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WORKING PAPER

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Seventh North American, Central American and Caribbean Working Group Meeting (NACC/WG/7)
ICAO NACC Regional Office, Mexico City, 30 August - 1 September 2022

- Agenda Item 3: Follow-up of the Activities of the NACC/WG Task Forces**
3.1 Progress of the NACC/WG on Aeronautical Information Management (AIM), Air Traffic Management (ATM) and Communications, Navigation and Surveillance (CNS)

PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SEARCH AND RESCUE IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE (SAR/TF)

(Presented by the SAR/TF Rapporteur)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Working Paper presents the progress made by the Search and Rescue Implementation Support Task Force (SAR/TF) since its previous progress report. This Paper includes details of the activities carried out and the results of the previously identified deliverables and recommendations to improve the SAR coordination function in the CAR Region.

Action:	Suggested actions are included in Section 6.
<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety• Air Navigation Capacity and Efficiency
<i>References:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Report of the Second NAM/CAR Air Navigation Implementation Working Group (ANI/WG) Search and Rescue (SAR) Implementation Task Force Meeting (ANI/WG/SAR/TF/2), Online, 7 to 9 September 2021

1. Introduction

1.1 The CAR Region has the permanent challenge of implementing, updating and strengthening a realistic and efficient Search and Rescue (SAR) system suitable to its operational circumstances.

1.2 The elements of the SAR system are widely necessary to guarantee the life of the traveling public, the continuity of air transport and the important contribution to civil aviation, where we can guarantee an effective operation by adhering to the different procedures and new technologies.

2. ANI/WG/SAR/TF/2 Meeting

2.1 The Second NAM/CAR Air Navigation Implementation Working Group (ANI/WG) Search and Rescue (SAR) Implementation Task Force Meeting (ANI/WG/SAR/TF/2) was held online from September 7 to 9, 2021.

2.2 The Meeting addressed different topics such as the Revision of the SAR part of the Air Navigation Plan for the CAR/SAM Regions, Revision of the SAR Plan of the CAR Region and SAR agreements.

2.3 Regarding the revision of the SAR part of the Air Navigation Plan of the CAR/SAM Regions, the States and Territories of the CAR Region have the task of updating the information of the Search and Rescue Regions (SRR) of which they are responsible, as well as incorporating the coordinates in the description of their lateral limits in Vol. I of the aforementioned Plan. In the same way, the need to update the information on the Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) and Rescue Sub-Centres (RSCs), including the SAR points of contact (SPoC) and other complementary information about them was addressed.

2.4 Additionally, the updating of the ICAO Global Aeronautical Distress and Safety System (GADSS) was addressed, in search of content that should be included in the upcoming update of the SAR Plan for the Caribbean Region. The text of the 2022 edition of the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual, Appendix V, Autonomous Distress Tracking (ADT) of Aircraft in Flight, will provide the most accurate and concise background information for the SAR services, to be reviewed by aircraft operators and Air Traffic Services Units (ATSU). In this regard, the Meeting requested the Secretariat to organize a Regional Workshop on GADSS with the aim of raising awareness and providing initial information on this system.

2.5 Regarding the SAR agreements, the Meeting noted that several CAR States and Territories have pending signature of their corresponding SAR agreements. The causes that prevent the completion of these agreements are diverse and of a different nature. The involvement of various organizations and the lack of a clear understanding of the context of SAR operations remain the main obstacle. Although the nature of SAR agreements related to coordination between units is the same as other ANS operational agreements, for example, between ATSU, these SAR agreements cannot materialize, facing the same difficulties as other more complex agreements and with other implications.

2.6 After the Meeting, the authorities of Cuba and Mexico resumed their conversations regarding the signing of their SAR agreement, which could be finalized in 2022.

3. Global Aeronautical Distress and Safety System (GADSS) Virtual Workshop

3.1 As agreed at the ANI/WG/SAR/TF/2 Meeting, the Virtual Workshop on GADSS was held, which was attended by 122 representatives from 23 States/Territories and 4 International Organizations of the NAM/CAR Regions.

- 3.2 The objectives of this virtual workshop were the following:
- Provide information regarding the Global Aeronautical Distress and Safety System (GADSS) and the new requirements for aircraft Autonomous Distress Tracking (ADT);
 - Explain roles and responsibilities of Air Operators, ATSU and RCCs in the GADSS; and
 - Raise awareness of the possibility that changes in operational procedures may need to be considered as a result of GADSS implementation.

- 3.3 The workshop was organized with the support of the following organizations:
- ICAO Airspace Management and Optimization Section;
 - United States Coast Guard (USCG);
 - United States Mission Control Center (USMCC);
 - USMCC/RCC; and
 - Central American Corporation for Air Navigation Services (COCESNA).

4. Other SAR activities in the CAR Region

4.1 Several meetings were held in August through the Central American Search and Rescue Committee (COBUSA) where different aspects that need to be included in the National SAR plans of each Central American State were raised. Delays were found on the part of the different emergency coordination and assistance structures under the responsibility of Central American States, such as updates of equipment available at the time of a SAR operation for reasons considered, in many cases, as classified information in military units.

4.2 Attention is paid to the date of implementation of the Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELT) Autonomous Distress Tracking (ADT) (ELT/ADT), which will have to be postponed to 2024 according to the information that has been compiled and would be confirmed before December 2022.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Support for the implementation of SAR services continues to be a relevant need in the CAR Region. Resource restrictions as a result of budget cuts due to COVID-19 have further affected the difficult situation of SAR services in our region. Training of SAR personnel, unfortunately, is not a priority for some States. The change of key personnel in this area continues to be one of the main difficulties

5.2 The training of SAR personnel, at their different Basic, Intermediate and Advanced levels, must be reinforced to address the rotation of personnel in the first response units at the RSC, which is where one of the largest problems originates due to the non-replication of knowledge to the personnel that replaces them.

5.3 The lack of high-level attention to the signing of SAR agreements remains being our top priority. At this point, the effort of the aeronautical authorities of Cuba and Mexico to finalize their SAR cooperation agreements is recognized; however, there are other key agreements that could not be finalized.

6. Suggested actions

6.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Evaluate the progress of the Task Force to support the implementation of Search and Rescue (SAR) detailed in this Paper;
- b) Support the recommendations included in Section 5; and
- c) Make any additional recommendation deemed necessary.

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