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WORKING PAPER

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Fifth North American, Central American and Caribbean Working Group (NACC/WG) Search and Rescue (SAR) Implementation Task Force Meeting (NACC/WG/SAR/TF/5)
Mexico City, Mexico, 23 to 27 September 2024

Agenda Item 2: Search and Rescue (SAR) Global and Regional Affairs
2.1 Follow up on valid SAR Conclusions/Decisions and Deficiencies

Status of the Search and Rescue Services in the NAM/CAR Regions:
Analysis of the USOAP Results
(Presented by the Secretariat)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
This working paper provides information regarding the status of the Search and Rescue (SAR) services in the NAM/CAR Regions, using as a reference the results of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP), pointing out the most critical aspects of SAR services provision, and request support to enhance the evaluation of these services.	
Action:	Suggested actions are included in Section 5.
<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">• Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention)• Annex 12 – <i>Search and Rescue</i>• CAR/SAM Regional Air Navigation Plan• Integrated Safety Trend (Analysis) and Reporting System (iSTARS) website and tools• USOAP On-line Framework (OLF)

1. Introduction

1.1 Compliance with the requirements of the Chicago Convention is a responsibility of States. The fulfillment of these responsibilities normally involves several entities, each one with clearly defined roles according to the national legal framework.

1.2 The assignment of the responsibilities of each State with respect to the provision of air navigation services has been carried out through a regional agreement, which is reflected in the corresponding regional air navigation plan.

1.3 The establishment of the search and services (SAR) requires a combination of functions related to safety oversight and service provision, to ensure that all responsibilities of the State are being met.

2. Background

2.1 The North American, Central American and Caribbean Working Group (NACC/WG) has been working to assess the status of air navigation service (ANS) provision, through the evaluation of the Basic Building Blocks (BBBs). The NACC/WG/9 Meeting requested the Secretariat to collect more information and provide better guidance on the mechanism used in other regions for the evaluation of BBBs in SAR.

2.2 The SAR/TF/4 Meeting discussed the issue of the work of the NACC/WG for the evaluation of the SAR area BBBs. The Task Force analysed the challenges to complete this task objectively, so that it clearly reflects the support needs for SAR implementation and operation in the region.

2.3 The main challenge identified by the task force is the lack of an impartial mechanism to collect information on the status of the provision of SAR services. The results of the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) can provide an alternative mechanism to prioritize where more thorough evaluation is needed.

3. Analysis

3.1 The SAR area in the ANS USOAP checklist has 16 Protocol Questions (PQs), which cover critical areas not only for safety oversight but also for service provision according to Annex 12 requirements. The SAR USOAP Effective Implementation (EI) for the NAM/CAR Regions is 56.19%. The SAR USOAP EI for the CAR Region is 52.51%.

3.2 The last States audited in the NAM/CAR Regions were Canada (June 2023, SAR EI 81.25%), Belize (December 2023, SAR EI 6.25%), the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) comprised by Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (December 2023, SAR EI 37.25%), Mexico (February 2024, SAR EI 18.75%) and United States (July 2024, SAR EI 81.25%)

3.3 As for the assessment of the SAR service provision in the CAR Region, the USOAP shows the following results:

- 53% of CAR Region States have not arranged for the establishment and provision of SAR services within its territory and the areas where the State has accepted responsibility.
- 53% of CAR Region States have not established an RCC or, as applicable, an RSC in each search and rescue region (SRR) where they have responsibility.
- 68% of CAR Region States have not completed the SAR coordination agreements with neighbouring States.

3.4 The CAR/SAM Air Navigation Plan assign the responsibility for the establishment of Rescue Coordination Centres (RCCs) in the CAR Region to Cuba, Central American States through COCESNA, Curacao, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, United States and Trinidad and Tobago. According to the USOAP Haiti, Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago, do not comply with the requirements for the establishment of the RCC.

3.5 The next States to be audited in 2025 are Costa Rica and El Salvador.

4. Conclusions

4.1 The results of the USOAP in the NAM/CAR Region provide a valid reference for the current challenges the State face to comply with their responsibilities with the SAR provision and oversight.

4.2 The assessment of BBBs carried out by the States themselves makes it difficult to obtain unbiased results that would allow the establishment of objective support programmes that reliably serve to resolve the main difficulties of the region in regards to SAR provision.

4.3 The lack of establishment of RCCs is the main priority that the Region should address.

5. Suggested actions

5.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Take note of the information of this working paper.
- b) Request support to the NACC/WG for the development of a regional project for the assessment of the SAR Basic Building Blocks, prioritizing the evaluation of the functioning of CAR Region RCCs.
- c) Suggest any other actions deemed necessary.