

## Outcomes from WRC-15

### 1. Introduction

The 2015 World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) took place in Geneva between 2 to 27 November 2015, organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). IATA, in cooperation with ICAO and our member airlines, actively engaged in this global, multi-industries negotiation on allocating and identifying radio frequency spectrum - a critical infrastructure for air traffic management and operations. Frequency spectrum is notably a scarce resource with finite capacity for which competing demands are constantly increasing.

### 2. Key Outcomes from WRC-2015

In addition to successfully protecting our aviation frequency spectrum against on-going frequency requests brought forward by other industries, including mobile phones, amateur radio and earth-exploration services, then following successfully achieved important outcomes were achieved from this WRC as followings:

#### Favorable outcomes from WRC-2015:

1. Frequency allocation agreed for space-based ADS-B protecting the spectrum which is being used for broadcasting ADS-B messages from aircrafts to satellites
2. Frequency allocation agreed for Wireless Avionics Intra-Communications (WAIC). WAIC is radio communication between two or more points on a single aircraft. It is safety related and applicable to future generation of aircrafts.
3. Better regulatory protections for the frequency used by Fixed-Satellite Service (FSS) in Africa. This FSS is being used as a feeder network for aeronautical and metrological information.
4. Better regulatory protections for the frequency used by COSPAS. COSPAS (Russian acronym) is a global search and rescue satellite aided tracking facility for emergency beacons. This is favorable for search and rescue operations.
5. Agreement on an agenda item for WRC-2019 on Global Aeronautical Distress and Safety System (GADSS)
6. New frequency allocations/identifications to Amateur Radio, Earth-exploration services and Fixed Satellite Services do not adversely impact aviation.
7. New frequency identifications to mobile phones do not adversely impact aviation safety-of-life application, especially radio altimeters
8. Frequency allocation agreed for short-range radars supporting automotive applications which may be used by taxiing aircrafts

#### Outcomes from WRC-2015 that can be considered favorable/acceptable but still requires long-term monitoring and following-up

1. Regulatory spectrum provisions related to Command and Control Link for Unmanned Aircraft was agreed in a form of a WRC-2015 resolution
  - While this resolution will enable UAS to continue its operation and development, the resolution itself is a political compromise among States, so it is far from being ideal.
  - While it is acceptable by ICAO, the resolution requires ICAO to work diligently in identifying technical/operational requirement and developing SARPs for UAS within the next 4 years and to report the progress made at WRC-2019.

IATA will need to be actively involved with this ICAO process as UASs are expected to share the same airspace with commercial airlines.

- This resolution will be reviewed at WRC-2023.
2. New frequency identifications to mobile phones on L-Band and C-Band frequencies that may potentially cause interference to non-safety-of-life aviation application including Aeronautical Mobile Satellite Communication System and FSS supporting Aeronautical applications, respectively
    - Regulatory and technical measures to protect aeronautical applications are well in place in the relevant WRC-2015 resolutions
  3. New frequency identification for maritime mobile-satellite (Earth-to-space) link
    - This does not directly impact airline aircrafts but may require some changes on search-and-rescue aircrafts in order to enable new capability.

Summary of all outcomes from WRC-2015 which are of interest to the aviation industry may be found in **Appendix A** of this report.

### **3. Industry Alignments**

Alignments between IATA's and ICAO's position are of paramount important in this global, multi-industries forum.

- a) WRC is a conference among States and Administrations. However, as both ITU and ICAO are specialized agencies under the United Nations, ICAO enjoys the advisory privileges and status to ITU and WRC that are not available to other industry representatives, including IATA.
- b) IATA always has very good opportunities to influence ICAO's position early, especially during ICAO panel meetings including Frequency Spectrum Management Panel (FSMP). The ICAO position, once developed, will be circulated to all ICAO Member States in advance. Often, this position will be taken into account during the development of national positions and positions ITU regional groups.
- c) Harmonized approach and unified, systematic teamwork by all aviation personnel attending the WRC are of paramount important, especially noting that WRCs and ITU meetings are well covered by delegates from telecommunication and mobile industries and aviation will always be outnumbered. These harmonized approach and teamwork are proven to be the key to the successful outcomes for aviation in this WRC-2015.