

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

*Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
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AGENDA ITEM 6: TECHNICAL AND REGIONAL
COOPERATION

**SUSTAINING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EFFORTS IN APAC
THROUGH ICAO APAC COMBINED ACTION TEAM (CAT)
PROGRAMME**

(Presented by the International Civil Aviation Organization)

SUMMARY

The current average USOAP score for States in RASG-APAC is below the world average of 64.59% and 17 APAC States have lower EIs than the 60% EI of the GASP target. Therefore there is a continued need to sustain efforts to extend assistance to address the non-satisfactory USOAP protocol questions which will improve the EIs. APAC States needs assistance to address deficiencies in ANS, AGA and OPS, especially to mitigate the high risk associated with the regions high aviation activities and to keep accident rates down. A very successful methodology and assistance concept has been established through the ongoing ICAO APAC CAT missions. Considering the positive results and benefits achieved, there now is strong justification for the sustainment of the ICAO APAC CAT Mission programme to reaffirm ICAO's commitment to continue assistance as part of the NCLB initiative and maintain an outreach to APAC States especially the Pacific Islands. For the APAC CAT Programme to continue providing ongoing assistance and implementation support to facilitate preparation for future USOAP CMA Activity and increase the EI scores, States/Organizations/Industry are requested to contribute to ICAO's Voluntary Safety Fund (SAFE) earmarked for APAC CAT Programme.

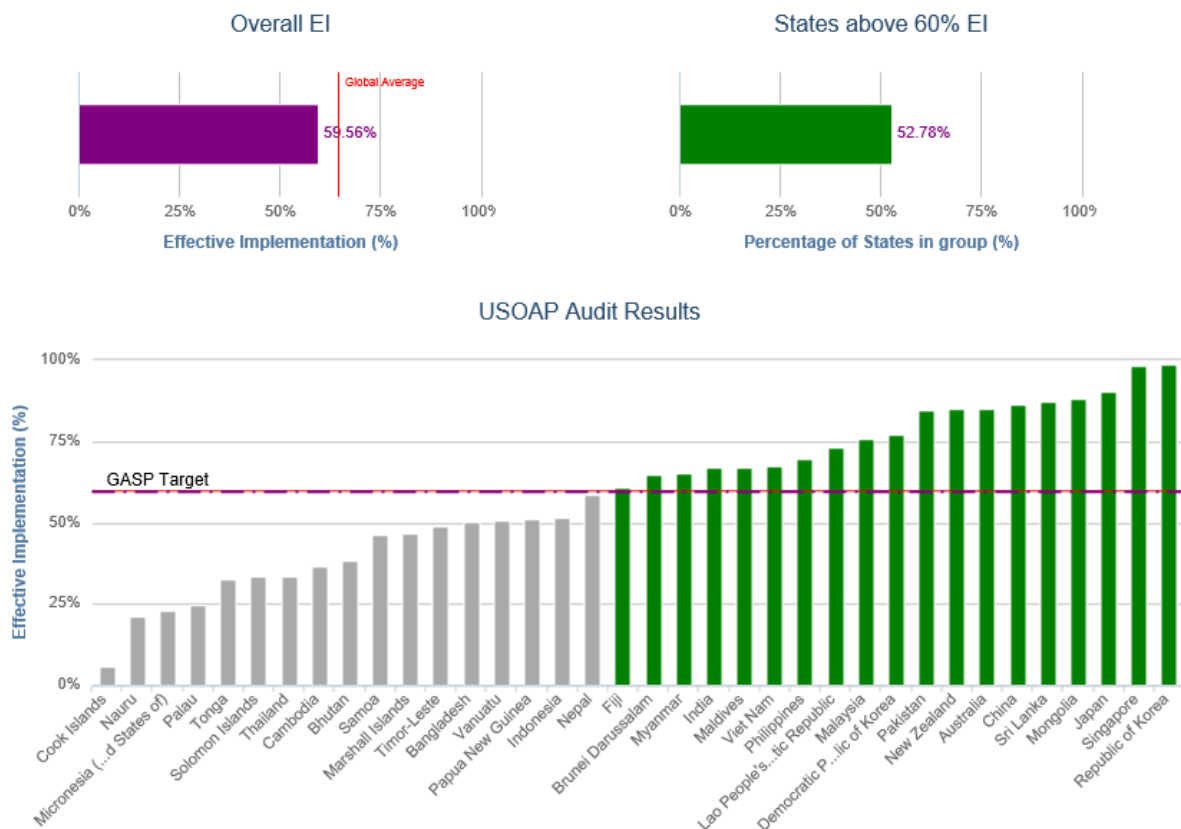
SUSTAINING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EFFORTS IN APAC THROUGH ICAO APAC COMBINED ACTION TEAM (CAT) PROGRAMME

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The current average USOAP score for States in RASG-APAC is 59.56% which is below the world average of 64.59%. Only 52.78% of the States in RASG-APAC have achieved the target of 60% EI, as suggested by the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP). 17 APAC States have lower EIs than the 60% EI of the GASP target.

1.2 The Asia Pacific Combined Action Team (CAT) assistance mission programme was devised as a No Country Left Behind outreach initiative to States in all APAC sub-regions including the Pacific Islands and was aimed at providing focused assistance from ICAO and voluntary champion States. The assistance programme conducts an assessment and gap analysis of USOAP Protocol Questions in areas with low EIs and assists to identify the most readily achievable improvement.

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2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The original objective of the APAC CAT was to visit and support APAC States with lower EIs below the global average in the USOAP Audit, in enhancing their capabilities to effectively use the ICAO CMA On Line Framework (OLF) and extending assistance to address the non-satisfactory protocol questions which will improve the EIs to above the global average EI by mid-2018.

2.2 The Regional Office experience working with low performing States indicate that after conclusion of any USOAP audit activity be it CSA or ICVM, the State authorities turn lax and close these files which are to be opened again when the next audit program is initiated probably after 5-6 years. The CAT missions encourage States to address the unsatisfactory PQs even when the audit is not planned and tries to bring the focus of States on improving their EIs. It is expected that following APAC CAT missions, States will be motivated to consistently review their PQs, progress with implementation of Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) and soon after the EIs of the States would be improved incrementally by 10-15%, subject to validation of CAPs by ICAO. These CAT missions also strengthen responsiveness between ICAO and the States, which would then definitely help improve the implementation of ICAO SARPs. Based on the feedback from the States, a second visit to the States would be planned to further strengthen the foundations made in their first visit, as well as to retain the sustainability.

2.3 The APAC CAT mission are usually a 5-day technical assistance mission with following key activities:

- Assessments and Gap Analysis
- Capacity Building
- Training - Understanding the PQs and expectations
- Workshop on use of USOAP CMA OLF and simultaneously the provision of guidance and update on the State USOAP CAPs through the OLF
- Expert advice and guidance on Implementation

2.4 One of the outputs or deliverable of the technical assistance mission is a comprehensive mission report which encompasses recommendations on each technical area elaborating on specific actions to be taken by States in order to address the deficiencies identified by the actual USOAP audit.

2.5 The APAC CAT missions are typically 4 to 6 subject matter experts, composed of Regional Officers, COSCAP CTA/PCs, voluntary State experts nominated by States as their contribution to ICAO's NCLB initiative and EASA experts. The experts are carefully selected based on their full knowledge of the USOAP PQs in their respective areas of expertise, and either they are ICAO USOAP auditors or at least they have completed the USOAP CBT program. The Regional Office is grateful for champion States/organizations such as Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Malaysia and Singapore and EASA for releasing their SMEs at no cost.

2.6 The expert team will work with counterparts/NCMC in States to identify the work process that can be improved, work to address unsatisfactory PQs and to seek a capacity building opportunity. A Regional Officer assigned to the State by the APAC Regional Office mentor programme would act as a team leader and a coordinator during the mission and also be responsible for following up with the States counterpart on the progress made after the mission.

2.7 For 2016 APAC CAT programme, 11 States was targeted out of which 3 were from Pacific Islands. It has been challenging to finalize these program as matching the availability of different experts with the convenience of the States gets complex at times especially in view of commitments of Regional Officers to service various planned regional meetings. In 2016 the APAC CAT programme missions covered – Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Solomon Islands and Tonga.

2.8 For those who are aware of the USOAP CMA audit process you will note that the methodology employed in the CAT Programme is the same. However the objective is very different. In the CAT Programme the subject matter experts do a hand holding exercise by going through the unsatisfactory questions one by one and discussing the implementation of the corrective action plan. Thus the main difference is while audit is an assessment exercise, CAT is an assistance exercise.

- 2.9 There are many direct and indirect benefits from this program.
- CAT missions helped to improve direct assistance to States by 6 times in 2016 as compared to 2015.
 - An improvement of State EIs has been achieved in some States. For example Philippines have seen an improvement of their EI after a recent ICVM activity to 69.68%, Nepal has managed to resolve its SSC,
 - There is now a less inclination by States to request postponement of their scheduled USOAP CMA audits as seen by the readiness of Indonesia and Bangladesh to readily accept forthcoming ICVMs in 2017.
 - A short update on how the recommendations of the 1st CAT Mission are being followed up by one State – PNG have updated 130 PQs against the CAPS and upload on the OLF with evidences as per the guidance during the CAT mission , submitted a revised organisation structure to the Government for approval of new technical positions, increased OLF upload activity of evidences, working on individual CCs against all Annexes and determining differences before uploading it on EFODs, completion of a Manual of Regulatory Audits , website upgraded etc.
 - Generally we have also observed an increasing use and adoption of USOAP On-Line Framework (OLF) in the APAC Region, which is essential for moving the CMA activities.

2.10 From the Regional Office perspective one of the important benefits out of these CAT missions is that a direct organic link has been established between ICAO RO and the State which helps in future coordination as well as assistance activities. Lastly this exercise also provides a deeper understanding of implementation bottlenecks in the States which helps in planning our future course of action. Mentors from the ICAO Regional Office do the follow up with the States and a second follow-up visit would be based on feedback from States.

2.11 For the 2016 CAT mission programme, the full funding came from the ICAO SAFE Fund and the initial CAT project completed all its activities, on-time and under-budget. Based on the encouraging results, the APAC Regional Office has commenced a 2017 Combined Action Team (CAT) Programme. For 2017 a budget of CAD 135,562 was requested and some CAD 46,677 was approved from the ICAO SAFE Fund and the ICAO Secretary General approved that the additional amount of CAD 88,885 required for the 2017 mission programme be funded by the ICAO regular carryover funds. For 2017, CAT Missions have already been conducted for Bangladesh, Cambodia and Indonesia. Further CAT missions are being coordinated with Papua New Guinea, Myanmar, Fiji, Maldives, Timor-Leste, and if funds allow to include Bhutan and Nepal.

3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

3.1 A very successful methodology and assistance concept has been established through the ongoing ICAO APAC CAT missions. Considering the positive results and benefits achieved, there now is strong justification for the sustainment of the ICAO APAC CAT Mission programme to reaffirm ICAO's commitment to continue assistance to our Member States as part of the NCLB initiative and maintain an outreach to States in all APAC sub-regions, especially the Pacific Islands.

3.2 APAC States needs further assistance to address deficiencies in ANS, AGA and OPS, especially considering the need to mitigate the high risk associated with the regions high aviation activities and to keep accident rates down. For selected States a follow-up CAT mission will further strengthen the foundations made in their first visit, as well as to retain the sustainability of the progress achieved.

3.3 Finally, there is a necessity to assist, encourage and support States who are candidates for future USOAP Audit activity while reinforcing the existing Regional Office organic contact and communication with States.

3.4 In conclusion while the successful methodology is there and future candidate States are available based on USOAP CMA Activity Schedule for 2018/2019 and analysis of 2016/17 CAT mission follow-ups, however there remains the two biggest challenges for the ICAO APAC Regional Office to sustain the APAC CAT Mission programme, which are :

- Sourcing the funding of the APAC CAT Programme through to 2019, and
- Encouraging champion States to volunteer/release their SME experts for CAT missions.

4. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE

4.1 The Conference is invited to:

- a) To record its appreciation to the champion States/Organizations mentioned in Para 2.5 above, who have volunteered/released their Subject Matter Experts for the APAC CAT missions;
- b) Urge States to write directly to the ICAO APAC Regional Office to provide in-kind contributions by releasing SMEs for future planned CAT missions;
- c) Encourage States who have received APAC CAT Mission assistance to consistently work on the guidance provided and implementation of the recommendations contained in the comprehensive mission reports and report the progress to the APAC Regional Office; and
- d) Urge States, Organizations and Industry to make voluntary contributions to the ICAO SAFE Fund earmarked for the ICAO APAC Combined Action Team (CAT) programme to support its continued assistance activities to States.

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