



ICAO

International Civil Aviation Organization
North American, Central American and Caribbean Office
WORKING PAPER

E/CAR/CATG/9 — WP/06
16/07/25

Ninth Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Technical Group (E/CAR/CATG/9) Meeting
Miami, United States, 28 to 31 July 2025

Agenda Item 4: Update of the E/CAR/CATG Work Programme and Activities
4.3 Regional Mechanism for Sharing of ANS Human Resources

PROPOSAL FOR SHARING ANS HUMAN RESOURCES

(Presented by the Secretariat)

| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | |
|--|--|
| This Working Paper analyses the challenges faced by eastern Caribbean States to count with a full cadre of trained and sufficiently experienced staff for all disciplines of air navigation services provision and oversight and proposes actions to develop and implement a mechanism for sharing and/or pooling ANS human resources. | |
| Action: | Suggested actions are included in Section 5. |
| <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 7300 – Convention on International Civil Aviation• COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN OF ACTION (CSP) FOR THE SIX ICAO CONTRACTING STATES MEMBERS OF THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY (ECCAA).• Final report of the Eighth Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Technical Group (E/CAR/CATG/8) Miami, United States, 22 to 24 October 2024. |

1. Introduction

1.1 The Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) sets the framework for the safe and continuous development of civil aviation globally. In practice, the Convention functions based on the equal applicability of its Annexes by Contracting States.

1.2 The Convention was signed under several basic principles, among which we can mention: Respect for sovereignty of States, equal opportunities and non-Discrimination in the application of the Law. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) was founded in the same principles of the Convention.

1.3 The eastern Caribbean is a particularly complex subregion, comprised of eight Small Island Developing States. As defined by the United Nations, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are a distinct group of 39 States Members of United Nations that face unique social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities. The eastern Caribbean accounts with 8 of the 39 SIDs. The ICAO CAR Region accounts in total with 14 SIDs, for a 35% of the global number.

2. Background.

2.1 ICAO has conducted several studies to analyse the context and status of the eastern Caribbean civil aviation system, with the aim of tailoring the most suitable strategies for supporting them in complying with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs).

2.2 More recently, the ICAO NACC Regional Office is drafting the Country Strategic Plan of Action which includes a comprehensive analysis, derived of previous missions and projects, regarding the overall aviation context for each State.

2.3 All these studies highlight the challenges faced by the Eastern Caribbean States in fulfilling their commitments as signatories to the Convention and maintaining a service provision structure that responds to the constant demand for improvements from users.

3. Analysis.

3.1 The establishment, provision and oversight of air navigation services (ANS), requires States to account with sufficient staff, adequately trained and relevant experience, for each one of the services provided.

3.2 This alone proves to be a challenge for eastern Caribbean States, which mostly account with relatively small organizations for the provision of ANS and Aerodromes, limited sources of revenues, and several services normally subcontracted. The latter is particularly challenging when a new service is introduced or upgraded (transition from non-RADAR to surveillance ATS, introduction of new automation, implementation of new safety procedures, etc.).

3.3 Access to training, including basic and recurrent, is another obstacle for the eastern Caribbean. The availability of training for all ANS areas is limited and the investment required to develop and maintain competencies is significant.

3.4 Language is another limitation to training and support services, since several options for training provide services mostly in Spanish and interpretation is available for an additional cost. Some training and support services cannot be provided in a language than that of the receiver.

3.4 The same applies to experience. When a new service is required or planned to be introduced, basic knowledge and experience are required to support the decision making, and to lead the implementation efforts; additional experience may be needed when on-the-job training is required. Evidently, no in-house experienced staff can be found for a service that an organization has never provided, and the investment to develop those competencies internally are too high for a service that will be provided with a limited scope or not frequently.

3.5 Additionally, several ANS require the use of tools and systems that are normally very expensive to acquire and require constant training to maintain proficient use. The frequency of use of these tools may increase the need for recurrent training, adding cost to the initial investment made.

4. Conclusions.

4.1 Despite all the progress in technology and automation, without trained and competent staff the aviation system cannot function, let alone progress. Even outsourced or delegated services require minimum competencies to ensure compliance with the responsibilities of States.

4.2 The size and range of services provided by most eastern Caribbean States limits the capabilities to develop and maintain staff, sufficient and adequately trained, for all ANS and Aerodromes specialities. States need to identify the core services they are required and prioritize specialization for these services. The decision to maintain in-house or outsource services must be based on an objective cost-benefit analysis, considering not only the initial cost but also the maintenance in the long term.

4.3 Equal opportunities not necessarily mean the same as equal assistance; in some cases, may be the opposite. The E/CAR/CATG must maintain an approach that is consistent with that.

4.4 Although the Convention is founded on the principle of harmonized implementation of ICAO SARPs, it's evident that is very difficult, if not impossible, for smaller States to comply with these requirements under the same terms as larger States. Collaboration and sharing of resources are the most viable mechanism to support States in complying with their responsibilities as signatories of the Chicago Convention.

5. Suggested actions.

5.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Take note of the information provided in this Working Paper;
- b) Establish an Ad hoc Group to work with ICAO Secretariat to develop a proposal for a regional mechanism for sharing of ANS Human Resources for the eastern Caribbean subregion. The Ad hoc Group must present the results of their work for the E/CAR/CATG/10 Meeting, and
- c) Suggest any other action deemed necessary.