



ICAO

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North American, Central American and Caribbean Office

WORKING PAPER

MCAAP/PEC/9 — WP/05  
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**Ninth Meeting of the RLA09801 Project Evaluation Commission (MCAAP/PEC/9)**  
ICAO NACC Regional Office, Mexico City, Mexico, 25 to 26 March 2026

**Agenda Item 3: Development of a New Strategic Approach Directive for the MCAAP**

**MCAAP STRATEGIC GUIDELINES**

(Presented by Canada)

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	
<p>Decision MCAAP/PEC/8/01 instructed the Project Evaluation Committee (PEC) to develop a strategic approach to the implementation of the MCAAP, for discussion and finalization at PEC/9. This is a task of a strategic and guiding nature, consistent with the role of the PEC in continuous evaluation, proposal of improvements and monitoring for the continuous improvement of the Project, as described in the MCAAP Procedures Manual (Section 4.6). To complete this task, <b>Appendix A</b> outlines strategic guidelines for the implementation of the MCAAP in the medium and long term, ensuring coherence with the mission of the Project, which is to assist NACC Member States/International Organizations on implementation of ICAO Standard and Recommended Practices (SARPs) and regional cooperation, in line with regional and global plans.</p>	
<b>Action:</b>	As presented in Section 3.
<i>Strategic Goals 2026-2050:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Every flight is safe and secure</li><li>• Aviation is environmentally sustainable</li><li>• Aviation delivers seamless, accessible, and reliable mobility for all</li><li>• No country left behind</li></ul>
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Report of the Eighth Meeting of the MCAAP Project Evaluation Commission (MCAAP/PEC/8)</li><li>• Report of the Twelfth Meeting of the FRL09M1 MCAAP Project Steering Committee (MCAAP PSC/12)</li></ul>

**1. Introduction**

1.1 Decision MCAAP/PEC/8/01 instructed the Project Evaluation Commission (PEC) to develop a strategic approach to the implementation of the MCAAP, for discussion and finalization at PEC/9.

1.2 This is a task of a strategic and guiding nature, consistent with the role of the PEC in continuous evaluation, proposal of improvements and monitoring for the continuous improvement of the Project, as described in the MCAAP Procedures Manual (Section 4.6).

1.3 The development of the draft MCAAP Strategic Guidelines, presented in Appendix A to this Working Paper, was undertaken by Canada, Cuba and COCESNA. The Secretariat supported this process by facilitating the task and providing guidance and comments throughout the development of the document.

## **2. Discussion**

2.1 Per the MCAAP Procedural Handbook, MCAAP's Mission is to "assist Project member States/Territories in the NAM/CAR Regions in the effective implementation of ICAO SARPs for improving the safety, efficiency and capacity of the regional civil aviation system, in harmonization with the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP), the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP), the CAR/SAM Regional Air Navigation Plan, and in support of the ICAO No Country Left Behind (NCLB) initiative."

2.2 Discussions at PEC/8 highlighted challenges to the MCAAP's current implementation:

- a) States are not taking advantage of the activities available to them under MCAAP which is leading to a sizable financial balance in the programme; and
- b) States are not participating in the selection or planning of activities, leaving most proposals to come instead from the Secretariat. This suggests States are not taking ownership of the MCAAP.

2.3 Discussions at PEC/8 suggested that these challenges may be caused by administrative hurdles (e.g., lengthy processing times and budget management complexities) and a lack of awareness from States of the benefits of participating in the MCAAP.

2.4 PEC/8 went on to agree to the need for "a more strategic and result-based management approach... transitioning from isolated, short-term activities to comprehensive programmes with a duration of two to three years. These programmes would be focused on high-level strategic goals and regional priorities, with formulation led by the member states and supported by the ICAO Secretariat."

2.5 PEC/8 outlined several specific suggestions for improvement, including:

- a) Hiring a dedicated project manager or supporter to handle administrative matters and follow up on technical implementations.
- b) Enhancing the project's digital presence through a revamped website and a stronger communication plan to promote results and increase transparency.
- c) Promoting senior level engagement by ensuring that the Project Steering Committee's role includes strategic direction.

2.6 Additionally, there may be value in ensuring the MCAAP is relevant to the needs of potential participants in the program and to the resources and capabilities of countries and organizations likely to contribute and lead projects. This may be accomplished by surveying potential participants on the training activities that would interest them and by contacting countries/organizations at an early stage to determine the types of projects they could contribute.

2.7 The potential MCAAP action areas for 2026–2028, outlined in **Appendix B** to this Working Paper, provide an initial indication of how the proposed strategic approach could be translated into concrete areas of implementation.

### 3. Alignment with ICAO and Regional Plans

3.1 The MCAAP Strategic Guidelines outlined in **Appendix A** emphasize alignment with ICAO’s Long-Term Strategic Plan (2026-2050) and other associated plans, in order to translate global strategies into a concrete framework for the NAM/CAR Regions. These relevant ICAO strategies are outlined below:

Instrument	Description
ICAO’s Long-Term Strategic Plan (2026-2050)	Objectives: 1. Zero fatalities; 2. Net zero emissions by 2050; 3. A connected, accessible, inclusive transport system, ensuring that no country is left behind.
Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP)	Establishes global strategic direction and encourages regions and states to develop <b>RASP/NASP</b> aligned to global goals. Progress is monitored with objectives/indicators and periodic reviews.
Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP)	incorporates a <b>performance-based</b> approach with Key Performance Indicator (KPI) orientation and implementation structure (Aviation System Block Upgrade (ASBU), performance based).
Long Term Global Aspirational Goal (LTAG)	Aspirational goal of net zero emissions by 2050 for international aviation.
ICAO Business Plan 2026–2028	Applies results-based management, consolidates projects & activities into programs, and emphasizes KPIs and risk management (ERM) integrated to the achievement of objectives.

Table 1 – Relevant ICAO Global Plans and Strategies

### 3.2 Linkage between Global Strategies and MCAAP Action Areas (2026-2028)

3.2.1 The potential MCAAP action areas for the 2026-2028 triennium, as detailed in **Appendix B**, serve as the regional operationalization of the global instruments previously described. This alignment ensures that every project implemented under the MCAAP contributes directly to ICAO’s high-level goals through the following thematic bridges:

- Safety and Oversight (GASP Alignment): Objective 1 and Objective 3 of the MCAAP Action Plan translate the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) into regional targets for Effective Implementation (EI) and accident reduction. By focusing on States with limited oversight capabilities, the MCAAP directly supports the No Country Left Behind initiative.
- Modernization and Efficiency (GANP/ASBU Alignment): Objective 2 of the Action Plan integrates the performance-based approach of the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP). This includes the regional coordination of Aviation System Block Upgrades

(ASBU) and the safe integration of new entrants, such as Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) and Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS).

- Spectrum Protection and Emerging Threats: In line with the ICAO Business Plan's focus on risk management, the MCAAP prioritizes the protection of the radio-frequency spectrum and ATM systems against emerging technical threats, ensuring the resilience of the regional aviation infrastructure.
- Results-Based Management (RBM): Following the ICAO Business Plan 2026-2028, the MCAAP Action Plan replaces isolated activities with comprehensive programs. This is reflected in Objective 4, which establishes a clear performance target of 85% compliance with project-defined objectives to ensure tangible results and accountability.

3.2.2 Through this structured alignment, the MCAAP acts as a regional catalyst, transforming long-term global aspirational goals into measurable local improvements in safety, efficiency, and sustainability.

#### 4. Suggested Action

4.1 The Meeting is invited to adopt the following Draft Conclusion:

<b>DRAFT CONCLUSION</b>		<b>MCAAP STRATEGIC GUIDELINES</b>	
<b>PEC/9/C2</b>			
<b>What:</b> That, considering Decision MCAAP/PEC/8/01, which requested the development of a new strategic approach directive for the MCAAP, as endorsed by Conclusion RLA09801 PSC/12/01, the Project Evaluation Commission: a) review the draft MCAAP Strategic Guidelines contained in Appendix A to this Working Paper; b) review the potential MCAAP action areas for 2026–2028 outlined in Appendix B to this Working Paper; and c) request the Secretariat to consolidate comments and suggestions received and prepare a revised version of the Guidelines for further consideration by the Project Steering Committee (PSC) by the PSC/13.	<b>Expected impact:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Political / Global <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-regional <input type="checkbox"/> Economic <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Operational/Technical		
<b>Why:</b> To support the development of a structured and consistent strategic framework for the MCAAP, enhancing the prioritization, alignment, and effectiveness of project activities.			
<b>When:</b> a) and b) Immediately; c) by the PSC/13	<b>Status:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Valid / <input type="checkbox"/> Superseded / <input type="checkbox"/> Completed		
<b>Who:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> States <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ICAO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:	PEC		

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **STRATEGIC GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MCAAP PROJECT (2026-2028)**

#### **Purpose**

The MCAAP Strategic Guidelines outline governance, core principles, prioritization criteria, communications plan, and performance indicators to support the implementation of the MCAAP in the medium and long term, ensuring coherence with the MCAAP's mission, which is to assist NACC Member States in the implementation of ICAO Standard and Recommended Practices (SARPs) for improving the safety, efficiency and capacity of the regional civil aviation system, in line with the relevant regional and global plans.

#### **Governance**

In line with the MCAAP Procedural Handbook and the Strategic Guidelines outlined herein, the Project Steering Committee (PSC) should provide overarching strategic direction for the MCAAP, in addition to its existing responsibilities approving the Project Document (PRODOC) and FRL09M1 MCAAP work plan, nominating Project Evaluation Committee (PEC) members, and overseeing the project and budget.

The PEC should manage the technical components of MCAAP and facilitate the PSC's ability to provide strategic guidance in the completion of its existing activities, including to evaluate the management and activities, proposes improvements, and monitor activities in accordance with the MCAAP Procedural Handbook and the outlined Strategic Guidelines.

#### **Core Principles**

##### **1. Align Activities with Global and Regional Strategies**

- a) Support ICAO alignment and regional coherence (e.g., ICAO's Long-Term Strategic Plan, Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP), Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP), North American, Central American and Caribbean priorities, etc.).
- b) Adhere to ICAO values/enablers such as inclusion, gender equality and talent development.

##### **2. Align Activities with the Needs/Interests of Participants and the Capabilities/Resources of Partner Countries and International Organizations**

- a) Consult participants via surveys to ensure the projects offered align with their needs and interests.
- b) Identify opportunities for cooperation, in-kind input, and technical partnerships (consistent with the PEC's role of "seeking and lobbying for support"). This may include designing each strategic line with a "partner map" (champion states, industry, regional organizations) and co-financing/in-kind options. Communities of practice or technical networks should also be promoted among States and International Organizations.

##### **3. Maximize Project Impact and Cost-Effectiveness**

- a) Organize activities into coherent multi-year "programmes" (e.g. Performance-Based Navigation (PBN)/ Air Traffic Flow Management (ATFM); State Safety Programme (SSP)/

Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP); Environment (ENV)/ Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSA)/ Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF)).

- b) Reinforce the MCAAP criterion of multi-member benefit and promote "replicable" products (guides, checklists, modules, deployment packages) that can be re-used in separate activities
- c) Incorporate digital tools, modern training, data sharing (where applicable) and adoption of innovative practices in the implementation of projects.

### Prioritization Criteria

Based on the Core Principles and building on the existing parameters in the MCAAP Handbook, the MCAAP should prioritize projects using the criteria outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1 – Project Prioritization Criteria**

Priority	Description	Indicator
Risk/Need of Partner Country	Focus on States with greater gaps/limited capacities (e.g., based on operational risks).	Effective Implementation (EI) Score or Equivalent Qualitative Assessment (e.g., from an audit)
Synergy with Global & Regional Plans	Alignment with the methods and objectives of regional and global plans and strategies	% of regional and global plans that project aligns with
Multi-Member Benefit	Benefits/applicability for multiple MCAAP members	# of MCAAP members that could be reasonably expected to benefit from the project.
Readiness	The States' ability to effectively and sustainably implement outcomes from the project.	Qualitative assessment of the presence of personnel and enabling regulations.
Scalability	Potential to expand the activity and/or apply it to other partners	Qualitative assessment of the potential to expand the activity and apply it to other partners.
Feasibility	The feasibility of delivering the project based on costs/challenges and its contributions to the MCAAP objectives.	Cost-benefit analysis on the cost of the project and its contributions to the MCAAP's objectives.

### Communications Plan

The MCAAP should promote Member State engagement by actively promoting upcoming activities and the subsequent results on its webpage and via promotional material (e.g., quarterly email updates to Members). This may include an annual catalogue of upcoming activities to give States timely notice of what is available to them. This transparency will also demonstrate the MCAAP's value to participating States and could help to attract potential external donors.

**PEC Project Performance Monitoring** [N.B. PEC/9 Discussions to guide approach]

In line with ICAO's Results-Based Management (RBM) approach, the PEC will develop and maintain a set of metrics to observe trends and results. This monitoring may be summarized in a brief annual "status of implementation" report for discussion in PEC, with recommendations to the PSC (without superseding the PSC's authority to approve the work plan/resources). Performance monitoring should focus on two categories: (1) Assess the impact of individual projects delivered under the MCAAP; (2) The MCAAP's completion of its own objectives.

**Table 2 – Project Effectiveness Monitoring**

<b>Metric</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
Multi-Member Benefit	# of MCAAP Member beneficiaries from the project.
Scalability	# of repeated project deliveries from the project in the project cycle
Risk/Need	# action plans derived from projects; qualitative improvements in identified gaps (where baseline exists).
Synergy with Global & Regional Plans	# action plans linked to global/regional priorities
Project Impact and Cost-Effectiveness	Qualitative Assessment of the project's completion of its objectives
	Monitoring: % of activities with action plan and subsequent review.
	Qualitative assessment based on post-project surveys from participants.

**Table 3 – Completion of MCAAP Objectives**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
Assist NACC Member States/ in the implementation of ICAO SARPs	Regional EI Score Exceeds X%
Improve the safety, efficiency and capacity of the regional civil aviation system	X % reduction in accidents per million departures;

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## APPENDIX B POTENTIAL MCAAP ACTION PLAN (2026-2028)

### Key Priorities

- Incorporate relevant technologies and concepts to make flights safer and more secure.
- Advance the evolution of audit programmes and the commitment of States to improve their oversight capabilities and compliance with ICAO provisions.
- Protect the radio frequency spectrum and auxiliary Air Traffic Management (ATM) systems from emerging threats.

**Objective 1:** *Reduce the accident rate in the ICAO NAM/CAR Regions and improve sustainability of States' safety monitoring systems.*

### Indicators

- Accident rate per million departures.
- Percentage of States achieving the target level of Effective Implementation (EI) of a safety oversight system.

### Targets (2026-2028):

- [X] % reduction in accidents per million departures.
- [X] % of States exceed [X] % of the effective implementation of a safety monitoring system.

### Associated Outcomes

- Improved policies, provisions, and implementation support, to strengthen risk management and encourage adequate resource allocation to address high-risk categories and emerging risks.
- Optimization of the overall plan and regional plans for safety to keep them focused on priorities.
- Improved policies, provisions, and implementation support to strengthen safety oversight.
- Development and implementation of an integrated ecosystem of operational safety data analysis.
- Increased collaboration with Member States and other relevant stakeholders to protect the radio-frequency spectrum used by aeronautical services.

**Objective 2:** *Develop regionally harmonized policies, regulatory frameworks, guidance and tools, including the safe development of advanced air mobility (AAM), unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and upper airspace operations, and assist States in implementing them*

**Indicator**

- Percentage of States reporting performance improvements in the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

**Target (2026-2028)**

- [X] % of States report performance improvements in the key performance indicators of the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP) during the triennium.

**Associated Outcomes**

- Assist States and regions in the identification and effective implementation of operational improvements necessary to address the expected increase in traffic;
- maintain and improve efficiency levels to adapt to airspace needs in the provision of air navigation services in the face of the expected increase in traffic, both following the sharp increase in traditional aviation and the anticipated large-scale integration of UAS and new entrants, including the publication of national air navigation plans;
- improve air navigation performance in the ICAO NAM/CAR Regions and offshore;
- Coordination of the Regional Air Navigation Plans of the ICAO CAR/SAM and NAM Regions, which reflect the Aviation System Block Upgrades (ASBU) implementation goals.

**Objective 3:** *Increased Effective Implementation (EI) Index in the ICAO NACC region, facilitating a level playing field and opportunity for international civil aviation.*

**Indicator**

- Regional average score of Effective Implementation (EI) within the NACC region.

**Target (2026-2028)**

- Maintain or reach a regional average of [X] % of Effective Implementation.

**Associated Outcomes**

- Improvement of governance practices related to the development of the legal and regulatory framework of States in full compliance with the SARPs.
- Increased coordination to assist States in sharing resources, participating in regional initiatives and building capacity.
- Improved, accessible and efficient implementation of projects and implementation support activities in all areas of civil aviation.

**Objective 4:** Needs of Member States met at a higher rate in response to ICAO's audit activities, plans and arrangements to facilitate a level playing field and opportunities for international civil aviation, with the following aim:

**Indicator**

- Rate of compliance with the specific objectives defined in implementation projects and activities.

**Target (2026-2028)**

- Compliance in [X] % of the objectives pursued with the implementation of projects and activities.

**Associated Outcomes**

- Enhanced, accessible and guided ICAO training offer to Member States for their aviation personnel to acquire and maintain competence in compliance with ICAO's Civil Aviation Training Policy.
- Enhancing ICAO's portfolio of solutions to better serve Member States.
- Increased direct assistance to States on all strategic objectives to facilitate benefit-making, especially in developing States.

**Objective 5:** *Increased confidence in aviation and safety through universally recognized audit systems, increased awareness of aviation safety and security among aviation stakeholders and information on compliance with aviation security-related SARPs.*

**Indicator**

- Number of Member States actively using ICAO online monitoring systems (e.g., iSTARS).
- Total volume of user sessions/visits to online monitoring platforms.

**Targets (2026-2028)**

- [X] States conducting at least one annual review via online systems.
- [X] total annual visits to the platforms.