



ICAO

INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

TENTH MEETING OF DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION FOR THE AFRICA -
INDIAN OCEAN REGION (AFI-DGCA/10)*Libreville, Gabon, 15-16 July 2024***Agenda item 6: Capacity building and gender equality****Initiatives by Gabon on capacity building***(Presented by Gabon)***SUMMARY**

The purpose of this working paper is to present the initiatives undertaken by Gabon to build aviation capacity. These initiatives include the establishment of a partnership for the award of basic aviation training grants, the signing of memorandums of understanding with training schools, the establishment of a programme for access to diploma courses and training in English.

Action required: The meeting is invited to:

- a) Note the information contained in this working paper;
- b) Encourage Member States, ICAO and regional and international organisations to develop capacity building programmes for all civil aviation authority staff;
- c) Encourage Member States and partners to set up scholarships for basic training;
- d) Encourage ICAO to facilitate the signing of protocols between States and training organisations.

Reference documents:

Doc 10184 Assembly resolutions in force (as at 7 October 2022)
Aviation Professionals Study - 2022 Consultant's Report

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The report of the study on aviation professionals in Africa (Consultant's report) identified the following shortcomings, in particular:

- the lack of qualified technical personnel;
- inadequate data on the number of aviation professionals available in all areas;
- lack of information on the gap between the number of aviation professionals available and the number required; and
- gender equality, with few women employed in the aviation sector.

1.2 ICAO requires that Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs) have suitably qualified personnel to carry out safety oversight tasks and activities. This qualification includes initial training, on-the-job training, specialised and recurrent training, appropriate to maintain and enhance the competency of technical personnel to the desired level.

1.3 In his address to the nation, the President of the Transition, President of the Republic of Gabon, Head of State, announced a number of key measures, including the creation of a new national airline, the construction of a new international airport and work to extend provincial airports. These measures, which are designed to revitalise the aviation sector, require the provision of a sufficient number of qualified aviation personnel.

2. DISCUSSION

Problems/Issues

2.1 The problem of insufficient numbers of aviation professionals is a global one, and even more so in the AFI region.

2.2 ICAO audits of aviation safety and security have highlighted the lack of qualified personnel as one of the most common shortcomings.

2.3 However, since 2020, due to the negative consequences of the COVID 19 pandemic, particularly in terms of the aviation sector's economy, States, including Gabon, have been unable to ensure the effective and efficient implementation of the established technical staff training programmes and plans.

2.4 There is also the issue of staff retention capacity in the States CAA and several partners in Gabon's aviation industry are finding it difficult to attract new professionals, retain those already in post and thus promote the transfer of skills.

2.5 Indeed, the lack of recruitment, essentially due to the unavailability on the labour market of the profiles sought, prevents the maintenance of the skills transfer chain, which is highly necessary for a field as demanding as aviation.

2.6 The challenges facing aviation training in Gabon are essentially as follows:

- the absence of local schools or training centres;
- the lack of schools or training centres in the region (CEMAC);
- insufficient grants or funding for aviation training; and
- the high cost of aviation training.

2.7 It is therefore necessary to:

- encourage the granting of national scholarships for training in aviation professions;
- sign agreements and partnerships with aviation schools in Africa and around the world; and
- negotiate, within the framework of cooperation, with the embassies of partner countries, the granting of cooperation scholarships for training in aviation-related professions.

Partnership for aviation scholarships

2.8 In 2009, ICAO launched the NGAP (New Generation of Aviation Professionals) initiative with the aim of ensuring that enough qualified and competent aviation professionals are available to cope with the significant increase in air traffic in the coming years.

2.9 According to the ICAO, world air traffic is expected to double by 2032, with average annual passenger growth of 4.6%. To keep pace with this growth, the aviation sector will need to recruit 1.3 million new technicians, 125,000 air traffic controllers and more than 620,000 pilots by 2036. The current workforce is not sufficient to meet these needs due to forthcoming retirements, a lack of access to affordable training and harmonised skills in certain disciplines, a lack of awareness among young people of the types of jobs in the sector, and competition and attractiveness from other sectors.

2.10 As demonstrated by the studies carried out by the ICAO as part of the NGAP programme, developed above, the need for aviation professionals is growing all the more so as traffic forecasts for the African continent are high (need for 18 533 pilots in 2036 compared with 7 251 in 2016, 7 050 air traffic controllers in 2036 compared with 4 860 in 2016, etc.).

2.11 In order to meet the challenge of training aviation personnel in Gabon, a strategic approach aimed at strengthening the national aviation sector has been put in place through a partnership between the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and the Gabon National Scholarships Agency. This Aviation Professions Scholarship Programme, set up in accordance with government directives, has been launched to train young Gabonese in various aviation fields.

2.12 In accordance with resolution A40-25, paragraph 2, subparagraph d, and in the continuity of the partnership signed between the CAA and the Gabon National Scholarships Agency, an awareness-raising campaign on aviation professions was conducted throughout the country for 6 months.

2.13 This intensive awareness campaign covered all of Gabon's nine provinces. A number of secondary and higher education establishments were visited by a multidisciplinary caravan made up of the Gabon National Scholarships Agency, CAA and the aviation industry (ANSP, the operator responsible for implementing facilitation security, the incident and accident investigation office, airlines, airport managers, fuel suppliers and ground handling operators).

2.14 More than 3,000 young people expressed an interest in the various aviation professions at the end of this campaign. Following the needs identified by the Gabonese authorities, listed in paragraph 1.3, it is planned to make nearly 300 scholarships available to students for specialised training in the following fields:

- pilots ;
- cabin crew ;
- aircraft maintenance technicians ;
- air traffic controllers ;
- aeronautical engineers.

Memoranda of understanding with training schools

2.15 Resolution A40-25, paragraph 4, subparagraph b, invites States to establish partnerships on issues related to training and learning in the context of regional cooperation and the exchange of knowledge.

2.16 In order to meet this expectation and the vision of the highest authorities, Gabon has undertaken to seek out and sign partnerships with aeronautical training schools.

2.17 To this end, several memoranda of understanding have been signed with training establishments. The aim of these memorandums of understanding is to provide a framework for cooperation between Gabon and these training centres and to strengthen their collaboration in the areas of training and the enhancement of technical and operational skills in civil aviation.

2.18 These partnership agreements have been signed with the following establishments:

- Regional School of Air Navigation and Management- *Ecole Régionale de la Navigation Aérienne et de Management (ERNAM)* ;
- African School of Meteorology and Civil Aviation- *Ecole Africaine de la Météorologie et de l'Aviation Civile (EAMAC)* ;
- University Training and Research Institute for Air Transport- *Institut de Formation Universitaire et de Recherche du Transport Aérien (IFURTA)* ;
- Morocco Aviation Private Academy (MAPA) ;
- Ethiopian Aviation University (EAU).

2.19 On the other hand, by memorandum 030/SS/TMN/meo/ANAC/2024/DG-XD from the CAA Director General, access to short, medium and long-term training leading to a diploma was made available to technical staff.

2.20 Finally, as part of the process of continuous improvement of human resources management within CAA, an English-language training programme has been set up for all CAA staff, both technical and support staff.

3. EASURES TO BE TAKEN BY THE MEETING:

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Note the information contained in this Working Paper;
- b) Encourage Member States, ICAO and regional and international organisations to develop capacity building programmes for all Civil Aviation Authority staff;
- c) Encourage Member States and partners to set up scholarships for basic training;
- d) Encourage ICAO to facilitate the signing of protocols between States and training organisations.