

Professional Peer Review of the ICAO Evaluation Function



Peer Review Panel, February 2020

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| Target audience | The main target audience of this report comprises the EAO (Evaluation and Audit Office (EAO), ICAO senior management, ICAO departments and field offices, and ICAO Member State representatives. The assumption is that readers are familiar with the agency, as such background information on ICAO is kept to a minimum. Additional information can be found on the ICAO website (www.icao.org). |
| Panel Members | <p>The Peer Review Panel was composed of three members:</p> <p>Ms. Susanne Frueh, Director, Internal Oversight Service of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Chair of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), Chair of the Panel</p> <p>Mr. Miguel Jiménez Pont, Head, Independent Evaluation Unit, International Trade Centre (ITC)</p> <p>Ms. Isabelle Mercier, Acting Director for International Assistance Evaluation Division (PRA), Global Affairs Canada</p> |
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| Disclaimer | The views expressed in this report are those of the members of the Peer Review Panel in their individual capacities. |

About ICAO

- The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is a UN specialized agency, established by States in 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. These SARPs and policies are used by ICAO Member States to ensure that their local civil aviation operations and regulations conform to global norms, which in turn permits more than 100,000 daily flights in aviation's global network to operate safely and reliably in every region of the world.
- In addition to its core work resolving consensus-driven international SARPs and policies among its Member States and industry, ICAO also coordinates assistance and capacity building for States in support of numerous aviation development objectives; produces global plans to coordinate multilateral strategic progress for safety and air navigation; monitors and reports on numerous air transport sector performance metrics; and audits States' civil aviation oversight capabilities in the areas of safety and security.
- Over the last ten years, ICAO's financial and human resource has almost remained the same. The total number of ICAO staff in 2019 is 724 . The regular budget for the triennium 2017–2019 of ICAO amounts to CAD 302 million (about CAD 100 million per year). As in the last two triennia, the Programme Budget for the period 2020 through 2022 is based on Zero Nominal Growth for States' assessments and is CAD 322.7 million (about USD 242 million).
- ICAO's regular programme is complemented by the Technical Cooperation Programme, managed by the Technical Cooperation Bureau and voluntary contributions provided by States. Technical Cooperation Projects are financed through extra-budgetary and voluntary contributions. The financial resource for technical cooperation projects was CAD 131.4 million in 2017. However, most of the big Technical Cooperation Projects focus on procurement of goods and services and are not normally considered for evaluations. Such projects are being covered by audits.
- Most Technical Cooperation Projects in ICAO are funded by the Member States themselves. Major voluntary contributions in kind and cash (excluding contribution for premises) in 2018 come from China (CAD 4.6 million), USA (CAD 2 million), France (CAD1.3 million) and the Republic of Korea (CAD809, 000). In 2017, China contributed CAD 8.8 million, USA CAD 2 million, Canada CAD 1.7 million and the Republic of Korea CAD1.4 million.

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Acronyms

| | |
|-------|--|
| C/EAO | Chief of EAO |
| C_WPs | Summary evaluation reports |
| EAAC | Evaluation and Audit Advisory Committee |
| EAO | Evaluation and Audit Office |
| ERG | Evaluation Reference Group |
| GANP | Global Air Navigation Plan |
| ICAO | International Civil Aviation Organization |
| JIU | Joint Inspection Unit of the UN System |
| PRT | Peer Review Team |
| RBM | Results-based Management |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SWOT | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats |
| TCB | Technical Cooperation Branch |
| UNEG | United Nations Evaluation Group |

Executive Summary

Introduction

This Professional Peer Review of the evaluation function of ICAO was carried out under the provisions contained in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Framework for Professional Peer Reviews of the Evaluation Function of UN organizations.¹ It is the first Peer Review of ICAO's evaluation function and was carried out at the request of ICAO.

The purpose of the Peer Review is to:

- a) Enhance knowledge, confidence and use of evaluation within ICAO;
- b) Advance ICAO's evaluation normative framework;
- c) Stimulate/encourage dialogue between various key stakeholders on expectations and the role of the evaluation function leading to strengthened organizational performance;
- d) Encourage a culture of evaluation, learning and accountability within ICAO.

The Peer Review looked at evaluation activities conducted between 2015 and 2019, and considered both central and decentralized evaluation functions. The Panel, composed of two Heads of evaluation functions within the UN system and an evaluation specialist from a donor country, reviewed relevant documents and assessed the quality of evaluation reports. The Panel visited ICAO headquarters in Montreal from 16 to 19 December 2019. In addition to the ICAO Evaluation and Audit Office (EAO), the Panel met with a wide range of relevant stakeholders including: ICAO senior management; heads of relevant departments/programmes; members of the ICAO permanent council and committees/commissions; the Chair of the Evaluation and Audit Advisory Committee on Internal Oversight (EAAC) (by phone); and representatives of donor governments.

Assessment

Overall, the Panel found that, despite resource constraints, ICAO's evaluation function has improved since the 2013/2014 Joint Inspection Unit of the UN System (JIU) review, which ranked ICAO in the lower percentile. The function, with some exceptions, mostly meets the UNEG Norms and Standards² although performance is hampered by resource limitations. The Panel recognizes that the EAO may not be able to increase its regular budget in the short term, but believes that it has the drive and vision to deliver more and that some of this could be obtained by building partnerships with others and by strengthening support to decentralized evaluation. ICAO would be well advised to invest further in its evaluation function so as to maximise the impact.

Strengths - The Panel found several strengths of the ICAO evaluation function on which the function can build.

With its independent positioning within the organization, the EAO can bring unbiased and objective evidence to the Council and the Secretariat. There are well established management response and implementation tracking mechanisms that appear to work well. The function is well recognized by both

¹ Available at: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/945>

² Available at: <http://www.unevaluation.org/2016-norms-and-standards>

Council members and management which allows it to use its current resources wisely to produce reports that are seen as very relevant.

Opportunities – The Panel identified several factors which offer opportunities to further strengthen the evaluation function.

The Panel found that stakeholders understood that evaluation can be a useful tool to support evidence-based decision making among ICAO management, staff and Council members. While the appetite for more evaluation is low, this may be because ICAO has yet to fully understand the value of evaluation and incorporate it effectively into its decision-making processes. Recent EAO efforts to contribute to a change in ICAO corporate culture, in particular the expectations concerning the on-going evaluation of the results-based management (RBM) system, could open a wider space for evaluation to engage in strengthening the process and use of evaluations.

The renewed focus on setting up a decentralized evaluation system is an opportunity to build a stronger evaluation culture. If done well and incrementally, it would provide the organization with stronger evidence of ICAO's relevance for the Agenda 2030 at the country and regional level.

While resources are limited, there are ample opportunities to build partnerships which would help enhance capacity and expertise while, at the same time, increasing EAO's internal capacity to ensure quality and timeliness of evaluation work.

Technical Cooperation Bureau projects are already required to include a budget for evaluation. Establishing a fixed percentage or use of the surplus for evaluations could help address current resource constraints.

Challenges – While the Panel found several strengths and opportunities, it is concerned about a number of issues and challenges.

The overall evaluation culture in ICAO is weak. There are several aspects to this: a weak learning culture; a weak knowledge management system; a weak RBM system; an un-developed decentralized evaluation system; and the co-location with audit blurs the distinction for stakeholders between the two function and enhances the accountability dimension of the function at the cost of the learning function.

The limited capacity of staff to undertake evaluations results in a limited evaluation work programme. Nevertheless, in recent years, the work programme has focused on strategic high-level evaluations which, in an ideal scenario, could pave the way for the next generation of independent evaluations to focus more on specific strategic results of its programmes at global and country level.

Resources for conducting central evaluations are very limited and rely on annual requests for additional top-up funds. The total 'regular' resources available for the central evaluation function of approximately USD 277,000 annually (including staff cost) is less than 0.09% of the total annual expenditure of the Organization which is not only significantly below the average UN system organizations' spending but also inadequate in absolute terms considering ICAO's relatively modest total annual expenditure.

The quality of the evaluation reports has improved in the last two years as confirmed by the quality assessment of all reports since 2015. The EAO has difficulties identifying qualified consultants, in part due to the technical nature of the work, but also because of their inability to pay market rates.

The workload for developing the decentralized evaluation system is underestimated, while the number of actual decentralized evaluations to take place is overestimated. In the Panel's view, the investment

into decentralized evaluation needs to be incremental, initially fully guided and coached by EAO, and in smaller steps than originally envisaged. This could take the approach of “pilot projects” to help enhance the decentralized evaluations capacity in a realistic way.

UNEG Norms

Enabling environment

ICAO has a positively evolving enabling environment, with strong interest by the Council in EAO evaluation reports, and reportedly good levels of discussions and support for implementation. Additional budget requests have been provided but the overall funding limits the function to evolve further.

Relevance and responsiveness

Relevance and responsiveness scored lowest in the rating but have also improved in comparison to the 2014 JIU assessment. In part this is linked to the insufficient resources available for the function and the overall evaluation culture.

Independence and impartiality

A strong overall performance on independence. However, while the location of the central evaluation function and the behavioural independence of evaluation staff and external evaluators are satisfactory, significant financial constraints and the non-availability of evaluation reports to the public limit the independence of the evaluation function of ICAO.

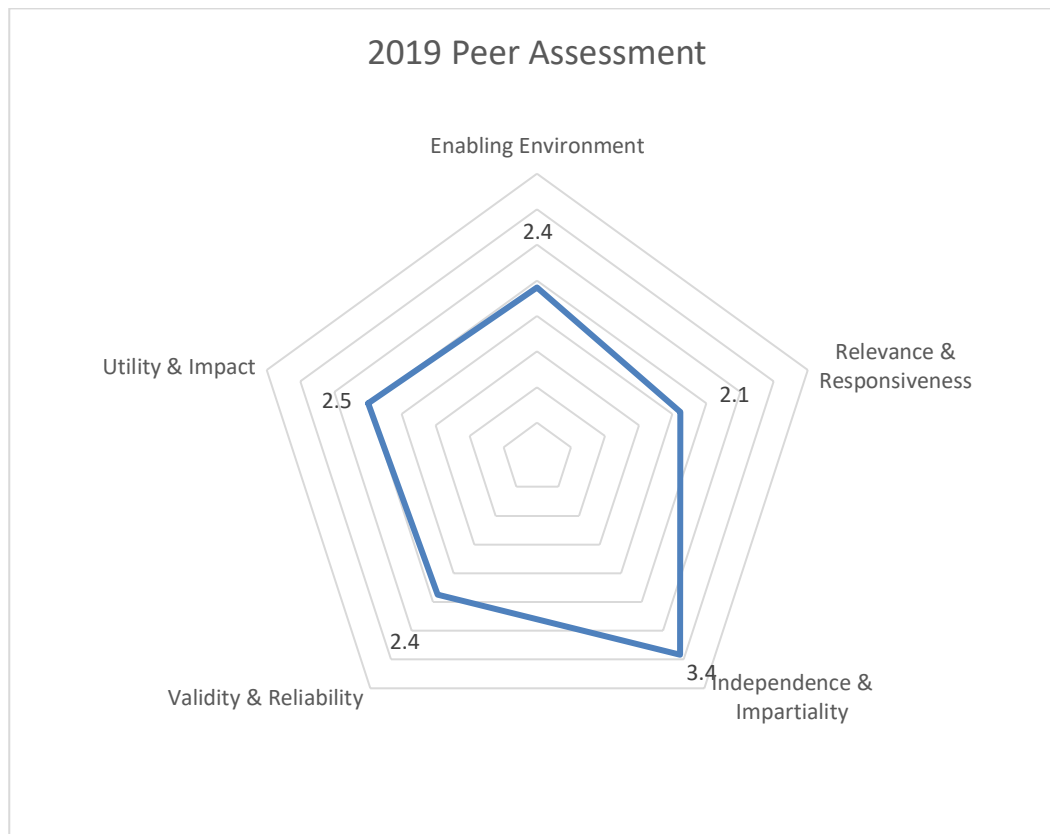
Validity and reliability

Reports have substantially improved in recent years and, if this trajectory continues, this rating should improve as well.

Utility and impact

While utility and impact improved significantly over the recent assessment, the rating again reflects resource limitations and the overall evaluation culture. More resources spent on the right strategic evaluations (feedback and evidence on performance of the strategic plan) would help increase this rating.

Figure 1 Overall Performance on UNEG Norms and Standards



Key: 4: good practices, 3: satisfactory, 2: under development, 1: nascent
Source: Peer Review Panel, 2015 (Annex 2); JIU 2014

Recommendations

The review provides eight recommendations to further improve and strengthen the evaluation function. One recommendation is made to the Council, two to senior management and five to the EAO.

Recommendation 1: ICAO should update its evaluation policy. This should be an all-of organization policy with EAO the custodian.

Recommendation 2: The Secretary General, as part of the budgeting process for the next triennial budget 2023 to 2025, should identify/or request resources for at least one additional full-time position for the evaluation function.

Recommendation 3: The EAO should seek opportunities to increase its access to additional resources.

Recommendation 4: The EAO should incorporate innovative practices to increase the value of evaluation.

Recommendation 5: The EAO should play a more active role in strengthening the RBM community in the organization.

Recommendation 6: The EAO should adopt a phased approach to implementing decentralized evaluation.

Recommendation 7: The EAO should seek to publish evaluation reports and make them publicly available.

Recommendation 8: The Council, in its selection of EAAC members, should ensure that evaluation expertise is included at all times.

Chapter 1. Introduction

About the Peer Review

1. This Professional Peer Review (hereafter Peer Review) of the evaluation function of the United Nations International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) was carried out under the provisions contained in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Framework for Professional Peer Reviews of the Evaluation Function of UN organizations.³ This peer review was undertaken jointly with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/ Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) Evaluation Network and was conducted using a framework developed by a collaborative task team of UNEG and the DAC Evaluation Network. While peer reviews in the past have focussed on central evaluation functions, this Peer Review has, at the request of ICAO, also looked at the nascent decentralized evaluation function as it has recently gained significant attention within UNEG⁴ and within the UN reform context. It is the first Peer Review of ICAO's evaluation function and was carried out at the request of ICAO's Evaluation and Audit Office (EAO) based on UNEG's recommendation that evaluation functions undergo a review every five years.⁵ The panel included two UNEG evaluation heads, and an evaluation specialist from a donor country (representing the DAC Network for Development Evaluation) (see Annex 9 for the panel's background).

2. Chapter 1 (Introduction) provides the background to the Peer Review and the ICAO evaluation function. Chapter 2 (Overall Assessment) presents strengths and opportunities as well as key issues emerging from the analysis of ICAO's evaluation function. In Chapter 3 (Assessment against UNEG Norms) the Panel assesses the central evaluation function in ICAO along the UNEG Normative Framework, i.e. independence, credibility, utility and enabling environment including demand. Chapter 4 (Conclusions) provides the Panel's overall conclusion and, in Chapter 5 (Recommendations), the Panel offers some recommendations for the EAO, and ICAO senior management and Council. The annexes include analytical tools and interim products (e.g. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats [SWOT] analysis, quality assessment, etc.).

Purpose of the Peer Review

3. The Peer Review is part of an on-going process to improve ICAO's evaluation function, as suggested by the UNEG Framework for Professional Peer Reviews.⁶ The review provides recommendations to senior management in ICAO, the EAO where the function sits, and ICAO's donors and Member States in order to further improve and strengthen the evaluation function. The report also intends to provide insights to ICAO's Evaluation and Audit Advisory Committee on Internal Oversight (EAAC) on the functioning of the evaluation function.

4. The purpose of this Peer Review is to:
- a) Enhance knowledge, confidence and use of evaluation within ICAO;
 - b) Advance ICAO's normative framework for evaluation;

³ UNEG, 2011. UNEG Framework for Professional Peer Reviews of the Evaluation Function of UN organizations. http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=945

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ UNEG Norms 4.1 and 4.2.

⁶ Op.cit. 3, para.4.

- c) Stimulate/encourage dialogue between various key stakeholders on expectations and the role of the evaluation function leading to strengthened organizational performance; and
- d) Encourage a culture of evaluation, learning and accountability within ICAO.

Subject and scope

5. This is a third-generation Peer Review designed to be lean in order to avoid making unreasonable demands of time, expense and additional workload on both panel members and the organization being reviewed.⁷ This is reflected in the terms of reference attached to this report (Annex 10). The panel therefore used a self-assessment conducted by ICAO in November 2019, the 2013/2014 JIU review of the evaluation function for historic comparison, and allocated sufficient time for panel discussions and conclusions during the panel's visit.

6. Taking in to consideration both central and decentralized evaluation functions, this report includes an assessment of the:

- Broader *enabling environment* for evaluation within and outside ICAO.
- *Internal normative framework for evaluation*: The impact of existing policies and procedures of the evaluation function, including the extent to which they conform to UN norms and standards.
- *Evaluation quality*: (i) Quality of evaluation processes, products and resulting decisions made using evaluation products. This includes the planning process, the conduct of evaluations, the impartiality/independence of evaluations, the quality of evaluation reports, the independence of evaluation teams and team leaders, and the ability to produce credible and timely reports. (ii) Assessment of the quality assurance system, including the application of methodology and the production of knowledge management products.
- *Evaluation follow-up and use*: (i) Extent and utility of follow-up to evaluations, including the actual impact of evaluations, how evaluation results are disseminated and lessons used, both within ICAO and by external stakeholders; (ii) The responsibility for follow-up of recommendations and how it is undertaken and monitored.

The Peer Review looked at the evaluation activities carried out between 2015 and 2019.

The Peer Review is intended to be forward-looking and provide guidance on how the evaluation function can be further strengthened to meet emerging challenges and opportunities both within ICAO and the UN system more broadly.

This Peer Review is part of EAO's strategy to ensure independent quality assessment of its oversight functions in line with the 2014 Evaluation Policy.

Core Assessment Criteria

7. To review the evaluation function, the Peer Review used key criteria based on the UNEG Norms and Standards. These are further reviewed in Chapter 3 but covered:

- ✓ Enabling environment

⁷ UNEG Framework for Professional Peer Reviews of the Evaluation Function of UN organizations, 2011, para.17.

- ✓ Relevance and responsiveness
- ✓ Independence and Impartiality
- ✓ Validity and reliability
- ✓ Utility and impact

Approach and Process

8. As an initial basis for its work, the Panel used an existing self-assessment conducted by ICAO EAO in November 2019 using a modified version of the 2013/2014 JIU review matrix methodology. The benefit of using a similar approach allowed for a comparison with the self-assessment done for the JIU review in 2013. The Panel adopted a peer exchange approach to enrich its independent assessment and promote learning through discussions on ways to meet common challenges related to evaluation practice. Beyond the ICAO EAO, the Panel met with a wide range of relevant stakeholders, including ICAO senior management, clients of recent EAO evaluation reports, the Chair of the Advisory Committee on Internal Oversight (by phone), and representatives of donor governments (Annex 5).

9. The timeline of the review process was:

| Activity | Date |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Receipt of the final self-assessment guide from UNEG | October 25, 2019 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Self-assessment and preparation of the matrix | October 28 – November 15, 2019 |
| Peer review/validation including field work by the Peer Review Team | 15 – 19 December 2019 |
| Draft Report by the Peer Review Team | January 15, 2020 |
| Review of the draft report by EAO | January 27, 2020 |
| Final review report to EAO | February 16, 2020 |
| Final report shared with Senior Management, the EAAC and the ICAO Council | March 19, 2020 |

Limitations

10. Since this is a peer review and not an evaluation, triangulation of data is limited. In adherence to the lean approach of new generation peer reviews, a survey among ICAO staff was not conducted. Given time and resource constraints, the ICAO regional offices were not visited but only contacted by phone.

11. However, the Panel is confident that the interviews and focus group meetings conducted, and the document analysis provided sufficient data to identify credible findings.

ICAO's Evaluation Function

12. EAO is the custodian of the ICAO evaluation function and conducts centralized evaluations. It was first created in 1994 when the ICAO Council approved the consolidation of the Evaluation and Internal Audit Offices into a single office for accountability and oversight.

13. The main role and responsibilities of EAO with respect to the centralized evaluation function are to:

- Develop a triennial and annual evaluation plan and programme;

- Develop and establish effective guidelines, tools and templates for centralized evaluation at ICAO, including the evaluation manual, which cover planning, methodology, quality assurance, management responses and knowledge management;
- Provide an annual activity report to the Council;
- Present evaluation results to senior management, EAAC and the Council;
- Promote the use of evaluation through consultations with the President of the Council and senior management to plan evaluations and follow-up recommendations, as well as through the evaluation process and use; and
- Participate in relevant UNEG and JIU events to represent the interests of ICAO on evaluation oversight issues.

14. With respect to decentralized evaluation, EAO's main role and responsibilities include:

- Developing and establishing effective guidelines, tools and templates to support decentralized evaluation;
- Providing methodological and quality assurance support to decentralized evaluations; and
- Maintaining a register of decentralized evaluations conducted at ICAO.

15. The Chief of EAO (C/EAO) (Director position, D1) reports administratively to the ICAO Secretary General. EAO's annual and triennium plans are approved by the ICAO Council to which EAO presents its annual report. Compared to others in the UN system, EAO has a very small evaluation function and resources.⁸ In addition to the C/EAO, EAO has one Evaluation Specialist hired from the regular budget (professional position, P4). When conducting evaluations, the Evaluation Specialist is supported by a consultant and an intern.

16. EAO conducts on average two centralized evaluations annually (see Annex 3 for list of evaluations since 2015). EAO has drafted Decentralized Evaluation Guidelines to start decentralized evaluations in ICAO which have been shared with the Secretary General and Bureau Directors for comments. They were also presented during the Senior Management Group meeting. The draft guidelines were developed through a robust internal consultative process.

⁸ Table 1

Chapter 2. Strengths, Opportunities and Challenges

17. The Panel conducted a SWOT analysis (Annex 1) from which the following strengths, opportunities and challenges emerged.

Strengths

A reasonably independent and credible central evaluation function

18. The 2014 Evaluation Policy provides a robust framework for the function and was, at the time, broadly in line with prevailing practices in UNEG. It speaks to all three key criteria for a professional evaluation function: independence, credibility and utility. Through its direct reporting line to the Secretary General and the Council, EAO has a strong independent position.

Co-location with internal audit

19. As there is only one evaluation officer, co-location with internal audit is the best fit for ICAO's evaluation function. Reporting to the C/EAO, who is an auditor, the evaluation officer benefits from the C/EAO's independence and is ensured direct access to management through the C/EAO's Director status. There are also benefits from a common follow-up tracking system.

The draft Decentralized Evaluation Guidelines provide an opportunity to strengthen the evaluation function

20. A new approach to decentralized evaluation for ICAO is currently being developed.⁹ It addresses the responsibilities outlined in the Evaluation Policy vis-à-vis providing guidance material for decentralized evaluation. With UN reform requiring a greater focus on system-wide work at the country level, ICAO has a good opportunity to better explain its mandate as relevant to the SDG's within the country context. Given the small dimension and capacity of the central evaluation function, guidance to help departments and regional offices in terms of evaluation is key.

Support from the ICAO Secretary General and Council

21. Despite the resource constraints previously outlined under weaknesses, there is evidence of good support by the Head of the organization, the President of the Council and donor countries who share a key interest in a robust function and professional objective reports. EAO has been able to increase its limited resources on an ad-hoc basis by requesting additional funding from the Secretary-General which, thus far, has always been provided.

A good appetite for evaluation by key stakeholders

22. Evaluation reports are in demand, and discussed by the Council and Committees. Several recent evaluation reports have been influential and are continuously referred to as important inputs into the work of the organization (e.g. Secretariat support to the council, evaluation of ICAO's standard setting process). All stakeholders interviewed indicated that they felt the office's current output is reasonable with a few pointing to possible fatigue should there be more oversight reports, albeit possibly conflating evaluation with other oversight reports.

⁹ EAO Guidelines for Decentralized Evaluation, ICAO, Draft, June 2019.

23. Stakeholders' expectations focus on evaluation facilitating a better understanding of why - and to what extent - ICAO is reaching its mandate to help States achieve the highest possible degree of uniformity in civil aviation regulations, standards, procedures and organization performance.¹⁰ They are especially interested in the implications of these results to improve ICAO's performance. Beyond accountability, evaluation is expected to add a learning value to the steady and reliable baseline data that ICAO is regularly collecting about aviation engineering and management standard compliance at the country level (performance audits).

Good link between evaluation planning and corporate planning

24. Central evaluations are included in the Medium-Term Strategy thus enabling a direct link between the corporate strategy and evaluation function. The evaluation plan reflects most key activities of the organization, although with insufficient focus on results, and is approved by the Council.

EAO staff possess the right professional experience and background

25. The current Evaluation Specialist is a seasoned evaluator with over twenty years experience with other UN organizations in the evaluation field. A noticeable improvement in the quality of evaluation reports since his arrival two years ago points to an increased professionalization of the function. His initiatives regarding report improvements, decentralized evaluation guidelines and ideas for building an evaluation culture are positive signals for further strengthening ICAO's evaluation function at the central and decentralized levels. With the exception of some areas (e.g. gender, SDG relevance), the reports are broadly in line with the UNEG Norms and Standards.

EAO's participatory approach has created more space for evaluation

26. The involvement of internal stakeholders in reference groups has increased ownership of the reports. While there are opportunities for further strengthening this, it is the right approach to building a stronger evaluation culture.

A robust process for management response and implementation tracking

27. Drawing on the approach developed in internal audit and the existing system, EAO evaluations systematically require a management response which are subsequently followed on a regular and frequent basis by the evaluator. The recommendation tracking system provides real-time information on status and opens room for dialogue with the departments. Management responses reflect strong tone at the top and are submitted to the Secretary General before being finalized. The Secretary General at times discusses her views of the draft response with managers resulting in adjustments.

Opportunities

Operating in an evaluation-rich environment

28. ICAO's location in Montreal provides it with easy access to potential evaluation expertise and other resources. The *École nationale d'administration publique*, located in Montreal, offers both a Ph.D. and Master's degree programme in evaluation. Other universities offer advanced degrees in social science research, as well as aviation engineering and management - all of which can offer a pool of students or expertise from which ICAO can draw in support of evaluation.

¹⁰ Art. 37 of the 1944 Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation.

29. Looking more broadly, Federal Government Departments and organizations involved in aviation – including Transport Canada, Canadian Border Services Agency, and the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority – all conduct evaluations of their programmes as per federal evaluation policies. ICAO can also benefit from Canada’s strong evaluation culture by tapping into the resources offered by the Canadian Evaluation Society and other professional evaluation organizations, such as the American Evaluation Association and the Canadian Association of International Development Professionals. Deepening and strengthening ICAO’s network would increase its access to evaluation expertise and knowledge.

Increasing capacity through secondments and junior professional officers

30. EAO already uses interns to supplement capacity but these internships tend to be of short duration (less than six months). Other no-cost options to increase capacity for longer durations include the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme or Associate Expert programme which could provide EAO with 2-3 year appointments funded by donor countries, and the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) programme, which could offer EAO specialized expertise for specific evaluation projects. A UN volunteer staff position could also be considered as their cost is much lower than regular posts and would allow to bring in an experienced volunteer from a programme country. The UNV online volunteer programme could also be used for short term translation and survey work at no cost.

Leveraging synergies between audit and evaluation

31. Both functions are struggling with resources to implement their programme. The current co-location could benefit even more from this proximity and ability to ensure joint planning. For instance, regional office audits could be cast as performance audit with a focus on economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the work done by these audits. The Evaluation Specialist could contribute to the development of this approach. In addition, regional office audits could be combined with an evaluation of the regional office thus using the model of joint audit/evaluations. This latter option would have to be weighed against the current capacities and is likely only to be feasible if staff capacity for evaluation is increased.

The value of evaluation in supporting the ‘No Country Left Behind’ initiative is clear

32. ICAO’s ‘No Country Left Behind initiative’ has focussed its activities in countries most challenged in implementing Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). Contrary to much of ICAO’s work, which is primarily operational and regulatory in nature, the ‘No Country Left Behind Initiative’ organizes ICAO’s capacity building activities around a set of measurable results and targets at the country level. This programme-like approach lends itself well to evaluative work. Dovetailing evaluations with country-level audits of SARP implementation can help strengthen ICAO’s country-level work by providing insights into tangible gains, as well as identifying best practices and solutions to challenges.

Openness to earmarking project funds for decentralized evaluations

33. ICAO’s fiscally constrained environment limits the capacity for the central evaluation unit to expand. There is, however, openness for evaluation funds to be earmarked within projects managed by ICAO’s Technical Cooperation Branch (TCB). While the details have yet to be worked out, the Council has supported funding high-value project evaluations through these project-level funds. This would stimulate the conduct of decentralized evaluation. The application of EAO’s recently developed Decentralized Evaluation Guidelines would also support this evaluative work.

Funding evaluation capacity from technical cooperation envelopes

34. Resource constraints could be overcome if the overhead income charged for TCB projects could be tapped into to fund at least one evaluator who could manage TCB decentralized evaluations. The Panel was informed that whenever there is a surplus on overhead income at year end this amount is moved to a reserve fund. The Council could determine to set aside a certain amount to fund TCB evaluations and evaluation staff on an annual basis, and these funds could be transferred to a dedicated account for strengthening evaluation instead of to the reserve fund.

Updating the evaluation policy would better articulate existing deficiencies

35. ICAO's existing evaluation policy is dated and does not articulate a fully developed vision of the function. Areas such as funding and the conduct of decentralized evaluation, have recently been developed (or are being developed) and are not reflected in the policy. The current policy also fails to explain adequately how evaluation projects are selected, relying mostly on audit-like criteria and practices to determine the timing and scope of evaluations. Updating the policy would be an opportunity to engage with evaluation stakeholders within ICAO to better articulate the value of evaluation within ICAO, systematize decentralized evaluation, and define an evaluation-specific approach to project selection and timing.

The use of an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) is a good practice, and its use could be strengthened at ICAO

36. Recent evaluations have benefitted from the use of a reference group. ERGs are a good way to integrate the views of various stakeholders, and tend to enhance the validity and credibility of evaluations. In an organization with a weak evaluation culture, an ERG could create a small group of evaluation champions throughout the organization. Selecting the right members is key. EAO could select members for a specific evaluation or, based on their position in the organization and their interest in evaluation. Either option could work, as long as the ERGs are managed in a way that encourages dialogue and learning between members, and that benefits from the active engagement of these multiple viewpoints.

Using decentralized evaluations to enhance an evaluation culture within ICAO

37. The emergence of decentralized evaluation can be an opportunity to strengthen the evaluation culture in ICAO from the ground up. From the Panel's perspective, decentralized evaluations can be managed by staff who have an interest in learning more about and contributing to evaluation. With EAO's support, this group can benefit from existing training programmes or modules,¹¹ and apply this knowledge by advising on and/or decentralized evaluations. In addition to sharing the burden of managing evaluations, the use of a volunteers to manage evaluations is an opportunity to build knowledge of evaluation within the organization. It can contribute to improving the visibility of evaluative work within ICAO and contribute to a stronger evaluation culture.

Evaluation can play a role in better articulating and measuring ICAO's contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

38. ICAO has recently reinvigorated its efforts to define its contributions to the SDGs. To date, however, the links between ICAO's work and the achievement of results that contribute to the SDGs remain weak.

¹¹ The Canadian Evaluation Society offers a variety of courses and training workshops. The most complete for the 'new' evaluator is the 'Essential Skills Series' which is offered periodically throughout the year. (<https://evaluationcanada.ca/essential-skills-series-evaluation>). There are several other pre-packaged training modules that exist in an online format.

EAO's upcoming evaluation of ICAO's contribution to the SDGs has yet to be defined. The Panel's view is that ICAO would benefit from an evaluation that focusses on the organizational contribution to one (i.e. SDG 9) or some key SDGs. The evaluation could be a 'quick win' for both EAO and the organization by being a mechanism to express ICAO's core mandate, activities and results as they relate to the SDGs. It could also provide a framework for the organization to better start tracking its performance regarding SDG contribution, and position it to have solid performance data in the future.

Challenges

39. While the Panel found several strengths and opportunities (above), it is concerned about a number of weaknesses and challenges.

Nascent evaluation culture

40. While some stakeholders seem keen on evaluation, the overall evaluation culture in ICAO is weak and the panel detected a certain passive response to it. Several aspects in particular warrant highlighting.

41. While many interviewees referred back to key evaluations, there was little appetite for more evaluation or for a greater evidence base for results. Evaluations reflect important key organizational processes but less so result areas.

42. There is a weak *knowledge management system* to systematically collect and share experience and lessons learned in ICAO, even though the Panel detected strong demand for this from the regional offices. Accessing evaluation reports is not easy. Neither the ICAO website nor the intranet provide access to evaluation reports. While the organization's intranet has a site for evaluation reports, it is not a complete repository. In addition, there appear to be few decentralized evaluation plans and EAO engagement at times is *ad hoc* or by chance.

43. Evaluation has been less influential with regards to accountability and learning so more needs to be done to prove its relevance in these two important objectives for the function. Part of this stems from low annual output and limited capacities. However, the Panel detected a certain degree of apathy towards evaluation by key stakeholders interviewed. One interviewee acknowledged that recommendations are accepted, even if not feasible, as it "did not matter".

44. Finally, the unclear distribution of roles and responsibilities within ICAO,¹² and the sensitive aviation safety context in which ICAO operates, may also discourage a strong evaluation culture as evaluative evidence can sometimes be overridden by political and security considerations. The Panel was repeatedly told that given the political context, any change is a challenge.

Small and fragile staff capacity in EAO and growing expectations

45. Staffing of the Evaluation Division in EAO is inadequate. Given the size of ICAO, the central evaluation function with only one single staff position is clearly inadequate, small and fragile. While the current Evaluation Specialist shows much enthusiasm and ideas, a one-person unit can only do so much and the function risks being destabilized should that person leave. While interns complement the Division, they are not a satisfactory solution to capacity issues nor does it retain institutional memory.

¹² JIU Review of Management and Administration in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) 2019, page iii.

46. The Panel’s concern is that planned activities, in particular regarding decentralized evaluation, training and communications¹³, will fall short unless the capacity issue is addressed. Considering the anticipated doubling of air traffic aviation every 15 years and the emerging trends and dynamic environment in which the organization operates,¹⁴ there is a risk of progressive irrelevance of evaluation if it does not start addressing learning needs in the field related to the contribution of the organization to economic development and sustainable development. Some thoughts on this have been addressed under opportunities and in the recommendations section.

Very limited resources for conducting central evaluations

47. Not only is the number of evaluation staff in the EAO limited to one person, but so are the financial resources to conduct evaluations. The resources provided for the function in 2013 according to the JIU report were among the lowest for an evaluation function in the UN system. Six years later, this situation has not changed but rather worsened, at a time when most UN agencies have increased their evaluation budgets. The share of evaluation in the EAO budget has also declined since 2013 (staffing dropped from two to one).

Table 1: Budget Evolution for ICAO’s Evaluation Function 2010-2019

| Year | # of ICAO Staff | # of EAO Staff | # of Evaluation Staff (P4 level) | Budget (in CAD) for Evaluation Function Including Salary ¹⁵ | % spent by ICAO on the evaluation function* |
|------|-----------------|----------------|----------------------------------|--|---|
| 2010 | 730 | 5 | 1 | 201,000 | |
| 2011 | 701 | 5 | 1 | 193,000 | |
| 2012 | 699 | 6 | 2 (one for 3 months) | 213,000 | |
| 2013 | 677 | 7 | 2 | 406,000 | 0.28 |
| 2014 | 676 | 6 | 2 (one for 6 months) | 298,000 | 0.12 |
| 2015 | 688 | 6 | 1 | 211,000 | 0.08 |
| 2016 | 696 | 6 | 1 | 220,000 | 0.08 |
| 2017 | 709 | 6 | 1 | 232,000 | 0.09 |
| 2018 | 714 | 6 | 1 | 280,000 | 0.09 |
| 2019 | 724 | 6 | 1 | 277,000 | |

*Does not include D/EAO

48. The budget and staffing have further eroded since the 2013 data provided to the JIU. The current figure of 0.09 percent of the organizational expenditure dedicated to evaluation (Table 1) is on the low end of the UN spectrum (see Table 2 below) considering that the organization has a relatively modest total annual expenditure. The average cost per evaluation of USD \$ 20,600 is low in absolute terms and compared to most other UNEG members. It is based on a lean overall budget and limits what the EAO can do in terms of an evaluation and its ultimate independence to select what should be evaluated and not what can be evaluated. Furthermore, the average consultant fees paid by ICAO are significantly below market rates.

¹³ Medium Term Strategy 2016-2021, Annex 3.

¹⁴ JIU Op. cit.

¹⁵ Doesn’t include the Salary of C/EAO.

Limited identity from the audit function limits use of evaluation for learning

49. The Panel found that the visibility of the evaluation function is limited, as is the understanding by stakeholders of the differences with internal audit, partly because of its location in EAO. Being co-located with internal audit affects, to some extent, the evaluation function's clear identity, and also positions it as a purely oversight function rather than a learning function. This is also shaped by the use of similar processes and procedures. Interviewees used the word audit and evaluation interchangeably. As previously expressed, this set-up makes full sense in the organisational context and is similar to several other UN agencies. However, it reflects a finding of the JIU system-wide review of the evaluation function which stated that combined functions seem to struggle more and, on average, were ranked lower in most key performance areas (see Annex 7). The Panel therefore believes that, while co-location certainly has its benefits, additional measures are required to give the central evaluation function a distinctive identity, and improved and sufficient visibility. It is important to ensure that the dual function of accountability and learning is fully understood by key stakeholders and that more visibility is given to the function. (see para 43).

Lack of capacity for evaluation in regional offices

50. Zero Nominal Growth budgeting over most of the past decade has also affected the rest of the organization. Although there is interest in decentralized evaluations, regional Directors pointed to capacity constraints and the need for assistance. With such a small central capacity this will be a challenge. Only two of the evaluations in the past four years took place in the field (Uruguay and AFI Evaluation in Africa). While the Panel believes in strengthening decentralized evaluation, it believes a more incremental approach would be wise so as not to overwhelm field office capacities. In the short term, this means managing decentralized evaluations from headquarters (through the EAO) with progressive delegation of tasks to regional offices and departments. The Panel believes that given the current low number of decentralized evaluations this could be feasible but would require additional EAO capacity, in particular if there is a significant increase in TCB project evaluations.

Weak RBM culture

51. The current results framework and its indicators pose a challenge to evaluations. In the absence of baseline information, robust monitoring and evaluation systems, specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely (SMART) key performance indicators, and a well-functioning full RBM loop, it is difficult for any evaluation to speak to results obtained or explore the reasons for lack thereof.

Varying quality of evaluation reports with recently improved performance

52. With the support of an independent consultant, the Panel assessed the quality of all eight ICAO evaluation reports produced since 2015 (see Annex 3). Overall, the quality of the reports varies significantly. Only three reports are rated as "satisfactory". The mixed quality of evaluation reports potentially undermines the credibility and demand for evaluations over time. The Panel has also noted that while recent reports have shown consistent improvements, coverage of gender, human rights and SDGs (leaving no one behind) is still lagging. There are also methodological challenges. Reports tend not to use a theory-based approach. Using a theory-of-change approach would strengthen the quality of the report, and help build the evaluation and RBM culture. Methods tend to be standard and do not use more advanced technological options (e.g. artificial intelligence) or benchmarking.

Reports tend to be bulky, have a large focus and take a long time to prepare

53. The large scope and ambition of the reports takes a toll on the time required to produce them. The Panel noted a double loop sharing of evaluation reports with management in addition to a final sharing of the draft with the Secretary General's office (together with the draft management response). The final draft is also shared with the Secretary General, who is the ultimate recipient of the report, which not only poses timing issues, but also a threat to the independence of the report. It would be preferable that the Head of the organisation only receive the final report, as is the practice in other UN organizations. There is a need for a wider mix of products, including lesson learned reviews, meta synthesis, after-action reviews, real time evaluations etc. to increase the overall usefulness of the function.

Virtual ERGs reduce the scope for joint learning

54. The Panel noted the good use of ERGs but felt that their being only held online limited their potential for broader organizational learning and debate during the process.

Lack of transparency

55. ICAO falls short on the UNEG Norms and Standards with regards to transparency. It is one of the few UN organizations not publishing their evaluation reports. It is of note that organizations not publishing largely co-locate evaluation with internal audit.¹⁶ While it is a prerogative of the Council to determine publication of internal documents, not publishing evaluation reports clearly limits the effectiveness and credibility of the function, if not the organization.

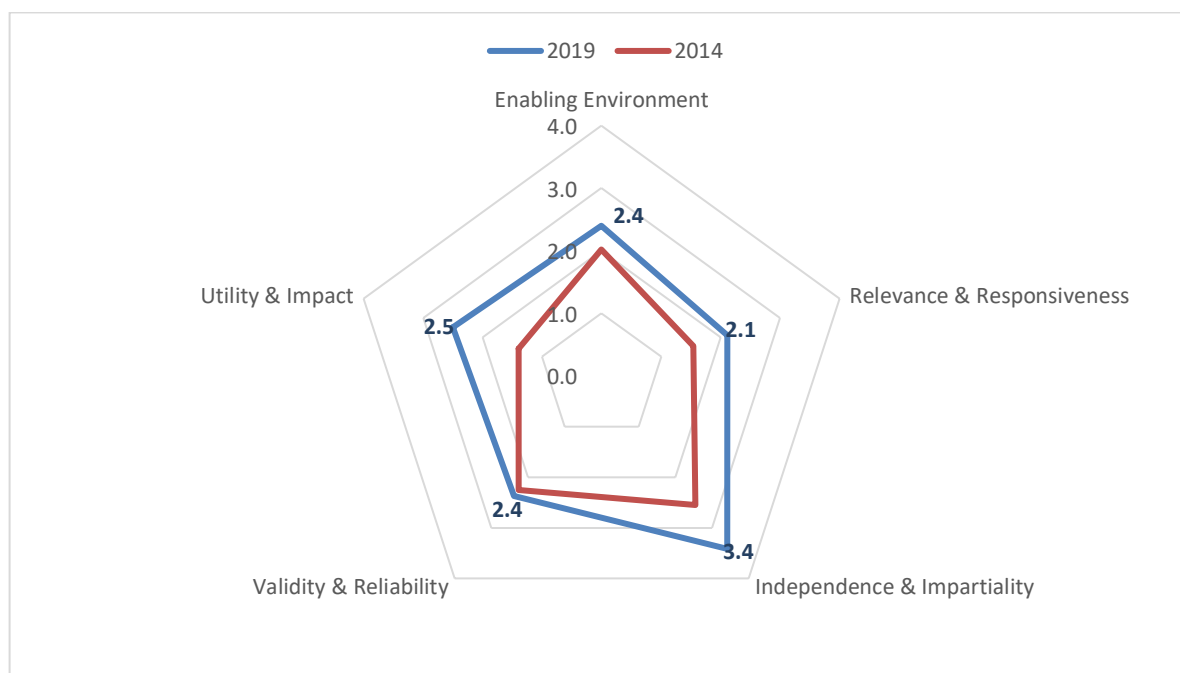
¹⁶ JIU, 2014 (a)

Chapter 3. Assessment against UNEG Norms

56. This Chapter presents the Panel’s findings of a systematic assessment of ICAO’s central evaluation function against the UNEG Normative Framework, i.e. independence, credibility, utility and enabling environment. The Panel’s review was based on a self-evaluation prepared by the EAO in advance of the Panel’s visit. This self-evaluation and its ratings were then discussed by the Panel and either accepted or modified. The resulting ratings are reflected in the body of the chapter. On most criteria, the Panel’s assessment matched those of the self-evaluation indicating that the self-evaluation was done with a good understanding of current limitations.

57. Figure 2 summarizes the rating of ICAO’s *central* evaluation function. The decentralized function was not rated as it is virtually inexistent. Overall, the central evaluation function has significantly improved since the JIU 2013/14 report on all criteria. These ratings reflect the average of the ratings of several sub-questions for each criterion which are all further elaborated below.

Figure 2: Overall assessment of ICAO’s evaluation function, 2014 and 2019



Key: 4: good practices, 3: satisfactory, 2: under development, 1: nascent
Source: Peer Review Panel, 2015 (Annex 2); JIU 2014

58. As per the UNEG Framework for Peer Review of the Evaluation Function, the review’s approach was guided by the following overarching questions: “Is the enabling environment conducive to building a robust function that plays the role it should?” “Are the Organization’s evaluation policy, function and its products: independent; credible; useful and influential for learning and accountability purposes?” The Panel assessed the evaluation function’s performance against the UNEG Norms and Standards and the evidence base according to four core assessment criteria:

(a) **Enabling environment.** This criterion assesses the evaluation architecture and to what extent the right level of support is given to the function and to what extent the function is in demand;

(b) **Independence** of evaluations and the evaluation system(s), which requires the evaluation process being impartial and independent in its function from the process, concerned with policy making and programme management. The planning and selection *of evaluation subjects should be impartial and independent*;

(c) **Credibility** of evaluations that requires them to report successes and failures, as well as sufficient participation of stakeholders. This depends on the expertise and independence of the evaluators, as well as the degree of transparency of the evaluation process; and

(d) **Utility** or results of evaluation in terms of having an impact on decision-making, which requires that evaluation findings are perceived as relevant and useful and are presented in a clear and concise way, fully reflecting the different interests and needs of parties involved.

59. To conduct its assessment, the Panel used a framework of 54 performance indicators, which have been developed against the UNEG Norms and Standards.¹⁷ For each performance indicator a rating scale is used where: Level 1 is rudimentary / VERY LOW; level 2 is ad hoc or developing / LOW; level 3 is systematized and routinized / AVERAGE; and, level 4 is refined and enhanced use / HIGH.

The Enabling Environment

60. **Evaluation architecture:** In assessing how ICAO is organized to carry out the evaluation function, the Panel acknowledges that the central evaluation function of ICAO (EAO) is well structured and operates independently of the control of management in the planning, management, conduct and reporting of evaluations. It generally supports the broad strategic and programmatic decision-making of the organization. However, although the linkage with internal audit is excellent, other linkages with decentralized evaluation, monitoring and performance reporting, knowledge management and other forms of assessment are made to some extent but are not fully operational. (Rating: 2/4).

61. **Governance:** The governance structure for evaluation in ICAO, and roles and responsibilities of legislative/ governing bodies and senior management are well defined through the EAO's Charter. Evaluation plans are approved by the Council. Evaluation summaries are presented to the Council and important decisions are being made on evaluation recommendations by the Council. The EAAC and the Working Group for Governance and Efficiency review evaluation reports. However, while Governing bodies appreciate evaluation, they do not necessarily have a good understanding of its role and purpose. The Panel observed systematic confusion between evaluation and audit at all levels of the organization. Evaluation is mainly used as a mechanism for supporting organizational accountability rather than learning. This limits the value and sustainability of evaluation to strategically position ICAO to improve organizational performance and efficiency. (Rating: 2/4)

62. **Mandate, Policy and Strategy:** The ICAO Evaluation Policy was approved by the Council in 2014 (C-DEC 203/3). It provides the institutional framework for the evaluation function and complements the Charter for EAO. It aims to foster a common understanding of evaluation and provides the evaluation criteria that serve as a foundation for quality assurance. The Policy also provides guidance for the funding of evaluations of extra-budgetary activities and the supporting role of EAO to decentralized evaluations. The Policy outlines the: aims of evaluation; guiding principles; types of evaluation that ICAO conducts; evaluation criteria; planning and budgeting for evaluations; elements of quality assurance;

¹⁷ This framework has been developed on the basis of the JIU maturity matrix for the central evaluation function which is available on: Analysis of the evaluation function in the United Nations system; JIU/REP/2014/6 https://www.unjiu.org/sites/www.unjiu.org/files/jiu_document_files/products/en/reports-notes/JIU%20Products/JIU_REP_2014_6_English.pdf

roles and responsibilities; dissemination of evaluation reports; and follow up to evaluation recommendations.

63. In the Panel's view, the Policy should better emphasize the organizational leadership's firm commitment to use, publicize and follow up on evaluation outcomes. Accordingly, the Policy should take account of the following needs: (a) more emphasis on the role of evaluation within the organization (purpose), in particular concerning learning; (b) a clearer articulation of the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders; (c) clarification on how and whether reports will be made public; (d) explanations about the difference between evaluation and other types of assessments carried out within the organization, in particular audit; (e) clarifications on how evaluations are prioritized and planned, particularly in terms of their linkages to the Business Plan; (f) clarifications on how evaluations are budgeted, with special emphasis on decentralized evaluation; and, g) a statement on disclosure and dissemination for full evaluation reports being published on ICAO's public website. A summary review of the current policy is attached in Annex 4. (Rating: 2/4)

64. The Panel acknowledges that the absence of an organizational evaluation strategy with results framework and indicators and support from senior management does not provide an enabling environment for EAO's results oriented approach. Nevertheless, the Panel noted some instances of support to promote the evaluation function and for evaluation including requests by senior management for evaluation, allocation of additional budget when requested (e.g. in 2018) and effective follow up to the implementation of evaluation recommendations by management. Overall, there is understanding on the part of senior management on the added-value of evaluation, but there are only a few 'champions' who truly promote the function. (Rating: 2/4)

65. **Supporting implementation of the evaluation policy:** EAO has an evaluation manual/guideline and tools in place for evaluation. These documents refer to key aspects of the policy and many of the UNEG criteria. The Panel finds the policy should have been complemented with a theory of change and an implementation strategy in particular for decentralized evaluation and its use. (Rating: 3/4)

66. The Governing Council approved the Evaluation Policy in 2014 and indicated that the implementation of the policy should be reviewed once in five years. The Panel took note of EAO's intention to use the present Review as the initial step to update the Policy. (Rating: 3/4)

67. **Resources:** Assessing human core resources, the Panel observed that there are clear dedicated core resources for evaluation from the regular budget. The budget has been stable for the past two triennia but is over a third less than in 2013. Although funding for one single evaluation P4 staff has been consistent, the core resources are inadequate and the current situation is putting the sustainability of the evaluation function at risk. One member of staff for evaluation is clearly insufficient to match current EAO's ambitions, in particular concerning the resources necessary to support the development of a decentralized evaluation, which are undervalued by EAO. (Rating: 3/4)

68. Core financial resources are inadequate. While the overall EAO budget has been stagnant for most of the past decade, the evaluation budget, including the salary of the one evaluator, is small. From a high point in 2013/2014 when the JIU review was undertaken, the ICAO evaluation function is probably one of the few UN evaluation functions less resourced in 2019 than in 2013. Table 2 shows that the current 0.9 percent share of the ICAO expenditures for 2018 was already significantly lower than the average for small organizations (point B) in 2014, but has since further decreased from the 0.28% at the

time of the JIU report.¹⁸ The current budget allocation is considered by EAO and the organization's management as adequate in that it allows for two key evaluations a year. The Panel disagrees with this view. It leads to a work planning process that is not needs-based but resource-based and does not aim to cover the most critical results area of the organization. Lack of funding thus can also affect the independence to implement what should be done. Access to competent evaluation consultants is a serious concern, with limited post of consultants and limits on consultancy rates. (Rating: 2/4)

Table 2: Expenditure by UN Organizations on Evaluation 2014

| Budgetary analysis by level of performance, size of organization and structural location | % of organizational expenditure on evaluation |
|--|---|
| A. Levels of performance | |
| Cluster I <i>High level of development</i> | 0.33 |
| Cluster II <i>Average level of development</i> | 0.38 |
| Cluster III <i>Below-average level of development</i> | 0.30 |
| B. Size of organization⁴⁸ | |
| Large organization (<i>between US\$ 1-5 billion</i>) | 0.18 |
| Medium-sized organization (<i>between US\$ 1 billion and 300 million</i>) | 0.17 |
| Small organization (<i>less than 300 million</i>) | 0.33 |
| C. Structural location | |
| Stand-alone | 0.33 |
| Co-located within oversight | 0.14 |
| Co-located within management | 0.28 |

69. Although the Evaluation Policy foresees the possibility to fund extra-budgetary activities with earmarked extra-budgetary resources, this opportunity has never been explored. Currently no budget is allocated from non-core/ extra budgetary resources. (Rating: 3/4)

70. No budget is allocated from non-core / extra budgetary support for human resources (Rating: N/A)

71. **Results and accountability, learning culture:** The organization does not have a comprehensive RBM policy or system. However, ICAO has decided to use RBM as its management approach and some aspects of it (through the Business Plan and CMRT) are being implemented. Linkages between evaluation, strategy, budget, programmatic areas, etc. are not well defined. Implementation of RBM is not complete. The overall organizational culture for results and accountability / learning is low. (Rating: 2/4)

Relevance, responsiveness, efficiency and adaptability

72. **Relevance to stakeholder demands and coverage:** Coverage planning benefits from the evaluation and audit functions' co-location. Evaluations are planned and prioritized according to clear selection criteria including coverage, potential for learning, risk assessment, and demand of the Council and management. However, the Panel believes that the selection criteria could be improved in the

¹⁸ JIU, 2014 (b) p. 21, JIU, 2014 (a), p. 31

Evaluation Policy. In particular by expanding the evaluation coverage to crosscutting issues and enhancing the potential for learning. (Rating: 3/4)

73. The Panel observed that there is currently limited support to decentralized or technical evaluation functions by the central evaluation unit. Although the policy foresees a role for EAO to develop and establish effective guidelines, a preliminary draft of these were only recently produced. Management does also not appear to report the few decentralized evaluations to EAO, which is a missed opportunity to provide quality assurance. (Rating: 2/4)

74. There has been progress over the last two years in the coverage and responsiveness of the evaluation plan, in particular regarding the themes related to key functions of the organization, such as the evaluations of standard setting and global plans. This covers some of the key mandates of the organization. It has contributed to build evaluation reputation and trust with management. However, the Panel believes that the most recent themes selected (the recent evaluation of the Secretariat support to the Council and the on-going evaluation of the RBM system) are more of a performance audit nature and too internal looking. In general, evaluations tend to focus on processes rather than results. It is therefore difficult for the Council to hold management accountable for results and support an RBM culture. (Rating: 2/4)

75. **Responsiveness to UN reform, global challenges, gender and human rights:** The EAO, despite being very small, is an active member of UNEG participating in its work groups (such as the Peer Review Working Group) and uses UNEG products (such as guidelines and tools). ICAO has contributed to the Working Group on Professionalization of Evaluation (2016). Capacity limitations prevent EAO from engaging in UN reform and global evaluation issues. Gender and human rights appear not to be a priority, in part given the very technical standard setting nature of the organization. (Rating: 2/4)

76. The Panel observed that there is currently no coordination or collaboration with other UN organizations in the conduct of evaluations. It recognized, however, that capacity limitations make this a lower priority. (Rating: 1/4)

77. While the Panel agreed with EAO that support to national evaluation capacities is not a priority for such a small non-resident UN Agency without Country Offices, it notes that national evaluation capacity is a global UN priority which should be addressed by all UN evaluation functions, including EAO. However, responsibility for this should be shared across the UN system-wide evaluation system who should support and incentivize non-resident small agencies through some form of special and differential treatment. (Rating: 1/4)

78. Acknowledging the technical nature of ICAO programmes and mandate, the Panel observed that gender, human rights and diversity are only considered to some extent, but not systematically across all evaluation work. (Rating: 2/4)

79. Concerning the extent to which EAO is upholding and promoting the principles and values to which the United Nations is committed in its evaluation practice, the Panel observed that the link between ICAO's work with the SDGs is increasingly emphasized in its evaluations. Moreover, there is a plan to evaluate the contribution of ICAO towards achieving the SDGs. (Rating: 3/4)

80. **Adaptability and continuous improvement:** The Panel observed that, although client satisfaction is being continuously assessed, adaptation and change process is slow and focused on mechanical implementation issues rather than broad, strategic ones. In this regard, the Panel cautioned

EAO not to take a broad approach to this topic and start with quick wins such as meta synthesis, an evaluability assessment and case studies at country level. (Rating: 2/4)

81. The Panel did not observe any initiatives to generate knowledge or empower stakeholders through evaluation **beyond ICAO**. Nor did it observe initiatives to participate in forums and learning about advances in evaluation, such as addressing complex contexts and complicated evaluands, which are relevant in the field of international civil aviation. While this may be a luxury in a one-person office, it observed that it may be possible to do so through tapping into evaluation communities such as the Canadian Evaluation Society. (Rating: 1/4)

Impartiality and balanced perspectives

82. **Structural independence:** The evaluation function reports to the Secretary General. It is independent of decision-making and implementation. It participates in management bodies as observers/ advisors/ information brokers in order to be kept informed and produces relevant products. (Rating: 3/4)

83. The appointment of the Head of Evaluation, who is the Director of the EAO and a trained auditor, is made by the Secretary General and approved by the Governing Council. (Rating: 4/4)

84. **Functional independence:** The Head of Evaluation has significant discretion over the development and issuance of evaluation reports. According to the standard operating procedures for audit and evaluation report clearance, the draft report and the management action plan are submitted together to the Secretary General for review and agreement. Once the report is finalized, it is sent to the Secretary General for endorsement of the Management Action Plan. (Rating: 4/4)

85. The Head of Evaluation has significant discretion over the planning of the evaluation work programme, which the Governing Council duly approves. The planning, however, is affected by the shortage of resources and EAO plans are based on what it can do and not what it should do. This limits effective discretion over planning. There are mostly adequate safeguards for independence and no violations of independence. (Rating: 3/4)

86. In terms of access to information, the Panel observed that EAO staff have complete access to all ICAO records, files, documents, accounts, physical property and personnel, as required in the conduct of evaluations. EAO has also free and unrestricted access to the ICAO Council. (Rating: 4/4)

87. As per the Charter, the Director of EAO submits an annual report on evaluation activities and audit to the Secretary General who then submits it to the Council. The annual report of the EAO provides a full, if not compact overview of evaluations conducted by EAO. Given the statutory shortness of the annual report, there is little information on identified systemic issues or a separation of audit and evaluation follow-up which leads to a further blending of the two functions. In addition, individual evaluation reports and recommendations are presented and discussed at the Council. For each evaluation, EAO prepares Council Working Papers (C-WPs), which summarize the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations for discussion during Council Sessions. (Rating: 3/4)

88. **Built-in mechanisms for impartiality:** In terms of controls and approaches for stakeholder involvement and balanced perspectives, EAO uses external consultants to provide impartial technical/evaluation expertise. It holds periodic meetings with evaluation stakeholders throughout the evaluation process and maintains documented processes for the formal endorsement of evaluation

deliverables (e.g. terms of reference, inception reports, final reports) by the reference groups. Despite these efforts, the Panel perceived a certain level of apathy from some stakeholders. (Rating: 3/4)

89. **Professional/technical Independence:** EAO staff are expected to show the highest level of professional objectivity in gathering, assessing and communicating information about the activity or process being examined. The quality of the evaluation process and results is ensured through conformity to the UNEG Norms and Standards, and use of the Evaluation Manual and associated tools and templates. Overall, the Panel observed appreciation for evaluation reports. (Rating: 3/4)

90. In terms of the evaluation function, the Panel observed that it is independent but not isolated. It is engaged with the organization and has a good standing with the Governing Body. However, the evaluation function does not benefit from a separate and distinct identity from audit and it is somehow overshadowed by it, thus not fulfilling its full value added. (Rating: 3/4)

91. **Behavioural independence:** Evaluators and evaluation managers fully abide by all accepted norms, standards and guidelines of professionalism, ethics, integrity and cultural sensitivity. There are no known cases where norms and standards have been breached by the evaluators and evaluation managers. (Rating: 4/4)

92. The evaluation function benefits from the advantages of being in the same office as audit and staff abide by accepted norms, standards and guidelines. However, accepted recommendations are not always implemented due to funding constraints and are accepted by management with this in mind. (Rating: 3/4)

93. In terms of the role of the Council, the Panel found that Member States abide by accepted norms and standards. However, participation of Member State representatives in ERGs could imply a risk of undue influence on the evaluation process. (Rating: 3/4)

Credibility, validity and reliability

94. **Evaluators and evaluation teams, staff and consultant quality:** The current Evaluation Specialist is an experienced evaluator with a good understanding of organizational and institutional issues. (Rating: 3/4)

95. External consultants meet the defined levels of professional expertise in evaluation. However, it is very difficult to get independent evaluation consultants who have knowledge and experience in evaluation and aviation. Limited availability of evaluation expertise in the field of international civil aviation must be addressed when developing the decentralized evaluation function. (Rating: 3/4)

96. Some consideration is given to the application of different methods and types of evaluations, but a one-person evaluation unit and budget constraints limit what the evaluation unit can do. (Rating: 2/4)

97. There are clear policies and opportunities for all staff to enhance their evaluation skills and receive training on the latest evaluation methods. The Evaluation Specialist attends UNEG organized and other trainings. (Rating: 3/4)

98. **Conditions are in place to ensure quality and consistency in the application of standards and approaches:** EAO has developed a Manual for evaluation, which needs to be updated to be in line with the UNEG Norms and Standards. Similarly, the Decentralized Evaluation Guidelines have only recently been developed and should be finalized following a review of the strategy for decentralized evaluation. (Rating: 2/4)

99. Stakeholders (including the national counterparts when necessary) are systematically consulted throughout the evaluation process (planning and design, conduct and follow up). However, the Panel observed that control systems, including ERGs, mostly play a passive accountability-focused role. Since they are only engaged in a virtual commenting process, they do not display an active lessons learned-focused engagement. (Rating: 2/4)

100. The quality of evaluation reports is assessed internally within EAO. There is no external review in place. (Rating: 2/4)

101. The quality of evaluation reports varies for the period reviewed. The Panel conducted an analysis of the evaluation reports since 2015, the results of which are summarized in the table in Annex 3. The analysis indicates medium quality overall but with significant improvements, especially in the last two years. (Rating: 3/4)

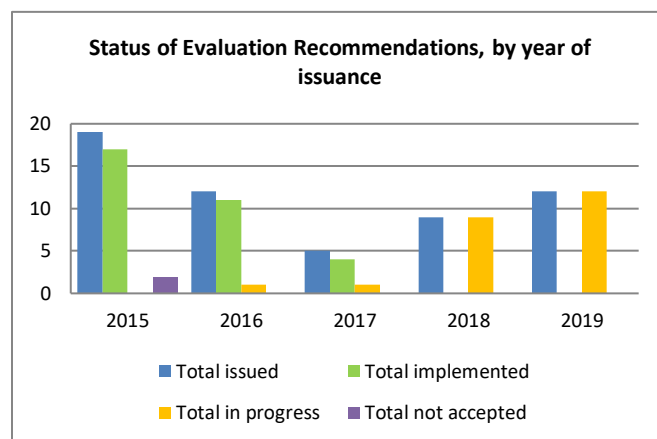
Utility and potential impact

102. **Conditions in place to enhance use:** Although there is a dissemination and communication strategy, the Panel detected mostly passive sharing of reports. No other products are produced. The reports are posted on the intranet but difficult to find and most stakeholders said they had no interest in accessing them. (Rating: 2/4)

103. With regards timeliness in meeting stakeholder demands, evaluations are sometimes not completed within the set schedule. Nevertheless, the Panel recognized that evaluation reports are presented to the Council allowing for time sufficient for adequate discussion on the report and recommendations. (Rating: 3/4)

104. The recommendation tracking system is a strong point of EAO. Evaluations that are not accepted are now rare, but the Panel is concerned that none of the 2018 recommendations have been fully implemented and that there are still outstanding recommendations from 2015-17. However, since the implementation of recommendations takes time, the Panel is of the opinion that there is no need to report every two months. (Rating: 4/4)

Table 3: Status of implementation of recommendations 2015 - 2019



105. In terms of accessibility and transparency, evaluation reports are currently only accessible to Council members through the Council Portal and summary evaluation reports are available in the EAO

intranet. A disclosure policy should foresee exceptions to wider dissemination with the option of not publishing sensitive information as decided by the Head of Evaluation. (Rating: 2/4)

106. Evaluation results are shared internally within ICAO and with the members of the Air Navigation Commission. Evaluation results are also discussed by management, Council Committees and during the Governing Council Sessions. (Rating: 3/4)

107. Evaluation results are not shared externally. They are not accessible to Member States at the field level, nor other UN organizations or external stakeholders. The norm within the UN system is that evaluation reports are available on the corporate website. (Rating: 1/4)

108. **Outcome level, nature and level of use:** When it comes to recommendation implementation rates, most of the recommendations of the evaluations conducted in 2015, 2016 and 2017 are implemented. However, recommendations made in 2018 are not yet implemented. Quantitative assessments in client satisfaction surveys conducted by EAO since 2018 suggest that evaluation recommendations were specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely (SMART), and constructive. The Panel reviewed the quality of recommendations in all eight reports and found that the quality has improved in recent years (Rating: 3/4)

109. The Panel assesses as “low” the use of evaluation for strategic setting at ICAO level. The fundamental issue is that evaluations do not indicate how the organization has contributed to corporate strategic results. EAO could use its engagement with each ERG to agree upon the chain of results towards corporate strategic results. Currently, there is limited evidence that evaluation is truly orienting work at the strategic level. (Rating: 2/4)

110. The Panel’s assessment of the use of evaluation for strategic direction setting at higher programmatic level is “average”. The 2017 *“ICAO Partnerships with UN Organizations and Agencies”* evaluation paved the way for a new partnership framework to be developed. Similarly, the recommendations of the evaluation of GANP and Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) are being used as an input for the development of the Global Aviation Safety Oversight System (GASOS). (Rating: 3/4)

111. At project and programme implementation level for programmatic improvement and learning, the Panel assessment is “average”. The recommendation made by the evaluation of the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan) and the evaluation of ICAO’s technical assistance to Uruguay were useful for implementation. (Rating: 3/4)

112. External use of ICAO’s evaluation is rated low since reports are not publicized. (Rating 1/4)

113. **Impact level, effect of use:** Follow up after the implementation of recommendations, post evaluation/usefulness of recommendation assessment only started recently. Currently, the unit records evidence of effect/impact if it is brought to their attention. (Rating: 2/4)

114. The Panel observed that Council and senior management appreciate evaluations for learning purposes but this still needs to materialize into decision-making that embeds evaluation lessons learned into action which will subsequently enhance the institutionalization of evaluation within ICAO. (Rating: 2/4)

Chapter 4. Conclusion

Overall, the Panel confirmed that, despite resource constraints, ICAO's evaluation function has further improved on its functioning since the 2013/2014 JIU review which ranked ICAO in the lowest percentile.

The function, with some exceptions, meets the UNEG Norms and Standards. Opportunities for improvement are hampered by severe resource limitations. The Panel recognizes that EAO may not be able to increase its regular budget but believes that it has the drive and vision to deliver more, and that some of this could be obtained by building partnerships with others and by strengthening support to decentralized evaluation.

EAO has clearly progressed in all assessment criteria since the last external review conducted by the JIU, but remains on the threshold of a fully-developed function. Unless the organization invests further into the function, further improvements will remain limited.

The current work output is seen as relevant and has recently covered major building blocks of ICAO's strategic and operational areas such as standard setting, GANP/GASP and RBM. EAO is now well positioned to move on to evaluations that provide evidence on results of the work of the organization. Improving this aspect could go hand in hand with planned improvements on RBM.

The envisaged investment in decentralized evaluation is warranted but, given current capacity constraints, the Panel concludes that the planned approach requires reconsideration and be more incremental.

Chapter 5. Recommendations

115. ICAO has an evolving evaluation function. Observed improvements in the quality of evaluation reports, the interest in pursuing decentralized evaluations, and senior management commitment to implementing evaluation recommendations all point to growth in a positive direction. It is, however, the opinion of the Panel that the evaluation unit has reached the limits of what is possible given the current resources available. In view of these limited resources ICAO does not fully benefit from the results and learning orientation that an evaluation lens brings. While improvements are possible with current resources, any significant improvement will require additional resources. The adoption of any of the following recommendations will need to be matched by a commitment to fund them adequately:

Recommendation 1: EAO should update its evaluation policy. This should be an all-of-organization policy with EAO as the custodian.

The panel noted some shortfalls in the current policy. An updated and more aspirational policy should describe the unique role that evaluation can play and distinguish it from audit. Importantly, it should articulate enhanced responsibility for decentralized evaluation, its funding structure and what it can do for the organization. A renewed policy should position the evaluation function as a key player in driving positive organizational change and contributing to achievement of results. Finally it should reflect the updated UNEG Norms and Standards and issues relevant for Agenda 2030.

Recommendation 2: The Secretary General, as part of the budgeting process for the next triennial budget 2023 to 2025, should identify/or request resources for at least one additional full-time position for the evaluation function.

The current work plan and ambition are not tenable and, unless the organization invests a minimum of one additional position at P2/P3 level, many of the planned activities in particular regarding decentralization risk falling short. An additional staff member could also help build institutional capacity and provide back-up should the Evaluation Specialist be absent. Should funding not be feasible, then some of the suggestions under Recommendation 3 may be considered although these options are less effective and less sustainable as they tend to provide funding for a maximum of two years (e.g. associate expert).

Recommendation 3: EAO should seek opportunities to increase its access to additional resources.

Alongside Recommendation 2, EAO should consider developing a multi-pronged resource mobilization approach. It could explore ways to increase its access to internal resources by examining options available within the UN system, including Associate Experts, UN volunteers or other such mechanisms. It could also explore developing partnerships with Canadian universities, Federal Departments and evaluation associations. All these options may increase access to staff and expertise at a minimal cost. EAO could otherwise focus on operationalizing the commitment to funding decentralized evaluations through TCB projects. The details have yet to be worked out for this but should include consideration of earmarking project funds (for complex funds over a threshold), establishing or exploiting the TCB surplus etc.. As funding would primarily come from countries, this evaluation work would be oriented to improving the implementation of standards in these countries.

Recommendation 4: EAO should incorporate innovative practices to increase the value of evaluation.

To date, EAO evaluations have been characterized by standard mixed-methods methodologies with a large focus on internal data and qualitative methods. They also have a large, high-level scope and formulaic application of the OECD-DAC criteria. While this is an acceptable evaluation practice, it is the opinion of the Panel that the value of evaluation can be increased by exploring other ways of planning, designing and conducting evaluations. First, EAO can consider exploring ways to incorporate new methods and external data sources into their evaluations. The partnerships and networks described in Recommendation 3 can help EAO access these new approaches. Evaluation could be planned with a more strategic and results-focused orientation. To date, much of the planning of evaluation has been limited by the current resource constraints. Consideration of evaluation-specific criteria in the planning of evaluations can help identify more needs-driven projects. EAO could consider a more needs focused application of OECD-DAC criteria in its evaluation questions. The Criteria were updated in December 2019 and make clear the importance of evaluation planning, to consider the relevance of all possible questions, and ensure that the evaluation focus on only those criteria and questions have the most value. Finally, having the evaluation and audit functions co-located, provides opportunities for synergies between the two. The EAO should consider conducting joint audits and evaluation when and where appropriate and useful. It can also consider conducting performance audits as part of the suite of products it produces for the organization.

Recommendation 5: EAO should play a more active role in strengthening the RBM community in the organization.

Evaluation is a key component of the RBM framework. Overall, the Panel saw that there were opportunities for EAO to become an institutional leader in RBM practices. With the use of ERGs and decentralized evaluation stakeholders, EAO could help increase awareness of RBM, the role of evaluation in RBM, and the importance of other components, such as results oriented decision making, performance measurement and learning, among others. This could be achieved through regular communications with these specific groups, as well as other RBM stakeholders in the organization, through an enhanced evaluation dissemination strategy that leverages existing online and social media platforms, as well as more traditional offerings such as 'brown bag lunches' and/or training and learning sessions. EAO's role could be formal or informal and would largely depend on its capacity to secure more resources to do this important work.

Recommendation 6: EAO should adopt a phased approach to implementing decentralized evaluation.

EAO has embarked on an ambitious plan to launch decentralized evaluations at ICAO. While the Panel applauds the ambition, the details have yet to be worked out by EAO. The Panel is concerned that the strategy currently proposed by EAO to create a relatively large and complex structure for supporting decentralized evaluations does not match the organization's interest or capacity to deliver. The operationalization of decentralized evaluations should be aligned to a thorough and realistic assessment of what can be achieved with resources available and what will be required to advance. It should also include consideration of organizational readiness for decentralized evaluation as articulated in an updated policy (see Recommendation 1). Currently, the best scope for decentralized evaluations will be in the field projects led by the TCB and country-based programming as part of the 'No Country Left Behind' initiative. We recommend that EAO considers starting with small, manageable evaluations of projects that have demonstrated an interest in evaluation. These first evaluations could be managed by EAO with a small group of interested volunteers from within the TCB. Piloting decentralized evaluations

will have to include an articulation of expectations, goals and targets of the evaluation, as well as a way to course correct as things progress.

Recommendation 7: EAO should seek to publish evaluation reports and make them publicly available.

The publication of evaluation reports aligns with UN and international norms and standards related to accountability and transparency. In addition, sharing evaluation reports is an opportunity to support organizational learning. To date, ICAO does not make evaluation reports publicly available, and makes them available to ICAO staff only through a portal that few staff access. Security concerns were cited as one of the main reasons EAO did not publish reports. However, the Panel did judge this to be a particularly important barrier based on the reports it reviewed. ICAO should pursue a strategy to make evaluation reports public, including a mechanism to identify where and when security concerns are an issue.

Recommendation 8: The Council in its selection of EAAC members should ensure that evaluation expertise is available at all times.

The Panel recognizes that membership of the EAAC is determined by the Council and through the nominations received. In line with the practice in other organizations, reserving one of these positions for evaluation would ensure constant capacity to oversee and advise the Council on the performance of the function.

Annexes

Annex 1: SWOT Analysis of the ICAO Evaluation Function

Annex 2: Rating ICAO's Central Evaluation Function

Annex 3: Quality Assessment of ICAO Evaluation Reports (2015-2019)

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Annex 1: SWOT Analysis of the ICAO Evaluation Function¹⁹

Strengths

- a) Reasonably independent central evaluation function (in EAO)
- b) Several past evaluations were useful to various in-house stakeholders
- c) Recognition of ICAO staff of value of evaluation – considered to be useful
- d) Good appetite for evaluation in ICAO
- e) Close collaboration between planning and evaluation
- f) Central evaluations included in Medium Term Strategy 2016-2021 (evaluation plan)
- g) Evaluations included in many project budgets at the decentralized level
- h) Dedicated Chief of the central Evaluation Division pushing in the right direction following UNEG Norms & Standards
- i) Participatory approach by Evaluation Division has created space for evaluation
- j) Key donors want a strong evaluation function and want to see it strengthened
- k) Management response and tracking of implementation of evaluation recommendations

Weaknesses/Challenges

- a) Limited budget and process affects independences especially norms and standards Weak Evaluation culture
- b) No decentralized capacity
- c) Guidelines for decentralized created before policy update
- d) Weak results orientation/RBM maturity of ICAO
- e) No Theory of Change / theory based approach
- f) Insufficient resources for consultants and evaluations
- g) Resources don't match ambition
- h) Apathy regarding the work done
- i) Not used as driver of change
- j) Mixed to low appetite for more
- k) Gender / diversity not covered
- l) Work plan lacks strategy if focus
- m) Self-limiting plan
- n) Reports not shared widely within the organization
- o) No internet presence and portal seen as cumbersome
- p) Methods (lack of literature review, benchmarking, artificial intelligence, etc.)
- q) Product limit - scope too big, takes time
- r) Evaluation too internal looking
- s) Lengthy draft sharing/ double loop
- t) Virtual reference group impedes joint learning
- u) Process seen too close to audit
- v) No separate identity from audit
- w) EAC has no evaluation experts

Opportunities

- a) Partnerships (Transport Canada, CTSA, Public Safety CBSA, Universities evaluation/transport programmes)
- b) Junior Professional Officer, trainees, UNV
- c) Induction of new council members
- d) Regional offices - lessons learned, No Country Left Behind Renewed emphasis of improving RBM
- e) Policy needs updating
- f) Reference groups could be learning platform
- g) Demonstrate relevance to SDGs...
- h) Joint evaluations (e.g. Montreal Protocol, GEF)
- i) Performance Audit (e.g. Regional Offices, efficiency: maximize co-location) TCB funding from overhead (e.g. 1% > \$1M - or from surplus/Reserve) Communications/reach out strategy beyond reporting
- j) Evaluation information sessions / lessons learned sessions
- k) Results group - phased
- l) Decentralized - but more modest: train small number of volunteers in evaluation - use in other regions (modify/downscale ILO/UNDP approach)
- m) Use ready-made training/guidelines

Threats/Challenges

- a) Competition for declining budget
- b) Apathy / low appetite / lack of interest for more by key actors Absorptive capacity
- c) Risk of interference in double loop process in draft review Transparency (of evaluation results/reports)
- d) Limited pool of consultants
- e) Limits on consultancy rates
- f) Poor performance data organizationally
- g) One-person office / personality dependent
- h) Box-thinking culture (not thinking 'outside the box')
- i) Risk of irrelevance resulting from evaluation not engaging in new aviation technologies and themes (artificial intelligence, drones, SDGs, economic development).

¹⁹ Weaknesses and threats are combined in the main report under “challenges”.

Annex 2: Rating ICAO's Central Evaluation Function

| | 2019 Self-Assessment (EAO Rating) | 2019 Peer Review Panel Assessment |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Enabling Environment | 2.8 | 2.4 |
| Relevance & Responsiveness | 2.7 | 2.1 |
| Independence & Impartiality | 3.8 | 3.4 |
| Validity & Reliability | 2.9 | 2.4 |
| Utility & Impact | 3.0 | 2.5 |

Annex 3: Quality Assessment of ICAO Evaluation Reports (2015-2019)*

| CRITERIA | MAX POINTS | SCORE PER EVALUATION REPORT | | | | | | | | TOTAL | Ø | % | TOTAL MAXIMUM POSSIBLE (ALL REPORTS) |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------|----|-----|--------------------------------------|
| | | AFI Plan | External Stakeholder Perspectives on ICAO | ICAO's Technical Assistance to Uruguay | Member States Needs and Expectations | ICAO Partnerships with UN Organizations and Agencies | GASP-GANP Report | ICAO Standard-Setting Process Report | Secretariat Support to the Council | | | | |
| YEAR | | 2015 | 2015 | 2016 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2018 | 2019 | | | | |
| Report Structure | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 19 | 2 | 61% | 32 |
| Object of Evaluation | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 16 | 2 | 49% | 32 |
| Evaluation Purpose, Objective, Scope | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 14 | 2 | 45% | 32 |
| Evaluation Methodology | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 17 | 2 | 52% | 32 |
| Evaluation Findings | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | 48% | 32 |
| Evaluation Conclusions | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 15 | 2 | 48% | 32 |
| Evaluation Recommendations | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 18 | 2 | 56% | 32 |
| Gender, Human Rights & the SDGs | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 1 | 30% | 32 |
| Management response | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 23 | 3 | 72% | 32 |
| Total (A-I)** | 36 | 16 | 18 | 17 | 17 | 15 | 21 | 21 | 24 | 148 | 18 | 51% | 288 |
| D+E+F+G | 16 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 66 | 8 | 51% | 128 |

Scores **Required to have a minimum of 21 points overall (60%) and 11 (70%) of which should be in criteria D,E,F,G to be considered as adequate.

*full details scoring available

| | | | | |
|-----------|--------------|------------------------|----------------|-----|
| Excellent | Satisfactory | Partially satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | n/a |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

Source: Peer Review Panel, 2019. The assessment is based on a quality assessment template with 11 criteria and a total of 45 sub-criteria (see below). The assessment was conducted by an independent consultant. While the assessment was done as objectively as possible, some criteria require a judgment by the assessor.

Annex 4: Analysis of EAO's Evaluation Policy

| Analysis of EAO Evaluation Policy | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Section | Content/Heading | Panel Comments |
| 1 | Introduction | Very short; could be more aspirational |
| 2 | Aims and Guiding Principles | Collaboration with internal audit is an unusual principle guiding evaluation at ICAO and unique for a UN evaluation policy. Other key principles are missing, e.g. transparency, inclusiveness etc. and could be added. |
| 3 | Definitions | Standard definitions are provided for evaluation and decentralized evaluation is well defined. However, the difference between evaluation and audit, as well as other assessments undertaken in ICAO, is not clarified. Requirement for notification and a plan to register decentralized evaluations is misplaced here. |
| 4 | Evaluation Planning | No selection criteria. Not clear who approves the plan. Does not define what coverage means. |
| 5 | Quality Assurance (QA) | Does not reflect the use of reference groups or stakeholder groups. It also remains unclear who is responsible for QA in particular when the evaluation specialist drafts the reports |
| 6 | Roles and responsibility | EAO is the custodian but there is no differentiation between the role of the Director (Chief EAO) and the senior evaluator who leads the implementation of the function. Point 6.5 contradicts the Charter which states the Council approves the work programme. The role of the Council is not as strong as in other UN organizations. The role of the EAAC is not clearly specified (nor is it in the Charter). There is no clear separate role for the Secretary General even though in practice and per the Charter there is one. Should be more specific on responsibilities of management for decentralized evaluation including management response and implementation tracking. |
| 7 | Dissemination | Limited and not made public thus not in line with UNEG Norm # 7 . Management Response should be under a separate heading and more complete |
| 8 | Resourcing | Is silent on how evaluations are budgeted. Seems to take Regular Budget for a given but misses other opportunities. Does not stipulate Extra Budgetary funding allocation although there is an existing Council resolution. |
| | Missing elements | Theory of change Ethical standards and code of conduct and behaviours Gender and human rights |

| | | |
|--|-----------------|---|
| | General Comment | Many key elements are missing. While they may be in part in the Charter the Policy should be fully stand-alone. The policy predates the current Norms and Standards and should be revised also bearing in mind UN reform and OECD DAC new criteria. |
|--|-----------------|---|

Annex 5: List of persons interviewed

| Name | Position / Representation | Remarks |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| 1. ALIU, Olumuyiwa | Council President – ICAO Governing Council | |
| 2. SCIACCHITANO, Salvatore | President Elect of Council - ICAO Governing Council | |
| 3. LIU, Fang | Secretary General – ICAO Secretariat | |
| 4. HURLEY, Claude | President – Air Navigation Commission (ANC) | |
| 5. GRUTER, Kurt | Chair of the Evaluation and Audit Advisory Committee (EAAC) | |
| 6. LLOYD, David | UK Permanent Representative to ICAO - Council Member | |
| 7. KORYFIDOU, Elpida | Second Vice President of the ANC– Air Navigation Commission Representative for Greece - ANC | |
| 8. ZO’O MINTO’O, Prosper | Regional Director, WACAF Regional Office | |
| 9. KASAHMBO, Barry | Regional Director, ESAF Regional Office | |
| 10. DJIBO, Boubacar | Director, Air Transport Bureau (ATB) | |
| 11. HASEGAWA, Toru | Deputy Director – Economic Development, ATB | |
| 12. LEFOYER, Sylvain | Deputy Director – Air Security & Facilitation, ATB | |
| 13. HUPE, Jane | Deputy Director, Environment, ATB | |
| 14. BELAYNEH, Meshesha | Deputy Director, TCB | |
| 15. MACFARLANE, Richard | Deputy Director, Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency – Air Navigation Bureau (ANB) | As OIC for the Director of ANB and as Deputy Director of ANB |
| 16. COSTA, Marcus | Chief, Accident Investigation Section, ANB | OIC for Deputy Director, Safety |
| 17. MAURINO, Martin | Technical Officer, Global Aviation Safety, ANB | |
| 18. DE BODY, Thilly | Acting Head, SPCP | |
| 19. QUESADA, Oscar | Deputy Director, SAM Regional Office | |
| 20. EFENDIOGLU, Tuncay | Chief EAO | |
| 21. FARICE, Gugsu Y. | Evaluation Specialist | |

Annex 6: Documents reviewed

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Joint Inspection Unit | Analysis of the Evaluation Function in the United Nations system JIU, 2014/6 (a) |
| Joint Inspection Unit | Complementary annexes to JIU/REP/2014/6 (b) |
| Joint Inspection Unit | Management and Administration Review, 2018 |
| EAO | Evaluation of External Stakeholder Perspectives on ICAO, 2015 |
| EAO | Evaluation of the Comprehensive Regional Implementation Plan for Aviation Safety in Africa (AFI Plan), 2015 |
| EAO | Evaluation of Member State Needs and Expectations, 2016 |
| EAO | Evaluation of selected programme activities of the South American Regional Office: ICAO's technical assistance to Uruguay, 2016 |
| EAO | Evaluation of ICAO Partnerships with Organizations and Agencies of the United Nations System, 2017 |
| EAO | Evaluation of the ICAO Standard-Setting Process, 2018 |
| EAO | Evaluation of the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP), 2019 |
| EAO | Evaluation of Secretariat Support to the Council, 2019 |
| EAO | EAO Work Plans, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 |
| EAO | Guidelines for Decentralized Evaluations |
| ICAO | Charter of the Evaluation and Internal Audit Office, June 2017 |
| ICAO | ICAO Evaluation Policy, 2014 |
| ICAO | ICAO Evaluation Manual, 2016 |
| ICAO | ICAO Business Plan 2017-19, 2016 |
| ICAO | C-WP/14788, Draft ICAO Business Plan 2020-22, 2019 |
| ICAO | Summary of Decisions. C-DEC 215/6 |
| ICAO | Summary of Decisions. C-DEC 217/13 |
| ICAO | Summary of Minutes. C-MIN 215/6 |
| ICAO | Summary of Minutes. C-MIN 217/13 |

Annex 7: JIU Findings on Level of Development by Location of the Evaluation Function

Level of development of the evaluation function by size of the organizations' overall annual budgets and the location of the corporate evaluation function 2013/2014

| | Small | | Medium | | Large | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------|
| | <i>Organization</i> | <i>Grade</i> | <i>Organization</i> | <i>Grade</i> | <i>Organization</i> | <i>Grade</i> |
| Stand Alone | UNODC | 5.2 | ILO | 6.7 | WFP | 6.7 |
| | UNIDO | 6.4 | UNEP | 5.8 | UNDP | 7.1 |
| | UN Women | 6.2 | UNFPA | 6.0 | UNICEF | 6.3 |
| | | | | | FAO | 5.9 |
| Co-Located/ Management | ITC | 4.9 | UNAIDS | 5.3 | UNHCR | 3.8 |
| | UNCTAD | 4.4 | | | | |
| | UN-Habitat | 4.2 | | | | |
| Co-Located Oversight/Audit | IMO | 3.7 | UNESCO | 6.1 | UN-OIOS | 6.2 |
| | WMO | 3.5 | UNRWA | 3.4 | WHO | 4.7 |
| | ICAO | 3.9 | WIPO | 5.2 | | |
| | | | IAEA | 5.9 | | |

Source: JIU/2014/5 Analysis of the Evaluation Function in the United Nations System, Vol.I. p. 20. Ratings from 1-8

Annex 8: Benchmarking with other UN entities, 2012-2013

| | A. Organizational Expenses 2011-2012 | B. Central Evaluation Expenditure 2012-2013 | Central Evaluation Expenditure/ Organizational Expenses (B/A) |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| UNDP | 10,760,449,060 | 16,374,000 | 0.16% |
| WFP | 8,631,035,777 | 12,474,100 | 0.14% |
| UNICEF | 7,406,962,500 | 8,538,742 | 0.12% |
| UNFPA | 1,635,210,695 | 2,961,275 | 0.18% |
| ILO | 1,263,872,294 | 3,568,000 | 0.28% |
| UNEP | 1,090,415,027 | 2,597,200 | 0.24% |
| FAO | 2,843,739,572 | 11,190,854 | 0.39% |
| UNIDO | 560,942,389 | 3,195,542 | 0.57% |
| UNODC | 504,815,288 | 4,038,522 | 0.80% |
| UN Women | 434,195,070 | 5,481,417 | 1.26% |
| UNESCO | 1,744,008,488 | 2,424,000 | 0.14% |
| UNOIOS | 8,561,566,880 | 9,160,900 | 0.11% |
| WHO | 4,594,467,405 | n/a | n/a |
| UNRWA | 1,281,448,435 | 973,251 | 0.08% |
| IAEA | 1,114,061,992 | 2,631,587 | 0.24% |
| WIPO | 693,624,429 | 1,475,000 | 0.21% |
| ICAO | 433,353,361 | 1,217,502 | 0.28% |
| WMO | 176,137,581 | 85,000 | 0.05% |
| IMO | 150,985,588 | 150,000 | 0.10% |
| UNHCR | 4,487,029,272 | 3,791,312 | 0.08% |
| UN Habitat | 392,460,606 | 2,200,750 | 0.56% |
| UNAIDS | 600,714,491 | n/a | n/a |
| ITU | 423,050,739 | n/a | n/a |
| UNCTAD | n/a | 520,200 | n/a |
| ITC | 163,223,000 | 1,384,834 | 0.85% |
| Total (SUM) | 60,125,773,243 | 96,433,988 | |
| Total (AVERAGE) | 2,312,529,740 | 4,383,363 | 0.33% |

Annex 9: Peer Review Panel Members

Susanne Frueh, Panel Chair, UN Evaluation Group

Susanne Frueh has over 30 years of experience in international organizations combining operational experience with evaluation, risk management, results-based management and strategic planning expertise. Since an earlier career in consulting and programme management during her earlier career, she has worked at senior leadership level in the evaluation functions of several UN organizations (UNCDF, WFP, UNOCHA and UNESCO). While at the UN Joint Inspection Unit she contributed to the JIU's review of the evaluation function in the UN System. She has been a member of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) since 1999, chairing the Group since 2017. She also serves as vice-President of the Advisory Board of the German Institute for Development Evaluation Institute (DEVAL) and is a member of the Advisory Committee on Internal Oversight of UNRWA. In 2011, she was nominated by the UN Secretary-General to be a member of the Interim Coordination Mechanism for system-wide evaluation, responsible for developing and negotiating a new UN policy on independent system-wide evaluation. She also chaired the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) from 2005-2007, served as an Advisory Board member of the mid-term review on the Hyogo Framework for Action (2011-12) and was a peer panelist/advisor on the evaluation functions of FAO (2004, 2017), WFP (2007, 2013-14), the UN Office for Internal Oversight Services (2012), IFAD (2018-19), European Investment Bank (2019-2020) and a member of the High Level Panel of Experts on IFAD's 2nd edition of the evaluation manual (2015).

Miguel Jiménez Pont, Panel member, UN Evaluation Group

Miguel Jiménez Pont is the Head of the Independent Evaluation Unit of the International Trade Centre (UN/WTO) (ITC) and a vice-Chair of the United Nations Evaluation Group. He is an experienced development professional and evaluator with a fine blend of substantive development knowledge, analytical capacity and strategic management skills. He has acquired a specialized orientation and insights on strategic and operative requirements for good performance of technical cooperation in developing countries and transition economies. With about three decades of professional experience in the bilateral and multilateral settings, he has earned an excellent performance record at headquarter and country level, as a substantive thought leader, moderator and partnership builder, demonstrating continuous care for beneficiaries' ownership to ensure effective change and impact. He has acquired substantive experience addressing civil society needs and public policy issues through technical cooperation in multi-faceted areas of trade, entrepreneurship and employment generation, poverty, agriculture, governance, environment and gender equality. Over the last fourteen years, he has led the gradual development of the evaluation function in ITC.

Isabelle Mercier, Panel Member, DAC network for Development Evaluation

Isabelle Mercier is a senior-level evaluator of international assistance at Global Affairs Canada. She has over fifteen years of experience in conducting evaluations in Canada's federal departments. She has recently focused her work on integrating feminist research practices in evaluation in support of Canada's feminist policy framework. She has advanced the practice of system mapping, social network analysis and advanced qualitative analysis techniques in her department. Leveraging her background in philosophy and ethics, she also sits as the ethics expert in the University of Ottawa's Health Sciences and Science Research Ethics Board.

Annex 10: Terms of Reference

Peer Review of the Evaluation Function of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

Draft Terms of Reference, 29 October 2019

I. Background

1. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is a UN specialized agency, established by States in 1944 to manage the administration and governance of the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention). ICAO works with the Convention's 192 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. These SARPs and policies are used by ICAO Member States to ensure that their local civil aviation operations and regulations conform to global norms, which in turn permits more than 100,000 daily flights in aviation's global network to operate safely and reliably in every region of the world.
2. In addition to its core work resolving consensus-driven international SARPs and policies among its Member States and industry, ICAO also coordinates assistance and capacity building for States in support of numerous aviation development objectives; produces global plans to coordinate multilateral strategic progress for safety and air navigation; monitors and reports on numerous air transport sector performance metrics; and audits States' civil aviation oversight capabilities in the areas of safety and security.
3. Over the last ten years, ICAO's financial and human resource has almost remained the same. The total number of ICAO staff in 2019 is 724 (Please see annex 3). The regular budget for the triennium 2017–2019 of ICAO amounts to CAD 302 million (about CAD100 Million per year). As in the last two triennia, the Programme Budget for the period 2020 through 2022 is based on Zero Nominal Growth for States' assessments and is CAD 322.7 million (about USD 242 Million)
4. The regular programme of ICAO is complemented by the Technical Cooperation Programme, managed by the Technical Cooperation Bureau. Technical Cooperation Projects are financed through extra-budgetary and voluntary contributions. The financial resource for technical cooperation projects was CAD 131.4 million in 2017. However, most of the big Technical Cooperation Projects focus on procurement of goods and services and are not normally considered for evaluations. Such projects are being covered by audits.
5. Most Technical Cooperation Projects in ICAO are funded by the Member States themselves. Major voluntary contributions in kind and cash (excluding contribution for premises) in 2018 come from China (CAD 4.6 million), USA (CAD 2 million), France (CAD1.3 million) and Republic of Korea (CAD809, 000). In 2017 China contributed CAD 8.8 million, USA, CAD 2 million, Canada CAD1.7 million and Republic of Korea (CAD1.4 million) in 2017).

II. Information on ICAO Evaluation Function

6. The Evaluation and Internal Audit Office (EAO) is the custodian of the Evaluation Function at ICAO and conducts centralized evaluations. The main role and responsibilities of EAO with respect to the centralized Evaluation Function are to:
 - Develop a triennial and annual evaluation plan and programme;
 - Develop and establish effective guidelines, tools and templates for centralized evaluation at ICAO, including the evaluation manual, which cover planning, methodology, quality assurance, management responses and knowledge management;
 - Provide an annual activity report to the Council;
 - Present evaluation results to the Senior Management, the Evaluation and Audit Advisory Committee (EAAC) and the Council;
 - Promote the use of evaluation through consultations with the President of the Council and Senior Management for the purposes of evaluation planning and follow-up to recommendations and through the evaluation process and use;

- Participate in relevant UNEG and JIU events to represent the interests of ICAO on evaluation oversight issues.
7. With respect to the decentralized evaluation, EAO's main role and responsibilities includes:
 - Developing and establishing effective guidelines, tools and templates to support decentralized evaluation;
 - Providing methodological and quality assurance support to decentralized evaluations; and
 - Maintaining a register of decentralized evaluations conducted at ICAO.
 8. The Chief of EAO (C/EAO) reports administratively to the Secretary General of ICAO. EAO's annual and triennium plans are approved by ICAO Council and EAO is presenting its annual report to the council. Compared to other Evaluation Functions in the United Nations system, EAO has a very small Evaluation Function and resources.²⁰ In addition to C/EAO, the Evaluation Function of EAO has one Evaluation Specialist hired from regular budget. When conducting evaluations, the evaluation specialist is supported by a consultant and intern.
 9. The Evaluation and Audit Office is conducting on average 2 centralized evaluation annually (please see annex 4 for list of evaluations since 2015). EAO has drafted a Decentralized Evaluation guideline to start decentralized evaluations in ICAO. The draft guideline is shared with the Secretary General and Directors of Bureaus for comments and presented during the Senior Management Group Meeting.
 10. The ICAO Evaluation Policy, adopted by the Governing Council in 2014, states that the quality of the ICAO Evaluation Function is ensured by conducting periodic self-assessments as well as undergoing independent external assessments such as the UNEG peer review. .
 11. EAO has included in its 2019 Work Programme a review of the Evaluation Function to assess its status and performance through the UNEG Peer Review mechanism. It will be the first peer review of the Evaluation Function and will be carried out following the methodology put together by the UNEG Peer Review Group for small Agencies. Such Peer Reviews are planned to be conducted every five years in line with the UNEG recommendation.
 12. The peer review is intended to be forward-looking, providing guidance on how the Evaluation Function can be further strengthened to meet emerging challenges and opportunities both within ICAO and the UN system more broadly.

III. Purpose and Scope

13. The overall objective of the peer review is to assess the organizational positioning, resources and performance of the Evaluation Function against UNEG Norms and Standards. The peer review will therefore contribute to the improvement of the evaluation function in ICAO in supporting the objectives of the organization through an impartial assessment of the independence, credibility and utility of the Evaluation Function.
14. The review is expected to assess the operational effectiveness of the Evaluation Function and identify its strengths and areas for improvement. The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the review will be shared with Senior Management, the EAAC and the ICAO Council by the end of March 2020.
15. The Review is expected to help ICAO to ensure that its evaluation function is fully fit for purpose and positioned to make the best contribution to the work of the organization. It is expected to help EAO to seek support from the Secretary General and the Council on the effective implementation of recommendations included in the final report as the latter may require additional resources. EAO will regularly update the Secretary General, EAAC and the Council on the status of implementation of recommendations of the Review that it will have accepted. The peer review report will also be shared with UNEG to provide feedback to the UNEG Task Force on Peer Reviews to contribute to the improvement of the Self-Assessment methodology of UNEG for smaller Evaluation Functions.
16. The scope of the peer review covers the evaluation activities carried out from 2015 until 2019. It will also assess the comprehensiveness and completeness of the ICAO Evaluation Policy approved by the Council in 2014.

IV. Peer Review Criteria and Questions

17. As set out in the UNEG Framework for Peer Review of the Evaluation Function, the approach to the review will be guided by the overarching question: “Are the agency’s evaluation policy, function and its products: independent; credible; useful and influential for learning and accountability purposes, as assessed by a Panel of professional evaluation peers against the UN Norms and Standards and the evidence base?”. Accordingly, the peer review will use the following core assessment criteria (see annex 1 for the detail):
- i. **Independence of evaluations and evaluation systems:** The evaluation process should be impartial and independent in its function from the process concerned with policy making and programme management. The planning and selection of evaluation subjects should be impartial and independent.
 - ii. **Credibility of evaluations:** Credibility requires evaluators to report successes and failures, as well as sufficient participation of stakeholders. This depends on the expertise and independence of the evaluators, as well as the degree of transparency of the evaluation process.
 - iii. **Utility of evaluations:** To have an impact on decision making, evaluation findings must be perceived as relevant and useful and be presented in a clear and concise way, fully reflecting the different interests and needs of parties involved.
18. The peer review will answer the key overarching questions and issues contained in Annex 1. The issues/detailed questions will be further refined in consultation with the Peer Review Team. The questions/issues are organized around the following key dimensions:
- The ICAO Evaluation Policy
 - Governance arrangements
 - Management of the Evaluation Function
 - Evaluation planning
 - Evaluation quality and
 - Evaluation follow up and use

V. Methods

19. The Peer Review will use the following data collection methods and tools:
- a. **Self-assessment:** the Evaluation and Internal Audit Office will conduct a self-assessment of the Evaluation Function using the self-assessment matrix developed by UNEG for smaller UN Evaluation Functions (Annex 2). The self-assessment report will be validated by the Peer Review Team (PRT).
 - b. **Document review:** the documents to be reviewed include ICAO’s Evaluation Policy, Evaluation Manual, completed evaluation reports (Please see the lists in annex 4), the ICAO Business Plans, and other key reference documents. List of reference documents will be prepared and the documents will be shared with the Peer Review Team.
 - c. **Interviews:** The Peer Review Team will conduct interviews of key stakeholders including members of the ICAO Council, Air Navigation Commission, EAAC and the senior management of the Secretariat. List of individuals to be interviewed will be developed in consultation with the Peer Review Team.
 - d. **Stakeholder survey:** the Peer Review Team will conduct a survey to get the perspectives of evaluation users on the relevance, quality and usefulness of EAOs evaluations. This will complement the Client Satisfaction Assessments being done by EAO after each evaluation.

VI. Panel Membership

20. The Peer Review Team membership comprises:

- i. Susanne Frueh, Peer Review Team Leader, Director of Internal Oversight Service, UNESCO
- ii. Miguel Jiménez Pont, Peer Review Team Member, Head of the Independent Evaluation Unit of the International Trade Centre (ITC)
- iii. Isabelle Mercier, Acting Director Evaluation, Global Affairs, Canada (CIDA), OECD DAC representative

21. The Panel had the support of a consultant who assessed the eight available evaluation reports.

VII. Reporting

22. The Peer Review Team will submit its draft report to EAO for comment and discussion. The PRT will submit the final report to EAO and the Secretariat. The Peer Review Team will be fully responsible for the content of the final report.

VIII. Responsibility of ICAO

23. EAO will be the internal initiator, principal organizer, and substantive collaborator on the review within ICAO. EAO will be responsible for submitting a draft terms of reference for the PRT as well as assisting the PRT including providing relevant documents and data, facilitating the panel’s visit to ICAO Headquarters; interacting with the PRT on preliminary findings and contributing feedback on the review process. ICAO management is expected to allocate appropriate time for meeting and discussing with the PRT and to provide a management response to the final report and to ensure implementation of the agreed to recommendations.

IX. Review Process and Schedule

| Major Activity | Date |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Getting the final self-assessment guide from UNEG | October 25, 2019 |
| Self-Assessment of the Evaluation Function by EAO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review • Actual Self-assessment and preparation of the matrix | October 28 – November 15, 2019 |
| Peer review/validation including field work by the Peer Review Team | 15 – 9 December 2019 |
| Draft Report by the Peer Review Team | February 15, 2020 |
| Review of the draft report by EAO | February 27, 2020 |
| Final review report to EAO | March 16, 2020 |
| Final report shared with Senior Management, the EAAC and the ICAO Council | March 19, 2020 |

X. Budget

24. The budget for this Peer Review, including travel cost for the UNEG participants, will be primarily covered by UNEG and additional budget will be allocated by EAO, if required.

Annex A: Core Criteria of the Peer Review and Review Questions

Core Criteria

- a. **Independence of evaluations and the evaluation system(s).** The independence of the Evaluation Function comprises two key aspects — behavioural independence and organizational independence.
 - i. Behavioural independence entails the ability to evaluate impartially without undue influence by any party. This requires that the persons and entities undertaking the evaluation should be independent of those concerned with the policy, programme or activities to be evaluated, to avoid possible bias or conflicts of interest. Evaluators must have the full freedom to conduct their evaluative work impartially, without the risk of negative effects on their career development, and must be able to freely express their assessment.
 - ii. Organizational independence requires that the central Evaluation Function is positioned independently from management functions, carries the responsibility of setting the evaluation agenda and is provided with adequate resources to conduct its work. At the same time, in practice, the guarantees of independence are necessarily defined according to the nature of evaluation work, its governance and decision-making arrangements, and other factors. In this regard, the activities of the office can be expected to have greater degree of independence than evaluation activities at decentralized levels. Organizational independence also necessitates that evaluation managers have full discretion to directly submit evaluation reports to the appropriate level of decision-making and that they should report directly to an organization's governing body and/or the executive head. Independence is vested in the Evaluation Head to directly commission, produce, publish and disseminate duly quality-assured evaluation reports in the public domain without undue influence by any party.
- b. **Credibility of evaluations.** Credibility is grounded on independence, impartiality and a rigorous methodology. Key elements that contribute to credibility include transparent evaluation processes, inclusive approaches involving relevant stakeholders and robust quality assurance systems. Credibility requires that evaluations are ethically conducted, managed by evaluators that exhibit professional and cultural competencies, and should report successes, as well as failures. Recipient partners should, as a rule, fully participate in evaluations in order to promote credibility and commitment on their side. Whether and how the organization's approach to evaluation fosters partnership and helps build ownership merits close attention.
- c. **Utility of evaluations.** In commissioning and conducting an evaluation, there should be a clear intention to use the resulting analysis, conclusions or recommendations to inform decisions and actions. The utility of evaluation is evident when it contributes in an effective and timely manner to organizational learning, accountability for results and informed decision-making processes. To have an impact on decision-making, evaluation findings must be perceived as credible and relevant and be presented in a clear and concise way. They should also respond to the different interests and needs of the many parties involved in the evaluation subject. However, measures to ensure the utility of evaluations are only partly under the control of evaluators. It is also critically a function of the interest of managers and Member States through their participation in the Governing Council and in commissioning, receiving, and using evaluations.
- d. The core criteria of **impartiality and transparency** will also be considered, as they are strongly related to the criteria of independence, credibility and utility. Impartiality is enabled by independence and is a fundamental element of the credibility of evaluations. Transparency is another fundamental element of credibility and is an important basis for the utility of evaluations.

Review Questions/issues

The Self-Assessment will examine and comment on both operational and strategic issues including/questions: (To be revised based on the inputs of the Peer Review Team)

- A. The ICAO Evaluation Policy:
 - i. the extent to which the evaluation policy conforms with UNEG Norms and Standards, internal and external contextual changes and whether it needs to be updated;

- ii. how well-aligned is the ICAO evaluation policy with other organisational policies or frameworks relevant to the Evaluation Function (notably, those concerning strategic planning and budgeting; results-based management and knowledge management);
 - iii. whether the policy includes and safeguards adequate provision of human and financial resources for evaluation at (a) central level and (b) decentralized levels; and whether it sets out clear arrangements for maintaining and updating technical skills and knowledge for evaluation;
 - iv. how far the policy sets out clear arrangements to ensure that evaluation in ICAO contributes effectively to learning, accountability and performance improvement;
- B. Governance arrangements
- i. the functional relationships of the EAO with Management and the Governing Council of ICAO;
 - ii. mechanisms to protect financial and human resources for evaluation from influence which might undermine the independence and impartiality of evaluation;
 - iii. contractual arrangements for the Chief of EAO (C/EAO), including recruitment, performance management and termination;
 - iv. mechanisms (both formal and informal) to provide C/EAO with adequate access and opportunities to contribute to key corporate processes and decisions, including the deliberations of ICAO's Governing Council and safeguards in place to avoid conflict of interests between contribution to decision-making and later evaluations;
 - v. arrangements for periodic review of the Evaluation Function;
- C. Management of the Evaluation Function
- i. how far management arrangements, working procedures and the internal organization of the Office supports the fulfilment of evaluation policy commitments;
 - ii. approaches used to plan, conduct and manage evaluations and follow up, including arrangements to manage the quality and duration of the evaluation process;
 - iii. the development and use of guidance/manual and tools to support and strengthen the conduct and management of evaluations;
 - iv. the extent to which C/EAO and Evaluation Specialist are seen as influential internally in the agency at headquarters and regionally – and how they can become more so;
- D. Evaluation Planning
- i. the methods and criteria used for strategic planning and prioritization of evaluation activities and the extent to which topics selected for evaluation meet the needs and demands of key stakeholders, balancing accountability including on coverage, and learning;
 - ii. adequacy of staff and financial resources to conduct/commission high-quality (i.e. credible, useful, timely) evaluations
- E. Evaluation quality
- i. the quality and credibility of the evaluations, from the planning process through the conduct of the evaluations to the quality of the evaluation reports and of evaluation results;
 - ii. the independence of evaluation teams and team leaders;
 - iii. the adequacy of the quality assurance system;

- F. Evaluation Follow up and use:
- i. the effectiveness of the current systems for tracking evaluation recommendations/Secretariat Action Plan/ for ensuring that evaluation findings and recommendations are used by Senior Management and Governing Council
 - ii. the ways in which evaluation results are communicated and lessons used;
 - iii. the use of evaluation evidence in the development of new policies and programmes and in decision-making, to the extent that this can be assessed.

Annex 11: Management Response

1. This is the first ever Peer Review of ICAO's evaluation function and it has provided a very good opportunity for ICAO to reflect on its progress towards meeting UNEG Norms and Standards and ways to strengthen its evaluation function.
2. During their on-site visit, Peer Review Team consulted ICAO Council Members, ICAO Senior Management and the Secretariat staff. EAO would like to thank the Peer Review Team for the comprehensive review and thorough analysis of the evaluation function which resulted in a number of recommendations which will help EAO to enhance its evaluation function moving forward. EAO highly appreciates the financial support of UNEG for undertaking this peer Review.
3. Overall, the peer review exercise has been a positive experience. ICAO has noted the improvement made by the evaluation function in the application of UNEG norms and standards since the 2013/2014 Joint Inspection Unit's (JIU) review and the improvements in the quality of evaluation reports in the last two years.
4. EAO acknowledges the overall budget limitations of the organization as well as the inadequacy of the budget allocated to the evaluation function. .
5. EAO believes that Evaluation Functions have to follow UNEG Norms and Standards but should prioritize their focus areas based on their comparative advantage, organizational context and structure and capacity. In this regard, EAO volunteered to be assessed as a pilot project based on the assessment methodology, recently developed by a group of UNEG members, with the participation of ICAO, to enable small evaluation functions such as ICAO's to further improve its overall functioning and alignment with the UNEG Norms and Standards. The interpretation of some of the assessment criteria by the Peer Review Team led to certain findings and conclusions that were not fully agreed by the UNEG working group which developed the new methodology. EAO has therefore a different view on some of the findings such as working on National Evaluation Capacity Building and advancing evaluation in the context of the UN system's work beyond UNEG.
6. Below we provide the management responses to the specific recommendations

Management Action Plan

| Recommendation of the Peer Review Report | Management Response (Agree, Partially Agree, Disagree) | Action planned / taken / reason for partially agreeing or disagreeing and indicative timeline |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Recommendation 1: EAO should update its evaluation policy. This should be an all-of organization policy with EAO as the custodian.</p> | Agree | <p>EAO will update the Evaluation Policy incorporating recent developments in evaluation including the updated UNEG Norms and Standards and issues relevant for Agenda 2030. The Policy will address the recommendations made by the Peer Review and clearly spell out the role and responsibility as well as the funding modalities of decentralized evaluation in the Organization.</p> <p>December 2021</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 2: The Secretary General, as part of the budgeting process for the next triennial budget 2023 to 2025, should identify/or request resources for at least one additional full-time position for the evaluation function.</p> | Agree | <p>EAO discussed the recommendations of the Peer Review Report and requested the Secretary General to take appropriate action for additional full time position for the evaluation function. Management will consider this request as part of the budget discussions in Q4 of 2022 for the next triennial budget (2023 to 2025). Meanwhile in the short term, EAO has already started exploring opportunities for enhancing its evaluation capacity through secondment or JPO funded by a Member State.</p> <p>December 2020</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 3: EAO should seek opportunities to increase its access to additional resources.</p> | Agree | <p>EAO has already taken an action and submitted a request in January 2020 to obtain a secondee to strengthen its evaluation function taking into account the specific recommendation made by the Peer Review. If this is not successful, EAO will endeavor to obtain a Junior Programme Officer.</p> <p>December 2020</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 4: EAO should incorporate innovative practices to increase the value of evaluation.</p> | Agree | <p>The Peer Review acknowledges that EAO is currently utilising accepted evaluation methodologies. EAO will explore additional methodologies to further enhance the use of its evaluations.</p> <p>December 2022</p> |
| <p>Recommendation 5: EAO should play a more active role in</p> | Partially Agree | <p>EAO has completed in February 2020 a high level evaluation on the application of RBM in ICAO based on the JIU benchmarking framework to highlight gaps</p> |

| | | |
|---|-----------------|--|
| strengthening the RBM community in the organization. | | <p>in applying RBM. As this will establish the basis for improving the application of RBM in the Organization, this evaluation is one of the best responses to this recommendation. Constant dialogue and interaction with the stakeholders during the follow up and implementation of recommendations will also further enhance EAO's role as a change agent. As resources permit, EAO will further study and support the Organization in applying RBM without compromising its independence and oversight role.</p> <p>December 2021</p> |
| Recommendation 6: EAO should adopt a phased approach to implementing decentralized evaluation. | Partially Agree | <p>ICAO's Decentralized Evaluation Guideline is not anticipated to be fully implemented in the short term. It requires capacity building and time to be successfully implemented. In addition existing projects do not have a budget for evaluation. EAO will play its role by building the capacity of relevant stakeholders. This is reflected in the Guidelines. EAO will implement the decentralized guideline by supporting pilot stakeholders (e.g. TCB) and based on lessons learned, will modify and expand the implementation of decentralized evaluation in the Organization.</p> <p>December 2021</p> |
| Recommendation 7: EAO should seek to publish evaluation reports and make them publicly available. | Agree | <p>The Council has recently made a decision to approve the public disclosure of Internal Audit and Evaluation Reports. EAO is currently working on the draft policy.</p> <p>December 2020</p> |
| Recommendation 8: The Council in its selection of EAAC members should ensure that evaluation expertise is available at all times. | Agree | <p>EAO has already identified this issue and the official letter to be sent to Member States for nomination included relevant recommendations.</p> <p>However due to the existing nomination process, ICAO is very dependent on the choices of Member States for EAAC Membership.</p> <p>July 2020</p> |