



**GREPECAS Programmes and Projects Review Committee (PPRC)**  
**On-line Meeting (ePPRC/01)**  
 27 May 2020

**Agenda Item 1: Main Progress in the Improvements to GREPECAS**  
**1.2 Definition of the main challenges in the CAR/SAM Regions by the Global contingency of COVID-19 in coordination and activities**

**COORDINATIONS BETWEEN THE REGIONAL OFFICES AND THE STATES TO FACE THE CHALLENGES IN THE PROVISION OF AIR NAVIGATION SERVICES AND FACILITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COVID-19 CRISIS**

(Presented by Secretariat)

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	
This working paper presents some of the challenges that have been observed in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic and the continuity of air operations in the SAM Region.	
<b>Action:</b>	Take note and consider the preparation of ANS Contingency Plans due to Pandemics and epidemics.
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency</li> <li>• Economic Development of Air Transport</li> <li>• Environmental Protection</li> </ul>
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EB 2020/9, 30 January, 2020</li> <li>• SL AN 13/35-20/47, 20 March, 2020</li> <li>• Declaration on the outbreak of the new coronavirus (COVID-19) adopted by the ICAO Council on 9 March, 2020, at the fourth session of the 219th session periods.</li> <li>• SL re. EC 6/3 - 20/55 issued on 15 April, 2020 (Repatriation flights)</li> <li>• LT/23.1-SA089, issued on 13 March, 2020, by the SAM Office</li> </ul>

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The COVID-19 virus began to manifest itself in late 2019 and early 2020.

1.2 ICAO took note of the directives provided by the World Health Organization, since the beginning of the spread of the virus, regarding the safe transport of passengers.

1.3 States began to implement restrictions on passengers movement, as well as border closings after observing the COVID-19 spread with high probability of becoming a pandemic.

1.4 The fact of the presence of the virus in the CAR/SAM States began to manifest itself at the end of February and early March. Consistent with measures implemented in other regions, States imposed restrictions on air traffic as well as border closures.

## **2. Analysis**

2.1 ICAO, since the onset of the COVID-19 virus, has worked closely with WHO on the measures that should be applied for the safe transport of passengers through aviation.

2.2 With the expansion of the pandemic, the concerns of the States began to be expressed with consultation on health protocols that should be applied to the personnel providing services in the ATS, AIS/ AIM and MET units, and that could have direct contact with crews from countries that were already affected by the COVID-19 virus at that time. The State Letter SA089 dated 13 March, 2020, suggested a series of sanitary measures for the ATS, AIS/AIM, and MET units, as well as shift roles to avoid a massive contagion of all the technical personnel.

2.3 When the pandemic began to affect the CAR/SAM States, and they implemented restrictive measures in relation to aviation activities, as well as border closings, the greatest challenge was the standardization of the NOTAM messages that were issued by States to communicate restrictive measures. The regional offices in coordination with the Air Navigation Bureau (ANB) prepared standardized NOTAM models, which have been circulated to the States for their use.

2.4 Considering that the measures implemented by the States were an immediate reaction, passengers of various nationalities remained stranded in different countries. The new challenge for the CAR/SAM Regions was to coordinate repatriation or humanitarian flights. Coordination has been carried out among the States to implement security measures that will make humanitarian flights possible. In this regard, ICAO issued SL AN 13/35-20 / 47, through which the implementation of contingency arrangements to reduce the risks of the spread of COVID-19, was suggested and two actions were requested:

- a) review the established or planned contingency arrangements for air traffic services;
- b) take note of the importance of avoiding excessive or unintended restrictions.

2.5 Likewise, as the supply chain had to be ensured, it was agreed to create safety and health protocols with the States to maintain cargo transport flights.

2.6 The development of the pandemic and the measures implemented by the States have paralyzed aviation activity by 90% in the CAR/SAM Regions. The reaction of the States, although framed in the ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices, it has been observed that there are opportunities for improvements in contingency plans for public health events. The Regions have worked with the existing Contingency Plans for ATM, adapting it to the conditions of the pandemic, and establishing measures to mitigate the possible consequences of contagion and contamination in the work areas of the different ANS units, in a coordinated manner.

2.7 The Meeting should consider establishing an Ad-hoc group in order to study the enhancement of Contingency Plans for ATS, AIS/AIM and MET areas for pandemics or epidemics. The suggestion of this working group could be shared with the Air Navigation Commission to promote the preparation of ICAO guide material to ensure the continuity of ATS, AIS/AIM and MET services, as well as all CNS support, in case of occurrence of an epidemic or pandemic in the future. The purpose is to collect the lessons learned from this pandemic and standardize contingency procedures to be applied for future public health cases.

**3. Suggested action:**

3.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) take note of the information provided in this working paper;
- b) consider the recommended action in section 2.7; and
- c) other actions that the Meeting consider appropriate in relation to the point under discussion.