INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

SEVENTH MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONAL AVIATION SAFETY GROUP FOR AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN (RASC/7) – VIRTUAL.

12 October, 2021

Agenda Item 1: Review of the status of implementation of the 2021 RASG-AFI Work Programme

1.1 RASG-AFI Projects and Critical Activities.

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY
This paper provides an update on the status of implementation of the 2021 RASG-AFI Work Programme, related to progress on selected RASG-AFI Projects and Critical Activities since RASC/6 meeting was held virtually in July 2021. Action to be taken by the Meeting is provided at paragraph 3 of this Paper.
REFERENCE(S): RASG-AFI/6 Report
Related ICAO Strategic Objective(s): SAFETY

1.   INTRODUCTION:

This working paper highlights the status of implementation and action relating to selected activities, initiatives and projects , aimed at improving the overall level of safety in the RASG-AFI region including progress made since the virtual RASC/6 meeting held in July 2021, while outlining underlining challenges and proposing some recommendations.

2. DISCUSSION:

Significant Safety Concerns (SSC)

2.2.1   Since the inception of the SSC-SST in 2013 to date, 19 SSCs have been resolved in 12 States. Currently, only one outstanding SSC exists in Eritrea in the RASG-AFI region been identified in 2010 in the area of aircraft operations, specifically pertaining to the certification of air operators. This SSC is one of the longest outstanding of the seven SSCs worldwide. The continued existence of the SSC in Eritrea is contrary to the Abuja Safety Targets and the SSC project was established to assist expeditious action by States.

2.2.2   It is worthwhile to note that in March 2020, an SSC was identified in Côte d'Ivoire in the area of air navigation services pertaining to the ground and flight validations of published instrument flight procedures. Positively, Côte d'Ivoire implemented appropriate corrective actions acceptable to ICAO to resolve the SSC, within a period of less than four months from identification.

2.2.3   In spite of the long standing SSC in Eritrea, it is evident that the SST-SSC, under the championships of Ghana, South Africa and AFCAC, significant progress has been achived in assisting States to resolve actual or potential SSCs. The strategies adopted to achieve the progress include:

   a) Continuous monitoring of States' safety performance, with special emphasis on States with SSCs, low EI, high traffic, or complex aviation activities.
   b) Assistance by ICAO, including through AFI Plan, TCB projects and ROST missions.
   c) Assistance to RASG-AFI States in need by stronger RASG-AFI States.
   d) Assistance by AFCAC through the AFI Cooperative Inspectorate Scheme (AFI-CIS).
   e) Assistance by RSOOs/COSCAPs to States as necessary.
   f) Assistance by development partners, including China, EU and the US.
   g) Assistance by Industry partners, including Airbus, Boeing, ACI, CANSO and IATA.

2.2.4   The significant challenges faffecting the efforts to resolve or mitigate potential SSC include:

   a) Limited funding or budget to the SST-SSC
   b) Unwillingness , reluctance or refusal by some States to solicit or to accept assistance
   c) Unwillingness, reluctance or refusal by some States to inculcate a positive safety culture, including the sharing and exchange of safety data and information, especially through the USOAP CMA OLF and State Letters as well as to AFCAC.

2.2.8   With regard to the SSC in Eritrea, the State has neither been responsive to offers for assistance nor requests for safety information by ICAO. The prevailing COVID-19 pandemic has further compounded the challenges.

2.1 State Safety Programme (SSP)

2.1.1   The SSP implementation project was initially launched in February 2017 for a duration of 24 months and developed under the AFI Plan to support the establishment of a sound safety oversight system in twenty-four (24) States and ensure compliance with provisions of Annex 19 requirements. The eligible States under the project included Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, with the eligibility was based on the attainment of the 60% EI regional target.

2.1.2   With more RASG-AFI States attaining the 60% EI target, the SSP Project was revised to incorporate new eligible States including Benin, Congo, Gabon,Mozambique and Rwanda. In addition, the Project implementation approach was revised to take into account SSP implementation based on satisfactory implementation of SSP Foundation Protocol Questions (PQs).

2.1.3   During the project implementation, eligible States were provided with assistance and capacity building activities, which included safety management training and assistance in the review for acceptability and implementation of the USOAP Corrective Action Plan (CAP), for the SSP Foundation PQs as well as the review of the States' results of the SSP Gap Analysis Questions. The table below shows the SSP status of implementation for the current 29 eligible states, based on the information reported by the States on the ICAO iSTARS, October 2021:

SSP Status of implementation for RASG-AFI SSP project (iSTARS) - Eligible States		
SSP Level of implementation	**# of States**	**% of States**
L0 - States not started a GAP analysis	2	7% ↓
L1 - States started a GAP analysis	5	17% →
L2 - States with Gap Analysis Completed	8	28% ↑
L3 -States with Implementation Plan Defined	13	45% ↑
L4 -States fully implemented their SSPs	1	3% →
Total Number of States	29	100%

Note: Level zero (L0) in the lowest level and means that State did not start or not report the project on iSTARS-GAP analysis tool and level (L4) in the hightest level and mean State completed the process.

2.1.4   Although the selected States achieved some progress, SSP implementation remains one of the main challenges faced by States in the AFI Region. From the tabele above, it is evident that more efforts from States and continuing support of ICAO is required to ensure States meet the Annex 19 requirements and achieve the established GASP Goal related to the SSP.

2.1.5   It is important to highlight that GASP edition 2020-2022, Goal 3, calls for States to effectively implement the SSPs. This goal addresses organizational challenges faced by States when implementing an SSP and includes the implementation of SMS by service providers within individual States, in accordance with Annex 19. Goal 3, establishes two targets to be achieved in a phased approach:

    a)   Target 3.1 calls for all States to implement the foundation of an SSP by 2022; and
    b)   Target 3.2, which calls for the implementation of an effective SSP by 2025. An "effective SSP" refers to an SSP that actually achieves the objectives that it is intended to achieve.

2.1.6   It is therefore imperative to extend the existing SSP project to continue assisting RASG-AFI States in the implementation of the SSP. Furthermore, assistance to a specific State will be provided based on the fulfilment of the eligibility criteria, and a phased approach will be adopted to ensure that States have a robust foundation for an SSP before progressing into the implementation of the actions required for an effective SSP. In addition, the project revision includes the establishment of a mechanism to improve coordination and collaboration among the States, which will support SSP development and implementation.

2.2 Aerodrome Certification.

2.2.1   To foster effective implementation of the "No country left behind" initiative, the AFI Plan Steering Committee directed the   AFI Plan Secretariat in December 2016 to initiate the Aerodrome Certification project aimed at supporting States to certify at least one international aerodrome and build capacity to certify the rest.Subsequently, the revised Abuja Safety Targets reviewed the Aerodrome Certification target for States to certify all international Aerodromes by 2022.

2.2.2   The aerodrome certification project designed initially to support 16 African States to certify at least one of their International aerodromes was launched in August 2016, in both ESAF and WACAF Regions. At the request of some States, four (4) other aerodromes were added to the Project during this first phase.

2.2.3   To augment the Aerodrome certification project implementation sentisation meetings/teleconferences were held with Directors General of CAAs and CEO of Airports of the beneficiary States. The events also supportdd highlighting importance of the project and securing the necessary commitment and the required support. The aerodrome certification workshops were conducted in Accra, Lomé, Brazzaville and Nairobi for the benefit of Regulatory and airport personnel of both supporting and beneficiary States.

2.2.4   The workshops to beneficiary States resulted in preparation and submissions of action plans to the ICAO Regional Offices in Dakar and Nairobi and most States are progressing in the timely implementation of their plans, although some are behind schedule. Implementation assistance and progress monitoring missions were conducted by the project Team. The assistance provided under the project has led to the certification of 14 international Airports including Abidjan, Abuja, Bamako, Cotonou, Dakar, Kigali, Lagos, Libreville, Lusaka, Manzini, Maputo, Niamey, Ouagadougou and Windhoek in thirteen beneficiary States.

2.2.5   Current percentage of certified aerodromes in the AFI region is 31.78 per cent and by December 2020, 50 per cent of AFI States developed aerodrome certification capacities. It can also be underscored that some aerodromes published in the eANP are neither used for international operations, nor compliant with SARPs, negatively impacting the overall percentage of certified aerodromes.

2.2.6   Unfotrunately, the COVID 19 pandemic has hampered the progress on the all RASG AFI projetcs including the aerodrome certification project. However as a mitigation measure and to ensure progress of the project, ICAO Regional Offices and nominated experts have been supporting the beneficiary States through virtually and remotely.

3.   ACTION BY THE MEETING:

3.1.   The meeting is invited to:

   a) Support the appropriation of funding from either SAFE, AFI Plan, or other financial partners for the efficient implementation of the AFI Plan projects, particularly the resolution of the SSC in Eritrea;
   b) Urge States to develop and or update the OLF CAPs associated with SSP Foundation PQs and revise all GAP-Analysis questions on the iSTARS.
   c) Encourage States to support the implementation of the SSP project including but not limited to release identified Resources Experts to participate in the collaboration mechanism;
   d) Encourage States to aggressively pursue the Certification of their International Aerodromes;

e) Urge States in general and Eritrea in particular, to solicit or accept assistance to resolve safety issues; and

f) Urge States to inculcate a positive safety culture, including the sharing and exchange of safety data and information, especially through the USOAP CMA OLF and State Letters as well as to AFCAC.

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