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International Civil Aviation Organization  
African Flight Procedure Programme

**10th Meeting of the African Flight Procedure Programme Steering Committee**  
(Dakar, Senegal, 19 to 21 November 2024)

**Agenda Item 5: Presentation of working papers and information papers by stakeholders**

**Working Paper 5.1: PANS-OPS Safety Oversight Training**

(Presented by Namibia)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This working paper highlights the critical issue of insufficient PANS-OPS (Procedures for Air Navigation Services – Aircraft Operations) Oversight Training in the African-Indian Ocean (AFI) Region. PANS-OPS provides essential criteria for the design of instrument flight procedures, which are vital for ensuring safe navigation in various operational conditions. However, the lack of specialized training for regulatory personnel responsible for overseeing PANS-OPS compliance poses a significant risk to airspace safety and the ability of AFI States to meet international standards.

Key challenges contributing to this gap include the limited availability of training programs, high costs, and a lack of institutional capacity within civil aviation authorities. Without comprehensive training, there is an increased risk of non-compliance with ICAO standards, poorly designed flight procedures, and potential conflicts with terrain or obstacles, particularly in complex environments.

This paper recommends a collaborative approach to develop a regionally coordinated PANS-OPS Oversight Training Program, supported by capacity building, financial assistance, and the establishment of specialized training centers. Addressing this gap is essential for enhancing oversight, improving compliance with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), and fostering sustainable air transport development in the AFI Region.

The African Flight Procedure Programme (AFPP) Steering Committee is urged to consider these recommendations and initiate steps to strengthen PANS-OPS oversight capabilities across the Region.

**Action by the meeting is indicated in section 3.**

**REFERENCES**

Annex 19 – Safety Management  
Annex 11 – Air Traffic Services  
ICAO-Doc 8168 - Procedures for Air Navigation Services – Aircraft Operations (PANS-OPS)  
ICAO Doc 9734 -Safety Oversight Manual  
ICAO Doc 9734- Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP).  
AFPP- Regional Strategy for the Implementation of PBN (Performance-Based Navigation) in the AFI Region



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### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The African Indian Ocean (AFI) Region has made significant strides in enhancing aviation safety through various initiatives such as the establishment of the AFPP which performed a commendable job in ensuring that the AFI region have the requisite capacity in the field of the PANS-OPS (Procedure for Air Navigation Services – Aircraft Operations). PANS-OPS includes (but is not limited to) flight procedure design and operation, airspace design and operations as well as all related domains such as Quality assurance for flight procedures, their regulatory or operational approval, etc. However, one critical gap remains unaddressed: the lack of PANS-OPS Oversight Training. As PANS-OPS is integral to flight safety, particularly in instrument flight procedures (IFP) design and implementation, the absence of adequate training poses serious risks to airspace safety and regulatory compliance across the region.
- 1.2 This paper seeks to initiate discussion on addressing the deficiency in PANS-OPS Oversight Training to bolster the region’s capacity to meet international standards and enhance flight safety.

### 2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1 PANS-OPS provides criteria for the design of instrument flight procedures that ensure safe separation between aircraft and terrain or obstacles under various operational conditions. It plays a crucial role in enhancing air navigation safety, particularly in complex terrain and adverse weather conditions. However, effective oversight of PANS-OPS activities requires specialized training for regulatory authorities to assess compliance and safety.
- 2.2 Despite many States and Organizations have built expertise in the field of Instrument Flight Procedure (IFP) design as a result of the efforts made by AFPP with the support of the active members, the host administration and the donors, the number of qualified PANS-OPS inspectors is still low in the AFI region, this is due to the following and not limited to:
- Limited availability of specialized training programs;
  - High cost of existing training options;
  - Lack of institutional capacity in regulatory authorities.
- 2.3 The absence of comprehensive training for PANS-OPS oversight creates significant operational and safety risks, including:
- Non-compliance with ICAO SARPs, particularly Annex 11 and Doc 8168.
  - Increased likelihood of inadequate flight procedure design.
  - Increase in the number of SSC issued during ICAO USOAP Audit in the region.
- 2.4 Although ICAO has established requirements for PANS-OPS procedures oversight, many civil aviation authorities in the AFI region lack the resources or access to training needed to fulfil these responsibilities. Existing regional training facilities do not currently offer sufficient courses focused on PANS-OPS oversight.
- 2.5 To mitigate the current gaps, it is critical to develop regional training programs tailored to the specific needs of AFI States. These programs should cover:



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- Fundamentals of PANS-OPS design and compliance.
- Oversight methodologies.
- Flight procedure validation.
- Continuous competency development for pansops inspectors.

### ***RECOMMENDATIONS***

- 2.6 To address the challenges outlined above, the following actions are proposed for consideration by the AFPP Steering Committee:
- Collaborate with ICAO, AFPP, and other stakeholders to establish a regionally coordinated training framework focusing on PANS-OPS oversight.
  - Provide technical assistance and funding mechanisms to support the training and certification of PANS-OPS oversight personnel in AFI States and enhance capacity building for Civil Aviation Authorities.
  - Designate regional Training centers to offer specialized courses on PANS-OPS oversight, in partnership with AFPP.
  - Explore funding models that allow for cost-sharing among member states to reduce the financial burden of training for smaller or resource-constrained states.
  - Implement a system for tracking progress in the training and certification of PANS-OPS oversight personnel across the region.

### ***CONCLUSION***

- 2.7 The lack of PANS-OPS Oversight Training in the AFI Region presents a serious challenge to ensuring the safety and efficiency of air navigation services. By addressing this gap, AFI States can significantly enhance their compliance with ICAO standards, improve the safety of their airspace, and promote the development of sustainable air transport in the region.

### **3. ACTION BY THE MEETING**

- 3.1 The Steering Committee is invited to:
- a) Take note of the information provided in this working paper; and
  - b) Explore ways for the conduct of a PANS-OPS flight procedure Oversight Training.

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