

1.3 ICAO

ICAO is funded and directed by 193 national governments to support their diplomacy and cooperation in air transport as signatory states to the Chicago Convention (1944).

Its core function is to maintain an administrative and expert bureaucracy (the ICAO Secretariat) supporting these diplomatic interactions, and to research new air transport policy and standardization innovations as directed and endorsed by governments through the ICAO Assembly, or by the ICAO Council which the assembly elects.

Industry and civil society groups, and other concerned regional and international organizations, also participate in the exploration and development of new standards at ICAO in their capacity as 'Invited Organizations'.

As new priorities are identified by these stakeholders, the ICAO secretariat convenes panels, task forces, conferences and seminars to explore their technical, political, socio-economic and other aspects. It then provides governments with the best results and advice possible as they collectively and diplomatically establish new international standards and recommended practices for civil aviation internationally.

Strategic Objectives

In its ongoing mission to support and enable a global air transport network that meets or surpasses the social and economic development and broader connectivity needs of global businesses and passengers, and acknowledging the clear need to anticipate and manage the projected doubling of global air transport capacity by 2030 without unnecessary adverse impacts on system safety, efficiency, convenience or environmental performance, ICAO has established five comprehensive Strategic Objectives:

Safety:

Enhance global civil aviation safety. This Strategic Objective is focused primarily on the State's regulatory oversight capabilities. The Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) outlines the key activities for the triennium.

Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency:

Increase the capacity and improve the efficiency of the global civil aviation system. Although functionally and organizationally interdependent with Safety, this Strategic Objective is focused primarily on upgrading the air navigation and aerodrome infrastructure and developing new procedures to optimize aviation system performance. The Global Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency Plan (Global Plan) outlines the key activities for the triennium.

Security & Facilitation:

Enhance global civil aviation security and facilitation. This Strategic Objective reflects the need for ICAO's leadership in aviation security, facilitation and related border security matters.

Economic Development of Air Transport:

Foster the development of a sound and economically-viable civil aviation system. This Strategic Objective reflects the need for ICAO's leadership in harmonizing the air transport framework focused on economic policies and supporting activities.

Environmental Protection:

Minimize the adverse environmental effects of civil aviation activities. This Strategic Objective fosters ICAO's leadership in all aviation-related environmental activities and is consistent with the ICAO and UN system environmental protection policies and practices.

ICAO Standards

The establishment and maintenance of international Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), as well as Procedures for Air Navigation (PANS), are fundamental tenets of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) and a core aspect of ICAO's mission and role.

SARPs and PANS are critical to ICAO Member States and other stakeholders, given that they provide the fundamental basis for harmonized global aviation safety and efficiency in the air and on the ground, the worldwide standardization of functional and performance requirements of air navigation facilities and services, and the orderly development of air transport.

Today, ICAO manages over 12,000 SARPs across the 19 Annexes and five PANS to the Convention, many of which are constantly evolving in concert with latest developments and innovations.

The development of SARPs and PANS follows a structured, transparent and multi-staged process – often known as the ICAO “*amendment process*” or “*standards- making process*” – involving a number of technical and non-technical bodies which are either within the Organization or closely associated with ICAO.

Typically, it takes approximately two years for an initial proposal for a new or improved Standard, Recommended Practice or procedure to be formally adopted or approved for inclusion in an Annex or a PANS. Occasionally, this timescale can be expanded or compressed depending on the nature and priority of the proposal under consideration.

