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CO-ORDINATION

REVIEW OF THE AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS
AND THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL
ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Views of the executive heads of organizations
transmitted in response to paragraph 13 of
Economic and Social Council resolution
1768 (LIV)

INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

ICAO'S RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS
OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

1. General

In order to achieve its main statutory objective, i.e. the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation, ICAO works in close co-operation at technical level with other organizations in the United Nations system dealing with related activities. Most of the day-to-day co-ordination activities are therefore carried out by ICAO at secretariat level through correspondence and other forms of consultations with organizations like WMO, ITU, IMCO, ILO, WHO, UPU, etc.

It should be noted that most of ICAO's regular programme activities are "regulatory" in nature and, that, in a very high proportion of instances, the end object of this process of informal consultation is the formal adoption by one or more of the organizations concerned, of Conventions, International Standards, Regulations, Specifications or Recommendations (depending on the terminology used for such "regulatory" material by the various organizations), that are either common to the organizations that have participated in such a consultative process or, when adopted by only one of them, have fully taken into account the requirements and responsibilities of the other(s). Such "regulatory" material frequently contains references to the appropriate official text(s) of another international organization that identify related functions or areas of activity that are regulated by that organization.

Examples of common technical recommendations of world-wide applicability are the ICAO Aeronautical Meteorological Standards and Recommended Practices contained in annex 3 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation and the Specifications for Meteorological Services for International Air Navigation published by the World Meteorological Organization.

The ITU Radio Regulations include references to certain matters covered by ICAO action (e.g. the function of ICAO in co-ordinating communications of the Aeronautical Mobile (R) Service), as do also certain Resolutions and Recommendations adopted by the ITU Administrative Conferences.

Similarly, annex 10 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation incorporates formal references to the ITU Radio Regulations and to decisions of ITU Administrative Conferences.

Again, the ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices on Facilitation contained in annex 9 of the Convention on International Civil Aviation include appropriate references to the International Health Regulations of the WHO and to the Universal Postal Convention (Vienna, 1964). References to the applicability (in connexion with water operations of aircraft) of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea are made in the Standards on the Rules of the Air contained in annex 2 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.

2. ICAO Policy

As will be seen in paragraph 6 below, the ICAO Convention, anticipating the establishment of "a general organization set up by the nations of the world to preserve peace", incorporated provisions for establishing a relationship with it when created.

The policy of ICAO with regard to relations with other specialized agencies is established by Resolution A1-10, adopted by the Assembly of ICAO at its first session which authorizes the ICAO Council to make appropriate arrangements to promote effective co-operation with other intergovernmental organizations and expressed a preference for informal working arrangements over formal agreements.

3. Formal co-operation arrangements

ICAO has only concluded formal agreements with the United Nations (see paragraph 6 below) and the International Atomic Energy Agency. A "working arrangement" governs the relations between ICAO and WMO and, inter alia, provides for co-ordination at a very early stage in the development of work programmes at both intersecretariat and intergovernmental level (e.g. through the device of simultaneous meetings of both organizations). An "Understanding" was concluded between the President of ICAO Council and the Director-General of ILO to provide guidelines for co-ordinating the work of the two organizations which have, inter alia, co-operated in the drafting of conditions of employment on Civil Aviation.

4. Informal arrangements

In accordance with the preference expressed by the ICAO Assembly (see paragraph 3 above) a high proportion of the ICAO activities that require co-ordination with other organizations of the United Nations system are not governed by comprehensive agreements or written arrangements. These co-operative activities are nevertheless, of considerable volume and significance and the success achieved in ensuring that all relevant points of views and interests are properly combined has justified the reliance that the ICAO Assembly placed on pragmatic arrangements that can be made quickly responsive to changing circumstances. These various arrangements take the form of reciprocal attendance at intergovernmental meetings, participation in technical panels or working groups, preparation of special studies at the request of other organizations, supply of statistical and other data, interchange of correspondence and visits, co-operation at the field level, etc.

5. Relations between ICAO and the United Nations

The Convention on International Civil Aviation, the basic constitutional instrument of ICAO, provides in its articles 64 and 65 that:

"The Organization may, with respect to air matters within its competence directly affecting world security, by vote of the Assembly enter into appropriate arrangements with any general organization set up by the nations of the world to preserve peace.

"The Council, on behalf of the Organization, may enter into agreements with other international bodies for the maintenance of common services and for common arrangements concerning personnel and, with the approval of the Assembly, may enter into such other arrangements as may facilitate the work of the Organization."

On the basis of these articles and of corresponding articles 57 and 63 of the Charter of the United Nations, ICAO and the United Nations concluded a relationship agreement which entered into force on 13 May 1947.

In ICAO's view, this agreement, later supplemented by the adoption of ICAO Assembly Resolution A 5-5, on emergency action to assist in the maintenance of international peace and security, has proved to be a satisfactory tool of co-operation between the two organizations. While providing the basic requirements - co-operation and co-ordination - it avoids excessive formalization of procedures and ensures, under its various provisions, that ICAO will promptly consider all formal recommendations of the United Nations. ICAO has amended the Convention on International Civil Aviation to provide for cessation of membership in the Organization, of any Contracting State expelled from membership in the United Nations, or recommended by the latter to be debarred from membership in international agencies in relationship with the United Nations.

The relations between ICAO and the United Nations, governed by the above-mentioned agreement, have developed satisfactorily particularly with regard to substantive questions of world-wide scope requiring a multilateral approach, as well as in relation to administrative and budgetary matters of interest to the organizations of the United Nations system.

6. Problems of world-wide scope

The preamble to the Convention on International Civil Aviation states that "the future development of international civil aviation can greatly help to create and preserve friendship and understanding among the nations and peoples of the world, yet its abuse can become a threat to the general security" and that "it is desirable to avoid friction and to promote that co-operation between nations and peoples upon which the peace of the world depends". These objectives are therefore part of the statutory responsibility of ICAO which contributes to their attainment by working as efficiently as possible towards the development of orderly and safe international civil aviation.

ICAO is aware of the role that it can play in promoting the progress and the peace in the world as an international organization and as part of the United Nations system. This awareness has prompted the positive response of this organization to the recommendations of the United Nations in various fields: e.g. World Plan of Action, Decolonization, Assistance in case of Natural Disasters, Problems of the Human Environment, etc.

ICAO has participated fully in the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and in the Special Fund since their inception and subsequently in the United Nations Development Programme. It also participates in other relevant system-wide programmes, co-operating with other interested United Nations bodies such as the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Regional Economic Commissions, etc. Due to its highly specialized field of work, the action of ICAO in some of these areas has necessarily been more limited than that of other organizations of the United Nations system with broader fields of responsibility.

7. Co-ordination on administrative and budgetary matters

In accordance with article XII of the relationship agreement, close and effective co-ordination is maintained in the field of personnel arrangements through the participation of ICAO in the work of the United Nations system's bodies which are responsible for the development of uniform conditions of service. The principle of uniformity of ICAO's personnel arrangements with those of the common system was formally adopted by the Council of the Organization in 1964. On financial and budgetary matters, co-ordination is maintained through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). The present system of co-ordination on administrative and budgetary matters appears to work satisfactorily and ICAO has no particular comments to offer in this regard since it shares fully in the process of continuous development and refinement to which it is subject. The ICAO Council has also agreed (at present until 31 December 1977) to continue to make use of the Joint Inspection Unit.

8. Interagency bodies

ICAO attaches much importance to its participation in the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC). The ACC and its subsidiary bodies provide a multilateral consultative mechanism which, in the experience of ICAO, has proved to be valuable both to supplement the system of bilateral interagency consultations mentioned above and to assist the Economic and Social Council in the over-all co-ordination of the work of the various elements of the United Nations system.

The ACC has played a useful role in stimulating not only co-ordination but also positive co-operation among the members of the United Nations system of organizations in pursuit of common goals while actively fostering a sense of common purpose among the organizations that, with widely varying mandates, compose the system.

9. Relations with organizations outside the United Nations system

While not falling strictly within the scope of a review of the relationship of ICAO with other organizations of the United Nations system it is perhaps desirable to refer, for the sake of completeness, to the fact that ICAO maintains close relations with other intergovernmental organizations which have been established by States to co-ordinate certain areas of their Civil Aviation activities from a regional or subregional aspect. Thus ICAO provides secretariat services to the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) and the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC). Similar arrangements are being made with the newly established Latin American Civil Aviation Commission (LACAC).

Although at a different level, since it is mainly related to the implementation of ICAO's specifications and regional plans, ICAO also maintains relations with other intergovernmental organizations such as the Agence pour la Sécurité de la Navigation aérienne (ASECNA), the Corporación Centroamericana de Servicios de Navegación Aérea (COCESNA), the European Organization for the Safety of Air Navigation (EUROCONTROL) and the European Space Research Organization (ESRO).

10. Conclusion

As will be seen from the above summary review of the Organization's relationship with the United Nations and the other specialized agencies, ICAO has not experienced difficulties in co-ordinating its work with that of the other members of the United Nations family. From ICAO's viewpoint and interests the system appears to be working satisfactorily and the organization has no particular comments to offer on its improvement except perhaps one of a general nature which is dictated by its own experience: that is that any efforts aimed at improving or streamlining co-ordination and concentration of effort should take into account the necessary diversity in the scope and structure of organizations whose primary objective is to deal with problems of varying natures, requiring in many instances different methods of work to achieve somewhat specialized objectives.

It is believed that due consideration of this element will facilitate a realistic approach to the question of co-ordination and assist all organizations in making their optimum contribution to the preparation and implementation of programmes aiming at the solution of system-wide problems.

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