1. Introduction

1.1 At regular intervals, ICAO organises a conferences where States, airports, service providers and airspace users get together and discuss economic and management issues that underpin global aviation operations. CEANS 2008 was held in Montreal in September last year. 103 contracting states and many international organisations such as IFATCA participated in this conference. IFATCA did not present any working paper to this.

1.2 The conference was preceded by a very useful and successful seminar aimed at preparing the delegates and focussing on the debates which would be held during the week.

2. Discussion

2.1 The goals of the conference were outlined in three key and interrelated topics: economic oversight; performance management and consultation with users. As ICAO states, it is a uniquely collaborative success which highlights ICAO’s important global role in this domain. Fifteen recommendations were endorsed by the conference and these recommendations are expected to bring about the increase in efficiency and cost-effectiveness that are currently being sought by all State and industry stakeholders.

2.2 The previous conference in 2000 focussed more on the commercialised approach of management and operations of the airport and the air navigation service providers. This time, the aim was to come up with specific financial and managerial guidelines and focus of economic oversight to develop a strategy to cope effectively with the growth of air traffic worldwide. Commercialisation has brought in airport and air navigation service to a marked improvement in overall management practises according to ICAO, with more incentives to be profitable and increased revenues to keep with the demand in infrastructure.

2.3 In his opening speech the President of the Council of ICAO, Roberto Kobeh González outlined the importance ICAO can and should play. This despite the fact that a contracting State is not legally bound to adhere to the policies and that some of the charging policies deviate from provisions of the Chicago convention. With the commercialisation and privatisation of airports and air navigation...
services, there is a genuine risk that ICAO’s economic policies become less known and applied. This could lead to diverging approaches to user charges and taxations. For example, the economic characteristics and capacity limitations of airports and ANSP, combined with the liberalisation of air transport services, have in certain circumstances, given rise to questions regarding the application on non-discrimination principle in Article 15 of the Chicago Convention and the application of equitable cost recovery practises.

2.4. Recommendations

Of the 15 recommendation endorsed by the conference, 10 seek to amend the document 9082\(^1\). These were decided after extensive and interesting debates on objectives of economic oversight by states which should

- prevent the potential risk that a service provider could engage in anti-competitive practise or abuse its dominant position
- to ensure non discrimination and transparency in the application of charges
- to ascertain that capacity meets future demand

The symposium concluded that economic oversight, performance management and consultation with users – are interrelated and should be considered as a single package. It was reinforced that proper application of the principles related to these three topics would contribute to improved cooperation in the industry in general and to increase efficiency for service providers.

ITF presented a paper that Staff should be consulted and not just the users. This paper received some interesting comments but was not kept in the recommendation of the conference.

3. Conclusions

I found the discussion very interesting. From a service providers’ point of view, the conference saw a very active and efficient CANSO explaining to the States what their members think should be done by States in order to increase the efficient management of service providers. A lot of discussion took place on ownership, oversight, regulatory resources etc. which are the points we do observe currently among our membership in this slow transformation process. The service providers have clearly flagged what they would like to see in the future. Other interesting discussions included a more performance based programs such as ATM global concept. Key Performance Indicators and Performance Measurement systems were presented by both Eurocontrol and the European Commission.

\(^1\) ICAO’s Policies on Charges for Airports and Air Navigation Services