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Ninth Regional Aviation Safety Group — Pan America Plenary Meeting (RASG-PA/9)
Panama City, Panama, 23 June 2016

Agenda Item 9:   **Other Safety Initiatives**

RASG ORGANIZATIONAL GUIDELINES

(Presented by the Secretariat)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
This Information Paper presents the ICAO Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs) Organizational Guidelines document (see **Appendix**). The RASG-PA/9 Meeting is invited to note the information contained in this paper.

Strategic Objectives:	• Safety

1.   Introduction

1.1   The Council during the 190th Session considered and approved C-WP/13558, in which the ANC proposed the establishment of Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs) in all Regions. It was envisioned that the RASGs would serve as a regional cooperative forum integrating global, regional, sub-regional, national and industry efforts in continuing to enhance aviation safety worldwide. In addition, RASGs would provide inter-regional harmonization related to aviation safety issues and a means to monitor worldwide implementation of the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP). RASGs serve as ICAO's focal point for safety issues in the Regions.

2.   Discussion

2.1   RASGs are maturing, and a single document providing guidance and standardization is needed. This document provides consistency in RASG working methodologies and assists in the alignment of objectives, prioritization and harmonization of activities and outputs, and defines the level of Secretariat support.

2.2   In addition, this guidance document reinforces the role that the RASGs play in relation to the implementation of the GASP, and the "*No Country Left Behind*" (NCLB) initiative.

2.3   The guidance document is meant to be a "living document" that can be revised to improve the contents or expanded to add additional information in the event of any changes in the ICAO RASG organizational structure.

2.4   Each RASG has its own Procedural Handbook which defines the objectives, membership, organization and working methods. In order to account for individual RASG Terms of Reference (TORs) and procedural handbooks and/or manuals, this guidelines document has been formulated in a generalized manner to allow for the harmonization of regional differences and to address the particular circumstances of each RASG while meeting the overall ICAO GASP objectives.

2.5   The RASG Guidelines document will serve to reinforce RASGs' role in harmonizing regional implementation of safety initiatives and will encourage the sharing of knowledge, experience and expertise, lessons learned, best practices and different approaches to harmonization.

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International Civil Aviation Organization

Regional Aviation Safety Groups

(RASGs)

Guidelines

Table of contents

1. Introduction

ICAO Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs) serve as regional cooperative fora for integrating global, regional, sub regional, national and industry efforts in continuing to enhance aviation safety worldwide. RASGs provide a formal reporting channel allowing ICAO to monitor the worldwide implementation of the GASP and to facilitate the implementation of regional safety initiatives. RASGs coordinate their respective analysis and monitoring efforts as well as facilitate the implementation of SARPs in each region. RASGs promote efforts to harmonize all activities undertaken to address aviation safety issues on a regional basis. The RASGs will build upon the achievements of existing safety organizations and facilitate the exchange of best practices, cooperation and collaboration.

1.1   Purpose of the RASG Guidelines

The main purpose of these Guidelines is to clearly define RASG objectives and support requirements which are necessary to ensure the successful implementation of efforts to harmonize and coordinate activities which are aimed at improving international civil aviation safety and efficiency. In order to account for individual RASG Terms of Reference (TORs) and Procedural handbooks and/or manuals, this document has been formulated in a generalized manner to allow for the harmonization of regional differences and to address the particular circumstances of each RASG while meeting the overall ICAO GASP Objectives.

1.2   Scope

This document provides information which is meant to be used as guidance for establishing and maintaining a structure and work program that meets the objectives for which the RASGs were established. In addition, it is meant to provide a framework of standardization to ensure global safety initiatives are

addressed in a manner consistent with ICAO objectives and the implementation of the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP). RASGs are the ICAO dedicated regional mechanism to monitor progress, coordinate actions among States and make recommendations to facilitate GASP strategies and safety implementation activities.

2. Guidance

2.1 GASP Implementation

The GASP is built on the principle of multilateral cooperation and, as such, it is essential that all relevant stakeholders are involved in the development and implementation of any activities aimed at improving safety under the RASG umbrella. Together with ICAO, the stakeholders in the civil aviation sector are States, airlines/operators, airports, air navigation service providers, aircraft and equipment manufacturers, maintenance and repair organizations, regional organizations and bodies, RSOOs, RAIOs, international organizations, regional technical assistance programs, training organizations and industry representatives. The commitment of all stakeholders is fundamental for success in improving safety.

Using the GASP, the RASGs will continue to build on the work already done by States, existing sub regional organizations such as the Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programs (COSCAPs) and Regional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs). RASGs may also develop additional action plans based on future ICAO GASP objectives and strategic priorities and support the establishment and operation of a performance-based safety system for the region by:

     a) serving as the regional focal points for collecting, exchanging and analyzing relevant safety information and identifying risks to civil aviation at the regional level;

     b) reviewing and coordinating the action plans developed within the region to address identified risks with regional and global aviation stakeholders.

c) collaborating with regional stakeholders to prioritize implementation activities in the region by providing the necessary safety intelligence;

d) facilitating the sharing of safety information, best practices and experiences among all stakeholders;

e) ensuring that all safety activities at the regional and sub regional level are properly coordinated and monitored to avoid duplication of efforts;

f) ensuring that the appropriate level of participation from a CAA and/or partner organization is clearly defined in the RASG TORs and/or Procedural handbook/manual to ensure the proper level of decision making authority is present to affect the desired results of RASGs or contributory bodies.

g) reducing duplication of efforts by encouraging collaboration, cooperation and resource sharing;

h) conducting follow-up and monitoring of GASP and regional safety activities as required;

i) coordinating with respective PIRG on safety issues; and

j) providing feedback to ICAO to continually improve and ensure an up-to-date global safety framework.

RASGs will support ICAO's Strategic priorities established through the ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) which include the three areas of aviation activity which are global priorities: improving runway safety; reducing controlled flight into terrain (CFIT) accidents; and reducing loss of control in-flight (LOC-I) accidents.

The 2017-2019 edition updates the GASP to include a global aviation safety roadmap developed to support an integrated approach to implementation. This roadmap has been developed to provide an action plan to assist the entire aviation community in achieving the objectives presented in the GASP. It provides a structured, common frame of reference for all relevant

stakeholders. The aim of the global aviation safety roadmap is to ensure that safety initiatives deliver the intended benefits associated with the objectives in a coordinated manner, thus reducing inconsistencies and duplication of effort. The draft global aviation safety roadmap is presented in Appendix A of the 2017-2019 edition of the GASP.

In addition to the GASP roadmap, the 2017-2019 edition of the GASP also includes a section on Safety Performance Indicators (SPIs). During the HLSC which was held in 2015, the international aviation community recommended that ICAO improve and harmonize SPIs, taking into account other SPIs that were currently in use. Appendix D of the 2017-2019 GASP presents a sample set of SPIs which includes metrics for each SPI along with the type of information that is collected (reactive, predictive, etc.) and the intended use of the information (e.g. for targeting, monitoring or awareness of the indicator value). The sample set of SPIs can be used by regions and States when establishing baselines to define targets and acceptable levels of safety.

2.2   No Country Left Behind

RASGs will contribute to the "No Country Left Behind" initiative by promoting and focusing on States with the greatest needs and coordinating requests for assistance. The No Country Left Behind (NCLB) campaign highlights ICAO's efforts to assist States in implementing and complying with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). The main goal of this work is to help ensure that SARP implementation is better harmonized globally so that all States have access to the significant socio-economic benefits of safe and reliable air transport. Prioritized set of implementation-focused recommendations, with the goal of maximizing socio-economic benefits at minimum cost. The NCLB effort also promotes ICAO's efforts in resolving Significant Safety Concerns (SSCs) brought to light through ICAO's safety oversight audits programme (USOAP) as well as other safety, security and emissions-related objectives.

2.3   Terms of Reference (TORs) and Procedural Handbooks

The RASG TORs were adopted by the ICAO Council during the 190th Session, 4th Meeting and are attached as **Appendix A** to this guidance document. The Council in approving the TORs felt that depending on the regional situation, sufficient flexibility can be exercised in determining the specific membership of each of the RASGs.

In order to facilitate it's work, the RASGs have developed Procedural handbooks/manuals which are published by the Secretariat, adopted by the RASG membership and intended to provide, for ease of reference, a consolidation of material, particularly of a procedural nature, about the work of RASG contributory bodies. It also contains the working arrangements and internal instructions developed by the Group for the practical application of its Terms of Reference. This handbook and/or manual should be reviewed periodically and updated. It should also be made available to all RASG members to maintain transparency.

2.4   Guidance on Format and Content for RASG Meeting Reports

The primary audiences of the RASG meeting reports are the States and International Organizations. All regions are different in nature and the modus operandi of the meetings and report style is therefore also different. However, one element all meetings should in common are action items referred to as 'Conclusions' and 'Decisions'. The guidance in **Appendix B** aims to ensure that these are clear and that any action for ICAO is clearly identified.

Conclusions and Decisions are defined as follows: Conclusions deal with matters which, in accordance with the Group's Terms of Reference, directly merit the attention of States, International Organizations or actions by ICAO   in accordance with established procedures. Decisions deal with matters of concern only to the RASG.

2.5   **Coordination between PIRGs and RASGs**

In establishing the RASGs, the Council called upon the Secretariat to ensure proper coordination between Regional Aviation Safety Groups and Planning and Implementation Groups in order to avoid any duplication of efforts. The Council emphasized that if any issue concerning flight safety is brought to the attention of a PIRG, it shall liaise with the corresponding RASG and in return, if any air navigation issue is presented to the RASGs, it will liaise with the corresponding PIRG.

2.6   Information Sharing

The role of RASGs is key in promoting the sharing of safety information and best practices in order to eliminate inefficiencies and increase effectiveness, and support States with the global safety objectives. RASGs should develop guidance and mechanisms for the sharing of best practices to support GASP implementation. In addition, RASG outputs, such as meeting reports, TORs, procedural handbooks and safety reports should be made publically available to promote transparency which is a fundamental tenet of a safe air transport system.

3.   Support to RASGs

3.1   ANB Support

ICAO HQ, through the ANB/IMP-SAF section will serve as the interface between the RASGs and the Air Navigation Commission and support the review of reports of RASG meetings by the Commission/Council.

Additionally, ANB will provide the RASGs with the following resources:

    a) support in the preparation of the yearly consolidated PIRG/RASG report to Council;

    b) support ANC review of reports.

c) sharing of essential information and lessons learned as best practices between all the RASGs (PIRG-RASG-TRACK Secure Portal Site, and RASG/PIRG Public Website);

d) provide RASGs with subject matter material;

e) maintain transparency on RASG activities by maintaining up to date information on ICAO web site.

f) support RASG meeting agendas by providing IP/WPs on current ICAO activities and initiatives;

g) provide input and comments on RASG Reports, Outputs, SEI's and DIPs;

h) encourage adoption of best practices and harmonization;

i) consolidation of RASG global efforts;

j) coordinate and support the PIRG/RASG bi-annual coordination meeting;

k) provide RASG meeting support and participation;

l) provide support to RASG Aviation Safety Summits; and

m) coordination and follow-up of HQ actions for RASGs.

3.2   Regional Office Support

In order to ensure the necessary continuity in the RASG work programme, each ICAO RASG Secretariat shall provide the necessary Secretariat assistance to the Group and serve as its communication link with all interested parties. In order to achieve this, the Secretariat will support the RASGs by providing administrative, coordination and technical support as required. In particular, but not all inclusive, the Secretariat should:

a) ensure alignment of RASG activities with the GASP;

b) track, monitor and facilitate action items and report status to Chairpersons;

c) coordinate meeting logistics;

d) develop meeting agendas;

e) ensure meeting agendas, documentation and summaries are provided to members;

f) ensure meeting summaries, notices, and related documents are posted online in a timely manner;

g) maintain communication with the Co-Chairs, Executive Committee/Steering members and RASG members;

h) identify required administrative support; and

i) manage the work programme.

To support and conserve the resources of the ICAO Secretariat, and to support the effective and efficient operation of workgroup meetings, ICAO Secretariat support should be prioritized for higher level activities directed at States. RASGs should strive to work with a minimum of formality and paper work (paperless meetings). In addition, normal ICAO meeting procedures, e.g. for documentation and reports, will only be applicable to plenary meetings. RASG working groups and/or sub-groups should have the flexibility of operating under more informal rules for efficiency and effectiveness, yet ensure for ICAO Secretariat oversight and follow-up of activities and outputs. These subsidiary contributory groups to the RASGs may be coordinated by any RASG member and are not necessarily provided with ICAO Secretariat support during meetings. RASG members should assume the duties and responsibilities of ensuring the normal conduct of business for working groups and sub-groups to the extent possible.

COUNCIL APPROVED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR REGIONAL AVIATION SAFETY GROUPS (RASGs)

1.   ESTABLISHMENT

1.1   Consistent with the Planning and Implementation Regional Group (PIRG) mechanism, the Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs) may be established in the following regions by the Council of ICAO. The meetings of the RASGs will be convened as required.

Regional Aviation Safety Group – Pan American (RASG-PA) for Caribbean, South American and North American Regions; (based on the existing arrangements put in place by States.)

Regional Aviation Safety Group – Europe (RASG-EUR) for the European Region;

Regional Aviation Safety Group – Asia Pacific (RASG-APAC) for APAC Regions;

Regional Aviation Safety Group – Africa (RASG-AFI) for the African Region;

Regional Aviation Safety Group – Middle East (RASG-MID) for the Middle East Region.

2.   MEMBERSHIP

2.1   Contracting States entitled to participate as members in a RASG meeting are:

a)   Those whose territories or dependencies are located partially or wholly within the geographical area to be considered by the meeting;

b)   Those located outside the area:

   i.   *which have notified ICAO that aircraft on their register or aircraft operated by an operator whose principal place of business or permanent residence is located in such States, operate or expect to operate into the area; or*
   ii. *which provide facilities and services affecting the area.*

2.2   Contracting States not meeting the above criteria and non-Contracting States are entitled to participate in RASG meetings as observers. The aircraft operators, international organizations, maintenance and repair organizations, regional organizations, training organizations, aircraft manufactures, airport and air navigation service providers and any other allied organizations/representatives will be invited to attend RASG meetings in the capacity of observers. The members and observers will serve as partners of RASG and their joint commitment is fundamental for success in improving aviation safety worldwide. The Regional Director will serve as the Secretary of the RASG. Wherever two Regional Directors are involved, they would alternate serving as Secretary of the RASG and PIRG to balance the Secretariat responsibilities between these two regional groups.

3.   RESOURCES

3.1   An officer from Headquarters (ANB) will participate and provide support to the RASG meetings. The ANB officer will serve as the interface between the RASG and the Air Navigation Commission and present the reports of RASG meetings to the Commission/Council for review and harmonization.

4.   WORK PROGRAMME

4.1   The RASG will develop and implement a work programme that supports a regional performance framework for the management of safety on the basis of the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and the Global Aviation Safety Roadmap (GASR). The reports of RASG meetings will be reviewed by the Commission on a regular basis and by the Council as deemed necessary.

4.2   Using the GASP and GASR, the RASG will build on the work already done by States, existing sub regional organizations such as the Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programmes (COSCAPs) and Regional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs) and support the establishment and operation of a performance-based safety system for the region by:

a) analyzing safety information and hazards to civil aviation at the regional level and reviewing the action plans developed within the region to address identified hazards;

b) facilitating the sharing of safety information and experiences among all stakeholders;

c) ensuring that all safety activities at the regional and sub regional level are properly coordinated to avoid duplication of efforts;

d) reducing duplication of efforts by encouraging collaboration, cooperation and resource sharing;

e) conducting follow-up to GASP/GASR activities as required;

f) coordinating with respective PIRG on safety issues; and

g) providing feedback to ICAO to continually improve and ensure an up-to-date global safety framework.

GUIDANCE ON FORMAT AND CONTENT FOR PIRG/RASG MEETING REPORTS

1.   REPORT SUMMARY

In order to support the analysis by the ANC of the report, the Secretariat is requested to prepare a brief summary of the main conclusions of the PIRG/RASG meeting report. This summary is normally informal and not a part of the report. It should be available five working days prior to the SRP meeting in which they will be discussed. The report summary should contain the following:

a) a summary of the main conclusions of the meeting, including current progress and specific concerns and challenges[1] of the regions in the context of the discussions of the meeting.

b) why are these of specific concern and what actions are being taken?

Any other points that the Regional Office/ANB specifically wishes to draw to the attention of the ANC, such as inter-regional and intra-regional PIRG/RASG coordination issues, SARP implementation issues, specific items for ANC consideration and the implementation of best practices or matters that could be of a global nature.

2.   DRAFTING OF CONCLUSIONS AND DECISIONS

a) Conclusions should be clear and understood stand-alone. They should be developed applying the principles of specifying **W**ho, **W**hat and by **W**hen of the action in the Conclusion text. They should be preceded by a paragraph that includes a brief rationale for the conclusion – the **W**hy.

b) The text of Conclusions and Decisions should be summarised separately in a table which includes the Who, What and by When.

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[1] These could be in the areas of Safety, Efficiency, Capacity or Interoperability.

Conclusions that were considered by the meeting to require action from ICAO HQ should thus be clearly identifiable. Examples of such conclusions are those considered to require action on SARPs, require feedback from the ANC, merit Council attention or have relevance for other regions.

c) Draft Conclusions and Decisions proposed by contributory bodies which are subsequently accepted by the PIRG/RASG plenary meeting should be included in the PIRG/RASG meeting report and the table summarising the Conclusions and Decisions.

3.   PUBLICATION OF REPORT

a) The final report and supporting documentation should be published within 45 days of the meeting in the languages used at the meeting and should be made available on the ICAO web site without password protection.

b) In cases where the PIRG/RASG plenary does not meet on an annual basis, the ANC should receive from the Secretariat an annual update on the PIRG/RASG (e.g. GREPECAS PPRC meeting reports).

4.   PROCESS FOR ANC REVIEW OF PIRG/RASG MEETING REPORTS

Presentation of PIRG/RASG meeting reports:

a) The report summary is a way for the Secretariat to present the reports and support the analysis of the contents as well as any additional information relevant to the ANC review.

b)   Regional Offices and PIRG/RASG Chairpersons will be invited to provide a short (15 minute[2]) summary to the ANC Working Group (SRP meeting) via remote participation. Typical content would include a verbal summary and a Regional Office view of the region's 'State of Affairs' in terms of Safety and Air Navigation in the context of the PIRG and RASG reports.

Discussion and analysis:

1.   The ANC studies the reports in a SRP meeting. If the regional offices and /or PIRG/RASG Chairpersons can participate, the meeting will be held using the remote conferencing facility installed in the ANC Chamber. If remote participation is not feasible, HQ Secretariat will present the summary.

2.   Particular attention should be given by the SRP to items where it is suggested by the report summary that ICAO HQ should take action and where significant implementation or planning difficulties are highlighted.[3]

3.   Regional Offices will be offered the opportunity to discuss (via remote participation) the above and the main outcomes of the PIRG/RASG meetings with the SRP.   Remote participation meetings will not be interpreted and may be held at a time that best suits all participants.

4.   **Amendments to Air Navigation Work Programme (ANWP):** Based on suggestions from the meeting reports (ref summary table) and the discussion, the SRP will consider whether any action should be proposed (e.g. Amendments to the ANWP or Job Cards). The SRP Chair will note those in the SRP report.

5.   **ANC meeting:** A subsequent ANC meeting will include an agenda item to review the SRP report without going through the PIRG/RASG meeting report in detail. This will ensure that any actions are contained in the ANC minutes (such as changes to the AN-WP, job-cards, information to Council, feedback to PIRG/RASG, information to other PIRG/RASGs). Progressing efforts and developments by the PIRGs/RASGs should also be noted in the minutes. Feedback to the Regions will be via the discussion in the SRP, the SRP report and the ANC minutes, made available to the Regional Office by the ANB.

5. **ANC Annual report:** On an annual basis, the ANC will review all SRP reports pertaining to PIRG/RASG meeting reports and provide a consolidated report to Council. The meeting report summary will be referenced in preparing the consolidated report. Significant issues common to multiple regions will be highlighted.

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[2] The summary should not exceed 15 minutes per meeting, or 30 minutes for a combined PIRG/RASG summary.

[3] If ANC members wish to discuss an issue which is not highlighted in the summary, a brief 'heads-up' would be appreciated by the Secretariat to ensure a meaningful response.