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**Eleventh Meeting of the North American, Central American and the Caribbean Working Group
(NACC/WG/11)**

Guatemala City, Guatemala, September 21-25, 2026

**Agenda Item 3: Presentation of the progress of the action plans of the NACC/WG Task Forces
and the progress in the regional work**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MINIMUM LONGITUDINAL SEPARATION OF 10 NM BETWEEN AIRCRAFT IN
CONTINENTAL AIRSPACE AND INTERREGIONAL COORDINATION NAM/CAR/SAM**

(Presented by Secretariat of SAM/IG)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
This paper addresses the activities carried out in the SAM Region for the implementation of the minimum longitudinal separation of 10 NM in continental airspace, in support of Recommendation 3.1/1 of the 14th ICAO Air Navigation Conference. It also proposes strengthening coordination between the CAR and SAM Regions to harmonize implementation plans, operational criteria and activities related to the CNS/ATM enabling elements required for the application of such separation.	
Action:	The actions are shown in section 4.
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	• Every Flight is Safe and Secure • Aviation is Environmentally Sustainable • 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>	• Recommendation 3.1/1 AN-Conf/14 Draft 30/10 • Report of SAM/IG/33 • Project B-1 GREPECAS - NEOSPACE

1. Introduction

1.1 The 14th ICAO Air Navigation Conference issued Recommendation 3.1/1 on the Optimized Application of Longitudinal Separation Minimums, promoting the evolution towards separation

of 30 NM in ocean space and 10 NM in continental airspace where the necessary operational and technological capabilities are in place.

1.2 In response to this recommendation, the SAM Region incorporated the implementation of the minimum longitudinal separation of 10 NM into its regional strategy for improving air navigation 2026-2028, considering it a priority solution to increase the capacity, efficiency and sustainability of air operations.

1.3 Likewise, the need for close coordination with the CAR and NAM Regions was identified, within the framework of joint airspace optimization initiatives under the GREPECAS B1 – NEOSPACE Project. See the details of GREPECAS programs and projects at the following link:

<https://www.icao.int/sites/default/files/GREPECAS/html/GREPECAS-Programmes.html>

2. Analysis

2.1 During SAM/IG/33 (Lima, 11-15 August 2025), SAM States discussed the need to progressively improve the current longitudinal separation minimums applied in continental airspace where 80 NM, 40 NM or 20 NM separations are still used due to ATS surveillance, communications or automation limitations.

2.2 SAM/IG/33 concluded that the implementation of the minimum longitudinal separation of 10 NM is a regional priority and adopted the goal of implementing, no later than 24 October 2030, ADS-B coverage and pilot-controller communications in continental airspace above FL290 within common FIR limits, as a key enabler for such separation.

2.3 Regional studies identified that the main enablers for this implementation include:

- a) ADS-B coverage in areas with ATS surveillance gaps.
- b) Adequate direct controller-pilot communications.
- c) Implementation and interoperability of the AIDC between adjacent CCAs.
- d) Exchange of ATS surveillance data between States.
- e) Progressive modernization of the ATM and CNS systems.

2.4 It is estimated that the reduction of separation minimums will make it possible to:

- a) Better access to optimal flight levels.
- b) Increase in airspace capacity.
- c) Reduction of tactical delays.
- d) Lower fuel consumption.
- e) Reduction of CO₂ emissions.
- f) Improved coordination between adjacent ACCs.

2.5 Meeting SAM/IG/34 (Lima, 24-28 August 2026) reviewed the progress of the working groups/study for the improvement of transregional airspace and the implementation of the FRT0,

including the coordination at the level of Rapporteurs and the Secretariat as part of the GREPECAS Project B1. Paper NE/4.2 is available at the following link:

<https://www.icao.int/filebrowser/download/143255?fid=143255#block-icao-page-title>

2.6 In turn, SAM/IG/34 analyzed the results of the First ATM/CNS meeting for the implementation of the minimum longitudinal separation of 10 NM between aircraft in continental space, which reflect that:

- a) there are ADS-B sensors installed in areas of common FIR boundary that should be integrated and used in tactical work in area control centers (ACC). Likewise, a wide potential is identified to advance in the sharing of ADS-B data between the neighbouring ACCs;
- b) in most States, projects are being developed to improve pilot-controller communications;
- c) in some ACCs the ATS automated equipment has recently been renewed, while in others these improvements are being planned;
- d) the need to accelerate and integrate these projects to solve the ATS communications and surveillance gaps is identified in a way that favors the implementation of optimized separation and, in general, the implementation of the elements of the FRT0 of the GANP that lead to the implementation of the free airspace (FRA). Y
- e) a great potential is identified to make it feasible to reduce the longitudinal separation between the adjoining PCAs.

The Summary (in Spanish only) of the aforementioned ATM/CSN meeting can be found at the following link:

<https://www.icao.int/filebrowser/download/100328?fid=100328#block-icao-page-title>

2.7 Considering the operational interdependencies between the CAR and SAM Region, particularly in the CAR/SAM interface airspaces, and analogously between NAM and CAR spaces, it is crucial to exchange information on similar initiatives underway and to harmonize technical and operational criteria for future 10 NM longitudinal separation applications.

2.8 It is relevant to note that, within the scope of the GREPECAS B1 project, the First Joint Air Traffic Management (ATM) Coordination Meeting of North America, the Caribbean and South America (NAM/CAR/SAM/ATM/1) has been convened to be held in Lima, Peru, from October 19 to 21, 2026. See the following link with information about this event:

<https://www.icao.int/SAM/meetingdocs?fid=138728#block-icao-page-title>

2.9 Finally, SAM/IG will be included in its 2027 work program, subject to the existence of budgets, the execution of a SAM ATS/ATFM Meeting and on ATM Contingency Plans, to discuss and approve improvements in longitudinal separation and update the corresponding letters of agreement. It was noted that the last meetings on these matters were held in 2022.

3. Conclusions

3.1 The implementation of the minimum longitudinal separation of 10 NM represents one of the main regional initiatives to improve the capacity and efficiency of the continental ATM system.

3.2 Successful implementation of this separation requires the coordinated development of CNS and ATM capabilities, including ADS-B surveillance, VHF communications, and ATS automation.

3.3 Cooperation between the NAM, CAR and SAM Regions will facilitate harmonised implementation and strengthen regional interoperability in support of the objectives of the GANP and the RANP CAR/SAM.

3.4 The Appendix to this document sets out a proposed Conclusion for the consideration of the Meeting.

4. Suggested action

4.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Take note of the information submitted and analyse the activities of the SAM Region on the minimum longitudinal separation of 10 NM, to identify common applicable practices for NACC/WG and SAM/IG;
- b) Exchange information on initiatives related to the optimization of longitudinal separation minimums;
- c) Consider coordination mechanisms between the NAM, CAR and SAM Regions for the harmonized implementation of the minimum longitudinal separation of 10 NM;
- d) Support the exchange of experiences related to ADS-B, AIDC, surveillance data exchange ATS and other associated enablers;
- e) To analyze and, if appropriate, approve the draft conclusion indicated in the appendix to this note.

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APPENDIX

DRAFT Conclusion NACC/WG/11	Interregional coordination NAM/CAR/SAM for the implementation of the longitudinal separation of 10 NM in continental space.	
What: That: Working Groups and Task Forces for the implementation of airspace improvements in the NAM and CAR Regions, in conjunction with their counterparts in the SAM Region, and with the support of the corresponding Regional Offices: a) Exchange information on plans and projects related to the implementation of the minimum longitudinal separation of 10 NM and its enabling elements CNS/ATM; y b) Participate in the implementation of the minimum longitudinal separation of 10 NM, as appropriate, through their specialists and rapporteurs, as part of relevant interregional coordination mechanisms, including the GREPECAS B1-NEOSPACE Project and the NAM/CAR/SAM/ATM Meeting.	Expected Impact: ☒ Political / Global ☒ Interregional ☐ Economics ☐ Environment ☒ Operational / Technical	
Why: With the purpose of promoting a harmonized application of the longitudinal separation of 10 NM between aircraft in cross-border continental airspace.		
When: Immediately. Report on progress to GREPECAS/24	Status: ☒ Valid / ☐ Superseded / ☐ Completed	
Who: ☒ States ☒ ICAO ☒ Others: Organizations and Industry		