



ICAO

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WORKING PAPER

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**Third Meeting of Rapporteurs of the North American, Central American and
Caribbean Working Group (NACC/WG/RAP/03)**
(ICAO NACC Regional Office, from 24 to 27 March 2025)

**Agenda Item 3: Update NAM/CAR regional needs and NACC/WG objectives, its structure and
the review and reporting mechanisms (Dashboard)**

Revised strategy for the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Technical Group (ECAR/CATG)
(Presented by ECAR/CATG Chairperson)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
This Working Paper presents the progress report of the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Technical Group (ECAR/CATG) and request support for its revised strategy.	
Action:	Suggested actions are included in Section 6.
<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">• Final Report of the Eighth Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Technical Group (E/CAR/CATG/8) Meeting (Miami, United States, 22 to 24 October 2024)

1. Introduction

1.1 Civil aviation is an element of vital importance for the sustainable development of States, especially for those that have tourism as their main source of contribution to their Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

1.2 The Eastern Caribbean subregion is made up of relatively small island States, in which airports represent their main gateway for arrivals and departures.

1.3 In this context, the provision of air navigation services and airport services requires special attention to ensure the sustainability of the main economic activities of this region, as well as its connectivity in terms of logistics.

2. Background

2.1 The Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Technical Group (ECAR/CATG) was established in October 2012 by the Directors of Civil Aviation of the Eastern Caribbean at their 24th Meeting (E/CAR/DCA/24). The purpose of the establishment of the group was to continue the performance-based work programme for the implementation and improvement in all air navigation fields in the Eastern Caribbean area.

2.2 The activities of the ECAR/CATG were originally carried out by the Eastern Caribbean Working Group (E/CAR/WG), which was created from Agreement No. 2/1 of the Informal ATS CAR/SAM 1/75 Meeting held in Bridgetown, Barbados, from 14 to 17 October 1975, for the purpose of examining problems affecting airspace organization and utilization in the Eastern Caribbean area for States and Territories in the PIARCO and San Juan Flight Information Regions (FIRs).

2.3 The Membership of the ECAR/CATG is the following: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, France, Grenada, Netherlands (Saba and Sint Eustatius), Sint Maarten, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom, United States and Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA). Other international organizations may be included as observers.

3. Discussion

3.1 For several years, ICAO has implemented an ambitious support program for the Eastern Caribbean, emphasizing regional initiatives such as strengthening the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Authority (ECCAA) to enhance oversight within the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). This support, primarily aimed at developing safety oversight capabilities, facilitated the establishment of the Air Navigation Services Safety Oversight Program for ECCAA member States.

3.2 The Eastern Caribbean States continue to encounter challenges in achieving full compliance with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) across various domains. Additionally, relatively small organizations responsible for air navigation services face constraints in maintaining the service levels expected by users. In this context, the ECAR/CATG has been identified as the most appropriate framework to sustain and enhance support for this subregion. By addressing its specific needs and operational environment, this framework aims to develop the necessary capacities to achieve sustainable compliance with ICAO SARPs and industry best practices.

3.3 The Eighth ECAR/CATG Meeting (E/CAR/CATG/8) was held in Miami, United States, from 22 to 24 October 2024. The Meeting was attended by 60 participants representing 9 States and 3 international organizations. The main objective of the meeting was to identify the main priorities for the sustainable provision of air navigation and aerodromes services in the Eastern Caribbean, to discuss and agree on supporting actions.

4. ECAR/CATG Main Priorities

4.1 After reviewing the presented documentation, receiving the report from the Group Committees and analysing all the information provided, the Meeting worked to establish the priorities for the E/CAR/CATG, to respond to the expectations for a revised strategy to support the E/CAR ANS and AGA.

4.2 The following is a list of the areas where changes are required, including recommendations for specific actions:

4.2.1 High Level Support

Sustaining high-level support for civil aviation initiatives remains a continuous challenge for E/CAR States. Despite tourism being a primary economic driver in the region, ministerial-level decision-makers require regular engagement to reinforce the critical role

of air navigation services in maintaining operational safety and efficiency—essential for facilitating visitor arrivals. To address this, periodic awareness sessions for E/CAR government high-level decision-makers are recommended.

4.2.2 ***Communication mechanisms***

ICAO disseminates information on its activities and meetings through formal communication channels. In the region, several States have restructured their frameworks, distinguishing or separating functions related to air navigation services (ANS) safety oversight and service provision. However, these structural changes are not reflected in ICAO's communication procedures, resulting in critical information not consistently reaching the appropriate institutions responsible for ANS oversight and service delivery. To address this, a revised communication plan for the E/CAR region is recommended to ensure that relevant information is effectively distributed to the appropriate points of contact.

4.2.3 ***ANS Planning***

The provision and oversight of air navigation services remain critical priorities in the region. The lack of updates to air navigation plans developed by E/CAR States has led to misalignment in implementation initiatives and hindered the strategic analysis of ongoing improvement projects. Establishing a dedicated support project to update E/CAR air navigation plans will enhance compliance with ANS-related SARPs, ensure strategic alignment, and optimize the use of available resources.

4.2.4 ***ATS surveillance system implementation***

Several States in the E/CAR subregion are in the process of implementing ATS surveillance systems, to enhance the provision of air traffic control services. These initiatives require support to ensure proper implementation, and the updating of ATS operational procedures. Additionally, the lack of coordination among these independently executed initiatives prevents the analysis of combined coverage and potential resource sharing. It is recommended that ICAO provide support to ensure compliance with technical requirements and the effective implementation of operational procedures.

4.2.5 ***Instrument Flight Procedures Design***

Instrument flight procedures design (IFPD) oversight has the lowest USOAP ANS effective implementation for the E/CAR. E/CAR States are facing challenges to comply with ICAO requirements for IFPD due to limited human resources and training. The implementation of the ICAO Instrument Flight Procedures Design Programme (FPP) has been received as a viable solution for E/CAR States, to enhance the IFPDS oversight. ICAO is urged to implement the FPP.

4.2.6 ***SAR Services***

SAR coordination is one of the main deficiencies identified in the region, with limited support and very little progress. The CAR/SAM Air Navigation Plan assigns responsibilities for the establishment of Rescue Sub Centres (RSC) to Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, France, Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The RSCs of Barbados, Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines are not operational. The RSC of Antigua and Barbuda has a great opportunity to function as a joint rescue coordinating subcentre. To complete these functions, Antigua and Barbuda RSC requires SAR Mission Coordinators

training and complete SAR agreements with RSC Pointe-a-Pitre. It is recommended that international cooperation be requested to provide training for SAR mission coordinators for the personnel of Antigua and Barbuda. Similarly, the development of specific implementation support projects to establish the operation of the RSCs of Barbados, Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is recommended. High-level support from ICAO is essential to facilitate the signing of Search and Rescue (SAR) agreements between Antigua and Barbuda and France.

5. Conclusions

5.1 There's a significant disparity in terms of organizational size, complexity and range of services, between most of the eastern Caribbean States' service providers and the rest of the NAM/CAR States. While the expected levels of services are the same, the challenges faced to ensure compliance with ICAO SARPs and industry's best practices are significantly higher. Consequently, the support mechanisms required to promote compliance with ICAO SARPs to enable the sustainable development of the air navigation and aerodrome systems of these States must be adapted to their specific circumstances, providing assistance and guidance as necessary.

5.2 The priorities and activities of the NACC/WG are not necessarily at the same level of those of the ECAR/CATG. Nevertheless, the NACC/WG Task Forces have the expertise that can provide invaluable support to the ECAR/CATG. The link between the ECAR/CATG and the NACC/WG Task Forces needs to be established.

6. Suggested actions

6.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Take note of the information provided in this Working Paper and provide recommendations to address the ECAR/CATG Main Priorities detailed in Section 4.
- b) Endorse the Conclusions detailed in Section 5 and identify the mechanisms by which the NACC/WG Task Force can provide support to the ECAR/CATG.
- c) Suggest any other action deemed appropriate.