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Agenda Item 4 Collaborative Approaches to Safety

RECOGNITION OF FLIGHT CREW LICENSES: REGIONAL APPROACHES FOR A VOLUNTARY AND NON-BINDING TECHNICAL FRAMEWORK

(Presented by ALTA)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Information Paper is submitted for the consideration of the Directors of Civil Aviation of the NAM/CAR Regions with the purpose of facilitating an exchange of views at the executive level on possible regional approaches for the recognition of flight crew licenses, from a technical, voluntary, and non-binding perspective. The document does not intend to establish commitments or define uniform solutions, but rather to provide the Meeting with a technical reference framework that allows for an informed assessment of alternatives that may contribute to greater regional coherence and predictability, while fully preserving the sovereign prerogatives and responsibilities of each State. While national licensing systems in the NAM/CAR Regions are generally aligned with ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices — particularly Annex 1 — differences remain in their implementation and oversight. These differences present an opportunity to analyze flexible and gradual approaches, supported by common technical criteria and by the experience gained in other ICAO regions, especially the South American (SAM) Region. This Information Paper is conceived as a technical, voluntary, and non-binding exercise aimed at supporting strategic decision-making at the executive level, strengthening mutual trust among authorities, and improving the predictability and efficiency of the system, also considering the relevance of this topic for the aviation industry and the sustainable development of air transport in the region.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aviation Delivers Seamless, Accessible, and Reliable Mobility for All• No Country Left Behind• The International Civil Aviation Convention and Other Treaties, Laws and Regulations Address All Challenges• The Economic Development of Air Transport Assures the Delivery of Economic Prosperity and Societal Well-Being for All
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) Annex 1 — Personnel Licensing (ICAO)• ICAO regional experiences, particularly in the SAM Region

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Information Paper is presented within the framework of the work of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), with the objective of providing the Directors of Civil Aviation of the NAM/CAR Regions with technical information and analysis to serve as a basis for the exchange of views regarding possible regional approaches for the recognition of flight crew licenses, on a non-binding basis and without prejudice to the sovereign competencies of each State. Aeronautical personnel licenses are governed by international standards agreed within ICAO, particularly Annex 1 — Personnel Licensing, as well as by the provisions of the Chicago Convention. This regulatory framework establishes a common basis in terms of training, experience, medical certification, and language proficiency, which has fostered a high degree of international harmonization.

1.2 In the NAM/CAR Regions, these standards have been widely incorporated into national regulatory frameworks. However, differences persist in implementation approaches, levels of institutional development, and oversight capabilities among States. In this context, it is appropriate to analyze the advisability of flexible, gradual, and non-binding approaches that allow for the identification of common references and promote greater regional coherence, while fully recognizing the different national contexts and prerogatives.

2. CONSIDERATIONS

2.1 Taking into account the existing alignment with ICAO standards, the region has a solid foundation to examine the possibility of advancing towards a more structured and coherent approach to license recognition, based on common criteria. Without prejudice to national competencies, such an exercise could focus on identifying shared technical elements already present in most national systems, such as:

- Compliance with the applicable provisions of ICAO Annex 1
- Processes for verification of authenticity and validity of licenses
- Valid medical certification in accordance with international standards
- Compliance with language proficiency requirements

2.2 The identification of these common elements could contribute to strengthening mutual trust among authorities, which is a key factor in promoting more consistent practices. At the same time, any progress in this area should consider progressive and adaptable implementation, in accordance with the capacities and regulatory frameworks of each State. It is emphasized that this initiative is limited exclusively to the technical aspects of license recognition. Issues related to employment, labor relations, or immigration remain under the exclusive responsibility of each State and are expressly outside the scope of this document.

3. POSSIBLE STEPS TO CONSIDER

3.1 In order to guide regional exchange, and without prejudice to the sovereign decisions of each State, the following indicative steps are proposed:

3.1.1 Voluntary exchange of information

Facilitate the exchange of general information on national regulatory frameworks and current practices for license recognition or validation.

3.1.2 Identification of common elements

Identify, at the regional level, shared technical elements that may serve as references, in line with ICAO Annex 1.

3.1.3 Development of guiding criteria

Develop, if deemed appropriate, non-binding reference criteria for guidance purposes only.

3.1.4 Flexible and gradual adoption

Allow States, on a voluntary basis, to consider such criteria in accordance with their institutional capacities and legal frameworks.

3.1.5 Monitoring and feedback

Promote periodic review instances to share experiences, lessons learned, and potential adjustments.

4. REGIONAL EXPERIENCE IN THE SAM REGION

4.1 The experience developed in the South American (SAM) Region highlights the value of cooperative and progressive approaches, based on mutual respect and trust among authorities. Within the framework of various regional agreements and mechanisms, SAM States have promoted initiatives based on:

- Full respect for sovereignty and national legal frameworks
- Use of ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices as a common reference
- Strengthening of technical cooperation and information exchange
- Gradual implementation, avoiding rigid or uniform schemes

4.2 These experiences demonstrate that harmonization processes do not require the adoption of identical systems, but rather the identification of shared principles that facilitate compatibility and predictability among States. Lessons learned in the SAM Region may serve as a useful reference, adaptable to the context and needs of the NAM/CAR Regions.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The NAM/CAR Regions are in a favorable position to continue technical exchanges on license recognition, building on common principles, flexible approaches, and prior regional experiences. A gradual, voluntary, and non-binding approach could contribute to improving coherence and strengthening mutual trust among authorities, while providing greater predictability and efficiency for the aviation industry, supporting the sustained development of a safe, efficient, and competitive civil aviation system in the region.

5.2 The Meeting is invited to take note of the information presented in this Information Paper and to exchange views on the possible regional approaches described, as well as on the advisability of identifying common technical criteria of a voluntary and non-binding nature.

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