



ASSEMBLY — 38TH SESSION

TECHNICAL COMMISSION

Agenda Item 31: Aviation Safety – Emerging Issues

GLOBAL SHORTAGE OF AVIATION SAFETY INSPECTORS

(Presented by the United States)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A global shortage of qualified aviation safety inspectors has been a growing issue as ICAO Member States continue to enhance their capabilities in aviation safety oversight. This shortage is evident through a high number of inspector vacancies and the movement of trained and qualified inspectors to other authorities or to private industry. Inspectors perform a core function of an aviation authority and have direct impact on safety. The United States requests that ICAO Secretariat work on developing provisions and guidance on the overall competencies for government safety inspectors.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- recognize the ongoing challenge of hiring, training, and retaining aviation safety inspectors who must maintain a level of safety for their Contracting States;
- request the Council to have the Secretariat work on developing provisions and guidance on overall competencies for government safety inspectors; and
- incorporate into the overall regional framework.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Safety Strategic Objective.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Not applicable.
<i>References:</i>	Not applicable.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 A global shortage of qualified aviation safety inspectors has become evident as ICAO member states continue to enhance their capabilities in aviation safety oversight. This shortage is evident through a high number of inspector vacancies and the movement of trained and qualified inspectors to other authorities or to private industry. Inspectors perform a core function of an aviation authority and have direct impact on aviation safety. The United States requests that ICAO focus attention to this growing need for inspectors and recommends focusing on developing guidelines for inspector training, retention of inspectors (including commensurate pay and retirement age) and the inclusion of safety inspectors in ICAO's Next Generation of Aviation Professionals (NGAP) overall programme.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 All States who are members of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and signatories to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (known as the Chicago Convention), are obligated to implement the aviation safety requirements of ICAO. In order to fulfill its ICAO obligations, each national Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) including its operations and continuing airworthiness inspectorate in particular, are then granted the responsibility and authority to implement the ICAO requirements on behalf of the national government.

2.2 The work of the inspectorate is accomplished by a group of highly skilled aviation professionals. Among these are aviation safety inspectors who accomplish many of the daily technical and safety functions of the CAA as required by ICAO. Aviation Safety Inspectors represent the national government and their role is critical to maintaining an overall international aviation safety standards. As a result, lack of qualified aviation safety inspectors directly impacts aviation safety.

2.3 ICAO noted in its recent annual Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme report that critical element number 4, technical personnel qualifications and training have the highest percentage of lack of implementation by ICAO Contracting States of the eight critical elements. This is in part due to lack of infrastructure and environment for authorities to hire, train and retain safety inspectors. Various authorities of Member States both in developed and developing countries have found that hiring, training and retaining qualified aviation safety inspectors has been an ongoing challenge.

2.4 In some cases development of trained and qualified inspectors has been a challenge due to lack of applicants with general qualifications for initial employment outlined in ICAO *Airworthiness Manual* (Doc 9760), Part II. Other authorities may also face the challenge of maintaining a training programme to ensure inspectors have initial and recurrent training and that inspectors use the latest requirements and practices due to a lack of knowledge or resources. In other cases, retention of qualified inspectors has been an issue due to the lack of salaries commensurate with industry counterparts or similar inspector positions at other authorities in the region, as well as early retirement requirements set by the national government.

2.5 The United States is requesting Member States urge ICAO to focus on addressing safety inspector shortages through its Secretariat. Possible ways ICAO may facilitate more attention is to integrate aviation safety inspectors into the ICAO's Next Generation of Aviation Professionals programme, including the use of the NGAP working groups to develop and provide outreach and guidance materials and possibly develop a workshop for Member States.

3. REQUESTED ACTIONS BY THE ASSEMBLY

3.1 The Assembly is invited to note the information contained in this paper:

- a) *recognize* the ongoing challenge of hiring, training, and retaining aviation safety inspectors who must maintain a level of safety for their Contracting States;
- b) *request* the Council to have the Secretariat work on developing provisions and guidance on overall competencies for government safety inspectors; and
- c) *incorporate* into the overall regional framework.

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