

SAFETY CULTURE ASSESSMENT – AEROTHAI EXPERIENCE

SUMMARY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.4 This working paper outlines the methodology, statistical findings, and qualitative insights originating from AEROTHAI's latest safety culture assessment, which was conducted in 2025.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Safety Culture Assessment Methodology

2.1.1 Target Group Expansion

Safety Culture is a part of the overall organizational culture. Moving away from the previous assessment framework—which isolated frontline Air Traffic Controllers (ATCs) as the sole target cohort—the 2025 assessment expanded its scope to encompass all AEROTHAI employee, including technical personnel, safety personnel, general staff, and management.

2.1.2 *Quantitative Survey Design*

The quantitative phase utilized an online questionnaire structured around a standard 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). Customized versions of the questionnaire were designed to align with the distinct roles of each target group, ranging from 11 to 23 specialized questions.

Despite variation in question volume across target groups, the overall questionnaire was arranged following six areas in safety culture:

- Attitude Towards Safety
- Just Culture
- Reporting Culture
- Informed Culture
- Learning Culture
- Flexible Culture

2.1.2.1 Participation in the survey was voluntary. To candid responses, no personally identifiable information or employee names were captured, retaining only broad demographic data. Internal promotion campaigns were implemented across units to target a minimum response threshold of 60% per department.

2.1.3 *Qualitative Focus Group Interviews*

2.1.3.1 Following the conclusion of the quantitative survey phase, AEROTHAI conducted structured focus group interviews to gather contextual data. Participation was entirely voluntary, with personnel self-registering for sessions of interest. To optimize discussion quality, interview sizes were limited to between 5 and 10 participants per session.

2.1.3.2 Each session began with an introductory briefing on safety culture frameworks and the precise objectives of the session. Facilitators re-emphasized confidentiality protocols, assuring participants that all insights would be aggregated and anonymized to protect individual identities.

2.1.3.3 Discussions targeted real-world experiences and safety perception within respective units. Facilitators focused closely on areas that exhibited lower quantitative scores during the survey phase. Participants were also invited to suggest improvement strategies.

2.2 **Statistical and engagement results**

2.2.1 *Quantitative survey results*

Out of a total workforce of 3,309 employees at the time of survey, 2,479 valid responses were captured, yielding a high overall participation rate of 75.56%. All areas of safety culture achieved mean scores above the 4.0 threshold (*Agree*). The highest mean score was recorded in "Attitude Towards Safety" (4.60), whereas "Just Culture" (4.36) and "Informed Culture" (4.20) emerged as the lowest-scoring areas.

2.2.2 *Qualitative focus group results*

A total of 96 employees participated in the qualitative phase, which comprised:

- **10 focus group interviews** conducted (online or face-to-face) across all target groups, including a dedicated session for Union representatives.
- **12 individual interviews** conducted (online or face-to-face) with senior executives and safety managers.

2.3 Key findings and lessons learned

2.3.1 *Identified strengths*

- **SMS Buy-in:** Most personnel recognize the importance of the Safety Management System and actively prioritize attendance in SMS activities and training.
- **Safety Consciousness:** Frontline operators display a high level of safety awareness, driven by the shared understanding that their actions directly impact aviation safety.
- **Positive Reporting Perception:** Personnel view safety reporting mechanisms as constructive tools that alleviate individual anxiety by transitioning safety concerns into structured organizational system.
- **Systemic Shift:** The company's culture is shifting from a punitive, individual fault-finding toward a systemic paradigm that analyses environmental and operational factors.

2.3.2 *Identified areas for improvement*

- **Reporting Friction:** Frontline personnel find the current incident reporting infrastructure overly complex and time-consuming.
- **Feedback Deficit:** A perceived lack of effective feedback following report submission has reduced system confidence.
- **Information Silos:** Safety data and critical meeting outputs often remain concentrated within management and safety circles, leaving frontline personnel disconnected from insights.
- **Operational Pressures:** Instances remain where capacity or operational demand pressures conflict with safety priorities.
- **Unsystematic Case Studies:** Some personnel indicate that operational lessons learned from past occurrences are not yet systematically developed or distributed.
- **Communication Gaps:** While efforts to bridge generational divides are noted, further improvement is required to foster assertive communication and direct peer-to-peer safety correction.

2.3.3 *Lessons learned*

2.3.3.1 Safety culture is not static; it evolves continuously alongside personnel demographics, organizational environments, and SMS maturity. Organizations must establish recurring assessments to capture these shifts in employee sentiment toward safety and safety activities.

2.3.3.2 High quantitative scores can create a false sense of security. Comprehensive qualitative deep-dives are essential to surface localized, systemic deficiencies that standard surveys frequently mask.

2.3.3.3 The timing of an assessment is critical. Negative sentiment in the organization, industrial relations, or survey fatigue can introduce significant bias into safety culture assessment outcome.

2.3.3.4 Qualitative safety culture interviews demand substantial human resources and administrative effort. Future assessment initiatives must allocate sufficient project management and resources to support this phase.

2.3.3.5 Because the survey prioritized anonymity and omitted device or user tracking to maximize response rates, the project team estimates a replication rate of approximately 5% due to duplicate submissions by single respondents.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The Meeting is invited to:

- a) Encourage States and service providers/operators to utilize the insights detailed in this paper to enhance their internal safety culture assessment frameworks.
- b) Maintain a vigilant, non-complacent attitude regarding the safety culture in any organization.

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