



WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 36TH SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 13: Progress report on the implementation of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) under the comprehensive systems approach

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ICAO
UNIVERSAL SAFETY OVERSIGHT AUDIT PROGRAMME (USOAP)
UNDER THE COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEMS APPROACH**

(Presented by the Council of ICAO)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Assembly Resolution A35-6 requested the Council to report to the next ordinary session of the Assembly on the overall implementation of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP). This paper summarizes the progress made in the implementation of USOAP since the adoption of the comprehensive systems approach on 1 January 2005. As of 31 July 2007, sixty-one audits had been conducted. The audits have been instrumental to establish the degree of implementation of the eight critical elements of a safety oversight system, to determine the status of States' compliance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and to identify areas of concern. Audit results have still revealed audit findings in the areas of personnel licensing, aircraft operations and airworthiness of aircraft; however, the majority of audit findings under the current cycle relate to the new audit areas, i.e. aerodrome, air navigation services and aircraft accident and incident investigation. The paper also addresses the continuation of USOAP beyond 2010.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) review the progress in the implementation of USOAP under the comprehensive systems approach; and
- b) provide the Secretariat with a mandate to conduct a study regarding the continuation of the Programme beyond 2010 and to present various options to the Council.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Objective A.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	No additional resources required. The work involved for the Secretariat is expected to be undertaken within the resources included under the Draft Budget 2008-2010, supplemented by the short and long-term secondment of auditors by States, and the support provided by other ICAO Bureaux and Regional Offices.
<i>References:</i>	Doc 9848, <i>Assembly Resolutions in Force</i> (as of 8 October 2004) Doc 7300, <i>Convention on International Civil Aviation</i> Doc 9734, <i>Safety Oversight Manual, Part A — The Establishment and Management of a State's Safety Oversight System</i>

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Assembly Resolution A35-6 resolved that the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) be expanded to include the safety-related provisions contained in all safety-related Annexes to the *Convention on International Civil Aviation* (Doc 7300) from 1 January 2005 and instructed the Secretary General to adopt a comprehensive systems approach in conducting safety oversight audits in all Contracting States.

1.2 This paper summarizes the progress made in the implementation of USOAP since the adoption of the comprehensive systems approach on 1 January 2005, and contains information as of 31 July 2007. A separate document containing detailed analysis on the audit results will be produced and distributed during the Assembly.

2. PROGRESS ACHIEVED BY USOAP ON STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE A (ENHANCE GLOBAL AVIATION SAFETY)

2.1 Audits

2.1.1 The conduct of audits under the comprehensive systems approach started in April 2005. As of 31 July 2007, a total of sixty-one audits had been conducted. The programme remains on course to complete the audits of all Contracting States within the six-year cycle ending in 2010.

2.2 Audit Reports

2.2.1 Pursuant to Assembly Resolution A35-6, safety oversight audit reports have been restructured to reflect the critical elements of a safety oversight system as presented in ICAO Doc 9734, *Safety Oversight Manual*, Part A — *The Establishment and Management of a State's Safety Oversight System*.

2.2.2 In accordance with the Resolution, final safety oversight audit reports are made available to all Contracting States through a secure website, providing them as well with access to all relevant information derived from the Audit Findings and Differences Database (AFDD). As of 31 July 2007, a total of twenty-eight audit final reports had been posted, including the one on the audit conducted of the European Aviation Safety Agency. Detailed information on the status of implementation of ICAO provisions and the critical elements is also posted on the secure website.

2.3 Audit Tools

2.3.1 Several tools are used in the preparation, conduct and reporting of safety oversight audits. These include the State Aviation Activity Questionnaire (SAAQ), Compliance Checklists (CCs) for each of the Annexes being audited, eight Audit Protocols (APs) and numerous procedures, checklists, work instructions and flowcharts, all of which form part of the Safety Oversight Audit (SOA) Section Quality Management System.

2.3.2 A dedicated secure website was developed for the submission and updating by States of the SAAQ and CCs and for the dissemination of audit reports and related information, in accordance with Assembly Resolution A35-6.

2.4 State corrective action plans.

2.4.1 In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on safety oversight audits signed with ICAO, States undertake to prepare and submit to ICAO, within sixty calendar days from the date the interim safety oversight audit report has been made available to them, a corrective action plan addressing the findings and recommendations contained in the report, including the identification of specific actions, deadlines and the office(s) responsible for each action. As of 31 July 2007, all of the corrective action plans due following an audit under the comprehensive systems approach had been submitted to ICAO by the States concerned.

2.5 Auditor training

2.5.1 The transition to the comprehensive systems approach required the training of a large number of auditors on the new audit methodology and procedures, while taking into account all the areas covered by the scope of the audits and the need to have audit teams in three of ICAO's official languages (English, French and Spanish). As of 31 July 2007, eleven training courses had been conducted, with a total of 216 participants, including fifty-four ICAO officers from Headquarters and the Regional Offices. Two of these courses were done on a cost-recovery basis, at the request of the States concerned. To become an approved auditor requires successful completion of the auditor training course and on-the-job training, which is conducted during an actual audit mission. As of 31 July 2007, a total of seventy-seven auditors (from ICAO Headquarters, Regional Offices, Contracting States and international organizations) had been approved. On-the-job training will continue to be provided on the basis of programme requirements to officials who have completed the auditor training course.

2.6 Seminar/workshops

2.6.1 In preparation for the launching of safety oversight audits under the comprehensive systems approach, seven seminars (one in each ICAO Regional Office) were conducted to familiarize National Safety Oversight Coordinators with the comprehensive systems approach, the methodology and the tools used for the conduct of the audits. A total of 437 participants from 111 Contracting States, thirteen international and regional organizations and from the ICAO Regional Offices benefited from this series of seminars.

2.6.2 A new seminar was developed in 2006 to assist States in their preparation for an upcoming audit and to allow them to exchange audit experiences with other States. Four such seminars have been delivered so far, including one at the request of a Contracting State, on a cost recovery basis. In all, 217 officials from forty-two States and three international organizations participated in these seminars.

2.7 Deployment of auditor staff

2.7.1 Contracting States have supported the Programme actively through the secondment of officials to ICAO. In all, since the launching of the comprehensive systems approach, seven States (Austria, France, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States) have seconded experts to ICAO on a long-term basis. In addition, nineteen Contracting States and two international organizations have seconded experts to ICAO on a short-term basis to take part in the conduct of audits. This valuable support from States will continue to be required throughout the entire audit cycle.

2.7.2 SOA has started deploying Standards and Procedures Officers – ICAO staff members responsible for managing a portfolio of Contracting States and team leading audits to the ICAO Regional

Offices (ROs), with a view to establishing improved coordination between ROs and HQ for the implementation of the Programme and also to reduce mission costs.

2.8 Audit results

2.8.1 Audit results on the first fifty-eight audits conducted under the comprehensive systems approach have been analyzed to establish the degree of implementation of the eight critical elements (CE) of a safety oversight system (Doc 9734, Part A refers), to determine the status of State's compliance with ICAO SARPs and to identify areas of concern. Appendix to this working paper shows that the global degree of implementation of the eight critical elements was 60.5 per cent. One of the critical elements are below the 50.0 per cent mark, namely CE-5 - *Technical guidance tools and provisions of safety-critical information*.

2.8.2 While the audit results under the comprehensive systems approach have still revealed audit findings in the areas of personnel licensing, aircraft operations and airworthiness of aircraft, it should be noted that the majority of audit findings under the new cycle relate to the new audit areas, i.e. aerodrome, air navigation services and aircraft accident and incident investigation.

2.8.3 A separate document, providing detailed information and analysis of the audit results, including the degree of implementation of the critical elements, the status of States' compliance with ICAO SARPs and the areas of concern identified will be distributed during the Assembly.

2.9 Amendments to the generic MOU

2.9.1 Pursuant to the recommendations made by the Directors General of Civil Aviation Conference on a Global Strategy for Aviation Safety (DGCA/06), a process was developed and approved by the Council for the release of audit information to the public on audits conducted under the comprehensive systems approach. Similarly, an additional mechanism was developed to enable the rapid resolution of significant safety concerns identified under USOAP. The Council approved amendments to the generic MOU on safety oversight audits to incorporate these two developments.

2.10 Administrative integration of ICAO's audit programmes

2.10.1 Further to Council's approval of the administrative integration of the USOAP and the Universal Security Audit Programme (USAP), a new Safety and Security Audits (SSA) Branch was established within the Office of the Secretary General in 2006 to manage both audit programmes. Increased efficiencies have been realized through a streamlining of administrative activities and sharing of non-technical resources, while maintaining the technical and functional independence of USAP and USOAP.

2.11 ISO Recertification of the Safety Oversight Audit Section

2.11.1 The Safety Oversight Audit Section was originally certified by AOQC Moody International Inc. under ISO 9001:2000 requirements in 2002. In September 2005, SOA was subjected to a recertification audit to ensure that it continued to effectively implement and develop its ISO-based Quality Management System. As a result of this audit, SOA was recertified for a period of three years. AOQC Moody International Inc. will continue to carry out maintenance audits of SOA on a yearly basis, with recertification audits taking place every three years. ISO certification is gradually being extended to cover the entire SSA Branch.

2.12 Audit Results Review Board

2.12.1 A high-level Secretariat Audit Results Review Board (ARRB) has been established as part of an overall coordinated strategy for working with States that are found to have significant compliance shortcomings with respect to ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) or do not participate fully in ICAO's safety oversight and security audit processes. The ARRB meets regularly to examine both the safety and security histories of specific States and provides an internal advisory forum for coordination among ICAO's safety, security and assistance programmes. Progress reports on the activities of the ARRB will be presented to the Council on a regular basis.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF USOAP BEYOND 2010

3.1 The current six-year cycle of safety oversight audits under the comprehensive systems approach extends through the end of 2010. Even though the audit cycle does not include the conduct of audit follow-up missions, once completed it will establish a baseline on the level of effective implementation worldwide of the eight critical elements and the status of States' compliance with ICAO SARPs in all safety-related Annexes.

3.2 The Secretariat has started looking at the future of the Programme beyond 2010, with a view to adopting a more proactive approach and making more effective and efficient use of the resources made available to the Programme while considering the role of other Bureaux of the Organization as well as the ICAO Regional Offices. To this end, a study will be conducted in the course of the upcoming triennium to present the Council with various options for the future development of the Programme, such as a fixed audit cycle, the conduct of audit follow-ups or the transition to a continuous monitoring programme (CMP) of States' safety oversight capabilities.

3.3 It is envisioned that future activities of the Programme could be based on pre-established risk indicators, such as States' ability to maintain their SAAQ and CCs up-to-date, the results of an audit under the comprehensive systems approach and of the progress made in the implementation of the corresponding corrective action plan, aircraft accident and serious incident rates, a sudden increase in aviation activity, and the overall situation in the State. A more proactive approach would allow for audit activities to be prioritized and better focused while maintaining the principle of universality. It would also yield additional Programme benefits by encouraging Contracting States to ensure ongoing compliance with ICAO provisions while implementing at the same time the critical elements of a safety oversight system.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The ICAO USOAP has been implemented on schedule and within its budget allocation. Audits conducted under the comprehensive systems approach have continued to increase States' awareness on their safety oversight responsibilities. The audits have also proven to be instrumental in determining the States' degree of compliance with ICAO provisions and the implementation of the critical elements of a safety oversight system. Given its wide scope, the Programme also allows the identification of safety concerns relative to all safety-related Annexes. As a continuation to the current audit cycle, the Secretariat will present during the upcoming triennium various options to the Council regarding the future development of the Programme.

Degree of Implementation of the Critical Elements of a Safety Oversight System (%)

Global – 58 States – CSA Audits 60.5%

