



**International Civil Aviation Organization
UNDP/ICAO Regional Project RLA/98/003
Transition to CNS/ATM Systems in the CAR and SAM Regions**

**Tenth Meeting/Workshop of ATM Authorities and Planners
of the CAR/SAM Regions (AP/ATM/10)**

(Lima, Perú, from 10 to 14 May 2005)

Item 6: Other matters

Coordination and harmonization of ATS contingency plans

(Paper presented by Paraguay)

Summary

The purpose of this working paper is to underline the importance of establishing suitable and harmonized contingency plans that will benefit the users of international civil aviation.

References

- National ATS contingency plans
- SAM Regional ATS contingency plan
- Report of the Informal ATM/SAR 02/00-SAM meeting (Lima, September 2000)
- Doc. 9426, ATS Services Planning Manual
- ICAO Council Resolution A23-12
- Reports of GREPECAS/10 and GREPECAS/11
- Annex 11, Air Traffic Services, Attachment D

1- Introduction

1.1 On 27 June 1984, the ICAO Council approved the guidelines for the contingency measures to be applied in the event of an interruption of air traffic services and the corresponding support services.

1.2 The guidelines were amended and broadened in light of the experience gained in the application of the contingency measures in different parts of the world.

1.3 The objective of these guidelines is to help ensure the safe and orderly flow of international air traffic in the event of interruption of the services provided to international civil aviation, and the continued availability of the main global air routes of the air transport network.

1.4 The guidelines establish the responsibilities of States and ICAO concerning the development of contingency plans and the measures that should be taken into account when preparing, executing and completing the implementation of said plans.

1.5 The experience has shown that the likelihood of a service outage in given part of the airspace can significantly affect the services in adjacent airspaces. Consequently, it is necessary to establish international coordination, with the assistance of ICAO.

1.6 The guidelines describe the important role played by ICAO in the preparation of contingency plans and in the coordination of said plans.

1.7 The role of ICAO in the preparation of contingency plans must be of a global nature and not be restricted to the airspace over high seas or areas of undefined sovereignty, so as to ensure the continued availability of the main global air routes of the air transport network.

1.8 Finally, consideration is given to the fact that the international organizations involved, such as the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA), are valuable advisors for determining whether the plans can be implemented, in whole or in part.

1.9 The aspects taken into account at the AP/ATM meetings, which define the courses of action to be taken by the States and international organizations in their airspace, are the responsibility of each of them, without forgetting that, in greater or lesser extent, they directly affect adjacent States.

1.10 The responsibility for the implementation of the guidelines and the pooling of efforts to optimize the foreseen results in a harmonized manner depends on efficient coordination and the exchange of information, which benefit the aeronautical community as a whole.

2 **Analysis**

2.1 The purpose of ATS contingency plans is to have other facilities and services operate when those foreseen in the regional air navigation plan are temporarily interrupted. The States are responsible for establishing the necessary measures to ensure the safety of international civil aviation operations.

2.2 These ATS contingency plans should contemplate the activity proper to each FIR, that is, the development of national ATS contingency plans, taking into account not only international civil aviation but also the State domestic aviation, and of a regional (intra- and inter-regional) contingency plan, taking into account the main traffic flows of the CAR and SAM Regions.

2.3 The civil aviation administrations of the SAM Region worked intensely on the Y2K problem and developed contingency measures that enabled them to continue providing a safe, orderly and efficient air traffic control service in the areas under their responsibility, beyond any difficulties that could have arisen due to the change of millennium.

2.4 The GREPECAS/10 meeting considered the need to update the Y2K contingency plans, in order to face any other contingency that might affect, in part or in total, the provision of ATS and related services. Accordingly, **Conclusion 10/8: ATS Contingency Plans** was approved:

That,

- a) *the CAR/SAM States/Territories and international organizations review with adjacent States/Territories the national ATS contingency plans prepared and coordinated to face the Y2K problem, and agree on the most suitable measures to be adapted to any contingency that might affect, in part or in total, the provision of ATS and related services; and*
- b) *based on sub-paragraph a) above, the ICAO NACC and SAM Regional Offices take the relevant measures to adapt the regional Y2K contingency plans and coordinate them with the other Regions which might be affected by said plans.*

3. National ATS contingency plan

3.1 The civil aviation administration of Paraguay has coordinated and harmonized the Y2K contingency plan with the adjacent States, in keeping with the Y2K regional plan.

3.2 The contingency plan implemented by Paraguay on occasion of the Y2K problem already contemplates other possible events, such as labor conflicts or strikes, and failure of the systems that support air traffic services.

3.3 The contingency plans in force in the Asuncion FIR are: the “ALFA 1” contingency plan for partial interruption of air traffic services, and contingency plan “ALFA 2” for total interruption of air traffic services. These plans have been reviewed, modified and are currently in the process of approval.

3.4 Thus, the civil aviation administration of Paraguay, following ICAO instructions emerging from the meetings in which the issue of the ATS contingency plan was analyzed, and taking into account the implementation of new RNAV routes, has done the corresponding review and update of its plan. The “Asuncion 1” contingency plan of the Asuncion FIR is shown in **Appendix A** (*available in Spanish only*) to this Working Paper.

4 Coordination and harmonization

4.1 The contingency plans with the various adjacent countries have been presented, discussed and coordinated at the AP/ATM meetings, and contingency procedures and/or measures have been signed with some of them.

4.2 Although contingency procedures and measures are in place, some problems have been identified that need adjustments so as to facilitate the task of ICAO with respect to the updating and modification of the Regional Contingency Plan, which is aimed at ensuring the safe and orderly flow of international air traffic in the event of an interruption of air traffic services and the corresponding support services in the SAM Region, in harmony with other Regions.

4.3 Because of its geographic location, traffic flows from the north and south of the hemisphere converge over the Asuncion FIR. Consequently, adjacent States must analyze the particular situation of the Paraguayan airspace in order to define the direction of the traffic flows in the simplified contingency routes to be agreed upon.

4.4 The geographic location of the Asuncion FIR requires that adjacent States coordinate and harmonize their contingency plans prior to that of the Asuncion FIR, specifically regarding the direction of the simplified routes to optimize aircraft paths, without the need to establish restrictions in addition to those already contemplated in the contingency plan of each of the States involved.

4.5 Regarding the issue of coordination and harmonization of national plans, the ICAO Regional Offices played an important role on occasion of the Y2K problem.

4.6 The 2000 regional contingency plan is the best result obtained from regional harmonization, closely coordinated by ICAO and the States of the Region. Its update is still pending.

5 **Conclusions**

5.1 In view of the above, note should be taken of the need to update and harmonize the contingency measures to be applied in the event of a partial or total interruption of air traffic and support services, so that, when that occurs, the main international routes will continue to be available.

5.2 Note is taken of the relevant and important role to be played by ICAO in the coordination and harmonization of the regional contingency plans resulting from the national plans prepared by the States of the Region.

6 **Suggested action**

6.1 The meeting is invited to adopt the following courses of action:

- a) To take note of the updated ATS contingency plan for the Asuncion FIR contained in **Appendix A** to this Working Paper.
- b) That the Secretariat of the AP/ATM/10 meeting, in coordination with the ICAO Regional Office, organize a meeting whose agenda includes a specific item on ***“Coordination and harmonization of ATS contingency plans in the SAM Region”*** and circulate the information and invitation to the States.