ICAO

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PROPOSED WORKING ARRANGEMENTS OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC/SOUTH ATLANTIC (NAT/SAT) AFTER THE FIRST ATLANTIC COORDINATION MEETING (ACM)

(Presented by the United States of America, South Africa, Angola, Trinidad & Tobago, Portugal, France, ASECNA, and IATA)

SUMMARY
This paper discusses the potential safety and efficiency benefits to Atlantic Oceanic Operations by coordinating working relationships between the NAT Systems Planning Group (SPG) and the SAT. Further, this paper presents the outcome of the discussions of the first Atlantic Coordination Meeting (ACM/1) and requests the APIRG to support the inter-regional coordination aspects of the ACM/1 by formalization of NAT/SAT coordination efforts as well as SAT structure and the planned ACM/2 meeting in early 2020. Action by the Meeting: See paragraph 3.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Similar to the SAT, all NAT SPG service providing States, except Iceland, are accredited to other ICAO PIRG's. The unique characteristics of oceanic service provision requires the collective efforts of those States to maintain and, where possible, improve the agreed safety standards in all activities supporting the provision of air navigation services.

1.2 In the spirit of harmonization and collaboration, the NAT SPG reviewed and was encouraged by the SAT/24 outcomes, in particular those aiming at improving coordination and cooperation with the NAT, as well as structural changes and enhancements aimed at improving safety and efficiency in the SAT.

2. DISCUSSION

First Atlantic Coordination Meeting (ACM/1)

2.1. ACM/1 was held in Paris, France, on 31 January 2019 (based on the NAT SPG Conclusion 54/5) directly after the NAT 2030 vision workshop. The meeting attended by representatives from fourteen (14) States and six (6) Organizations/Industries and was chaired by the APIRG Chairman and the Deputy Regional Director of the EUR/NAT Office (replacing the NAT SPG Chairman who was unable to attend). The SAT and GREPECAS Chairmen also attended the ACM.

2.2 The ACM addressed the existing working structures, milestones and activities, implementation challenges and areas with harmonization needs between and within NAT and SAT.

2.3 The ACM agreed on the following prioritized list of joint projects that aim to further harmonization and seamless operations in the Atlantic airspace: 1) harmonization of contingency plans; 2) Performance-Based Communication Surveillance (PBCS) implementation; and 3) Space-Based Automatic Dependent Surveillance – Broadcast (ADS-B) implementation. Other operational and safety concerns were noted, specifically in the area of ATCO/Pilot procedures, HF COM issues for flights transiting from the AFI FIRs to PIARCO FIR, high number of flights not being able to operate on their optimal flight levels, and the operation of non-RVSM approved aircraft in RVSM airspace.

2.4 The three projects agreed by the ACM are effectively SAT project teams and supported by stakeholders from the NAT. Formal approval of the project terms of reference by the NAT SPG is not required for NAT support efforts. However, there was concern that no SAT co-leads had been proposed so far for their three projects.

2.5 The project on harmonization of contingency plans was led by the United Kingdom with an objective to deliver an updated SAT Contingency Plan, using NAT Doc 006 as a basis. As a result, the updated SAT Contingency Plan was approved by the SAT/24 meeting (3 to 7 June 2019).

2.6 In regards to the PBCS and SB ADS-B implementation joint projects, the EUR/NAT Office and the United States presented information papers sharing the NAT experience on the PBCS and SB ADS-B implementation at SAT/24. Additionally, Canada informed the NAT SPG/55 regarding their coordination with ASECNA on SB ADS-B implementation and their readiness to take up the SB ADS-B project lead responsibility, if required.

2.7 Additionally, because of the conclusions from last ICAO Regional Monitoring Agency Coordination Group (RMACG) meeting held in June 2019, the regional monitoring agencies SATMA, ARMA and CARSAMA will need to update their ToRs for the inclusion of PBCS monitoring and the installation plans for an additional RVSM HMU in the AFI Region to ensure global harmonization.

2.8 In regards to all of the above, the authors of this paper wish to express the critical safety aspects of regional monitoring for the vertical, lateral, and longitudinal dimension as it relates to reduced separation and that implementation of PBCS is a necessary safety component of future services.

2.9 Furthermore, the NAT SPG was presented with requests from Trinidad and Tobago and EUROCONTROL to participate as an observer in meetings of the NAT SPG and its contributory groups. The NAT SPG welcomed the requests for an observer status at the NAT SPG. It was highlighted that their participation would be beneficial for the NAT Region activities, especially from the perspective of the NAT and EUR/SAM/SAT harmonization and coordination efforts.

Safety Oversight of the South Atlantic

2.10 During SAT/24 a number of proposals were introduced regarding the development of a SAT Vision, Concept of Operations, and Implementation Plans. SAT/24 also agreed to rename the SAT Study Group on the Improvement of Airspace Structure (IAS/SG) to SAT Implementation Management Group (SAT IMG). Since the SAT reports to multiple PIRG's and RASG's, having an implementation group is a necessary development in the harmonization of service provisions.

The SAT IMG format aims to enhance the process of project identification, planning, and implementing ICAO globally applicable Standards and Recommended Practices.

2.11 Additionally, SAT/24 noted that the SAT reports to multiple PIRG's and RASG's as well as their respective domestic airspace and this poses challenges in respect to the safety oversight roles of implementing States. As previously stated, oceanic service provision requires a unique focus not only on implementation but also on ensuring that implementing ANSP's are meeting prescribed and agreed levels of safety. This can best be accomplished by having State regulators accountable for the delivery of the agreed level of safety performance in the provision of air navigation services and in aircraft operations.

2.12 To address this challenge, it was proposed to establish an independent SAT Safety Oversight Group to complement the SAT IMG work. The proposed solution would ensure that implementation proposals receive appropriate safety oversight and provide the respective PIRG's and RASG's with complete information regarding SAT initiatives.

2.13 The following are potential defined safety roles for a SAT SOG that would complement the SAT IMG and allow the SAT IMG to concentrate on implementations, procedures, and technical issues:

a) Clearly define all accountabilities and responsibilities for the delivery of safety performance with respect to the provision of air navigation services,
b) Support the safety management activities that will result in an organizational culture that fosters safe practices, encourages effective safety reporting and communication, and actively manages safety within the SAT,
c) Share safety related data, knowledge and expertise with concerned stakeholders,
d) Disseminate safety information and SAT operating requirements to stakeholders,
e) Establish and implement hazard identification and risk management processes in order to eliminate or mitigate the safety risks associated with air navigation services supporting aircraft operations in the SAT,
f) Establish and measure SAT Region safety performance against agreed safety standards, and
g) Continually improve SAT safety performance through safety management processes.

2.14 Considering the above and in support of the proposals made during the SAT/24 meeting, the NAT SOG would like to invite SAT State oversight authorities and associated stakeholders to the next NAT SOG meeting/21 in Madrid, Spain from 10-13 December 2019. This invitation is extended to support the harmonization, collaboration and coordination efforts between the NAT/SAT and exhibit the scope of work conducted by a SOG structure in oceanic airspace.

3 ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

a) Note the information provided,
b) Support the organization and participation of the planned ACM/2 meeting in 1Q 2020,
c) Encourage SAT States to participate as observers the NAT SOG/21 meeting in Madrid, Spain, and
d) Encourage the SAT to support the formation of a SAT SOG.