



ICAO

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North American, Central American and Caribbean Office

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

Alternatives in establishing a Regional Accident Investigation Organization

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Working Paper emphasizes on the existing need to look for alternatives for the regional accident investigation organizations to have the necessary faculties to contribute to States in dealing with accident investigations, especially major accidents.

It also shows some important results that have been achieved as an Investigation Cooperative Mechanism (ICM) in the Establishment phase of AIG critical elements and the challenges that remain in the Implementation phase, especially because of the powers of the AIG in the Civil Aviation Laws and how this impacts its role with other institutions during investigations and of course the support it can receive from regional accident investigation organizations.

Action:	It is requested to ICAO: a) Take note and recognize the actions carried out by COCESNA/GRIAA as an ICM and with tangible results for COCESNA Member States. b) Identify possible alternatives to provide regional investigation organizations with the necessary faculties to assist States in dealing with accident investigations.
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doc.9946 Manual on RAIO

1. Introduction

1.1 The implementation of accident investigation represents a significant challenge in the aviation systems of the Chicago Convention signatory States, firstly because of the actions involved in amending civil aviation laws to include corresponding provisions on the independence, powers of the investigator and protection of investigation records, and subsequently, because of the establishment and operation of Accident Investigation Authorities itself.

For this reason, the States have decided to look for alternatives to locate those capabilities that will assist in the establishment of the IGA and to share the resources that are available in the States to comply with Annex 13 Standards, one of these alternatives being the establishment of Investigation Cooperative Mechanisms (ICM-GRIAA) and Regional Accident Investigation Organizations (RAIO).

2. Addressing Current Challenges

2.1 In recent years, important steps have been taken to contribute to specifically identify these accident investigation needs and highlighting how accident investigation can positively impact the safety of air transport operations.

Nowadays, initiatives such as the NACC AIG Turnkey Project and the joint assistance between ICAO NACC and COCESNA GRIAA have marked important steps in the phase of establishing AIG in the States, with concrete results in building a solid proposal of the text of the **Civil Aviation Act** regarding AIG, an **updated AIG Regulation, new AIG Procedures** and a **Training Program by phases** in accordance with the reality of each State aimed to meet the requirements of ICAO, which recently led to the preparation of the State of Belize by GRIAA for the ICAO USOAP Audit in AIG, obtaining tangible results with respect to the initial diagnosis that was practiced in the area of accident investigation.

This demonstrates that ICMs such as GRIAA in Central America are fulfilling their role in helping States to comply with Annex 13 standards and to raise their AIG implementation levels to contribute to a safer air transport.

3. Alternatives for a regional configuration

However, work is still being done to identify solutions to the **Implementation** phase of the States's accident investigation, which involves even the initial response capacity of the AIGs, being this the main challenge in the region in terms of the real capacity of the States by themselves to deal with major accidents and the importance of doing it together through a Regional Cooperation Mechanism such as GRIAA, without leaving behind the present challenge of the role of the AIG in these major accidents with respect to other institutions as long as the powers of the investigator and the delegation to regional investigation organizations are not clearly defined in the Civil Aviation Law.

Thus, this Working Paper expresses the need to seek those configuration alternatives, mainly legal and organizational, that will allow these investigation organizations to have the necessary faculties to contribute to the States in dealing with accident investigations by pooling the resources available in the region, understanding that the best way to address accident investigation and generate an improvement in air transport through the AIG is by joining regional efforts and not through individual efforts.

4. Recommended Action

- a) Take note and recognize the actions carried out by COCESNA/GRIAA as an ICM and with tangible results for COCESNA Member States.
- b) Identify possible alternatives to provide regional investigation organizations with the necessary faculties to assist States in dealing with accident investigations.