



**Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and
Continuing Airworthiness Programme
COSCAP-SOUTH ASIA
International Civil Aviation Organization**



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Discussion Paper

**DP05: Update on ICAO USOAP Programme
Transition to Continuous Monitoring Approach**

1. Introduction

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

2. Background

- 2.1 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 (except Annex 9 - *Facilitation* and Annex 17 - *Security*), and also to transition to a *comprehensive systems approach* (CSA) for the conduct of safety oversight audits.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 Assembly directed the Council 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; assess, on an on-going basis, States' compliance with their oversight obligations;
 - adapt the audit planning and scope accordingly; and,
 - examine the feasibility 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*.

- 2.4 While audit methodologies implemented since the inception of the USOAP have proven to be effective, maintaining the same type of regular and mandatory audits in the future will not be the most cost-effective approach for the Organization. The 36th Session of the Assembly (resolution A36-4 refers) directed the Council to examine different options for the continuation of the USOAP beyond 2010, including the feasibility of applying a new approach based on the concept of continuous monitoring. Out of several options proposed by the Secretariat on the future of the USOAP, the Council of ICAO (C-187) opted for the *Continuous Monitoring Approach* (CMA) and directed the Secretary General to begin the development of a methodology and tools including on-line framework required to implement a CMA.
- 2.5 The *Continuous Monitoring Approach* offers enhanced flexibility in implementing audit methodologies (several types of audits and/or activities), while also providing for the effective utilisation of the combined resources of ICAO headquarters, regional offices, Contracting States and regional safety organizations. This will allow for the application of a continuous, sustainable and cost-effective monitoring system.
- 2.6 The 37th Assembly adopted resolution 29/1 as presented in A37-WP/395, consolidating previous resolutions related to USOAP. Among other provisions, this directs the evolution to the CMA beginning 1 January 2011. A detailed transition plan has been prepared for the two year period from 2011 to 2012. In January 2013, implementation of the CMA will begin gradually, taking into consideration that some States may require more time in order to fulfil their obligations under the new approach.
- 2.7 The CMA concept will involve the establishment of a system to monitor the safety oversight capability of Contracting States on an ongoing basis. In applying this monitoring system, ICAO will adopt a harmonized and consistent approach to assessing the safety level of aviation activities and evaluating safety management capabilities.
- 2.8 Under the CMA, the USOAP will carry out a variety of activities including CSA audits. Other activities will include Limited CSA audits, Safety Audits and ICAO Coordinated Validation Missions (ICVMs). These activities will provide the USOAP with enhanced flexibility and enable it to tailor activities to respond to the situation and needs of each State. The CMA will also allow ICAO to identify when other types of activities, such as technical assistance, are required.

3. Discussion

- 3.1 All COSCAP-SA Member States except two have been audited under the comprehensive systems approach.
- 3.2 During missions to States COSCAP-SA is providing support related to the implementation of corrective action plans and preparation for the audit, as necessary.

- 3.3 The application of a 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.
- 3.4 A CMA will require the establishment by ICAO of a centralized database to properly manage information received from different sources on an ongoing basis.
- 3.5 Continuous feedback from the States will be required under the CMA in order to determine when either full-scale or limited monitoring activities are required. Such activities will include both targeted and full-scale audits of a State's aviation safety oversight capability.
- 3.6 In a related matter, development of the *Electronic Filing of Differences* (EFOD) system has been completed and it will soon 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. In addition to providing States a tool that facilitates a streamlined, uniform approach to notifying differences, it will allow ICAO to notify all other States of differences to SARPs, and it will also produce the Supplements to Annexes in an expedited manner.
- 3.7 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 will not be 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 will be imported to the new system in order to avoid imposing an additional task on Member States. Prior to the publication by ICAO of Supplements to the Annexes, Member States will be requested to formally confirm that the data imported from the Compliance Checklist can be considered as official notification of differences under Article 38 of the Chicago Convention. Further information regarding this process will be provided soon via an ICAO Electronic Bulletin.
- 3.8 The EFOD with SARPs up to 2009 amendments is now available, with updates to 2010 SARP amendments to be available in early 2011. Subject to approval by the 192nd Session of Council, EFOD will become the official method for the notification of differences as of October 2012.
- 3.9 To support the use of the EFOD system, the ICAO Air Navigation Commission has established the Electronic Filing of Differences Task Force (EFTF) to assist the Secretariat develop draft policies for governing EFOD. The task force will also assist in conducting a comprehensive study on the difficulties encountered by States, with a view to improving existing guidelines and procedures. It is anticipated that the work of the EFTF will be completed by December 2012 (reference State Letter AN 1/1-IND/11/2).

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 COSCAP-SA programme to continue to provide regular updates to Member States on developments concerning the ICAO USOAP programme.
- 4.2 COSCAP-SA Member States are encouraged to utilize COSCAP-SA to provide support for follow-up to the USOAP audit as required. 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.
- 4.3 Member States should ensure that they keep the Compliance Checklist current as this data can be readily imported into the EFOD database.
- 4.4 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.

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