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WORKING PAPER

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**Twelfth North American, Central American and Caribbean Directors of Civil Aviation Meeting
(NACC/DCA/12)**

Placencia, Stann Creek District, Belize, 9-11 July 2024

Agenda Item 5: Toward More Effective Implementation Support

IMPLEMENTATION OF MULTINATIONAL OPERATIONAL AGREEMENTS TO PROVIDE SEARCH AND RESCUE SERVICES IN THE HIGH SEAS SPACE

(Presented by Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed amendment to Volumes I and II of the ANP prepared by ICAO contemplates that Central American States will assume responsibility for providing search and rescue (SAR) services in the corresponding space. Following is the intention of the States to implement multinational agreements to coordinate and carry out SAR operations in international maritime areas. This would ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of these operations in maritime environments where international cooperation is essential to preserve lives and ensure safety at sea. Such agreements involve sharing SAR resources, applying SAR operational protocols and communications, developing coordination procedures, and collaborating in the implementation of agreed protocols to balance jurisdictional interests and preserve human lives.

Action:	refer to section 3.
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety• Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency• Security & Facilitation• Economic Development of Air Transport• Environmental Protection
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ***

1. Introduction

1.1 The Regional Office of the International Civil Aviation Organization (NACC ICAO) received expressions of interest and proposals to improve the management of the high seas unassigned airspace located in the Pacific Ocean adjacent to the MHCC FIR airspace. Through invitation Ref:

2.1 According to ICAO, States, either individually or in cooperation with other States, should ensure that they have the necessary resources to establish and provide Search and Rescue (SAR) services in a timely manner within their territories, with the objective of guaranteeing assistance to persons in distress.

2.2 In this context, to provide effective SAR services in the high seas, Central American States are contemplating the implementation of multinational agreements, which implies the creation and application of protocols and collaborative procedures between different countries to coordinate and carry out search and rescue operations in international maritime areas. These agreements are essential to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of search and rescue operations in maritime environments where international cooperation is essential to save lives and ensure safety at sea.

2.3 The scope of these agreements includes the following:

- a) To support each other through the sharing of SAR assets for Operations within their respective SAR Search and Rescue regions, territories and corresponding waters (to the extent possible, in accordance with the actual technical capabilities of the SAR environment) for Operations within their respective Search and Rescue Regions (SRR).
- b) Apply the guidelines of Annex 12 to the Chicago Convention and the international aeronautical and maritime SAR manuals with respect to SAR operational procedures and communications.
- c) Develop appropriate procedures and communications for coordinating the assets of parties responding to the same distress incident and for coordination at the parties' RCCs or RSCs; and
- d) Collaborate to establish and implement, to the extent possible, agreed operational procedures, which balance jurisdictional interests and the goal of saving lives, with respect to the entry of various types of SAR assets into each other's territory solely for the purpose of conducting a Search and Rescue operation.

3. Request for Action

- a) The meeting is invited to take note of the information presented.

- b) ICAO, IATA, and other interested parties are being requested to promote the establishment of multinational agreements for the provision of Search and Rescue service on the high seas.

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