International Federation of Air Traffic Safety Electronics Associations

IFATSEA

The Global Voice ofAir Traffic Safety Electronics Personnel

Date October 19, 2025

To: IFATEA Executive Board

Subject: IFATSEA Engagement at the 42nd ICAO General Assembly
Montréal, 22 September – 3 October 2025

The 42nd Session of the ICAO General Assembly convened from 22 September to 3 October 2025, bringing together representatives from ICAO's 193 Member States and key international organizations. Held at ICAO Headquarters in Montréal, the Assembly served as a pivotal forum for shaping global aviation policy, addressing emerging challenges such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and workforce development, and advancing the harmonization of international standards to ensure a safe, secure, and sustainable air transport system.

During this session, IFATSEA contributed one working paper and two informational papers focused on elevating the role of Air Traffic Safety Electronics Personnel (ATSEPs) within ICAO frameworks. The working paper, A42-WP/353, advocated for the integration of artificial intelligence and cybersecurity into ICAO's competency-based training frameworks, emphasizing the need to modernize ATSEP training in line with evolving operational demands. The informational papers, A42-WP/444 and A42-WP/455, provided global context on ATSEP implementation practices and highlighted regional efforts to enhance recognition, licensing, and harmonized training standards. Together, these submissions reinforced IFATSEA's commitment to advancing aviation safety through professionalization and regulatory alignment.

IFATSEA's advocacy efforts were strongly supported during the Assembly, with active participation from members representing Canada, Germany, Ghana, Nigeria, and the United States. This diverse presence underscored the global relevance of ATSEP issues and helped amplify calls for harmonized training standards, cybersecurity resilience, and formal recognition within ICAO documentation. The coordinated engagement across regions reflected IFATSEA's commitment to inclusive, system-wide safety improvements.

IFATSEA Delegation – ICAO 42nd General Assembly

No.	Name	Position	Capacity ICAO 42nd GA
1.	Mr. Ing Frank Kofi Apeagyei	IFATSEA President	Observer
2.	Mr. Carlos Aguire	IFATSEA Vice President	Observer
3.	Ms. Meaghan Olmstead	IFATSEA Executive Secretary	Observer
4.	Mr. Michel Gaulin	IFATSEA Americas Director	Observer

5.	Mr. Patrick Delaney	IFATSEA ICAO Liaison Officer	Chief Observer
6.	Mr. Andrea Voecking	IFATSEA Advisor	Observer
7.	Mr. Ishaya Dung	IFATSEA Advisor	Observer
8.	Mr. Scott Burke	IFATSEA Advisor	Observer
9.	Mr. Matthias Eversberg	IFATSEA Advisor	Observer
10.	Mr. Joseph Sokolowski	IFATSEA Advisor	Observer

IFATSEA members arrived well prepared, drawing on lessons from previous ICAO Assemblies to sharpen their advocacy and engagement. Their interventions, formal statements or contributions made during Assembly discussions to influence outcomes or clarify positions, supported A42-WP/353 (cybersecurity and AI integration), A42-WP/81 (preserving ATSEP inclusion in ICAO DOC 9868), and A42-WP/317 (calling for global recognition and licensing of ATSEPs).

Beyond our own submissions, we actively contributed to discussions on other papers with strategic relevance to the ATSEP workforce. A42-WP/110 and A42-WP/258 addressed fatigue in aviation, where IFATSEA highlighted the historical exclusion of ATSEPs. A42-WP/259 focused on fostering a positive safety culture, again noting that ATSEPs are often overlooked. In A42-WP/145, IFATSEA emphasized that ATSEPs are uniquely qualified to lead ground check operations involving unmanned aircraft systems.

These formal interventions were decisive and well-targeted, referencing IFATSEA's informational papers A42-WP/444 and A42-WP/455, as well as the ICAO APAC Regional ATSEP Human Factors Guidance Material; Version 2.0 (June 2025). They reflected a deep understanding of ICAO procedures and a coordinated, principled approach to advancing ATSEP recognition, harmonized training, and regulatory alignment across multiple agenda items. (interventions found in appendix)

ICAO Executive Summery

The ICAO Technical Commission convened to address the evolving role of Air Traffic Safety Electronics Personnel (ATSEPs) in global aviation safety. Discussions centered on formal recognition of ATSEPs within ICAO documentation, retention in competency frameworks, and the potential for licensing under Annex 1.

Key working papers WP 81 (Ghana), WP 317 (Kazakhstan), and WP 353 (IFATSEA) highlighted the need to modernize ATSEP training, integrate cybersecurity and AI, and close regulatory gaps. Delegations emphasized ATSEPs as the technical backbone of CNS and ATM systems, with calls to harmonize standards and ensure accountability.

Secretariat Highlights (ATSEP-Relevant)

The Competency-Based Training and Assessment (CBTA) framework remains under review for all aviation professions, including ATSEPs. This ongoing evaluation is central to ensuring consistent global standards.

ATSEP licensing has been discussed in previous ICAO Assemblies (36th through 39th), but no consensus has been reached regarding inclusion under Annex 1. The issue continues to be a point of debate among Member States.

ICAO is actively developing cybersecurity guidance within the CBTA framework. This work is directly relevant to IFATSEA's proposal in WP 353, which calls for integrating cybersecurity into ATSEP training.

Chair's Summary and Proposed Next Steps (ATSEP-Focused)

The role of ATSEPs was formally recognized as critical to aviation safety. Working Papers 81, 317, and 353 were referred to ICAO expert groups for further study and recommendations.
Cybersecurity and artificial intelligence were acknowledged as essential themes. WP 353 was referred for deeper analysis within ICAO's ongoing work program. Discussion suggested establishing a specialized short-term study group to develop a strategic vision and high-level framework for AI in aviation before moving forward.
Agreement was reached to proceed with summary actions related to ATSEP training, retention, and licensing, marking a step forward in regulatory alignment.

Positions and Support Snapshot (ATSEP-Focused)

WP 81, submitted by Ghana, received strong support from Ghana, Russia, Zambia, Nigeria, Gabon, and Japan (Items A & B). Sweden opposed the reference to Annex 10, citing scope concerns.
WP 317, presented by Kazakhstan, was supported by Ghana, Russia, and Zambia. Sweden and Brazil opposed the proposal, citing misalignment with existing frameworks.
WP 353, led by IFATSEA/AFACI/IFATCA, gained support from the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Russia, Zambia, and the United States (with a deferral pending further study). CANSO expressed reservations, considering the inclusion of AI and cybersecurity premature.

Country and Organization Positions (ATSEP-Focused)

IFATSEA/AFACI — WPs 81 & 317
ATSEPs were described as the technical backbone of the Air Traffic Management (ATM) system, essential to maintaining the integrity and safety of global aviation infrastructure. Concerns were raised that removing ATSEPs from ICAO Doc 9868 would undermine harmonized training and cybersecurity resilience. Additionally, the absence of maintenance personnel specifications in Annex 10 creates safety gaps, while the lack of licensing provisions under Annex 1 leads to inconsistent standards across regions. To address these issues, proposed actions included retaining ATSEPs in Doc 9868 under the CBTA framework, integrating ATSEP training references into Annex 10, and developing SARPs under Annex 1 to establish global licensing pathways.

Ghana

- Supports WPs 81, 317, 353
- Notes ATSEP licensing implemented via legislative instrument
- Reports safety improvements and regional adoption

Zambia

- Supports WPs 81, 317, 353
- Emphasizes ATSEP role in CNS and ATC safety
- Advocates for mandated service provision standards

Nigeria

- Supports WP 81 retention under PANS-TRG unless alternative is defined
- Emphasizes ANSP certification for regulated competence

Japan

- Supports WP 81 Items A & B; does not support Item C (Annex 10 reference)

Sweden

- Opposes WP 317 (Annex 1 licensing) and WP 81 Action C (Annex 10 reference)

• Notes Europe's robust ATSEP training without licensing

Brazil

• Opposes WP 317; not aligned with prior PTLP decisions

Russia

• Supports WPs 81, 317, 353

• Emphasizes need to renew competencies amid digitization and AI

United States

- Cybersecurity and AI were acknowledged as essential themes. WP 353 was referred to for deeper analysis within ICAO's ongoing work program
- Suggested, a specialized short-term study group was proposed to develop a strategic vision and high-level framework for AI in aviation before advancing related

CANSO

- It is concerned that attempting to establish a harmonized competency requirement, as Working Paper 81 and 353 suggest, or as IATA urges, will not meet the requirements for a license as suggested in Working Paper 317
- Working Paper 317 may not adequately reflect the local, operational, technical, or organizational needs of ANSPs.
- Working Paper 474 suggests including AI and competency frameworks right now seems premature.

Consensus emerged around:

• Retaining ATSEPs in ICAO Doc 9868 under the CBTA framework
• Exploring Annex 10 integration and Annex 1 licensing pathways
• Coordinating efforts through ICAO expert groups to avoid duplication
• Developing cybersecurity guidance tailored to ATSEP roles

ICAO A42-WP/657 Report – Aviation Licensing and Training - 25.16
Aviation licensing and training

25.16 The Commission reviewed A42-WP/81, presented by Ghana, which invited the Assembly to recognize the essential role of air traffic safety electronics personnel (ATSEP) in the aviation safety system and develop training provisions for Annex 10. The Commission also reviewed A42-WP/317, presented by Kazakhstan, which proposed to develop training and licensing provisions for ATSEP in Annex 1 — Personnel Licensing, and A42-WP/353, presented by the International Federation of Air Traffic Safety Electronics Associations (IFATSEA), which proposed to incorporate artificial intelligence (AI) and cybersecurity training topics into guidance related to ATSEP. The Commission acknowledged the vital role that ATSEPs serve in the aviation safety system. It also recognized the importance of considering AI and cybersecurity hazards, mentioned that these are topics that should be contemplated using a risk and performance-based approach, and that the use of AI in aviation may not be mature. The Commission further discussed the suitability of training and licensing provisions. Recalling discussions from previous sessions of the ICAO Assembly and considering the

discussions of the above papers, the Commission agreed to refer the contents of the working papers to the relevant expert groups for further consideration.

Additional Meeting

In addition to the General Assembly, IFATSEA President Frank Kofi and ICAO Liaison Officer Patrick Delaney met with the ICAO Annex 10 Secretariats. Annex 10 is structured around four specialized panels: Navigation, Surveillance, Communication, and Spectrum.

The meeting was highly productive. The Secretariats expressed strong support and appreciation for the contributions of ATSEPs and encouraged IFATSEA to take a more active role in these panels. The Secretariats specifically recommended that IFATSEA request full membership status, rather than observer status, to more effectively contribute to the panel's work.

ICAO Annex 10, titled Aeronautical Telecommunications, is structured into multiple volumes and supported by specialized panels that guide its development and maintenance. These panels are part of ICAO's Communications, Navigation, and Surveillance (CNS) framework and include:

ICAO Annex 10 Panels

- **Navigation Systems Panel (NSP)** Focuses on the development and maintenance of standards for navigation systems such as GNSS, ILS, and VOR.
- **Surveillance Panel (SP)** Responsible for surveillance technologies including radar systems, ADS-B, and multilateration.
- **Aeronautical Communications Panel (ACP)** Oversees standards for voice and data communications, including HF, VHF, satellite communications, and data link systems.
- **Frequency Spectrum Management Panel (FSMP)** Manages the allocation and protection of radio frequency spectrum used for aviation purposes.

These panels operate under the Air Navigation Commission (ANC) and collaborate closely with ICAO Member States and industry experts to ensure global interoperability and safety in aviation telecommunications. To maintain meaningful representation and influence, we need sustained commitment from our members to participate in these panels at least once or twice per year.

Summary

During the 42nd ICAO General Assembly, IFATSEA actively advanced the global recognition and professionalization of Air Traffic Safety Electronics Personnel (ATSEPs). Through one working paper and two information papers, we advocated for the integration of cybersecurity and artificial intelligence into ICAO's competency-based training frameworks, while also highlighting regional initiatives to harmonize ATSEP licensing and standards. Our coordinated interventions supported by delegations from Canada, Germany, Ghana, Nigeria, and the United States reinforced the critical role of ATSEPs in aviation safety and called for their formal inclusion in ICAO documentation. In parallel, we engaged in strategic discussions on fatigue, safety culture, and unmanned aircraft operations, and held targeted meetings with ICAO Annex 10 Secretariats to pursue full membership in the technical panels shaping global CNS standards.

Key Next Steps for IFATSEA Advocacy and Development

To stay ahead of emerging aviation challenges and strengthen the global recognition of Air Traffic Safety Electronics Personnel (ATSEPs), IFATSEA should proactively pursue the following initiatives:

- **Request full membership status** on the Personnel Training and Licensing Panel (PTLP)
- **Request full membership status** on each of the ICAO Annex 10 panels: Navigation, Surveillance, Communication, and Spectrum
- **Develop CBTA-aligned training modules** focused on cybersecurity and artificial intelligence to modernize ATSEP competencies
- **Establish a study group** to evaluate ATSEP involvement in drone flight checks and create corresponding competency-based training standards
- **Draft a formal statement** for inclusion in Annex 10 recognizing ATSEP CBTA training requirements
- **Initiate a study group** to explore the structure and profile of a potential Annex 1 licensing pathway for ATSEPs

These steps will position IFATSEA as a proactive leader in shaping global aviation safety standards and ensuring ATSEPs are fully integrated into ICAO's regulatory and training frameworks. To realize this vision, IFATSEA must also ensure it has qualified members ready to actively participate in the requested panels and study groups, bringing both technical expertise and strategic insight to the table.

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Appendix

Two Minute Speech: ATSEP AI and Cybersecurity Aviation WP/353, retaining ATSEP in DOC 9868 WP/81 and Support of ATSEP Professionals Licensing WP-317

Thank you Chair,

IFATSEA stands before you today to address a critical issue at the heart of global aviation safety: the recognition, training, and licensing of Air Traffic Safety Electronics Personnel (ATSEP).

ATSEP professionals are the technical backbone of air traffic management. They ensure the reliability and security of communication, navigation, surveillance, and air traffic control systems, the very infrastructure that enables safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible flight operations. Yet despite their indispensable contributions, two pressing concerns threaten their role in the global safety framework.

First, there are formal efforts to remove the ATSEP professionals from Doc 9868, PANS-Training. This undermines decades of progress in harmonizing ATSEP training. Such a move could introduce regulatory gaps, weaken cybersecurity resilience, and disrupt international consistency at a time when aviation systems are becoming more integrated, complex, and exposed to evolving risks.

Second, Annex 10 — Aeronautical Telecommunications — does not specify who is responsible for maintaining the systems it governs. This omission creates a critical gap in the aviation maintenance safety chain.

And third, ATSEPs remain unlicensed under ICAO Annex 1. Unlike pilots or aircraft maintenance engineers, these professionals lack formal global regulatory framework leaving a critical gap in safety oversight. Without licensing, States may adopt varying practices, leading to inconsistencies in qualifications, and performance.
To address these challenges, IFATSEA strongly supports both Working Papers 81 and 317 and calls for three decisive actions:

• Retain ATSEP professionals within Doc 9868 to preserve and advance competency-based training.
• Integrate ATSEP responsibilities into Annex 10 to reflect their operational role in maintaining CNS systems.
• Develop Standards and Recommended Practices under Annex 1 to formally license ATSEP professionals and harmonize qualifications across State licensing.

ICAO already has a strong foundation for ATSEP training in Doc 10057 and PANS Training Doc 9868. States like Kazakhstan have demonstrated that national ATSEP frameworks are both feasible and effective.

Let us not allow short-term administrative shifts to jeopardize long-term safety. Let us formally recognize ATSEPs as licensed aviation professionals and reaffirm our collective commitment to safe, secure, and globally harmonized skies.

Thank you

Two Minute Speech: Fatigue in Aviation WP/110

Thank you Chair,

We commend the UAE and its partners for presenting this vital working paper. Fatigue in aviation maintenance is a systemic safety risk that demands global attention. The data is clear: fatigue contributed to over 25% of reported human error incidents in maintenance across the MID Region.

However, as IFATSEA, we must respectfully highlight a critical omission: the absence of Air Traffic Safety Electronics Personnel (ATSEP) from this discussion. These professionals maintain the systems that enable safe navigation, surveillance, and communication, often under high operational pressure, during night shifts, and in remote or time-critical environments.

This is not a new concern. In 2016, ICAO hosted a Symposium on Fatigue Management Approaches in Aviation. While the conversation advanced for flight crew, cabin crew, and air traffic controllers, it left out any meaningful discussion on ATSEP professionals despite their safety-critical role. That gap persists today.

We encourage ICAO to broaden this initiative by referencing AN/42 – Information Paper 455 and the endorsed ICAO APAC Regional ATSEP Human Factors Guidance Material, both of which highlight the importance of fatigue risk management tailored specifically to ATSEP. Fatigue impacts all safety-critical personnel and addressing it comprehensively will strengthen aviation's safety framework while ensuring no group is overlooked.

Thank you.

Two Minute speech: Unmanned Aircraft Systems for Gound Checks WP/145

Thank you Chair,

IFATSEA supports Working Paper 145, which proposes the integration of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) for ground checks of navigational aids. This is a forward-looking solution to a persistent challenge: ensuring timely, cost-effective, and environmentally sustainable calibration of NAVAIDs, especially in developing States where flight inspection resources are limited.

The use of UAS for ground-based testing offers a transformative opportunity to extend the periodicity of manned flight tests, reduce operational costs, and lower CO_2 emissions. But for this innovation to succeed, it must be implemented by professionals with technical expertise to ensure accuracy, safety, and regulatory compliance.

That expertise already exists in the form of trained Air Traffic Safety Electronics Personnel, or ATSEPs.

ATSEP professionals are uniquely qualified to lead this work. They understand the architecture, signal behavior, and operational thresholds of systems like ILS, VOR, and DME. They are already responsible for maintaining and troubleshooting these systems, and with proper training in UAS operations and data analysis, they can seamlessly extend their role to include ground-based NAVAID testing.

Moreover, integrating ATSEPs into this framework reinforces ICAO's commitment to competency-based training and professional recognition. It ensures that UAS-based testing is not just technically

sound, but operationally sustainable, anchored in the expertise of those who know these systems best.

We urge ICAO to the development of SARPs and guidance material for UAS-based NAVAID testing, and to explicitly recognize the role of trained ATSEPs in performing and validating these checks. This will strengthen safety oversight, support developing States, and advance ICAO's goals for innovation, sustainability, and global harmonization.

Thank you.

Two Minute Speech: Fatigue in Aviation WP/258 and Fatigue in Aviation Maintenance WP/110

Thank you Chair,

IFATSEA supports working paper 258.

Fatigue is a pervasive and invisible threat to aviation safety, one that cannot be eliminated, but must be actively managed. ICAO has long recognized this in Annexes 6 and 11, and through Doc 9966.

This paper calls for a much-needed review of ICAO's fatigue management frameworks. As our understanding of sleep science and fatigue evolves, so must our regulatory provisions. States and service providers need updated guidance on fatigue hazard quantification, data analysis, safety performance indicators, and structured assessments especially for performance-based approaches.

But we must also confront a longstanding omission. In 2016, ICAO hosted a Symposium on Fatigue Management Approaches in Aviation. While the conversation advanced for flight crew, cabin crew, and air traffic controllers, it left out any meaningful discussion on Air Traffic Safety Electronics Personnel (ATSEP) despite their safety-critical role.

ATSEP professionals often work under high operational pressure, during night shifts, and in time-critical environments. Yet fatigue risk management frameworks rarely reflect their reality. IFATSEA urges ICAO to broaden this initiative by referencing AN/42 – Information Paper 455 and the endorsed ICAO APAC Regional ATSEP Human Factors Guidance Material. Both documents highlight the critical need for fatigue risk management. Strategies specifically tailed to the unique responsibilities of Air Traffic Safety Electronics Personnel.

Updating Doc 9966 and sector-specific guidance will empower Member States to implement fatigue management systems that are scientifically sound, operationally practical, and globally harmonized. It will also uphold the principle of No Country Left Behind, ensuring all States—regardless of capacity, can protect their aviation workforce and infrastructure from fatigue-related risks.

Let us act decisively. Let us modernize our fatigue management frameworks to reflect today's operational realities and tomorrow's safety imperatives.
IFATSEA also supports the UAE's working paper 110.

Thank you.