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(NACC/WG/RAP/02)**

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Agenda Item 2: Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP), seventh edition

UNIVERSAL SAFETY OVERSIGHT AUDIT PROGRAMME (USOAP)

(Presented by the Secretariat)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
This Working Paper provides information on the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) and proposes actions to support the implementation required for Air Navigation Services (ANS).	
Action:	Suggested Actions are included in Section 5.
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategic Objective 1 – Safety• Strategic Objective 2 – Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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>• Doc 9735 - <i>Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme Continuous Monitoring Manual</i>• Resolution A41-6: ICAO global planning for safety and air navigation

1. Introduction

1.1 The Contracting States to the Convention on International Civil Aviation have the commitment to regulate and supervise all aeronautical activities carried out under their responsibility, to ensure the safe, efficient and regular operation of air transport services.

1.2 Article 12 of the Convention requires Contracting States to implement and apply the Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) contained in the Annexes to the Convention. Each contracting State undertakes to keep its own regulations in these respects uniform, to the greatest possible extent, with those established from time to time under the Convention.

1.3 Article 37 of the Chicago Convention specifies, "*Each contracting State undertakes to collaborate in securing the highest practicable degree of uniformity in regulations, standards, procedures, and organization in relation to aircraft, personnel, airways and auxiliary services in all matters in which such uniformity will facilitate and improve air navigation*". This uniformity is achieved by integrating the SARPs adopted and amended by ICAO into the national legal framework and practices of Contracting States and applying them in a timely manner for the safety, regularity and efficiency of air navigation worldwide.

1.4 Safety oversight is a function performed by a State to ensure that individuals and organizations performing an aviation activity comply with safety-related national laws and regulations.

2. Background of the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP)

2.1 The USOAP has its origin in Resolution A29-13 (Improving Safety Oversight) adopted in 1992 by the 29th Session of the ICAO Assembly, motivated by the concern that some of the Contracting States could experience difficulties to fulfil their safety oversight obligations. The first stage of the Programme was launched in 1996 on a voluntary basis.

2.2 The initial success of the Programme led the 32nd Session of the ICAO Assembly (Resolution A32-11), held in 1998, to endorse an improved programme and provide the necessary funding, thus establishing the USOAP which comprises periodic, mandatory audits, systematic and harmonized, to be carried out by ICAO, including a systematic monitoring and reporting mechanism on the application of safety-related Standards and Recommended Practices, related procedures, guidance material and practices.

2.3 The USOAP was launched in January 1999, replacing the voluntary programme. At the 35th Session of the Assembly, held in 2005, Resolution A35-6 requested that the USOAP be expanded to include safety-related provisions contained in all Annexes to the Convention.

2.4 Through the USOAP, ICAO conducts audits to determine the safety oversight capabilities of Member States and the status of their implementation of all safety-relevant ICAO standards and recommended practices and procedures associates.

3. Establishment of the 8 critical elements of the safety oversight system

3.1 A State safety oversight (SSO) system is considered effective and sustainable to the extent that it can integrate a set of characteristics that identify the State's capacity to adequately discharge its responsibilities in relation to the safety of aviation activities that take place under its authority.

3.2 In order to tangibly evaluate this concept, a set of critical elements (CE) that characterize an effective and sustainable SSO were identified. The CEs are essentially the safety defence tools of an SSO system needed for the effective and sustainable implementation of a safety-related policy and associated procedures. The effective application of the latter is an indication of a State's capacity for safety oversight.

3.3 The eight CEs of an SSO system are interconnected and complement each other. CE-1 to CE-5 are presented as the “Establishment CEs”, while CE-6 to CE-8 are the “Implementation CEs”. They are as follows:

- The “Establishment CEs”:
 - CE-1 — Primary aviation legislation;
 - CE-2 — Specific operating regulations;
 - CE-3 — State system and functions;
 - CE-4 — Qualified technical personnel ;
 - CE-5 — Technical guidance, tools and provision of safety-critical information;
- The “Implementation CEs”:
 - CE-6 — Licensing, certification, authorization and approval obligations;
 - CE-7 — Surveillance obligations; and
 - CE-8 — Resolution of safety issues.

3.4 In the context of the USOAP the following eight audit areas have been identified:

- 1) primary aviation legislation and civil aviation regulations (LEG);
- 2) civil aviation organization (ORG);
- 3) personnel licensing and training (PEL);
- 4) aircraft operations (OPS);
- 5) airworthiness of aircraft (AIR);
- 6) aircraft accident and incident investigation (AIG);
- 7) air navigation services (ANS); and
- 8) aerodromes and ground aids (AGA).

3.5 Protocol Questions (PQs) are the primary tool for assessing the level of effective implementation of a State’s safety oversight system. They are based on ICAO SARPs, PANS, ICAO documents, other guidance material and taking into consideration the CEs. PQs are organized by audit areas.

3.6 Effective implementation (EI) is a measure of the State’s safety oversight capability. A higher EI indicates that a State’s safety oversight system has a greater degree of compliance with ICAO provisions.

3.7 The EI is calculated for any group of applicable PQs based on the following formulae:

$$\text{EI (\%)} = \frac{\text{number of satisfactory PQs}}{\text{total number of applicable PQs}} \times 100$$

3.8 The EI can thus be calculated for each CE, each audit area and as an overall value.

3.9 The following activities may be performed under USOAP CMA to identify deficiencies in a State and to assess the resolution of findings and SSCs, if applicable:

- a) USOAP CMA audit;
- b) safety audit;
- c) ICVM; and
- d) off-site validation activity.

3.10 The objective of a USOAP Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA) audit is to determine a State's capability for safety oversight by assessing the effective implementation of the CEs of the safety oversight system and the status of the State's implementation of all safety-related ICAO SARPs associated procedures, guidance material and best safety practices. Audits are tailored to the complexity of the State's civil aviation system.

3.11 The objective of an ICAO Coordinated Validation Mission (ICVM) is to assess and validate Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) (or mitigating measures for State Safety Concerns (SSCs)) implemented by a State to address previously identified findings, including SSCs. During an ICVM, the ICAO team of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) may also provide on-site guidance to the State on resolving findings and deficiencies.

3.12 The objective of an off-site validation activity is to assess and validate CAPs implemented by a State to address certain PQ findings without conducting an on-site activity, i.e. an audit or ICVM. CAPs typically addressing PQ findings associated with CEs 1 to 5 (collectively known as "establishment" CEs) are best suited for an off-site validation activity, if the State submits evidence of their full implementation. This activity is conducted at ICAO Headquarters.

4. Conclusions

4.1 The USOAP receives significant attention from the States, in their interest to demonstrate their compliance with the commitments assumed through the Convention.

4.2 Although the USOAP focuses on evaluating the State's capacity with respect to safety oversight, the level of air navigation implementation plays a fundamental role in the result obtained by the State, mainly for the air navigation PQs related with CE 6.

5. Suggested actions

5.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Promote the involvement of the NACC/WG task forces with the PQs related to air navigation implementation;
- b) Recommend actions for better ANS coordination between the ANS implementing body and the USOAP contact points; and,
- c) Highlight the need to report to the USOAP when implementing or improving ANS.