



ASSEMBLY — 40TH SESSION

TECHNICAL COMMISSION

Agenda Item 29: Aviation Safety and Air Navigation Regional Implementation Coordination Mechanisms

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GLOBAL AVIATION SAFETY OVERSIGHT SYSTEM (GASOS)
— BENEFITS OF THE GASOS FOR THE CENTRAL AMERICAN REGION

(Presented by Members States of the
Central American Corporation for Air Navigation Services (COCESNA)¹)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This working paper shows COCESNA's support through the Central American Aviation Safety Agency (ACSA) for participating in the regional safety oversight organization cooperative platform (RSOO-CP) and undergoing an ICAO GASOS assessment to demonstrate ACSA's qualifications and capabilities to perform Level 2 functions for its Members States. COCESNA encourages other similar entities to participate in these important ICAO initiatives.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) encourage ICAO to continue supporting regional safety oversight organizations and the use of the RSOO-CP; and
- b) recognize the work conducted in the COCESNA/ACSA GASOS programme as a solution for States experiencing difficulties in meeting their safety oversight and accident and incident investigation obligations.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Safety Strategic Objective.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	N/A
<i>References:</i>	Resolution A39-14, <i>Regional cooperation and assistance to resolve safety deficiencies, establishing priorities and setting measurable targets</i> Doc 10004, <i>Global Aviation Safety Plan 2017–2019</i> Doc 9734, <i>Safety Oversight Manual, Part B — The Establishment and Management of a Regional Safety Oversight System</i> Forum on Regional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs) for Global Aviation Safety Report

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In response to the increasing aviation safety oversight challenges experienced worldwide, ICAO is proposing to establish the Global Aviation Safety Oversight System (GASOS). GASOS is presented as a voluntary, assessment and recognition system for Safety Oversight Organisations (SOOs) and Accident and Incident Investigation Organisations (AIOs). It is important to note that under GASOS an SOO is defined as a State CAA, a regional safety oversight organization (RSOO) or any other State, regional or sub-regional aviation safety oversight body that carries out safety functions or activities to support a State or group of States. (It does not include private organizations.)

1.2 One of the most significant aspects of the GASOS recognition process is that it assesses and recognizes the qualifications and ability of an SOO to provide certain safety oversight/certification functions, security administration and accident and incident investigation on behalf of a State.

1.3 Delegating safety oversight functions from a State to SOOs/AIOs recognized by ICAO under GASOS does not exclude, in any way, the State's obligations and responsibilities as a signatory of the Chicago Convention.

1.4 The Central American Aviation Safety Agency (ACSA), under the protection of the Central American Corporation for Air Navigation Services (COCESNA), was founded and established in 2000 with strong support from ICAO, the European Union and the United States Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and has been one of the first regional safety oversight organizations (RSOOs) in developing harmonized regional regulations. ACSA has been a leader since its inception for offering technical support in aviation safety to its member States. Furthermore, ACSA was a major contributor in the development of ICAO's Doc 9734, *Safety Oversight Manual, Part B — The Establishment and Management of a Regional Safety Oversight System*.

1.5 Additionally, ACSA has been an active member on the ICAO RSOO cooperative platform. As such, when ICAO announced during the RSOO cooperative platform that it would be conducting a GASOS "pilot programme", ACSA graciously volunteered. Continuing with ACSA's tradition of being a leader, this meant that a GASOS pilot programme would expose areas of weakness or more positively, highlight areas where ACSA could improve its services to its member States.

1.6 The Operative Areas subject to initial Level 2 assessment proposed were Air Navigation Services (ANS), Flight Operations (OPS), Airworthiness (AIR) and the Generic (GEN) aspects of the Organization. The ICAO team carried out the assessment from 31 August to 7 September 2018 and sent the report to the agency in November 2018. ACSA plans to request an additional GASOS assessment in other areas such as Personnel Licensing (PEL) and Aerodromes and Ground Aids (AGA) in order to enhance its ability to provide the benefits to and continue building capacity for its member States.

2. PROGRAMME BENEFITS

2.1 ACSA's gained experiences during the pilot GASOS assessment phase proved to be extremely beneficial. The presentation of the GASOS assessment report to COCESNA's Board of Directors by ICAO generated the required support to develop a corrective action plan and resolve the findings. This will reinforce the Agency's effectiveness and efficiency which directly benefits its member States receiving the services. Some of the benefits and achievements already seen are:

- a) adoption of harmonized regional regulations that are binding on all member States is a large step toward regional regulatory harmonization;
- b) strengthening of the political support by COCESNA's Board of Directors;
- c) amendment of COCESNA's statutes to update the functions that the Agency performs;
- d) review and update of the ACSA's technical and administrative processes;
- e) technical and financial support for ACSA in order to participate in more ICAO initiatives;
- f) strengthening the credibility of the work being done on behalf of COCESNA's member States;
- g) international cooperation with international organizations; and
- h) efficiency obtained regarding the current regulatory systems, as well as the auditing safety oversight programmes.

2.2 Regarding the benefits for the Central American States, because of the GASOS assessment, ACSA is now in a better position to:

- a) provide provisions for greater and more consistent compliance with ICAO SARPs;
- b) assist its members States in improving of the State's safety oversight responsibilities at national and regional levels;
- c) offer the flexibility in the choice and combination of different organizations for different functions;
- d) assist in the State's ability to maintain a profitable and effective civil aviation authority; and
- e) provide improvements in the capacity of States for the efficient use of human resources between States.

2.3 ACSA's contribution has not been limited to its participation in the GASOS pilot project. It also has actively collaborated as a member of the expert groups appointed by ICAO, such as the GASOS Study Group (GASOS-SG) and the Ad-hoc legal advisory group. These groups have worked extensively in solving the concerns expressed by the ICAO Member States during the last Air Navigation Conference (AN-Conf/13).

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Since its creation, ACSA has been a leader by recommending, advising and guiding its Member States (civil aviation authorities) and Air Operators (providers), as well as implementing best practices in Aviation Safety as promoted and recognized by ICAO and other ICAO Member States.

3.2 The experience, the knowledge, training level and education of its personnel, as well as the international recognition of the services offered, are considered the main strengths of COCESNA and ACSA.

3.3 The GASOS programme has strengthened and updated the services that ACSA offers which restates its quality and paves the way forward to helping resolve future challenges at the regional and global levels.

3.4 GASOS is a tool for helping provide more flexible and reliable alternatives for safety oversight, which responds to the future challenges posed by a rapidly expanding air transportation industry and offers affordable options in the oversight area for aviation safety and accident investigation.

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