

ICAO Keynote Speech for WBA Conference

29 Nov. 2022
CATC, Bangkok, Thailand

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Distinguished Participants

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning and Welcome to Bangkok!

- 1) It is an honour for me to join you today for the WBA 2022 Conference in Bangkok, where ICAO Asia and Pacific Office is also located. On behalf of ICAO, I would like to congratulate WBA for the successful organization of its 2022 Conference in-person despite the ongoing challenges of Covid-19. I also take this opportunity to thank WBA for inviting ICAO to speak today.
- 2) As we all witnessed, 2020 & 2021 have proven to be the most challenging years in the history of Civil Aviation due to COVID-19.
- 3) COVID-19 has impacted all industries, all sectors and all aspects of our lives with devastating economic and financial losses and significant uncertainties. For the air transport and tourism sectors, COVID-19's impacts have been especially significant.
- 4) As per ICAO monthly monitor data for July 2022, aviation globally has shown regaining its momentum thanks to the relaxation of travel restrictions compounded by the strong travel demand. Nevertheless, recovery of the Asia and Pacific Regions still lags behind other regions. Overall, North America and Latin America/Caribbean are leading the recovery chart, approaching the pre-pandemic levels.
- 5) Wildlife strikes can cause accidents and serious incidents, costing the aviation industry billions of dollars due to aircraft damage, flight delays and other operational impacts. Throughout the past years, ICAO has been taking initiatives in formulating International Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and other provisions such as procedures for air navigation services (PANS) and guidance material, aiming to help States prevent wildlife strikes on, or in the vicinity of aerodromes.

- 6) ICAO is doing a complete rewrite of the ICAO Bird strike information Systems (IBIS) Manual, which is expected to be ready by First Quarter of 2024.
- 7) Based on ICAO Annex 14 SARPs and PANS-Aerodromes, States need to develop and promulgate legislation and regulation to address the safety concerns, including those related to land use around an aerodrome.

ICAO Bird strike Data

- 8) ICAO received Bird strike reports from hundred-sixty-nine States and territories during the period from 2016 to 2020. A total of 130,024 wildlife strike reports were received during this period.
- 9) Even though the data period had an impact due to reduced activities heavily effected by COVID-19 pandemic, the number of wildlife strikes reported to ICAO has increased 33% in comparison to the previous period.
- 10) The Asia and Pacific Region remains third in number of wildlife strikes reported to ICAO following North American, Central American and Caribbean (NACC) and European and North Atlantic (EUR/NAT) regions.
- 11) For the Asia and Pacific region, the months with the least reported number of wildlife strikes are January and February. October is the month of the highest wildlife strike activity. Two peaks are identified during the year, the first lower peak between April and June. The second and highest one occurred between October and November.
- 12) For the Asia and Pacific region, fifty-two per cent of the wildlife strikes occurred during the day time and twenty-four per cent occurred at night time. It can be inferred that the majority of the strikes take place in day light.
- 13) For the Asia and Pacific region, around Seventy-five per cent of the wildlife strikes for which location data was furnished occurred on or near the aerodrome. Twenty-seven per cent of these occurred during the take-off phase while forty-five per cent occurred during the approach and landing phase. However, unknown (nor defined) flight phase covers twenty-four per cent.

Challenges in WHM

- 14) ICAO has observed some common challenges in Wildlife Hazard Management:

- a) Ensuring cooperation and collaboration in addressing wildlife related matters between multiple stakeholders, involving regulators, airport operators, aircraft operators, air navigation service providers, pilots, manufacturers, local communities, as well as various wildlife strike committees at different levels.
 - b) Ensuring data accuracy in wildlife strike reporting as an effective WHMP depends on accurate and reliable data.
 - c) Understanding the changes in wildlife migratory patterns due to climate change and its impact on WHM.
- 15) As per ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme, Continuous Monitoring Approach, among 35 audited States in Asia and Pacific Regions an average effective implementation for WHM (based on 6 protocol questions) as of June 2018 was 57.5%.
- 16) Recognizing the low USOAP EI and need to address the challenges faced by States in WHM field, as per Decision of the Second Meeting of APANPIRG Aerodrome Operations and Planning Subgroup (AOP/SG/2), Asia/Pacific Wildlife Hazard Management Working Group (AP-WHM/WG) was established with the objective to assist States to establish a ***National Wildlife Strike Hazard Management Committee and a National Wildlife strike hazard reduction programme.***
- 17) The Working Group has successfully conducted four meetings and WBA has been actively participating and contributing to the work of Working Group since its first meeting in Bangkok in 2018.
- 18) The Working Group has developed five Regional Guidance Materials in WHM including ***State Action Plan for Establishment and Implementation of WHMP - Generic Template***, which was approved by the Thirty Third Meeting of APANPIRG held in Bali, Indonesia last week. All these regional guidance documents have been published on the ICAO Website eDocuments Webpage under AGA heading: <https://www.icao.int/APAC/Pages/eDocs.aspx>
- 19) The Working Group has also developed the Survey Questionnaire which was circulated to Asia/Pacific States. Responses to survey questionnaire received from 23 States/Administrations have been analyzed to find out Asia and Pacific States' challenges in wildlife hazard management and to formulate prioritized actions to provide assistance to the States as required.

- 20) ICAO APAC Office in collaboration with Australian Aviation Wildlife Hazard Group (AAWHG) organized series of WHM webinars in 2020 and 2021 covering the topics,: (i) *WHM Programme*; (ii) *Reporting and Recording Data on Wildlife Strikes*; and (iii) *Wildlife Safety Risk Assessment*. Each webinar was attended by more than 150 participants representing Aviation Regulators, Pilots, Air Traffic Controllers, and Aerodrome Operation Personnel.
- 21) In coming years, ICAO APAC Office and AP-WHM/WG will focus on prioritized technical assistance to States for the ***Establishment and Implementation of National WHMP*** and assist aerodrome operators to develop and implement ***Wildlife Hazard Management Programme*** specific to the individual airport.
- 22) As the recovery of the air traffic is accelerating globally and expecting to approach the pre-pandemic levels in some regions, we need to continue our good work on further improving aviation safety. To this end, I would like to emphasize that proper safety oversight should be continued, and wildlife hazard management programmes should remain functional and effective at aerodromes to ensure flight safety. I am happy to see that in the conference programme, there are a couple of presentations on these aspects.
- 23) For the next two and half days, I see there are many interesting presentations which address different issues related to wildlife hazard management. As we all know, Wildlife Hazard Management is a complex field, therefore let's use this opportunity to learn more from sharing our ideas for our benefit.
- 24) Finally, I would like to thank the Civil Aviation Training Centre for providing this well-equipped and highly sophisticated facilities to WBA for organizing this Conference in Bangkok and wish you a very successful deliberation.

Thank you for your kind attention!