



**Agenda Item 8: Regional Flight Safety Initiatives**

**CREATION OF A REGIONAL GROUP OF EXPERTS IN CHARGE OF THE INVESTIGATION OF ACCIDENTS AND SERIOUS INCIDENTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA**

(Presented by COCESNA/ACSA)

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| <b>SUMMARY</b>  |   |
| This note contains the foundation for the creation of a board responsible for the investigation of accidents and serious incidents in the Central American Region, and the benefits it would bring to the region and other interested parties |   |
| <b>References:</b>  |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annex 13, GASP, GASR, GSI-4, USOAP AIG</li> </ul>  |   |
| <i>Strategic Objectives</i>   | <i>This working paper is related to Strategic Objectives for 2005-2010: A, D and E.</i> |

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The Central American Agency for Aviation Safety (ACSA), implemented a year ago the “Aviation Safety Roadmap of Central American Region”, which is aligned with GASP, BP 4a-1b. Under this Roadmap **investigations are carried out in a functional way and independent on any political or any other outside pressure.** In the current year it is planned to incursion with more intensity in the area of incidents and accidents prevention.

1.2 This Agency is conscious that such efforts will allow the access to information, for improving safety management, and the timely compliance of the objectives of the mentioned projects and with the aim of achieving an effective independence with regard to accident investigation it is considered the creation of a regional group of accidents investigation.

1.3 Also, ACSA in the development of the project that allows establishing this required group to all Central American civil aviation authorities on accident investigation, it is considered the following actions:

1.4 In August 2007, the first meeting of the group took place, in which the representative of El Salvador was elected as President. A series of initiatives were established to help the region, such as:

- a) Development of MRAC-13 (Harmonized and Standardized regulations for the region) for its certification in compliance with ICAO Annex 13.
- b) Development of an Accident Investigator’s Manual, a Procedural Handbook and check lists at a regional level.
- c) Evaluate the possibility of forming a “GO TEAM” at a regional level to provide support to States in the investigation of accidents and serious incidents.
- d) Select a person from each Member State to function as an IIC (Investigator in charge) in the Go-Team.

1.5 In the 15th Meeting of Cocesna’s Technical Committee, CT-15/2007-2 establishes that: **COCESNA Member States shall designate an expert for the regional working group of accident and incident investigation”**

1.6 The USOAP audits conducted in the region show that no State has an independent body responsible for the investigation of accidents and incidents in aviation, in the best case scenario, there exists in some State departments which are responsible for the investigation of an accident or incident when it occurs, but these departments do not always have adequate financial resources or fully qualified personnel to perform the investigation tasks; furthermore, these departments are within a hierarchical organizational structure within their respective civil aviation authorities and sometimes these same structures do not allow the freedom necessary when preparing final accident/incident reports.

1.7 The experience capitalization is another factor that obliges to launch this project in creating an entity with independent character to conduct investigations to allow generating the raw material for the development of mitigation measures, prevention or the recurrence which constitutes the purpose of all investigation.

## **2. History**

2.1 There is current growth and expansion of aviation in Central America, which is reflected in the increase in operations in the region and this brings, as a result, an increase in the volume of operations.

2.2 The countries in the Central American region are developing countries with limited resources.

2.3 With the exception of the State of Belize, all countries of the Central American region share a common language (Spanish).

2.4 There are regional initiatives for Central American integration within the scope of aviation [Central American Agency for Aeronautical Safety (ACSA)].

2.5 When an aircraft accident occurs, world attention is drawn to the country in which the event has occurred, due that the occurrence has ultimate responsibility in the process of the investigation, in determining the probable causes and recommended operational security measures, and in order to prevent other accidents with similar characteristics from taking place.

2.6 Many States delegate responsibility for investigating accidents and serious incidents to their civil aviation authorities (in accordance with Annex 13). However, this practice creates a potential conflict of interest because investigators may have to notify their respective civil aviation authorities of safety oversight deficiencies.

2.7 The final reports and recommendations generated by delegated accident investigators in the State are not always supported by proper authorities, and thus corrective actions and mitigation measures are not always applied.

### **3. Proposal**

3.1 It is proposed that under the coordination and continual support of RASG-PA, the implementation of this pilot plan, develops and establishes a Board whose objective and responsibility will be for the investigation of accidents and serious incidents in the Central American region.

3.2 It is proposed that as a result of the pilot project, and the progress of the reports derived of accident investigations carried out, other states might join the project which would generate compliance with Annex 13, GASP and GASR.

3.3 It is also proposed that COCESNA/ACSA be designated as “champion” of the project.

3.4 This task involves a process of analysis of organizational agreements of cooperation with other States and international organizations of aviation, and the development and establishment of a harmonized regulatory framework among all COCESNA members States with respect to the requirements of ICAO Annex 13.

3.5 It should be pointed out that with this proposal, the State where the accident/incident occurs is *not* delegating the investigation responsibility or authority to another State/Organization, since the State where the accident/incident occurred is part of this regional organization and the investigator-in-charge (IIC) is part of the State.

### **4. Benefits**

4.1 When a regional Board in charge of the accident and incident investigation exist:

- a) will ensure the independency of the process of investigation;
- b) will ensure that all investigations are consistent with requirements established by ICAO;
- c) would be achieving an optimization and pooling of both human and financial resources, which is one of the objectives of RASG-PA.
- d) through a standardized training program of the members of this board it will be assuring highly qualified personnel in the accident investigation techniques; and
- e) compliance with Annex 13 and GASP GSI-4.