



**Twentieth Meeting of the CAR/SAM Regional Planning and Implementation Group
 (GREPECAS/20)**

Salvador, Brazil, 16 – 18 November 2022

Agenda Item 2: Global and Regional Developments

2.2 Global updates related to COVID-19 actions, including outcomes from High-Level Conference on COVID-19 (HLCC 2022)

GLOBAL UPDATES RELATED TO COVID-19 ACTIONS, INCLUDING THE OUTCOMES OF THE HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON COVID-19 (HLCC 2021) AND ITS IMPACT ON ANS

(Presented by the Secretariat)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
<p>This working paper summarizes the actions taken globally and in the Caribbean and South American region during the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on air navigation services.</p> <p>The scope of this working paper includes the actions as part of the agreements and the declaration of the High-Level Conference on COVID-19 held in October 2021 at ICAO headquarters.</p>	
Action:	Suggested action is presented in Section 5.
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency • Economic development of air transport
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 Response and Recovery Platform https://www.icao.int/covid/Pages/default.aspx • Covid-19 restart and recovery of aviation in the NAM/CAR regions: https://www.icao.int/NACC/Pages/NACC-COVID19.aspx • Actions of the SAM Region against COVID-19 https://www.icao.int/SAM/SECURITY-FACILITATION/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx

1. Introduction

1.1 The impact of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) on world air transport during 2020 and 2021 was unprecedented in history; in the first stage of the pandemic, airports suffered a 28.4% decrease in the volume of passengers (first quarter of 2020), equivalent to a reduction of 612 million passengers in absolute terms. For airlines, worldwide revenue passenger-kilometres (RPKs) went down as much as 94% and international RPKs to 98%.

1.2 During the second wave of the virus, international air transport fell by up to -88%. ICAO estimated that, by the end of 2020, the impact of COVID on airlines and airports would reduce revenues by up to 314 billion dollars and 100 billion dollars, respectively.

2. Scope

2.1 This working paper includes a summary of the activities and agreements reached by the Caribbean and South American countries for the recovery of aviation as part of COVID-19, including the declaration reached at the ICAO High-Level Conference for COVID-19 (HLCC-19).

2.2 It is important to mention that the Caribbean and South American regions developed specific recovery strategies that responded to the States' needs based on the COVID-19 impact. All the strategies were aligned with the ICAO documentation, including fluid coordination between the ICAO Offices.

2.3 It is important to point out that although the COVID pandemic almost completely paralyzed passenger air transport, the air navigation services, including ATM, CNS, MET, AIS, and SAR air traffic services, continued providing services during the most critical stages of the pandemic, mainly in support of cargo and humanitarian flights.

3. Discussion

3.1 As part of ICAO's efforts to support States in aviation recovery, the ICAO Council implemented the Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART), which issued a series of measures aimed at the recovery and resilience of worldwide air transport worldwide. The CART measures supported the harmonization and standardization that helped expedite the aviation recovery: <https://www.icao.int/covid/cart/Pages/default.aspx>

3.2 The CART Report, the *Take-off: Guidance for Air Travel through the COVID-19 Public Health Crisis* (TOGD), and the Guidance Manual on Transboundary Risk Management Measures and Diagnostic Tests (Doc 10152) were part of the ICAO publications that supported States during the COVID-19 pandemic, helping to expedite transportation recovery and resilience.

3.3 As part of the measures implemented by ICAO in support of States, the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Implementation Center –CRRIC, was established, an electronic platform designed to monitor the implementation of the health recommendations contained in the documents developed by ICAO for the recovery of COVID-19.

3.4 The strategies of the Caribbean and South American regions involved the CAA, and industry representatives, including IATA, CANSO, IFALPA, the IDB, and the World Bank, among others. The NACC and SAM Regional Offices developed training to support States in implementing the measures recommended in the CART documents.

3.5 The recovery strategies of each one of the regions were led by the ICAO offices (NACC/SAM), holding periodic meetings to harmonize the approach in adopting the CART measures, the Take-off document, and document 10152 according to the needs of each region. The meeting's reports can be found on the websites of both offices: <https://www.icao.int/SAM/SECURITY-FACILITATION/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx> y <https://www.icao.int/NACC/Pages/NACC-COVID19.aspx>

3.6 Related specifically to air navigation services, several guidance documents were developed to support States and service providers during the pandemic, including the health protection of operational personnel, guidance for ground and in-flight testing of radio aids, and risk management applicable to the extension of the validity of the rating and issuance of ATCOs licenses. The publications can be downloaded at <https://www.srvsop.aero/covid-19-ans/>

3.7 In the same way, online workshops were developed that supported the States to provide maintenance to the ANS infrastructure and keep it in operation even under the crisis caused by COVID-19 and despite the restriction measures issued by the States to avoid contagion of the illness.

3.8 One of the most important events developed by ICAO to support States in the recovery of aviation from COVID-19 was the ICAO High-Level Conference on COVID-19 (HLCC), held in October 2021, where a series of high-level aviation recovery measures were agreed.

3.9 In the HLCC declaration, the States committed to "maintain the safe, protected and orderly flow of air traffic with operational personnel in conditions to perform their duties, including flight crews and air traffic controllers", recognizing the importance of aviation personnel in the safety and efficiency of air traffic. For more information on the HLCC declaration at the following link: <https://www.icao.int/Newsroom/Pages/Ministerial-Declaration-of-the-High-level-Conference-on-COVID-19.aspx>

4. Conclusions

4.1 Although Latin America, including the Caribbean and South America, has been one of the regions in the world that have achieved the fastest recovery following COVID-19, the impact of the pandemic on air navigation services and air transport will last for several years.

4.2 The interruption of training and recruitment of the technical personnel, including air traffic controllers, CNS, AIS, MET, SAR, PANS-OPS, and ANS inspectors; and the reduction in the income of ANS service providers and States as a product of flight protection and the use of nav aids, fees, among others, could impact the regularity and safety of the ANS services for the upcoming years.

4.3 States and ANS service providers must continue to monitor the performance of the air navigation system; and harness the learned lessons during the pandemic, including the importance of updating ATS contingency plans and improving efficiency in the issuance of NOTAM, among other important lessons.

5. Suggested actions

5.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) take advantage of the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic to improve the ANS process and procedures
- b) States and service providers should monitor the air navigation system in the post-pandemic stage to ensure that it has achieved an adequate recovery and that it will maintain safety and efficiency; and
- c) States should coordinate with ICAO offices to continue working on the strengthening and resilience of the air navigation system, taking into consideration the lessons learned during COVID-19.

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