REGIONAL AVIATION SAFETY GROUP – PAN AMERICA

RASG-PA

RASG-PA

CST

Collaborative Safety Team (CST)

Strategy

October 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 Over the past 20 years, several ICAO member States and Industry partners have established safety collaboration mechanisms to facilitate the sharing of safety information with the objective to identify potential safety deficiencies and mitigate their associated risks through the development of safety enhancement initiatives (SEI). These State-Industry safety collaboration mechanisms are created according to a variety of different models influenced by safety management requirements and context within each State, and are generically referred to as Collaborative Safety Teams (CSTs). CSTs may be integrated as part of State Safety Information Sharing Networks supporting accident prevention activities at State level.

1.2 CSTs consistently demonstrate positive safety benefits where they have been implemented, and the concept is considered to be a key contributor to achieving greater and more targeted improvements to aviation safety in the Pan American Region.

1.3 RASG-PA promotes, facilitates, supports and monitors the implementation of CST in the Pan-American Region, based on safety risk data analysis performed by the PA-RAST.

1.4 PA-RAST proposes the CST Strategy articulated in this document as a means to improve overall safety in the Pan American Region by:

(1) effectively supporting the adoption of State and Region level CSTs; and,

(2) fostering safety collaboration between PA-RAST and local CSTs.

1.5 This Strategy recognizes that effective State–industry collaboration can precede any formal CST structure: collaboration first, structure second. A formal CST is not the only path to collaboration, nor does it need to be the first step on the safety collaboration journey. Accordingly, the Strategy promotes State–industry collaboration in all its forms, from less formal exchange initiatives with no requirement for governance structures, terms of reference or formal establishment processes to the formal establishment of a CST. These preliminary informal collaboration initiatives allow trust and mutual gain to develop gradually, demonstrate value through the mitigation of priority risks, and, as they prove successful over time, can be a pathway to a formal CST. In this Strategy, trust means a professional, working trust between organizations: the reasonable expectation of each participant that the others will act as agreed and will use shared information only to improve safety (see CST Implementation Guidance, Guiding Principle 2).

2. CST Strategy

2.1 Updated CST Guidance Material

2.1.1 In 2023, PA-RAST developed simplified guidance material to provide clear and scalable guidance to help States (or groups of States) create their own local or regional CST, understanding that each State has its own structure.

2.1.2 In 2026, PA-RAST has revised its CST guidance material to better demonstrate that a CST does not need to be overly complex to function, and that collaboration can begin through informal State–industry exchange platforms that do not require vast volumes of data, formal structures, regulations or organizational charts; the collaboration journey can start with limited safety information/intelligence and a common understanding aimed at the continuous improvement of safety through the mitigation of priority risks. The availability of safety data, or of data-sharing infrastructure, is therefore not a prerequisite for initiating collaboration. Realistic and progressive expectations should guide the use of data in each initiative: starting with available accident/serious incident information, aggregated, non-sensitive information and gradually moving toward greater granularity as clear rules for preventive use of information, disclosure criteria and confidentiality guarantees are consolidated. This revised guidance material presents various collaboration options, from informal State–industry collaboration initiatives, ad-hoc arrangements to structured CSTs.

2.2 CST Support Plan (for current and new CSTs)

2.2.1 Criteria for identifying priority States/Regions for CST development

2.2.1.1 As resources and time are limited, it is important for RASG-PA to prioritize how resources will be allocated for supporting CST development in the region. While PA-RAST can provide support to existing CSTs on an ongoing and ad-hoc basis, PA-RAST does not have unlimited resources available to help setup several CSTs simultaneously. In this context, it will be important to have clear criteria to help prioritize where PA-RAST help will be provided to ensure effective engagement and smooth implementation of any new CST.

2.2.1.2 To assist PA-RAST in making the decision to recommend supporting development of a CST, all the following criteria should be considered, while confirming that foundational criteria a) and b) are met:

a) Interest to create a CST has been demonstrated by the State, or by industry members within the Region/State;

b) PA-RAST safety data identifies safety opportunities or any other relevant safety condition in the State/Region;

c) Safety culture within the State is known to be conducive to the CST concept;

d) Conditions exists within the State for the self-sustainability of the CST; and

e) Operators will support the CST (e.g. active engagement, sharing operational safety information)

Note.— The criteria above guide the prioritization of RASG-PA resources for supporting formal CST development; they are not preconditions for State–industry collaboration itself. States and industry members are encouraged to initiate collaboration on safety matters at any time, and RASG-PA may facilitate informal exchange platforms in support of such initiatives without the requirement of a formal structure. In particular, the absence of established safety data-sharing capabilities within a State does not constitute a barrier to initiating collaboration or, in due course, a CST.

2.2.2 Engaging with prioritized States/Regions for CST development

2.2.2.1 When PA-RAST evaluates the criteria in 2.2.1.2, and considers the necessary conditions to be met, it will provide its recommendation on CST prioritization to RASG-PA Executive Steering Committee (ESC). The ESC will approve RASG-PA support for the implementation of a CST by a formal Conclusion. Once a State has been prioritized for CST development, CST implementation can be initiated as follows:

a) Based on the ESC Conclusion, the corresponding ICAO Regional Office (NACC or SAM) will formally contact the relevant State to share RASG-PA's intention to support the implementation of a CST, and will propose an initial meeting between PA-RAST and the State.

b) Hold an initial meeting with local State and/or Industry to assist in the determination of the most appropriate CST implementation strategy

   i. Provide demo of guidance material

   ii. Q&A session

c) Support the identification of an initial, narrowly scoped safety topic capable of producing early and tangible results, in order to strengthen trust among the parties and demonstrate the value of collaboration before formalization;

d) Encourage the selection of initiatives that can deliver measurable safety improvements within a relatively short timeframe, reinforcing trust among stakeholders and demonstrating the practical value of State–industry collaboration.

e) After the initial meeting, provide support for local CST partners to establish their implementation timeline and implementation plan.

f) Provide support in development of documentation/processes/templates that will be used by the local CST.

g) Facilitate a pre-launch meeting with local partners to address outstanding items and concerns; and

h) Support local partners in planning and initiating their CST activities.

Note.— Steps e) through h) apply when local partners elect to formalize their collaboration as a CST. RASG-PA engagement with State and industry stakeholders under this Strategy is to build trust and collaboration, not perform structural-compliance review; the objective is to demonstrate value before formalizing a CST structure. Where partners elect to formalize, a Declaration of Intent recording the commitments of the State, its industry and RASG-PA is available (CST Implementation Guidance, Appendix G); it formalizes collaboration already under way and is not a precondition for the steps above.

2.3 Regional Integration of CSTs

2.3.1 There is an opportunity to generate synergy and further safety benefits by encouraging collaboration between PA-RAST and local CSTs in the Region. Currently, when a risk is identified based on regional PA-RAST data, local intelligence is not available to contextualize the safety issue.

2.3.2 PA-RAST will continue to engage with individual States when data that is reviewed at PA-RAST identifies safety opportunities for improvement or safety issues that warrant local intervention, and then organize a RASG-PA Go-team to facilitate local action on the issue.

2.3.3 Where there is a local CST, that CST may be an active partner of the PA-RAST and directly contribute by improving the safety intelligence available to evaluate safety issues, and help in the design and implementation of local safety enhancements. Observations and conclusions can be reported back to PA-RAST for evaluating applicability of local strategies at the regional level.

2.3.4 Safety issues identified locally (by CSTs) may also be reported at the PA-RAST level, to facilitate identification of systemic issues across CSTs in the Region. CSTs may also liaise with PARAST when safety issues that relate to risks observed with foreign operators operating within the State, or in the context of domestic operators activities' in other States in the region. Enabling active data-driven efforts and interaction of aviation stakeholders at local and regional level are intended to provide additional safety benefits for States, and the entire region.

Lessons learned and effective Safety Enhancements developed by local CSTs should be evaluated by PA-RAST for possible adaptation and promotion throughout the Pan American Region, thereby strengthening the regional safety knowledge base.

2.3.5 CST representation and attendance at PA-RAST in-person meetings are highly encouraged. Participation at in-person meetings can facilitate awareness, engagement and support between PA-RAST and individual CSTs as well as a platform to exchange best practices among safety experts.

2.3.6 Where local Runway Safety Teams (RSTs) exist, CSTs are encouraged to include RST representation so that systemic runway safety issues can be raised and discussed across the aviation system. The two mechanisms complement each other and one does not replace the other (see CST Implementation Guidance, Collaboration between ICAO RASG-PA and local CSTs).

2.4 CST Promotion and monitoring

2.4.1 Once the guidance material is updated and strategy is approved by RASG-PA, RASGPA entities will actively promote the development of CSTs in the Pan American Region. This will include:

a) Promotion of the concept at aviation events and/or meetings in the Pan American Region

b) Presentation of a Paper (working paper or information paper) on the CST Strategy at the ICAO General Assembly

c) Inclusion of the CST strategy in the Regional Aviation Safety Plan (RASP).

2.4.2 PA-RAST will work with CSTs to establish non-sensitive metrics to support monitoring progress of CSTs and track outputs of each CST, including implemented Safety Enhancements, collaborative initiatives, and measurable safety outcomes, aggregating the results to obtain a broad system view. This approach will help determine if the CST approach is producing results as intended. If results are not as intended, evaluate the reasons and consider how RASG-PA can support individual CSTs and/or if the PA-RAST strategy needs to be amended.

2.4.3 In monitoring progress under this Strategy, RASG-PA will recognize progress in effective State–industry collaboration and risk mitigation beyond the nominal establishment of CSTs. State–industry collaboration initiatives that have not yet formalized as CSTs constitute measurable progress, and their evolution will be reflected accordingly in RASG-PA monitoring and reporting. Where a CST is established under a Declaration of Intent, the annual progress report and the reaffirmation of commitments upon a change in CAA leadership provided for in that instrument support continuity monitoring and RASG-PA's proactive engagement across administrative transitions.

2.5 Strategic Vision

The ultimate objective of this Strategy is not the establishment of Collaborative Safety Teams as an end in itself, but the development of a sustainable culture of State–industry collaboration capable of continuously identifying, prioritizing and mitigating operational safety risks throughout the Pan American Region. Regardless of the degree of formalization adopted by each State or Region, success will be measured by the effectiveness of collaboration and the resulting improvements in aviation safety.

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