



International Civil Aviation Organization

Tel.: +1 (514) 954-8220/8221 Fax: +1 (514) 954-6376
E-mail: info@icao.int Website: www.icao.int

ICAO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PIO 10/05

ICAO COUNCIL PRESIDENT CALLS FOR INCREASED GLOBAL TRANSPARENCY IN SHARING OF AVIATION SAFETY INFORMATION

MONTREAL, 26 August 2005 – The President of the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Dr. Assad Kotaite, today issued a call to the 188 Contracting States of the Organization to focus their collective energies on eliminating remaining systemic deficiencies in the global air transport system, some of which may have contributed to five major accidents in August. Four of these accidents claimed at least 330 lives.

“The global aviation system is fundamentally safe. The year 2004 was the safest in terms of fatalities since the creation of ICAO in 1944 and the second lowest in terms of the number of accidents, yet the current month is one of the worst in history. We owe it to the citizens of the world to address this situation in a globally aggressive, coordinated and transparent manner.

“ICAO and its Contracting States recognize that it takes more than rules and standards to prevent accidents. They must be implemented and enforced. In addition, States must fulfil their responsibility to establish national safety oversight systems, which involves close and constant scrutiny of all components of a State’s aviation infrastructure. This include airlines, airports, air navigation systems, as well as aviation legislation and civil aviation administrations.

“There must also be an unobstructed flow of safety-related information by everyone involved in air transport, at every level and across every safety discipline. At the same time, airlines and regulators must put in place safety management systems that can make use of this information in order to take action before an accident occurs.

“ICAO has taken a leadership role in all of these areas.

“In 1999, the Organization created the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) to help States assess the effectiveness of their safety oversight systems, as well as the implementation of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), associated procedures, guidance material and safety-related practices. Summary reports of audited States were given to all other States for them to judge for themselves the level of safety of any Member State and to take the action they felt necessary.

“Beginning this year, USOAP is being expanded using an overall systems approach that will help States develop stronger internal processes to respond to safety threats. Rather than summary reports, complete safety oversight audit reports will be made available to all Contracting States, including audit findings, recommendations, a State’s subsequent action plan of corrective measures, as well as the Organization’s comments on the State’s action plan. This greater transparency should encourage concerted action on the implementation of corrective measures.

“ICAO’s new *Unified strategy to resolve safety-related deficiencies* builds on this trend towards greater transparency and disclosure of information which may have an impact on the safety of international air navigation. It promotes the establishment of regional and sub-regional safety oversight organizations and partnership initiatives among States, industry, air navigation service providers, financial institutions and other stakeholders to strengthen safety oversight capabilities. The Unified strategy also reminds all States of the need for surveillance of all aircraft operations, including foreign aircraft within their territory and to take appropriate action when necessary to preserve safety.

“Last week, procedures for the application of Article 54 j of the Convention on International Civil Aviation were communicated to all Contracting States in order to deal with States having significant compliance shortcomings with respect to ICAO safety-related standards. Article 54 j stipulates that if a State fails to carry out a recommendation of the ICAO Council, the Organization can communicate the shortcomings to all other Contracting States.

“In the Fall of 2005, ICAO will consider the adoption of standards for setting up safety management systems. Guidance material and tools will be circulated among States to enable them to set up the systems in the most efficient way throughout organizations involved in air transport.

“Given the forecast for sustained growth of air transport in the coming years, it is essential that all Contracting States of ICAO cooperate in reducing the rate of accidents worldwide. Effective safety oversight systems and transparency in the greater sharing of information is how we can best achieve this objective.”

<p>A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency and regularity, as well as for aviation environmental protection. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 188 Contracting States.</p>
--

-END-