

# Air Accident Investigation During a Pandemic

Transport Safety Investigation Bureau  
Singapore

APAC-AIG/8  
Agenda Item 6: Other business  
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CONFIDENTIAL

# Introduction

- COVID-19 pandemic has led to a slew of anti-COVID-19 measures
  - closure of borders, travel restrictions and mandatory self-isolation
- While thousands of aircraft have been grounded, AIAs still need to be prepared to respond
- New risks and challenges to AIAs arising from COVID-19 pandemic

# Introduction

- ICAO provided advice in overcoming these challenges
  - <https://www.icao.int/safety/COVID-19OPS/Pages/aig.aspx>
- ICAO AIG Webinar on “*Aircraft Accident Investigations during the COVID-19 Pandemic*” on 25 June 2020
  - recording available at <https://www.icao.int/Meetings/webinar-series/Pages/ArchivedWebinars.aspx>

# Air Accident Investigation During a Pandemic

- Risk assessment for responding to an accident could ensure the safety of investigators
- The TSIB carried out an assessment of the procedures and risks involved in responding to an occurrence:
  - Locally
  - Overseas

# Considerations - Local occurrences

- Limited presence of foreign participants due to travel restrictions and quarantine needs
  - Risk of overlooking or inadvertently destroying evidence
  - Essential to establish and maintain constant communication
  - Make use of technology such as 3D laser scanners and drones to share accident site evidence for foreign counterparts and experts' advice

# Considerations - Local occurrences

- Biological hazards, including COVID-19
  - PPEs for accident sites should be more than adequate
- Essential to read out flight recorders early
  - TSIB has readout facilities
  - In case need to read out in foreign facility, consider hand over to counterpart at transit area
- Testing of aircraft parts overseas unlikely to be affected

# Considerations – Overseas occurrences

- TSIB will still nominate accredited representatives
- Decision to travel will depend on:
  - Severity of the accident
  - Pandemic situation in the State of Occurrence
  - Availability of flights
    - Commercial
    - Chartered
    - specially-arranged dedicated flights
  - Travel restrictions and quarantine requirements of the State of Occurrence
    - Can be waived by taking a COVID-19 test before travel?
  - Logistics arrangements
    - Transport, accommodation, PPE supply

# Considerations – Overseas occurrences

- Even if not travelling, TSIB AccRep will maintain constant communication with AIA of the State of Occurrence
  - Emails
  - telephone calls
  - Teleconferencing
  - Video-conferencing

# Considerations – Overseas occurrences

- The meeting is invited to:
  - Note the risks and challenges to, and considerations for investigation operations during a pandemic,
  - Note that States/Administrations should carry out risk assessments and review their operational procedures in order to continue to be able to quickly and effectively respond to an accident or incident, and
  - Encourage ICAO APAC Office to summarise the measures taken by States/Administrations and post on the ICAO APAC's **APAC COVID-19 Contingency and Recovery Planning Group** webpage for reference.