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**REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND
THE COUNCIL**

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY SAFA PROGRAMME

[SEC(2009) 1576 final]

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(Text with EEA relevance)

Why this report?

Article 6 (2) of Directive 2004/36/EC provides that:

"The Commission shall publish yearly an aggregated information report available to the public and the industry stakeholders containing an analysis of all information received in accordance with Article 5. That analysis shall be simple and easy to understand and shall indicate whether there exists an increased safety risk to air passengers. In the analysis, the source of that information shall be dis-identified."

This is the third annual report covering the period 01 January to 31 December 2008.

1. THE EC SAFA PROGRAMME

1.1. Origins of the EC SAFA programme

Initially the SAFA programme was launched by the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) in 1996. The SAFA programme was not based upon a European legal binding basis but upon a commitment of the Directors General of the participating ECAC Member States. The scope of the inspections relating to 'foreign' aircraft implied those aircraft which are not used or operated under the control of the competent authority of the state where the inspection takes place.

On 30 April 2004 Directive 2004/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the safety of third-country aircraft using Community airports (the so-called 'SAFA Directive') was published, creating a legal obligation upon EU Member States to perform ramp inspections upon third country aircraft landing at their airports, where 'third country aircraft' implied an aircraft which is not used or operated under control of a competent authority of an EU Member State; although the Directive does in no way prohibit EU Member States from inspecting aircraft from other EU Member States. EU Member States were given a window of two years for implementing this Directive through the enactment of national legislation.

Following a decision by the Directors General of ECAC member states, the SAFA Programme was transferred under European Community (EC) competence where as of 1 January 2007, responsibility for the management and further development of the **EC SAFA programme** falls upon the European Commission assisted by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). EASA is a European Commission agency based in Cologne which is responsible for the operational management of the EC SAFA programme on behalf of the same Commission in accordance with Commission Regulation (EC) 768/2006.

Until 2006 the operational elements of the SAFA programme were implemented by the Central Joint Aviation Authorities (CJAA). At the end of 2006 the SAFA coordination activities including the centralised database have been transferred from CJAA to EASA.

The continued participation of the fifteen non-EU ECAC Member States, and thus the pan-European dimension of the programme, has been assured through the signature of a Working Arrangement between each of these individual States and EASA. Including the EU-27 therefore, the EC-SAFA programme boasts a total of **42 participating States** (*see Appendix A*).

1.2. Functioning of the EC SAFA Programme

In each SAFA participating State, aircraft (third-country for EU states or foreign for non-EU ECAC states) can be subject to a ramp inspection, chiefly concerned with the aircraft documents and manuals, flight crew licenses, the apparent condition of the aircraft and the presence and condition of mandatory cabin safety equipment. The references for these inspections are contained in the Standards of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Annexes 1 (Personnel Licensing), 6 (Operations of Aircraft) and 8 (Airworthiness of Aircraft).

These checks are carried out in accordance with a procedure which is common to all participating States. Their outcome is then the subject of reports which also follow a common format. In the case of significant irregularities, the operator and the appropriate Aviation Authority (State of Operator or Registry) are contacted in order to arrive at corrective measures to be taken not only with regard to the aircraft inspected but also with regard to other aircraft which could be concerned in the case of an irregularity which is of a generic nature. All data from the reports as well as supplementary information are shared and centralised in a computerised database set up and managed by EASA.

The main features of the EC SAFA Programme can be summarised as follows:

- its application by all SAFA participating States: in principle all 42 ECAC States (EU Member States and non-EU ECAC States that have signed the EASA Working Arrangement;
- the broad dissemination of SAFA ramp inspection results through a centralised database;
- its bottom-up approach: the Programme is built around ramp inspections of aircraft;
- its focused attention: primarily focusing on third country aircraft flying to the EU and SAFA participating States (although SAFA inspections may continue to be performed on aircraft from EU Member States);
- its inherent objective of checking for compliance with ICAO Standards which are commonly applicable internationally to all inspected aircraft .

1.3. Integration of the EC SAFA Programme in the overall aviation safety chain

Based upon the SAFA inspections performed over the last few years, experience shows that these give a general indication of the safety of foreign operators. However, this indication is limited in the sense that no full picture is obtained about the safety of any particular aircraft or operator. This is due to the fact that certain aspects are difficult to assess during an inspection (e.g. crew resource management, full airworthiness status ... etc.) owing to the limited time

available to perform an inspection and consequently the limited level of detail possible during such an inspection. The value of those indicators will be further enhanced by increasing also the level of harmonisation across the participating States in the performance of SAFA inspections.

A full assessment of a particular aircraft or operator can only be obtained through the continuous oversight by the responsible national civil aviation authority (State of Operator or State of Registry). In this manner, the information gained through the EC SAFA Programme is useful:

- Primarily as a pre-emptive tool helping to identify potential negative safety trends whereby a numerous and/or recurring number of findings concerning a particular operator, is a very good indicator of potential structural weaknesses both with regard to the quality control management of that operator as well as the level of safety oversight exercised by the responsible national civil aviation authorities of the state where that operator is certified; similar negative trends may also be identified concerning specific aircraft types.
- More directly, SAFA inspections may contribute in real-time to the safe operation of the particular aircraft which has just been inspected, prompting the inspecting authorities to ensure that corrective actions are taken immediately prior to any further operations being conducted by that aircraft.

Additionally, since the coming into force of Regulation (EC) No 2111/2005 establishing a list of carriers which are banned from flying into EC territory, SAFA inspections have acquired an increased importance as one of the criteria considered by the Commission in taking its decisions on the inclusion of carriers in the Community list. Indeed, this has been the case since the establishment of the first Community list in March 2006 and its subsequent regular updates.

1.4. Development of the programme in 2008

On 16 April 2008, the Commission adopted two important legislative measures aimed at further strengthening the EC SAFA Programme:

- Commission Directive 2008/49/EC containing the core elements of the SAFA Procedures Manual and providing for harmonised rules for the conduct of SAFA inspections including: follow-up actions, mandatory reporting timeframe (15 working days) and the mandatory communication of the results of the inspection to the inspected operators through the delivery of a Proof of Inspection according to a common format. In addition, the abovementioned Directive introduces a common set of criteria for the qualification of SAFA inspectors. EASA was mandated to support the participating states by developing detailed guidance material in line with the core elements enshrined in the Directive.
- Commission Regulation (EC) No 351/2008 implementing a structured, pan-European approach to the prioritisation of SAFA ramp inspections on potentially unsafe subjects, aimed at fostering a better utilisation of the available inspecting resources.

As tasked under Commission Directive 2008/49/EC, EASA has developed and issued detailed Guidance Material for the qualification SAFA ramp inspectors setting standards which are common across all participating States. The qualification criteria focus on eligibility, training (including recurrent training) and the experience of inspectors. The training of inspectors must follow the syllabi developed by EASA whilst independent training providers must be qualified according to a dedicated set of common criteria.

A number of initiatives started in 2007 have continued in 2008, becoming regular standard activities under the EC SAFA Programme; such as the quality review of reports entered by participating States in the SAFA database and the database analysis. Conducted on a four-monthly basis this analysis attempts to identify as early as possible potentially negative safety concerns and trends in order that they may be addressed in a timely manner before indeed becoming a threat to international aviation safety. The methodology for conducting this analysis was further refined and enhanced to maximise the use of the available SAFA data.

In October 2008 a major upgrade of the SAFA database was deployed, allowing for improved reporting, support for monitoring of the prioritisation process (established under Commission Regulation (EC) No 351/2008) and improved workflows. Whilst also implementing the changes introduced by Commission Directive 2008/49/EC, namely the mandatory reporting of class 3 actions, the upgrade introduced a major new feature aimed at improving the consistency of findings by using a set of pre-described findings, developed and maintained by EASA.

The SAFA database was also replicated as a fully operational training environment allowing for hands-on training of its users.

1.5. Introduction of a risk-based approach

The newly-enacted Commission Regulation (EC) No 351/2008 (which came into force in April 2008) introduces the concept of prioritisation of SAFA inspection from a pan-European perspective whereby participating States are required to prioritise a portion of their ramp inspections on certain subjects (either individual operators or all the operators certified in a certain state). The prioritisation list is compiled by the European Commission and updated whenever the need arises according to the set of criteria established under the said Regulation, namely:

- information transmitted by EASA following the analysis of SAFA database;
- information stemming from the meetings of the Air Safety Committee;
- information received by the Commission from the Member States.

In addition, operators which are listed in Annex B of the Community list of banned air carriers (established under Regulation (EC) No 2111/2005) as well as the other operators certified in the same state as any operator featuring concurrently on the Community list are also subject to prioritised inspections.

The first prioritisation list was issued on 20 April 2008 and was subsequently reviewed twice during that same year. During 2008, out of a total 10,337 SAFA inspections 1,481 were conducted on subjects indicated in the prioritisation list.

2. THE SAFA CENTRALISED DATABASE

The SAFA centralised Database has been managed by EASA since December 2006, when it was transferred from the Central Joint Aviation Authorities (CJAA) in the Netherlands to EASA in Cologne, Germany.

Although it is managed and maintained by EASA, the inclusion of reports in the database remains a responsibility of the individual National Aviation Authorities (NAA) of the 42 SAFA participating States.

In 2008 the SAFA Participating States performed a record 10,337 inspections which revealed some 11,298 findings (*see Appendix A*).

Data contained in the database is considered confidential in the sense that it is only shared with other participating States and is not available to the general public. The database can be accessed by all National Aviation Authorities of participating States via the (secured) internet.

3. AREAS OF INSPECTION

According to the 'SAFA Directive', aircraft suspected of non-compliance with international safety standards (based on e.g. regular analysis of the database by EASA) must be inspected with priority by the Member States. Furthermore the SAFA ramp inspections may be carried out using a spot-check procedure.

There are five areas on which the inspections can be focused:

- (1) Specific State of Operator (checking operators from a particular State).
- (2) Specific aircraft type.
- (3) Specific nature of operations (scheduled, non-scheduled, cargo, etc.).
- (4) Specific third country operator.
- (5) Specific aircraft identified by its individual registration mark.

Appendices B, C and D list the states of operator, aircraft types and operators inspected during the year 2008. They highlight the wide coverage of the EC SAFA Programme and its non-discriminatory application.

The smooth operation of the Programme can also be illustrated by the table below, which aggregates the information in the Appendices and provides an overview of activities.

Although under the 'SAFA Directive' the main obligation on EU Member States is the inspection of third-country aircraft visiting EU airports, aircraft from EU Operators continue to be subject of inspections as well. The following table shows the results:

Inspections	10,337 inspections.....
Operatoron 1,067 different operators.....
State of Operatorfrom 131 states.....
Aircraft typeoperating 220 different (sub)types of aircraft

The table below meanwhile reflects the fact that the vast majority of all flights within EU Member States are carried out by EU operators and that in general, SAFA Participating States were still using the broader criteria of the former ECAC SAFA Programme.

	Inspections on EU Operators	Inspections on non-EU Operators
2008	5,879	4,458
Percentage	56.87%	43.13%

Out of the 10,337 inspections conducted during 2008, 9,040 were performed by EU Member States: 42.7% (3,857) were performed on operators certified in third (non-EU) countries while the remaining 57.3% (5,183) were conducted on EU operators. In 2008, third country operators performed some 700,000 landings in the Community airports implying an inspection rate (No. of inspections/No. of landings) of approximately 0.5% (i.e. 5 inspections for every 1,000 landings). Landings of EU operators in another EU state (other than the one responsible for their safety oversight) amounted to more than 2,900,000; implying an inspection rate of 0.17% for EU operators.

4. MAIN RESULTS OF THE SAFA INSPECTIONS

4.1. Inspection findings in general

A first starting point regarding the findings, which are deviations from ICAO Standards, is the quantitative approach. This compares the total number of findings (F) to the total number of inspections (I) and the inspected items (II).

During the inspection, a checklist is used which comprises a total of 54 different inspection items. In the majority of cases, not all items are checked during an inspection because the time between the arrival of the aircraft and its departure is not sufficient to perform a complete inspection. Therefore, the relationship between the total number of findings and the total number of inspected items might give a better understanding rather than a ratio based merely on the number of inspections. The results are presented in the table below:

	Period
	01 January 2008 – 31 December 2008
Total Inspections (I)	10,337
Total Inspected Items (II)	358,046
Total Findings (F)	11,298
Average no. of Inspected Items during an Inspection	34.64
Findings/Inspections (F/I)	1.093
Findings/Inspected Items (F/II)	0.0315

4.2. Inspection findings and their categories

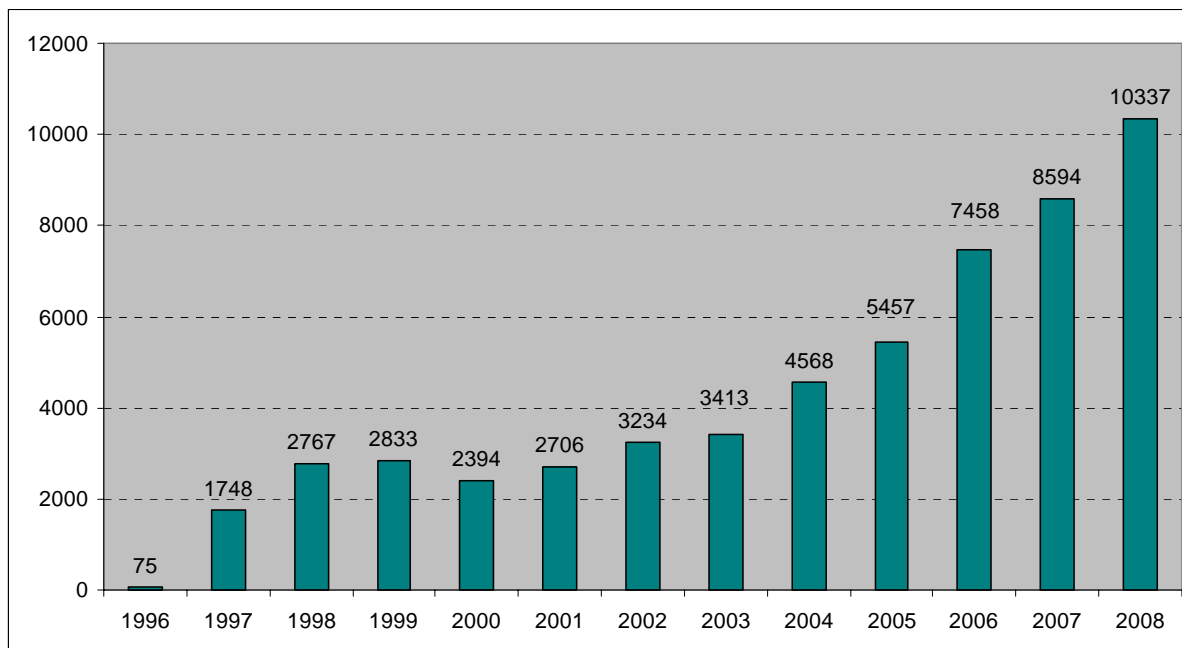
Not only the absolute number of inspection findings needs to be considered, but also their “severity”. To this end, three categories of findings have been defined. A “Category 1” finding is called a minor finding; “Category 2” is a significant finding and “Category 3” a major finding. The terms “minor”, “significant” and “major” relate to the level of deviation from the ICAO Standard. The prime purpose of categorising the findings is to classify the compliance with a standard and the severity of non-compliance with this standard.

The inspections and the categories of findings are recorded in the database and the results are presented in the table below:

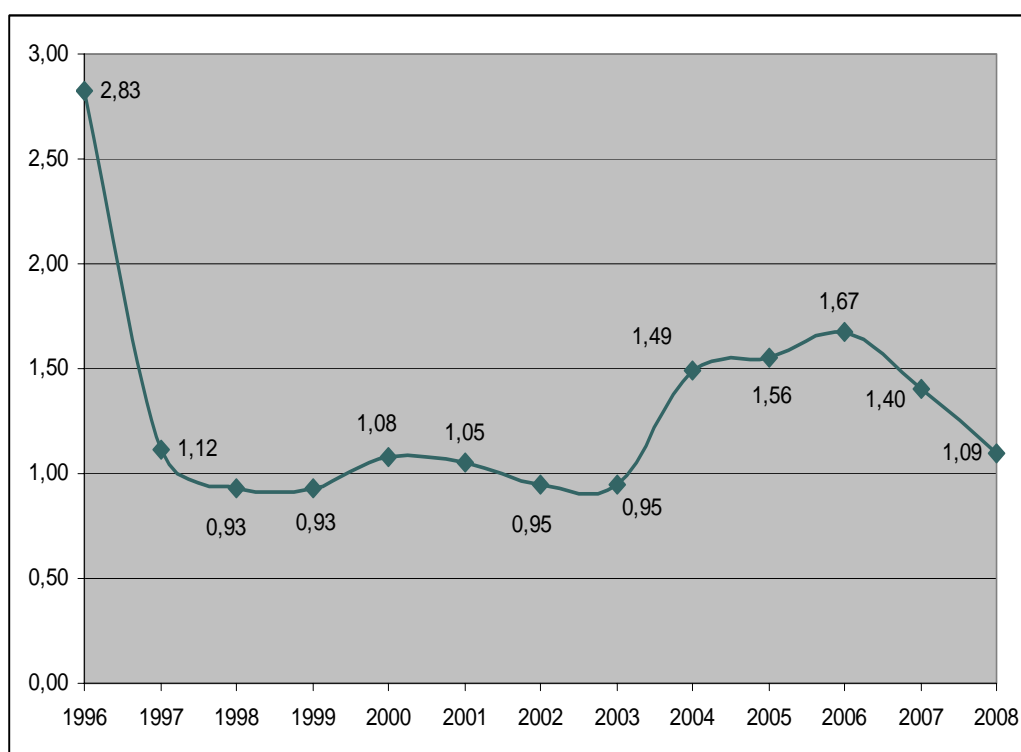
Year	No. inspections (I)	No. findings (F)				Ratio of findings (Fcat./I)			
		Cat. 1 (minor)	Cat. 2 (significant)	Cat. 3 (major)	total	F cat.1 / I	F cat.2 / I	F cat.3 / I	F total / I
2008	10337	4661	4551	2086	11298	0,451	0,440	0,202	1.093
		41,26%	40,28%	18,46%	100.00%				

4.3. Historical overview

	Year													Total 1996-2008
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	
Total Inspections (I)	75	1748	2767	2833	2394	2706	3234	3413	4568	5457	7458	8594	10337	55584
Total Inspected Items (II)	1675	31413	88400	95524	80454	82935	93681	100014	148850	181440	260524	300035	358046	1822991
Total Findings (F)	212	1951	2573	2631	2587	2851	3064	3242	6799	8492	12481	12073	11298	70254
Findings/Inspections (F/I)	2.8267	1.1161	0.9299	0.9287	1.0806	1.0536	0.9474	0.9499	1.4884	1.5562	1.6704	1.405	1.093	1.264
Findings/Inspected Items (F/II)	0.127	0.062	0.029	0.028	0.032	0.034	0.033	0.032	0.046	0.047	0.048	0.040	0.032	0.039



No. of SAFA inspections since the beginning of the Programme in 1996



Average no. of findings per inspection (1996-2008)

4.4. Inspection findings on a regional basis

Region	No. of States inspected	No. of Operat. inspected	Inspect. (I)	No. of findings (F)				Ratio of findings (Fcat./I)			
				Cat. 1 (minor)	Cat. 2 (signif.)	Cat. 3 (major)	Total	F cat.1/I	F cat.2/I	F cat.3/I	F total/I
EU (27) ¹	27	532	5,879	2,293	2,103	849	5,245	0.390	0.358	0.144	0.892
Europe (ECAC) ²	43	665	7,330	2,973	2,764	1,140	6,877	0.406	0.377	0.155	0.938
Russian Federation, Belarus & Central Asia ³	7	92	905	410	489	244	1,143	0.453	0.540	0.270	1.263
North America ⁴	3	88	456	259	203	132	594	0.568	0.445	0.289	1.303
Latin America & the Caribbean ⁵	21	46	163	112	153	74	339	0.687	0.939	0.454	2.080
Middle East and North Africa ⁶	17	78	998	577	586	300	1,463	0.578	0.587	0.301	1.466
Africa ⁷	20	41	192	169	190	112	471	0.880	0.990	0.583	2.453
Asia ⁸	16	41	260	158	151	77	386	0.608	0.581	0.296	1.485

¹ EU - Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

² Europe (ECAC) - Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

³ Russian Federation, Belarus and Central Asia - Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan.

⁴ North America (NA) - Bermuda, Canada, United States of America.

⁵ Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC) – Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Cayman Islands, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Netherlands Antilles, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

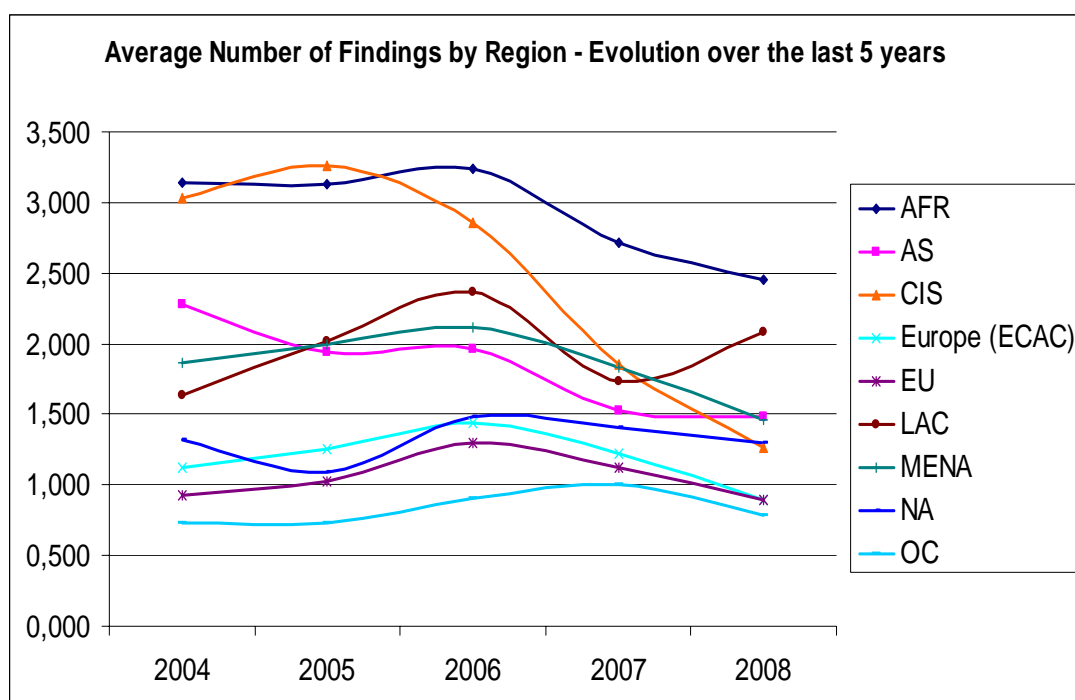
⁶ Middle East and North Africa (MENA)- Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

⁷ Africa (AFR) - Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Oceania ⁹	4	16	32	3	15	7	25	0.094	0.469	0.219	0.781
Average/all States								0.451	0.440	0.202	1.093

From this table, one may note that:

- Operators from States in the EU, ECAC and Oceania have fewer findings per inspection than average.
- Operators from Africa, the Russian Federation/Belarus/Central Asia group, Asia, the Middle East, North America and North Africa have more findings per inspection than average.



The five years evolution shows that the average number of findings (per inspection) has decreased for almost all geographic regions, most notably for operators licensed in the Russian Federation, Belarus and Central Asian states (CIS). The only exception is Latin America and Caribbean (LAC).

⁸ Asia (AS) - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Hong Kong (Special Administrative Region of China), India, Indonesia, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vietnam.

⁹ Oceania (OC) - Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

Distribution by ICAO regions

Region	No. of States inspected	No. of Operat. inspected	Inspect. (I)	No. of findings (F)				Ratio of findings (Fcat./I)			
				Cat. 1 (minor)	Cat. 2 (signif.)	Cat. 3 (major)	Total	F cat.1/I	F cat.2/I	F cat.3/I	F total/I
APAC ¹⁰	18	55	271	153	159	79	391	0,565	0,587	0,292	1,443
ESAF ¹¹	9	25	131	95	126	75	296	0,725	0,962	0,573	2,260
EUR/NAT ¹²	56	773	8580	3607	3477	1483	8567	0,420	0,405	0,173	0,998
MID ¹³	17	71	726	374	387	217	978	0,515	0,533	0,299	1,347
NACC ¹⁴	10	107	489	284	253	165	702	0,581	0,517	0,337	1,436
SAM ¹⁵	10	20	79	74	85	30	189	0,937	1,076	0,380	2,392
WACAF ¹⁶	11	16	61	74	64	37	175	1,213	1,049	0,607	2,869
All States	131	1067	10337	4661	4551	2086	11298	0,451	0,440	0,202	1,093

From this table, one may note that:

- Operators from States belonging to the EUR/NAT have fewer findings per inspection than average.

¹⁰ APAC-Asian and Pacific ICAO Region: Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China (incl. Hong Kong and Macao), Cook Islands, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshal Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, Vanuatu, Viet Nam.

¹¹ ESAF-Eastern and Southern African ICAO Region: Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

¹² EUR/NAT-European and North Atlantic ICAO Region: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands (incl. Netherlands Antilles), Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom (incl. Cayman Islands, Bermuda), Uzbekistan.

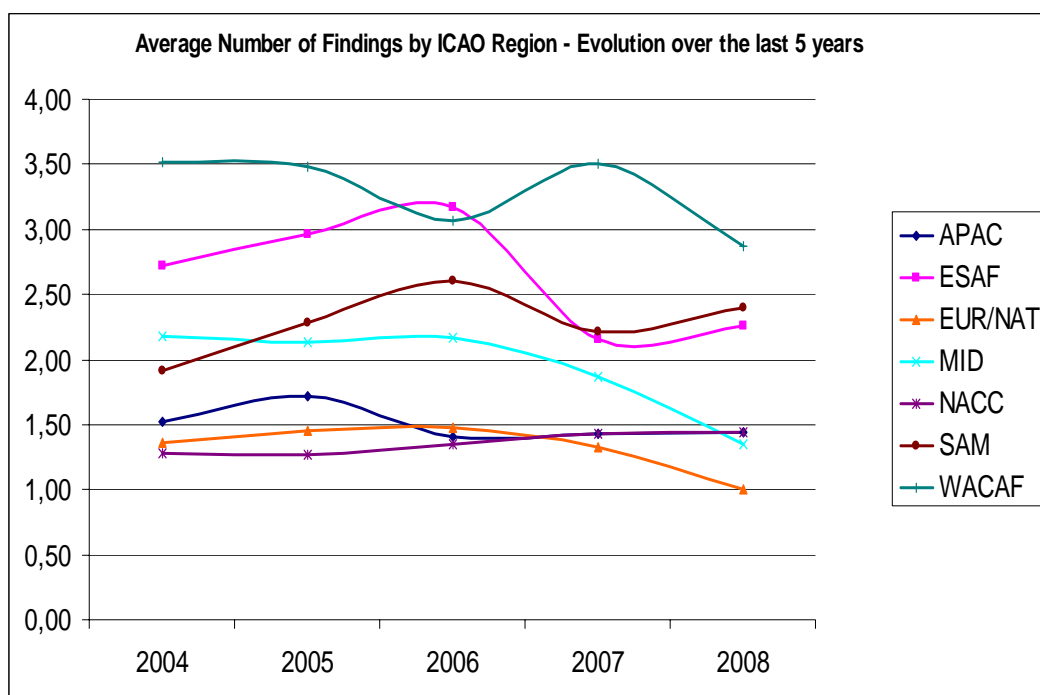
¹³ MID-Middle East ICAO Region: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, United Arab Emirates, Yemen.

¹⁴ NACC-Northern American, Central American and Caribbean ICAO Region: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, United States of America.

¹⁵ SAM-South American ICAO Region: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Panamá, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela.

¹⁶ WACAF-Western and Central African ICAO Region: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo.

- Operators from States belonging to the MID, SAM, WACAF, NACC, APAC and ESAF have more findings per inspection than average.



This graph shows that for the NACC, APAC region the average number of findings (total number of findings/total number of inspections) maintained at a fairly constant level. The EUR/NAT, MID, WACAF regions figures improved, whilst the ESAF, SAM regions shows an increase of the average reversing the improving trends of last year.

Comparison between the EU, ECAC and the rest of the world

Region	No. of States inspected	No. of Operat. inspected	Inspect. (I)	No. of findings (F)				Ratio of findings (Fcat./I)			
				Cat. 1 (minor)	Cat. 2 (signif.)	Cat. 3 (major)	Total	F cat.1/I	F cat.2/I	F cat.3/I	F total/I
EU	27	532	5879	2293	2103	849	5245	0,390	0,358	0,144	0,892
Rest of EUROPE (non-EU ECAC States)	16	133	1452	680	661	291	1632	0,468	0,455	0,200	1,124
EUROPE (ECAC)	43	665	7330	2973	2764	1140	6877	0,406	0,377	0,155	0,938
Non-EU States	104	535	4458	2368	2448	1237	6053	0,531	0,549	0,277	1,358
All States	131	1067	10337	4661	4551	2086	11298	0,451	0,440	0,202	1,093

4.5. Inspection findings related to checklist items

Appendix F provides the results regarding each individual inspection item (III) which has been inspected. It indicates the number of times that a particular inspection item was checked,

the number of findings and the ratio F/III. Appendix G provides the detailed breakdown of findings for the year 2008 by categories.

4.6. The top 3 significant and major inspection findings related to checklist items

The inspection checklist consists of four major parts. Part A concerns items to be inspected in the flight deck of the aircraft. Part B of the checklist concerns items to be checked in the (passenger) cabin, and mainly consists of safety equipment. Part C relates to the general technical condition of the aircraft which needs to be verified during a walk around check. Part D checklist items concern the cargo compartment of the aircraft and the cargo carried.

Any general findings not covered by Parts A, B, C or D can be administered under Part E (general) of the checklist.

When considering the findings established during a SAFA inspection, Category 2 (significant) and Category 3 (major) findings require the highest attention when it comes to the need for rectification. For each part of the checklist, the top 3 of Category 2 and 3 findings related to the number of inspections are given in the tables below Appendices D and E.

5. ACTION TAKEN AFTER RAMP INSPECTIONS

Based on the category, number and nature of the findings, several actions may be taken.

If the findings indicate that the safety of the aircraft and its occupants is impaired, corrective actions will be required. Normally the aircraft captain will be asked to address the serious deficiencies which are brought to his attention. In rare cases, where inspectors have reason to believe that the aircraft captain does not intend to take the necessary measures on the deficiencies reported to him, they will formally ground the aircraft. The formal act of grounding by the State of Inspection means that the aircraft is prohibited from resuming its flights until appropriate corrective measures are taken.

Another type of action is called “corrective actions before flight authorised”. Before the aircraft is allowed to resume its flight, corrective action is required to rectify any deficiencies which have been identified.

In other cases, the aircraft may depart under operational restrictions. An example of such a restriction would be the case where there is a deficiency regarding passenger seats. Operation of the aircraft is possible under the condition that the deficient seats are not occupied by any passengers.

It is standard practice that the captain of the aircraft which has just been inspected is debriefed about the findings. In addition, Category 2 and Category 3 findings are communicated to the responsible Aviation Authority and the home base of the operator with the request to take appropriate action to prevent reoccurrence.

In order to achieve best the objectives of the EC SAFA Programme, close cooperation with the Civil Aviation Authorities of all those States whose operators and aircraft have been subject of SAFA inspections is imperative. As part of their responsibility regarding the safety oversight of their national operators according to the relevant international safety standards, these Civil Aviation Authorities are requested to ensure proper implementation of corrective actions in order to address the reported SAFA findings.

In some cases, when the findings on an aircraft are considered important, individual SAFA Participating States may decide to revoke the entry permit of that aircraft. This means that the particular aircraft is no longer allowed to land at airports or fly in the airspace of that State. Such a ban can be lifted if the operator of the aircraft proves that the problems have been properly corrected. Such entry permit repercussions can therefore be, and usually are, of a temporary character.

As regards such bans and their subsequent lifting, those SAFA Participating States which belong also to the European Community shall be acting in accordance with the provisions laid down in Regulation (EC) No 2111/2005 on the establishment of a Community list of air carriers subject to an operating ban within the Community.

	No. of Inspections	10,337
	No. of Findings	11,298
ACTIONS TAKEN	information to the authority & the operator	3,566
	restriction on aircraft operation	109
	corrective actions before flight authorisation	1,407
	aircraft grounded	14
	immediate operating ban	10*

*not including bans/operational restrictions imposed by the EC pursuant to Regulation (EC) No 2111/2005 EC