

OPENING ADDRESS - DIRECTOR REGIONAL

Es un placer y un privilegio hacer uso de la palabra en ocasión de la apertura de este seminario regional sobre la seguridad operacional, organizado por séptimo año consecutivo por la Asociación Sindical de Pilotos Aviadores de México en cooperación con la OACI.

Quisiera extender mi más cálida bienvenida a todos los conferencistas y participantes. También quisiera expresar mi gratitud a las autoridades de ASPA, así como a las autoridades de las líneas aéreas y de las otras instituciones que han brindado su apoyo, por el espíritu de cooperación demostrado en el auspicio y organización del evento. Quisiera finalmente agradecer a la Dirección General de Aviación Civil de México por sumarse al esfuerzo.

For all the success, we have had in our battles to improve aviation safety; we continue to face a never-ending demand to do better. We are constantly being asked to improve a level of safety that other industries envy, and we are asked to achieve this in the face of diminishing resources, which has become a common theme in all fields. Frankly, we are being asked to do more with less, and if we are going to deliver, we need to take a fresh look at how we address the safety

concerns underlying modern aviation.

We have, I think, at least one clear catalyst for this fresh look: safety management systems. Managing any aviation organization, large or small, requires the management of many business processes: financing, budgeting, communicating and allocating resources, and so forth. We have now come to acknowledge that managing safety is just one more of these business processes. Managing safety is now as much a part of running a business as any of the traditional business processes. I am among those who firmly believe that properly deployed SMS will achieve the twin goals of raising safety to the next level, while allowing for a rationalization of resources.

An SMS is a systematic approach to managing safety that builds upon the utilization of specific tools. The subjects of this conference, Threat and Error Management TEM, the Line Operations Safety Audit LOSA and the Normal Operations Safety Survey NOSS, are specific SMS tools. This is a fundamental point that I would like to stress right from the outset, and one that you will hear more of early in the programme.

ICAO's relationship with TEM, LOSA and NOSS is a long one. It goes back to 1996, when we became interested in a concept that by

then didn't even have a name, but had obvious safety potential. The relationship developed, and was formalised at the Fourth Global Flight Safety and Human Factors Symposium, back in April 1999. By 2001, what had until then been an idea in development was ready for operational deployment.

In March 2001, ICAO organised what we called the First LOSA Week, which was hosted by Cathay Pacific at its training centre in Cathay City at the Hong Kong International Airport. When compared to the Conference we are about to begin, it was a rather modest affair. Nevertheless, numbers should not obscure the significance of the First LOSA Week. This pioneering event represented a turning point, in that in its aftermath it was then LOSA came of age, completing the transformation from research concepts to operational tools. From that point on, the story of LOSA evolved, extended into NOSS, and became one of success and acknowledged contribution to the management of safety.

I won't go into technicalities that experts on the matter will address over the next day and a half, but I would be remiss in my contribution to this event if I didn't at least flag for your consideration two concerns associated with LOSA and NOSS.

First, LOSA and NOSS are only data collection tools that support an SMS. LOSA and NOSS do not provide solutions; they identify trends. The airlines and air traffic service providers, through their SMS, must then act upon the trends detected by LOSA or NOSS data. Only then can the potential benefits of LOSA and NOSS be realised. This is not an idle concern, because if there is no follow up action building upon the data, safety management action will not take place.

Second and most importantly: we need to protect the extremely sensitive LOSA and NOSS data. The confidentiality of the data, and the protection of professional pilots and air traffic controllers who volunteer access to their cockpits for observations, must be sacrosanct. We cannot afford for one single professional pilot or air traffic controller to be disciplined because of LOSA or NOSS. Beyond the ethical questions involved, such action would be the death warrant for one of the most promising safety tools aviation has ever produced. We must not allow it to happen, ever.

Soy consciente de lo apretado de la agenda de los próximos dos días, por lo que no quiero distraer más su atención. Reitero mi agradecimiento a los organizadores de este seminario, y les deseo muy productivas deliberaciones durante los próximos dos días.

Muchas gracias.
