

**59th CONFERENCE OF
DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONS**

*Cebu, Philippines
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AGENDA ITEM 3: AVIATION SAFETY

**EXAMPLES AND INDICATORS OF
A POSITIVE SAFETY CULTURE**

(Presented by ACI, CANSO, FSF, IFALPA and IFATCA)

DISCUSSION PAPER

SUMMARY

This paper provides a summary of a WP presented to APRAST/21 in March 2024. In doing so it aims at advising the Conference of the industry's effort in promoting a positive culture by giving the notion a more concrete form by citing examples and indicators of a positive safety culture that are commonly witnessed at industry organizations. Given the potential of these examples and indicators to be used as a basis to develop guidance on the promotion of safety culture in future, the paper invites the conference to encourage States and Administrations to consider adopting the indicators suggested in the paper in their assessment and promotion of safety culture.

EXAMPLES AND INDICATORS OF A POSITIVE SAFETY CULTURE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Annex 19 requires that States promote a positive safety culture.

1.2 Yet safety culture is a rather abstract concept that may be difficult to grasp and define although after years of promotion most in the industry have a general idea of it.

1.3 During cross industry discussions, ACI, CANSO, IFALPA and IFATCA agreed that a positive safety culture was fundamental to runway safety, and by extension safety performance and organization in general. One way to help promote it was to give concrete examples and indicators of a positive safety culture that members of these International Organizations had witnessed at their workplace and felt useful for sharing amongst service providers and States.

1.4 This paper provides such examples and indicators and in doing so attempts to facilitate and encourage discussions on safety culture and help define safety culture.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 The following presents some of the indicators some examples of a positive safety cultures that the four associations have identified. They are categorized by the levels in the organization: regulator, corporate, managerial, operational, union, and general.

2.1.1 Regulator-level positive safety culture indicators:

2.1.1.1 There is a relationship with the local or national judiciary to explain a positive safety culture.

2.1.1.2 There is collaboration between the aviation industry stakeholders and the judiciary.

2.1.1.3 There are guidelines for the industry on how to deal with the media in light of protection of identity and the media's impact on reporting and safety learning.

2.1.1.4 Legislation is published on the protection of safety data as well as of the individuals involved in accidents or incidents in the interest of safety improvement and learning.

2.1.1.5 Investigators are trained in the application of positive safety culture during investigations.

2.1.2 Corporate-level safety culture indicators:

2.1.2.1 Safety culture defined and published with explanations of how the various aspects of a safety culture integrates and compliments each other.

2.1.2.2 There is a positive safety culture policy.

2.1.2.3 Safety culture surveys regularly conducted.

2.1.2.4 Anonymous safety culture surveys explore the reasons behind why staff report or do not report, e.g. out of fear or because they do not believe in the value of safety reporting.

2.1.2.5 Specifically positive safety culture and more broadly safety culture promotional materials produced and effectively communicated to all staff.

2.1.2.6 Investigators are trained in the application of a positive safety culture.

2.1.2.7 Managers trust their staff to report safety occurrences. This is usually determined through the results of a safety culture survey where such a question can be posed to managers and staff and they answer anonymously.

2.1.3 Managerial indicators:

2.1.3.1 Leadership exhibit SMS competency.

2.1.3.2 Evidence of leadership commitment to safety in communications and actions can be provided.

2.1.3.3 All levels of leadership express, demonstrate and reinforce in all communications the commitment to safety.

2.1.4 Operational level indicators:

2.1.4.1 Staff have a common understanding of the meaning of a positive safety culture in a similar fashion to the corporate definition.

2.1.4.2 Frequent reports of safety occurrences and hazards and monitoring/sharing of such reporting trends (on an anonymous basis) to encourage further reporting. Moreover, a reporting culture should include errors and mistakes made even when no one was watching, e.g. reflecting on voluntary reports being filed.

2.1.4.3 Staff adhere to written procedures unless, in the clear interest of safety, it is necessary to deviate from these procedures.

2.1.4.4 Staff trust their managers to report safety occurrences to them.

2.1.4.5 Staff feel comfortable discussing errors and mistakes in order to improve safety, as long as the data sharing and discussion complies with data protection policy (this also refers to the need for psychological safety to speak up).

2.1.5 Organized labour/labour union-level positive safety culture indicators:

2.1.5.1 The union is involved in the drafting of the positive safety culture policy and co-signatory on the positive safety culture policy.

2.1.5.2 The union promotes a positive safety culture amongst its members through their own communication channels.

2.1.5.3 In the interest of learning, the union is at least informed of the outcome of any review of negligent actions of a member. Ideally, they may even be invited to partake in safety review.

2.1.6 General indicators:

2.1.7 Establishment and availability of a viable 2-way communication channel for reporting safety concerns by staff and communicating safety initiatives and expectations by the top management.

2.1.8 Feedback mechanism to inform the action taken on the concern being reported and that tracks actions, timeframe and evidence of completion (this will encourage the personnel to report further in future).

2.1.9 Mechanism to understand the contextual constraints and contributory factors behind repetitive violations: Central repository of safety concerns from various internal committees (common dashboard)/comprehensive safety occurrence database.

- 2.1.10 Safety information is viewed as an opportunity for improvement, not for retributions.
- 2.1.11 Availability of a mechanism to recognise staff for voluntary reporting of hazards.
- 2.2 A more detailed list can be found in [WP/10](#) presented to APRAST/21 in March 2024.

3. ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE

- 3.1 The Conference is invited to:
 - a) Note the information contained in this paper; and
 - b) Encourage States and Administrations to consider adopting the indicators suggested in the paper in their assessment and promotion of safety culture

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