INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION
NORTH AMERICAN, CENTRAL AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN OFFICE

FOURTH MEETING OF THE DIRECTORS OF CIVIL AVIATION
OF THE CENTRAL CARIBBEAN

(Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands, May 17-20, 2000)

Agenda Item 3:   **Air Traffic Management**

                          b) Development of a Contingency Plan for the CAR Region

                          CONTINGENCY PLANNING

(Presented by the United States of America)

SUMMARY
The International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) Standards and Recommended Practices include provisions for contingency planning in cases of systems failure or loss of operational status. Currently, the Eastern Caribbean States have implemented a plan for the PIARCO FIR, which includes the national plan for Trinidad and Tobago. The Central Caribbean States should consider implementing a comprehensive regional plan including individual plans, as well as working with the Eastern Caribbean States in establishing a Caribbean-wide, comprehensive contingency plan.

1.   **Introduction**

1.1   The International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) include provisions for contingency plans in many areas, such as Air Traffic, Search and Rescue, Communications, and Aeronautical Information Services. The development of these plans is necessary in order to continue operations without a disruption of service during times of system failure or loss of operational status.

1.2   As a result of activities conducted to identify possible problems in aviation systems due to the date change in the Year 2000 (Y2K), ICAO determined that contingency plans addressing all aspects of civil aviation are not prevalent.

1.3   In addition, the region as a whole has realized through experience, the disastrous impact of Mass Casualty Incidents (MCIs) upon aviation services and infrastructure.

2.   Discussion

2.1   Currently, the plan for the PIARCO FIR, including the national plan for Trinidad and Tobago, is the only one that has been implemented within the Eastern Caribbean. Other Eastern and Central Caribbean States are encouraged to follow in the footsteps of Trinidad and Tobago and develop their own national contingency plans, which could form the basis of a regional comprehensive plan.

2.2   Since aviation is truly an international enterprise, national systems failures and/or equipment outages will most likely have regional and international implications. In response to the potential threat of disruption by Y2K upon civil aviation in the region, multi-state task forces were established to combine resources and information to resolve any possible problems.

2.3   During this process, States realized the amount of effort necessary to develop and establish contingency plans to address the Y2K issue. It is out of these discussions that the need for comprehensive contingency plans was recognized.

2.4   Therefore, it is not only essential for States to begin developing national contingency plans for their systems, but it is also important to share these plans with States in their region. Coordinated back-up plans will facilitate a seamless, efficient, and safe regional aviation environment.

2.5   It has also become evident that in such cases as natural disasters or MCIs, aviation services and infrastructure are impacted profoundly. Past incidents have shown that entire systems may be debilitated, thereby hindering the successful operation of systems. It is essential that back-up plans are developed and put in-place to facilitate emergency operations. Additionally, States should work together to ensure proper resource allocation and the ability to re-build systems or services that may have been effected or destroyed.

2.6   Considering the large interface between the States of the Eastern Caribbean and the Central Caribbean, it would be beneficial for the Caribbean States to consider the development of a Caribbean-wide plan.

3.   Conclusion

3.1   Comprehensive contingency plans are an essential part of ensuring safe and continuous service in the cases of system malfunctions or even failure.

3.2   Consideration should be given to coordinating a Caribbean-wide contingency plan, thereby facilitating communications within the region.

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