ICAO: objectives and composition
010 Air Law and ATC Procedures › 01 Chicago Convention and ICAO

QUESTION

What does the Chicago Convention create?

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ANSWER

ICAO, made up of an Assembly, a Council and such other bodies as may be necessary.

Art. 43

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QUESTION

Which ICAO objective covers safety of flight?

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ANSWER

To promote safety of flight in international air navigation.

Art. 44(a)–(i)

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QUESTION

How often does the Assembly meet in ordinary session?

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ANSWER

At least once in 3 years.

Art. 48(a)

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QUESTION

Who can call an extraordinary Assembly session?

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ANSWER

The Council, or one-fifth of all contracting States asking the Secretary General.

Art. 48(a)

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QUESTION

How many votes does each State have in the Assembly?

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ANSWER

1 vote per State. Technical advisers may take part but cannot vote.

Art. 48(b); Art. 48(b), (c)

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QUESTION

What is the quorum of the Assembly?

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ANSWER

A majority of contracting States.

Art. 48(c); Art. 48(b), (c)

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QUESTION

How does the Assembly take decisions?

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ANSWER

By a majority of votes cast, unless the Convention says otherwise.

Art. 48(c); Art. 48(b), (c)

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QUESTION

How many contracting States does ICAO have?

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ANSWER

193 Contracting States, and each one sits in the Assembly.

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QUESTION

How many contracting States does the Council have now?

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ANSWER

40 Contracting States, in force since 12 June 2026.

Art. 50(a) as amended (2016 Protocol); Art. 50(a) as amended

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QUESTION

What Council size do older texts show?

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ANSWER

36 Contracting States, from the older edition of the Convention text. That text no longer applies.

Art. 50(a) (Doc 7300/9); Art. 50(a) as amended (2016 Protocol); Art. 50(a) footnote; 2016 Protocol

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QUESTION

What was the original Council size in 1944?

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ANSWER

21 Contracting States.

Art. 50(a) footnote; Art. 50(a) footnote; 2016 Protocol

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QUESTION

How often does the Assembly elect the Council?

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ANSWER

Every 3 years.

Art. 50(a)

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QUESTION

How long is the Council President's term?

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ANSWER

3 years. The President can be re-elected.

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QUESTION

Does the Council President have a vote?

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ANSWER

No. The President has no vote.

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QUESTION

What majority does a Council decision need?

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ANSWER

A majority of Council members.

Art. 52; Arts 52, 53

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QUESTION

What vote does the Council need to adopt an Annex?

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ANSWER

Two-thirds of the Council, at a meeting called for that purpose.

Art. 90(a); Art. 90(a), (b)

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QUESTION

When does an adopted Annex take effect?

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ANSWER

After 3 months, or a longer period the Council sets, unless a majority of contracting States disapprove.

Art. 90(a); Art. 90(a), (b)

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QUESTION

Who adopts standards as Annexes?

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ANSWER

The Council adopts them. The Assembly does not adopt Annexes.

Art. 54(a)–(n); Arts 49, 54(l), (m), 57(a), 90

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QUESTION

How many Annexes does the Convention have?

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ANSWER

19 Annexes, with over 12 000 SARPs and six PANS.

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QUESTION

How long does developing a standard typically take?

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ANSWER

About two years, from proposal to adoption.

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QUESTION

How many Air Navigation Commission members does the Convention now set?

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ANSWER

21 members, in force since 12 June 2026.

Art. 56 as amended (2016 Protocol); Art. 56 as amended; Doc 7300 footnote

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QUESTION

What was the Air Navigation Commission size before 12 June 2026?

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ANSWER

19 members, from the older edition of the Convention text. That text no longer applies.

Art. 56 (Doc 7300/9); Art. 56 as amended; Doc 7300 footnote

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QUESTION

What was the original Air Navigation Commission size?

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ANSWER

12 members.

Art. 56 footnote; Art. 56 as amended; Doc 7300 footnote

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QUESTION

How many ratifications did each 2016 Protocol need?

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ANSWER

128 ratifications, reached on 12 June 2026.

ICAO news 15 June 2026; Art. 50(a) as amended (2016 Protocol); Art. 56 as amended; Doc 7300 footnote

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QUESTION

Who are the Air Navigation Commission members?

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ANSWER

Experts nominated by States and appointed by the Council. They are not State representatives.

Art. 56

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QUESTION

What does the Air Navigation Commission do for Annexes?

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ANSWER

It prepares and recommends changes to the Annexes to the Council.

Art. 57

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QUESTION

Does ICAO license pilots?

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ANSWER

No. ICAO adopts standards, and each State writes the binding rules.

Arts 12, 37, 38, 54(l)

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QUESTION

Who recommends, adopts and implements the standards?

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ANSWER

The Air Navigation Commission recommends, the Council adopts, and States implement or notify differences.

Arts 49, 54(l), (m), 57(a), 90

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QUESTION

Who heads the ICAO Secretariat?

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ANSWER

The Secretary General, the chief executive officer appointed by the Council.

Arts 54(h), 58

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QUESTION

What vote permanently moves the ICAO seat?

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ANSWER

An Assembly decision with at least three-fifths of all contracting States.

Art. 45

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QUESTION

Who chooses the Air Transport Committee?

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ANSWER

The Council, from its own representatives.

Art. 54(a)–(n)

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