



Third Meeting of the Steering Group of the Improvement of Air traffic Services over the South Atlantic (SAT/SG3)

Virtual, 8 - 10 December 2025

Agenda Item 6: SAT Governance

6.3 Review and validation of the amendment to the SAT Handbook

Proposal for the inclusion of a Fast-Track Approval Procedure in the SAT Handbook

(Presented by Secretariat)

SUMMARY	
<p>This paper proposes the inclusion of a Fast-Track Approval Procedure in the SAT Handbook to allow timely updates to SAT documentation between meetings. It responds to SOG01-06 by adapting NAT SPG best practices while considering SAT structural and resource differences. The meeting is invited to endorse the proposed procedure for incorporation into SAT DOC 001.</p> <p>Action by the Meeting is in paragraph 3</p>	
<p><i>Strategic Objectives</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Safety</i> • <i>Capacity and Efficiency</i>

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This paper proposes the formal inclusion of a Fast-Track Approval Procedure within the SAT Handbook (SAT DOC 001). The increasing operational complexity and the continuous evolution of communication, navigation, and surveillance technologies in the South Atlantic region require timely updates to SAT documentation. The current review cycle, which depends primarily on annual SAT meetings, may not always accommodate urgent operational requirements.

2 DISCUSSION

2.1 The SAT Steering Group (SAT-SG) is responsible for reviewing and approving administrative, operational and technical documentation related to the improvement of air traffic services over the South Atlantic. The SAT Handbook establishes the structural and procedural frameworks governing such coordination. However, it does not currently include a mechanism for approving documentation changes between SAT meetings.

2.2 During SOG/01, the meeting adopted Conclusion SOG01-06, which tasked the development of "a fast-track procedure for the SAT Group taking into account best practices of the NAT SPG Handbook (DOC 001), and identifying differences between NAT and SAT in terms of structures and resources."

2.3 This Working Paper responds directly to SOG01-06 and provides the proposed mechanism for consideration by SAT SG.

2.4 Other ICAO regional groups, such as the North Atlantic Systems Planning Group (NAT SPG), employ Fast-Track or Decision-by-Correspondence processes, allowing for accelerated Approval of amendments where operational urgency and regional consensus are evident. Adopting a similar mechanism would enhance SAT responsiveness, documentation governance and harmonization with ICAO best practices.

2.5 Timely adaptation of SAT documentation is essential for maintaining operational safety, efficiency and interoperability. A Fast-Track Approval Procedure would:

- a) Support urgent operational needs.
- b) Harmonize SAT processes with ICAO best practices.
- c) Ensure consistent implementation of new technologies and procedures.
- d) Reduce delays resulting from the conventional annual meeting cycle.
- e) Address the requirement established under SOG01-06.

2.6 The proposed procedure would consist of the following stages:

- a) Submission of a proposal, including justification and draft amendment.
- b) Initial screening by the SAT-SG Chair and ICAO Regional Offices.
- c) Circulation to SAT members for a 20-working-day consultation period.
- d) Consolidation of comments by ICAO and resolution of any objections.
- e) Approval by the SAT-SG Chairperson by means of correspondence on behalf of SAT-SG if no objections remain; if objections persist, an online meeting may be convened to address pending issues.
- f) Publication and implementation by ICAO Regional Offices.

2.7 It is proposed that the Fast-Track Approval Procedure be added as a new section to the SAT Handbook, clearly defining its purpose, scope, eligibility criteria, workflow, roles, timelines, and documentation requirements, as proposed in **Appendix A** of this working paper.

2.8 The introduction of a Fast-Track Approval Procedure into the SAT Handbook will enhance the responsiveness and efficiency of SAT documentation management in line with ICAO regional practices. This proposal also addresses the task established under SOG01-06, ensuring alignment with NAT SPG best practices while considering SAT-specific structural and resource realities.

3 ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Take note of the information provided in this paper;
- b) Review and endorse the inclusion of the proposed Fast-Track Approval Procedure of SAT operational and technical documentation into the SAT Handbook; and
- c) Provide further guidance as appropriate

Appendix A - FAST-TRACK Amendments to SAT operational and technical documentation

1. Insertions to SAT Handbook

12. FAST-TRACK APPROVAL PROCEDURE FOR SAT TECHNICAL AND OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTATION

12.1. Purpose

12.1.1. To establish a mechanism allowing SAT-SG to review and approve technical and operational SAT documentation between meetings when urgent updates are required. This procedure supports timely regional harmonisation while remaining consistent with the SAT-SG Guidance and ICAO provisions.

12.1.2. This procedure does not apply to SAT governance or organizational documents (including the SAT Handbook), which require SAT-SG plenary approval.

12.2. Scope

12.2.1. This procedure applies exclusively to technical and operational SAT documentation, including:

- a) ATS coordination procedures (COM/NAV/SUR, AIDC, contingency arrangements, etc.);
- b) operational guidance and interoperability material;
- c) technical appendices and supporting documentation;
- d) implementation procedures requiring timely regional harmonisation.

12.2.2. Fast-Track processing shall not be used for:

- a) the SAT Handbook (SAT DOC 001);
- b) governance or structural documents;
- c) strategic documents (e.g., CONOPS, RSIP);
- d) amendments requiring a Safety Risk Assessment under Annex 19;
- e) changes modifying State or ANSP regulatory responsibilities.

12.2.3. Proposals not eligible for Fast-Track shall be addressed through the normal SAT-SG approval process.

12.3. Principles

12.3.1. The Fast-Track procedure is based on ICAO regional practices, including NAT SPG Decision-by-Correspondence methods. The process ensures:

- a) transparency;
- b) timely coordination;
- c) traceability of comments; and
- d) approval by silent consent, unless objections are received.

12.3.2. Approved amendments shall be recorded in the official list of SAT-SG Decisions and maintained by ICAO Regional Offices.

12.4. Roles and Responsibilities

12.4.1. SAT-SG Chair

- a) Determines proposal eligibility;
- b) Ensures compliance with the Fast-Track process; and
- c) Validates the approval on behalf of SAT-SG.

12.4.2. ICAO Regional Offices (WACAF)

- a) Conduct circulation and consultation;
- b) Consolidate comments;
- c) Prepare and publish the Fast-Track Decision (FTD); and
- d) Publish approved amendments.

12.4.3. SAT States, ANSPs and SAT Bodies

- a) Review and comment on proposals within agreed timelines; and
- b) Provide approval, comments or justified objections.

12.5. Fast-Track Workflow

12.5.1. Proposals may be submitted by SAT States, ANSPs, or SAT contributory bodies and shall include:

- a) text (with changes indicated);
- b) operational or technical justification;
- c) confirmation of no safety impact; and
- d) proposed effective date.

12.5.2. Submissions are addressed to the SAT-SG Chair, with a copy to ICAO WACAF.

12.5.3. Within ten (10) working days, the SAT-SG Chair and ICAO assess eligibility for Fast-Track processing.

12.5.4. Eligible proposals are circulated for a twenty (20) working-day consultation.

12.5.5. Members respond with:

- a) Approve;
- b) Approve with comments; and
- c) Reject (with justification).
- d) No response is considered "no objection."

12.5.6. ICAO consolidates comments. If a rejection is received, ICAO coordinates reconciliation.

12.5.7. If consensus cannot be achieved, the proposal is deferred to the next SAT meeting.

12.5.8. If no objections remain, the amendment is approved by the SAT-SG Chairperson by means of correspondence on behalf of SAT-SG.

12.5.9. ICAO issues a SAT-SG Fast-Track Decision (FTD) and circulate it via correspondence, and this will be incorporated into the list SAT SG Decisions.