International Civil Aviation Organization

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WORKING PAPER

SEVENTH WORLDWIDE AIR TRANSPORT CONFERENCE (ATCONF/7)

Montréal, HQ, 16 to 20 November 2026

Agenda Item 3: Strengthening regulatory and institutional frameworks
3.2: Enhancing air connectivity through progressive economic and regulatory aviation frameworks for international air transport

ESTABLISHMENT OF A DIGITAL DIRECTORY OF FOCAL POINTS FOR AIR SERVICES NEGOTIATIONS

(Presented by Argentina)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Action: The Conference is invited to:

a) support the establishment of a digital directory containing the contact details of the focal points of each International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Member State responsible for bilateral or multilateral air services negotiations;
b) take the necessary steps to obtain the contact details of these focal points through written requests addressed to the civil aviation authorities of each ICAO Member State; and
c) take the necessary steps to ensure that the information provided by ICAO Member States remains up to date.

Strategic Goal:	This working paper relates to Strategic Goal: *The Economic Development of Air Transport Assures the Delivery of Economic Prosperity and Societal Well-Being for All*.
Financial implications:	Not applicable
References:	Doc 9626, *Manual on the Regulation of International Air Transport* World Air Transport Statistics (WATS) ALTA (Asociación Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Transporte Aéreo), *Informe de tráfico Aéreo Internacional en América Latina y el Caribe* [Report on International Air Traffic in Latin America and the Caribbean], July 2026 data

[1] Spanish version provided by Argentina.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Air transport is an essential component of economic development and societal well-being, a role that is particularly evident across all sectors of the global economy, including tourism, trade and cultural exchange.

1.2 The COVID-19 pandemic severely tested this role. The sharp decline in passenger traffic highlighted the need for greater openness and cooperation among countries around the world.

1.3 Following the reform of its Aeronautical Code in December 2023, Argentina has pursued a successful open-skies policy that has resulted in historic and exponential growth in its market.

1.4 One of the key drivers of this success has been the conclusion of more than sixty (60) new Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) between civil aviation authorities, many of them based on open-skies arrangements, as well as the signing of Air Services Agreements (ASAs) by diplomatic authorities. Accomplished within the first thirty months of the current administration, this represents a historic record.

1.5 In this context, there is a need to further enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of bilateral negotiations between civil aviation authorities.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 In the context of air services negotiations between civil aviation authorities, a common obstacle is the lack of ready access to the contact details required to conduct such negotiations efficiently, often requiring States to rely instead on diplomatic channels, which may not always prove effective.

2.2 To address this issue, the system used at the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) Air Services Negotiation (ICAN) meetings has proven both valuable and successful, as participating delegations are required to provide the contact details of the focal points designated by the civil aviation authorities of each participating State for the conduct of negotiations.

2.3 However, many civil aviation authorities of ICAO Member States are unable to participate in ICAN due to budgetary, scheduling or other constraints, and ICAN meetings are held only once a year.

2.4 For this reason, and building on this experience, it is proposed that ICAO establish a digital directory containing a list of the focal points designated by each State, including their full names, positions within their respective organizations and contact details, in order to facilitate efficient negotiations throughout the year.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 To facilitate the modernization and development of new bilateral air services frameworks between civil aviation authorities and/or other appropriate authorities, it would be beneficial to maintain a digital directory listing the focal points designated by the civil aviation authorities of each ICAO Member State, including their contact details, with the information being updated on a regular basis.

3.2 This would support more efficient and accessible negotiations and facilitate the negotiation of traffic rights among all States.

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