RASG-PA ESC/23 — WP/06
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Twenty-Third Regional Aviation Safety Group — Pan America Executive Steering Committee Meeting (RASG-PA ESC/23)
Miami, United States, 19 to 20 March 2015

Agenda Item 10:   Other issues

VISION ON THE EVOLUTION OF THE REGIONAL AVIATION SAFETY GROUP — PAN AMERICA (RASG-PA)

(Presented by the Secretariat)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
This working paper presents an analysis on the RASG-PA activities during the last years as a safety management regional process, pointing out strengths and identifying opportunities for improvement as well as efficiencies that can be taken advantage of. This paper presents various recommendations and two mayor proposals for ESC consideration as options for RASG-PA enter its 7th year. It should be noted that the proposals have as a core understanding, the desire to maintain, and strengthen the very successful aspects of the RASG-PA. This includes maintaining common process for sharing information, producing safety intelligence and designing risk mitigation strategies. One major proposal is for the separation of RASG-PA in two RASGs, one for the NACC region and the other for the SAM region. The RASG-NACC and the RASG-SAM would be in charge of rendering of accounts to ICAO government organisms and of their relationship with States accredited to each Regional Office. The other Major Proposal is for a comprehensive review and evaluation of RASG-PA Mechanism, to be completed as a form of Continuous Improvement of the mechanism. This review would be inclusive of the RASG-NACC and RASG-SAM proposal

Action:	Comment on the proposal and approve recommendations and actions tending to attain a major efficiency of the present mechanism of RASG for NAM, CAR and SAM regions, respecting at the same time the accreditation areas of each Regional Office
Strategic Objective:	• Safety

1.   Introduction

1.1   The creation of RASG-PA was widely supported to foment and provide follow up to the implementation of the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP) endorsed by ICAO Assembly in year 2007 to provide support to the Global Air Safety Roadmap (GASR) developed by the ISGG upon ICAO request (2005).

1.2   In year 2007in Bogota, Colombia, States and industry concluded in the need to create this forum to coordinate all safety efforts carried out by the States, industry, international organizations, etc., which, in that moment, displayed a series of initiatives in accordance with own perception and priorities.

1.3   Afterwards, in year 2008, in Puntarenas, Costa Rica, a decision was taken to create the RASG-PA as a regional initiative to foment and provide follow up to the GAST implementation, and to ensure an adequate coordination of the initiatives, avoiding efforts duplicity.

1.4   As a way to govern RASG-PA activities, an Executive Committee was created, initially conformed by President, four Vice-presidents, NACC and SAM ICAO Regional Directors, ICAO HQs representative, and one representative of each of the following international organizations ISSG, ACI, IATA/ALTA, IFALPA and IFATCA.

1.5   Subsequently, RASGPA ESC members requested that RASG-PA be formally recognized by ICAO. RASG-PA request was accepted by ICAO government organisms and, finally, the Council decided to create RASGs globally, as a group similar to the existing PIRGs entrusted since many years ago of the planning and implementation of the Air Navigation Regional Plans, aligned with the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP).

1.6   After more than 7 years of operations, it is necessary to give retrospective look to the path walked, identify successful processes, opportunities for improvement in activities being developed, make the necessary changes to guarantee that this forum continues complying with needs of the region for continuing improving aviation safety.

2.   **Analysis**

        First steps

2.1   The first RASG-PA initiatives were intended to use a methodology based in result-oriented projects.

2.2   In this way, projects were conceived with the idea of generating a rapid impact in these initiatives. Some of the initial projects were:

2.3   FOQA data Exchange with the CAA: This was assumed by ACSA, Costa Rica DGAC and LACSA, and concluded with interesting results that are used as example of the real implementation of the information exchange concept and collaborative work within the GASP framework.

2.4   Safety Annual Report: This report is a sample of effective implementation of the information exchange and collaborative work concept. It is also a tool used to reach consensus on the principal risks to be mitigated. Previously, efforts were made without any coordination among the different aviation actors, which lead to duplicity of actions. The report has matured in time, and other RASGs are developing their own reports.

2.5   Project on legislation to protect information. This project helped to understand the complexity of this issue and evidenced the difficulties to implement juridical mechanism for the protection of the information.

"Walking the talk of Safety Management"

2.6   Since the beginning, RASG-PA was conceived as a forum leading to safety information processing. Though some initiatives were not duly supported by data, RASG-PA's activities have always been oriented to identify safety risks; thus, representing the fundamental principle of Safety Management. In this moment, one of the main strengths of RASG-PA is to have achieved a collaborative forum for sharing transparent information, process this information to generate safety intelligence, and develop mitigation activities, which constitutes in reality a regional safety management process.

Risks identification and mitigation

2.7   The PA-RAST creation as a technical forum to act over identified risks through the processing of shared information and the generation of safety intelligence has been another important step for risk mitigation actions, known as DIPs and SEIs. However, opportunities for improvement can still be found in the effectiveness of mitigation actions and in the evaluation of the impact that these generate.

Composition of the RASG-PA Executive Committee

2.8   As mentioned in paragraph 1.4 above, initially the RASG-PA Executive Committee was formed by States Civil Aviation Authorities, ICAO, ISSG, ACI, IATA/ALTA, IFALPA and IFATCA; however, with time, many actors from the industry incorporated to the Executive Committee, whose support has been very important to promote RASG-PA activities. RASG-PA's industry wide representation, however, was not accompanied by a growing number of States joining the Executive Committee as members, which created an unbalanced State representation in this forum. Therefore, it is necessary to review the composition of the RASG-PA Executive Committee under a different point of view, and considering that NAM/CAR and SAM regions are under the accreditation of NACC and SAM Offices, respectively.

RASG-PA annual plenary meetings

2.9   The RASG -PA has convened annual plenary meeting in a date coincident with the ALTA Safety Summit. Also, in the same week, Executive Committee meetings are being held. The format of the Executive Committee meetings consists in repeating WPs that will be presented during the plenary. Plenary meetings have had little discussion and it has not been possible to identify in a clear way the value that these add to the RASG-PA process.

2.10   RASGs plenaries back to back with Executive Committee meetings should be avoided.

2.11   The plenaries could be carried out with a different frequency and based on the needs that important decision is made by RASGs members. The fast track mechanism could be a more efficient tool for the approval of issues that do not require ample debate to reach consensus.

ALTA Safety Summit

2.12   ALTA Safety Summit has turned to be an important achievement of RASG-PA, making possible an annual forum for networking and to provide information about identified risks and corresponding mitigation actions, as well as for the exchange of ideas and good practices. This important forum should be strengthen and widen its scope reaching more industry actors and to be used as a interregional forum.

Information Analysis Team (IAT)

2.13   This initiative complies with the important role of RASG-PA as a safety intelligence generation mechanisms; however, participants to this forum, programmed to be held back-to-back with PA-RAST meetings, are PA-RAST participants. Efficiencies can be generated through the incorporation of the IAT process as part of the PA-RAST terms of reference. .

RSOO

2.14   Regional safety oversight organizations are very powerful tools when a need to strengthen or display actions tending to guarantee compliance of service suppliers and States with regarding safety oversight obligations. At least three regional organizations have been identified that should have more participation or visibility as risk mitigation tools. At the same time, RSOO participation in the RASG processes should have an adequate balance with respect to States participation. .

ASTT (Aviation Safety Training Team)

2.15   The safety training team was an initiative that evolved from being a database to compile and provide a link to the RASG-PA webpage on different safety training activities. ICAO has a tool available known as Training Directory, which can offer an acceptable solution. Additionally, the internet search tools can achieve the same objective. Therefore, this can be considered a redundant effort. Subsequently, the ASTT initiated one-day seminars addressed to share information on issues related to risk areas. However, these activities impact on safety improvement are not too clear. Risk mitigation actions, in theory, fall within three categories: a) Standards/Procedures, b) training, and c) technology. PA-RAST DIPs or SEIs should fall in any of these categories; therefore, it could make more sense to implement training activities when these are identified as necessary for PA-RAST to mitigate risks, and eliminate the ASTT with the objective of achieving activities efficiency.

RASG-SAM and RASG-NACC

Proposal for the separation of RASG-PA in two RASGs, one for the NACC region and the other for the SAM region

2.16   In order to improve efficiency and to take advantage of regional processes and mechanisms already existing in each Regional Office, as well as to ensure a strict respect to the SAM and NACC Regional Offices accreditation areas, it seems convenient to analyse the advantages of dividing the RASG-PA in two new RASGs: RASG-NACC and RASG-SAM.

2.17   This division should only generate more efficiency and a better participation and appropriation of States regarding RASGs activities. Also, it will facilitate coordination as well as the accounts rendering to ICAO Council. In this moment the inclusion of both regions in only one RASG could hide some regional realities that need more transparency.

2.18   The collaborative forum composed by the industry and States should be strengthen with this division, not the opposite.

2.19   The Safety Annual Report process that requires an ample safety information base should be maintained with now changes at all, the same as the RAST/IAT process. However, the assignment of specific projects for each region would be delegated to each RAST, i.e. RASG-SAM or RASG-NACC for the implementation by the States.

2.20   During the Safety Summits, both RASGs could take better advantage sharing common challenges to both regions, and exchanging better practices.

2.21   Convened joint events Secretariat would be leaded by the Regional Office accredited to the place where the meeting would take place, with the support of the other Regional Office.

2.22   Contributions presently provided by the industry in support of RASG-PA, should be divided into equal parts between both Regional Offices, and its implementation would start after the approval of a budget and a programme of activities to be presented and approved by the corresponding RASG Executive Committee. The use of resources should be reported every year, according to executed activities, giving priority to the implementation of risk mitigation projects to be developed by the RAST.

Comprehensive review of RASG-PA Mechanism

Proposal for evaluation of RASG-PA to be completed as a form of Continuous Improvement of the mechanism

2.23   Establishment of Fast Track working group to evaluate the proposal and recommendations of this working paper, including the RASG-NACC and RASG SAM proposal.

2.24   In keeping with SMS principals of continuous improvement there is merit in conducting the recommended comprehensive review at this stage of RASG-PA maturity.

2.25   Many of the recommendations in this NE are indicative of the need for such a review and those and for improvements that are very timely and much needed.

2.26   ICAO has recognized the value and success of the RASG-PA mechanism. ICAO has now instituted RASG in all the regions. We must consider however that this also brings other items of consideration that may impact RASG-PA such as;

2.26.1   Implementation of RASG in other regions that may not be familiar with its benefits and value may pose a challenge for committing of limited budgets and personnel resources.

2.26.2   May not be seen as a priority item or as applicable in their region versus other regional efforts already established in the respective region.

2.26.3   Weakening the value and effectiveness of RASG in other regions may very well have a negative impact on RASG-PA and the RASG concept as a whole. As the initial flag ship RASG-PA must continue to set the example and standards of effectiveness and efficiency.

2.27   If this proposal is accepted, terms of reference with expected deliverables, timelines, and assigned participants, at minimum, should be identified within the next 45 days.

3.   **Suggested actions**

3.1   Considering that:

- All recommendations are tending to achieve a better efficiency of the RASG present mechanism, and that

- This working paper has been coordinated between the NACC and SAM Region, committed, as one, to support the decision of the ESC,

3.2   The ESC is invited to:

a)   Take note of this working paper,

b)   Comment on the proposals, and

c)   Approve actions that can be approved immediately, namely those referred to the two major proposals.

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