



**Cooperative Development of Operational Safety
and Continuing Airworthiness Programme
(Under ICAO Technical Co-operation Programme)**

COSCAP – South Asia



**19th Meeting of the Steering Committee
26th – 28th January 2010
Bangkok, Thailand**

Update on the ICAO USOAP Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This discussion paper addresses the current and forthcoming activities of the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) and COSCAP-SA support to Member Administrations..

1. Background :

- 1.1 The 35th Session of the ICAO Assembly considered the proposal of the Council for the continuation and expansion of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme as of 2005, and resolved (Assembly Resolution A35-06 refers) that the Programme be expanded to cover the safety-related provisions in all safety-related Annexes (all except Annex 9 - Facilitation and Annex 17 - Security) and also to transition to a comprehensive systems approach for the conduct of safety oversight audits.
- 1.2 The 36th Assembly indicated that USOAP has had a very positive effect on the international aviation community and has become an essential mechanism to determine the safety oversight capability of Contracting States. The importance of analyzing audit results using tools to collect and maintain current safety-related information, thereby supporting real-time monitoring of States' safety oversight capabilities, was acknowledged.
- 1.3 Council was directed to make appropriate changes to USOAP to incorporate the analysis of safety risk factors, including the corresponding guidance material, and to apply them on a universal basis, following the completion of the current audit cycle in 2010, to assess, on an on-going basis, States' compliance with their oversight obligations, and to adapt the audit planning and scope accordingly. The Assembly also directed the Council to examine the feasibility, among the various options that could be considered, of a new approach based on the concept of continuous monitoring, to be implemented at the end of the current audit cycle in 2010. In so doing, the Council shall continue to maintain as core elements the key safety provisions contained in Annex 1 – Personnel Licensing, Annex 6 – Operation of Aircraft, Annex 8 – Airworthiness of Aircraft, Annex 11 – Air Traffic Services, Annex 13 – Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation, and Annex 14 – Aerodromes.

- 1.4 While audit methodologies previously implemented since the inception of the USOAP have proven to be effective, it is envisaged that maintaining the same type of regular and mandatory audits in the future may not be the most cost-effective approach for the Organization. In this respect, the proposed Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA) seems to offer enhanced flexibility in implementing audit methodologies (several types of audits and/or interventions), while also providing for the effective utilisation of the combined resources of ICAO HQ, ROs, Contracting States and regional safety organizations. This option would allow for the application of a continuous, sustainable and cost-effective monitoring system going forward.
- 1.5 In order to address the concerns expressed by several Representatives, the President of the Council offered some suggestions in accordance with which the Council directed the Secretary General to:
- a) begin to develop the methodology and tools required to implement a CMA, including the necessary detailed guidance to States;
 - b) conduct targeted ICAO Coordinated Validation Missions (essentially follow-ups) during the transition phase. In addition, other intervention activities that would normally be found under a CMA would be phased in gradually, with pilot projects conducted in select States;
 - c) inform Contracting States of the decision of the Council regarding CMA and provide them with regular updates through Electronic Bulletins, to ensure that they are both well informed and involved in the CMA process, as recommended in the ANC report; and
 - d) provide a detailed transition plan leading to the introduction of a CMA, including timelines, as part of its report to the Council during the 189th Session. The Secretary General would also propose to the Council, for its consideration, a draft Assembly Resolution to be presented to the next ordinary session in 2010 as directed in Assembly Resolution A36-4.

2. Discussion :

- 2.1 Four of the COSCAP-SA Member Administrations - Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal have been audited under the comprehensive systems approach. Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka will be audited in 2010.
- 2.2 During missions to States COSCAP-SA has provided support related to pre-audit preparations, implementation of corrective action plans. While support to States/Administrations related to USOAP preparations or corrective action plan implementation is now a large part of the COSCAP-SA programme, it should be recognized that there is a limit to the direct support that can be provided to Member Administrations.
- 2.3 The application of a Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA) to the safety oversight process is consistent with the policy of the Organization to pursue a proactive approach to safety under the safety management concept, as embodied by the State safety programme (SSP) and safety management systems (SMS). A CMA will link with both, thus providing for an integrated approach to the resolution of safety concerns. A fundamental feature of this link is that it will allow ICAO and States to develop and maintain an on-going, updated

picture of the safety situation in States as opposed to the snapshot provided by conventional auditing.

- 2.4 A CMA would require the establishment of a centralized database to properly manage information received from different sources on an ongoing basis. Under this approach, the USOAP would also provide enhanced flexibility by implementing tailored audits and would be capable of identifying when other types of intervention, such as operational or technical assistance, are required.
- 2.5 Continuous feedback from the States would be required under the CMA in order to determine when either full-scale or limited monitoring activities are required. Such activities would include both targeted and full-scale audits of a State's aviation safety oversight capability.
- 2.6 On a related matter, the development work for the initial phase of the Electronic Filing Of Differences (EFOD) system has now been completed and will be available to States as an electronic alternative to notify differences to Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) after the current cycle of Annex amendments has been entered into the database which will be completed by August 2009. States will have access to a tool that facilitates a streamlined, uniform approach to notifying differences and that allows the Organization to notify all other States of differences to SARPs and which produces the Supplements to Annexes in an expedited manner.
- 2.7 States will be presented with a web-based user interface where they can access a SARP and indicate the difference level, State reference (i.e. regulation) and any comments on the difference as identified by the State. Comments included with filed differences will appear as entered and not translated. Since the EFOD system is based on the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme's (USOAP) Compliance Checklist, all data previously entered in the Compliance Checklist in the context of USOAP audits may be imported to the new system if the State concerned formally confirms that such specific submissions are to be further considered as official notification of differences under Article 38 of the Chicago Convention.

3. **Recommendations:**

- 3.1 COSCAP-SA programme to continue to provide regular updates to Member Administrations on developments concerning the ICAO USOAP programme.
- 3.2 COSCAP-SA Member Administrations encouraged to utilize COSCAP-SA to provide support for their preparations for the USOAP audit as required.
- 3.3 If required and subject to availability of resources, COSCAP-SA to engage short-term experts in the areas of USOAP expansion to review implementation of SARPs and, if required, to provide support related to implementation.
- 3.4 Administrations should ensure that they maintain current the Compliance Checklist as this data can be readily imported into the EFOD data base.
- 3.5 Ongoing efforts to fully implement the Corrective Action Plan from the ICAO USOAP audits should be sustained as this will be utilized as one of the indicators under the Continuous Monitoring Approach.