

**INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION
NORTH AMERICAN, CENTRAL AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN OFFICE**

**TWENTY-SIXTH EASTERN CARIBBEAN INFORMAL WORKING GROUP MEETING
(26TH E/CAR IWG)**

(Barbados, 3 to 7 June 2002)

Agenda Item 4: CNS Developments
 4.2 Other CNS Items

**CNS Shortcomings and Deficiencies in the E/CAR
HF Communications (Piarco FIR)**

(Working Paper presented by Trinidad and Tobago)

SUMMARY

This Working Paper advises the E/CAR Working Group of the work done by Trinidad and Tobago with regard to resolution of the problem of deficiency in communication using HF/SSB in the Piarco FIR/UIR.

1 Introduction

1.1 High Frequency is the Primary means of communications in the oceanic areas of Piarco FIR east of 56° W longitude.

2. Discussion

2.1 The HF SSB communication system has been used by Air Traffic Controllers since 1985 to provide communication to aircraft in the airspace east of 56°W.

2.2 The existing equipment is at least twenty (20) years old, unreliable and very noisy.

2.3 It has been long acknowledged that the Air Traffic Control Staff who carry out the function of Radio Operator as a part of their tour of duty are not the best category of staff to do so.

2.4 The newly formed Trinidad and Tobago Civil Aviation Authority sought to improve the service, as reported at the 25th ECWG Meeting by two major initiatives:

- acquisition of new HF equipment;
- by including in its new structure, a separate category of staff with responsibility for Radio Operations.

2.5 In this regard, discussions were held in Trinidad and Tobago with senior personnel of the ICAO Procurement Section, Montreal, in order that technical assistance may be achieved in a timely manner with respect to procurement.

2.6 A request for funds has been made to the appropriate authority in order to conclude the transaction.

2.7 The issue of dedicated personnel for the purpose of operating the new equipment is expected to be resolved when the TTCAA acquires its full complement of staff soon after 2002 September 30, the new transition completion date.

2.8 In the interim, the CAA has accepted an offer made by IACL and which involves a short-term arrangement with the United States company, Aeronautical Radio, Inc. (ARINC).

2.9 The CAA will issue an appropriate NOTAM informing airlines that should they be unable to contact Piarco ACC on HF, they can then contact ARINC's New York HF radio facility to relay the required ATC reporting and/or flight information exchange.

3. Conclusion

3.1 Trinidad and Tobago recognises that its efforts to date have not brought relief to this longstanding safety issue.

3.2 Trinidad and Tobago fully accepts responsibility for the provision of a safe and reliable service in the airspace entrusted to it, as custodian of the Piarco FIR/UIR.

3.3 It is committed to the provision of a satisfactory service in the shortest possible time after this interim arrangement, utilizing dedicated staff and new equipment.

4. Action suggested

4.1 The Meeting is invited to take note of the contents of this Working Paper.