



WORKING PAPER

RASG-PA/15 — WP/07

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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

FILLING OF PAN AMERICAN REGIONAL AVIATION SAFETY TEAM (PA-RAST) AND REGIONAL AVIATION SAFETY GROUP – PAN AMERICA (RASG-PA) LEADERSHIP VACANCIES

(Presented by Secretariat)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper proposes a coordinated approach to address existing and potential leadership vacancies within the Pan American Regional Aviation Safety Team (PA-RAST) and the Regional Aviation Safety Group – Pan America (RASG-PA) Executive Steering Committee (ESC). It invites the Plenary to ratify the extraordinary PA-RAST elections to be held during the 70th Pan American Regional Aviation Safety Team Meeting (PA-RAST/70) (February 2026) and to authorize the Secretariat to conduct complementary elections for the vacant RASG-PA Vice-Co-Chair positions.

Action:	As presented in Section 3.
<i>Strategic Goals 2026-2050:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Every flight is safe and secure ● Aviation delivers seamless, accessible, and reliable mobility for all
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● RASG-PA Procedural Handbook (5th Edition, Rev. 1, 2024); ● RASG-PA/13 and RASG-PA/14 Final Reports; ● ESC/40 Summary of Discussions; ● PA-RAST/68 Report.

1. Introduction

1.1 During the Thirteenth Meeting of the Regional Aviation Safety Group – Pan America (RASG-PA/13), under Conclusion *RASG-PA13/C6/2023*, RASG-PA elected new Co-Chairs and Vice Co-Chairs for the 2023–2026 triennium. Subsequently, both RASG-PA Vice-Co-Chair positions became vacant, and no elections were held to fill these vacancies. In 2025, the Co-Chair position representing the States also became vacant, leaving the Group with only the Industry Co-Chair. To ensure continuity of leadership, Canada agreed to provisionally designate the current State Co-Chair of the Pan American Regional Aviation Safety Team (PA-RAST) to also serve as State Co-Chair of the RASG-PA until the end of the current term.

1.2 Similarly, within the PA-RAST, the Vice-Chair elections that should have been conducted in November 2024 were not held. As a result, the regular succession cycle was disrupted, requiring extraordinary elections to restore leadership continuity and ensure a proper transition to the next cycle.

1.3 To ensure continuity of leadership, the PA-RAST will conduct extraordinary elections during its 70th Meeting (PA-RAST/70) in February 2026. The purpose of these elections is to address any vacancies in its Co-Chair or Vice-Chair positions and to restore the regular succession cycle for the next term.

1.4 In accordance with the RASG-PA Procedural Handbook (5th Edition, Rev. 1, 2024), the results of PA-RAST elections are subject to ratification by the RASG-PA Executive Steering Committee (ESC). This process ensures transparency, consistency, and appropriate validation within the regional governance framework.

1.5 In parallel, the RASG-PA ESC continues to operate with vacancies in both Vice-Co-Chair positions (States and Industry), which should be filled for the remainder of the current 2023–2026 cycle.

2. Discussion

2.1 RASG-PA LEADERSHIP ELECTION AND RATIFICATION PROCESS

2.1.1 The approval and ratification process for RASG-PA leadership positions follows two sequential actions. Once the Executive Steering Committee (ESC) completes the internal selection of candidates for Co-Chair and Vice-Co-Chair positions, the proposed leadership must be formally approved by the members of the RASG-PA during the corresponding Plenary meeting of the election year. This approval is formalized through a Plenary Decision, which confirms the mandates of the elected Co-Chairs and Vice-Co-Chairs for the established three-year term.

2.1.2 The Procedural Handbook establishes that, when a RASG-PA Co-Chair is unable to complete the three-year term, the Vice-Co-Chair assumes the Co-Chair responsibilities, and the State or Organization of the outgoing Co-Chair designates a replacement Vice-Co-Chair. However, the current situation, marked by the simultaneous vacancy of the Co-Chair and both Vice-Co-Chair positions, is not contemplated in the Handbook, making the standard succession mechanism inapplicable. In such circumstances, the reconstitution of the RASG-PA leadership must be submitted to the RASG-PA Plenary for formal approval.

2.1.3 The Procedural Handbook does not define quorum requirements or voting modalities for the ESC's internal selection process. Therefore, the internal selection of candidates for Co-Chair and Vice-Co-Chair may take place during any duly convened ESC meeting, whether in-person or virtual, using the modalities agreed upon by its members. The resulting nominations shall then be submitted to the RASG-PA Plenary for approval in accordance with the established procedure.

2.2 PA-RAST LEADERSHIP ELECTION AND RATIFICATION PROCESS

2.2.1 The election and ratification process for PA-RAST leadership positions operates under a distinct but complementary mechanism, reflecting its technical function under the oversight of the ESC. Elections for PA-RAST Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs are conducted by the active members of the PA-RAST and are formalized through the submission of a Working Paper to the RASG-PA Executive Steering Committee. The date on which the ESC approves this submission marks the official start of the two-year term of office for the elected PA-RAST Co-Chairs and Vice-Chairs.

2.2.2 The Procedural Handbook allows the PA-RAST election process to occur outside a physical meeting; however, the essential act of selection and confirmation must take place within the structured forum of a PA-RAST meeting, whether conducted in person or virtually. If an election is not carried out during an in-person session, the nomination must still be confirmed by the PA-RAST members at the next scheduled quarterly meeting before formalization by the ESC.

2.2.3 This procedure ensures that PA-RAST elections remain transparent and traceable within the established meeting structure, and that the formalization process through the ESC maintains consistency with the overall governance of RASG-PA.

2.3 ACCUMULATION OF LEADERSHIP ROLES

2.3.1 Based on the existing procedural framework, there is no explicit provision in RASG-PA governance documents that prevents an individual from simultaneously serving as Co-Chair of RASG-PA and Co-Chair of PA-RAST.

2.3.2 Nevertheless, the RASG-PA structure establishes a clear distinction between executive and technical leadership levels. The RASG-PA Co-Chairs exercise an executive role, presiding over the RASG-PA Plenary and leading the ESC, which oversees all RASG-PA activities. Conversely, the PA-RAST Co-Chairs perform a technical coordination role, focusing on safety data analysis and the implementation of regional safety enhancement initiatives.

2.3.3 The PA-RAST reports directly to the RASG-PA Executive Steering Committee, and its Co-Chairs are responsible for presenting the outcomes of technical work to the ESC for review and endorsement. This hierarchical relationship ensures that the RASG-PA Co-Chairs retain executive oversight of the work carried out by the PA-RAST, while the PA-RAST Co-Chairs remain accountable for technical progress and implementation.

2.3.4 While the simultaneous holding of the positions of Co-Chair of RASG-PA and Co-Chair of PA-RAST may present a potential conflict between executive and technical responsibilities, such an arrangement can be tolerated on an exceptional and temporary basis. This is justified by the governance mechanisms in place within the Group, including oversight by the Executive Steering Committee and formal ratification by the Plenary. Any such tolerance should be strictly limited to a short period, sufficient only to maintain operational continuity and to allow the scheduled elections to take place, thereby avoiding the establishment of a precedent for future cycles.

2.4 SUCCESSION AND TERM IMPLICATIONS FOR PA-RAST VICE-CHAIRS ELEVATED TO CO-CHAIR

2.4.1 In accordance with the succession model established in the RASG-PA Procedural Handbook, the Vice-Chairs of the PA-RAST are expected to assume the positions of Co-Chair at the conclusion of their two-year term, ensuring continuity and an orderly leadership transition. Under the regular cycle, this transition should have taken place in November 2024. However, this transition did not occur, as the corresponding elections were not held. The elevation of the current Vice-Chairs to Co-Chair during the PA-RAST/70 Meeting (February 2026) now represents a necessary adjustment to realign the leadership cycle with the rotation scheme established under Conclusion RASG-PA13/C6/2023.

2.4.2 To ensure stability and provide adequate time for the incoming Co-Chairs to exercise their leadership functions, and considering that the Vice-Chair elections and the corresponding transition that should have taken place in November 2024 did not occur, together with subsequent adjustments to the schedule of Plenary and ESC meetings, it is proposed that the Co-Chairs elevated during PA-RAST/70 begin a full two-year term covering the 2026–2028 period. This adjustment implies redefining the reference points of PA-RAST leadership terms so that future two-year mandates begin and end in connection with RASG-PA Plenary meetings, while preserving the established 2+2 year succession model. This approach would allow the PA-RAST to restore its regular leadership cycle while ensuring sufficient continuity for programme implementation.

2.4.3 Under this arrangement, the Vice-Chairs elected at PA-RAST/70 would have their terms aligned with the new 2026–2028 cycle.

2.5 CALENDAR-RELATED IMPACT ON THE RASG-PA LEADERSHIP CYCLE

2.5.1 The current RASG-PA leadership cycle was established under Conclusion RASG-PA13/C6/2023 for the 2023–2026 triennium and, in accordance with the Procedural Handbook, its closure is effective through a Plenary meeting in 2026. The calendar originally envisaged for 2026 included an Executive Steering Committee meeting in the first semester (ESC/41), followed by a Plenary meeting in the second semester (RASG-PA/16), which would have provided the regular forum to conclude the 2023–2026 leadership cycle and initiate the subsequent cycle.

2.5.2 However, the Fifteenth Meeting of the RASG-PA (RASG-PA/15), originally planned for November 2025, was subsequently postponed. As a result, the in-person Plenary session of RASG-PA/15 is now scheduled for March 2026, thereby becoming the first Plenary opportunity in 2026 to address leadership matters at both interim and cycle-transition levels. This change in the meeting calendar has, in practical terms, shifted the cycle-closing Plenary opportunity to RASG-PA/15.

2.5.3 In this context, the Meeting may wish to consider that leadership actions at RASG-PA/15 may need to address not only existing vacancies, but also the transition arrangements required to properly close the 2023–2026 cycle and enable the start of the next leadership cycle in a timely and procedurally consistent manner.

2.6 NEED TO UPDATE THE PROCEDURAL HANDBOOK

2.6.1 It is necessary to update the terms of the RASG-PA Procedural Handbook to address leadership vacancy scenarios that are not currently contemplated. The absence of clear provisions for extraordinary elections, interim appointments, and succession arrangements has created operational challenges, that should be mitigated through explicit guidance in the next revision of the Handbook.

2.6.2 The updated Handbook should also stipulate that all Co-Chair and Vice-Chair positions, once ratified, are to be formally published as Decisions in the reports of the meetings where such ratifications occur. This measure will enhance transparency, ensure traceability of leadership changes, and reinforce the governance framework of the Group.

2.6.3 As a result, the following Draft Conclusion is presented:

DRAFT CONCLUSION	
RASG-PA/15/Cxx	FILLING OF LEADERSHIP VACANCIES IN RASG-PA AND PA-RAST
<p>What: That, to maintain continuity of leadership, enable orderly succession, and preserve the balance between States and industry, the RASG-PA:</p> <p>a) endorse and approve the PA-RAST election results to be submitted for ratification at the in-person phase of the Fifteenth Regional Aviation Safety Group – Pan America Plenary Meeting (RASG-PA/15) (March 2026);</p> <p>b) approve the establishment of a revised periodicity for PA-RAST leadership terms, such that each two-year term begins and ends at a RASG-PA Plenary meeting;</p> <p>c) approve the conduct of RASG-PA elections during the in-person Plenary session of RASG-PA/15 to fill for the 2026–2029 term;</p> <p>d) instruct the Secretariat to update the RASG-PA Procedural Handbook to incorporate the identified provisions addressing leadership vacancies within both the RASG-PA and PA-RAST structures, by the ESC/41.</p>	<p>Expected impact:</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>Why: To safeguard the effectiveness, transparency and credibility of the regional safety governance framework.</p>	
<p>When: From a) to c) Immediate and d) by ESC/41</p>	<p>Status: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Valid / <input type="checkbox"/> Superseded / <input type="checkbox"/> Completed</p>
<p>Who: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> States <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ICAO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>	<p>Industry members</p>

3. Suggested Action

3.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) acknowledge the current leadership vacancies within the RASG-PA and PA-RAST structures and the temporary arrangements implemented to ensure operational continuity;
- b) approve the Draft Conclusion RASG-PA/15/Cxx on the filling of leadership vacancies in RASG-PA and PA-RAST, as proposed in paragraph 2.6.3;

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- c) encourage RASG-PA members to submit nominations for the RASG-PA and PA-RAST leadership positions to be filled, in accordance with the applicable procedures and timelines; and
- d) request the Secretariat to take the necessary follow-up actions arising from the approved Conclusion, including the implementation of the related elections and the update of the RASG-PA Procedural Handbook within the timeline established therein.

— END —