



International Civil Aviation Organization

## ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

For information only

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### APPLICATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF ANNEX 9 — *FACILITATION* TO RELIEF FLIGHTS DESTINED FOR THE NORTH AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN REGIONS

With reference to the recent events in the North American and Caribbean Regions, States' attention is drawn to Standards 8.8 and 8.9 of Annex 9 — *Facilitation* to the *Convention on International Civil Aviation*. These Standards set out the obligations of Contracting States in respect of relief flights being conducted following natural disasters and similar emergency situations where United Nations assistance is required.

These Standards call on States to facilitate the entry into, departure from and transit through their territories of aircraft engaged in relief flights to areas stricken by natural disasters, and ensure the prompt clearance of personnel and articles arriving on such aircraft.

As a result, relief flights carrying personnel and aid material destined for the North American and Caribbean Regions are required to be cleared without delay, in order to ensure that such flights are conducted efficiently and rapidly.

The applicable provisions of Annex 9 are reproduced in the Attachment, for information and ease of reference.

**Enclosure:**

Extracts from Annex 9

Issued under the authority of the Secretary General

**EXTRACTS FROM ANNEX 9 (14TH EDITION, 2015)  
RELATING TO RELIEF FLIGHTS**

**Chapter 1: Definitions**

**Relief flights.** Flights operated for humanitarian purposes which carry relief personnel and relief supplies such as food, clothing, shelter, medical and other items during or after an emergency and/or disaster and/or are used to evacuate persons from a place where their life or health is threatened by such emergency and/or disaster to a safe haven in the same State or another State willing to receive such persons.

**Chapter 8: Other facilitation provisions**

**C. Relief flights following natural and man-made disasters which seriously endanger human health or the environment, and similar emergency situations where United Nations (UN) assistance is required**

8.8 Contracting States shall facilitate the entry into, departure from and transit through their territories of aircraft engaged in relief flights performed by or on behalf of international organizations recognized by the UN or by or on behalf of States themselves and shall take all possible measures to ensure their safe operation. Such relief flights are those undertaken in response to natural and man-made disasters which seriously endanger human health or the environment, as well as similar emergency situations where UN assistance is required. Such flights shall be commenced as quickly as possible after obtaining agreement with the recipient State.

*Note 1.— According to its Internationally Agreed Glossary of Basic Terms, the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs considers an emergency to be “a sudden and usually unforeseen event that calls for immediate measures to minimize its adverse consequences”, and a disaster to be “a serious disruption of the functioning of society, causing widespread human, material or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using only its own resources”.*

*Note 2.— With respect to the application of measures to ensure the safe operation of relief flights, attention is drawn to Annex 11 — Air Traffic Services, the Manual Concerning Safety Measures Relating to Military Activities Potentially Hazardous to Civil Aircraft Operations (Doc 9554) and the Manual concerning Interception of Civil Aircraft (Doc 9433).*

8.9 Contracting States shall ensure that personnel and articles arriving on relief flights referred to in 8.8 are cleared without delay.

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