INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION
Seventh Meeting of the Civil Aviation Authorities of the SAM Region
(RAAC/7)

(Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, 01 to 03 July 2002)

Agenda Item 4: Transition to the CNS/ATM System
c) RVSM Implementation

US Domestic Reduced Vertical Separation Minimum (DRVSM)

(Presented by the United States of America)

INFORMATION PAPER

SUMMARY

This paper presents information on the United States of America implementation schedule for Domestic Reduced Vertical Separation Minimum (DRVSM).

1. Introduction

1.1 On May 10, 2002, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued a proposed rule that would significantly increase capacity and operating efficiency at high altitudes. The proposal would reduce the minimum vertical separation between aircraft from the current 2,000 feet to 1,000 feet for all aircraft flying between 29,000 and 41,000 feet, thus allowing more airplanes in the same volume of airspace.

1.2 Currently, aircraft at those altitudes must be separated by 2,000 feet vertically, meaning they can fly only at 29,000, 31,000, 33,000 feet and so forth. As high-altitude air traffic continues to increase, it would mean fewer opportunities for airlines and other aircraft operators to fly at the altitudes they want. Implementing Reduced Vertical Separation Minima (RVSM) will increase the routes and altitudes available and lead to more efficient routings that will save time and fuel.

1.3 RVSM is already in place over the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and in the domestic airspace of several other countries.

2. Discussion

2.1 The FAA expects many benefits from implementing RVSM in US Domestic airspace. The attached power point presentation outlines the US FAA DRVSM program, simulation results, required international coordination with States that share airspace boundaries with the US and the overall program benefits.

2.2 The FAA proposes to implement RVSM in December 2004. By then, the agency estimates, more than 90 percent of flights between 29,000 and 41,000 feet will be made by RVSM-compliant

aircraft. The RVSM program costs for U. S. airlines and other operators are estimated at $634 million for the 2002 – 2016 period, primarily for aircraft engineering to calibrate altimeters and autopilots to RVSM standards. The estimated benefits, primarily in fuel savings, would be $5.8 billion from 2004 through 2018.

2.3 On May 10, 2002, the FAA published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) in the Federal Register on its RVSM proposal. The public has until August 8 to comment on the NPRM.

3.0 **Conclusion**

3.1 The meeting is invited to note the information in this paper and the attached power point presentation and to continue to support the implementation of RVSM through their technical experts participation in resolving cross-border RVSM issues.