

# Evolving ICAO's Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme: The Continuous Monitoring Approach

The ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) was launched on 1 January 1999, pursuant to a resolution by the ICAO Assembly. The objective of the USOAP is to promote global aviation safety by regularly auditing ICAO Member States to determine their capability for

effective safety oversight. The USOAP is managed by the Continuous Monitoring and Oversight Section of the Air Navigation Bureau.

The current cycle of USOAP Comprehensive Systems Approach (CSA) audits, which assess the level

of effective implementation by States of the critical elements of a safety oversight system, began in 2005 and will be completed at the end of 2010. ICAO is now looking ahead to the implementation of a USOAP Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA) which was adopted by the Council of ICAO as a more proactive approach which will incorporate the analysis of safety risk factors.

The USOAP will embark on two-year transition period to the CMA beginning in 2011, with the launch of this new approach now planned for 2013.

## CMA Highlights

The CMA is designed to be long-term, cost-effective, flexible and sustainable, generating valuable data and contributing to the improvement of global aviation safety. This will be accomplished by using a harmonized and consistent approach to monitoring the safety oversight capabilities of Member States on an ongoing basis. The CMA will identify safety deficiencies, assess associated safety risks, develop assistance strategies, and enable the prioritization of assistance.

CSA audits will continue to be carried out by ICAO and will be tailored to the level and complexity of aviation activities in the State and could be either full scale or of limited scope additional activities are envisaged; which will include, but not limited to, safety audits (CSA audits carried out at the request of States and on a cost recovery basis) and ICAO Coordinated Validation Missions (ICVMs).

Note: ICVM's are missions carried out with a view to validate the status of

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#### CMA ORIGINS: ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION A36-4

At the 36<sup>th</sup> ICAO Assembly, Assembly Resolution A36-4 called on the Secretariat to develop a new methodology to be considered following the end of the CSA cycle of audits in 2010. A36-4 provided the Secretariat with its marching orders and set it on a course to develop the new CMA methodology that USOAP will begin transitioning to on 1 Jan 2011. The Resolution's objectives for the ICAO Secretariat included that it should:

- Consider options for the evolution of USOAP beyond 2010 based on the concept of continuous monitoring.
- Incorporate the analysis of safety risk factors and apply them on a universal basis in order to assess, in an ongoing manner, States' oversight capability.

This new methodology was required in order to consider the concept of continuous monitoring while also covering the core elements of Annexes 1, 6, 8, 11, 13 and 14. In addition, it was specified that the new methodology should incorporate a safety risk-based approach while maintaining the core USOAP principles, such as universality.

compliance and effective implementation of the latest corrective action plan submitted by States on findings/recommendations emanating from an ICAO USAOP CSA audits.

States will also be required provide ICAO with certain information in order to evaluate their capacity for safety oversight. This information will include updates to corrective action plans

prepared following CSA cycle audits and a completed State Aviation Activity Questionnaire (SAAQ).

Prior to the launch of the CMA, States will also be responsible for developing a plan for the completion of CMA protocol questions (PQs) within a specific time frame. Once their plan is developed, States will need to adhere to their established timelines for completing the PQs using an interactive on-line framework. This framework, combined with a centralized database, will allow ICAO to manage information received on an ongoing basis.

ICAO has begun the process of developing the SAAQ and PQs that will be used under the CMA. These will be based on the questionnaires developed for the CSA audit cycle and will incorporate lessons learned. During this development process, collaboration with States, international organizations and other stakeholders in international civil aviation will be very valuable.

The CMA will provide benefits to both States and to other stakeholders in international civil aviation. These include a continuous monitoring process rather than one-time "snapshot" assessments of safety oversight systems, as well as collective sharing of safety data and the ability to identify safety risks. ICAO is confident that the CMA will go a long way towards ensuring the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation, while also providing adaptability to meet future challenges. ■

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