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**ASSEMBLY — 40TH SESSION**

**TECHNICAL COMMISSION**

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

**REGIONAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE SMS OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN CORPORATION FOR AIR NAVIGATION SERVICES BY THE CENTRAL AMERICAN STATES**

(Presented by the Member States of the Central American Corporation for Air Navigation Services (COCESNA)<sup>2</sup>)

**REVISION NO. 1**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Central American Region currently faces challenges in the establishment of specific safety management system (SMS) requirements by each of its States and their corresponding SMS acceptance processes. To date, COCESNA has gone through different individual evaluations carried out by each State, which sometimes have different points of view in the establishment of some SMS elements or procedures. This makes its implementation more complex to try to comply with the requirements of each member State.

This complexity has caused the need for an SMS, at the regional level, to be accepted as a single regional system with standard requirements. This leads to high-level efforts for the approval of a regional acceptance initiative by civil aviation authorities to establish standard requirements for SMS acceptance.

<i>Strategic objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Strategic Objective on Safety.
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Coordination meetings for the States.
<i>References:</i>	Annex 19 — <i>Safety Management</i> Doc 9859, <i>Safety Management Manual</i>

<sup>1</sup> English and Spanish versions provided by COCESNA.

<sup>2</sup> Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Through COCESNA, the Central American Region has been characterized by managing the realisation of regional projects associated with the needs and demands of the States in the improvement of air navigation in line with the *Global Air Navigation Plan* (Doc 9750, GANP) over the years. Similarly, part of the challenges we currently face and associated with the implementation of State safety programmes (SSPs) in the States is the implementation of safety management systems (SMS), including air traffic service providers such as COCESNA.

1.2 The improvements made to the air navigation system in COCESNA have been maintained within a framework of regional development, so all Central America has the necessary safety in air traffic control operations.

1.3 For this reason, since the corporation is a Central American integration body, the main objective of its strategic plan is the implementation of an SMS for 2019 at the regional level. This objective is aligned with most of the implementation plans of the Central American SSPs, which seek to establish their SMS acceptance processes and their subsequent execution.

## 2. DEVELOPMENT - CURRENT SITUATION

2.1 Some of the main challenges that the region has faced are the establishment of specific standardized requirements for SMS at the regional level and their corresponding SMS acceptance processes. To date, COCESNA has gone through different individual evaluations carried out by each State, and during these evaluations, these types of differences has been detected, which has brought a need for standardization of acceptance procedures in the region.

2.2 The SMS of COCESNA, whose implementation is led by the Executive Presidency and the Central American Agency for Air Navigation (ACNA), is currently under development of its third and fourth stages with evaluations of the first and second stages with elements that comprise the specific SMS processes, this being the basis: appointment of an accountable executive; statement of safety commitment through a policy; creation of safety committees and action groups; SMS Manager; and an emergency response plan coordinated with the different Central American control centres. Also, there are efforts of the States to develop acceptance processes, as well as ACSA through the Central American Safety Events Analysis Program (PASOC).

2.3 COCESNA, having the function of airspace administration of Central America, is also required to identify the dangers and manage the risks associated with air traffic service that occur throughout the airspace in conjunction with the States, as well as the correct management of the changes made to the air navigation system, whether in the introduction of new technologies and equipment, change in key personnel, or regulatory requirements.

2.4 Over the years, the implementation of the quality management system of COCESNA, certified with the ISO 9001 standard in its 2015 edition, has allowed a development in the provision of air traffic control and the provision of communications, navigation and surveillance (CNS) services, maintaining 99.95 per cent indexes in the availability of air navigation system equipment, as well as reducing the indexes of high impact events, such as air traffic service (ATS) incidents in recent years. This includes the identification of hazards and risk management in projects for the introduction of new technologies, associated with change management and strengthened under the project management methodology.

2.5 Other elements such as continuous improvement through internal and external audits, the high preparation and maintenance of staff competencies, which are common between the quality management system and an SMS, have allowed COCESNA to evolve as a supplier of air traffic services.

### 3. CONCLUSION

3.1 Derived from this and being COCESNA a regional service provider, it was envisaged that the appropriate route to follow included making joint efforts between COCESNA and the States to establish a single acceptance process for COCESNA's SMS with standard requirements, and thus carry out a joint evaluation by the States, handling the same criteria on the SMS implementation.

3.2 The designated route that was viewed as a solution includes the following general steps:

- a) approval of the regional acceptance initiative by the aviation directors and members of COCESNA's Board of Directors;
- b) coordination between the SSP coordinators – establishment of requirements and criteria;
- c) approval of requirements by the civil aviation authorities;
- d) coordination between SSP and COCESNA's SMS – support for the implementation of requirements;
- e) joint evaluation of the SMS based on the regional SMS requirements;
- f) follow-up on findings and recommendations; and
- g) acceptance of the SMS.

3.3 The Assembly is invited to:

- a) support joint efforts and acceptance methodology used by the member States of COCESNA whose experience serves as an example of regional integration for other control centres worldwide with similar characteristics;
- b) promote meetings for the exchange of experience between States regarding SMS acceptance at the regional level, so practices can be improved in SMS acceptance processes;
- c) continue to promote the ICAO Safety Management Implementation website to encourage the exchange of documentation and experience in the implementation of SSPs and SMS; and
- d) strengthen SMS training, so the implementation experiences in different service providers are included in the courses.