



International alignment key to recovery and safety of aviation

For immediate release

Montréal, 20 October 2020 – Ensuring that States coordinate and sufficiently resource their aviation strategies will underpin both the continued safety of flight and the global recovery of the aviation network as a whole, ICAO Council President Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano and ICAO Secretary General Dr. Fang Liu declared at yesterday’s Flight Safety Foundation 2020 International Air Safety Summit.

“There should be no misconceptions regarding the dependence of the ultimate speed and effectiveness of our sector’s recovery on the degree of international coordination we establish,” the President said. “It will also be dependent on the measures we pursue being compatible with safety and security requirements; proportionate to the improvement of public health; flexible where possible to allow for a viable economic recovery; and safeguarded not to distort markets.”

“While we saw some slightly positive trends in passenger figures over the summer travel season, with ‘second waves’ of the pandemic now emerging, we should have no illusions about how quickly the global recovery will take place,” the Secretary General stressed. “This highlights that we must now pay extra close attention to new types of systemic and organizational risk which may arise, and notably due to the financial situations of service providers. States and industry also face the challenge of having to balance operational safety risks with pandemic risks, all while protecting the health of passengers, crew members, and other aviation personnel.”

ICAO’s leadership pointed to the raft of support that the UN agency has delivered to States and operators throughout the pandemic to achieve this, with a special focus on the [recommendations prepared by the ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Taskforce \(CART\)](#), and the enduring [Global Aviation Safety Plan \(GASP\)](#). Both of these documents support the global alignment and harmonization of States’ efforts.

“The CART guidelines have all been developed with all key sectoral priorities in mind, and at the end of October we are expecting the new Phase II of this guidance to be adopted through Council,” Mr. Sciacchitano declared, noting that “some of its new provisions are being designed to help countries evaluate new testing options, and notably as a means to alleviate the current traveler quarantine requirements which are so significantly impacting passenger enthusiasm and confidence globally.”

“Among its key objectives, the GASP calls for the implementation of State Safety Programmes and Safety Management Systems. These are needed more than ever today,” underlined Dr. Liu, pointing to a variety of concerns that have been reported to ICAO by States.

These concerns include crews lacking proficiency due to lapses in recurrent training, the airworthiness of aircraft removed from service for long periods, the effects of flying almost empty cabins on overall aircraft performance and pilot handling, flight crews flying long past their duty times, and passengers becoming more disruptive in the face of the multiple health-related restrictions that can vary from the airport to the aircraft.

“The GASP also calls for each State to develop a national aviation safety plan which is aligned with its global targets and policies. Initiatives in these national plans augment State capabilities to oversee industry and to manage operational safety risks. Key operational risks, such as runway

incursions or mid-air collisions, remain very high on our list of priorities, and must be managed pandemic or not,” the Secretary General added.

Many States face resource challenges in this regard, especially regarding qualified technical personnel and Civil Aviation Safety Inspectors. However these professionals are needed more than ever now in order to ensure that mitigation measures don't erode established safety risk controls. Today's Summit also provided ICAO with a platform to call on governments to assure sustainable funding for these critical CAA functions.

Throughout, the President and the Secretary General underscored the importance of ensuring unwavering commitment to aviation's primordial and foundational value: safety. “Our resilience will continue to derive, now more than ever, from our ability to adapt, but also to maintain and improve upon our industry's impressive record for safety performance while restoring public confidence in air travel,” concluded Dr. Liu.



Resources for Editors

About ICAO

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 guidance necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, amongst many other priorities. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 193 Member States.

[ICAO Council Aviation Recovery Taskforce \(CART\) Recommendations](#)

[ICAO COVID-19 Portal](#)

[ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan](#)

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