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Ninth North American, Central American and Caribbean Working Group Meeting (NACC/WG/09)
Mexico City, Mexico, 30 September to 04 October 2024

Agenda Item 4: **Follow-up to the NACC/WG 2023-2024 work plan**

AIM TASK FORCE ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS REPORT

(Presented by AIM/TF Rapporteur)

| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY |
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| This Working paper presents the various activities and action plan progress of the Aeronautical Information Task Force from the period of August 2023 to September 2024. It also includes details of the Action Plan and the activities carried out during the work sessions in the seventh AIM Task Force face-to-face meeting. |

Action:	Suggested actions are presented in Section 4.
Strategic Objectives:	• Safety • Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency
References:	• Second Meeting of Rapporteurs of the North American, Central American and Caribbean Working Group (NACC/WG/RAP/2), Mexico City, Mexico, MAR 28 to 31, 2023 • Final report of the Eighth North American, Central American and Caribbean Working Group Meeting (NACC/WG/8) ICAO NACC Regional Office, Mexico City, Mexico, 29 August to 1 September 2023 • Twenty-first Meeting of the Caribbean and South American Regions Planning and Implementation Group (GREPECAS/21), Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 14 to 17 November 2023 • Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP, Doc 9750) • Aviation System Block Upgrade (ASBU) Framework • ICAO NACC/WG/AIM/TF/07, July 30 to August 2, 2024, Curaçao

1.   Introduction

1.1   Following up on the requirements of the Air Navigation Services (ANS) and to promote the harmonized development of AIM in the CAR Region, the AIM TF 06 Meeting discussed holding interests in important AIM activities and priorities associated with: Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP) the 7th Edition, the Electronic Air Navigation Plan (eANP) Vol III, Aeronautical Information Management (AIM) Training Curriculum, the AIM Collaborative Plan and Tracking Website, and some other relevant related aspects to the transition to AIM.

1.2   The collaborative sharing of information and data will allow aligning States' efforts to complete the 21 Steps (Phases 1 to 3), according to the ICAO Roadmap, GANP, the Aviation System Block Upgrade (ASBU) and the Basic Building Blocks (BBBs), that specify all updated main elements to AIM projects in progress and some other new or emerging.

1.3   In the NACC/WG 2022-2023, the Secretariat presented WP/04, explaining the framework of the Basic Building Blocks (BBBs), with the fundamentals for air navigation, which define the essential services provided to international civil aviation. The WP/04 also explained the Aviation System Block Upgrade (ASBU) describing the scalable implementation of operational improvements to be implemented after essential services defined as BBBs. The provision of aeronautical data and information and the quality of the data are essential for any service in Aeronautical Information Management (AIM) and the implementation of the System wide information management (SWIM). The provision of quality-assured aeronautical data and information is included in the ASBU, so it is considered an operational improvement to be achieved once basic services (BBBs) are achieved.
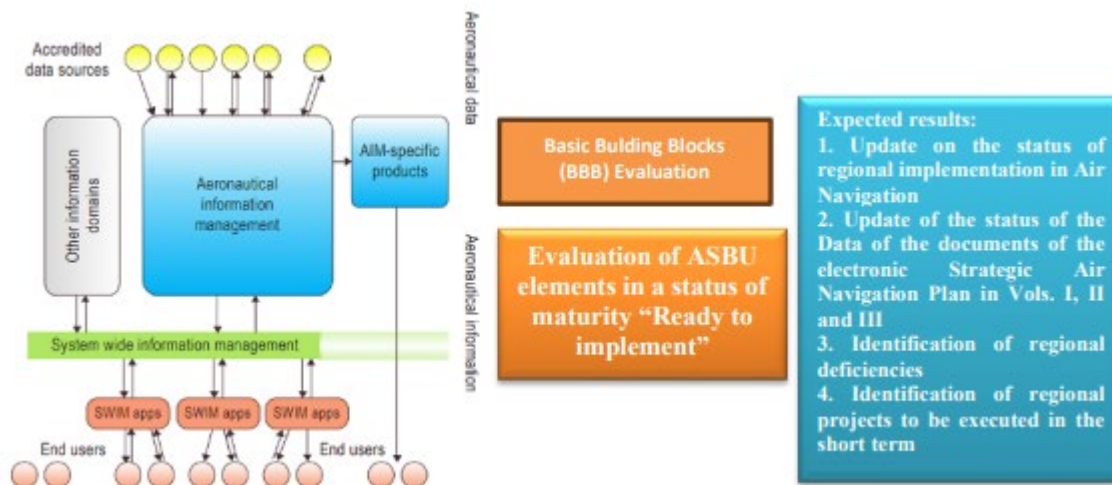
1.4   Under WP/14, presented by the AIM/TF Rapporteur, the draft report of the AIM/TF/06 Meeting, important Agenda points on AIM activities and priorities associated with GANP the Seventh Edition, the electronic Air Navigation Plan (e-ANP) Vol. III, the AIM Training Curriculum, the AIM Collaborative Plan, relevant aspects of the transition to AIM, and the AIM Tracking Website were discussed, including the update of the regional status of the AIM implementation process of the SARPs of Annex 15, Annex 4, and the AIM implementation Roadmap, the AIM Collaboration Plan and status of the AIM Action Plan.

1.5   The AIM/TF/07 meeting, held from July 30 to August 2, focused on updating and elaborating the AIM Collaborative Plan implementation. This included incorporating the results of the 41st Assembly of ICAO, the ASBU and BBBs, and the GANP 7th Edition. The AIM/TF Action Plan was reviewed and updated during the meeting. Sub-groups successfully completed their work in plenary sessions, focusing on key areas such as:

- English Language Proficiency for AIM Personnel
- Airspace Optimization
- Centralized Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) for the Region
- Aerospace Operations Notices to Airmen (NOTAM)
- AIM Training and Competency

1.6   Further discussion also took place on the AIM Tracking website, AIM data and cybersecurity, and other relevant aspects within the AIM area for ICAO NACC States.

1.7   WP20 of the AIM/TF/07 meeting recommended the development of standardized English proficiency level requirements for Aeronautical Information Management Personnel (AIS and ARO). This is crucial for enhancing safety and efficiency in operational communications within the AIM profession.

2.   Discussion

2.1   While there are no official licensing requirements for AIM personnel that mandate a specific level of English proficiency, a standardized English proficiency level is essential for ensuring safe and effective communication in the aviation industry. AIM personnel play a critical role in providing briefings to aeronautical personnel and publishing safety-critical information like NOTAMs, AIPs, AICs, and SUPs, which require clear and consistent communication for safety. However, the lack of a standardized proficiency level for these tasks poses a potential risk to aviation safety.

2.2   Currently, there are no global English proficiency requirements specifically for AIM personnel. This results in variations in communication style, pronunciation, understanding, and writing, which can lead to errors, misinterpretations, and miscommunication in information published in AIPs, SUPs, AICs, NOTAM details, and FPL briefings.

2.3   The importance of English proficiency for AIM personnel was emphasized by all participating States, acknowledging the need for a shared understanding of English for the AIM community to function effectively and efficiently. This is particularly important considering the complex and demanding nature of data and information management within aviation, requiring AIM professionals to understand, analyse, review, process, publish, and manage a wide range of technical aviation information.

2.4   Annex 19 Chapter 1 definitions state that Operational Personnel are those involved in aviation activities who can report safety information. Since AIM functionalities are related to these operational functions, they are considered operational as well. Static data publications, which provide, support, and elaborate on aeronautical data related to air operations, are also essential. Maintaining operational safety relies on accurate data, and the information provided by AIM is intrinsic to air navigation, ensuring safety in both air and ground operations.

2.5   Amendment 32 to Annex 15, effective November 27, 2003, established a standard requiring the use of English for AIM officers. Similarly, paragraph 1.3 of Annex 15, concerning miscellaneous specifications, states that aeronautical information products intended for international distribution must include an English version of the parts expressed in plain language. Therefore, aeronautical information products intended for international distribution should include English text for those parts expressed in plain language (Annex 15, 1.3.1).

2.6   The AIM Task Force of the ICAO NACC WG, proposes the following AIM Personnel English Language Proficiency Levels/Rating Scale, presented in upcoming tables.

> _Note:_
> ✈ _Levels/Rating Scales presented are reflected on the AIM area for a more appropriate evaluation._
> ✈ _The Basic Required level, is equivalent to the ICAO English Proficiency Level 4, and the Superior Level to an ICAO English Proficiency Level 5 or 6._
> ✈ _Reference for levels: Annex 1 Chapter 1.1 Levels: Expert, Advanced and operational._

PERSONNEL TYPE / AREA OF FUNCTION	LEVEL	COMPREHENSION		ORAL EXPRESSION		WRITING
		AUDITIVE COMPREHENSION	READING COMPREHENSION	ORAL INTERACTION	ORAL EXPRESSION	WRITTEN EXPRESSION
AIM: AIS & ARO	BASIC REQUIRED LEVEL 4 OPERACIONAL	Fully understand the main ideas when the speech is clear, whenever everyday matters and/or matters of professional interest are discussed, although clarification strategies may sometimes be needed.	Understand the vocabulary included in forms and spreadsheets necessary to perform the job properly, with the help of reference materials.	Simply exchange information on day-to-day and/or work-related matters, using the correct grammatical structures and classification strategies if necessary.	Explain, in simple terms, the personal and / or work reality. Respond concisely to any questions or requests made in the workplace. Clarification strategies may sometimes be needed.	Know how to complete forms and forms necessary to properly perform the job. Compose short, simple notes on work needs, with the help of reference materials.
	SUPERIOR LEVEL 5 AVANCED LEVEL 6 EXPERT	Fully understand the main ideas when the speech is clear, as long as everyday matters and/or matters of professional interest are discussed.	Understand the vocabulary included in forms and spreadsheets necessary to successfully perform the job.	Exchange information on day-to-day and/or work-related matters, using grammatical structures correctly.	Explain personal and/or work reality. Respond concisely to any questions or requests made in the workplace.	Be able to complete forms and templates necessary to properly perform the job. Compose notes regarding work needs.

PERSONNEL TYPE / AREA OF FUNCTION	LEVEL	COMPREHENSION		ORAL EXPRESSION		WRITING
		AUDITIVE COMPREHENSION	READING COMPREHENSION	ORAL INTERACTION	ORAL EXPRESSION	WRITTEN EXPRESSION
PUBLICATIONS	**BASIC REQUIRED LEVEL 4 OPERACIONAL**	Understand Quotes about Topics of personnel or professional interest, with the possible Use of clarification Strategies.	Understand simple texts on everyday and/or work-related topics, with the help of reference materials.	Exchange information on daily and/or work matters in a simple way, using clarification strategies if necessary.	Explain, with simple structures, the personal and / or work reality, although sometimes clarification strategies may be needed.	Translate and/or write texts on technical topics and/or topics of professional interest, with the help of reference materials.
	SUPERIOR LEVEL 5 AVANCED LEVEL 6 EXPERT	Fully understand the main ideas when the speech is clear, whenever everyday matters and/or matters of professional interest are discussed.	Understand texts on everyday and/or work-related topics without the aid of reference materials. Knowing how to find specific information in simple writings, fundamental-work-related minds.	Exchange in a simple, direct and autonomous way, the information on daily and / or work matters.	Explain, with more complex structures, the personal and / or work reality with ease and fluency.	Translate and/or write texts on technical topics and/or topics of professional interest autonomously.

PERSONNEL TYPE / AREA OF FUNCTION	LEVEL	COMPREHENSION		ORAL EXPRESSION		WRITING
		AUDITIVE COMPREHENSION	READING COMPREHENSION	ORAL INTERACTION	ORAL EXPRESSION	WRITTEN EXPRESSION
NOTAM / DYNAMIC DATA	BASIC REQUIRED LEVEL 4 OPERACIONAL	Understand phrases and vocabulary on topics related to daily life and / or work, although sometimes clarification strategies may be needed.	Understand very short and simple texts on topics of personal and/or work interest, with the support of reference materials.	Exchange information on daily and/or work matters in a simple way, using clarification strategies if necessary.	Explain, with simple structures, the personal and / or work reality, although sometimes clarification strategies may be needed.	Compose notes and short and simple messages related to the work. Complete forms and documents related to work activity, with the help of reference materials.
	SUPERIOR LEVEL 5 AVANCED LEVEL 6 EXPERT	Understand phrases and vocabulary on topics of personal and/or work interest.	Understand moderately complex texts on topics of personal and/or work interest without the help of reference materials.	Exchange in a simple, direct and autonomous way information on daily and / or work matters.	Explain, with more complex structures, the personal and / or work reality with relative ease and fluency.	Compose and/or translate notes and messages related to the work. Know how to fill out forms and documents related to work activity.

2.7   The transition to AIM is ongoing in the NACC region, with States facing challenges in obtaining necessary training, implementing QMS, and securing required resources.

2.8   Effective AIM training must be based on the right knowledge background and defined competencies for AIM personnel, enabling them to review, analyse, validate, and manage data and information accordingly. States must establish, acknowledge, and audit these competencies to verify qualified AIM personnel performing their tasks as required by Annex 15, PANS-AIM Doc 100066, and Doc 8126.

2.9   Providing a structured and collaborative process for developing a robust AIM competency framework that can be adopted by the global aviation community, which provides numerous benefits, such as:

- Enhanced Quality of AIM Services: A competency-based approach will ensure that AIM personnel have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their duties effectively and consistently, leading to improved quality and safety of AIM services.
- Improved Workforce Development: A clearly defined competency framework will provide a roadmap for training and development, ensuring that AIM professionals have the skills and knowledge needed to meet evolving industry demands.
- Increased Recognition and Value of the AIM Profession: By establishing a formal competency framework, the AIM profession will gain greater recognition and value within the aviation industry.

2.10   The AIM Action Plan (**Appendix**) is designed to improve workflow management within the AIM Task Force. The CAR/SAM region is collaborating on similar tasks to ensure more States in SAM and NACC regions achieve greater uniformity.

2.11   The AIM Tracking website provides a centralized platform for tracking and monitoring the progress of each State in implementing the AIM transition, eANP compliance, and the AIM Collaborative Plan. This facilitates better guidance provision between States, promoting the safe, efficient, timely, and accurate provision of aeronautical information.

3.   Conclusion

3.1   While significant progress has been made in achieving the AIM transition, some States still face considerable challenges. The AIM Task Force recognizes that training for AIM professionals is crucial to achieving ongoing improvement and ensuring high quality assurance (QA) standards in all AIM processes and procedures.

3.2   Delays in implementing any of the 21 steps towards the AIM transition would negatively impact the timeline and hinder the successful integration of AIM into the Air Traffic Management (ATM) operational concept, particularly with regard to SWIM implementation.

3.3   The AIM Task Force has witnessed remarkable progress in implementing ICAO Doc 8126 7th Edition - Aeronautical Information Services Manual. This effort highlights the urgent need to address the training and development of all AIM professionals, as they are a crucial element in the successful implementation of the manual.

3.4   Addressing the lack of standardized English proficiency for AIM personnel is essential for ensuring the safe and efficient implementation of the AIM transition. A clear plan for achieving this proficiency, including training and assessment requirements, should be developed and implemented across all States. This will enhance the effectiveness of AIM processes and ensure consistent and accurate communication in the aviation industry.

3.5   The AIM Tracking website is a valuable tool for monitoring the progress of AIM implementation and identifying areas where support and guidance are needed. Continued development and utilization of this platform will enhance the effectiveness of the AIM transition by providing clear visibility into progress, facilitating collaboration, and promoting the consistent and efficient provision of aeronautical information.

3.6   The successful implementation of the AIM transition requires a collaborative effort involving all stakeholders. By working together, States, international organizations, and industry representatives can effectively address the challenges and ensure that the AIM system contributes to a safer, more efficient, and more harmonized global aviation system.

3.7   The establishment of clear and standardized competency requirements for the AIM profession is essential to ensure the quality and effectiveness of AIM services. This includes defining the skills, knowledge, and experience required for AIM personnel to perform their duties effectively. A formal framework for competency assessment and validation should be established, ensuring that all AIM personnel meet the required standards.

4.   Suggested actions

4.1   The Meeting is invited to:

a) evaluate the content of this Working Paper; and
b) take necessary actions to:

4.1.1   Address English Proficiency:

1. AIM TF to provide /develop a standardized English proficiency assessment, namely: create a standardized test or assessment specifically designed to evaluate the English proficiency of AIM personnel. This could be a combination of written, oral, and listening components.
2. AIM TF stablish minimum proficiency requirements: Set minimum proficiency levels for AIM personnel based on the competency assessment results. These levels should align with the needs of the specific tasks performed by AIM personnel, such as providing briefings and publishing safety-critical information.
3. States are to provide targeted English language training programs for AIM personnel who do not meet the minimum proficiency requirements. This training should focus on aviation-specific vocabulary, communication skills, and comprehension of technical information.
4. The AIM TF is requested to create suggestions to a standardized ENG lang Prof examination for AIM personnel.

4.1.2   Enhance AIM Implementation:

1. Prioritize training and resource allocation: States should prioritize the allocation of sufficient resources and training opportunities for AIM personnel. This includes providing access to relevant training materials, workshops, and expert guidance to ensure proper knowledge and skills development.
2. Implement the by AIM TF suggested training curriculum: a comprehensive training curriculum for AIM professionals, encompassing all aspects of AIM, including data management, communication skills, and best practices.
3. Leverage the AIM Tracking website: Expand and refine the capabilities of the AIM Tracking website to provide more detailed information on implementation progress, challenges faced by States, and best practices for addressing these challenges. This platform can serve as a valuable resource for collaborative learning and knowledge sharing.

4. Promote collaboration and knowledge sharing: Encourage ongoing communication and collaboration between States, Regions, international organizations, and industry representatives. This can be facilitated through workshops, online forums, and regular meetings to share best practices, address challenges, and foster a collective understanding of the AIM transition.

4.1.3   Ensure Safety:

1. Implement a robust quality assurance (QA) program: Develop and implement a rigorous QA program for all AIM processes and procedures to ensure accuracy, consistency, and adherence to international standards. This program should include regular audits, feedback mechanisms, and continuous improvement measures.
2. Promote a culture of safety: Cultivate a strong safety culture within the AIM community by emphasizing the importance of clear communication, accuracy, and adherence to procedures.

4.1.4   AIM TF in collaboration with SAM to work on an AIM Competency Development:

1. to develop a comprehensive framework for AIM competency that can be adopted and implemented by all States, by:

2. Defining Core Competencies required for AIM professionals, including:

   i. Technical Knowledge: Understanding of AIM principles, procedures, and technologies.
   ii. Data Management: Skills in collecting, analyzing, validating, processing, and publishing aeronautical information.
   iii. Communication Skills: Effective communication skills, both written and verbal, for conveying information clearly and concisely to a variety of stakeholders.
   iv. Problem-Solving: Analytical skills and the ability to identify and resolve problems related to AIM processes.
   v. Collaboration: Skills in working effectively with colleagues and stakeholders from different organizations and backgrounds.

3. Developing a Competency Framework based on the identified core competencies, that includes:

   i. Competency Statements: Clear descriptions of each competency, outlining the knowledge, skills, and behaviors required to demonstrate proficiency.
   ii. Performance Indicators: Observable behaviors or actions that demonstrate competency.
   iii. Assessment Methods: Ways to assess competency levels, such as knowledge tests, practical exercises, simulations, and performance reviews.

4. Piloting Implementation of the competency framework in select States or organizations to gather feedback and refine the framework before wider implementation.

5. Developing Training and Development Resources by creating training materials, workshops, and other resources to help AIM personnel develop the necessary competencies.

6. Promoting Adoption, encouraging States and organizations to adopt the AIM competency framework and implement it through training, assessment, and performance management systems.

4.1.5 Propose the results, suggestions and strategies with the assistance of AIM TF by the upcoming GREPECAS and/or next NACC WG for recognition and/or acceptance.

4.1.6 Support the recommendations by the AIM TF; and

4.1.7 Suggest any additional action deemed necessary.

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