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INFORMATION PAPER

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**Ninth Meeting of the North American, Central American and Caribbean Directors of Civil Aviation
(NACC/DCA/09)**

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 25-27 June 2019

Agenda

Item 10:

Other matters

**CENTRAL AMERICAN CORPORATION FOR AIR NAVIGATION SERVICES (COCESNA) 60 YEARS OF SERVICE
TO INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT**

(Presented by COCESNA and its Member States: Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador
and Nicaragua)

This paper contains information regarding the work carried out by the Central American Corporation for Air Navigation Services (COCESNA) since its creation in 1960 in terms of air navigation services, aeronautical training, safety, environment, and air transport. The importance of the joint and coordinated work of its Member States in the framework of Central American integration is highlighted, which has allowed the Corporation to become an International Civil Aviation Organisation.

The safe, sustainable, efficient, and economic work of the Corporation, as well as the continuous improvement in human talent and the incorporation of cutting-edge technology to provide air traffic services, telecommunications and radio aids for air navigation has contributed substantially to the effective implementation of ICAO standards and recommended practices by their Member States. Similarly, it has supported other States and Organizations based on signed Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding.

Proposed action:

The Assembly is invited to take note of the information provided and support the corporate work of COCESNA.

Strategic Objectives

This working paper is related to the Strategic Objectives:
A – Operational safety
B – Air navigation capacity and efficiency
D – Economic development of air transport
E – Environment protection

References:

- Articles of Agreement of COCESNA.
- COCESNA Statutes.
- COCESNA's strategic plan.
- COCESNA's Green Paper.
- Central American Integration System

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Central American Corporation for Air Navigation Services, COCESNA, is an International Integration Organisation created by the Central American States to comply with the commitments and obligations in the international air sector contracted as signatories to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago, 1944).

1.2 This institution arises as a result of the Conference of Directors of Civil Aviation in Central America held in Guatemala from 4 to 5 November 1959, who recommended a **“Diplomatic Conference to establish an Intergovernmental Corporation for Central Aeronautical Communications,”** which was convened by the Government of the Republic of Honduras in Tegucigalpa from 22 to 26 February 1960.

1.3 As a result of this conference, the Contracting Parties signed the Articles of Agreement of COCESNA that was subsequently ratified by the respective Legislative Bodies. The Corporation was created to promote the cooperation of the Central American States in improving safety, consolidating the organization of air traffic services, aeronautical telecommunications and radio aids for air navigation, and ensuring the effectiveness of said services.

TRAINING

1.4 Aware of the need to strengthen human talent in the different aeronautical disciplines in 1989, COCESNA established the Central American School of Aeronautical Training (ECCA, for its acronym in Spanish). Today it is known as the Central American Institute of Aeronautical Training (ICAE), based in El Salvador, and created in 2001 to meet the training needs of air navigation, airlines, airport operators, maintenance, transport, and air policy organizations, as well as other related activities, expanding its coverage and becoming an Aeronautics teaching centre with great presence and projection at regional and international level.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

1.5 In sync with global aviation trends and aware of the importance of safety, COCESNA created in March 2000 the Central American Aviation Safety Agency (ACSA) based in Costa Rica, with the purpose of recommending, advising, guiding and facilitating matters related to the compliance of ICAO standards and recommended practices regarding safety and civil aviation for the contracting parties. Through ACSA, COCESNA seeks to raise levels of effective implementation (EI) and support member states in meeting their regulatory obligations.

AIR NAVIGATION

1.6 Through a statutory reform, the Central American Agency for Air Navigation (ACNA) was created in 2001 as another dependency of COCESNA to provide air traffic control services, telecommunications, aeronautical information and aids to air navigation in the territories of the Contracting Parties and other areas entrusted to COCESNA under international agreements. This unit, based in Tegucigalpa, plans, coordinates and develops the air navigation services and infrastructure plans for the efficient and safe provision of services in support of the Member States and ICAO for the implementation of the Global Air Navigation Plan. For this purpose, it is based on performance (IPBN) taking as an input the block methodology for the implementation of modules corresponding to civil aviation planning (ASBU).

TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT

On the other hand, as part of the institutional strengthening process, COCESNA created the Technical Secretariat (ST) in 2006, with headquarters in Nicaragua, as an advisory body for the Board of Directors, a unit that oversees the harmonised development and implementation of Civil Aviation Rules (RAC System) and other functions assigned by the Board of Directors. Currently, the Technical Secretariat works in different areas such as the implementation of COCESNA SMS Safety Management Systems, as a quality auditor in the various ICAO Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA) activities and SMS acceptance procedures. Currently, the initiative for the creation of an AIG group in Central America is being developed for the preparation of the training process and establishment of the regional accident investigation body GRIAA, an emergency role in AIG matters that meets the needs of the Central American region.

ENVIRONMENT

1.7 Considering that environment protection constitutes a regional and global commitment in compliance with the global agenda of Sustainable Development Goals and in harmony with ICAO strategic objectives, an entity specialised in environmental issues, civil aviation and climate change was created in 2016 to mainstream the environmental variable in corporate activities to foster the decarbonisation of the aviation sector in Central America. In this line of ideas, “The COCESNA’s Green Paper” has been developed, which will constitute an environmental idea to promote different actions aimed at ensuring the protection of the environmental systems and minimise the carbon and ecological footprint of corporate operations.

AIR TRANSPORT

1.8 In 2019, COCESNA started an important process that will allow the implementation of Air Transportation in the Corporation to contribute to economic and social development by strengthening regional integration in coordination with other International Organisations. For this purpose, the standards, recommended methods, and procedures manuals promulgated by ICAO in this matter will be considered. Similarly, with a long-term objective and to face the growth of regional air transport in an orderly, efficient and economic manner, the Corporation is preparing the bases to have the “Central American Regional Air Transport Plan.”

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1.9 COCESNA is an organization in constant evolution and learning that is continuously renewed and has highly qualified human capital that works with cutting-edge technology and modern management tools, which has allowed it to be promoted outside the region by ICAO as a model organisation with recognised prestige. In this regard, the eleventh ICAO award “Edward Warner” has been the subject of several awards, distinguishing the Corporation for its outstanding contribution to safety, regularity, and efficiency of air navigation in the Central American area. It has also received recognition from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the United States Armed Forces, among others.

2 INDICATORS AND INITIATIVES

2.1 COCESNA has strengthened the integration of a superior airspace common to Central American countries and has modernised the equipment of Central American Air Information Navigation Systems (FIR), achieving a growth of over 200% of its coverage since its inception. Currently, it has an area of 2,639,054 square kilometres and the relevant actions to manage before ICAO an expansion of the area of responsibility in the Pacific Ocean and the provision of the monitoring and communications service through the ADS-C and CPDLC implementation.

2.2 Regarding training, COCESNA has a regional aeronautical training centre that covers the needs for personnel from 21 countries and 69 organisations with courses taught in English and Spanish, training civil aviation professionals under a regional platform and efforts that aim at the continuous improvement of instruction programmes. It also provides technical assistance and services based on the technological evolution, the demand for specialised training and NGAP references together with the ICAO training policy, the TRAINAIR PLUS Programme, the trends and projections of civil aviation by 2030, as well as the regulations and national plans, among others.

2.3 The training management system has a positive impact on compliance with the requirements of ICAO safety oversight audits. This is reflected in the compliance results of the COCESNA Member States of 85.56% that exceeds the worldwide average of 66.09%. Similarly, it contributes to the compliance results of the critical element number 4, competences of the personnel with a global average for the COCESNA Member States of 89.7% positively surpassing the world average by 34.7%.

2.4 From 2013 to 2015, an annual average of 121 courses was developed, while the number increased to 237 between 2016 and 2018, reflecting an increase of 196%. Regarding the average number of hours taught, 7,627 hours were taught from 2013 to 2015; while an average of 15,509 hours was reflected from 2016 to 2018, showing an increase of 203%.

2.5 Special mention for ICAO recognition as Regional Training Centre of Excellence (RTCE), which is the world's highest award for aeronautical training organization used to prepare ICAO courses, thus joining a select group of 20 CIACs.

2.6 COCESNA has supported its Member States in improving the effective implementation of ICAO standards and recommended practices to satisfactorily face the audits of this Organisation, as well as the inspection visits and the FAA. On the other hand, the framework of regional integration has promoted the approval of common standards in 2018; this was through a set of standards approved by COMITRAN/SICA.

2.7 Other safety initiatives include the Regulatory Administration Information System (SIAR) and the Central American Safety Events Analysis Programme (PASOC), which has enabled the region to have a contemporary and unified tool for information collection on safety events, deficiencies, and dangers, which enables proper management according to the GASP vision 2020-2022 in terms of maintaining the goal.

2.8 Within the framework of the implementation of a comprehensive investment plan for the modernisation of the Central American air navigation system, several projects have been promoted to guarantee the homogeneity, integration and compatibility of technology in relation to communications (ground-air), renovation of the main navigation systems (radio aids, VOR, DME, ILS), updating of radars, and modernisation of AWOS systems.

2.9 Similarly, initiatives have been developed for the exchange of radar data with adjacent FIRs, improving operational safety, and strengthening the availability of radar data with the possibility of including ADS-B data exchange.

2.10 In addition, communication links have been established via AIDC with other control centres in the region and in the adjacent FIRs of Cuba, Mérida, Panama and Guayaquil. Among other actions, a backup and contingency centre has been established for CENAMER and other adjacent centres, as well as the International NOTAM Office for Central America (NOF).

2.11 Regarding the Inspection and Evaluation area, a specialized unit was established to perform commissioning and verification tasks for radio aids and facilities for air navigation, instrument approach

procedures (conventional and RNAV) and Visual Aid Systems (PAPI, ALS, etc.) This for Member States and for other clients within and outside the Central American region.

2.12 Procedures are established for the expansion of the responsibility area of the Central American FIR in the maritime area to continue with the strategic modernization of air navigation services. To restructure the airspace, the initial processing of flight plans will be implemented, and the AIM office will become a regional operations centre.

2.13 In addition, new technologies such as the first WAM system in Central America, as well as the update/standardisation of functionalities, and operational features of all APP control centers in the region will be implemented.

2.14 “The COCESNA Green Paper” will continue to be promoted as a document that comprises various initiatives to encourage environment protection in the corporation's staff, promoting respect for natural systems in all its forms and manifestations. It will also allow the establishment of aspirational objectives and reduction goals in a specific timeline regarding energy, water, use of materials and integral waste management.

3 CONCLUSIONS

3.1 COCESNA is an integration organisation that supports its Member States in the modernisation and implementation of a network of air navigation equipment, system maintenance, subsystems and equipment to guarantee safe air operations in compliance with the requirements established by the standards and regulations. methods recommended by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). The development of these activities and the joint work with various international organisations, the flight information regions of the adjacent States and industry operators have increased the safety and reliability of air operations in the region, raising the safety standards and quality of the services delivered to the satisfaction of customers, operators and users, which has allowed becoming a specialised international organisation.

3.2 During its 60 years of life, COCESNA, as part of the regional and global air transport integration and development system, is constantly evolving, growing and renewing, prioritizing the development of human talent, technological advances, and optimizing its services for the benefit of its Member States and potential customers. Therefore, the future is projected with a sustainable long-term vision to provide regional and extra support to all transport stakeholders, understood as: Air Navigation Organisations, aeronautical authorities, airlines, and representatives of related activities.

4 PROPOSED ACTION

4.1 The Assembly is invited to take note of the information provided and support the work of COCESNA.