International Civil Aviation Organization
Asia and Pacific Office

Twenty-sixth Meeting of the Asia Pacific Regional Aviation Safety Team (APRAST/26)

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Agenda Item 5: Presentations – State / Industry / ICAO

FLIGHT SAFETY FOUNDATION FATIGUE RISK MANAGEMENT FATIGUE RISK MANAGEMENT CAPACITY-BUILDING INITIATIVE IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION

(Presented by the Flight Safety Foundation (FSF))

SUMMARY

The Flight Safety Foundation Asia Pacific Centre for Aviation Safety (AP CAS) has initiated a capacity-building initiative across the Asia Pacific region to better understand and address the persistent operational risks posed by human fatigue for the pilot workforce. Drawing on established scientific evidence, Flight and Duty Time Limitations (FDTL), existing Fatigue Risk Management System (FRMS) guidance, and best practices from ICAO, IATA, and the Flight Safety Foundation, this initiative seeks to strengthen regional understanding of fatigue-related risks and support the development of practical, operator-ready guidance materials. By engaging regulators, airlines, pilots, and other industry stakeholders, the project will identify current fatigue management challenges, compare existing practices with global best practices, and translate "what good looks like" into clear, usable tools that can be applied consistently by crew planning, flight operations, and safety teams, particularly during periods of operational pressure and disruption.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Asia-Pacific Regional Aviation Safety Plan (AP-RASP) 2026-2028 Edition outlines the regional strategy for States/Administrations, regional entities and industry in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region to enhance aviation safety oversight and management capabilities. This edition builds upon the previous 2023-2025 AP-RASP and adopts a risk-based approach for managing safety at the regional level through coordinated collaboration between regional aviation stakeholders.

1.2 Across the industry, it has been shown that pilot fatigue can contribute to all the global high-risk categories. The Asia-Pacific Regional Aviation Safety Plan (AP-RASP) 2026-2028 Section 3.6.1 specifically identifies Fatigue as a contributing factor to Controlled Flight Into Terrain (CFIT) accidents, The report states that to effectively reduce accidents in the APAC Region. States/Administrations and industry need to address the pre-cursors and contributing factors for each Regional High-Risk Categories (HRC). Table 1 of Section 3.6 contains a list, where Fatigue is included.

1.3 As discussed at the International Civil Aviation Organization – Assembly, 42nd Session, fatigue remains a persistent safety and operational risk across the aviation industry. Due to the significant growth projected in the Asia Pacific region through 2044, this challenge is even more pronounced. In response, the Flight Safety Foundation has initiated a capacity-building initiative to better understand fatigue-related challenges and support improvements in fatigue risk management.

1.4 The Asia Pacific Region would greatly benefit from a better understanding of the operational conditions and systemic factors that contribute to fatigue-related risks. Establishing a regional baseline will help identify common risks, emerging trends, alignment with international best practices, and opportunities for improvement. To support the Foundation's capacity-building initiative, a better understanding of the operational realities and fatigue-related challenges faced across the Asia Pacific region is needed.

1.5 The 61st Directors General Conference acknowledged the importance of Fatigue Risk Management System (FRMS) and Flight and Duty Time Limitations (FDTL), the Conference agreed that a regional baseline of fatigue risk management practices be established in APAC by FSF, who shall conduct the surveys and workshops with voluntary participation. The conference classified the FSF capacity building as a Core Action 61/03 supporting establishment of regional baseline of fatigue risk management practices complementary to the existing fatigue and human performance framework.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 To begin the initiative, three different surveys and virtual workshops will be directed to regulators, airlines, and pilot associations/unions. The surveys will be conducted in cooperation with ICAO and regional partners to establish a regional baseline of fatigue risk management practices and identify gaps against the best international practices. At least three fatigue risk management workshops will be conducted respectively with representatives of airlines, pilot associations/unions, and regulators to discuss the results of the surveys and analysis. The objective of the workshops will be to validate the information gathered and identify areas that are working well and areas for potential improvement. The results will support the development of practical guidance and tools to strengthen fatigue risk management across the Asia Pacific region. The project will be conducted in four phases with a timeline to finish by the end of 2026.

2.2 Using these insights, AP-CAS will facilitate multidisciplinary external working groups including airlines, pilot representatives, and regulators engaged with APRAST Operations WG and SEI. The working groups will identify effective practices and develop practical guidance that supports consistent and informed fatigue risk management decisions across the region.

2.3 The resulting guidance material will highlight regional challenges, relevant international best practices, and practical approaches that can assist States and operators in strengthening fatigue risk management programs.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The Meeting is invited to:

a) note the Core Action of the DGCA/61 included in the State Letter Ref. SN 2 (2026): AP112/26 (TC) and information presented in this Working Paper and recognize the importance of improving understanding of fatigue-related risks across the Asia Pacific Region.

b) encourage States, regulators, operators, and flight crew representatives to support the Flight Safety Foundation's regional fatigue risk management initiative and contribute to the identification of current challenges, effective practices, and lessons learned, following the guidance of the DGCA/61

c) agree that a regional baseline of fatigue risk management practices be established in APAC; and invite the Flight Safety Foundation to conduct the surveys and workshops described in this paper to help establish the baseline, reporting the outcomes and resulting guidance material to APRAST and RASG-APAC and to DGCA/62, as stated in the DGCA/61 Conference Output.

d) encourage States review and, where appropriate, strengthen their fatigue risk management regulations and guidance material, considering the ICAO provisions and international best practices; and

e) encourage the sharing of fatigue-related data, experiences, and effective practices among regulators and operators to support continuous improvement in fatigue risk management across the region.

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