NACC/WG/RAP/03 — WP/18
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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 4: Review of GREPECAS CAR/SAM Projects

Mechanism for integrating GREPECAS Conclusions/Decisions and implementation activities into the NACC/WG Work Programme

(Presented by the Secretariat)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
This Working Paper describes the air navigation and aerodromes planning and implementation framework of the CAR/SAM Regions and request support for the implementation of a mechanism to enhance coordination between the GREPECAS and NACC/WG.	
Action:	Suggested actions are included in Section 5
Strategic Objectives:	• Safety • Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency
References:	• GREPECAS Procedural Handbook • Terms of Reference for the North American, Central American and Caribbean Working Group (NACC/WG)

1. **Introduction**

1.1 The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that coordinates the principles of international air navigation. ICAO was created by the signing of the Convention on International Civil Aviation on 7 December 1944. All 193 signatory States to the Convention are invited to convene for Assembly sessions, every three years, where they adopt resolutions, agree on ICAO's budget, work programme, and pursue consensus on current priorities, policies, and targets for international civil aviation. The Assembly also elect 36 States to serve on the ICAO Council, a governing body responsible for Secretariat oversight, and for the decision making through ICAO on behalf of the Assembly. Each elected Council State appoints a representative to ICAO, and they elect a non-voting Council President to manage their work.

1.2 The ICAO Council adopts Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) concerning all aspects of civil aviation, referenced by the principles of the Convention. The Air Navigation Commission (ANC) is the technical body within ICAO decision making process. The ANC is composed of 19 commissioners, appointed by the ICAO Council. Commissioners serve as independent experts, who although nominated by their States, do not serve as State or political representatives. SARPs are developed under the direction of the ANC through the formal process of ICAO Panels, supported by the ICAO Secretariat. Once approved by the ANC, SARPs are sent to the Council, for final adoption.

2.   Planning and Implementation Regional Groups (PIRGs)

2.1   The regional planning process is the principal engine of ICAO's planning and implementation work. It is here that the top-down approach, comprising global guidance and regional harmonization measures, converges with the bottom-up approach constituted by States and aircraft operators and their proposals for implementation options. The development of regional plans for air navigation systems is undertaken by ICAO's PIRGs with the assistance of ICAO's Regional Offices. The six PIRGs are: Asia/Pacific Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APANPIRG), Africa-Indian Ocean Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APIRG), European Air Navigation Planning Group (EANPG), Caribbean/South American Planning and Implementation Regional Group (GREPECAS), Middle East Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group (MIDANPIRG), and North Atlantic Systems Planning Group (NATSPG).

2.2   The CAR/SAM Planning and Implementation Regional Group (GREPECAS) is responsible for the development and maintenance of the CAR/AM Regional Air Navigation Plan (RANP) and provides for the planning and implementation of air navigation systems within these Regions, in accordance with the planning frameworks agreed at the global and regional levels. GREPECAS was established by the ICAO Council in 1990 as recommended by the Second CAR/SAM Regional Air Navigation Meeting in 1989 (action by Council on Recommendation 14/6 of the CAR/SAM/2 RAN Meeting, Santiago de Chile).

2.3   The Terms of Reference of GREPECAS establish as its main function the development and maintenance of the CAR/SAM RANP in its three volumes, as well as the work programme aimed at the adoption of the GANP (Doc 9750) which defines the Aviation System Block Upgrade (ASBU) drivers and modules, as well as its Performance Framework. These activities are aligned with the relevant ICAO provisions. GREPECAS also reports to the ICAO Council through the ANC.

2.4   GREPECAS is the guiding and coordinating body for all activities conducted within ICAO concerning the air navigation system for the CAR/SAM Regions, and its activities shall be subject to review by the ICAO Council. To verify the effectiveness and implementation rate of operational improvements, ICAO provides data and tools to support performance monitoring and implementation and facilitates the exchange of relevant information and best practices in the CAR/SAM Regions. GREPECAS Procedural Handbook is available here: https://www.icao.int/GREPECAS/Documents/GREPECASProceduralHandbookBIL2022-04-19.pdf

3.   Discussion

3.1   The activities of GREPECAS are conducted through a program and projects framework. The programmes will be coordinated by the Regional Officers and the projects will be coordinated by experts from the States. The programmes cover the areas of air navigation, based on the GANP, ATM Operational Concept and in accordance with ICAO programmes under the Strategic Objectives. Projects in their conception are expected to be CAR/SAM except in particular cases where it is duly justified that they are only CAR or only SAM.

3.2   The respective CAR or SAM Regional Office shall designate programmes coordinators. To assist in the design, monitoring and achievement of the objectives of each project, the programmes coordinator of the Regional Office shall be supported by the project coordinators designated by the States. Each Regional Office will use its own implementation methodology to meet the objectives of the programmes and projects in the regions.

3.3   While the planning and reporting to the ICAO Council is conducted through GREPECAS, the implementation is conducted separately by each regional implementation group. For the SAM Region, the implementation is coordinated by the South American Implementation Group (SAMIG) and for the CAR Region the implementation is coordinated by is the North America, Central America, and Caribbean Working Group (NACC/WG). The NACC/WG as the regional implementation arm in ANS and AGA, reports directly to the GREPECAS.

3.4   By mandate of the Council, GREPECAS meets annually to carry out its planning, and monitoring functions. At these meetings, State representatives take decisions to ensure regional alignment of ANS and AGA implementation initiatives with ICAO's global objectives. These decisions must be addressed either through updating programmes and projects or through direct actions. As previously mentioned, the NACC/WG is the sole implementation arm for the CAR Region. If the NACC/WG does not integrate these programmes and projects, as well as individual actions, into its work programme, the decisions made by GREPECAS will simply not be addressed.

3.5   It is necessary to emphasize the importance of GREPECAS in the overall functioning of ICAO. Through this mechanism all the resources of the ICAO Secretariat are made available to support ANS and AGA implementation, including its human resources.

4.   Conclusions

4.1   Despite the importance of GREPECAS as the bridge between ICAO's global initiatives and the Regional priorities set out in the RANP, a formal mechanism has not been established to integrate GREPECAS activities into the NACC/WG work programme. This causes both groups, GREPECAS and NACC/WG, to continue generating work initiatives separately, developing a considerable workload that is not completed, and that may not be adequately supported by the ICAO Secretariat.

4.2   The terms of reference of the NACC/WG clearly establish that this group reports to GREPECAS. This is a fundamental element to be able to transmit to the decision-making bodies of ICAO the priorities and levels of implementation of the CAR Region. The project managers present their reports to GREPECAS annually, but there is no mechanism to ensure that these projects are fully integrated into the work programmes of the Task Forces that should address them.

4.3   GREPECAS constitutes a mechanism that enables considerable resources that can be used by the NACC/WG structure. Improved coordination between both groups would help obtaining resources to support implementation that have already been approved by ICAO, taking as a reference the reports that GREPECAS makes to the ANC and the Council.

5.   Suggested actions

5.1   The Meeting is invited to:

a) Take note of the information provided in this Working Paper.

b) Request the Secretariat to develop a process to address the opportunities for improvement detailed in Section 4, and present to the NACC/WG/10 for approval.

c) Request any additional action deemed necessary.

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