



**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 Business**

**THE NEED FOR A UNITED REGIONAL AVIATION SAFETY GROUP — PAN AMERICA (RASG-PA) AS THE MODEL FOR OTHER RASGS**

(Presented by Costa Rica, United States, ACI, Airbus, ALTA, Boeing, CANSO, IATA, and IFALPA)

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	
<p>This paper presents how the successes of the RASG-PA serve as a model for other RASGs and should continue its role as the global leader in regional safety policy, government and industry collaboration, and transparent safety information sharing and analysis.</p>	
<b>Action:</b>	<p>The ESC is invited to take note of the issues raised in this paper and with RASG-PA agree to support and reinforce the fundamental RASG-PA framework, embrace and promote the role of RASG-PA as the global leader of RASGs and continue to work collaboratively with all stakeholders to strategically evolve RASG-PA to address emerging safety issues.</p>
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety</li> <li>• Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency</li> </ul>
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assembly Resolution A36-7</li> <li>• Assembly Resolution A38-5</li> <li>• Council Decision 190/4 (2010)</li> <li>• RASG-PA Procedural Handbook</li> </ul>

**1. Introduction**

1.1 In response to Assembly Resolution A36-7- Global Planning for Safety and Efficiency (2007) the Member States of the ICAO South American (SAM) and North American, Central American, Caribbean (NACC) Regional Offices formed the first Regional Aviation Safety Group in 2008. During the formation of the RASG-PA, the Member States took an unprecedented step to voluntarily include industry not just as observers, but as partners.

1.2 The leadership and initiative taken by the RASG-PA Member States to proactively develop and implement such a successful model eventually lead to the ICAO Council directing the use RASGs throughout the world. The success of RASG-PA has directly contributed to the formation of the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP), which promotes a global approach to coordinating the efforts of States, industry, and international organizations in pursuit of the safe and orderly development of civil aviation.

1.3 While there is always room for improvement and further strategic planning, RASG-PA should continue to function as a pan-regional group, including states and industry from the NAM, CAR, and SAM regions under a single, unified structure.

## **2. RASG History and Development**

2.1 Before the establishment of RASGs, regional mechanisms; such as Cooperative Development of Operational Safety and Continuing Airworthiness Programmes (COSCAPs) and Regional Safety Oversight Organizations (RSOOs); existed to address the specific safety needs of regions. As these groups matured they became more aligned with sub-regional boundaries and in some cases may have obscured the role of ICAO Regional Offices.

2.2 It was determined by the ICAO Council that these groups were not sufficient in addressing and harmonizing regional flight operational safety issues. As such, the Council proposed that a new regional structure would be needed to monitor progress, coordinate actions among States and make recommendations to ICAO to facilitate the implementation of the Global Aviation Safety Plan (GASP). As stated, the COSCAPs and RSOOs are organized on a sub-regional basis. Considering that COSCAP/RSOO mechanisms did not cover all of the States of the region. In 2010, the ICAO Council agreed to formalize the RASGs as Council Bodies (C-DEC 190/4) with the mission to enhance civil aviation safety and efficiency through coordination and collaboration by all aviation stakeholders under ICAO leadership and to eliminate duplication of activities. The recognition of RASGs by the Council led to the establishment of a formal reporting channel which allowed for ICAO to monitor the worldwide implementation of the GASP.

2.3 The GASP is built on the principle of partnership and, as such, it is essential that all relevant stakeholders are involved in the development and implementation of any activities aimed at improving safety under the focus areas. Together with ICAO, the stakeholders in the civil aviation sector include States, airlines/operators, airports, air navigation service providers, aircraft and equipment manufacturers, maintenance and repair organizations, regional organizations, international organizations, training organizations and other industry representatives. The commitment of all stakeholders is fundamental for success in improving safety.

2.4 RASGs were developed as regional groups, and to help compliment the work of the Planning and Implementation Regional Groups (PIRGs). These regional groups were intended to cross ICAO Regional Office boundaries as a cooperative forum integrating global, regional, sub-regional, national, and industry efforts to enhance aviation safety worldwide.

### **3. Success of RASG-PA**

3.1 The North American (NAM), Caribbean (CAR), and South American (SAM) region is characterized by strong North-South traffic flows that reflect the significant economic, cultural, and linguistic ties of this hemisphere. All stakeholders in these regions have recognized the indispensability of cooperation between the ICAO regional office in Mexico City, representing the NAM/CAR region, and the ICAO regional office in Lima, representing the SAM region.

3.2 While the Pan American region established RASG-PA two years prior to formal recognition by the Council, the internal structure and framework has led to a number of critical safety initiatives that rely fundamentally on a strong sense of trust amongst stakeholders and a well-recognized need for the protection of safety information.

3.3 This trust and confidence amongst participants of the RASG-PA, strengthened by years of close collaboration, enabled the U.S. Commercial Aviation Safety Team (CAST) to sign a groundbreaking data-sharing agreement with the RASG-PA. This and other similar agreements are critical to the ongoing work for developed safety enhancements in the region. The continued effectiveness of this agreement is predicated upon the continuation of confidence between the participants of CAST and of a unified RASG-PA. Any significant structural change to the RASG-PA may terminate these agreements and necessitate a period of confidence building with the new structures followed by the re-negotiation of that agreement.

3.4 Moreover, any proposal to amend the structure of the RASG-PA in a manner that would affect its pan-regional characteristics would set a precedent for amending the structure of other highly successful cross regional bodies such as the aforementioned GREPECAS and CARSAMPAF.

3.5 Such developments would result in unacceptable inefficiencies, cost increases, and duplication of effort, which, ultimately, would have a negative effect on safety initiatives underway and the implementation of ASBUs throughout the region. This would also require the recalculation and re-establishment of the metrics and goals of the Bogota and Port of Spain Declarations, which were approved by the Directors General of the Contracting States of the SAM and NACC regions.

3.6 RASG-PA has attracted a vast array of industry and government stakeholders, which have been able to contribute substantial resources to RASG-PA programs and initiatives that have direct impact on improving safety. It is not likely that these stakeholders would have the ability or the desire to support two RASGs in the region. Duplication of efforts and increased resource constraints would surely have a negative impact on regional aviation safety.

### **4. Conclusion**

4.1 RASG-PA has served as the global model for RASGs, both in its cooperative structure across industry, governments, and ICAO regions; and in its unparalleled successes in raising safety levels throughout the region.

4.2 The successes of the RASG-PA are fundamentally predicated upon confidence among industry competitors, between government and industry, and among governments and industry throughout the entire Pan-American region. That confidence took years to achieve and culminated in a pivotal information sharing agreement that would be in jeopardy should the RASG-PA structure be modified in a way that all participants do not find acceptable.

4.3 Any major change in the cross-regional nature of the RASG-PA would result in unacceptable cost increases, inefficiencies, and duplication of efforts. It could also result in a deleterious effect on other cross-regional groups, such as GREPECAS and CARSAMPAF.

## **5. Suggested Action**

5.1 The ESC is invited to take note of the issues raised in this paper and with RASG-PA agree to:

- a) Support and reinforce the cross-regional RASG-PA framework as it exists today;
- b) Promote and direct improvements in the functioning of the RASG-PA that respect the essential cross-regional nature of the RASG-PA; and
- c) Engage collaboratively with all stakeholders to strategically evolve RASG-PA to address emerging safety issues.

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