ICAO UPDATE

Air cargo security
From Montreal on 27th June it was announced that ICAO and the World Customs Organization (WCO) had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for increased co-operation to protect air cargo from acts of terrorism or other criminal activity and for speeding up the movement of goods by air worldwide.

“The global air cargo system is a complex, multifaceted network for transporting vast amounts of freight, packages and mail on both passenger and all-cargo aircraft. The solution to improving security without sacrificing speed of delivery is through the consistent application of relevant and effective controls, from start to finish during the shipping process,” said Raymond Benjamin, Secretary General of ICAO.

“International trade is the lifeline of economies around the world and is critical to economic growth and social development,” said Secretary General of the WCO, Kunio Mikuriya. He added, “Moving goods by air is an essential part of the global supply chain and ensuring the security of air cargo is paramount which is why this MOU is a powerful tool in our collective efforts to keep potential threats at bay.”

Co-operation between the two organizations will focus on aligning the regulatory framework of both organizations relative to air cargo and will include electronic advance data, the sharing of information at various levels (government-to-government, Customs-to-Customs and Customs-to-industry), training and education and risk management.

Given the volume of goods transported by air and the impracticality of screening all cargo, a risk-based approach is considered necessary. WCO and ICAO experts will explore the application of risk management to cargo for identifying threats and implementing the required security measures, including the vetting of advance-cargo information.

On 1st July 2011, more stringent ICAO standards concerning air cargo became applicable. They include a new requirement for Member States to establish a supply-chain security process.

Aviation safety information
On 15th June the Council of ICAO adopted a code of conduct to oversee the collection, sharing and use of aviation safety information, in support of the Organization’s ongoing drive to further improve safety worldwide.
“Transparency and sharing of safety information are fundamental to a safe air transportation system. The new Code of Conduct will help ensure that the information is used in a fair and consistent manner, with the sole objective of improving safety,” said Roberto Kobeh González, President of the ICAO Council.

The Code of Conduct consists of guiding principles to develop a consistent, fact-based and transparent response to safety concerns at the State and global levels. The intent is also to promote public confidence in air travel and mutual trust among States, by providing reassurance as to how the information will be used.

With the Code, guidance is given to Member States, the aviation industry and other aviation organizations on establishing or improving their legal and institutional framework governing the use of safety information and on formulating and implementation of related legal agreements.

**Fatigue risk management**

The Council of ICAO adopted at its meeting of 13th June international standards for Fatigue Risk Management Systems (FRMS) as an alternative to prescriptive flight and duty limitations to address crew fatigue, often cited as a factor in aircraft accidents. The new standards become applicable on 15th December this year.

“Current flight and duty time regulations are a ‘one size fits all’ solution. FRMS recognize the growing complexity of crew fatigue and offer multi-layered, comprehensive approaches to various types of fatigue-related hazards, according to different operational contexts,” said Nancy Graham, Director of the Air Navigation Bureau of ICAO. She explained, “Operators using FRMS have reported greater operational flexibility than current flight and duty time regulations, while maintaining, and even improving on, current safety levels. The new standards will facilitate the development and globally-harmonized implementation of the systems, while making it easier for regulators to assess and monitor their use.”

The FRMS standards are supported by extensive guidance material based on the input of an FRMS Task Force comprised of State regulators, operators, scientists and industry representatives. This includes an FRMS implementation guide for operators, jointly produced by ICAO, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the International Federation of Air Line Pilots’ Associations (IFALPA).

In conclusion Graham reflected, “The fact that regulators, airlines and pilots all contributed to the effort ensures that all of the technical, operational and economic issues were covered. The input of world-recognized scientists ensures that the FRMS approach has solid scientific grounding. We can look forward to
widespread acceptance of the concept and its systematic application around the world.”.

These new fatigue management standards allow States to choose whether to establish FRMS regulations. The provision of prescriptive flight and duty time limitations regulations remain mandatory for all States. The new standards and related guidance material will be the focus of a symposium, followed by a meeting of the International FRMS Forum, to be held from 30\textsuperscript{th} August to 2\textsuperscript{nd} September at ICAO Headquarters in Montréal.