



WORKING PAPER

FACILITATION PANEL (FALP)

FOURTEENTH MEETING

Montréal, 20 to 24 April 2026

Agenda Item 6: Other Facilitation Matters

**IRREGULAR MIGRATION — THE EXPLOITATION OF NON-SCHEDULED OPERATORS
AND GENERAL AVIATION IN THE CARIBBEAN AND LATIN AMERICA**

(Presented by Jamaica)

SUMMARY

This paper presents an overview of the evolving threat challenging the Caribbean and Latin American countries, where the exploitation of un-scheduled and general aviation is resulting in an increase in irregular migration transiting through the region increasing risk to border security and aviation security.

Action by the FAL Panel:

Consider collaborating with experts from the Air Transport Regulation Panel (ATRP) and the Aviation Security Panel (AVSECP) to review ICAO Doc 9626, *Manual on the Regulation of International Air transport, Annex 9 — Facilitation* and any other relevant guidance material to strengthen the economic and regulatory framework regarding non-scheduled and general aviation in areas to include but not limited to the risk assessment and the expansion of the Advance Passenger Information/ Passenger Name Record API/PNR requirements to include general aviation.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 At the Forty-second Session of the ICAO Assembly (A42), Jamaica presented WP/276 the emerging threat facing the Latin American and Caribbean Region in relation to a significant increase in overflights and landing permits by non-scheduled operators transiting several regional states airspace exhibiting flight patterns involving one directional transit or technical stops often aligned with human trafficking and smuggling routes and the increased role General Aviation in facilitating transnational crimes to include irregular migration. Jamaica, takes note of Resolution 42-16: *Development and Implementation of facilitation provisions — combatting human trafficking* and the Assembly request to ensure that relevant

guidance material related to the issue of combatting human trafficking is current and responsive to the needs of Member States and, its encouragement to Member States to the study of facilitation problems with the Member States with shared airlinks.

1.2 Through the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) via its Critical Movement Alerts, has since 2023 issued notifications to Member States and international partners regarding irregular migration trends. These involve nationals from the Caribbean, West Africa and Asia transiting South America and the Caribbean using General Aviation and Non-Scheduled Operators.

1.3 This concern was further supported by the United Nations Panel of Experts established pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2653 (2022) in their Final Report to the United Nations Security Council, which emphasized the role of air transport in transnational organized crime, particularly trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling. The Panel also investigated and reported on the movement of more than 47 000 migrants to Central America for onward illegal movement towards North America. Additionally highlighting that “the smuggling of migrants is a complex, multilayered crime [involving] a web of actors including ringleaders; counterfeiters; land, sea and air transporters.”

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 While Doc 10171, *Manual on a Comprehensive Strategy for Combating Human Trafficking in the Aviation Sector* provides guidance on how to combat human trafficking on commercial flights and emphasizes the use of Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) systems by INTERPOL, and National Law Enforcement to detect, identify and intercept potential victims of human traffickers, a notable gap exists. The rising trend of migrant smuggling using Non-Scheduled Operators and General Aviation requires urgent regulatory attention. These operations frequently lack transparency, submitted on short notice and fail to provide API and PNR data to the respective competent authorities prior to arrival of these aircraft into our airspace, presenting vulnerabilities to regional aviation and border security.

2.2 The Latin America and Caribbean region while remaining a major hub for irregular migration, incidents and reports in other regions based on the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and World Customs Organization (WCO) reports indicated that irregular migration is a global issue. Vulnerabilities in the processing of un-scheduled and general aviation flights are being exploited by transnational organized criminals.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The Facilitation Panel is invited to:

- a) note the information in this working paper;
- b) consider collaborating with experts from the Air Transport Regulation Panel (ATRP) and Aviation Security Panel (AVSECP) to review ICAO Doc 9626, *Manual on the Regulation of International Air transport*, Annex 9 — *Facilitation* and any other relevant guidance material to strengthen the economic and regulatory framework regarding non-scheduled and general aviation in areas to include but not limited to the risk assessment and the expansion of API/PNR requirements to include general aviation.