



ICAO

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WORKING PAPER

AO/TF/5/ATFM/TF/7/CIIFRA/9 — WP/02

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**Fifth Meeting of the North American, Central American and Caribbean Working Group (NACC/WG)
Airspace Optimization Task Force, Seventh Meeting of the Air Traffic Flow Management
Implementation Task Force and Ninth Meeting of the CANSO IATA ICAO Free Route Airspace Team
(AO/TF/5/ATFM/TF/7/CIIFRA/9)**

Orlando, United States, 03 to 07 March 2025

Agenda Item 5: Other Business

FOLLOW-UP ON CONSOLIDATION OF AO AND ATFM TASK FORCES INTO AN ATM TASK FORCE

(Presented by the AO/TF, ATFM/TF Rapporteurs and the Secretariat)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This working paper addresses the consolidation of AO and ATFM Task Forces into a unified ATM Task Force, enhancing resource efficiency and coordination. To streamline operations and enhance collaboration, merging the Airspace Optimization Task Force (AO/TF) and the Air Traffic Flow Management Implementation Task Force (ATFM/TF) into a single entity named the “Air Traffic Management Task Force (ATM/TF)” is proposed. This change reflects the commitment to creating a more cohesive and efficient approach to managing both airspace optimization and traffic flow across the NAM/CAR Regions. The new name, ATM Task Force, aligns with ICAO Doc 9854, ensuring clarity in the mission while doubling resources and harmonizing efforts. By uniting these two critical functions under a single banner, it is aimed to foster improved coordination, enhance capacity building, and deliver stronger results in air traffic management for the region. This change will bring our objectives under one unified framework, simplifying communications and increasing the effectiveness of the initiatives.

Action:	Review and endorse the proposed ATM Task Force structure. Immediate approval of the proposed name change to the Air Traffic Management Task Force (ATM TF), is recommended consolidating the Airspace Optimization Task Force (AO/TF) and the Air Traffic Flow Management Task Force (ATFM/TF). This action will allow to efficiently align resources, streamline processes, and reinforce collaboration
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety• Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ICAO Doc 9854: Global Air Traffic Management Operational Concept• GREPECAS Conclusion 21/07: Integration of Airspace and ATFM Initiatives• Havana Meeting Summary of Discussions: Decision AO/TF/4/ATFM/TF/6/CIIFRA/8/4 (Consolidation Proposal).

1. Introduction

1.1 In response to evolving operational demands and the need for greater efficiency, the Secretariat proposes a name change that reflects the merger of two key task forces: the Airspace Optimization Task Force (AO/TF) and the Air Traffic Flow Management Task Force (ATFM/TF). The newly formed Air Traffic Management Task Force (ATM/TF) will serve as a unified body dedicated to overseeing both airspace optimization and traffic flow management within the NAM/CAR Regions.

1.2 The integration of these two critical functions under one task force will allow for more streamlined decision-making, better use of resources, and a harmonized approach to achieving the strategic objectives. This consolidation not only simplifies the internal structure but also aligns with global best practices, fostering a more cohesive working environment while enhancing collaboration across multiple stakeholders.

1.3 The proposed name change is more than just a rebranding—it's a strategic shift aimed at improving our overall effectiveness and delivering more impactful outcomes.

2. Analysis

2.1 The decision to merge the AO/TF and the ATFM/TF into the ATM/TF is based on an in-depth review of current challenges and operational synergies between the two groups.

2.2 By consolidating these functions under one task force, significant improvements in coordination and resource utilization are anticipated. Currently, the overlapping objectives of optimizing airspace and managing traffic flow create redundancies in efforts and communication channels. Unifying the two into a single task force allows for a more streamlined and holistic approach to air traffic management.

2.3 This new structure will also facilitate better alignment with international standards, particularly ICAO Doc 9854, which emphasizes a comprehensive and collaborative approach to air traffic management. Moreover, this change will help eliminate siloed operations, reduce response times in decision-making, and enable more robust data-driven strategies by pooling resources and expertise into one coordinated effort.

2.4 The Terms of Reference (ToRs), as outlined in the **Appendix**, serve as a foundational framework for the effective operation of the newly consolidated Air Traffic Management Task Force (ATM/TF). This Appendix requires careful review, support, and adoption by both the AO/TF and the ATM T/F to ensure alignment with regional objectives and seamless implementation. The endorsement of these ToRs will facilitate enhanced coordination, operational efficiency, and strategic direction for airspace modernization efforts in the NAM/CAR Regions.

2.5 In addition, stakeholders will benefit from improved clarity in reporting structures and goal setting, making it easier to track progress and address challenges in a timely manner. This analysis demonstrates that a single ATM Task Force offers operational, administrative, and strategic benefits that will enhance overall performance in the NAM/CAR Regions.

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1 The Rapporteurs recommends that the group endorse:

- a) sending a formal communication of the name change to all stakeholders;
- b) updating relevant documentation, charters, and task force materials moving forward;
- c) scheduling strategic planning sessions to establish the unified work plan and objectives for the ATM Task Force; and
- d) reviewing and adopting the ToRs in the Appendix.

4. Suggested actions

4.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) evaluate the progress of the AO Task Force & ATFM Task Force detailed in this paper;
- b) support the recommendations included in Section 3;
- c) support and adopt the terms of reference in the Appendix; and
- d) suggest any other action deemed necessary.

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APPENDIX

TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) OF THE AIR TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE (ATM/TF)

1. Background

1.1 The Air Traffic Management Task Force (ATM/TF) has been established as a consolidation of the **Airspace Optimization Task Force (AO TF)** and the **Air Traffic Flow Management Task Force (ATFM TF)**.

1.2 This reorganization enhances operational efficiency, resource allocation, and regional coordination across the NAM/CAR Regions.

1.3 The ATM/TF will provide a unified approach to airspace optimization and traffic flow management, ensuring alignment with ICAO Doc 9854 and supporting strategic initiatives outlined in GREPECAS Conclusion 21/07.

2. Objectives

2.1 The ATM/TF is responsible for advancing air traffic management initiatives by:

- Harmonizing airspace optimization and traffic flow management efforts to improve regional efficiency.
- Implementing Free Route Airspace (FRA) solutions to enhance operational flexibility and reduce congestion.
- Aligning regional ATFM measures with global best practices, including enhanced collaboration with the SAM Region.
- Developing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to track the effectiveness of ATM strategies and measure performance improvements.
- Facilitating coordination among Air Navigation Services Providers (ANSPs), airlines, and stakeholders to ensure a seamless operational framework.

3. Structure

3.1 The ATM/TF will retain a leadership structure that includes:

- **Rapporteur:** Leads task force activities, sets priorities, and reports progress to the North American, Central American and Caribbean Working Group (NACC/WG).
- **Vice-Rapporteur:** Supports the Rapporteur and ensures continuity of initiatives.
- **Ad hoc Groups:** Established under ATM/TF to focus on specific workstreams, such as FRA implementation, data-driven ATFM, and contingency planning.
- **Stakeholder Participation:** Representatives from ICAO, ANSPs, airlines, CANSO, IATA, and other regional entities will collaborate within the ATM/TF framework.

4. Scope of Work

4.1 The ATM/TF will undertake the following tasks:

- Develop and update the ATM/TF Work Plan, ensuring deliverables align with regional goals.
- Monitor and analyze air traffic demand patterns to optimize airspace structures.
- Enhance inter-regional coordination between NAM, CAR, and SAM Regions.
- Improve data sharing and interoperability among ATFM systems.
- Coordinate airspace contingency plans to enhance operational resilience.
- Engage in capacity-building initiatives to strengthen stakeholder expertise in ATM best practices.

5. Reporting Mechanism

5.1 The **Rapporteur** will provide periodic updates to the **NACC/WG** on progress and challenges.

5.2 The Task Force will submit working papers and recommendations for review and endorsement by GREPECAS via NACC/WG.

5.3 Stakeholders will receive briefing materials and performance reports to ensure transparency and engagement.

6. Deliverables

6.1 ATM/TF Concept of Operations (CONOPS) to guide implementation strategies.

6.2 Quarterly Reports outlining project milestones, challenges, and future activities.

6.3 Performance Metrics Dashboard tracking efficiency, capacity, and safety improvements.

6.4 Guidelines for Free Route Airspace Deployment across the NAM/CAR Regions.

7. Meeting Frequency

7.1 The ATM/TF will convene:

- Quarterly virtual meetings to assess progress and refine strategies.
- Bi-Annual face-to-face meetings, aligned with the NACC/WG schedule, to facilitate deeper collaboration.

8. Strategic Alignment

8.1 The ATM/TF aligns with:

- ICAO's Global Air Traffic Management Operational Concept (Doc 9854).
- GREPECAS recommendations for integrated ATFM solutions.
- The Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP) ASBU framework for performance-based improvements.
- Free Route Airspace objectives, as outlined in ICAO's FRA implementation roadmap.

9. Conclusion

9.1 The consolidation of AO/TF and ATFM/TF into the Air Traffic Management Task Force (ATM/TF) strengthens regional ATM coordination, enhances resource utilization, and simplifies communication channels. The ATM/TF will serve as a key enabler of airspace modernization efforts, ensuring a seamless, efficient, and performance-driven ATM environment in the NAM/CAR Regions.