



International Civil Aviation Organization

WORKING PAPER

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(Information Paper)
English and Spanish only¹

FOURTEENTH AIR NAVIGATION CONFERENCE

Montréal, Canada, 26 August to 6 September 2024

Agenda Item 3: Air navigation system performance improvement

3.1: Proposals to improve the efficiency of air navigation services contributing to LTAG

IMPLEMENTATION OF MULTINATIONAL OPERATIONAL AGREEMENTS TO PROVIDE SEARCH AND RESCUE SERVICES IN THE HIGH SEAS SPACE

(Presented by the Central American Corporation for Air Navigation Services (COCESNA)
on behalf of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed amendment to Volumes I and II of the ANP prepared by ICAO contemplates that Central American States will assume responsibility for providing search and rescue (SAR) services in the corresponding space. Following is the intention of the States to implement multinational agreements to coordinate and carry out SAR operations in international maritime areas. This would ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of these operations in maritime environments where international cooperation is essential to preserve lives and ensure safety at sea. Such agreements involve sharing SAR resources, applying SAR operational protocols and communications, developing coordination procedures, and collaborating in the implementation of agreed protocols to balance jurisdictional interests and preserve human lives.

Action: Refer to section 3.

1. INTRODUCTION

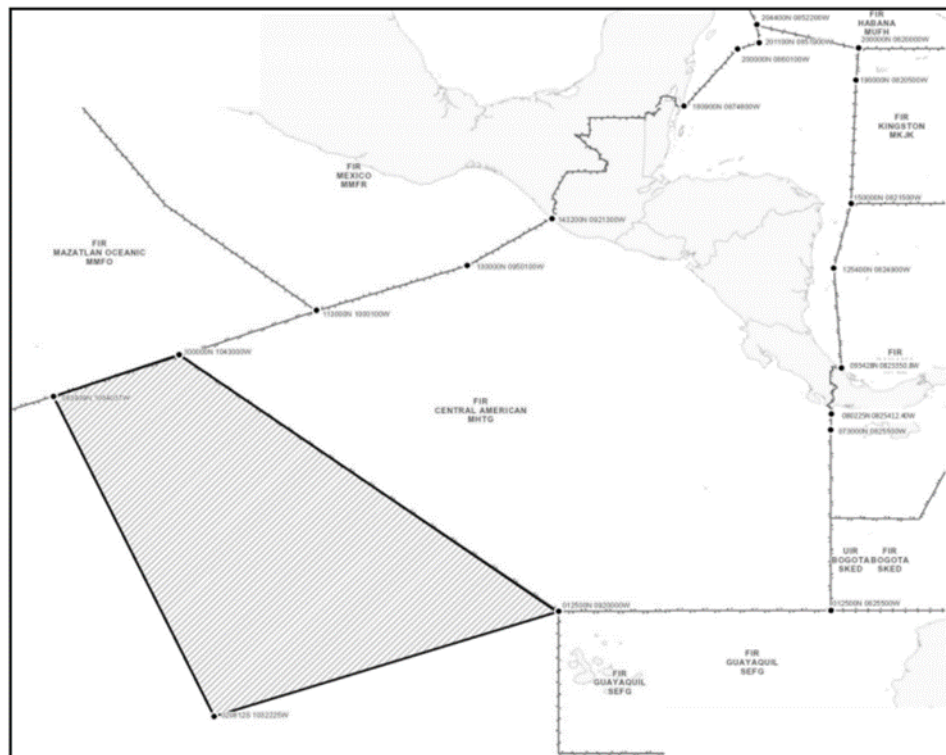
1.1 The Regional Office of the International Civil Aviation Organization (North American, Central American and Caribbean Office (NACC)) received expressions of interest and proposals to improve the management of the high seas unassigned airspace located in the Pacific Ocean adjacent to the MHCC FIR airspace. Through invitation (Reference: LT2/5.50 - SA095 dated 14 March 2019), COCESNA was convened to participate in the First Special Coordination Meeting for unassigned Airspace at High Seas (SCM/1), held at the South American (SAM) Regional Office in Lima, Peru, from 22 to 24 July 2019.

¹ English and Spanish versions provided by COCESNA.

1.2 The objective of that meeting was to present ICAO provisions and policies related to the establishment of authority and the process of amending Air Navigation Region Plans (ANP). The following points were addressed:

- a) ICAO provisions, policy and guidance on the delegation of airspace on the high seas (SCM/1-NE/02).
- b) ICAO procedure for modifying regional air navigation plans (SCM/1-NE/05).

1.3 As a result of the meeting, ICAO formulated an amendment proposal for Volumes I and II of the ANP. It was considered that the Central American States were capable of assuming the responsibility of providing SAR services in the airspace indicated in the following image:



2. MULTI-STATE ARRANGEMENTS

2.1 According to ICAO, States, either individually or in cooperation with other States, should ensure that they have the necessary resources to establish and provide SAR services in a timely manner within their territories, with the objective of guaranteeing assistance to persons in distress.

2.2 In this context, to provide effective SAR services in the high seas, Central American States are contemplating the implementation of multinational agreements, which implies the creation and application of protocols and collaborative procedures between different countries to coordinate and carry out search and rescue operations in international maritime areas. These agreements are essential to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of search and rescue operations in maritime environments where international cooperation is essential to save lives and ensure safety at sea.

2.3 The scope of these agreements includes the following:

- a) to support each other through the sharing of SAR assets for operations within their respective SAR regions, territories and corresponding waters (to the extent possible, in accordance with the actual technical capabilities of the SAR environment) for operations within their respective search and rescue regions (SRR);
- b) apply the guidelines of Annex 12 — *Search and Rescue* to the Chicago Convention and the international aeronautical and maritime SAR manuals with respect to SAR operational procedures and communications;
- c) develop appropriate procedures and communications for coordinating the assets of parties responding to the same distress incident and for coordination at the parties' RCCs or RSCs; and
- d) collaborate to establish and implement, to the extent possible, agreed operational procedures, which balance jurisdictional interests and the goal of saving lives, with respect to the entry of various types of SAR assets into each other's territory solely for the purpose of conducting a SAR operation.

3. **REQUEST FOR ACTION**

3.1 The meeting is invited to take note of the information presented.

3.2 The International Civil Aviation Organization, International Air Transport Association, and other interested parties are being requested to promote the establishment of multinational agreements for the provision of SAR service on the high seas.

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