

**61ST CONFERENCE OF
DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
ASIA AND PACIFIC REGION**

*Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
7 – 11 September 2026*

AGENDA ITEM 3 AVIATION SAFETY

**SSP IMPLEMENTATION, EVALUATION, AND RISK-BASED
SURVEILLANCE: THROUGH JAPAN'S EXPERIENCE WITH
SSP UPDATE**

(Presented by Japan)

INFORMATION PAPER

SUMMARY

This paper discusses the progress of the development of Japan's State Safety Programme (SSP) lead by responding amendment to Annex 19: Safety Management (3rd edition, November 2025). Several updates were made including National Aviation Safety Plan (NASP) establishment which describes specific measures to be taken over a certain period to achieve the objectives set out in the SSP. By sharing journey to the update with the challenges leading up to implementation, Japan provides ideas to encourage the SSP implementation and evaluation of its penetration after implementation in the Asia-Pacific region.

SSP IMPLEMENTATION, EVALUATION, AND RISK-BASED SURVEILLANCE: THROUGH JAPAN'S EXPERIENCE WITH SSP UPDATE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Following the ICAO's designation of the "State Safety Programme (SSP)" as an international standard in Annex 19: Safety Management (1st edition, July 2013) of the Chicago Convention, Japan Civil Aviation Bureau (hereinafter referred to as "JCAB") formulated SSP of Japan in October 2013 that comprehensively stipulates the measures it should take to ensure the safety of civil aviation, as the supervisor of civil aviation. This program has been in effect since April 1, 2014.

1.2 Key initiatives at the establishment period were launch of Voluntary Reporting System (called "VOICES" stands for Voluntary Information Contributory to Enhancement of the Safety) in 2014, establishment and operation of sector-specific safety information analysis committees. In the early stage of SSP operation, development of a safety information collection and analysis system, promotion and strengthening SMS (Safety Management System) of service provider, and Plan-Do-Check -Action cycle operation for SSP were mainly performed. Subsequently, necessary revisions to the SSP have been made to strengthen initiatives—such as introducing statistical methods to quantitatively evaluate progress toward safety objectives and strengthened the use of Safety Performance Indicators (SPIs).

1.3 In the course of these activities, and in response to the recently revised Annex 19(3rd edition, November 2025), JCAB have: (1) made necessary amendments to the SSP and upgraded it to the Public Notice by the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism from Circular Notice to clarify that it is a fundamental document related to aviation safety; (2) established a National Aviation Safety Plan (NASP), a document that describes specific actions to be taken over a certain period to achieve the objectives set out in the SSP, identifying "operational challenges" and "organizational challenges" and setting specific actions to address them; and (3) established the framework for implementation of Risk-based surveillance, which has been introduced in addition to the safety measures of compliance with regulations that have been carried out traditionally.

1.4 This paper discusses the progress of the development of recent Japan's SSP and by sharing journey to the update with the challenges leading up to implementation, Japan provides ideas to encourage SSP implementation and evaluation of its penetration after implementation in the Asia-Pacific region.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Amendment of the SSP and establishment of the NASP in Japan

2.1.1 In response to the amendment of ICAO Annex 19(3rd edition, November 2025), Japan considered amending the SSP to ensure compliance with the amended Annex, focusing on incorporating the newly required measures. Concurrently, Japan has decided to discuss the NASP alongside the SSP amendment to ensure consistency between the two, and to formulate the NASP at the same time as the SSP amendment. Furthermore, to clarify its status as a foundational document for aviation safety, the SSP was upgraded it to the Public Notice by the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism from a mere Circular Notice, making it clear with both documents aligned: the SSP serves as the foundational document defining the framework for Japan's aviation safety management, while the NASP outlines specific initiatives to be implemented over a set period based on that framework.

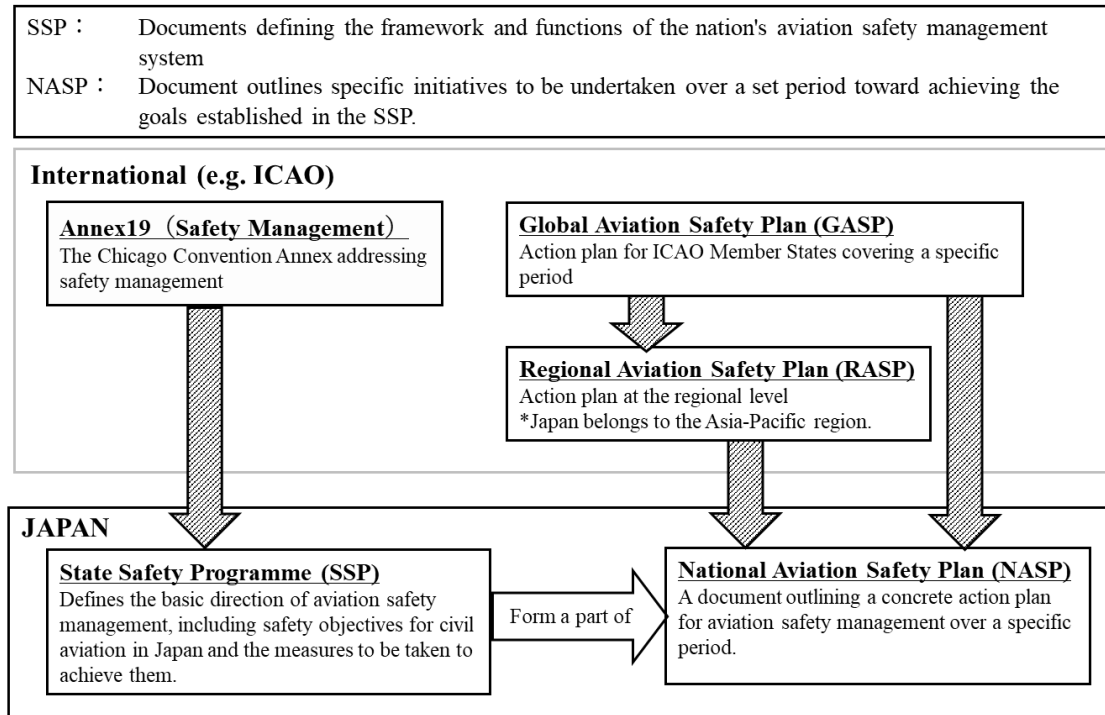


Fig. Annex 19 – GASP- RASP and SSP/NASP relation

2.1.2 These amendment of the SSP and establishment of the NASP were discussed through independent Working Group (WG) consist of experts, 11 members in total representing service providers and industry associations across various sectors, such as academia, Air transport, Maintenance, Airport and Air traffic, and the result and comments from the WG were reported to the Aviation Technology and Safety Committee under the Council of Transportation Policy and feedbacks were finally discussed at the SSP Committee.

2.1.3 In revising the SSP, the focus was placed on restructuring the program to ensure more alignment with the new "Annex 19." A decision was made to fundamentally review the SSP framework and enhance its effectiveness—for instance, by clarifying concepts such as "Positive Safety Culture" and requirements of Safety Management System (SMS). These clarifications were developed with reference to relevant ICAO documents to ensure that the intent and the direction to be aim are clearly understood by readers. Notably, the inclusion of these clarifications was driven by proposals and insights from service providers participating in the WG, serving as a prime example of quality improvement achieved through collaboration with service providers.

2.1.4 A key challenge was incorporating several new initiatives into the SSP—such as risk mitigation measures based on hazard risk assessments requiring State-level action and Risk-based surveillance. However, it was necessary to consider practical aspects—specifically, how to ensure feasibility—rather than merely establishing a framework. In this regard, the WG structure, which involved collaboration with service providers, played a crucial role; it not only enabled the incorporation of practical expertise but also facilitated the smooth penetration of the new SSP across the stakeholder.

2.1.5 Furthermore, to achieve the objectives of the Japanese SSP, it is essential that service providers understand the significance and importance of properly establishing and operating an SMS. In this regard, as mentioned in section 2.1.3, the amendments to the SSP clarified the basic framework regarding the requirements for the SMS that service providers must establish. While consideration was given to detailing these requirements further based on relevant ICAO documents, concerns were raised that doing so might lead to the misconception that merely covering the listed items was sufficient; consequently, the requirements were described by outlining the fundamental framework. This deliberative process served as an opportunity to reaffirm that, while various forms of guidance are useful references during implementation, the goal must never be simply to follow that guidance

without understanding its underlying purpose or the true essence of the initiative.

2.2 Introducing of Risk-based surveillance

2.2.1 One of the key issues is introduction of Risk-based surveillance in practice. The Conventional Safety Surveillance, which was Compliance-Based Audit mainly focused on followings:

- Conduct broad and uniform audits focusing on regulatory compliance and system conformity.
- Develop audit plans for each service provider based on a pre-established, uniform audit cycle.
- Set audit priorities based on each service provider's history of safety occurrences and enforcement records.

2.2.2 Safety Surveillance after the Revised Annex 19 Enters into Force, the Risk-Based Surveillance will be introduced in addition to Compliance-Based Audit.

- Identify areas of higher safety risk and determine surveillance priorities and frequency based on each service provider's safety risk profile (e.g., size, business model, and safety performance indicators), and conduct risk-differentiated surveillance activities.
- Define the surveillance scope (target divisions/ focus areas) considering both provider-specific risk (relative to peers) and cross-provider risks.

2.2.3 Safety risk-related items concerning each service provider's structure and operational status, based on ICAO Doc. 9859 Safety Management Manual are scored and evaluated, and the audit frequency and key audit items are determined based on the score.

2.2.4 Key take away is to recognize the needs to establish "safety risk-related items"—based on a shared understanding—as a baseline, launch actual activities, and proceed with improvements, even in a transitional phase of implementation, and optimization through a process of trial and error. It is important to break free from the constraint of having to anticipate everything in advance; instead, one should engage in meaningful dialogue with the relevant service providers to establish safety risk-related items and then refine these through repeated trials.

2.3 In summary, the administration established a deliberative body and invited external experts to ensure a comprehensive review from multiple perspectives; by ultimately soliciting broad public input and addressing concerns to the maximum extent possible, the process led to the issuance of SSPs and NASP—designed with due regard for the relationship between regulators and service providers as well as practical effectiveness—and facilitated their smooth penetration and implementation. While this approach demands extensive discussion and diverse resources, it helps foster a sense of shared ownership among all stakeholders and contributes to cultivating a "Positive Safety Culture." Furthermore, providing an overview of Risk-based surveillance—which has only recently been introduced—and highlighting the early stages of this new initiative offers valuable insights for the states looking to embark on similar efforts.

3. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE

3.1 The Conference is invited to:

- a) note Japan's journey to the amendment of SSP and establishment of NASP with the challenges leading up to implementation;

- b) share understanding that collaboration and close communication among stakeholders are key to the implementation of SSP and NASP; and
- c) encourage providing the information contributing to the introduction of SSPs and NASPs and the deepening of understanding within the APAC region.

— END —