



International Civil Aviation Organization

MIDANPIRG/22 & RASG-MID/12 Meetings

(Doha, Qatar, 4 – 8 May 2025)

Agenda Item 4.2: Outcomes of the SEIG Meeting

**INITIATIVE FOR ENHANCING THE NATIONAL CONTINUOUS MONITORING
COORDINATOR (NCCM) ROLE IN THE MID REGION**

(Presented by The Sultanate of Oman)

SUMMARY	
<p>This paper presents the Oman initiative for enhancing the national continuous monitoring coordinator (NCCM) role in the mid region within the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA). It identifies gaps in the current ICAO procedures for managing changes to Protocol Questions (PQs) and proposes the development of standardized procedures, tools, and a regional temporary task force to empower the NCCM & enhance the readiness of upcoming audits. The Sultanate of Oman offers its model for improving the NCCM role, emphasizing greater empowerment, interdepartmental collaboration, and proactive change management.</p> <p>Action by the meeting is at paragraph 3.</p>	
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	Safety
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- ICAO Doc 9735 – Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme Continuous Monitoring Manual- ICAO Doc 9734, Part A – Safety Oversight Manual- ICAO Guidelines for NCCMs, 2nd Edition, June 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA), described in ICAO Document 9735, is essential for maintaining the safety oversight system of States, ensuring that they are in full compliance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). The NCCM plays a key role in coordinating the State's participation in the CMA, ensuring the accuracy of the State Aviation Activity Questionnaire (SAAQ), managing Corrective Action Plans (CAPs), and providing evidence through the Online Framework (OLF). However, the current ICAO framework—while defining NCCM responsibilities—lacks specific procedures, tools, and authority structures to address challenges such as frequent PQ updates, inter-departmental coordination, and continuity during staff turnover. This results in reactive practices and missed opportunities for proactive readiness.

1.2 ICAO Doc 9735 further elaborates on the NCMC's function in facilitating smooth coordination among various State authorities responsible for different USOAP-monitored areas. It establishes the expected interactions with stakeholders and highlights the NCMC's critical role in managing CMA-related activities.

1.3 Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the USOAP CMA, States are required to designate NCMCs to act as facilitators and primary points of contact for continuous monitoring activities. NCMCs assist their respective States in preparing for USOAP CMA activities and contribute to monitoring the implementation levels of ICAO SARPs. States may appoint one or more qualified individuals to serve in this role.

1.4 Considering that in many States NCMCs simultaneously hold other responsibilities — such as State Safety Programme (SSP) Coordinator or inspector...etc. — there is a need to improve the description and clarity of NCMC duties to increase awareness and support from the leadership of Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs).

1.5 To address these challenges, the Sultanate of Oman has developed a model that goes beyond current ICAO guidance by introducing structured procedures, NCMC empowerment mechanisms, and tracking tools. This working paper proposes the regional adoption of Oman's enhancements and the formation of a task force to develop harmonized guidance across MID States.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Roles and responsibilities

As described in ICAO Doc 9735 the NCMCs are responsible for submitting, maintaining and/or updating the information provided by the State to the Monitoring and Oversight Office on a continuous basis, including but not limited to: a) PQ compliance status through PQ self-assessment; b) Corrective action plans (CAP); c) mitigating measures taken by the State in response to SSCs; d) State aviation activity questionnaire (SAAQ); e) Compliance Checklist (CCs); f) responses to Mandatory information request (MIRs); and g) other relevant safety information, as requested by ICAO.

The roles and responsibilities of the NCMCs incorporate a number of different tasks to assist auditors in the conduction of the safety oversight activities:

- During the Preparation, a NCMC prepares administrative and logistical arrangements for on-site activities providing assistance to the Team Leader with respect to mission information or clarifications; Coordinate the preparation of the State-specific mission plan in conjunction with the Team Leader; Arrange meeting facilities and work areas; Identify stakeholders for all specific areas covered in the USOAP activity; Brief key State management personnel on the scope and objectives of the activity; Coordinate the preparation of essential information and material to be submitted by State.
- During the on-site activities, the NCMCs ensure that all the State representatives responsible to attend the opening and closing briefings, work closely with the team leader to ensure a smooth conduct of the on-site activities; Keep the State's key management personnel informed on the progress and preliminary results of the activity.
- During the “after activity”, even though the activity has ended the NCMCs still have a significant role during the validation and reporting activities: Ensures that the SSCs, if any, are handled expeditiously; The State starts or continues working on its corrective actions and mitigating measures; The Feedback Form is duly completed and submitted to ICAO and the Regional Office is kept abreast of the State's progress towards the full implementation of its CAP(s).

2.1.1 In addition, the NCMCs are responsible for the On-Line Framework (OLF) State account, and have full control of user accounts for the State, issuing additional user accounts, deactivating invalid user accounts, and setting individual user rights/permissions.

2.1.2 As mentioned, information to be submitted and updated regularly by the NCMCs through the OLF include responses to the SAAQ; this questionnaire is designed to collect comprehensive and

specific information on each State's aviation activities, including legislative, regulatory, organizational, operational, technical and administrative details, in order to assist the Monitoring and Oversight Office in monitoring the level of aviation activity in the State related to each audit area and in prioritizing and planning USOAP CMA activities, in addition to facilitate MID Regional Office NCLB Strategy implementation and to the development of assistance mechanisms.

2.1.3 States often delegate to the NCMCs the file of States differences against standards and recommended practices (SARPs) by completing and maintaining up to date the Compliance Checklists (CCS) / Electronic Filing of Differences (EFOD) system. The completion of CCS by Member States provides an overview of the level of implementation of ICAO Standards.

2.2 Current Gaps in Guidelines for NCMC of the USOAP Audit Second Edition, June 2021

The purpose of the Gap Analysis is to assess the roles and responsibilities of the National Continuous Monitoring Coordinator (NCMC) and to evaluate the implications of recent developments within the USOAP Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA).

2.3 While ICAO Doc 9735 provides a foundational understanding of the NCMC's responsibilities, it does not fully address the practical challenges that NCMCs face when managing Protocol Question updates. In particular, the following gaps have been identified:

- Authority and coordination: Existing guidance does not sufficiently clarify the NCMC's authority to coordinate across various departments/ audit areas and ensure that regulatory changes are implemented effectively.
- PQ management framework: ICAO has not established a detailed procedure to guide States through the full cycle of PQ management, including notification of updates, impact assessment, evidence collection and coordination, and validation processes.
- Assessment of PQ changes: When PQs are added, amended, or deleted, there is currently no mechanism enabling States to systematically assess the impact of such changes on their compliance status or on their Effective Implementation (EI) scores across the relevant audit areas.
- Tracking and internal management tools: While the Online Framework (OLF) provides basic tracking functions — including CAP status updates, PQ compliance monitoring, and overall EI performance — it does not offer comprehensive internal management tools such as dynamic dashboards, departmental PQ matrices, workflow trackers, or automated notification systems. Consequently, States are required to establish supplementary internal mechanisms to ensure effective management of CAPs and PQs.
- Succession planning: There is an absence of ICAO guidance on establishing succession planning or backup arrangements to ensure the continuity of the NCMC function during periods of staffing transitions, which poses a risk to the stability of States' continuous monitoring capabilities.

These gaps constrain the ability of States to respond proactively to changes within the USOAP CMA framework and impact their overall readiness for audit and oversight activities. Although ICAO Doc 9734, Part A, emphasize that the NCMC is expected to oversee the State's safety oversight system; however, without structured guidance, this responsibility becomes difficult to manage effectively.

2.4 ICAO References Supporting the Need for Procedural Clarification

- ICAO Doc 9735 (Part A) establishes the NCMC's role in ensuring continuous oversight, but does not provide a detailed process for managing PQ updates or tools to track these changes across departments.
- ICAO Doc 9734 Part A describes the NCMC as a central figure for managing USOAP CMA activities but lacks procedural clarity on how to integrate PQ changes into the State's ongoing safety oversight activities.
- ICAO NCMC guidelines 2021, which provides guidelines for NCMCs, introduces the concept but leaves gaps in defining the role, authority, and processes for managing PQ updates, leading to inconsistencies in the implementation of ICAO's recommendations.

As part of the ICAO MID Region's continuous efforts under RASG-MID, particularly through the Safety Enhancement Initiative Group (SEIG), the need for harmonized and proactive mechanisms to support NCMCs is needed. This proposal builds on those initiatives by offering a concrete mechanism for structured cooperation and procedural enhancement.

2.5 Enhancing the NCMC Role: Oman's Approach

Recognizing these challenges, Oman has developed a model procedure for NCMCs to enhance their ability to manage PQ updates. This approach builds upon ICAO's guidelines but introduces key enhancements:

- Empowerment of the NCMC: The NCMC is appointed by the CEO of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) with full authority to coordinate activities across departments. This allows for better internal alignment and quicker responses to ICAO requests.
- Structured Procedure for PQ Updates: The process for managing PQ changes is clearly outlined, with specific steps for notification, impact analysis, coordination meetings, evidence updates, and final validation before submitting updates to ICAO.
- Digital Tools: Oman's model includes tracking tools such as a PQ tracking matrix and dashboard, which streamline the update process and ensure that no important changes are missed.
- Proactive PQ Self-Assessment: NCMCs are encouraged to conduct regular self-assessments, at least annually or whenever significant changes occur in the regulatory or operational landscape. This ensures that States are prepared for ICAO audits and able to respond to PQ changes in real-time.

2.6 Regional Harmonization and Support

To improve the effectiveness of the NCMC role across the region, Oman proposes the establishment of a regional task force to develop comprehensive guidance material and tools for managing PQ updates. The task force, led by Oman, will focus on:

- Developing regional standard procedures for NCMCs to manage PQ changes.
- Creating tools and templates for PQ tracking, CAP management, and internal coordination.
- Establishing a regional NCMC community of practice to foster collaboration, share best practices, and provide continuous support.

2.7 PROPOSAL FOR A REGIONAL NCMC TASK FORCE

2.7.1 NCMC Task Force

The principal objective of the NCMC/TF is to support States under the SEIG for MID Region, to increase the effective implementation of the MID region States' Safety Oversight Systems, enhancing their Safety oversight capability and readiness for the USOAP CMA activities in accordance with ICAO requirements, by:

- Working collaboratively, sharing best practices, promoting efficient and effective collaboration among States.
- Promoting the empowerment of the activities and functions of the NCMCs toward the quality of information uploaded in the ICAO On line Framework (OLF).
- Verifying and supervising the actions taken and work programs resulting from the Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) and their follow up.
- Identifying potential situations or issues that may jeopardize the continuous improvement of the safety oversight capabilities of the states (as required), i.e.: lack of training at regional or

individual level

2.7.2 NCMC TF Responsibilities

The NCMC TF is responsible for:

- Establishing and Develop NCMC TF Terms of Reference;
- Establishing a mechanism to identify common challenges, and to propose adequate solutions according to regional and/or individual needs and resources;
- Emphasizing the empowerment of NCMC's role, and enhancing its importance for the Effective Implementation of the actions included on the CAPs ensuring its quality, value and adequacy.
- Identifying opportunities for the improvement of the ICAO USOAP and ensuring their notification through the ICAO MID Regional Office;
- Identifying training needs of the NCMCs to coordinate with the MID Region Office and/or the respective authorities the delivery of such training;
- Meeting with the members of the NCMC TF periodically and keep constant communication among the States and the MID Region;
- continuously raise awareness among States about the need to comply with self-assessment requirements, while also overseeing and monitoring updates to ICAO Annexes and guidance material in order to identify emerging trends and determine appropriate actions to be taken by NCMCs and/or States.

2.8 BENEFITS as a REGION

- Improved USOAP CMA readiness.
- Faster and more consistent response to PQ changes.
- Strengthened regional collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and capacity-building.

2.9 CONCLUSION

The evolving landscape of aviation oversight necessitates a more structured approach to managing PQ updates and ensuring that NCMCs are properly empowered to handle these challenges. Oman's enhanced model provides a scalable and adaptable framework for MID States, which, when adopted, will contribute to the long-term improvement of safety oversight and readiness within the region.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Note the information contained in this paper;
- b) Discuss the establishment of a temporary task force led by Oman;
- c) Support the development of regional guidance for NCMCs;
- d) Encourage MID States to nominate NCMC/ focal points to the task force;