



Agenda Item 2: Report of activities and deliverables of GESEA and Subgroups

b) ATM implementation. Progress of the Subgroups

TABLETOP EXERCISES FOR ATS CONTINGENCY PLANS

(Submitted by the Secretariat)

SUMMARY

This working paper presents the results of the virtual table exercise conducted between September 7 and 8, 2023, and focuses on the proposal to coordinate and schedule exercises/drills for the years 2024 and 2025.

References:

- MCATS – Framework Plan for ATS contingencies of the SAM Region (June 2022).
- Meeting SAM/IG/29, 15-19 May 2023.
- RPEANS/13 (preliminary) report, 25-29 September 2023.

1. Background

1.1 SAM/IG/29 Meeting agreed on the work plan of the GESEA Subgroups and related Task Groups. A Tabletop Exercise on the ATS Contingency Plan was scheduled to be carried out in July 2023, after coordination with the delegates, it was agreed to hold it on the MS Platform on September 7 and 8, 2023.

1.2 Documents, records and presentations can be found in the following folder of the GESEA channel:

https://oaci.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/SAM-CAR-ANS-GESEA/Shared%20Documents/GESEA/SG1%20PLAN%20EA/1.%20GRUPOS%20DE%20TAREA/GT%20PLAN%20_LOA%20ATS%20reorganizado/2023%20setiembre%201r%20TABLE%20TOP%20PLANCONT?csf=1&web=1&e=d33LcD

1.3 Between September 25 and 29, 2023, the Thirteenth meeting of the ANS Expert Panel was held. This panel has been preparing Appendix 17 of LAR 211, which refers to requirements for ATS contingency plans. See link:

https://www.srvsop.aero/paneles_de_expertos/decima-tercera-reunion-del-panel-de-expertos-ans-rpeans-13/&t=1

2. Analysis

2.1 During the tabletop exercise, an exhibition of an ATC ZERO event in July 2020 that affected the LIMA FIR was held. The background of the health emergency situation and the severe degradation of the ATS due to lack of personnel was shared. Lessons learned were highlighted.

2.2 An ATS Contingency Plan exercise was developed based on the operational/technical scenario of the ACC Bogotá. The objective was not a specific examination of the Plan, but rather to motivate the analysis of the participants in situations that can be replicated in their own ACC units and FIRs.

2.3 Delegates analysed 12 *notes* linked to consecutive events in 1 hour of exercise, obtaining valuable feedback, as described below:

3. Conclusions

3.1 The topics to be evaluated by the administrations are indicated:

- a) Are we ready? Are we trained? Do we have back-up for ATS systems and processes? Is there adequate dissemination in our contingency plans?
- b) Knowledge and broadcasting of the regional MCATS. Alignment of Level 2 State Plans.
- c) Criteria for degradation and processes for Contingency Plans (PLACONATS).
- d) Phone tree. Phone numbers that are available H24/D365. Regularly updated.
- e) Process and coordination with AIS services (NOTAM), support services response plans, AIM, MET, CNS.
- f) Support for broadcasting regarding NOTAMs. Models of NOTAM generation and issuance during the activation of contingency plans by all units of the SAM Region.
- g) Consultations on the issuance of NOTAMs with domino effect (on flow measures) in States adjacent to the PCA in contingency.
- h) Contribution of the ATFM to traffic management and DCB. Development of the ATFM text of the MCATS contingency framework plan for the South American region.
- i) Concept of affectation to the network, during a degradation and contingency.
- j) Training for air traffic controllers. Treatment of aircraft and transition stage to ATS contingency measures.
- k) Airlines' knowledge of Level 2 contingency plans.
- l) Other alternative means of communication such as WhatsApp.
- m) CNS failures that may affect the distribution of flight plans. The ATS is operational, but the ATS management is affected. Collaboration of adjacent States.
- n) Cyberattacks that can usually prolong the duration of the ATS contingency. Preparation for these cases.
- o) Repository for the dissemination of contingency plans. Websites. Improvements to the call tree.
- p) Phraseology for air traffic control.
- q) Checklists or booklets with summary (text, graphs, etc.) for sectors of the ACC referring to the PLACONATS of the adjacent ACC sector.
- r) In the short term, **internal exercises** in SAM States for the analysis of operational and technical personnel. The opportunity for exercises in States that have more than one ACC/RIS is highlighted.
- s) Promote and participate in the activities of the G.P.A./LOA ATS of GS1 of GESEA.
- t) Analyze coordination procedures with AIS/NOF units for NOTAM issuance.
- u) Analyze possible repository of SAM contingency plans, on the RO SAM and/or SAM/IG website.

3.2 It was agreed that the delegates, after validation in their administrations, update the cell phone numbers and e-mails of the focal points indicated in the "phone tree" of the Region and send them as soon as possible an e-mail to the ATM/SAR Officers confirming their data.

3.3 It should be noted that, last September, the Thirteenth meeting of the panel of Experts, ANS, initiated activities for the approval of Appendix 17 "Requirements for ATS Contingency Plans" of LAR 211, which is in the process of validation and approval. According to what has been reported, for LAR 211 it is planned to stipulate periodic tests or drills on ATS contingency plans.

3.4 Therefore, the aforementioned LAR has been harmonized with the MCATS (see paragraph 3.15), in terms of the need to carry out exercises/simulations for the application of Contingency Plans. The MCATS, in this case, indicates activities once a year in each State for Level 2 Plans. The purpose is;

- a) Verify the validity of the call tree, corroborate the validity of the data from focal points including IATA.
- b) Review the technical data of the Plan, including ATS communication and frequencies, transfer points/airways, aircraft separation, NOTAM procedures, use of the TIBA procedure and Auto-transfer, etc.
- c) Verify the efficiency and availability of communications between focal points.

These activities will have an agile format and will have the co-participation of one or more adjacent (external) ATS units concerned in the Contingency Plan.

4. **Suggested Actions**

4.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Take note of the information provided;
- b) observe the requirements of the MCTAS and the importance of exercises/drills for level 2 contingency plans; and
- c) Agree on a tentative program or schedule to carry out the aforementioned exercises/drills, for the years 2024 and 2025.