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WORKING PAPER

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**Meeting of North American, Central American and Caribbean Directors General of Civil Aviation  
and ICAO Council (NACC DGCA-C)**  
Montego Bay, Jamaica, 13 October 2015

**Agenda Item 2: *Port of Spain Declaration and the Air Navigation and Aviation  
Security/Facilitation Challenges of the NAM/CAR States***

**REGIONAL AIR NAVIGATION AND SAFETY PRIORITIES**

(Presented by the United States)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The States of the North American, Central American and Caribbean (NACC) region are vital partners of the United States on many global issues, as we are closely linked by geography, culture, and history. The United States is uniquely placed to work with its regional partners to address mutual challenges to improve safety and efficiency in our part of the world. This paper highlights some of the areas to focus our collaborative efforts and encourages ICAO's greater support of initiatives addressing regional implementation of priority international standards.

<b>Action:</b>	Recommendations provided in paragraph 4.
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Safety</li><li>• Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency</li><li>• Environmental Protection</li></ul>
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Port of Spain Declaration</li></ul>

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The Central American and Caribbean (CAR) region is of critical importance to U.S. aviation interests. Over 40% of U.S.-international Flight Information Region (FIR) crossings (excluding Canada) are between U.S. and FIRs in this region.<sup>1</sup> The Caribbean alone is one of the most-visited international destinations for U.S. passengers at 17.2% of the global total.<sup>2</sup> The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) also manages air traffic in a large portion of the Caribbean and Puerto Rico including delegated airspace over several sovereign states, including the Bahamas and Sint Maarten. Due to these responsibilities, the United States is assigned to both the Central Caribbean and Eastern Caribbean sub-regions.

<sup>1</sup> FAA TFMS data, 2013-2014

<sup>2</sup> DOC ITA "U.S. Citizen Traffic to Overseas Regions, Canada & Mexico 2014", <http://travel.trade.gov/view/m-2014-O-001/index.html>

1.2 The airspace extending from Florida to South America and bounded by the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico is of economic and strategic significance to the United States and the airline industry. The expected increase in traffic between the United States and the CAR region will likely outpace the growth with other regions. With this in mind, the FAA must ensure that our international outreach aligns FAA's strategic initiatives with activities that advance key regional air navigation and safety improvements. This working paper includes priority areas in need of additional attention to accomplish desired results.

## 2. Regional Safety and Efficiency Challenges

2.1 In 2013, NACC Member States approved the Port of Spain Declaration to prioritize regional implementation of ICAO standards aligned with the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP) and the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP). The United States endorsed the Port of Spain Declaration as it provides measureable targets and specific timelines for implementation of safety and air navigation goals. Based on current data from the ICAO iSTARS Database and the CAR/SAM Regional Planning and Implementation Group (GREPECAS) Air Navigation Deficiency Database, there's a particular lack of effective implementation of international standards in the area of aerodrome safety within this region, as well as slow implementation of Aviation Safety Block Upgrade (ASBU)-related technologies. Providing needed attention to these issues will ultimately improve aviation on a system-wide basis throughout the NACC, and ultimately contribute to a more effective global aviation system.

2.2 ***Aerodrome Safety.*** As identified in Annex 14, aerodrome certification for international airports is an essential component to civil aviation safety. The region has identified deficiencies related to aerodrome certification, runway safety, and wildlife mitigation programs. Addressing aerodrome safety matters is critical for the United States given the importance in creating a safe environment within the airfield for the operation of aircraft while minimizing risks related to runway excursions and their consequences. The Port of Spain Declaration includes a performance target to increase the number of certified aerodromes in the region.

2.3 ***Air Navigation:*** This region is characterized by multiple air navigation service providers (ANSPs) operating in a non-integrated network. Highly variable weather patterns and system complexities contribute to schedule uncertainties and delays. The FAA has been a strong advocate for the global implementation of Collaborative Decision Making (CDM), within an integrated Air Traffic Flow Management (ATFM) system. The development of a regional ATFM/CDM network in collaboration with ICAO and industry partners would contribute greater operational efficiency in the CAR. Region-wide ATFM implementation is a key goal in the Port of Spain Declaration, and significant support is needed to support Member States on this initiative.

2.4 The FAA also recommends greater regional implementation in the use of System Wide Information Management (SWIM). Use of SWIM will provide the region with increased capacity for exchanging information on traffic flow constraints such as ground delays and ground stops. SWIM implementation also provides a new capability to automatically distribute weather-related pilot observations to controllers that further enhance safety and capacity. The transition to Aeronautical Information Management is also included in the Port of Spain Declaration.

2.5 Since 2012, the FAA has provided in-kind contributions in the form of technical expertise to the RLA/09/801 regional technical cooperation program better known as the “CAR Project” which aims to support regional ASBU implementation and remedy air navigation deficiencies. Through the use of workshops, seminars and technical assistance missions, the NACC regional office has been able to provide training and assistance to Member States that promote regional implementation of international standards. This program has the potential to provide significant contributions to Member States, but needs reliable funding and contributions of technical expertise.

### **3. Conclusion**

3.1 Sustaining a dynamic relationship with our counterparts in this region is both our priority and is critical to achieve the aerodrome safety and air navigation efficiency improvements for all users. With the Port of Spain Declaration, the NACC region has a strategic plan for implementation of GANP and GASP priorities but some Member States lack the financial and political will to complete critical targets.

3.2 As ICAO implements the No Country Left Behind (NCLB) initiative globally, the FAA strongly encourages the ICAO Council to focus existing resources to support regional-level for initiatives such as the CAR Project or other activities that advance implementation of priority standards that can lead to the reduction of aviation fatalities and the modernization of air navigation infrastructure.

### **4. Recommended Actions**

4.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a. encourage all NACC Member States to consider the Port of Spain Declaration regional performance targets and take action in meeting these goals; and
- b. request that the ICAO Council, through application of the NCLB initiative, give attention to regional initiatives that are aligned with regional performance targets, specifically priority goals related to aerodrome certification and air navigation improvements.

END