



**Fifth GREPECAS–RASG-PA Joint Meeting (GREPECAS-RASG-PA/5) and
Twenty-Third Meeting of the CAR/SAM Regional Planning and Implementation Group
(GREPECAS/23)**

Virtual Phase (Asynchronous, 19 January to 17 February 2026)
In-Person Phase (Mexico City, Mexico, 4 to 6 March 2026)

Agenda Item 8: CAR/SAM Air Navigation Implementation

FPL 2012 BEST INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES AS A TRANSITION TO FF-ICE

(Presented by IATA)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This working paper presents a proposal to work on the application of best international practices on FPL 2012 to facilitate the transition to the FF-ICE 2034. This WP also presents some challenges and suggestions to address FF-ICE as part of regional initiatives.

Action:

Suggested action

The meeting is invited to:

- a) Take note of the information contained in this working paper.
- b) Include in the GREPECAS work program and projects the development of guidance material aimed at States and ANSPs in the CAR/SAM Regions, with the purpose of harmonizing and strengthening the FF-ICE implementation process in the CAR/SAM Regions through 2034. This guidance material should consider as main inputs the initiatives currently underway within the NACC/WG and SAM/IG frameworks, as well as technical material, best practices, and lessons learned already published by EUROCONTROL and other relevant organizations.
- c) Establish a strategy to implement the best international practices to harmonize the FPL filing and processing procedures in CAR/SAM Regions for, inter alia:
 - i. Delegation to originate FPLs and their update messages.
 - ii. Harmonization of procedures to recognize the box corresponding to the DEST ALTN aerodrome as an optional data for those flights that depart from Latin America and the Caribbean to the US and that will apply to the exception described in ICAO Annex 6.
 - iii. Recommendation regarding the need of compliance with Doc 4444 regarding **no** transmission of the FPL’s Item 19, as well as the establishment

	of a procedure in which the ATS contacts the Airline Operations Control Center, in case of need to obtain the information of the FPL's Item 19. iv. Feedback provided by ANSP about message sent by operator.
<i>Strategic Objectives 2026-2050:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every flight is safe and secure • Aviation is environmentally sustainable • Aviation delivers seamless, accessible, and reliable mobility for all • No country left behind • The International Civil Aviation Convention and Other Treaties, Laws and Regulations Address All Challenges • The Economic Development of Air Transport Assures the Delivery of Economic Prosperity and Societal Well-Being for All
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICAO Global Air Navigation Plan • GREPECAS/21 Meeting Report • NACC/WG/10 Meeting Report • SAM/IG/33 Meeting Report

1. Introduction

1.1 The current flight planning system (FPL2012) has structural and operational limitations that prevent efficient information exchange among ATM system stakeholders, affecting the ability to anticipate, coordinate, and optimize air traffic flow in an increasingly complex and demanding global environment.

1.2 The main problems with FPL2012 are as follows:

- Rigid flight plan format: Does not allow inclusion of dynamic data nor adaptation to trajectory-based operations (TBO).
- Lack of interoperability between national and regional systems: Hinders smooth data exchange between air navigation service providers (ANSPs) and airspace users (AUs).
- Manual and fragmented processes: Cause delays, errors, and reduce responsiveness to contingencies.
- Absence of a collaborative digital environment: Limits strategic coordination among stakeholders such as airlines, ATC units, and aviation authorities.

1.3 Consequently, ICAO created FF-ICE as a response to the limitations of the traditional flight plan format (FPL2012), aiming to modernize air traffic management and facilitate global collaboration among all ATM system stakeholders. Its development began as part of the Global ATM Operational Concept (Doc 9854).

1.4 At the 14th Air Navigation Conference (AN-Conf/14, Montreal, 2024), Recommendation 3.2/2 was adopted, establishing the transition to FF-ICE services and the discontinuation of the "FPL2012" format no later than 2034. This deadline sets a global target for all States to replace the traditional flight plan with the new collaborative concept.

1.5 The 14th Air Navigation Conference also emphasized the importance of ensuring a smooth transition to the collaborative flight and flow environment (FF-ICE). Several aspects must be considered to guarantee that airspace users receive all necessary information to create the most efficient trajectories and implement FF-ICE consistently. If not properly addressed, trajectories would be suboptimal, leading to higher fuel consumption. Furthermore, if FF-ICE services are not applied uniformly worldwide, global users would need to develop multiple interfaces, creating ambiguities and less efficient trajectory management.

1.6 The provisions of FF-ICE Version 1, effective since November 2024, introduced a new mechanism for exchanging flight plan information, while the FPL2012 format and its distribution rules remained available.

1.7 The 14th AN-Conf also urged the development of national and regional implementation plans for the transition to FF-ICE, supported by ICAO provisions and guidance.

2. FF-ICE at Regional Level

2.1 Regional planning is essential for a successful implementation of FF-ICE, but with the agreement for a flight plan 2012 cessation date in less than 10 years from now, it becomes crucial to provide education and training to all the States that did not participate to the ICAO provision development process so that they understand why they need to implement FF-ICE and why it is necessary to achieve the transition at the same time.

2.2 At the regional level, it is therefore important that the implementation of FF-ICE is planned so as to include not only the acceptance of FF-ICE services instead of FPL2012 messages, but also the necessary ANSPs automation systems adaptation to provide feedback during the pre-departure negotiation and the use of the addition trajectory information contained in the FF-ICE trajectory so that the planned flight efficiency can be granted.

3. Implementation of FPL 2012 best international practices

3.1 As an important initiative to pave the way to the implementation of FF-ICE, the implementation of FPL best international practices would facilitate the change management required to a more automated and collaborative environment required in the future.

3.2 At least since 2018, conclusions of several meetings were formulated to harmonize ways of solving the following presentation and processing problems of the FPL in the CAR/SAM Regions:

- Missing FPLs
- Wrong information in the FPL operational fields
- Duplicated/multiple FPLs
- Requirement of DEST ALTN as a mandatory field
- Lack of standardization when presenting FPLs due to different requirements across the CAR/SAM AIPs:
 - o paper format (in some cases mandatory and in others optional).
 - o WEB.
 - o AFTN/AMHS to only the departing ARO/AIS unit.
 - o AFTN/AMHS to all involved ATS units.
 - o A combination of some of previous options.
- Need of Letter of Agreement between Airlines and ANSP to authorize FPL and associated messages presentation via AFTN/AMHS.
- Lack of standardization to process the FPL update messages (CHG, DLA, CNL) originated by the airlines AFTN addresses.

- Lack of training with feedback on errors found in other ANSPs/Organizations.
- Requirement of the transmission of item 19 of the FPL by AFTN or its delivery by another means available (e-mail, paper, etc.).
- Changes to FPLs without notification to users.
- No feedback to users of FPL acceptance or rejection.

3.3 It is important to emphasize that investment in new equipment and/or systems is not necessarily required to comply with the needs mentioned in the previous paragraph, considering that would suffice the implementation of more appropriate regulations and harmonized standard procedures, as well as their insertion in the regular aeronautical publications, particularly in the item ENR 1.10 and 1.11 of the AIP.

3.4 The objective would be to follow models already successfully applied in other regions, including best practices applied in the USA, Canada, Eurocontrol among others, who delegate responsibility for originating FPLs (and their respective update messages) to the Aircraft Operators. This delegation could be implemented based on PANS ATM (Doc. 4444), 11.2.1.1.1 and Appendix 2 (2.1), to have a single source of information as well as a single procedure, such as so that any mitigation can have the same effect for all States.

3.5 Harmonization of the applicable procedures for the use of the DEST ALTN aerodrome is also sought, in accordance with PANS ATM Doc.4444, Appendix 3, following the exception specified in ICAO Annex 6, applicable only to flights from Latin America and the Caribbean to the US, where this exception can be applied.

3.6 Another important aspect is the recommendation not to request the transmission of item 19 of the flight plan and to develop a procedure to obtain it from the Airline Operations Control Center, if necessary. It is important to emphasize that these Centers operate 24/7 and can be contacted quickly and efficiently, without the need for the information in item 19 to be sent to the ATS services unnecessarily, generating workload for the ANSP and the airline.

4. FF-ICE and FPL Initiatives in Regional Implementation Groups – NACC/WG and SAM/IG

4.1 IATA has submitted a working paper similar to this one at the NACC/WG/10 and SAM/IG/33 meetings, which, together with working papers presented by States and by the Secretariat, has contributed to planning the necessary actions to mitigate the problems identified in the submission and processing of FPL, as well as for the implementation of FF-ICE through 2034.

4.2 At the NACC/WG/10 meeting, the Secretariat, supported by Trinidad and Tobago, highlighted the importance of transmitting Item 19, especially for general aviation and for its use in SAR situations. It also emphasized the mandatory inclusion in the FPL of the DEST ALTN field values according to the guidance in Doc 4444.

4.3 Also at NACC/WG/10, the NACC/WG Chair reminded that the regulations are designed for all aviation users and that the optional use of this field can hinder flight coordination, as there are FPL processing systems where it is mandatory and others where it is not, which may lead to rejection at destination ATS units. However, he noted that there is a discrepancy between Annex 6, which declares this field optional, and Doc 4444, which considers it mandatory. Therefore, he recommended alerting ICAO about this inconsistency between the two documents. This opinion was shared by Cuba, which highlighted the hierarchical level of SARPs over guidance documents, creating confusion for States in interpreting the

documentation. Cuba also mentioned the publication of an Aeronautical Information Circular (AIC) with all regulations related to FPL as a clarification for operators.

4.4 At NACC/WG/10, the AIM/TF Rapporteur offered support to respond to IATA's request and gather information on compliance with the requirements set out in the Appendix of NE/43 through the following decision:

DECISION	
NACC/WG/10/16	UPDATE OF FPL ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION IN THE NAM/CAR REGION
What: That the AIM/TF conduct a survey of the ANSPs of the NAM/CAR Regions to update the information on compliance with the FPL format and processing requirements, delivering the result of this information to the NACC/WG.	Expected impact: <input type="checkbox"/> Political / Global <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inter-regional <input type="checkbox"/> Economic <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Operational/Technical
Why: For up-to-date information on compliance with FPL requirements	
When: 30 March 2026	Status: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Valid / <input type="checkbox"/> Superseded / <input type="checkbox"/> Completed
Who: <input type="checkbox"/> States <input type="checkbox"/> ICAO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:	AIM/TF

4.5 The SAM/IG/33 meeting created Subgroup 4 (SG4) of GESEA dedicated to the implementation of the FICE module of the GANP. This new subgroup, called GESEA SG4 FF-ICE IMPLEMENTATION (IMPL FF-ICE), aims to coordinate regional actions related to interoperability and information management, including the implementation of AIDC, the transition from the ICAO 2012 FPL format (scheduled to end in 2034), and the development of FF-ICE services.

4.6 The subgroup will work on standardizing key implementations such as AIDC and FF-ICE (Release 1 and 2), which are essential to enable future trajectory-based operations (TBO). These tools will allow broader and more automated flight information exchange, improving collaborative decision-making and overcoming the limitations of the current FPL format. Additionally, SG4 will guide the development of an FF-ICE operational concept for the SAM Region, which will serve as a basis for national and regional projects.

4.7 The SAM/IG/33 meeting has established the following actions for topics related to FPL and FF-ICE:

- Action S33/18 – SG4 to prepare a work plan and start activities based on the work of the ATM FPL and AIDC subgroups of the Interop Task Force, and discussions from SAM/IG/33. Progress will be reported to GESEA/9 in April 2026.
- Action S33/19 – Secretariat to formulate and manage an SIP with ICAO HQ for an FF-ICE trial during the SG4 meeting week in June 2026 in Brazil, with SG4 support.

4.8 The NACC/WG and SAM/IG initiatives to mitigate FPL presentation and processing issues, as well as FF-ICE implementation through 2034, need to be harmonized and strengthened through the GREPECAS work program and projects. This harmonization should be carried out through guidance material for the CAR/SAM Regions, based on initiatives already under development in both regions and on published material and FF-ICE implementation by EUROCONTROL.

5. Suggested action

5.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Take note of the information contained in this working paper.
- b) Include in the GREPECAS work program and projects the development of guidance material aimed at States and ANSPs in the CAR/SAM Regions, with the purpose of harmonizing and strengthening the FF-ICE implementation process in the CAR/SAM Regions through 2034. This guidance material should consider as main inputs the initiatives currently underway within the NACC/WG and SAM/IG frameworks, as well as technical material, best practices, and lessons learned already published by EUROCONTROL and other relevant organizations.
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