



WORKING PAPER

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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 3: Updates on RASG-PA/GREPECAS Joint Activities and Preparation for the RASG-PA–GREPECAS/5 Joint Session

STRENGTHENING AVIATION SAFETY MANAGEMENT IN THE NACC AND SAM REGIONS BY ENHANCING ANSP AND REGULATORY ENGAGEMENT, COLLABORATION, COORDINATION AND HARMONIZATION

(Presented by United States)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) and regulators play a central role in managing aviation safety risk, particularly those risks associated with air traffic management (ATM), airspace operations, and cross-border coordination. The Regional Aviation Safety Group – Pan America (RASG-PA), in conjunction with GREPECAS, leads the aviation safety strategy and the related planning processes. ANSPs assist in the implementation of RASG-PA-approved safety enhancement initiatives (SEIs) while also actively participating in, and contributing to, the RASGs to enhance safety in a coordinated manner. The RASG-PA and GREPECAS Procedural Handbooks both mandate continuous coordination between the regional implementation groups and the safety groups. However, the current regional coordination mechanism –the joint GREPECAS-RASG-PA Coordination Meeting- lacks effectiveness. This paper suggests that improving regional safety performance requires more active ANSP engagement and the strategic use of operationally relevant, risk-based, and context-rich safety information. It highlights the need for structured, region-wide, harmonized mechanisms to identify, protect, share, and analyze ATM safety data. Moreover, it calls for strengthening coordination between GREPECAS and RASG-PA to ensure that regional SEIs are informed by data that accurately represent the operational realities managed by ANSPs, operators, and regulators across the NACC and SAM Regions, and are implemented with the assistance and awareness of both regional governing bodies.

Action:	See Section 4.1
<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"> • ICAO Doc. 10004, The Global Aviation Safety Plan • NACC RASP (April 2021) • SAMSP (2023 – 2025) • 8th Ed. of the GREPECAS Procedural Handbook • 5th Ed., Rev. 1 of the RASG-PA Procedural Handbook • RASG-PA ESC/40 – WP/25
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1. Introduction

1.1 Effective regional aviation safety management relies on the coordinated participation of all stakeholders who directly influence operational safety outcomes. In the NACC and SAM Regions, air traffic management (ATM) is conducted within complex and increasingly interconnected cross-border environments that require close coordination between Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs) and regulators. These organizations play a direct role in managing safety risk through operational decision-making, oversight activities, and continuous coordination across Flight Information Region (FIR) boundaries.

1.2 The Regional Aviation Safety Group – Pan America (RASG-PA), in conjunction with GREPECAS, was established to support a coordinated, risk-based, and data-driven approach to regional safety management in alignment with ICAO Doc. 10004, the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) and the Regional Aviation Safety Plans. Within this framework, subsidiary and supporting bodies such as the Pan America - Regional Aviation Safety Team (PA-RAST), the North American, Central American and Caribbean Working Group (NACC/WG), the South American Implementation Group (SAM/IG), the Eastern Caribbean Civil Aviation Technical Group (E/CAR CATG) and GREPECAS Scrutiny Working Group (GTE) provide the primary forums where regional safety risks should be examined in detail and where practical safety enhancements can be developed and advanced. For these mechanisms to achieve their intended effect, the operational expertise and active participation of ANSPs and regulators are essential.

1.3 This paper focuses on strengthening ANSP and regulatory engagement within the existing ICAO regional safety and operational implementation structures, with particular emphasis on consistent participation in, and communication/information-sharing and collaboration between ICAO regional forums such as PA-RAST, GREPECAS/GTE, the NACC/WG, E/CAR CATG and the SAM/IG. The intent is to reinforce and where necessary, evolve mechanisms, without replacing or bypassing the existing governance structure.

2. Discussion

2.1 The ICAO regional safety framework is based on the principles defined in ICAO Doc. 10004 and subsequently expanded upon in the Regional Aviation Safety Plans (RASPs). According to Sections 1.4.4 and 1.4.5 of the GASP, “at the regional level, RASGs are the main drivers of the aviation safety strategy and the related planning process”. Furthermore, the roles and responsibilities of the RASG in aviation safety planning include the responsibility to coordinate and track the implementation of regional Safety Enhancement Initiatives (SEIs). The GASP also defines industry as inclusive of air traffic service providers and defines the role and responsibilities of industry (and thus ANSPs) to include the following:

- a) assist in the implementation of SEIs that support the RASP
- b) actively participate in, and contribute to, the RASGs to enhance safety in a coordinated manner

2.2 The latest edition of the GASP (2026-2028) also identifies several goals, targets and indicators. Goal 4 of this version of the GASP specifically calls for the regions, “to strengthen collaboration at the regional and national levels to address safety issues.” Target 4.3 calls for all regions to implement a mechanism to make use of the information on operational safety risks and emerging issues for the purpose of aviation safety planning by 2027. In addition, Goal 5 seeks to strengthen aviation safety planning and Target 5.1 calls for updated RASPs that align with the latest GASP.

2.3 Although it is in need of an update, the NACC RASP (2021 Edition) also contains supporting language with section (G) of the RASP dedicated to the “Coordination Between GREPECAS and the RASG-PA.” Within that section, the RASP says that for the successful implementation of the RASP, the effective participation and involvement of regional groups like GREPECAS and its contributory bodies are essential and calls for GREPECAS to facilitate the implementation of air navigation systems and services as identified in the CAR/SAM Air Navigation Plan, giving due priority to air safety; and coordinate safety issues with the RASGs. Furthermore, section G.6 explicitly states, “For the implementation of the RASP activities and outcomes, the effective collaboration with the GREPECAS through coordinated processes to sustain the collection and sharing of regional ATM data and the sharing and resolution of safety issues.”

2.4 For its part, the South American Region Safety Plan (SAMSP, 2023-2025) does not mention anything about the need for specific coordination between the RASG-PA and any of the contributing bodies such as GREPECAS or the SAM Implementation Group (SAM/IG). Instead, it simply says, “This regional group [the RASG-PA] will actively promote coordination and harmonization of all activities carried out for the resolution of regional aviation safety problems.”

2.5 Unfortunately, effective coordination processes needed to ensure successful cooperation between GREPECAS and the RASG-PA across the NACC and SAM regions are not as strong and standardized as they should be. The intent of this paper is to reinforce the need for the ICAO NACC and SAM Offices, the RASG-PA, and GREPECAS to more effectively execute the coordination processes defined in Appendix C of the GREPECAS Procedural Handbook and the RASG-PA Procedural Handbook which both mandate continuous coordination between the regional implementation groups and the safety groups called for in the latest edition of the GASP.

2.6 Before modifying the appropriate regional coordination mechanisms, the following aspects of the regional ICAO structure should be understood by all members of GREPECAS and the RASG-PA. The RASG-PA, supported by PA-RAST, provides the primary regional mechanism for identifying and managing aviation safety risks, including but not limited to high-risk categories such as mid-air collisions, controlled flight into terrain, loss of control in-flight, runway incursions, and runway excursions. These risks often have strong ATM and airspace operational components and are influenced by interactions across multiple States, FIRs, and service providers. Active participation by ANSPs and regulators in PA-RAST is therefore essential to ensure that regional safety analyses reflect operational realities and that proposed mitigations are both effective and practicable. In the absence of active participation in the PA-RAST which may be cost-prohibitive to some ICAO members, effective communication and information sharing between the regional safety focused groups and the regional operationally focused groups becomes even more important to ensure proper region-wide awareness and collaboration to achieve common, mutually beneficial safety enhancements. Therefore, acknowledging resource constraints throughout the region, flexible participation mechanisms (e.g., virtual, data sharing, focal points, etc.) should be considered to ensure the highest possible participation levels and broadest distribution of pertinent, non-sensitive information.

2.7 GREPECAS, GREPECAS GTE, the NACC/WG and the SAM/IG, all play a complementary role by advancing the planning and implementation of air navigation initiatives across the region. These forums therefore provide the mechanisms through which agreed-upon safety priorities can be translated into operational actions, procedural improvements, and technical solutions. Effective regional safety management depends on strong coordination between PA-RAST, as the primary safety forum under the RASG-PA, and GREPECAS, along with its associated bodies, as the implementation arms.

2.8 Opportunities exist to further strengthen this coordination by improving synchronization between safety risk identification and the implementation of targeted mitigation activities executed through the GREPECAS GTE, SAM/IG, NACC/WG and E/CAR CATG. Safety risks identified and monitored within PA-RAST require timely and aligned implementation actions through GREPECAS mechanisms to achieve measurable safety outcomes. Enhanced coordination helps avoid fragmentation, duplication, and misalignment between regional safety objectives and air navigation initiatives.

3. Conclusion

3.1 ANSPs and regulators contribute essential operational expertise through their Safety Management Systems and oversight activities. Participation in and/or communication among regional ICAO forums is therefore essential and allows this expertise to be applied beyond national boundaries, supporting the identification of common risk drivers and the development of coordinated regional mitigations. Where participation in and communication amongst these regional groups is limited, inconsistent, or non-existent, regional safety discussions risk becoming disconnected from operational realities, reducing the effectiveness of safety enhancement initiatives.

3.2 The considerations outlined above should be viewed as opportunities to reinforce existing regional structures. By strengthening participation, clarifying roles, harmonizing processes and improving coordination between the RASG-PA, the PA-RAST and GREPECAS-related forums, the NACC and SAM Regions can better leverage existing ICAO mechanisms to address regional aviation safety risks in a focused and effective manner.

4. Suggested Actions:

4.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Note the information presented in this paper;
- b) Encourage States to ensure sustained and meaningful participation by ANSPs and regulators in RASG-PA-supporting bodies, particularly PA-RAST, as well as in relevant GREPECAS forums, including the NACC/WG, the SAM/IG, the E/CAR CATG and GREPECAS GTE;
- c) Request the Secretariats of both the ICAO NACC and SAM regional offices to review, specify and strengthen the coordination processes mandated by both the RASG-PA and GREPECAS Procedural Handbooks and develop a proposal for a more robust and clearly defined coordination mechanism and processes to ensure the future effective coordination of operational safety information between the RASG-PA, GREPECAS, and their contributory bodies (PA-RAST, GREPECAS GTE, NACC WG, SAM/IG and E/CAR CATG) in both the ICAO NACC and SAM regions; bring that proposal to the next Joint Session of the RASG-PA and GREPECAS for discussion and possible approval;
- d) Once approved, direct both the ICAO NACC and SAM regional offices to include the approved coordination mechanism(s) in all future versions of their Regional Aviation Safety Plans; and
- e) Encourage the appropriate use and sharing of operationally relevant safety information and expertise from ANSPs and regulators to support regional safety analyses and the development of effective safety enhancement initiatives.