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MEDIA RELEASE

SOUTH AFRICA UNDERGOES AN AVIATION SAFETY AUDIT BY A UNITED NATIONS BODY - ICAO

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is currently conducting a 12-day Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA) audit of South Africa's civil aviation safety system and oversight capabilities with the audit concluding on 3 April 2023.

ICAO, a specialised agency of the United Nations, was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of civil aviation across the world.

The South African Civil Aviation Authority is mandated by the State in coordinating and leading this process and ensuring that the state performs well in the audit. In essence, the audit will put to a test the efficiency of the oversight responsibility of the SACAA on the industry. As a result, ICAO will also conduct physical visits to selected industry operators to assess the efficiency by which the Regulator, on behalf of the State, discharges its obligations.

South Africa, as a signatory to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation and therefore a Member State, is obligated to continuously comply with prescribed international civil aviation Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). Through this programme, ICAO monitors the fulfillment of the obligations of the safety oversight system by its Member States in their respective jurisdictions.

What is also significant about this audit on South African soil is that it will be number 1000 audit activity to be performed by ICAO under the USOAP-CMA programme, with this being a huge milestone for ICAO and the global community.

ICAO Council President, Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano said: "This year, we will be reaching a rather incredible USOAP milestone, with the planned audit that is currently taking place in South Africa.

"I wish to take this opportunity to specifically congratulate South Africa for its strong commitment to the USOAP programme, and to ICAO compliance. More generally, to reiterate ICAO's untiring willingness to engage with serve its Member States as we work together now towards the global safety target of zero fatalities by Year 2030."

The ICAO last audited South Africa in 2017, when the State achieved an Effective Implementation (EI) rating of 87.39% against the current global average of 67,50% E.I. This means that our country's level of E.I is currently significantly higher than the world's average.

This audit comes hot at the heels of the United States safety audit which saw South Africa retaining its Category 1 Status from the Federal Aviation Administration of the United States, which found that South Africa complies with the applicable ICAO standards for civil aviation safety oversight.

When this result was announced, the Minister of Transport, Hon. Sindisiwe Chikunga, remarked: "The significance of this Category 1 Status is that South African operators can continue to fly or operate directly into the United States without restrictions, bringing a huge economic benefit for the two countries."

South Africa has in June 2022 received permanent recognition of our cargo aviation security system by the United States Transport Security Administration.

South Africa's aviation cargo system is also recognised by the SACAA's European Union (EU) counterpart in terms of their ACC3 programme, after having undergone several of these assessments with the EU, South African airlines transporting cargo to EU States do not apply individually, at cost, to the EU for recognition because of the recognition given to the South African oversight system.

The Director of Civil Aviation, Ms. Poppy Khoza, said: "The continuous scrutiny of our civil aviation safety and security oversight is what should give the South African public confidence that the Regulator will not be distracted in its commitment to keep our skies safe. It is noy by luck that the airline sector still boasts a zero fatal accident rate in scheduled operations.

"The current reduction of fatal accidents in the general aviation sector is also evidence that the Regulator will stop at nothing in promoting and enforcing civil aviation regulations with our operators."

ENDS

About the SACAA

The South African Civil Aviation Authority is mandated with controlling, promoting, regulating, supporting, developing, enforcing, and continuously improving levels of safety and security throughout the civil aviation industry under the Civil Aviation Act, 2009.

About the ICAO

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is a United Nations (UN) specialised agency, established on the 7th December 1944 to manage the administration and governance of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention).

ICAO works with the Convention's 193 Member States and industry groups to reach consensus on international civil aviation Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and policies in support of a safe, efficient, secure, economically sustainable, and environmentally responsible civil aviation sector.

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