The USOAP Evolved

Realizing the Promise of the Continuous Monitoring Approach

For well over a decade, ICAO has performed safety oversight audits within the framework of the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP). These audits have enabled ICAO to evaluate the safety oversight capabilities of its Member States and achieve a more comprehensive understanding of this crucial component to air transport's continued growth and development.

As of the 36th ICAO Assembly in 2007, the USOAP was already in the third year of a six-year cycle of audits under the comprehensive systems approach (CSA). Almost half of all ICAO Member States had been audited and the audit results were presented by the ICAO Secretariat to the Assembly.

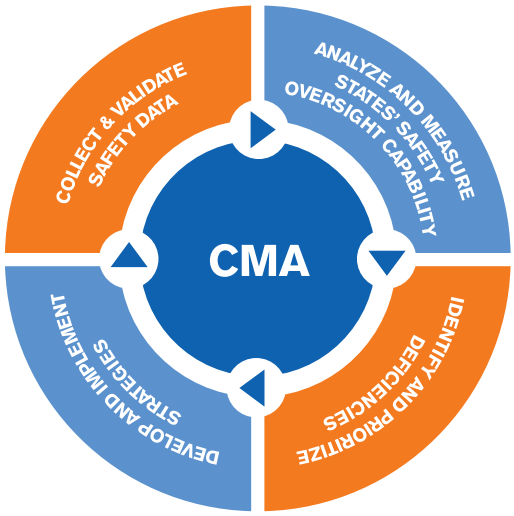
The Assembly was extremely pleased with the success of the USOAP but recognized that a six year audit cycle was too long. Delegates stressed that there was a need for ICAO to monitor States on a more frequent basis.

The evolution of the USOAP to a continuous monitoring approach (CMA) provides an ideal solution to collecting more regular information regarding the level of safety oversight provided by ICAO Member States. Under this new approach, cyclical audits will be replaced by an ongoing process of gathering safety information. This will allow stakeholders in international civil aviation to base their decisions on the latest information available.

The introduction of the CMA will require ICAO staff, Member States, and other stakeholders to be trained and familiarized with new reporting tools. These tools, which include the Audit Protocols together with the State Aviation Activity Questionnaire (SAAQ), will enable CMA activities to be gradually implemented across all levels.

This gradual implementation will take place over the course of a carefully planned transition period which has been tentatively set to last two years.

Figure 1: A typical CMA data-cycle



CMA Methodology

Under CMA, the objective of the USOAP is to promote global aviation safety through continuous monitoring of the Member States' safety oversight capabilities. The CMA enables ICAO to collect vast amounts of safety information, which is provided primarily by States. Safety information is also gathered from relevant external stakeholders, as well as through audits and other USOAP-CMA activities. Using the CMA, ICAO will be able to enhance States' safety oversight and safety management capabilities by:

- Identifying safety deficiencies.
- Assessing associated safety risks.
- Developing strategies for CMA activities and assistance.
- Prioritizing assistance.

Since CMA relies on multiple inputs, many of which may be received simultaneously, it is important when examining this new approach to look first at the big picture before breaking it down into component steps.

The cycle chart seen in Figure 1 *(left)* outlines the process of collecting and analyzing data under the CMA and displays how this information is then used to prioritize strategies.

While scheduled CMA activities will provide much important data and information, a vast amount of additional safety data will be collected and provided to the USOAP under the CMA by three types of stakeholders.

USOAP

www.icao.int/cma

Continuous Monitoring Approach

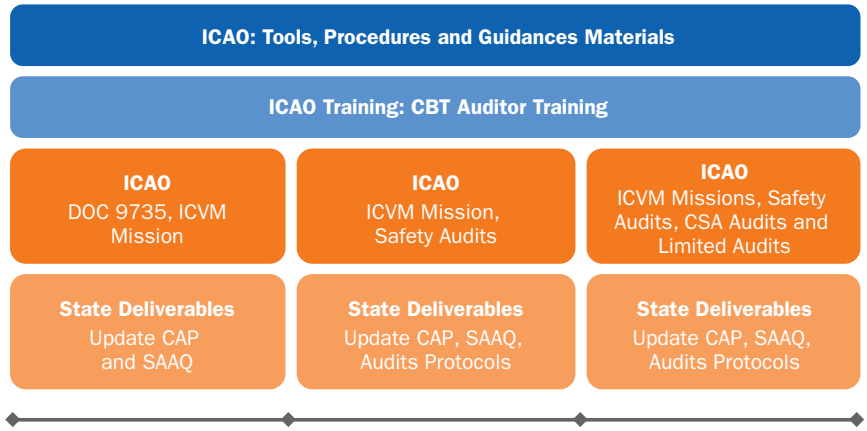
Promoting global aviation safety

by continuously monitoring and updating the safety oversight capabilities of all ICAO Member States.

USOAP CMA

Continuous Monitoring Approach

Figure 2: CMA Implementation/Transition Schedule



States

States are the principal source of safety information, which is collected when they complete and submit their State Aviation Activity Questionnaire (SAAQ), Electronic Filing of Differences (EFODs), USOAP protocols, and updated Corrective Action Plans (CAPs). In addition, State Safety Programmes (SSPs) support the development of proactive activities that provide sources of safety information that may be used within the CMA. As SSPs evolve over time, they will be capable of providing an increasing flow of safety data. This data will be used to enhance the CMA's overall value and effectiveness.

Internal Stakeholders

ICAO's Technical Co-operation Bureau, Regional Offices and other ICAO Bureaux are significant sources of safety-related information, providing data to the CMA that is stored in the ICAO database. Once this data has been collected it can also be used to generate integrated safety analyses.

External Stakeholders

External stakeholders include, but are not limited to, international organizations such as EASA, EUROCONTROL, the European Commission, and IATA. These organizations currently operate their own audit programmes, inspections and/or standardization visits that can provide ICAO with useful additional information. Through expanded agreements with such organizations, shared information can be used to help validate data currently held by ICAO, potentially reducing the duplication of monitoring activities. Other external stakeholders include Regional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs), where available.

Benefits and Strategies Employed to Develop & Effectively Implement CMA

The CMA incorporates various activities, including both full and limited CSA audits, depending on the level of information provided by States.

Overall, the CMA represents the best long-term, cost-effective, resource-efficient, and sustainable approach to safety oversight monitoring. It allows for more efficient use of the resources of ICAO, its Member States and Regional organizations, as well as providing for a far more proactive approach to the management of air transport safety—one consistent with the policies of the Organization as defined under the Safety Management System (SMS) concept.

There are numerous benefits of the USOAP-CMA, including:

- Transitioning from a one-time assessment 'snap-shot' process to one which features regular reports allowing for more effective real-time analysis.
- Providing for the collective sharing of safety data by promoting and encouraging the analysis of safety information by Regional and international organizations.
- Allowing for the continuous monitoring of Member States' safety oversight capabilities and performance.
- Enabling a proactive rather than reactive identification of safety risks.
- Providing States and stakeholders with access to safety information via a real-time and interactive online system.

The development of agreements with external stakeholders, described above, as well as the implementation of CMA activities, will take place gradually during the planned CMA transition period. This process will provide both States and ICAO with sufficient time to become accustomed to working with the new approach and to conduct appropriate tests with CMA procedures and tools.

The chart reflected in Figure 2 *(above)* outlines the implementation schedule during this transition period, together with the activities that will be undertaken by both ICAO and by its Member States.

The successful and efficient implementation of the CMA depends on continuing partnerships among, as well as on communication and information sharing between, all air transport safety stakeholders.

In order to ensure the success and effectiveness of the USOAP-CMA, staff at ICAO Headquarters and Regional Offices, as well as Member States and participating international organizations, must all understand their essential roles and responsibilities and be prepared to work together to fulfill their joint responsibility to the safety of international civil aviation. ■