

**54th CONFERENCE OF
DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONS**

*Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
07 — 11 August 2017*

**AGENDA ITEM 3: AVIATION SAFETY AND
AIR NAVIGATION**

**INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE SAFE AND EFFICIENT GROUND
HANDLING OPERATIONS**

(Presented by International Air Transport Association)

SUMMARY

IATA, in collaboration with the ground handling industry and other stakeholders, has taken the initiative to develop unifying industry standards and systems that enhance the safety and increase the efficiency of ground handling operations. The initiative is also designed to achieve cost benefits through the sharing of information that eliminates the need to duplicate the audit of ground handling operations by airlines.

The IATA Integrated Solution for Ground Operations establishes a system for the development and continuous improvement of industry provisions and oversight complementary to global regulations.

INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE SAFE AND EFFICIENT GROUND HANDLING OPERATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Ground handling¹ operations are a source of significant personnel safety and aircraft/equipment damage concerns. The complexity of ground handling operations has increased with widespread airport development and traffic growth, corresponding to larger numbers and size of aircraft. Compounding the issue is the demand to achieve minimized turnaround and stand occupancy times, which also increases the concentration of simultaneous ground handling operations and more ground support equipment. Maintaining and improving ground operational safety is challenging in this complex environment yet there are few global regulatory provisions in place.

1.2 A shortage of global regulatory provisions does not necessarily mean that there is a lack of oversight of ground handling operations. At the request of its members, IATA brought together the industry stakeholders (airlines, ground service providers, regulators, airports, cargo handlers and others) and instigated a global approach that implements and continuously improves unified industry standards for the conduct and oversight of ground handling operations. IATA's approach is one of an '**Integrated Solution for Ground Operations**', which is a coordinated effort to combine IATA's ground handling initiatives into a set of tools that ensure ground handling operations at airports are conducted in a safe, orderly and efficient manner, thereby minimizing the risk to both people and equipment.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The IATA Integrated Solution for Ground Operations includes the following activities:

IATA Safety Audit for Ground Operations (ISAGO) - the global standard for auditing and oversight of ground service providers. Based on conformity with industry-accepted standards, it has a dual aim of continuously improving safety and security in ground operations and reducing the burden and cost of airline oversight by audit sharing.

IATA Airport Handling Manual (AHM) - is the only industry approved standard for safe and efficient airport operations and also the reference for the latest ground handling policies and safety guidelines.

IATA Ground Operations Manual (IGOM) - complementary to the AHM, defines ground handling procedures for airlines and ground service providers to ensure ground operations activities are safely, efficiently, and consistently accomplished.

IATA Global Aviation Data Management (GADM) - Ground Damage Database (GDDDB) - provides industry with analysis of reports of ground damage received from both airlines and ground service providers, and establishes a baseline for ground damage performance, identifies negative trends and contributing factors, paving the way for risk mitigation and continuous safety improvements.

2.2 The combination of the aforementioned activities (illustrated in figure 1) provides tangible benefits and continuous safety improvements through, the standardization of safety standards and procedures for ground operations and data driven improvements of safety performance and measurement of corrective actions. Efficiency benefits are also achieved through reduced audit redundancy, reduced work complexity, and consistent aircraft turnaround times.

¹ In the context of this Discussion Paper, the term "ground handling" is used as defined in ICAO Annex 6 as 'services necessary for an aircraft's arrival at, and departure from, an airport, other than air traffic services'.

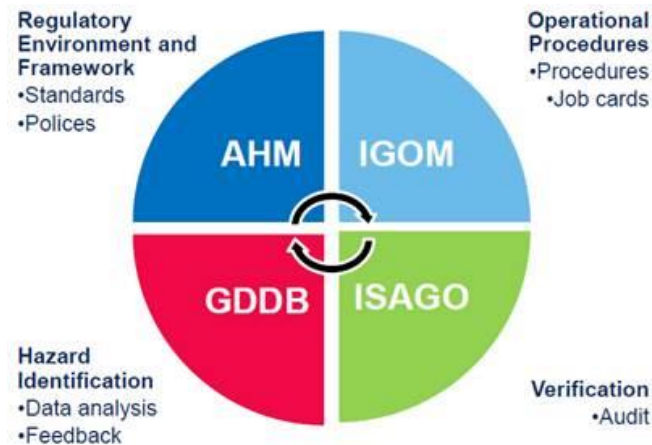


Figure 1 - the IATA Integrated Solution for Ground Operations

2.3 ISAGO is complementary to the IATA Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) program for which registration by air operators is mandatory for IATA membership. ISAGO registration provides a ground service provider with IOSA-compliant organizational and management systems and standardized procedures. Since its inception in 2008, over 1300 ISAGO audits have been performed. As of July, 2017 the [ISAGO Registry](#) counts 233 Providers registered for 462 stations. In 2015 IATA embarked upon a ‘root and branch’ review of the audit program, which will culminate in 2017 with the introduction of improvements, focussed on providing higher quality and more efficient audits, to provide greater assurance of meeting the objectives.

2.4 It is important to recognize that GSPs and stations that are ISAGO registered demonstrate a better safety performance (any ground damage that occurred was of less severity) and better safety reporting (indicating an improved safety culture) compared to GSPs or stations that are not ISAGO registered. This information comes from analysis conducted by IATA annually since 2015 using data in the IATA Ground Damage Database. The annual analysis is conducted as part of the continuous ISAGO performance measurement program, enhanced in the new ISAGO program.

2.5 Furthermore, the ISAGO Standards Manual (GOSM) incorporates the phased implementation (over the next two years) of safety management systems (SMS) by ground handling service providers, which is an industry first, to complement the SMS already being implemented by other aviation service providers. The ISAGO SMS standards consistent with the International Civil Aviation Organization Annex 19 SMS Framework applicable to air operators and certified aerodromes. IATA tracks (and in many areas contributes) to the development of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), PANS and guidance material, such as those currently in development for ground handling service providers. A GSP that has ISAGO registration is therefore well placed to meet the SMS requirements of an air operator, aerodrome operator or State.

2.6 The ISAGO audit reports of registered ground service providers are available to regulatory bodies through their AOC holders or on request from IATA that acts as the custodian of the reports. The audit reports, used by airlines in lieu of and in support of their oversight of outsourced ground handling operations, outline the scope of the audits and the activities taken by the ground service providers to demonstrate full conformity with all applicable ground handling operational standards.

2.7 Since IATA’s Board of Governors decided to make IGOM the basis for ground handling operations in December 2014, IATA has encouraged and assisted member airlines to incorporate IGOM into their own ground operations manual. The IGOM procedures reflect the minimum standards as identified by the industry with the goal of establishing global standardization, a common minimum level of safety, and guidance for ISAGO audit. As of June 2017, 74 IATA member airlines, 116 GSPs as well as 19 non-IATA member airlines have fully adopted IGOM. To further facilitate IGOM implementation, IATA has also published it in Chinese, French and Spanish languages, adding to the English and Russian versions.

2.8 The AHM, IGOM and ISAGO are continually developed and aligned to ensure overall consistency and relevance of the policies, processes, procedures and oversight pertaining to ground handling operations. All interested stakeholders, including regulatory authorities and associated agencies and international industry representatives such as ACI, are invited to participate in the work of IATA in ground handling to assure a consistent and collaborative result. Moreover, IATA is in regular contact with prominent regulatory bodies to ensure that the regulator perspective is taken into consideration.

2.9 The support and the recognition accorded to the IATA initiatives by various industry stakeholders, including regulatory bodies, has bestowed international acceptability and credibility, contributing to a much-needed global standardization of ground handling activities. Appropriate regulatory input to the development of the initiatives is maintained and can be further expanded to ensure they are aligned. Hence, from the regulatory point of view, the Integrated Solution for Ground Operations could be endorsed as an acceptable means of compliance to requirements for air operator oversight of ground handling operations. Some airports and civil aviation authorities have acknowledged the benefits gained and have adopted the IATA initiative.

2.10 IATA's aim is to raise awareness of industry-lead solutions that ICAO and regulatory authorities may utilize for the enhancement of safety, efficiency and harmonization of ground handling operations globally.

3. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE

3.1 The Conference is invited to;

- a) Recognize the IATA Integrated Solution for Ground Operations as providing a range of tools that forms a solid basis to implement and continuously improve the policies, processes, procedures and oversight pertaining to complex ground handling operations;
- b) Endorse and urge States to recognize IGOM as a standardized procedure for ground handling operations;
- c) Endorse and urge States to recognize ISAGO as an acceptable means of compliance to requirements for air operator oversight of ground handling operations; and
- d) Urge international civil aerodromes operators to recognize ISAGO as a standardized oversight of ground handling operations.

— END —