



ICAO

International Civil Aviation Organization
North American, Central American and Caribbean Office
INFORMATION PAPER

NCMC/9 — IP/02

14/09/26

Ninth NAM/CAR Regional Meeting for National Continuous Monitoring Coordinators (NCMC/9)

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, from 14 to 18 September 2026

Agenda Item 8: Activities and Future Priorities

OVERVIEW OF THE REGIONAL AVIATION SAFETY GROUP – PAN AMERICA (RASG-PA) AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE SAFETY OVERSIGHT PRIORITIES OF THE GLOBAL AVIATION SAFETY PLAN 2026–2028

(Presented by Secretariat)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This information paper introduces the Regional Aviation Safety Group – Pan America (RASG-PA) to the NAM/CAR Regional Working Group for National Continuous Monitoring Coordinators: its purpose, how it operates, how it supports States and how States can participate in its work. It relates that work to the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) 2026–2028 targets on States' safety oversight capabilities in aircraft accident and incident investigation (AIG) and aerodromes and ground aids (AGA), and to air navigation services (ANS), which, together with AIG and AGA, recorded the lowest effective implementation (EI) among the audit areas across the Pan American Region (NAM, CAR and SAM) in 2024. It summarizes RASG-PA work in these areas, including the GASP monitoring mechanism approved by the RASG-PA Executive Steering Committee in September 2026, which draws on Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme data.

Strategic Objectives:

- Every Flight is Safe and Secure
- No Country Left Behind

References:

- Global Aviation Safety Plan 2026–2028 (Doc 10004)
- Manual on Monitoring Implementation of Regional and National Aviation Safety Plans (Doc 10162), Second Edition
- RASG-PA Procedural Handbook, Fifth Edition, Rev 1
- RASG-PA Annual Safety Report 2025
- RASG-PA/15 Summary of Discussions (2026)
- PA-RAST/71 Summary of Discussions (August 2026)
- RASG-PA ESC/41 Report (September 2026)
- RASG-PA Safety Issue Alert RSIA-01 (May 2024)
- RASG-PA Safety Advisory RSA-07C (October 2025)
- NAM/CAR/NCMC/WG Terms of Reference, 2026–2028

1. Introduction

1.1 The Regional Aviation Safety Group – Pan America (RASG-PA) was established in November 2008 to use the framework of the ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) to support a performance-based aviation safety system in the Pan American Region. Its mission is to reduce fatality risk in commercial aviation by ensuring the prioritization, coordination and implementation of data-driven safety enhancement initiatives, through the active involvement of all civil aviation stakeholders (RASG-PA Procedural Handbook, 1.1 and 2.2).

1.2 This paper provides the members of the NAM/CAR Regional Working Group for National Continuous Monitoring Coordinators (NAM/CAR/NCMC/WG) with an overview of RASG-PA and of how its work relates to the NAM/CAR/NCMC/WG objective of strengthening Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP) effective implementation (EI), safety oversight capability and readiness for the USOAP Continuous Monitoring Approach (CMA) (Terms of Reference of the NAM/CAR/NCMC/WG (ToR), Section 2).

1.3 The ToR task the NAM/CAR/NCMC/WG rapporteurs with ensuring effective coordination with regional implementation groups, to prevent duplication of efforts and make optimal use of available resources, expertise and shared regional experience (ToR, Section 4). RASG-PA is likewise intended to avoid duplication of effort, by ensuring that regional and sub-regional safety activities are coordinated among role players (RASG-PA Handbook, 1.4 and 9.1 d)).

2. RASG-PA: purpose, membership and structure

2.1 RASG-PA has two objectives: to develop an integrated, data-driven strategy and work programme to reduce commercial aviation fatality risk in the Region; and to support, monitor and report the implementation of the GASP by States, fostering cooperation among all States and stakeholders. It serves as a regional cooperative forum that integrates global, regional, national and industry efforts, reducing the financial and human resource burdens on States (RASG-PA Handbook, 1.4 and 3.1).

2.2 All ICAO Contracting States, and Territories recognized by ICAO, within the areas of accreditation of the ICAO North American, Central American and Caribbean (NACC) and South American (SAM) Regional Offices are RASG-PA members. Membership also includes international and regional aviation organizations, industry, and regional organizations such as regional safety oversight organizations (RSOOs) and regional accident and incident investigation organizations (RAIOs) (RASG-PA Handbook, 4.1).

2.3 RASG-PA works through:

- a) the Plenary, which all members are entitled to attend, ordinarily held once a year consecutively with the CAR/SAM Regional Planning and Implementation Group (GREPECAS), with which RASG-PA coordinates safety issues;
- b) the Executive Steering Committee (ESC), composed of State and international organization/industry representatives from both Regions, which approves the RASG-PA work plan, projects and Annual Safety Report; and
- c) the Pan America – Regional Aviation Safety Team (PA-RAST), which analyses safety data, develops safety enhancement initiatives (SEIs) and detailed

implementation plans (DIPs) to reduce fatality risk, and prepares the Annual Safety Report (RASG-PA Handbook, 4.4, 5, 6.6, 7.1.1 and 9.1).

2.4 The Regional Director of the ICAO NACC or SAM Regional Office serves as Secretary of RASG-PA (currently the NACC Regional Director), and RASG-PA reports its outcomes to the ICAO Council through the Air Navigation Commission (ANC) (RASG-PA Handbook, 5.1.3 and 10.1). The Regional Offices gather safety data and information from their accredited States, support the implementation of the regional safety plans and of ESC-approved projects, and lead and track the GASP requirements that are more related to compliance than to data-driven safety analysis (RASG-PA Handbook, 6.2 and 7.2.6).

2.5 Safety information shared or used in RASG-PA activities shall not be used for punitive enforcement action, and PA-RAST outputs are produced in de-identified format (RASG-PA Handbook, 3.2 c) and Appendix B, 1.1).

3. GASP 2026–2028 priorities for States’ safety oversight capabilities

3.1 Under GASP Goal 2, the 2028 targets on States’ safety oversight capabilities address:

- a) sufficient financial resources for each safety oversight authority (Target 2.1);
- b) qualified technical personnel (CE-4) in aircraft accident and incident investigation (AIG) and in aerodromes and ground aids (AGA) (Target 2.2); and
- c) the resolution of safety issues (CE-8) in AGA (Target 2.3).

3.2 Under Goal 4, regions are to identify, by 2026, the States that need assistance to address these and other safety issues (Target 4.1), and to facilitate the required assistance by 2028 (Target 4.2) (GASP, Table 5-1).

3.3 Across the States accredited to the ICAO NACC and SAM Regional Offices, AIG, AGA and air navigation services (ANS) were the three audit areas with the lowest EI in 2024, and EI in AGA and ANS remained below the aggregate EI in each year from 2021 to 2024 (RASG-PA Annual Safety Report 2025). At the Fifth GREPECAS–RASG-PA Joint Meeting, held in Mexico City in March 2026 during the Fifteenth Meeting of RASG-PA (RASG-PA/15), the Secretariat reported stagnation in EI indicators, particularly in AGA and ANS, and continued low implementation of accident investigation capabilities (RASG-PA/15 Summary of Discussions, Appendix B).

3.4 The GASP also links these domains to operational safety risk. Among the contributing factors it associates with the global high-risk categories of occurrences (G-HRCs), it lists inadequate regulatory oversight for runway excursion (RE), and several factors that fall within ANS and AGA (GASP, Table 3-1):

- a) approach design, for controlled flight into terrain (CFIT) and RE;
- b) air traffic control performance and systems, surveillance and airspace design, for mid-air collision (MAC);
- c) aerodrome design, equipment and signage, for runway incursion (RI); and
- d) inadequate reporting of runway surface conditions, for RE.

4. RASG-PA work related to these priorities

4.1 *GASP monitoring mechanism.* RASG-PA/15 analysed the stagnation of GASP implementation indicators in areas including aerodromes and air navigation services. By Decision RASG-PA/15/D04, it tasked the PA-RAST with proposing a mechanism to strengthen their monitoring. At its Forty-First Meeting (ESC/41, Mexico City, 2–3 September 2026), the ESC approved the mechanism as the Region’s means of implementing GASP Targets 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3. The PA-RAST is to finalize the core indicator set using the GASP indicator forms in Doc 10162 and to present the first consolidated monitoring report, including the initial identification of States needing assistance under Target 4.1, to the Forty-Second Meeting of the ESC (ESC/42). For the safety oversight targets, those indicator forms draw on the USOAP CMA online framework (OLF). RASG-PA/15 underlined that individual States retain ultimate responsibility for taking corrective actions.

4.2 Because the mechanism relies on OLF information, how current that information is matters. ICAO notes that, depending on the time elapsed since the last USOAP activity and the update of a State’s EI score, GASP indicators may not reflect the State’s actual safety oversight and accident and incident investigation capabilities (Doc 10162). The NAM/CAR/NCMC/WG objective of ensuring accurate and timely USOAP CMA OLF updates (ToR, Section 2) therefore also supports an accurate regional picture and the timely identification of assistance needs.

4.3 *Aircraft accident and incident investigation.* By Decision RASG-PA/15/D02, RASG-PA created an Ad hoc Group to support States in the production of accident investigation reports. Led by Boeing and composed of Belize, the United States, Airbus, the Latin American and Caribbean Air Transport Association (ALTA) and the Regional Aviation Accident Investigation Group (GRIAA), with coordination support from the Secretariat, the Group is to identify mechanisms for supporting States in completing investigations and issuing final reports. It is to submit to the Sixteenth Meeting of RASG-PA (RASG-PA/16) a baseline diagnostic of pending accident investigation reports in the Pan American Region, with recommendations for a regional support strategy. RASG-PA/15 suggested that the Group prioritize collaboration with existing regional accident investigation mechanisms, to avoid duplication. The Seventy-First PA-RAST Meeting (PA-RAST/71, São Paulo, Brazil, August 2026) subsequently agreed to add the Flight Safety Foundation (FSF) to the Group.

4.4 *Aerodromes and runway safety.* RASG-PA/15 urged States to prioritize the establishment of collaborative Runway Safety Teams (RSTs) at all remaining international airports, and requested civil aviation authorities to gather evidence of implementation and report it to the ICAO Regional Offices. At ESC/41, the ESC further agreed that:

- a) the Secretariat survey States, air navigation services providers (ANSPs) and airport operators using an RST effectiveness tool; and
- b) a work scheme be defined establishing a two-way information channel between local RSTs and the PA-RAST, through the Regional Offices’ AGA officers.

4.5 The PA-RAST has also circulated to States and Territories a tracker on implementation of the Global Action Plan for the Prevention of Runway Incursions (GAPPRI), covering aerodromes, aircraft operators, ANSPs and regulators; submissions remain open. States have been invited to connect their national aerodrome and runway safety team contacts to the RASG-PA runway safety work.

4.6 The PA-RAST is also developing three RASG-PA Safety Advisories, due by the Seventy-Second PA-RAST Meeting (PA-RAST/72), on:

- a) runway markings and touchdown-point awareness;
- b) lessons from a barrier analysis of four runway collision occurrences, mapped against the GAPPRI recommendations; and
- c) gaps in the reporting of wet and slippery runway conditions, including runway condition codes and braking action reports.

4.7 Wildlife strikes are not yet the subject of a RASG-PA project. Following an analysis by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and ALTA presented at RASG-PA/15, which found bird strike rates in Latin America and the Caribbean significantly above the global average, the PA-RAST treats wildlife as a cross-cutting topic and is to determine by PA-RAST/72 which of its high-risk category project teams will address it.

4.8 *Air navigation services.* By Conclusion RASG-PA/15/C03, the Secretariat is to review the coordination processes in the RASG-PA and GREPECAS procedural handbooks and propose a more robust mechanism for engagement between ANSPs and regulators, for approval at the next RASG-PA/GREPECAS joint session.

4.9 The PA-RAST MAC project team works with the GREPECAS Scrutiny Working Group (GTE) on large height deviations (LHDs) in reduced vertical separation minimum (RVSM) airspace. The GTE's report to RASG-PA/15 found that vertical collision risk in CAR/SAM RVSM airspace in 2024 remained within the target level of safety overall, although risk levels in several flight information regions exceeded it, and that air traffic control coordination failures were the most frequent LHD category. The report stressed that timely and accurate data from States to the CAR/SAM Monitoring Agency (CARSAMMA) is critical to the reliability of regional safety assessments (RASG-PA/15, 3.10 and 3.11). As a result of the joint PA-RAST/GTE collaboration, a RASG-PA Regional Safety Advisory on LHDs in RVSM airspace was published in 2026; a second advisory, on unauthorized RVSM operations, is under development.

4.10 An ad hoc group established by the PA-RAST and led by the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO) coordinates action, with IATA, ALTA and the ICAO Secretariat, on hotspots of traffic alert and collision avoidance system resolution advisories (TCAS RAs) in several terminal areas of the Region. At PA-RAST/71, IATA reported that some of the States concerned have acknowledged procedure design contributions and initiated airspace redesign with industry collaboration.

4.11 *Controlled flight into terrain.* RASG-PA Safety Issue Alert RSIA-01 (May 2024) warns air carrier operators, ANSPs and civil aviation authorities of the increased CFIT risk when incorrect barometric altimeter settings are used on area navigation (RNAV) approaches, particularly at airports without an instrument landing system. In these conditions, the aircraft's flight path can remain outside the terrain clearance floor alert envelope of the terrain awareness and warning system (TAWS). TAWS is performing as designed, and a Too Low Terrain alert may not be generated; as RSIA-01 notes, air traffic controllers may then be the only remaining safety barrier against CFIT. Among other measures, RSIA-01 recommends that ANSPs ensure accurate altimeter settings are issued and correctly read back, and that controllers verify the barometric units in use when they suspect a flight crew is using different units. The PA-RAST CFIT project team is updating RSIA-01, by PA-RAST/72, to recommend raised minima for States using hectopascal altimeter settings — an exposure that extends to much of South America and parts of the

Caribbean — together with research by States, operators and associations into the prevalence of the issue in their own operations.

4.12 RASG-PA Safety Advisory RSA-07C (October 2025), which references RSIA-01, recommends that States:

- a) include the verification of operators' terrain databases and TAWS software in their continuous surveillance processes;
- b) monitor the reliability and age of their terrain and obstacle data; and
- c) require, in their regulations, the use of global navigation satellite systems (GNSS) as the position source for operators' TAWS.

4.13 At PA-RAST/71, the PA-RAST began mapping its products against the actions of the Global Aviation Safety Roadmap (Doc 10161) for regions and industry, assigning a custodian, a metric and a date to every accepted gap; the consolidated framework is to be presented at PA-RAST/72, and the results of the related high-risk category prioritization are to be relayed to the NACC and SAM Regional Offices as input to the development and review of regional aviation safety plans. The CFIT mapping identified the mitigation of GNSS radio frequency interference as a gap, and GNSS interference was integrated into the work plan of the CFIT project team, to assess its impact on CFIT and discuss mitigations. PA-RAST/71 also asked States to identify the causes of GNSS signal loss in their airspace, publish NOTAMs in a timely manner and preserve a minimum operational network of conventional navigation aids, consistent with ICAO guidance.

5. How States can participate

5.1 As RASG-PA members, States are entitled to participate in the Plenary, including the election of ESC members and the adoption of RASG-PA decisions, conclusions and statements. Members may attend ESC meetings as observers, subject to prior coordination, and State representatives may take part as PA-RAST members and in its high-risk category project teams. Where a State and its industry have established a Collaborative Safety Team (CST), the CST may appoint representatives to attend PA-RAST meetings (RASG-PA Handbook, 4.4, 5.3.3 and Appendix B, 1.3.2, 1.3.4 and 2.2.1).

5.2 The RASG-PA Handbook provides that civil aviation authorities, supported by service providers as necessary, should participate in the work of RASG-PA and its contributory bodies in order, among other things, to contribute information on safety risk, harmonize national plans with the regional and global plans, and use the Annual Safety Report and the safety performance indicator (SPI) dashboard for data-driven decision-making (RASG-PA Handbook, 6.3.1). Where RASG-PA projects involve States, interactions on behalf of RASG-PA directly involve the corresponding ICAO Regional Office (RASG-PA Handbook, 7.2.4).

5.3 States can also bring their own perspective on safety risks to the regional picture. Recognizing that regional analyses rely predominantly on data from North American operators through established industry frameworks, RASG-PA/15 supported the voluntary reporting by States of high-level operational safety trends and aggregated occurrence information to the PA-RAST, so that regional trends can also be identified from a State perspective. Participation is voluntary, and a CST is not a prerequisite (RASG-PA/15, 10.1 to 10.5). A pilot proof-of-concept, with the NACC Regional Office as data aggregator, is being launched under a framework endorsed at ESC/41, and its results are to be presented to

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RASG-PA/16. At PA-RAST/71, State inputs presented during the meeting were part of the regional evidence reviewed to confirm the high-risk categories on which the PA-RAST works. Given its focus on safety data analysis (RASG-PA Handbook, 5.4.1), the PA-RAST welcomes safety data from States as well as from industry, and invites States to present at PA-RAST meetings to share their perspective on the safety risks in their own States. This helps the PA-RAST identify safety risks and, where the same risks are observed in more than one State, confirm that they are systemic across the Region.

5.4 Upcoming opportunities to participate include PA-RAST/72 (Lima, Peru, 9–12 November 2026) and RASG-PA/16. Enquiries may be addressed to the RASG-PA Secretariat at rasgpa@icao.int.

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