



International Civil Aviation Organization

Building the Rules of the
Sky: Strengthening
International Aviation
Safety and Crisis
Response



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INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

The **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)** is a specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for setting international standards and procedures for the safe and orderly development of civil aviation across the globe. Today, ICAO has 193 member states and oversees more than 12,000 international standards covering areas such as pilot licensing, aircraft airworthiness, and procedures for missing aircraft. It is, in many ways, the reason flying is the safest form of transportation in the world.



The following simulation is set in 1947, at the moment ICAO officially came into existence. The Provisional International Civil Aviation Organization (PICAO) has spent two years as a temporary body, holding sessions in Montreal and developing draft standards, all while waiting for enough nations to ratify the Chicago Convention of 1944 to bring ICAO into formal existence. **On April 4, 1947, that moment finally arrived, and PICAO became ICAO.**

Delegates in this committee will fulfill the roles of the founding member states of ICAO, picking up where PICAO left off. **Your task**

is to finalize, debate, and ratify the standards and procedures that will govern international civil aviation — not just for your own generation, but potentially for decades to come. The decisions you make here are not hypothetical. Every standard that the real ICAO established in this era is still, in some modified form, in use today. The stakes are real: aviation is expanding fast, the world is recovering from the most destructive war in human history, and the people who will fly the planes and sit in the control towers are waiting for you to tell them the rules.¹

Additionally, this is a **Crisis Committee**. This means the situation will evolve over time, new developments will be introduced, and delegates must respond to events as they unfold. However, please note that delegates in this crisis committee do not have individual powers. As a result, they cannot directly influence backroom developments and must instead respond to updates provided by the dais. The resolutions you pass become key operating procedures for ICAO going forward, so the language you choose matters. Think carefully about unintended consequences. A poorly worded standard can be just as dangerous as no standard at all.

Finally, not all historical references in this committee are fully precise or strictly aligned with real-world chronology, as some elements have been adapted for the purposes of simulation and educational engagement.

SPRING CONFERENCE: Policy Advisors

Policy Advisors are subject-matter experts who support delegates during the conference. They do not participate in debate or voting, but they can provide guidance to help ensure your ideas and resolutions are realistic and grounded in real-world policy.

How Can You Use Policy Advisors?

Delegates are encouraged to actively consult Policy Advisors throughout the conference:

- **Opening Briefing:** Advisors will begin with a short introduction to the topic and key policy considerations.
- **Q&A Sessions:** You will have structured opportunities to ask questions about feasibility, policy context, and real-world applications.
- **During Debate:** You may submit written questions or, if allowed, yield speaking time to a Policy Advisor for a response.

¹ International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), "About ICAO," accessed April 7, 2026, <https://www.icao.int/about-icao>.



- **Unmoderated Caucuses:** Advisors can help you refine ideas, identify potential allies, and strengthen draft resolutions.
- **Resolution Feedback:** Before submission, you may ask Advisors to review your proposals for clarity, feasibility, and impact.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Rise of Aviation and the Lessons of World War II:

The airplane was invented in 1903, and within a few decades it had transformed from a novelty into a weapon of war and, simultaneously, a vehicle of commerce. By the 1930s, airlines were operating scheduled services across continents. But it was the Second World War that truly demonstrated both the power and danger of flight. Military aviation advances during the war, such as improved engines, longer ranges, all-weather navigation, radio communication, have all accelerated rapidly under the pressure of combat. Hundreds of thousands of pilots were trained across the Allied and Axis powers. Millions of people and enormous quantities of supplies moved by air.

The war also demonstrated the cost of getting aviation wrong. Aircraft crashes were common, caused by mechanical failure, human error, bad weather, and failures of communication. Pilots and ground controllers speaking different languages, using different units of measurement, and following different procedures created confusion that cost lives. As aviation began its transition from a wartime instrument to a peacetime one, it was clear that the world could not simply allow dozens of nations to develop their own aviation systems in isolation. A crash anywhere in the world could be caused by incompatible standards anywhere else.²

LIST OF GOVERNMENTS AND AUTHORITIES TO WHOM INVITATIONS WERE EXTENDED		
Afghanistan	Guatemala	Poland
Australia	Haiti	Portugal
Belgium	Honduras	Saudi Arabia
Bolivia	Iceland	Spain
Brazil	India	Sweden
Canada	Iran	Switzerland
Chile	Iraq	Syria
China	Ireland	Turkey
Colombia	Lebanon	Union of South Africa
Costa Rica	Liberia	Union of Soviet
Cuba	Luxembourg	Socialist Republics
Czechoslovakia	Mexico	Uruguay
Dominican Republic	Netherlands	Venezuela
Ecuador	New Zealand	Yugoslavia
Egypt	Nicaragua	The Danish Minister
El Salvador	Norway	in Washington
Ethiopia	Panama	The Thai Minister
French Delegation	Paraguay	in Washington
Great Britain	Peru	
Greece	Philippines	

The Chicago Conference of 1944:

In December 1944, delegates from 52 countries invited by the United States convened in Chicago and signed the ***Convention on International Civil Aviation***, now commonly known as the Chicago Convention.

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The landmark convention established the ICAO and its core mandate is “to help States to achieve the highest possible degree of uniformity in civil aviation regulations, standards, procedures, and organization.”⁵

The Convention also established the

“Freedoms of the Air,” a set of international aviation rights governing how airlines from one country may operate within or in relation to another country’s airspace, including transit, landing, and commercial transport privileges. Key components of the 1944 convention include state sovereignty over airspace, compliance with

² Smithsonian Institution, “World War II Aviation,” accessed April 7, 2026, <https://airandspace.si.edu/exhibitions/world-war-ii-aviation-uh>.

³ 52 of the invited 55 countries signed the convention.

⁴ The conference ran from November 1 to December 7, 1944, with 700 delegates gathering at the Stevens Hotel. The choice of timing was deliberate: American and Allied leaders assumed an Allied victory was coming, and they wanted to establish the postwar aviation order before the peace negotiations complicated everything.

⁵ International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), “The History of ICAO and the Chicago Convention,” accessed April 7, 2026, <https://www.icao.int/history-icao-and-chicago-convention>.



the host country's entry and clearance regulations, measures to prevent the spread of airborne diseases, aircraft being designated as having the nationality of the state in which they are registered, and other provisions reflective of the time, such as restrictions on pilotless aircraft entering a contracting state without special authorization.⁶

Since ratification takes time, the Chicago Conference created the Provisional ICAO (PICAO) as a temporary body to begin the work of developing international standards immediately. PICAO held its first meeting in Montreal in June 1945, where its technical divisions began the extensive task of drafting what would become the Annexes to the Chicago Convention: supporting documents attached to the main treaty that contain detailed technical rules and standards for aviation safety and operations. Not all treaties have annexes, but when they do, they are used to organize more detailed or technical information separately from the main text.

On April 4, 1947, enough countries (including Spain as the 26th ratifying state) had officially ratified the treaty, which triggered its **entry into force**. That is where this committee begins.⁷

The Structure of ICAO and the Chicago Convention

The Chicago Convention created ICAO with a clear mandate: **to help member states achieve the highest possible degree of uniformity in civil aviation regulations, standards, procedures, and organization.**

As of the modern era, there are 19 annexes covering subjects including: personnel licensing, rules of the air, meteorological services, aeronautical charts, units of measurement, airworthiness of aircraft, aircraft nationality and registration marks, air traffic services, search and rescue, aircraft accident investigation, aerodromes, security, and the safe transport of dangerous goods. As of 1947, many of these Annexes exist only as drafts prepared by PICAO's technical divisions — and it falls to ICAO's founding members to finalize, debate, and adopt them.⁸

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Now that the ICAO is fully operational, it is pertinent that designated member states standardize air procedures and fulfil the mandate set out by the Chicago Convention.

ICAO has just been formally established. The Provisional ICAO has done years of preparatory work, and the draft Annexes are in the works. This committee's task is to resolve the most difficult and consequential questions facing the new organization: **the ones that PICAO's technical experts could not settle by consensus, and that will now require political compromise between member states.**

The core challenge is this: aviation is inherently international, but the world is made up of sovereign nations with different languages, different measurement systems, different technological capabilities, and different geopolitical interests. Every pilot who takes off crosses borders. Every aircraft that lands at a foreign airport must be understood by its ground crew. Every accident investigation that takes place must be coordinated across multiple countries. To make any of this work safely, ICAO must establish common standards, and those standards must be accepted by nations who **do not necessarily share the same interests.**

The decisions made by this committee will have immediate, practical consequences. Airlines are waiting to expand their routes. Manufacturers are waiting to know what specifications their aircraft must meet. Pilots are waiting to know what language they must speak and what qualifications they must hold. **The world is in a hurry to rebuild after the most devastating war in history, and aviation is central to that recovery.** But

⁶ Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention), Dec. 7, 1944, Doc. 7300/Orig., International Civil Aviation Organization, accessed April 7, 2026, https://www.icao.int/sites/default/files/2025-02/7300_orig.pdf.
Read the full convention [here](#).

⁷ International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), *From PICAO to ICAO: Organizational Similarities*, accessed April 7, 2026, https://www.icao.int/sites/default/files/postalhistory/from_picao_to_icao_organizational_similarities.htm.

⁸ "ICAO Annexes: Complete Guide to All 19 Annexes," *Fasttrack ATPL Wiki*, accessed April 7, 2026, <https://fasttrack-atpl.com/wiki/aviation-authorities-regulations/icao/icao-annexes>.

speed without safety is catastrophic. Every decision this committee makes must balance the urgency of expanding civil aviation with the absolute necessity of keeping it safe.

ISSUES BEFORE THE COMMITTEE



International Language of the Sky:

The International Language of the Sky refers to a **single standardized communication system** used in aviation so that pilots and air traffic controllers from different countries can understand each other safely and consistently in flight operations anywhere in the world.

Aviation communication is highly technical, time-sensitive, and safety-critical. A **pilot** approaching a runway in low visibility must understand every instruction from the air traffic controller instantly and precisely. A **ground engineer** reviewing a maintenance log must understand specifications written by an engineer in another country. An **accident investigator**

must be able to read reports from a crash site thousands of miles away. When these communications fail, when a word is misunderstood, when an instruction is misheard, or when a unit of measurement is confused, people can die.

Research into aviation accidents has consistently identified communication failure as one of the leading causes of crashes. Between 1920 and 1940, aviation accident records show that fatal incidents were relatively frequent in early commercial and military aviation, with communication failures and lack of standardized procedures frequently cited as contributing factors in safety analyses of the period.⁹

The three most likely candidates for the official language of ICAO are English, French, and Russian. Each has significant support.

- **English** has strong support for several reasons, including the emergence of the United States as a global superpower, the Allied victory in the war, and the dominance of English-speaking countries in global aviation and aerospace industries, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom.¹⁰ Additionally, post-war aviation terminology has been developed in English, and many of the technical manuals for the most widely used aircraft are written in English. American and British delegates argue that choosing English simply recognizes an existing reality.
- Historically, **French** has been considered the traditional language of diplomacy, due to France's military and political dominance in the early 20th century. It was also the working language of the International Commission for Air Navigation (ICAN), an early intergovernmental body established in the interwar period to coordinate international civil aviation rules; it was replaced by the ICAO after the war.
- **Russian** reflects the reality of Soviet power. The USSR is now one of the world's two superpowers, has a major aviation industry, and represents a vast geographic territory over which international

⁹ Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, "Early Aviation Safety and Development," accessed April 7, 2026, <https://airandspace.si.edu>.

¹⁰ "International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Assembly Resolution A38-8 on Proficiency in the English Language Used for Radiotelephony Communications, ICAO Assembly (2013).



flights frequently pass. Air traffic controllers and pilots flying in the vast region speak Russian. Soviet delegates argue that any international standard that excludes Russian is, in practice, not truly international.¹¹

Other contenders are Spanish and Mandarin.¹²

The committee must decide not just what language to use, but what specific words and phrases should be standardized, and how to ensure that speakers of that language across dozens of countries use it consistently enough to be safe.

The Phonetic Alphabet:

Closely related to the **language question** is the question of the phonetic alphabet. A phonetic alphabet is a set of code words that stand for each letter of the alphabet. It is used in radio communication to make letters clear when signals are unclear, noisy, or affected by accents.

For example, the letters B and P sound almost identical over a crackling radio. Under stress, with accents, and over a long distance, even more letters blur together. A phonetic alphabet solves this by replacing each letter with a distinctive word: instead of saying "B," you say "Bravo"; instead of "P," you say "Papa."

Before and during World War II, different countries used different phonetic alphabets. The United States military used the Able Baker alphabet (Able, Baker, Charlie, Dog...). The British Royal Air Force used a different system. The result was confusion when Allied forces had to work together. As aviation expands internationally, the same problem will occur in civilian airspace — but with potentially fatal consequences.¹³

Standardizing Units of Measurement:

A second fundamental technical question is what units of measurement the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) should standardize for aviation. This is not a trivial issue. Aircraft specifications, fuel calculations, altitude readings, speed limits, and runway dimensions all depend on consistent units. Any mismatch between the units used by pilots, air traffic controllers, aircraft instruments, and airport procedures can create serious safety risks.

The central debate is between the metric system, which is used by most of the world, and the imperial system, which has historically been used by the United States and the United Kingdom. This matters because these two countries were among the largest producers of aircraft in the mid-twentieth century. Their aircraft were designed using imperial-based conventions, including altitude in feet and speed in knots, which are still standard in aviation today. A shift to full metric standardization would have required either redesigning aircraft systems or implementing widespread conversion procedures.

The dangers of unit confusion are well documented. In 1983, Gimli Glider incident occurred when an Air Canada aircraft ran out of fuel mid-flight due to a miscalculation between kilograms and pounds. The aircraft was forced to glide to an emergency landing, and although there were no fatalities, the incident demonstrated the risks of inconsistent measurement systems.¹⁴ While this incident took place after 1947, it illustrates risks that engineers and policymakers had already recognized.

¹¹ Markus Kuhn, "Paper Sizes," University of Cambridge Computer Laboratory, accessed April 7, 2026, <https://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/~mgk25/volatile/dunn-papersizes.pdf>.

¹² **Spanish:** Spanish was sometimes considered due to its wide global use, but it lacked early dominance in international aviation governance and was not established in key standard-setting institutions like ICAN or ICAO.

Mandarin: Mandarin was not a contender in early aviation standardization because China had limited influence in interwar aviation rule-making, and English was already entrenched as the global aviation language.

¹³ Ooma, "Alfa, Bravo, Charlie: The Phonetic Alphabet on Phone Calls," accessed April 7, 2026, <https://www.ooma.com/blog/alfa-bravo-charlie-phonetic-alphabet-on-phone-calls/>.

¹⁴ "Peete wins by stroke as Sutton collapses," *Ottawa Citizen*, July 25, 1983, <https://news.google.com/newspapers?id=qtEyAAAAIBAJ&sjid=B-8FAAAAIBAJ&pg=2801,1724260>.



There is no simple solution. Most countries and the scientific community favor the metric system because of its consistency and ease of use. However, in 1947 the aviation industry was heavily influenced by American and British manufacturing practices, which relied on imperial conventions. As a result, ICAO needed to adopt an approach that balanced safety with practicality.

Aircraft Accident Investigation

When an aircraft crashes, responsibility for the investigation is not fully detailed in the Chicago Convention, which simply states in Article 26 that the state where the accident occurs must conduct an inquiry. In practice, however, accident investigations are often complex. An aircraft may be manufactured in one country, operated by an airline from another, registered in a third, and crash in a different state altogether. The crew may also come from multiple national backgrounds. As a result, understanding the causes of an accident and preventing future incidents requires coordination between several states, access to records across jurisdictions, and technical expertise that may not always be available in the state of occurrence.

In January 1946, PICA0's Accident Investigation Division began developing recommendations that would later form Annex 13, which sets international standards for accident investigations. A key principle established during this process continues to guide investigations today: their primary purpose is to improve safety, not to assign blame or determine legal liability. If investigators believe their findings could be used against them or others in legal proceedings, they may be less likely to report information fully and honestly. For this reason, protections that encourage transparency are essential.

The committee must therefore consider how responsibilities should be shared when accidents involve multiple states, including which state should lead an investigation, what information should be exchanged, and how to ensure that findings remain objective and focused on improving aviation safety rather than reflecting political or national interests.^{15 16}

EXISTING INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The Paris Convention of 1919

Following the first World War, 32 nations signed the **Paris Convention on the Regulation of Aerial Navigation in 1919**. This marked the first international convention on civil aviation. The Paris Convention affirmed the principle of national sovereignty over airspace and created the International Commission for Air Navigation (ICAN), which began developing common technical standards.¹⁷

The International Air Services Transit Agreement (“Two Freedoms of Air”) (1944)

The treaty was signed by PICA0 member states around the same time as the Chicago Convention. It granted **two freedoms of air: (i) the privilege for contracting countries to fly across each others territory without landing and (ii) to be able to land for non-traffic purposes.**¹⁸ Non-traffic purposes means for purposes other than loading or unloading passengers. They refer to technical stops, like for refueling, emergency landings, etc.¹⁹

¹⁵ Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention), Dec. 7, 1944, 15 U.N.T.S. 295, Article 26.

¹⁶ International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), *Annex 13: Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation*, accessed April 7, 2026.

¹⁷ International Civil Aviation Organization, “History of ICAO and its Predecessor Organizations,” ICAO.int, accessed April 7, 2026, <https://www.icao.int/about-icao/History/Pages/default.aspx>.

¹⁸ *Convention Relating to the Regulation of Aerial Navigation*, signed at Paris on 13 October 1919, United Nations Treaty Series, vol. 84, p. II-252 (establishing the International Commission for Air Navigation under the League of Nations as the first international civil aviation regulatory body and laying early technical foundations later referenced by the Provisional International Civil Aviation Organization), accessed April 7, 2026, <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%2084/volume-84-II-252-English.pdf>.

¹⁹ Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Government of Barbados for Air Services Between and Beyond Their Respective Territories, bilateral air services agreement, text as provided in official treaty documentation (establishing mutual rights for scheduled international air services and regulating aviation operations between the two states), accessed April 7, 2026.



The Provisional ICAO (PICAO) Drafts

Since June 1945, PICAO's technical divisions have been developing draft Annexes to the Chicago Convention. These drafts represent years of expert work by aviation specialists from dozens of nations and cover the full range of technical standards for aviation safety. They are not yet finalized — the committee's work is to review, debate, amend, and adopt them. Whatever the committee adopts becomes binding on member states (or a formally declared difference must be registered).

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

Use the following questions to guide your research and prepare your country's position:

1. What language does your country speak? Does your country strongly prefer one of ICAO's candidate official languages, English, French, or Russian? What practical effects would it have for your country if a different language were chosen?
2. Does your country produce aircraft? If so, what measurement system do those aircraft use? How expensive would it be for your industry to switch systems, and how would you balance those costs with the safety benefits of global standardization?
3. How important is aviation to your country's economy? Is your country mainly an aviation provider, such as airlines and manufacturers, or more of an aviation consumer that relies on foreign carriers? How does that shape your position on ICAO standards?
4. What is your country's geopolitical alignment? Is it closely aligned with the United States, the United Kingdom, or the Soviet Union, or does it take a non-aligned position? How might those relationships influence your views in this committee?
5. How should aviation accidents be investigated? If a foreign aircraft crashes in your country, how much involvement should the aircraft's home country have in the investigation? What if the investigation finds that the crash was caused by your country's air traffic control system?
6. What should happen when a country refuses to grant overflight rights for political reasons? Should ICAO be able to step in, or should this remain a matter of national sovereignty? Where should the limits of state control be in a system that depends on international air travel?

GLOSSARY

Air Traffic Control (ATC): The service that provides guidance to pilots to ensure the safe, orderly, and efficient movement of air traffic. ATC controllers communicate with pilots by radio and are responsible for separating aircraft and preventing collisions.

Annex: A technical document attached to the Chicago Convention, containing detailed Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) for a specific aspect of aviation. As of the modern era, there are 19 Annexes covering subjects from pilot licensing to security to accident investigation.

Annex 13: The ICAO standard governing aircraft accident and incident investigation. Its core principle is that the sole objective of an investigation is to prevent future accidents, not to assign blame or liability.

Cabotage: The right to operate domestic air services within a foreign country. The Chicago Convention generally prohibits cabotage, meaning a foreign airline cannot carry passengers between two cities within another nation's borders.



Chicago Convention (Convention on International Civil Aviation): The foundational treaty of international aviation law, signed by 52 nations in Chicago on December 7, 1944, and entered into force on April 4, 1947. It creates ICAO and establishes the core principles of international civil aviation.

Five Freedoms of the Air: A set of commercial aviation rights established at the Chicago Conference: (1) the right to overfly a foreign country; (2) the right to make a technical stop; (3) the right to carry passengers from your home country to a foreign country; (4) the right to carry passengers from a foreign country back home; and (5) the right to carry passengers between two foreign countries as part of a route originating at home.

ICAN (International Commission for Air Navigation): ICAO's predecessor organization, established by the Paris Convention of 1919. ICAN developed the first international aviation standards and operated until 1947, when ICAO formally took over.

ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization): The United Nations specialized agency responsible for setting international standards for civil aviation safety, security, efficiency, and environmental protection. Established on April 4, 1947, when the Chicago Convention received its 26th ratification.

Imperial System: The system of measurement used by the United States and the United Kingdom, including feet (altitude), miles and nautical miles (distance), knots (speed), and pounds (weight). The primary alternative to the metric system in aviation.

Mayday: The international radio distress signal, derived from the French m'aidez (help me). Repeated three times — Mayday Mayday Mayday — to declare an aviation emergency.

Metric System (SI): The internationally standardized system of measurement based on meters, kilograms, seconds, and liters. Used by most of the world outside the United States and United Kingdom.

Phonetic Alphabet: A set of code words, each representing one letter of the alphabet, designed to ensure clear radio communication. The eventual ICAO standard (finalized 1956): Alfa, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Echo, Foxtrot, Golf, Hotel, India, Juliett, Kilo, Lima, Mike, November, Oscar, Papa, Quebec, Romeo, Sierra, Tango, Uniform, Victor, Whiskey, X-ray, Yankee, Zulu.

PICAO (Provisional International Civil Aviation Organization): The temporary organization established by the Chicago Conference to begin developing international aviation standards while the Chicago Convention was being ratified. PICAO operated from June 1945 until April 1947, when it became ICAO.

Recommended Practice: A specification in an ICAO Annex that is desirable and to which member states should aim to conform, but which is not mandatory. Distinguished from a Standard, which is mandatory.

SARPs (Standards and Recommended Practices): The collective term for the technical rules contained in ICAO's 19 Annexes. There are currently over 12,000 SARPs, all agreed by consensus by ICAO's member states.

Sovereignty of Airspace: The principle, affirmed by the Chicago Convention, that every nation has complete and exclusive sovereignty over the airspace above its territory. No foreign aircraft may enter a nation's airspace without permission.

Standard: A specification in an ICAO Annex that member states must comply with. If a state cannot or chooses not to comply, it must formally notify ICAO of the difference. Distinguished from a Recommended Practice, which is aspirational.



KEY DOCUMENTS AND TREATIES

Paris Convention on the Regulation of Aerial Navigation (1919) — The first major international aviation treaty, establishing airspace sovereignty and creating ICAN. Predecessor to the Chicago Convention.

https://www.icao.int/secretariat/PostalHistory/1919_paris_convention.htm

Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention, 1944) — The foundational treaty of modern international aviation law. Signed December 7, 1944; entered into force April 4, 1947. The core document governing all ICAO activities.

https://www.icao.int/publications/Documents/7300_cons.pdf

International Air Services Transit Agreement (1944) — Signed alongside the Chicago Convention, granting member states the First and Second Freedoms of the Air on a multilateral basis.

https://www.icao.int/secretariat/PostalHistory/international_air_services_transit_agreement.htm

ICAO Annex 1 — Personnel Licensing (Draft, 1947) — Standards for the licensing of pilots, air traffic controllers, aircraft maintenance engineers, and other aviation personnel.

ICAO Annex 2 — Rules of the Air (Draft, 1947) — Standards governing the rules that pilots must follow in flight, including right-of-way rules, separation standards, and flight procedures.

ICAO Annex 5 — Units of Measurement (Draft, 1947) — Standards for the units of measurement to be used in all communications and documentation for international civil aviation operations.

ICAO Annex 10 — Aeronautical Telecommunications (Draft, 1947) — Standards for radio communications, including the standardization of communication procedures and the phonetic alphabet.

ICAO Annex 13 — Aircraft Accident Investigation (Draft, 1947; adopted 1951) — Standards for the investigation of aircraft accidents, establishing the principle that investigations exist solely to prevent future accidents, not to assign blame.

<https://unitingaviation.com/news/safety/accident-investigation-provisions-of-icao-annex-13/>

ICAO History and the Chicago Convention (ICAO official site)

<https://www.icao.int/history-icao-and-chicago-convention>

History of the NATO/ICAO Phonetic Alphabet

<https://blog.privatefly.com/history-of-the-nato-phonetic-alphabet>

Role of Language in Aviation Accidents (Airport Technology)

<https://www.airport-technology.com/features/role-language-air-accidents/>

EXTRA RESOURCES

The following resources are recommended for delegates researching their country's position and the committee's issues:

ICAO Official Website — History and Background

<https://www.icao.int/history-icao-and-chicago-convention>

SKYbrary — Chicago Convention (comprehensive overview for aviation professionals)

<https://skybrary.aero/articles/chicago-convention>

Back to the Future: The ICAO Convention at 80 — IFATCA (readable overview of the 1944 conference)

<https://ifatca.org/article/back-to-the-future-1944-2024-the-icao-convention-is-80-years-old/>

Simple Flying — What Is The Chicago Convention And Why Does It Matter?

<https://simpleflying.com/chicago-convention/>



A History of the NATO Phonetic Alphabet — Private Fly Blog

<https://blog.privatefly.com/history-of-the-nato-phonetic-alphabet>

Role of Language in Air Accidents — Airport Technology

<https://www.airport-technology.com/features/role-language-air-accidents/>

Failure to Communicate — Flight Safety Foundation (on aviation communication errors)

<https://flightsafety.org/asw-article/failure-to-communicate/>

ICAO Annex 13 — Accident Investigation (UNITING AVIATION)

<https://unitingaviation.com/news/safety/accident-investigation-provisions-of-icao-annex-13/>

Is Flying Safer Than Driving? — USA Facts

<https://usafacts.org/articles/is-flying-safer-than-driving/>

Position Paper Guidelines:

In order to be eligible for a committee award, delegations must submit one (1) position paper per country (i.e. if two delegates are representing the United States, they will only submit one position paper between the two of them).

What is a Position Paper?

A position paper is a short document that outlines a country's opinion on an issue. The paper includes a short summary of what the issue or problem is, explains why the country is interested in the issue, and communicates the country's stance on what should be done to address the issue. A position paper is written as if you were the actual representative of the country stating its position. Your personal opinions on the issue should not be included. A position paper is not a summary of your country's GDP, government, economy, languages, etc. unless directly relevant to the issue. Only one position paper is written per country, per grade school committee; **if there are 2 or 3 delegates representing the same country on a committee, they should write the paper together.**

Why write a Position Paper?

Writing a position paper will help you organize why an issue matters to your country and what your country wants done on the issue. The first thing you will likely do in committee is present an opening speech about your country's position. You should be able to pull portions of a well written position paper into an introductory speech on your country's perspective.

How to Write a Position Paper

(1) Research the Issue. The questions you want to answer are:

- How does this issue affect your country?
- How does this issue affect your country's neighbors or allies?
- Is this a global problem that impacts everyone?
- What would your country like to see done on this issue?
- Are there countries or groups of people who will be particularly sensitive to addressing this issue?
- Are there any conventions or resolutions on the topics that your country has signed or ratified?
- What are UN actions on the issue? Has your country supported or opposed these actions?
- Keep in Mind: What a country says, and what it actually believes should be done may be different. Also, some countries may believe that no action should be taken on an issue. They may disagree with how others feel or may not want international involvement. It is okay if your position is that the international community should do nothing, but you will need to explain why.



- (2) Brainstorm Specific Actions. Come up with 3-4 specific things that can be done to reach the outcome your country desires. For example: “The United States believes we should send a peacekeeping mission to monitor human rights abuses in Syria and encourage talks between both sides.” You will present these ideas in committee as possible solutions to the problem and attempt to pass a resolution which includes these actions.
- (3) Outline Your Paper. Make an outline of what points you want to cover in your paper and the order in which you would like to address them. Remember a good paper should briefly explain the problem, explain why your country cares about the issue, and inform others what your country should like to see done. If you know other countries favor a solution that you will disagree with, make sure to include why your country disagrees.
- (4) Write your Paper. Position papers should be written from the perspective of the country you are representing. Rather than being a report on the topic, a position paper should explain what your country wants to see done to address the issue. Start by giving a brief summary of the issue and how it impacts your country. Then explain the specific actions you would like to see taken. Close by summarizing your country’s overall position. Proper grammar and spelling are a must.

Award Criteria and Eligibility

- The ideal position paper will have a clearly defined and summarized topic with your country’s position clearly outlined. Points are also awarded for organization, style and correct grammar.
- GCDC Staff will be fact checking position papers, so be sure to include the most up to date information and a bibliography (if using in text citations, a Works Cited page MUST be included)
 - Proper source citation: if an idea or quote came from another source, you must provide a footnote / citation.
- Papers will be disqualified if the conference staff has discovered that students did not write their own papers or that content has been plagiarized.
- **Make sure your position paper must have the required header below! Do not create any additional title pages - points will be deducted for improper format.**
- **Formatting Requirements: 500 words minimum, 1,500 words maximum. Times New Roman font, 12- point size**

REQUIRED POSITION PAPER HEADER

Committee:
Country:
Topic:
School:
Delegate Name(s):



Washington, DC

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