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(NACC/DCA/13)**

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, 4 to 7 August 2025

Agenda Item 4 Towards More Effective Implementation: Safety

BRIEFING ON SAFETY UPDATES

(Presented by Secretariat)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Information Paper provides an overview of the current status of safety effective implementation in the NAM/CAR Regions. It includes updates on the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP), the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP), the regional implementation of State Safety Programmes (SSPs) and National Aviation Safety Plans (NASPs), and ongoing initiatives led by the ICAO NACC Regional Office, including the activities of the National Continuous Monitoring Coordinators (NCCMs) and SSP Working Groups.

Strategic Objectives:

- Safety

References:

- ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP)
- Integrated Safety Trend (Analysis) and Reporting System (iSTARS)
- Safety related projects
- NCCM and SSP meetings reports

1. Introduction

1.1 The effective implementation of safety oversight and safety management systems remains a critical priority for civil aviation authorities in the North American, Central American, and Caribbean (NAM/CAR) Regions. In line with ICAO's global objectives and under the framework of GASP and Annex 19 Safety Management, States are required to establish robust safety oversight systems, implement a functioning SSP, and develop NASPs to address their unique operational contexts and national safety risks.

1.2 The ICAO NACC Regional Office, in coordination with Member States, regional safety partners, and technical assistance projects has been actively working to support States in strengthening their safety capabilities. Despite the progress achieved, challenges persist in terms of effective coordination, technical capacity, and implementation of safety data systems necessary to support a predictive, performance-based approach to safety.

1.3 The current global context has highlighted the need for resilient regulatory systems that can adapt to emerging risks, technological advancements, and industry changes. The importance of standardized tools, harmonized regional frameworks, and mutual recognition among States has become more evident as the region seeks to enhance safety performance and meet international oversight obligations.

1.4 This information paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the current status of safety implementation in the NAM/CAR Regions. It includes updates on:

- global and regional alignment with GASP 2026–2028;
- performance of States under the USOAP Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA);
- progress on development and implementation of SSPs and NASPs;
- ongoing efforts and deliverables of the SSP and NCMC Working Groups; and
- safety-related projects and initiatives being developed or supported by the ICAO NACC Regional Office.

1.5 Through this regional collaborative effort, the goal is to continue building safety oversight resilience, improve the implementation of ICAO provisions, and ensure that each State is adequately equipped to address both current and emerging safety challenges in a coordinated and proactive manner.

2. GASP 2023–2025 Updates and Alignment in the region

2.1 Five global organizational challenges are considered of the utmost priority, in the international context, because they impact States' safety oversight and safety management capabilities and, consequently, aviation safety at the global level. The global organizational challenges for 2026–2028 are as follows:

- lack of sufficient financial resources for the safety oversight authority to meet its national and international obligations;
- lack of qualified technical personnel, primarily aircraft accident investigators and aerodrome inspectors;
- lack of a regulatory process to address the resolution of safety issues, primarily related to aerodrome operations;
- low level of SSP implementation at the global level; and

- deficiencies in safety data and safety information collection, analysis and exchange, to support safety management activities.

2.2 The 2026–2028 edition of the GASP continues to align with current needs, capabilities and resources available to States. This edition considers the safety issues presented to Member States and industry by a dynamic and ever-changing environment, as well as recent developments in the field of aviation safety. Key revisions include new targets to address challenges such as insufficient financial resources for safety oversight authorities, lack of qualified technical personnel and the need to facilitate assistance to States struggling in the regions.

One of the most significant updates appears under Goal 2, which focuses on effective safety oversight. The first new target introduced under this goal addresses a key global organizational challenge: the availability of financial resources to each safety oversight authority and introduces three specific and measurable targets that aim to close long-standing oversight capability gaps across ICAO regions and promote a more sustainable safety governance model. Target 2.1 requires **all States to ensure that their NASPs include a clear commitment to provide adequate financial resources to their safety oversight authorities.**

Under Goal 3, which addresses the implementation of SSPs, two new targets have been introduced. **Target 3.1 calls for all States to assess the level of implementation of their SSPs by 2026**, while **Target 3.2 requires that all States establish an SSP by 2028**. Notably, this latter target does not reference the SSP maturity levels, which are absent from Annex 19 SARPs. These changes underscore the need **to assist States in conducting implementation assessments and to provide structured guidance for SSP establishment**, particularly in States that are at early stages of SSP development. Such assistance could be provided through the Regional Aviation Safety Group-Pan America (RASG-PA) or through other means. It is important to highlight that one of the biggest problems for SSP implementation is the lack of prioritization, resources and the absence of the SDCPS within the States.

- The focus of Goal 4, previously centered on enhancing collaboration at the regional level, has now been expanded to include national-level collaboration.
 - Target 4.1 calls for all regions to identify States that need assistance to address safety issues by 2026.
 - Target 4.2 directs regions to facilitate the required assistance to those identified States by 2028.
 - Target 4.3 **requires regions to implement a mechanism to utilize information on operational safety risks and emerging issues for the purposes of safety planning by 2027**

- Finally, the 2026–2028 GASP introduces a new Goal 5, aimed at strengthening aviation safety planning. This goal consolidates elements from Targets 3.2 and 4.2 of the previous edition and reflects ICAO’s emphasis on comprehensive and coordinated planning. A key component of this goal is **Target 5.1, which calls for all regions to publish an updated Regional Aviation Safety Plan (RASP) by 2026, considering the new edition of the GASP.**

2.3 Based on results from the analysis of safety data and information, the following Global high-risk categories of occurrences (or “G-HRCs”) were identified as “Global Safety Issues”:

- controlled flight into terrain;
- loss of control in-flight;
- mid-air collision;
- runway excursions; and
- runway incursions.

2.4. These types of accidents have historically resulted in the highest unsafe outcomes across the world, mainly in terms of number of fatalities – so they remain our top priority. They are essential to address if we are to reach our Goal of making every flight safe, with zero fatalities.

2.5 In addition, based on discussions during the 14th Air Navigation Conference (AN-Conf/14), we identified other global risk categories of occurrences (or “G-ORCs”) that are trending up, which should be monitored and take action on, as appropriate. These are:

- abnormal runway contact (which involves events such as tail strikes and hard landings);
- system/component failure or malfunction (non-powerplant) – that’s basically anything that can break on an airplane other than the engines; and
- turbulence encounters – which have garnered a lot of public concern and media attention over the past year, and these were a big point of discussions at AN-Conf/14.

2.6 ICAO is finalizing the new editions of the 3 key guidance material documents that accompany the latest GASP and these are:

- Doc 10131, which provides guidance on how to develop a regional or national aviation safety plan, in line with the GASP;
- Doc 10161, which is the Global Aviation Safety Roadmap – so the Action Plan to achieve the GASP Goals and Targets; and
- Doc 10162 which provides guidance on monitoring implementation to achieve the GASP Goals and Targets.

2.7 The RASP is currently under review by the NACC Regional Office, with the voluntary participation of the SSP Points of Contact (PoCs) from 10 States. Their involvement ensures the plan aligns with the GASP targets and reflects updated regional safety priorities. The revised NACC RASP is expected to be ready for acceptance by the NAM/CAR States by the last quarter of 2025.

3. USOAP Status in the NAM/CAR Regions (as of July 2025)

3.1 The NAM and CAR Regions contain 22 States. Only one State has not received a USOAP audit yet (Dominica). Until now, ICAO has performed 34 CMA Audits and 44 Validation Activities.

3.2 The average Effective Implementation (EI) rate in the NAM/CAR Regions has barely changed in 10 years and currently stands at 68.98%, which is below the world EI average which is 70.28%. Only 45.45% of the NACC States have achieved the target of 75% EI, as suggested by the GASP, only 3 areas (LEG, PEL and AIR) are above the target of 75% EI and in the case of the critical elements none have reached the 75% EI Target

3.3 States of the NAM/CAR Regions currently total 4,291 open USOAP protocol findings. The highest number of protocol findings (411) concern Licensing, Certification, Authorization and Approval Obligations (CE-6) in Aerodromes and Ground Aids (AGA).

3.4 The areas with the lowest EI scores are Accident and Incident Investigation (AIG), Air Navigation Services (ANS), and AGA.

	LEG	ORG	PEL	OPS	AIR	AIG	ANS	AGA
CE-1	51			7		76	23	14
CE-2	34		44	74	85	92	55	137
CE-3		46	30	35	17	88	66	41
CE-4		3	41	26	23	38	95	55
CE-5	14	6	30	76	54	396	4	108
CE-6			133	318	84		157	411
CE-7			61	84	29		387	271
CE-8			57	36	35	99	56	89

Protocol findings by Area and Critical Element Intersection

3.5 Common deficiencies include:

- Insufficient qualified technical personnel.
- Lack of financial resources
- Outdated regulatory framework

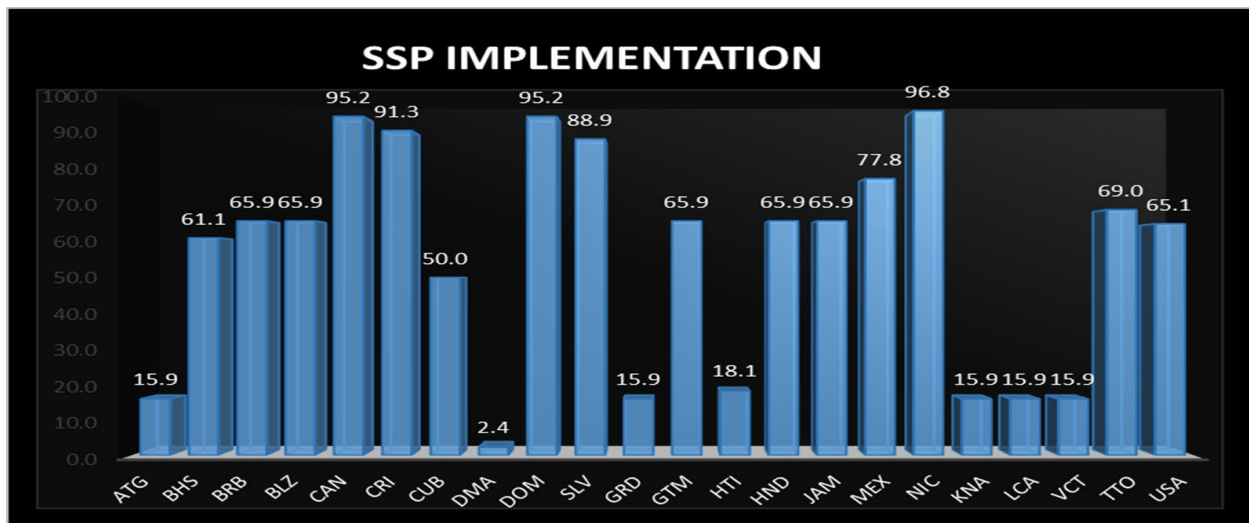
3.6 For 2025 there are two USOAP evaluations scheduled and three for 2026.

3.7 The NACC Regional Office continues providing targeted assistance and workshops to address these deficiencies.

4. SSP and NASP Implementation Status

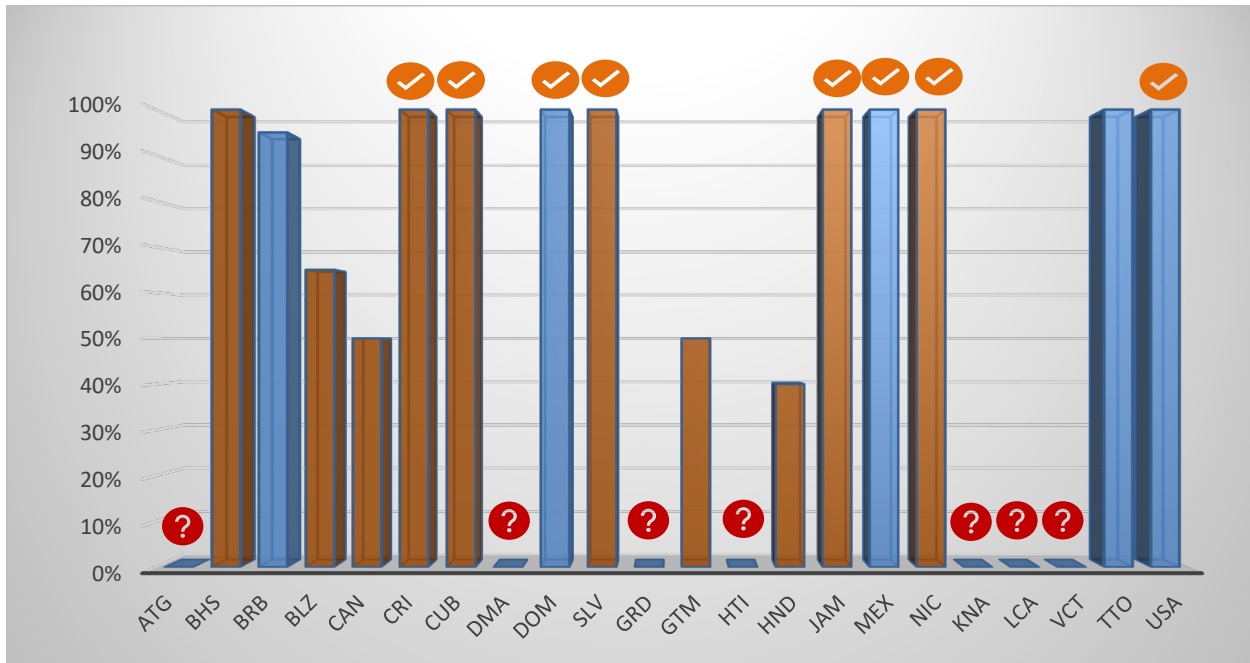
4.1 The monitoring system used by the ICAO NACC Regional Office relies on information provided through the Integrated Safety Trend Analysis and Reporting System (iSTARS) application, as well as the virtual and on-site support provided to States. To date, the progress in SSP implementation across the CAR Region remains limited, despite positive results in certain indicators, such as the SSP Foundation and SSP Gap Analysis. A lack of resources and competing priorities has contributed to the slowdown in implementation efforts. Only 40% of these States have a present Safety Data Collection and Processing Systems (SDCPS).

4.2 State Safety Programme (SSP)



4.3 National Aviation Safety Plan (NASP)

- 54% of NAM/CAR States have a present NASP, 36% have uploaded their NASP in ICAO GASP library
- 15% are in the mid stages of development of their NASP
- 31.% are not providing progress information in the development of their NASP.
- The NACC Regional Office has:
 - provided customized support to States through virtual NASP Clinics; and
 - promoted the use of ICAO Implementation Packages (iPacks) for States with limited resources.



5. Activities of the SSP and NCMC Working Groups

5.1 SSP Working Group:

- Establishment of English- and Spanish-speaking working groups, with their respective Terms of Reference (ToRs), to facilitate communication among participating States under the coordination of the ICAO NACC.
- Delivery of multiple webinars and workshops to SSP PoCs including: Gap analysis questions review (2020), Safety intelligence (2023), SDCPS establishment (2025), safety culture evaluation (2025)
- Ensure synergies with the central American collaborative Group for state operational safety.
- Information sharing regarding SSP progress evaluations ex. SSPIA
- Support to the (RASG-PA) SSP Implementation Project and NASP implementation project.
- Developed a personnel needs assessment tool that enabled States to effectively evaluate required personnel for SSP implementation using a data-driven methodology, enhancing human resource planning within civil aviation authorities.
- Ongoing regional needs assessments to identify shared challenges.

Work in Progress

- Establishment of a regional SSP implementation tool, led by Transport Canada
- Conduct virtual evaluations of progress in SSP implementation
- Conduct personnel needs assessments

5.2 NCMC Working Group

- Establishment of English- and Spanish-speaking working groups, with their respective Terms of Reference (ToR), to facilitate communication among participating States under the coordination of the ICAO NACC.
- Effectively managed targeted aviation exemptions during the pandemic, achieving over 95% implementation success across the region.
- Delivery of 3 USOAP CMA workshops
- Secured NCMC's commitment to implement a three-year work program aimed at enhancing the exchange of safety oversight information with ICAO through the OLF, resulting in improved updates to national regulations, procedures, certification processes, and surveillance plans.
- Developed a needs assessment tool that enabled States to effectively evaluate required personnel using a data-driven methodology, enhancing human resource planning within civil aviation authorities
- Ongoing regional needs assessments to identify shared challenges.

Work in progress

- The development of a model training program for civil aviation authorities was previously assigned to the NCMCs Working Group. However, due to resource constraints, it is now being established as an MCAAP project.
- The need for a model training program was identified during the ongoing needs assessment conducted by the WG. It will significantly help the states to enhance their national programs providing an ICAO compliant standardized methodology, positively impacting all the technical areas' performance.

6. ICAO NACC Safety Projects and Support Initiatives

6.1 SSP Implementation Project

- The project was designed to strengthen the capabilities of States within the CAR Region in the development and implementation of their State Safety Programme (SSP). It provided the necessary tools to enhance SSP documentation and supported effective implementation.
- A key component of the project was the promotion of essential training courses to facilitate SSP development. Additionally, Ad-hoc workshops were organized to address the specific needs of States during the implementation process.

- The initiative also took advantage of regional collaboration, leveraging synergies between the Central American Aviation Safety Agency (ACSA) and the NACC SSP Working Groups to foster knowledge sharing and coordinated support.
- Technical assistance was delivered with the collaboration of experts from Champion States and ACSA, ensuring that CAR Region States received targeted guidance to successfully advance their SSP

Achievements

- The project involved the active participation of 4 Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) provided by Member States and a Regional Safety Oversight Organization (RSOO): Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and ACSA.
- The Evaluation Phase prioritized States based on the ICAO iStars “SSP Foundation” indicator, through virtual meetings over ten business days within six weeks using State Safety Program (SSP) Assessment Tool design by ICG.
- The Data Collection Phase assessed a 20% sample of CAR Region States to identify common challenges, from the evaluation conducted in the previous step.
- Findings enabled the design and delivery of an Ad-hoc workshop in May 2024, offering targeted solutions to support SSP development.

6.2 National Aviation Safety Plan (NASP) Implementation Project

6.3 The Project objective: Ensure, by the provision of the appropriate training and guidance, that CAR States have the required tools and knowledge to develop their NASPs and have them approved by the end of 2024 2026.

6.4 NASP Implementation Project Achievements

6.5 As part of the efforts to support the development and implementation of National Aviation Safety Plans (NASPs) in the CAR Region, several key activities were successfully completed:

- Virtual training on the ICAO National Aviation Safety Plan was delivered to personnel from **13 CAR Region States**, strengthening their understanding of NASP requirements and planning.
- A NASP Implementation Workshop was developed and conducted, with participation from **25 representatives of 12 States**. The workshop focused on providing technical guidance based on the NASP preparation manual and methodologies needed for effective plan development.
- On-site technical assistance missions were carried out in seven States, led by Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and the ICAO Safety Implementation Regional Officer. These missions offered direct support for NASP advancement.
- Additionally, virtual assistance and follow-up activities were offered, and the evaluated States are currently in the process of submitting their action plans for review.

6.6 Fourteenth Regional Aviation Safety Group–Pan America (RASG-PA/14) and Fortieth Executive Steering Committee (ESC/40) Meetings

6.6.1 The most strategic developments and outcomes from RASG-PA/14 and the recent ESC/40 meetings are:

6.6.1.1 Safety Governance and GASP Implementation

The RASG-PA/14 plenary meeting which was held in November 2024, approved a comprehensive update of our regional Safety Performance Indicators. These indicators are essential tools for tracking the implementation of the Global Aviation Safety Plan, or GASP. However, the review highlighted concerning stagnation in several key areas—most notably, Effective Implementation rates below 75% in Aerodromes and Air Navigation Services. As a response, Conclusion C01/2024 tasked the Secretariat and PA-RAST with developing specific corrective measures, which are now in progress for ESC/40 meeting.

6.6.1.2 Low SSP Implementation – Regional Study Initiated

To tackle the persistent challenges with SSP implementation, particularly the low compliance among States, the group approved Conclusion C02/2024. This mandates the commissioning of a study led by an external academic body. The study aims to uncover root causes and formulate actionable recommendations. These findings will directly inform the Air Navigation Commission (ANC) and help shape our regional safety strategy.

6.6.1.3 AIG Strengthening Initiatives

In the area of accident and incident investigation—or AIG - a critical step has been taken. The ESC Decision 39/C01 initiated the creation of an Ad-Hoc Group, now coordinated by the United States with support from Canada, Airbus, and ATR. The goal is to support States in producing final investigation reports and to develop a regional framework that builds AIG capacity and improves compliance with ICAO Annex 13 provisions.

6.6.1.4 Mid-Air Collision Risk – Targeted Action

Lastly, the 2024 RASG-PA Safety Day was dedicated exclusively to Mid-Air Collision risk. This reflects regional concerns over increased TCAS RA events in CAR and SAM Flight Information Regions (FIRs). The result was a revised 2025–2026 work plan from the MAC Working Group, aligned with the findings and lessons shared during the event. This programme was submitted to ESC/40 for final endorsement.

6.6.1.5 Operational and cultural initiatives

a) *Regional Expansion of Voluntary Safety Reporting (ASAP)*. One of the most impactful developments is the regional push to expand the Aviation Safety Action Program, or ASAP. Following powerful presentations by Delta, American Airlines, Aeroméxico, and IFALPA at the Sixty seventh Pan America Regional Aviation Safety Team (PA-RAST/67) meeting, the team is now developing a regional ASAP strategy. This includes launching a pilot programme and encouraging the use of Mexico’s advisory circular as a regional reference. The aim is to promote a just culture and boost voluntary, non-punitive safety reporting.

b) *Collaborative Safety Teams (CSTs) Scaling Impact.* Our Collaborative Safety Teams are delivering real, measurable impact. Peru's P-CAST has raised concerns over operational challenges at the new Lima airport and received national recognition for its contributions. Brazil's B-CAST has launched new working groups focused on training, data sharing, and human factors, and has collected over 30,000 protected safety reports since mid-2023. In Canada, the CAG is leading a sophisticated bowtie-model analysis of ground operations risks. These examples show how CSTs are becoming key engines of proactive safety management.

c) *Enhanced Use of AIG Data in Safety Projects.* We are also reintegrating accident and incident data directly into our regional risk mitigation strategy. PA-RAST has resumed its practice of analysing significant accidents—such as the VoePass incident in Brazil and the Lima runway incursion—to extract lessons and develop recommendations. These insights will also help validate and update our Safety Performance Indicators (SPIs).

d) *Communication and Tools.* Finally, several tools and outreach initiatives have progressed. The Turbulence Awareness Video is now available to members through a secure access portal. Translation efforts are ongoing to ensure that critical resources, such as the GAPPRI Volume II, are available in both English and Spanish. Meanwhile, the Safety Partners Programme continues to grow, with new proposals under review to deepen operational engagement between industry and the Group.

7. Conclusion

7.1 The NAM/CAR Region continues making strategic progress in strengthening safety oversight and implementing safety management systems. However, key challenges remain in personnel availability, data systems, and harmonized implementation of SSPs and NASPs. The NACC Regional Office, through its Working Groups and projects, is providing structured support to address these challenges in alignment with GASP objectives.

7.2 States are encouraged to continue enhancing collaboration through regional mechanisms; prioritize resource allocation to strengthen safety management capabilities and engage with ICAO-led initiatives to improve implementation outcomes.