



ICAO

Second Meeting of the Asia/Pacific Wildlife Hazard
Management Working Group (AP-WHM WG/2)
Virtual Meeting, 27 to 29 May 2020

Agenda Item 3: Global, Regional and National Guidance/Best Practices on Wildlife Hazard Management

**CHALLENGES IN WILDLIFE HAZARD MANAGEMENT FOR
AERODROME OPERATORS IN ASIA-PACIFIC**

(Presented by Airports Council International)

SUMMARY

This paper presents the major challenges in wildlife hazard management that aerodrome operators in Asia-Pacific are facing and suggests a way forward to continue to meet these challenges.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Worldwide the average chance of an aircraft inflight or moving on an aerodrome being struck by animals, mostly (95%) birds, is 0.06%, according to the ACI annual report on airport safety for the year 2017. The percentage may seem insignificant but given at least 41% of these strikes occur during aircraft landings and takeoffs, airports have an important role to play in assisting States and other industry partners in the prevention of these accidents.

2. DISCUSSION

Challenges

2.1 Lack of Wildlife Hazard Management Plan. Like any successful business, managing the risk of an aircraft being hit by a flock of birds or other animals will not start without a plan. The lack of a proper wildlife hazard management plan is precisely what the problem is with many airport operators. Based on the 26 APEX in Safety Reviews that ACI conducted at airports in Asia-Pacific and the Middle East Regions from 2012 to 2019, 55% of these airports did not have a proper wildlife hazard management program and 60% of them did not have a formal risk assessment process.

2.2 Lack of Resources and Training. Anecdotal evidence indicates that many aerodrome operators have difficulties in dispersals of wildlife, especially birds. This could be due to the lack of domain expertise, training of personnel or resources available such as dispersal devices and operational personnel.

2.3 Lack of a Positive Safety Culture and Communication

2.3.1 Annex 19 mandates the promotion of a positive safety culture and yet the lack of a positive safety culture and, in particular, a good reporting culture in wildlife hazard management is one of the biggest challenges that the industry and States are faced with.

While there is no hard, scientific evidence to prove the general lack of a positive safety culture, the issue of discrepancies in wildlife statistics reported by different parties discussed at AP-WHM WG/1 strongly suggests that there is room to improve reporting culture and communication between stakeholders.

- 2.3.2 Fear factor in reporting: The lack of good reporting culture and even the reluctance to report wildlife strikes by aerodrome operators is partly due to the so-called fear factor since reporting bird-strike occurrences is often perceived as unsatisfactory work performance of the wildlife hazard management team. Regulators and airport management generally associate the number of wildlife strikes with the work performance of an individual or a group of personnel responsible for wildlife hazard management or safety management. The consequence of the number of wildlife strikes exceeding a limit set by airport management or the national regulator could vary from the loss of credentials to loss of performance-based incentives. This is one of the main reasons for not reporting wildlife strikes by the concerned staff.

Suggested Way Forward

2.4 Continuation of Joint Seminars and Symposiums. The absence of a proper wildlife hazard management plan at airports requires attention from both the operators and the regulators. ICAO and ACI, as the guardian of Chicago Convention and the international association of airport operators respectively, would be ideal partners in promoting wildlife hazard management for example by jointly organizing seminars and training. The ICAO/ACI Wildlife Strike Hazard Reduction Symposium held in Montreal, May 2017, is a successful example of such joint effort. It is suggested that ICAO, ACI, States and other International Organizations should continue this good cooperation, especially in the Asia-Pacific Region or subregions where wildlife strikes are a particular concern. In organizing such seminars, the following topics should be considered for inclusion in the program:

- Wildlife Hazard Management Plan;
- Habitat management;
- Risk assessment;
- Wildlife dispersal methods; and
- In addition to theories, thorough discussions of practical issues such as definitions of confirmed and unconfirmed wildlife strikes (to improve consistencies in reporting) and how to improve communications and cooperation between stakeholders such as regulators, airports, airlines, pilots and local administration bodies.

2.5 Continuation of Promotion of a Positive Safety Culture. ICAO, States and Industry should continue to promote a positive safety culture, in particular just culture, amongst regulators and operators to encourage reporting of wildlife strikes and resolution of associated safety issues.

2.6 Promotion of Online Training. For many States and airports, attending online training is an inexpensive or even the only feasible alternative to face-to-face training classes often held overseas. Online training is therefore an option worth promoting. There are many suppliers of online training. ACI offers an online wildlife hazard management course here:

<https://www.olc.aero/product/wildlife-hazard-management/>

2.7 Continuation of Cooperation in APEX in Safety. ACI is grateful to the Asia-Pacific Regional Office of ICAO and some States that have been participating in APEX in Safety missions as assessors. Their insights shared at APEX missions have helped identify some of the challenges discussed in this paper. States, other International and Regional Organizations are encouraged to send personnel with the required experience and expertise to APEX in Safety missions as voluntary assessors.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) Note the information contained in this paper;
- b) Discuss the challenges and suggested solutions presented in this paper; and
- c) Raise any other challenges and suggest other solutions in wildlife hazard management.

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