



International Civil Aviation Organization

First Meeting of the Asia Pacific Accident Investigation Group APAC-AIG/1

Bali, Indonesia, 18-19 September 2013

Agenda Item 2: Report on recent accident/incident investigation related developments and activities

REGIONAL ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION AUTHORITIES COOPERATION

Presented by France

SUMMARY

The ICAO European group of safety investigators (ACC) developed a "Code of Conduct on Cooperation in the Field of Accident/Incident Investigation", together with a checklist of co-operative measures.

This paper highlights the importance of regional cooperation.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The investigation of aviation accidents and incidents is today recognised as a fundamentally important element of any aviation safety regime, and those responsible for investigations have come to be considered by civil aviation safety authorities as key partners, both on the policy and technical levels. Accident and incident investigation in Europe is carried out within a precise methodological international co-operation.

1.2 The WP is showing the ACC's involvement in the international development of the organisation of accident and incident investigations.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The European Civil Aviation Conference ECAC (44 States) has established for many years the group of experts in accident/incident investigation ACC.

2.2 The aim of ACC is:

- To increase the effectiveness of the ECAC States' safety investigation bodies, and promote European policy and practice internationally
- To enhance the effectiveness of ECAC Member States' safety investigation capabilities, through the sharing of expertise and experience and the promotion of co-operation, taking into account developments at the EU level
- To co-operate with the European Network of Civil Aviation Safety Investigation Authorities ENCASIA, in ways which avoid duplication and add value to the work of both ACC and ENCASIA.

2.3 ENCASIA has competencies that are defined within European Regulation No 996/2010 and is working within this specific legislative framework notably through its working groups. ACC, with its wider membership and many observers, has the ability to reach out and bring a more international dimension to its discussions and activities. ACC is a working body able to adopt broad general positions, rather than a decision-making entity.

2.4 The ENCASIA has prepared procedures for requesting and providing help among ENCASIA Member States. This should allow each safety investigation authority to fully perform an investigation, with the assistance of other Member States where relevant. The guidance is largely based on EU Regulation No 996/2010, ICAO Annex 13 and the ECAC Code of conduct.

2.5 From the very beginning ACC has been itinerant, holding each of its meetings in a different ECAC Member State. This promotes familiarity with how the different investigation authorities are organised, and builds contacts and working relationships between staff at all levels. A key focus of its activities is the exchange of experience in methods of investigation and on the difficulties sometimes encountered. These exchanges happen both formally, on the occasion of a host country's briefing on its preoccupations, in the context of reports on recent investigations, or informally during coffee breaks and meals.

2.6 The development of co-operation in Europe was a natural extension of these contacts, and in due course, responding to the open-minded and amicable spirit which had developed in the joint search for optimal solutions, ACC developed a "Code of Conduct on Cooperation in the Field of Accident/Incident Investigation", together with a checklist of co-operative measures. The Code of Conduct, opened for signature by Heads of the accident investigation bodies on 7 April 2006.

2.7 ACC also organises workshops on issues of common interest and concern to Europe's accident investigators. These have included a seminar in Tallinn in 2000 on the needs of victims and their families; in 2002 a workshop in Nicosia on the organisation of investigation bodies; in 2005 one in Bucharest on communications following an accident; and in 2006 a Workshop on the Drafting and issuing of Safety Recommendations in Athens.

2.8 In 2009 ACC, in close cooperation with the Croatian authorities, ECAC and the French Bureau d'Enquêtes et d'Analyses organised in Dubrovnik a three-day workshop on the underwater recovery of aircraft wreckage and flight recorders, which included a day at sea practicing location and recovery techniques "for real". There followed in 2010 a workshop on the location and recovery from deeper waters, held in Larnaca, Cyprus. As in Dubrovnik, the programme included a day at sea to enable participants to gain first hand experience of the technologies and techniques necessary for deep water investigations, including the use of a Remotely Operated Vehicle, and the recovery aboard ship of aircraft wreckage pre-positioned for the purposes of the exercise.

2.9 In November 2012 ECAC published "*Guidance on the Underwater Location and Recovery of Aircraft Wreckage and Flight Recorders*". Reflecting inter alia learning gained from the two workshops mentioned above, the *Guidance* addresses the issues peculiar to underwater location and recovery operations, including the expertise, procedures and equipment needed to mount an effective response to an accident of this kind. It will be of interest to all those who might at any moment find themselves faced with the task of investigating the loss of an aircraft in these uniquely challenging circumstances.

2.10 For its 2012 workshop, ACC elected to look at the particular usefulness, in terms of accident prevention, of investigating *incidents*. Because investigations can be costly, the workshop explored the factors bearing on the identification of those incidents whose investigation can be expected to yield the greatest learning.

2.11 ACC meets about twice yearly (see Appendix), and held its latest thirty-ninth meeting at EUROCONTROL's headquarters in Brussels, on 21/22 May 2013. Members focused on the ATM dimension of the safety investigation discipline.

2.12 It is included in the ACC Code of Conduct that the ACC State shall take appropriate steps, within the limits of resources available to them and domestic obligations which shall take precedence, to positively answer a request of assistance from another ACC State in one or several of the various investigative fields.

2.13 BEA has done its best to be in line with the principles of the ACC Code of Conduct. On 16 November 2012 the Airbus A300B4, registered EI-EAC, operated by Air Contractors (Ireland), on behalf of DHL company, made a runway excursion during landing at Bratislava international airport. The Slovak safety investigation authority (Aviation and Maritime Investigation Authority of the Slovak Republic) delegated the safety investigation to the BEA in accordance with the provisions of Annex 13 and with the European regulation.

2.14 BEA has received observers from foreign Accident Investigations Authorities at least in two accident investigations: accident off the coast of Canet-Plage to the Airbus A320, registered D-AXLA, operated by XL Airways Germany, on 27 November 2008, and the Accident to the Airbus A-330 AF-447, registered F-GLZC, Rio-Paris on 1st June 2009.

2.15 The cooperative mechanism based on the ACC Code of Conduct has allowed the competency of investigators and quality of investigations conducted by States in this region to be greatly enhanced.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to note the content of this paper and consider defining further cooperative mechanism within APAC-AIG to enhance competency of investigators and quality of investigations in this region.

APPENDIX

List of ACC meetings

ACC/39 Brussels, 21-22 May 2013
ACC/38 Bucarest, 6-7 November 2012
ACC/37 Tel Aviv, 20 - 21 June 2012
ACC/36 Dublin, 22 - 23 November 2011
ACC/35 Paris, 19 - 20 May 2011
ACC/34 Istanbul, 14 - 15 December 2010
ACC/33 Madrid, 9 February 2010
ACC/32 Lisbon, 5 - 6 November 2009
ACC/31 Riga, 21 - 22 May 2009
ACC/30 Vienna, 12 - 14 November 2008
ACC/29 Brussels, 15 - 16 April 2008
ACC/28 Farnborough, 21 - 22 February 2008
ACC/27 Paris, 8 - 9 November 2007
ACC/26 Ljubljana, 15 June 2007
ACC/25 Prague, 16 March 2007
ACC/24 Madrid, 16 - 17 November 2006
ACC/23 The Hague, 5 - 7 October 2005
ACC/22 Budapest, 27 - 29 October 2004
ACC/21 Paris, 18 - 19 May 2004
ACC/20 Paris, Le Bourget, 17 - 18 September 2002
ACC/19 Prague, 27 June 2002
ACC/18 Tallinn, 16 - 19 October 2000
ACC/17 Brussels, 27 January 2000

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