



International Civil Aviation Organization
Asia and Pacific Office

Twelfth Meeting of the Asia Pacific Accident Investigation Group (APAC-AIG/12)

(Bangkok, Thailand, 28-29 August 2024)

Agenda Item 4: Enhancing Accident Investigation Capabilities

IMPROVING THE TIMELINESS OF FINAL ACCIDENT REPORTS

(Presented by IATA, FSF and IFALPA)

SUMMARY

This paper outlines the requirements of ICAO Annex 13 for thorough and timely publication of accident investigation reports. IATA and FSF data show that a significant number of final accident investigation reports are not made available to the industry. Failure to publish thorough and timely accident investigation reports prevents operators, equipment manufacturers, regulators, infrastructure providers, and other concerned stakeholders from accessing critical information that could make aviation even safer. Actions by the meeting is outlined in paragraph 3 below. And this working paper is to address the ICAO APAC AIG Task3, improving the sharing of best practices in safety management, safety data and analyses among regional platforms, including APANPIRG Sub-Groups via RASG-APAC.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Effective accident investigations are a cornerstone for the enhancement of global safety standards. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has established a framework within Annex 13, which provides guidelines for conducting thorough investigations and the publishing of factual reports on aviation accidents. This framework emphasizes the necessity for complete, accessible, and timely reports, which are critical for learning from past accidents and preventing future occurrences.

1.2 The Annex 13 States: in the interest of accident prevention, the State conducting the investigation of an accident or incident shall make the Final Report publicly available as soon as possible and, if possible, within twelve months.

1.3 Safety remains the top priority for the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Promoting the importance of accident investigations, encouraging the timely publication of accident investigation final reports, gathering final accident investigation reports, enhancing the effectiveness of investigation capabilities, and contributing to the improvement of safety performance by sharing data from accident investigations are key objectives included in IATA's work plan.

1.4 Failure to publish thorough and timely accident investigation reports prevents operators, equipment manufacturers, regulators, infrastructure providers, and other concerned stakeholders from accessing critical information that could make aviation even safer. Further, complete accident investigations and accident reports enable survivors of accidents, and bereaved families of accident victims, to understand the facts resulting in an accident whereas incomplete investigations and reports affect the confidence of the public in aviation safety.

1.5 IATA has identified a significant percentage of final accident reports are not completed in accordance with Annex 13 Standards and Recommended Practices. This significant percentage has led to IATA creating a strategic priority to promote increased State compliance with ICAO Annex 13 specifically for the production of thoroughly investigated, high quality, consistent and timely accident investigations reports. This topic has been raised in official statements from IATA's Director General, the IATA Annual General Meeting (AGM), IATA Media Day, numerous press releases, the IATA World Safety and Operations Conference (WSOC), Regional Aviation Safety Groups (RASGs) and the ICAO Air Navigation Commission (ANC).

1.6 The objective of Annex 13 is to investigate accidents for the sole purpose of preventing similar occurrences. However, this can be compromised by the lack of issuance of investigation reports in a timely manner. Not issuing or delaying in the release of final reports hinder the industry's ability to promptly implement safety improvements based on the findings. IATA's advocacy for timely and complete reports aligns with the industry's commitment to continuous improvement and the proactive prevention of aviation accidents.

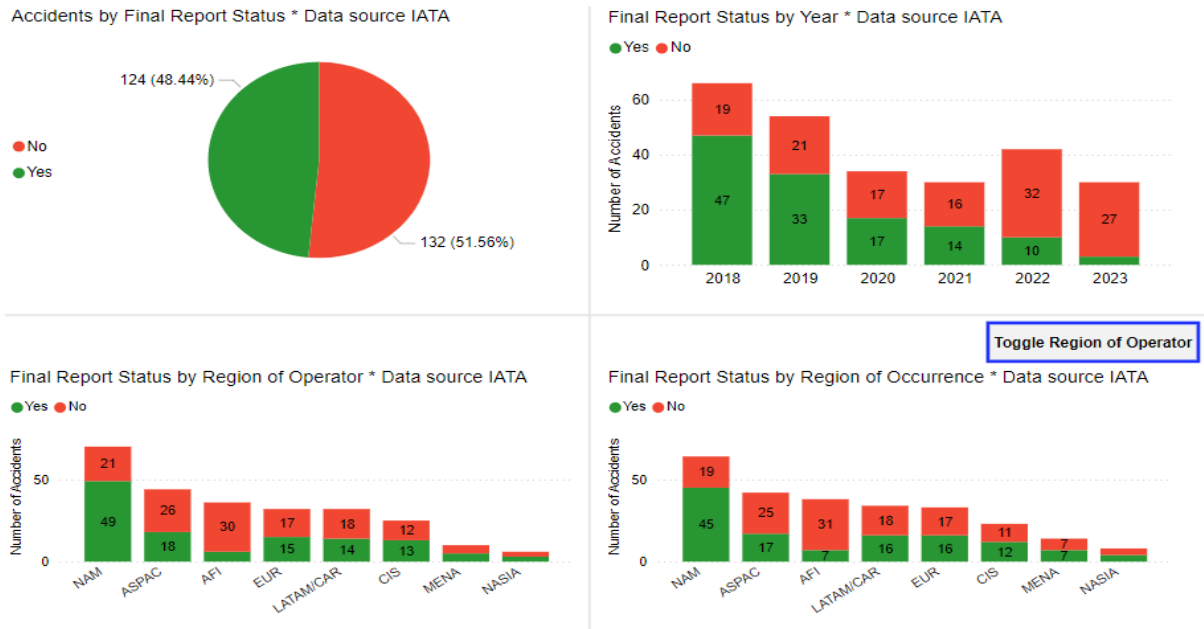
2. DISCUSSION

2.1 At this stage a high percentage of the final reports, are not submitted or are not made available for the industry. IATA, as well as the Flight Safety Foundation, is undertaking an exercise and working with all concerned stakeholders to encourage thorough and timely publication of accident investigation reports.

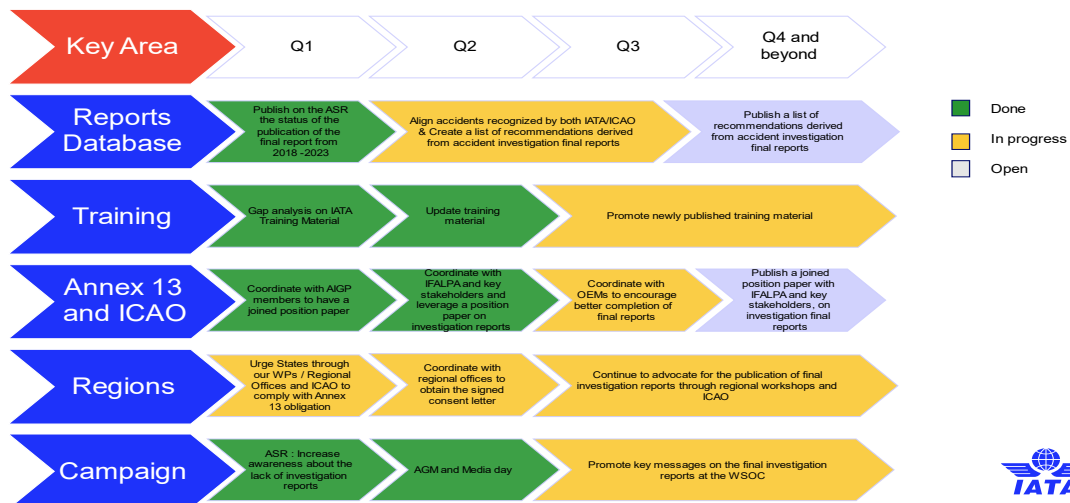
2.2 [The Interactive IATA Annual Safety Report](#) shows an order of magnitude of accident reports that were not made available. The report which was published in February 2024 shows that for the period of 2018-2023, there were 256 accidents happened globally, and 50 accidents happened in the ICAO APAC region (including both IATA ASPAC and NASIA, excluding Afghanistan).

2.3 Out of the 256 accidents recorded in the database, 124 (48.44%) accident investigations are completed with final reports, 132 (51.56%) are with no final reports.

2.4 From the regional basis, out of the 50 accidents, 21 (42%) accident investigations are completed with final reports, 29 accident **(58%) are with no final reports**. The IATA data concerning the number of available final reports compared to number of accidents is illustrated below:

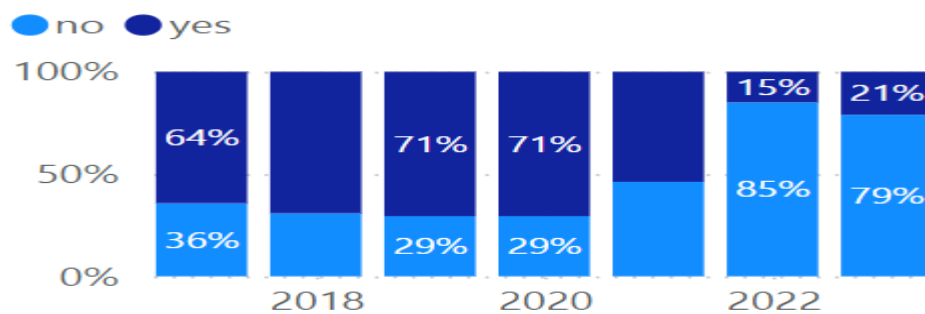


2.5 This data will be updated with the 2024 Half Year accidents. Please refer to the IATA Annual safety Report. IATA is working with States through the ICAO Accident Investigation Panel (AIGP) to understand why accident reports are not published in accordance with ICAO Annex 13. To support this initiative, a five-point roadmap has been developed by IATA.



2.6 During 2023, the Flight Safety Foundation, through its newly formed Asia Pacific Centre for Aviation Safety (AP-CAS), embarked on a comprehensive assessment and analysis of aviation safety issues to address key sectors of aviation in Asia Pacific including Air Navigation Services (ANS). The goal of this project is to assess regional aviation safety needs, highlighting risk areas and priorities that represent specific opportunities for targeted safety solutions. emerging risks have been identified through this study. It is notable that according to the ASN dashboard data, “unknown” ranks as the 5th highest occurrence category in the region, which is considered a high number when this information should be used to account for risk in the region. The unknown category

is used by FSF when a final report of an accident has not been made available. The graphic below indicates the number of final reports, by year, that have not been made publicly available according to the FSF Aviation Safety Network:



2.7 During the Thirteenth Meeting of the Regional Aviation Safety Group, Asia and Pacific Regions (RASG-APAC/13 – Hong Kong, China, December 2023), FSF data from 2022 concerning the number of unavailable final reports were presented in a Working Paper to meeting (RASG-APAC/13-WP/19 refers). The Meeting encouraged the Flight Safety Foundation and AP-CAS to conduct further analysis of the occurrences categorized unknown. The graphic above reflects a slight improvement over the analysis period from 2017 to 2023. However, **FSF data indicates that final reports were not available for 60 out of the total of 140 (42.5%) accident occurrences in the APAC Region during this period.**

2.8 There are some differences between FSF and IATA data. The FSF data includes all accidents that fall within the Annex 13 definition of an accident, while the IATA data is a subset of occurrences that could be considered as some of the most serious type of accidents, which is used by its Accident Classification Task Force (ACTF)*. In addition, the analysis period for FSF includes one additional year of data (i.e., 2017). These factors explain why the total number of accidents covered by the two analyses are different, with the FSF data reporting 140 accident occurrences from 2017 to 2023 compared to the IATA number of 50 for 2018 to 2023. Nevertheless, the data from both sources consistently illustrates the magnitude of the challenge.

2.9 IFALPA meanwhile, notes that the ICAO APAC region lags the global average in the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Program (USOAP), with an Effective Implementation (EI) score of 47.6 %. Sufficient qualified human resources in the AIG area is a challenge, this CE-4 component scoring 53.61% in the APAC region. CE-4 being ‘Qualified Technical Personnel’; where the State is to establish the minimum qualification requirements for the technical personnel performing safety oversight functions, and provide initial and recurrent training to maintain/enhance competencies.

2.10 IFALPA, through its Accident Analysis and Prevention (AAP) Committee, has instituted an Accredited Accident Investigator (AAI) program since the 1970s. The purpose of the AAI program is to develop and maintain a credible pool of pilots possessing the necessary training, qualifications and experience to participate in an investigation. These are pilots who have attended a recognised Accident Investigation training course. Strict conditions are required for continued re-accreditation, including active involvement in a safety capacity in their respective Pilots Association or in IFALPA’s AAP Committee. There are currently 178 registered AAI globally.

2.11 IFALPA believes that the participation of active commercial pilots fully qualified as investigators on official investigative boards is of paramount importance. This AAI program gives States the greatest possible assurance that the appointed representative will provide the most professional contribution to any State investigation.

2.12 Tapping on the IFALPA AAI is one way to address the challenging area of insufficient qualified human resources - especially in the APAC region.

2.13 The objectives of APAC-AIG are to support the ICAO APAC Office in its efforts to:

- a) Encourage and assist States/Administrations to establish an independent accident/incident investigation authority as required by paragraph 3.2 of Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.
- b) Enhance the capabilities and professionalism of the accident/incident investigation Authorities.
- c) Promote the Asia Pacific region's average Effective Implementation rate (EI) in the area of accident/incident investigation.
- d) Enhance the investigation capabilities of the Asia Pacific region by developing training opportunities for investigators in the region.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 States should follow the requirements laid out in ICAO Annex 13 and publish thorough final reports of accident investigations in accordance with the timelines required by this Annex, to guarantee the continuous improvement of aviation safety Standards.

3.2 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Note and support the content of this paper and the activities undertaken by IATA, FSF, IFALPA and the industry to draw attention to current issues relating to the timely issuance of accidents reports as defined by Annex 13.
- b) Urge compliance to ICAO Annex 13 obligation, and reaffirm the importance of producing accident investigation reports, in compliance with Annex 13 to the Chicago Convention timelines, in order to prevent the occurrence of future aircraft accidents and serious incident.
- c) Note the data concerning the number of accident reports from FSF that have not been made available and thus the occurrence category is considered as "unknown". For IATA, some accidents are classified as Other End State since the information available to the IATA Accident Classification Task Force (ACTF) meeting was not enough to determine the accident end state.
- d) Invite and encourage State Investigation Authorities to actively involve the local and regional IFALPA AAIs in their activities, be it investigations, training or meetings/seminars. This can be achieved by establishing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the State Investigation Authority and IFALPA's local/regional Member Association to frame roles, responsibilities etc of AAIs.
- e) Within the context of the existing terms-of-reference of the APAC-AIG, formulate a recommendation to the APAC-RASG on any further steps that should be taken to address this issue.

* For an accident to be included in the IATA Accident Database, the accident should meet all of the following criteria Any Person(s) (flight crew or passenger) have boarded the aircraft with the intention of flight. The intention of the flight is only limited to normal commercial aviation activities, specifically scheduled/charter

passenger or cargo service. The aircraft is turbine-powered and has a certificated Maximum Takeoff Weight (MTOW) of at least 5,700 kg (12,540 lb.) .The level of damage to the aircraft should either be that,

- Sustain a substantial damage or a replacement of the affected component exceeding \$1 million USD or 10% of the aircraft's hull reserve value, whichever is lower,
- Or the aircraft has been declared a hull loss.

— END —