

New ICAO-IFAR agreement to enhance innovation integration

It was announced from Montréal on 9 November that ICAO and the International Forum for Aviation Research (IFAR) had formalised a new agreement aimed at accelerating and improving the effective assessment of new aviation technologies and innovations.

The agreement establishes two new ICAO-IFAR Expert Groups which will review latest innovations in the areas of urban air mobility and AI in aviation. After their first year, each group will report back to ICAO and IFAR and the two organizations will use the findings to optimize and formalize IFAR's future contributions to ICAO and international aviation.

ICAO Secretary General Dr Fang Liu* commented: *'This new collaboration will see IFAR's community supporting ICAO's activities by sharing its consensus view on current areas of technical challenge and opportunity, and in turn, ICAO will augment its ability to engage with and benefit from IFAR's processes and expectations.'*

Dr Liu also expressed how developments relating to autonomous aircraft, renewable power and propulsion sources, artificial intelligence, additive manufacturing, big data, blockchain, autonomous control, and many other exciting developments, are changing the face of aviation today.

The agreement was signed during IFAR's 11th Summit, and in her keynote remarks to the virtual 2020 event ICAO Secretary General Dr Fang Liu emphasized how the new partnership is directly supportive of the Resolution countries adopted on innovation at the last (2019) ICAO Assembly.

She added: *'The innovation Resolution directs the ICAO Secretariat to assess and evolve our rulemaking and strategic planning mandates in order to keep better pace with the speed of change, even as we continue to safeguard and augment traditional safety, security, efficiency, and sustainability performance in air transport.'*

In concluding her remarks, the Secretary General commended the leadership and resolve of the research community to work with ICAO to address today's global challenges. She expressed high expectations on the outcomes of the two expert groups to be presented at IFAR's 12th summit next year (2021).

In conclusion Dr Liu said: *'Your ideas and commitments serve to raise global living standards, protect our planet, and ensure improving prosperity for all.'*

The COVID-19 crisis has made the power and importance of partnerships more relevant than ever before, and ICAO will look forward to a strong and productive relationship with the IFAR.’

About ICAO

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created by governments in 1944 to support their diplomacy on international air transport matters. Since that time, countries have adopted over 12,000 standards and practices through ICAO which help to align their national regulations relevant to aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, enabling a truly global network to be realized.

ICAO forums also provide opportunities for advice and advocacy to be shared with government decision-makers by industry groups, civil society NGOs, and other officially-recognized air transport stakeholders. To learn more on ICAO readers are invited to see: www.icao.int

**Dr Fang Liu is the Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). She was first appointed by the ICAO Council for a three-year term beginning August 2015, and then reappointed for a second consecutive term commencing August 2018.*