



**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**

**EXTENSION OF AUTHORIZATION FOR THE USE OF RASG-PA FUNDS TO SUPPORT INTERPRETATION SERVICES FOR PA-RAST MEETINGS**

(Presented by Secretariat)

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This working paper presents the background, impact, and operational value of providing simultaneous interpretation services for PA-RAST meetings. It demonstrates that simultaneous interpretation has significantly enhanced participation, inclusiveness, and the quality of technical safety discussions from 2023 to 2025. The paper reviews meeting outcomes, participation trends, and associated costs, and proposes converting the current temporary arrangement into a standing RASG-PA operational support mechanism.

<b>Actions:</b>	Presented in Section 5.
<i>Strategic Goals 2026-2050:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every flight is safe and secure</li> <li>• Aviation delivers seamless, accessible, and reliable mobility for all</li> </ul>
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RASG-PA Procedural Handbook (5th Edition, Rev. 1, 2024)</li> <li>• ESC/38 Summary of Discussions</li> </ul>

**1. Introduction**

1.1 During the ESC/38 (2023), the Executive Steering Committee considered working paper 04, presented by Canada, which highlighted that language limitations restricted interaction and could negatively affect the effectiveness of communication during PA-RAST meetings. Following the discussion, the ESC approved *Decision ESC/38/D03*, authorizing the provision of simultaneous interpretation services for PA-RAST meetings on an “as-needed” basis, with a financial ceiling of USD 56,000.

1.2 The discussion preceding the decision explicitly recognized that the availability of interpretation was essential to ensure equitable participation and to enable experts to express technical considerations without the barrier of a foreign language. This measure was implemented to enhance communication effectiveness, promote inclusiveness, and support more robust exchanges during PA-RAST meetings.

1.3 Two years after ESC/38, reports of PA-RAST meetings demonstrate sustained growth in participation by States, industry, and international organizations. These reports consistently highlight that the meetings have benefited from broad and diverse representation, with increased contributions from regulators, Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs), operators, manufacturers, and pilot associations across the Region.

## **2. Background**

2.1 The PA-RAST/62 (2024) and PA-RAST/63 (2024) meetings reported continuous engagement from project champions, operators and Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEMs), and emphasized multi-stakeholder interaction in the development of safety advisories, emerging risk analyses, and Collaborative Safety Team (CST) support activities. Although these reports do not explicitly reference language as an obstacle, they show robust participation across multiple linguistic backgrounds.

2.2 The PA-RAST/65 (2024) meeting noted the “growth and importance of the Group for aviation safety in the region”, highlighting the relevance of meetings for exchanging sensitive information, discussing emerging risks, and presenting operational safety data. The ability of participants to engage comfortably and productively in such discussions is supported by the presence of interpretation services.

2.3 The PA-RAST/68 (2025) meeting report explicitly states that the event had a “broad and diverse representation” involving nine States and nineteen international and industry organizations, and that this diversity strengthened the Team’s collective efforts. The record shows that the capacity to engage actively has increased, particularly in technical discussions and in the presentation of safety issues by States and operators whose first language is not English.

2.4 Similarly, the PA-RAST/69 (2025) report documents participation by 48 delegates from multiple linguistic backgrounds. The meeting benefitted from substantial contributions by States and industry members, including ANSPs, airlines, and international organizations. The discussion of safety data, CST progress, Aerial work (AWx) and Mid-Air Collision (MAC) projects, and other initiatives was enriched by the high participation level.

2.5 Taken together, these meeting reports demonstrate a consistent pattern: higher participation, broader representation, and more active engagement, enabled in part by the removal of language-related barriers. Interpretation services allow subject-matter experts to express technical views in their own language, reducing hesitation and fostering more confident and substantive contributions.

### 3. Discussion

3.1 The increasing complexity of regional safety issues—particularly in high-risk categories such as Controlled Flight into Terrain (CFIT), Loss of control in-flight (LOC-I), Runway Excursion (RE), MAC, and Adverse Weather—demands full engagement of all regional stakeholders. Ensuring effective participation from all States and industry partners is integral to maintaining the quality and usefulness of PA-RAST outputs.

3.2 The results observed since ESC/38 confirm the operational value of interpretation services. The PA-RAST relies on expert contributions from Spanish-speaking and Portuguese-speaking authorities and operators, many of whom participate more effectively when able to interact without linguistic constraints.

3.3 Interpretation services have become an enabling factor that directly supports:

- fuller participation of States with developing safety programmes,
- more open exchanges during analysis of emerging risks,
- increased confidence among participants to present sensitive or complex safety data,
- richer dialogue during discussions of safety advisories and project deliverables.

#### 3.4 Estimated Annual Cost Of Interpretation Services

3.4.1 Based on updated cost estimates for the provision of simultaneous interpretation services for PA-RAST meetings, it is possible to establish a reasonable annual budgetary reference to support planning and decision-making by the RASG-PA.

3.4.2 The current estimate considers the provision of professional simultaneous interpretation services at an average unit cost of approximately USD 1,500 per day, applied to an estimated total of ten meeting days per year, corresponding to four PA-RAST meetings of 2.5 days each. This results in an estimated annual cost of approximately USD 15,000 for interpretation services.

3.4.3 In addition, when PA-RAST meetings are held outside ICAO Regional Offices, the rental of interpretation equipment is required. Based on recent quotations, the estimated cost for equipment rental is approximately USD 7,500 per meeting. Assuming that such rental is required for two meetings per year, this represents an additional annual cost of approximately USD 15,000.

3.4.4 On this basis, the total estimated annual cost for the provision of simultaneous interpretation services for PA-RAST meetings amounts to approximately USD 30,000. This estimate is intended solely for planning purposes and does not imply a fixed or mandatory expenditure level, noting that interpretation services continue to be applied strictly on an “as-needed” basis and may not be required for all meetings or for their full duration.

3.4.5 It is further noted that this financial support is exceptional in nature. As a general practice within ICAO meetings, States that volunteer to host meetings are normally expected to assume responsibility for local logistical arrangements, including, inter alia, the provision of interpretation services. The use of RASG-PA funds for interpretation is therefore primarily intended to support PA-RAST meetings that are not hosted by a State, such as those held with the support of industry at neutral venues (e.g. Miami), where no host State assumes responsibility for interpretation arrangements. In this context, the application of RASG-PA funds constitutes a targeted and exceptional measure, justified by the operational characteristics of PA-RAST meetings and their reliance on broad, multilingual expert participation.

3.5 Given that *Decision ESC/38/D03* authorized interpretation services only within a fixed period and budget, RASG-PA now faces the risk of losing an essential mechanism that has demonstrably improved the functioning of PA-RAST meetings. In the absence of continued support, participation could diminish and the inclusiveness of the risk-mitigation process could be compromised.

3.6 In light of the role of interpretation in fostering regional collaboration, and considering the sustained multilingual participation observed in PA-RAST meetings from 2023 to 2025, it is justified that the authorization granted under *ESC/38/D03* be converted from a temporary measure into a standing provision of the RASG-PA operational framework.

#### **4. Proposal**

4.1 Considering the documented increase in participation levels at PA-RAST meetings over the last two years, and recalling that *Decision ESC/38/D03* successfully demonstrated the operational value of providing interpretation services to ensure inclusive, effective communication among States and industry stakeholders, it is appropriate for RASG-PA to institutionalize this support mechanism. The continued availability of interpretation services has enabled participants to express technical viewpoints in their own language, thereby improving the quality of safety discussions, strengthening collaboration, and fostering broader and more confident engagement. To preserve these benefits and ensure continuity in PA-RAST activities, the Meeting is invited to consider the following Draft Decision.

<b>DRAFT DECISION</b>	
<b>RASG-PA RASG-PA/15/Dxx</b>	<b>CONTINUATION OF INTERPRETATION SERVICES FOR PA-RAST MEETINGS</b>
<p><b>What:</b></p> <p>That, with a view to ensuring inclusive and effective participation of States and industry stakeholders in technical safety discussions, particularly in meetings where no host State assumes responsibility for interpretation arrangements, and subject to the application of RASG-PA financial resources in accordance with the approved policies and monitoring mechanisms:</p> <p>a) RASG-PA approve the funding of the provision of simultaneous interpretation services for PA-RAST meetings, as necessary, as a permanent operational support mechanism.; and</p> <p>b) the Secretariat amend the Procedural Handbook to include English-Spanish interpretation as a requirement for PA-RAST meetings, detailing the different sources of funding for such services according to the location of the meeting.</p>	<p><b>Expected impact:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Political / Global</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Inter-regional</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Economic</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Environmental</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Operational/Technical</p>
<p><b>How much:</b></p> <p>RASG-PA funds will be used, on an exceptional and as-needed basis, in accordance with the RASG-PA Policy for the Utilization of Financial Resources, subject to an annual ceiling of <b>USD 30,000</b>, with expenditures reported through the established monitoring mechanisms.</p>	
<p><b>Why:</b></p> <p>To sustain the increased participation, inclusiveness, and effectiveness of PA-RAST meetings observed following Decision ESC/38/D03, ensuring that all stakeholders can fully contribute to technical discussions and safety risk mitigation activities regardless of language proficiency.</p>	
<p><b>When:</b> Immediately</p>	<p><b>Status:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Valid / <input type="checkbox"/> Superseded / <input type="checkbox"/> Completed</p>
<p><b>Who:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> States <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ICAO <input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>	

**5. Suggested Action**

5.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) take note of the background and discussion presented in this working paper regarding the implementation and impact of *Decision ESC/38/D03* on PA-RAST meetings;
- b) recognize that the provision of simultaneous interpretation services has contributed to increased participation, inclusiveness, and effectiveness of PA-RAST discussions over the last two years;
- c) approve *Draft Decision RASG-PA/15/DXX* on the continuation of interpretation services for PA-RAST meetings, as presented in Section 4 of this Working Paper; and
- d) instruct the Secretariat and PA-RAST Co-Chairs to plan and implement PA-RAST meetings on an as-needed basis with English-Spanish simultaneous interpretation, and to continue reporting related expenditures under the established RASG-PA financial monitoring mechanisms.

— END —