



*International Civil Aviation Organization*

NORTH AMERICAN, CENTRAL AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN OFFICE

**Eighteenth Meeting of Directors of Civil Aviation of the Eastern Caribbean  
(18<sup>th</sup> E/CAR DCA)**

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 9 to 12 December 2003

18<sup>th</sup> E/CAR DCA – WP/09

03/12/03

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## **Agenda Item 5: CNS/ATM and other Air Navigation Developments**

### **STATUS OF E/CAR DIGITAL AFS NETWORK**

(Presented by InterCaribbean Aeronautical Communications Ltd. [IACL])

<b>SUMMARY</b>
This Working Paper presents an update on the take-over process from TSTT and the introduction of new technology on the E/CAR Digital AFS Network by Cable and Wireless (West Indies) Limited.
<b>References:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting E/CAR DCAs Report, Conclusion 16/12</li><li>• 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting E/CAR DCAs Report, Conclusion 17/4</li></ul>



## **1. Background**

1.1 The loss of user confidence in the E/CAR AFS Digital Network which was a result of poor maintenance service in terms of time to respond and frequency of fault occurrences was the primary cause for seeking an alternate Service Provider for the network.

1.2 Arising out of actions taken with regards to Conclusion 17/4 of the Seventeenth Meeting of Directors of Civil Aviation of the Eastern Caribbean, Cable and Wireless (West Indies) Limited (C&W) was selected to be the successor Service Provider. Until contracts and service level agreements are signed, TSTT shall continue with a renewed commitment to maintain the network at an acceptable level of operation.

## **2. Separation from TSTT**

2.1 Despite legal ramifications, TSTT was prepared to part ways with IACL provided agreement was reached in the settlement of payment for services already delivered. Being dissatisfied with the poor performance of the E/CAR AFS Network IACL had withheld a substantial portion of the proposed monthly payments. The resolution of this impasse was important to C&W agreeing to take over the network. After several months of negotiations, agreement was reached on the issue with TSTT. This was pre-requisite for commencement of the transition process by C&W.

### **3. Assigning a Project Team**

3.1 An additional delay of three months occurred as C&W was undergoing an extensive restructuring program. Eventually a Bid/Program Manager with an engineering team was assigned to the IACL Network project with the main objective of taking over the E/CAR AFS Network and implementing an upgraded network having improved reliability and suited to the international network platform presently managed by Cable & Wireless (West Indies) Limited.

### **4. Change of network platform**

4.1 Cable & Wireless completed an audit and review of the present network and have concluded that they can best serve the E/CAR by employing Frame Relay Technology which forms the backbone of their international networks and which can be effectively managed from a Network Management Centre in Barbados. The flexibility of Frame Relay allows the transport of voice and other transmission protocols over the network.

4.2 The present E/CAR AFS Network uses ISDN technology and while C&W will accept the network as it is and continue to maintain its operation they will be working assiduously to convert the system to Frame Relay in the shortest possible time. Already, a Frame Relay Network design for the Eastern Caribbean exists, and presently, C&W is in discussions with the FAA with regards to the interfacing of the San Juan Node Multiplexer with the Frame Relay network.

4.3 As Frame Relay is basically a transport mechanism for getting digital data from one point to another, ATS units will continue to use the same PBXs, Voice Switches and AFTN Switches that are presently used on the network. However, AFTN Terminals are to be upgraded. It would not impact negatively on the Radar Data Sharing proposals for the region nor prevent the use of X.25 connectivity between the present AFTN Message Switch and the terminals across the network.

### **5. Contracts and Service Level Agreements**

5.1 The preparation of draft Contacts and Service Level Agreements has been a long process. However, copies of the final drafts will be provided to the respective Directors of Civil Aviation.

5.2 Signing of Agreements are expected to take place by end December 2003 and C&W full take over the network will be initiated in January 2004 as the process has to be phased over a short period to ensure a smooth transition.

### **6. Suggested Action**

6.1 The Meeting is invited to make comments on the take over process and the introduction of a new technology on the E/CAR Digital AFS Network by Cable & Wireless (West Indies) Limited.