



- Agenda Item 2: Review of Air Navigation Matters**
2.2 Air Navigation specific activities:
2.2.2 Communications, Navigation and Surveillance (CNS)

EASTERN CARIBBEAN DIGITAL NETWORK

(Presented by Barbados)

SUMMARY

This working paper seeks to inform the meeting on the poor functioning of the E/CAR Digital Network and to request that the Regional DCAs establish a protocol for the easy and expeditious movement of spares within the Region.

Strategic Objectives	<i>This working paper is related to Strategic Objectives A and D.</i>
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1. Introduction

1.1 The E/CAR Digital Network is a safety critical communications system, comprised of both voice and data components. The system is exclusive to the Regional Air Traffic Services for the smooth and secured movement of messages within the E/CAR Region.

2. Background

2.1 The system was established in the E/CAR Region to provide the Air Traffic Services with an uninterrupted and secured network to assist with the safe and expeditious movement of air traffic.

2.2 The E/CAR Digital network was plagued with problems from the day of inception and continued to function in a faulty manner without resolution. The faults experienced by States have been so acute and continuous that it had become acceptable as standard operation for air traffic units to be unable to communicate with the French Antilles, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Barbados. Importantly is that the AFTN which is part of the network has been unserviceable in Barbados for well over six (6) months before a resolution.

2.3 The last providers of the network were very mindful of the poor functioning of the network. In that regard they entered into an arrangement with a contractor to rectify the faults through the employment of Frame Relay Technology which at the time of termination of the services, the company had reached an advanced stage in the implementation process. However, Trinidad and Tobago Civil Aviation Authority (TTCAA), the new providers of the network never pursued this option and therefore shelved the idea. To date the functioning of the network remains unchanged.

3. Discussion

3.1 E/CAR States have no confidence in the network. In this regard TTCAA should move swiftly to have the problems rectified or implement the long talked-about VSAT solution. The E/CAR/WG should request the DCAs to establish National Protocols for the easy and expeditious movement of spares for the network through the Region.

3.2 The TTCAA should ensure that the managers of the network possess a well stock spares-bank, which ensures that downtime is kept to a minimum.

4. Required Action

4.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) note the contents of this working paper;
- b) mandate the TTCAA to provide the E/CAR Region with a full functioning network system that is reliable;
- c) request the DCAs to establish National Protocols that will provide for the expeditious turnaround of spares for the network; and
- d) mandate that the TTCAA ensures that the managers of the network retain an adequate spares-bank and exhibit the required degree of sensitivity necessary for the continuous functionality of the network.