



**WORKING PAPER**

**ASSEMBLY — 37TH SESSION**

**TECHNICAL COMMISSION**

**Agenda Item 26: Safety management and safety data**

**ABILITY TO INVESTIGATE LOW-CONSEQUENCE EVENTS AND  
AUDIT REPORTS ACCORDING TO THE REACTIVE  
SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SMS)**

(Presented by Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of))

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This paper sets out the need to develop global initiatives through ICAO to enhance the investigation of low-consequence events and the processing of information from audit reports, at State and industry level, for the purpose of providing those responsible for the implantation, maintenance and monitoring of safety management procedures with the ability to carry out investigations to tackle and correct any active and latent faults encountered.

**Action:** The Assembly is invited to:

- a) duly note the information presented in this working paper; and
- b) urge ICAO to take the necessary actions to assess and evaluate, with a group of experts, the possibility of investigating low-consequence events and audit reports (internally by the industry's organizations as well as by the State's civil aviation authority), initiating training strategies and preparing documents to provide support to the States in this area.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to Strategic Objective A.
<i>References:</i>	Annex 1 — <i>Personnel Licensing</i> Annex 6 — <i>Operation of Aircraft</i> Annex 8 — <i>Airworthiness of Aircraft</i> Annex 11 — <i>Air Traffic Services</i> Annex 13 — <i>Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation</i> Annex 14 — <i>Aerodromes</i> Doc 9859, <i>Safety Management Manual (SMM)</i>

<sup>1</sup> Spanish version provided by Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Correct implementation of the safety management system (SMS) requires operators to respect a phased methodology. According to the *Safety Management Manual (SMM)* (Doc 9859), the objective of Phase II is to implement essential safety management processes, while at the same time correcting potential deficiencies in existing safety management processes.

1.2 These activities may include inspections and audit reports, analysis of information from accident reports and incident investigations, low-consequence events and employee reports.

1.3 To correctly perform an investigation which identifies the active and latent causes of the situations encountered, the investigating team must be capable of executing such tasks successfully.

1.4 Finally, obtaining correct and systematic information from a reactive perspective not only mitigates any associated risks but also uncovers the actual situation in the organization or the State, to determine safety priorities, indicators and goals.

## 2. DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Within the existing legal framework, the State's Accident Investigation Board is responsible for investigating and revealing information from the analysis of the causes of air incidents and accidents, solely for the purpose of preventing any future recurrences.

2.2 Within the risk-management component, the SMS framework requires that information from past events is taken into consideration and, for this reason, personnel trained in the investigation of incidents and accidents is required.

2.3 Due to the historic responsibility of the State's Accident Investigation Board, a few organizations and civil aviation authorities do not possess any personnel specializing in this area or any defined procedures or responsibilities.

2.4 A shortage of the skills required to investigate safety events therefore exists; this shortage is experienced both internally by organizations as well as in terms of the State's safety monitoring, taking into account that the latter are the ones responsible for monitoring the investigating abilities of organizations under the SMS framework.

## 3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Phase II of the implementation of SMS, "Reactive Processes", includes the ability to investigate active faults and latent conditions to report unsafe situations present internally in organizations and the strategies required to resolve the problem.

3.2 A correctly performed investigation is responsible for the success of the mitigation and prevention measures used.

3.3 The historic function of the Investigation Board has possibly resulted in the paradigm by which the investigation function is solely the competency of the said board according to the law. However, the Investigation Board's performance of its legal functions should not restrict any organization from potentially investigating, if necessary, events, incidents, accidents, or faults in its own system, and processing the results of audit reports, which is one of the requirements of the SMS.

3.4 Venezuela recognizes the lack of training in this respect, both internally in organizations as well as in the safety monitoring functions of several States. ICAO may resolve this shortcoming by providing assistance to the States in the form of training, the relevant documentation and by promoting responsibilities in terms of the investigative capacity of several service provider organizations and the State's Civil Aviation Authority.

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