



INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

Statement for the Sofia Ministerial Session on Congestion
Sofia, Bulgaria, 30 and 31 May 2007

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) statistical data for air traffic growth in the ICAO European Region, indicates that total scheduled services will grow at an average annual rate of 4.5 per cent over the period 1999 to 2010.

One of the keys to maintaining the safety of civil aviation while it continues its relentless growth, is the implementation of an air traffic management (ATM) system that allows optimum use to be made of enhanced air and ground capabilities, leading to greater efficiency and capacity.

The recently updated ICAO Global Air Navigation Plan contains a roadmap and guidance for the continued evolution toward a more global and seamless ATM system. The Global Plan contains 23 Global Performance Initiatives which are options for ATM improvements that, when implemented, will result in direct performance enhancements. The initiatives stem from an industry-developed roadmap and are based on available, or soon to be available, aircraft and ground capabilities. In most cases, the necessary supporting standards, procedures and technical specifications are already in place.

The ICAO planning and implementation regional groups (PIRGs) are the primary mechanism for implementation planning of facilities and services to support international air navigation. In an effort to further improve efficiency and enhance capacity, PIRGs are restructuring their planning processes and refocusing their efforts to take into account the Global Performance Initiatives as a logical progression of the work that they currently do. At the global level, ICAO is building tools, restructuring its planning processes and reallocating resources in order to provide the necessary support to States and PIRGs.

With the aim of bringing near and medium-term benefits to the European air navigation infrastructure, the European Air Navigation Planning Group (EANPG) is currently working on a number of important projects such as:

- Optimizing the air traffic services (ATS) route network through implementation of performance-based navigation;
- Supporting the implementation of approaches with vertical guidance at all airports;
- Enabling the Single European Sky (SES) through its unique ability of addressing regional institutional issues;
- Providing assistance in planning for increased airspace capacity through implementation of the Flexible Use of Airspace; and
- Enhancement of Surveillance Infrastructure.

The 54 States in the European Region of ICAO participate in the work of EANPG together with international organisations such as the European Commission, European Organisation for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL), International Air Transport Association (IATA), International

Business Aviation Council (IBAC), International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) and International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA). Therefore, it could be envisaged that support for the ICAO planning processes and implementation objectives already in place, as well as commitment to follow through with implementation in accordance with regional agreements, would bring near and medium-term capacity benefits at reasonable costs, using currently available technology. The result would be increased capacity and enhanced efficiency.

In addition to its technical work, ICAO has developed guidance addressing the economic aspects of congestion in the provision of airports and air navigation services, notably with respect to slot allocation at airports, and, more generally, with respect to the possible use of economic principles in setting airport or air navigation services charges, which would allow, for example, for the setting of peak pricing.