

**ICAO – ACI/LAC Seminar on Bird Hazards, Environmental Protection and Land Use at
Airports for the NAM/CAR/SAM (Americas) Regions**
Miami, USA, 24 – 27 April 2001

**Opening Address
by
Mr. Raymond Ybarra
ICAO Regional Director
North American, Central American and Caribbean Regional Office**

On behalf of ICAO, I would like to extend to all of you a warm welcome to this ICAO - ACI/LAC seminar on Bird Hazards, Environmental Protection and Land Use at Airports for the NAM/CAR/SAM (Americas) Regions, graciously hosted by Miami-Dade Aviation Department.

ICAO and ACI/LAC have collaborated on various initiatives in the region with the objective of promoting the safety in airport development and operations. The most recent example was the joint programme established by ICAO, ACI/LAC and the Pan American Health Organization which held three workshops on Airport Emergency Planning and developed a Guide to the Implementation of an Airport Emergency Plan in English and Spanish.

The subjects of this seminar; bird hazards, environment and land use at airports, are all interrelated and of increasing interest and importance in the Americas. The knowledge, expertise and experience on these matters is however still limited in some States and Territories of the regions due to the lesser importance previously given to this area and the few related events which have been held in the past.

ICAO's concern with bird hazards is obvious due to its potential impacts on the safety of aircraft operations and this is evidenced by long-standing provisions included in Annex 14 and the Aerodromes Manuals. Bird hazards continue to exist at many airports in the region resulting in bird strikes, many of which are not reported. The bird hazards are created for various reasons, one example which is increasingly critical is the presence of waste disposal facilities in close proximity to airports, a feature which is not recommended in ICAO SARPs. At this time I wish to clarify that although the seminar title only mentions bird hazards, the hazards actually involve various types of wildlife, not just birds, and this will be conveyed throughout the seminar programme.

ICAO's involvement with environmental issues as they relate to civil aviation commenced in 1968. Since then the Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection was formed which held its fifth meeting in January of this year. The meeting resulted in recommendations to Council including amendments to Annex 16 and a balanced approach to noise management which includes reduction of noise at source through a new noise certification standard for aircraft more stringent than the present Chapter 3, and improved land use planning and control at and around airports. The continuing growth of air traffic worldwide requires these sorts of measures in order to ensure the negative impact of noise exposure does not worsen with time and create constraints for airport growth and expansion. The ICAO Assembly Resolution 32-8 which comprises the Consolidated Statement of Continuing ICAO Policies and Practices related to Environmental Protection will be updated at the upcoming 33rd Session of the ICAO Assembly to be held in September 2001.

ICAO and States have a responsibility to achieve maximum compatibility between the safe and orderly development of civil aviation and the quality of the environment.

Earlier this month, ICAO also convened a worldwide Colloquium on Environmental Aspects of Aviation to familiarise States with ICAO and CAEP's work related to environment which was attended by over 200 participants from over 50 States and 20 international organisations.

The objective of this seminar is to enhance the regional awareness of bird hazard and environmental issues at airports and the important measures related to land use which can mitigate against the present and future potential problems in these areas. The objective of the seminar is also to provide a forum to exchange views and share experiences. The seminar programme includes informative presentations on a range of topics within the areas the seminar is intended to cover.

The participants in the seminar include representatives of civil aviation authorities and airport administrations in States and Territories in the NAM/CAR/SAM regions, as well as the regional representatives of international organisations. The 30 speakers who will be addressing you comprise representatives of these national and international organisations, as well as worldwide experts on the seminar topics, all with a common interest in promoting the best practices on these issues in the regions by sharing their knowledge, expertise and experience.

This seminar will run for the next four days at this venue and will be bilingual in English and Spanish. I hope you will take advantage of this seminar to enhance your understanding of the issues and current best practices, as well as make useful contacts with fellow participants and the speakers.

Before handing over to my learned colleague and friend Amaury Zuriarrain, I would like to acknowledge the considerable efforts by Miami Dade Aviation Department to host this event, as well as the many speakers who have dedicated their time and resources to support ICAO, ACI/LAC and States by participating in this seminar and thereby contributing to civil aviation in the Regions.