



Fifteenth Meeting of the Regional Aviation Safety Group – Pan America (RASG-PA/15) and Fifth RASG-PA–GREPECAS Joint Meeting (RASG-PA–GREPECAS/5)
Mexico City, Mexico, 2 to 4 March 2026

Agenda Item 8: Other business to be addressed in the virtual phase

TRIAL REDUCTION IN THE FREQUENCY OF PA-RAST MEETINGS

(Presented by the PA-RAST)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This working paper presents a proposal to temporarily reduce the frequency of the Pan America Regional Aviation Safety Team (PA-RAST) meetings in 2026 from four to three. The trial period will allow to evaluate any adverse impacts on the group’s effectiveness in delivering its safety mandate. This proposal is in response to stakeholder requests to reduce travel commitments associated with participation in PA-RAST.

Action:	Approve temporary reduction of PA-RAST meeting calendar in 2026, as presented in Section 5.
<i>Strategic Goals 2026-2050:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every flight is safe and secure
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RASG-PA Procedural Handbook, Fifth Edition, Rev. 1 • RASG-PA ESC/39 Report, Mexico City, 29–30 May 2024 • RASG-PA ESC/40 Summary of Discussions, Lima, 28–29 May 2025

1. Introduction

1.1 To fulfil its safety mandate, and in support of its various safety management activities and initiatives, the Pan America Regional Aviation Safety Team (PA-RAST) holds quarterly in-person meetings at various locations in the Americas. PA-RAST’s collaborative approach is recognized globally as having a significant contribution to aviation safety.

1.2 That being said, some PA-RAST member States and industry organizations have requested that changes to PA-RAST's current meeting calendar (e.g. reducing number of meetings) and meeting arrangements (e.g. offering virtual connection options) be considered to address pressures associated with travel. While these do not appear to be generalized concerns, it is felt that PA-RAST must consider this request to ensure the long-term sustainability of the group, which depends on broad commitment of its members.

1.3 In response to these concerns, this working paper presents a proposal to reduce the frequency, on a trial basis, of PA-RAST meetings for 2026. The proposal is suggested to be undertaken on a trial basis to confirm that reducing the frequency of meetings will not significantly affect the outputs/outcomes of the Pan-America Regional Aviation Safety Team.

2. Current PA-RAST meeting structure

2.1 The following quarterly in-person meeting schedule (four meetings per year) has helped maintaining strong commitment to safety activities and ensured the forward momentum of PA-RAST since its beginning over 15 years ago. Holding meetings in various locations increases PA-RAST's outreach, as there is often a higher level of local participation at each meeting location. This helps PA-RAST to maintain effective engagement across the Americas with:

- one spring and one fall meeting, alternating between ICAO NACC (Mexico) and ICAO SAM (Lima) Regional Offices.
- one winter and one summer meeting, held at various locations in the Americas (hosted by States or industry members).

2.2 Quarterly meetings are 2.5 days in duration, and a typical agenda is structured as follows:

- one day – Infoshare approach – operational safety presentations from members and industry safety partners on current safety topics, such as emerging risks in the region, analysis and lessons learned from a past event
- one day – Safety data review and trending {Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing System (ASIAS) and IATA flight data}, evaluation of necessary actions based on operational data (ad-hoc project or assigned to existing project team), review of High-Risk Category (HRC) project team activities
- half day – Administration items and other business (e.g. annual safety report).

2.3 In addition to the PA-RAST quarterly meetings, PA-RAST HRC project teams and other Ad hoc Groups created to complete specific projects all conduct work on an ongoing basis throughout the year and convene virtually on a regular basis to ensure progress between each PA-RAST in-person meeting.

3. Analysis of alternative meeting options

3.1 Replace one or more in-person meetings with virtual meetings:

3.1.1 During the COVID-19 pandemic, PA-RAST quickly transitioned to virtual-only meetings. The virtual format, combined with the language barrier was not conducive to the type of exchange the group experienced before the pandemic and has since recovered after returning to in-person meetings. Furthermore, as data sharing is not supported for virtual meetings, during the pandemic the group stagnated and PA-RAST saw a significant loss of momentum, engagement, as well as access to the key data needed to support the team's data centric mission.

3.1.2 Considering the limitations above, and the fact that PA-RAST individual project teams already meet virtually several times throughout the year, holding any or all of the broader PA-RAST quarterly meetings virtually is not perceived as being an alternative to in-person meetings that would effectively support the group's intended objectives.

3.2 Offer hybrid connection option for PA-RAST meetings:

3.2.1 PA-RAST already includes the hybrid option for targeted interventions by individuals who are not attending the full meeting (e.g. a person calling in to present a specific topic and then disconnecting).

3.2.2 Similar to virtual meetings, hybrid meetings are not considered to offer an acceptable level of protection for sharing sensitive information. Hybrid meetings also present challenges in interaction between in-person and virtual attendants. Hybrid connection options should continue to be considered for targeted presentations that do not require a protected environment but are not considered as being an alternative to in-person meetings that would effectively support the group's intended objectives.

3.3 Restructure meeting format and reduce the number of PA-RAST in-person meetings.

3.3.1 PA-RAST could condense the current four meetings per year (each three days in duration) into three meetings per year (each four days in duration). As part of this change, PA-RAST would restructure the approach to how each individual meeting is organized and structured as part of a broader meeting cycle (i.e. different objectives and approaches for each meeting in the year). The group would also consider alignment of PA-RAST meetings with other recurring events in the Americas, such as the ALTA Safety Summit. The new schedule for PA-RAST could be, conceptually, in February, June and November.

3.3.2 In addition, under the current quarterly meeting calendar, there is an agreement that two of the four annual meetings are to be held at the ICAO Regional Offices. If reduced to three meetings per year, it may be more appropriate to hold only one meeting per year at an ICAO Regional Office. This would allow for more meetings to take place at various locations across the Americas and maximise the group's outreach.

4. Conclusion

4.1 PA-RAST already includes many virtual and hybrid meetings in the conduct of its ongoing activities. However, the context of PA-RAST quarterly meetings is not considered suitable for virtual or hybrid options. The group strongly believes in the value of quarterly PA-RAST in-person meetings. While reducing the number of these in-person meetings presents a risk, given that they have been a key driver for the group, not looking to address the financial concerns identified by our members also presents a risk.

4.2 There is an opportunity, as described in 3.3, to restructure the approach to how PA-RAST meetings are conducted, and try to achieve similar safety objectives by reducing the frequency in meetings while extending their duration.

4.3 PA-RAST proposes to proceed on a trial basis for calendar year 2026 with the approach described in 3.3. Given that two States have already committed to hosting PA-RAST meetings in February 2026 and August 2026, the 2026 PA-RAST in-person meeting calendar would be February 2026 (three days), August 2026 (four days) and November 2026 (four days). Note that the revised 2026 calendar would mean a six-month interval between the February and August meetings, and a three-month interval between the August and November meetings. At RASG-PA Plenary/16 in March 2027, PA-RAST would present its conclusions of the trial with a view to making the changes permanent if the experience has proven effective and has not adversely impacted the group's capacity to deliver on its mandate of improving aviation safety.

5. Suggested Actions

5.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) take note of the stakeholder's request to reduce the number of PA-RAST in-person meetings;
- b) consider the options identified in Section three of this working paper to address stakeholders feedback; and
- c) approve the proposal shown in 4.3 for completing in 2026 a trial restructuring and reduction in the number of PA-RAST meetings.