



ICAO

## INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

**Twenty Fifth Meeting of the Africa-Indian Ocean Planning and Implementation Regional Group  
(APIRG/26)**

7 - 8 November 2023

**Agenda Item 3: Implementation of air navigation goals, targets and indicators, including the priorities set in the Regional Air Navigation Plan**

**3.3 STATUS REPORT ON THE GROUP OF THE IMPROVEMENT OF ATS OVER THE SOUTH ATLANTIC (SAT) ACTIVITIES**

*(Presented by the Secretariat)*

**SUMMARY**

This Paper presents the status of implementation and activities undertaken by the Group of the Improvement of Air Traffic Services over the South Atlantic (SAT) since APIRG/25. It highlights the implementation status by the implementation management group (SAT IMG) and the safety oversight group (SAT SOG).

The action by the meeting is in **Paragraph 3**

**REFERENCE(S):**

- SAT Handbook
- SAT Groups Meeting reports
- APIRG Reports

**Related ICAO Strategic Objective(s):**

*A – Safety, B – Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency and D – Economic Development of Air Transport,*

The action by the meeting is in **Paragraph 3**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. The Group of the Improvement of Air Traffic Services over the South Atlantic (SAT) is a technical group established by recommendation 5/11 of AFI RAN/7 with a membership from ICAO Contracting States in charge of Air Traffic Services provision over the South Atlantic, associated Air Navigation Service Providers, and International Air Transport Association (IATA). Member States are Angola, Argentina, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, France, Ghana, Morocco, Namibia, Portugal, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.
- 1.2. The structure of the SAT Group includes three main bodies, an administrative group, the SAT Steering Group (SAT SG) and two working groups i.e. the SAT implementation management group (SAT IMG) and the SAT safety oversight group (SAT SOG). Several projects teams are established under each bodies to plan and implement the Decisions of the SAT SG.
- 1.3. The SAT Steering Group (SAT SG) aims primarily to ensure with the support of its contributory bodies, a continuous, coherent and harmonized implementation of the air navigation system in the South Atlantic parties of the AFI and SAM Regions, in accordance with the provision and schedule of the concerned Regional Air Navigation Plans aligned with the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP Doc. 9750). In addition, the objective of the SAT Steering Group is to provide to States and international organizations concerned, the opportunity to examine any possible improvement of air traffic services over the South Atlantic through

the conduct *inter alia*, of the identified tasks as outlined in the SAT Handbook. The SAT SG is chaired by Mr. Sidi GUEYE, Director General of Senegalese CAA (ANACIM) and he is supported by Mr James Davis as the Vice-Chairperson. Mr. Zo'o Minto Prosper, Regional Director ICAO WACAF, acts as Secretary to the SG.

- 1.4. The South Atlantic Safety Oversight Group (SAT SOG) is responsible for coordinating air traffic monitoring in the SAT region. Mr. Luiz Antonio (Brazil) chairs the Group. He is supported by Mr. Alexis Braithwaite (Trinidad and Tobago) as SAT SOG Vice-Chairperson. The Secretary to the working group is Mr. Fernando Hermoza, ATM/SAR Regional Officer, ICAO SAM Office.
- 1.5. The Implementation Management Group (IMG) has the function to implement the recommendations emerging from the decisions of the SAT SG. The IMG is Chaired by Mr. Luis Tojais (Portugal) and supported by Mr. Apollin Komguem Magni (ASECNA) as Vice-Chairperson. The Secretariat to the working group is Mr. Sven Halle, ATM/SAR Regional Officer, ICAO EUR/NAT Office.

## **2. DISCUSSION**

### **SAT IMG**

- 2.1 The South Atlantic Implementation Management Group (SAT IMG) is responsible to the SAT Steering Group for the identification, planning, development and coordinated implementation of safe and efficient project supporting the aviation system within the SAT Region.
- 2.2 The SAT IMG has held two meetings in the last two years. A number of pertinent coordination issues were discussed during the two meetings, these include but not limited to harmonization of the SAT Contingency Plan with that of adjacent regional plans, implementation of PBCS/PBN separation minima, implementation of Space Based ADS-B, implementation of AIDC/AMHS, harmonization of the NAT and SAT concepts of operations (CONOPS), assignments of flight levels in the SAT region, and HF communication issues.
- 2.3 The First Meeting of the South Atlantic Implementation Management Group (SAT IMG/01) was held, thanks to the kind invitation of ASECNA, from **21 to 24 November 2022**, in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.
- 2.4 The first meeting was well attended by member States, organisations and stakeholders. Six decisions were drafted by the meeting with implementation status to be reported at SAT IMG/02 meeting. The main decisions were related to:
  - The inclusion of RCP240 and RSP180 in the monitoring tables – to identify required traffic statistics and aircraft data in the EURSAM corridor in order to guide the decisions making of the SAT SG.
  - The conduct survey on PBCS implementation in all SAT FIRs – to review the coordinated PBCS monitoring process for all SAT FIRs and to support the planning and implementation of PBCS.
  - The improvement of flight efficiency and flight level occupancy in the EURSAM corridor – to implement solutions for the improvement of flight efficiency and flight level occupancy in the EUR-SAM corridor.
  - The establishment of the SAT Contingency plan review Project Team – to review and propose amendments to the ATM Operational Contingency Plan for the South Atlantic and seek harmonization with contingency plan of the FIRs in adjacent regions.
- 2.5 The second meeting of the SAT IMG (SAT IMG/02) was held in Paris, France at the EUR/NAT ICAO Regional Office on **24 to 27 July 2023**. Some of the attendees joined in virtually, although there was difficulties experienced in following the meeting using the hybrid platform. The meeting drafted six decisions to improve the implementation status in the SAT area. The main decisions were related to:
  - The establishment of the SAT PBCS implementation support team (SAT PBCSIS) by September 2023 – to support the harmonized implementation of PBCS and use of the related PANS-ATM

separation minima in the South Atlantic. The PBCSIS will cover aspect related to PBCS raised during SAT IMG 1.

- The change of operational status of the ATS Route UN866 from unidirectional to bidirectional – to address the issue related to flight efficiency and flight level occupancy in the EURSAM Corridor.
- The update of letters of agreements between ATSUs, by 30 September 2023, to harmonize the application of the Mach number technique in the EURSAM Corridor – to address the issue related to flight efficiency and flight level occupancy in the EURSAM Corridor.
- The establishment of a SAT Document Management Office (DMO) – to facilitate appropriate harmonization and publishing of regional material.

### ***SAT SOG***

- 2.6 The core function of the South Atlantic Safety Oversight Group (SAT SOG) is safety oversight within the SAT region, as defined in its Terms of Reference (TOR) from the SAT Handbook.
- 2.7 The first meeting of the SAT SOG was held from 13 to 17 March 2023, in Miami, Florida, United States at the invitation of IATA. The meeting was attended by experts from SAT member states, the United States, industry stakeholders and organisations.
- 2.8 The meeting noted that the SAT area is a vast area encompassing several nations and presenting specific challenges regarding air traffic monitoring and recognized the difficulties arising from the territorial extension and the existence of two areas with such different profiles (EUR/SAM vs AORRA). Specific challenges identified included discrepancy in safety management and efficiency between the NAT and SAT areas, lack of readily usable information on safety performance in the SAT area and the significant differences in the safety monitoring methodologies used by the RMAs involved in the area notably ARMA, CARSAMA and SATMA.
- 2.9 The meeting resolved that there was need to define the SAT operating area as well as harmonise the monitoring procedures between the different regions that lies within the SAT geographical area.
- 2.10 Three (3) Decisions were drawn at this first meeting which established three project teams namely:
- The SAT Oceanic Error Safety Bulletin Project team (SAT OESB PT) – to improve safety in the area and complement the NAT OESB. A State letter was circulated in October 2023 to request the nomination of Subject Matter Experts from member States and Organizations
  - The SAT Annual Safety Report (SAT ASR) – to provide safety performance information based on the need in the SAT area by leveraging the NAT ASR. A State letter was circulated in October 2023 to request the nomination of Subject Matter Experts from member States and Organizations
  - The SAT RMA’s Harmonization/Standardization Project Team – to harmonize and standardize RMAs’ procedures and methods to improve safety in the SAT. The establishment of the team will be updated during SAT SOG 2 scheduled for the end of November 2023.

### ***SAT SG***

- 2.11 The SAT Steering Group has not been able to meet since the setting up of the SAT Group. However the first Meeting of the Steering Group (SAT SG/1) is scheduled to be held virtually on 4 December 2023. Invitation letter has been disseminated to all stakeholders for their active participation. Outcomes of SAT SOG 1 as well as SAT IMG 1 & 2 will be discussed during the meeting to provide further guidance on the future activities to be carried out in the SAT area.

### ***CHALLENGES FACED BY THE GROUP***

- 2.12 During the meetings the group faced a few challenges, especially in attendance by the members. Since the meetings were initially held virtually it was easier for all to be on the same platform however during the last year the meetings were held on site with option of virtual attendance.

- 2.13 It was noted in this type of arrangement the difficulty to follow the ongoing discussions by those who were connected virtually. This was mainly due to internet connections which either kept dropping or not clear especially as some members were connected from long distances. The issue of time zone was also raised as some participants attending virtually were in time zone of UTC-5 or UTC+3 with meetings timeframe sets between 8AM UTC to 4PM UTC.
- 2.14 The Group noted that it was important to hold a fully on-site meeting at least once a year for each of the working groups.
- 2.15 The Group also calls for member States and Organizations commitment to support the activities of the working groups.
- 2.16 Coordination of SAT activities with adjacent regions is yet to reach satisfactory level of efficacy due to the discrepancies in priorities.

### **3 ACTION BY THE MEETING**

- 3.1 The meeting is invited to:
- a) note the progress made by the SAT Group;
  - b) review and propose further actions, as necessary considering the discussions, to facilitate the implementation of outstanding items; and
  - c) Urge SAT member States and organizations to commit to support the activities of SAT groups.