



INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

**Third Meeting of the Steering Group for the continued Improvement of Air traffic Services
over the South Atlantic (SAT/SG3)
Virtual, 8 - 10 December 2025**

Agenda Item 6: Terms of Reference and future work programme of SAT bodies.

SAT Secretariat organization and functioning

(Presented by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY	
This working paper highlights the organization of the SAT Secretariat, the current distribution of responsibilities across ICAO Regional Offices and expected upcoming changes.	
Action by the Meeting is in paragraph 3.	
Reference	SAT Handbook
<i>Strategic Objectives</i>	A - Safety B - Capacity and Efficiency

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The SAT Handbook Part I defines the membership of the SAT as made of core members – including SAT Member States and their associated ANSPs, Airspace users- the Secretariat and observers.
- 1.2 The SAT Handbook Parts II, III and IV describe the role and responsibilities of the SAT Secretariat as follows:
 - Work permanently with SAT contributory bodies to bring projects to fruition.
 - Monitor the work program of the SAT contributory bodies between formal meetings including implementation team(s).
 - Support project teams through resource mobilization to create the necessary synergy, better coordination and to address systems interoperability issues.
 - Coordinate the preparation, conduct and reporting of SAT bodies’ meetings.
 - Establish and publish a quarterly bulletin on its projects and their level of implementation.
 - Serve as routine liaison focal point with PIRGs and ICAO HQ.
- 1.3 Part II, section 3.2 of the Handbook further designates ICAO WACAF Regional Office as responsible to coordinate SAT activities in close collaboration with other ICAO Regional Offices.

2. DISCUSSION

Current Secretariat structure

- 2.1 Since the restructuring of the SAT in 2021, the secretariat work has been informally dispatched between three ICAO Regional Offices as follows:
- WACAF Office: to provide the secretariat support to the SAT Steering Group (SAT SG);
 - EURNAT Office: to serve as secretariat to the SAT Implementation Management Group (SAT IMG); and
 - SAM Office: to serve as secretariat to the SAT Safety Oversight Group (SAT SOG) CNS.
- 2.2 In addition, the SAT Documentation Management Office (SAT DMO) - established in 2023 with the lead support from Brazil through a designated DM Officer-, ensures the currency and consistency of SAT documentation and publications under the supervision of the SAT SG secretariat.

EURNAT discontinuing secretariat support to the SAT IMG

- 2.3 At SAT SG/2 and again during SAT IMG/5–SOG/5, the EURNAT Office informed the SAT SG of its intent to discontinue providing direct secretariat support to SAT IMG as from January 2026.
- 2.4 The EURNAT Office’s decision may have significant impact on SAT activities if not effectively managed. Potential impacts include:
- *Administrative impact*: unsupported implementation of ATS in the SAT leading to uncoordinated, unharmonized and inefficient improvement initiatives within the SAT and between the SAT and NAT.
 - *Implementation performance*: slow down or halt on ongoing or planned implementation projects in the SAT.
 - *SAT Stakeholders’ commitments*: risk of low participation, contribution and collaboration to SAT IMG’s activities.
 - *Interregional implementation collaboration*: low interregional cooperation and collaboration on implementation matters leading to unharmonized and non-interoperable systems between the SAT areas and other neighboring regions such as AFI, CARSAM and NAT.
- 2.5 To mitigate these risks, ICAO proposes:
- To assign the SAT IMG secretariat support to the ESAF Office potentially supported by a Seconded, an option currently under discussion within the ICAO Secretariat).
 - A transition period of up to SAT IMG/8 during which the EURNAT Office will provide mentorship to ESAF Office and the potential secondee to ensure a smooth handover.

SAT DMO effectiveness

- 2.6 The SAT DMO work is coordinated between the DMO administrator designated by the supporting States/organization and the SAT SG Secretariat. The effectiveness of the DMO depends on sustained commitment of the stakeholders and the stability of its administration.

- 2.7 Recent changes were made in the designated DMO members and administrator by the host State to strengthen the DMO. However, these short-term changes may raise some issues regarding the stability and effectiveness of the DMO.
- 2.8 To ensure effective and sustainable actions of the DMO, it is suggested that its Terms of Reference be reviewed in due course to enhance its stability and ensure effectiveness through:
- Defined minimum resources for the effective functioning of the DMO;
 - Established performance assessment framework; and
 - Identified reporting mechanisms.

3 ACTION BY THE MEETING

- 3.1 The meeting is invited to:
- a) take note of the information provided in this working paper;
 - b) consider the proposed SAT enhancement measures for the functioning of the SAT IMG and the SAT DMO; and
 - c) Provide further guidance as appropriate.