



Seventh Regional Aviation Safety Group – Pan America Annual Plenary Meeting (RASG-PA/7)
Willemstad, Curaçao, 11-12 September 2014

Agenda Item 5: Safety Initiatives
5.5 Other Safety Initiatives

SAFETY INFORMATION PROTECTION

(Presented by United States)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The collection and analysis of safety data is an integral part of understanding the causes of aircraft accidents. The ability to effectively collect and disseminate safety data throughout the international community will help increase aviation safety worldwide. However, it continues to be critical that this Conference address the issue of protecting those sources of safety information. In furtherance of this initiative, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) established the Safety Information Protection Task Force (SIP TF) in 2010. The United States fully supports protecting sources of safety information to ensure collected data is de-identified and used only for safety analysis, rather than to take punitive action against individuals or organizations providing this information. This paper will describe actions the United States has taken toward these efforts and conveys the United States’ support of SIP TF recommendations.

<i>Strategic Objective:</i>	• Safety
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1. Introduction

1.1 In 2010, the ICAO Air Navigation Commission established the Safety Information Protection Task Force (SIP TF) to provide recommendations for new or enhanced provisions and guidance materials related to protection of safety information.

1.2 The United States fully supports protecting voluntary safety information, along with using publicly available information, to support air transportation safety oversight activities.

2. Discussion

2.1 Protection of safety information remains an important issue the aviation community must address. Protections must be in place to allow data collection in order to conduct safety management in areas of certification, operations, analysis, and investigation, in an environment where voluntary reporting can occur free from harm of inappropriate use.

2.2 The SIP TF has made recommendations to the ICAO Air Navigation Commission and ICAO Safety Management Panel (responsible for development of Annex 19) that supports global efforts to ensure protections for data sources and data exchange. These recommendations are to be incorporated into the next amendment to ICAO Annex 19, Safety Management.

2.3 The United States recognizes the need to thoroughly investigate aircraft accidents and incidents to understand the associated contributing factors and causes. It is appropriate to require safety investigators to disclose specific types of safety data, records, and transcripts. This provides analytical support and a foundation for proper and timely accident prevention actions. The United States also recognizes the need to publicly distribute the findings to improve aviation safety on an international level.

2.4 In addition to mandatory reporting requirements, which generate publicly available information, the United States has implemented voluntary reporting programs. This encourages air carriers, repair stations, flight crewmembers and dispatchers, and air traffic controllers to report safety information that may be critical to identifying accident precursors. Information provided through Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) voluntary safety programs and the Commercial Aviation Safety Team (CAST) provides detail about individual operations. This information supplements the data collected in mandatory reporting systems. Safety information provided under FAA voluntary safety programs is protected from disclosure under Part 193 of Title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

2.5 The activities of these programs are conducted in accordance with the following principles:

- Data is used only for safety analysis, rather than for punitive actions against individuals or organizations.
- Data is de-identified and aggregated before conducting analyses or reporting results, to protect individuals and organizations.
- Data can be accessed only to support approved activities.

2.6 FAA voluntary safety programs include the Flight Operation Quality Assurance (FOQA), Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP), and Voluntary Disclosure Reporting Program (VDRP). Each program proactively uses data to identify and correct deficiencies in all areas of flight operations, with the goal of improving aviation safety.

2.7 Used properly, this data can reduce or eliminate safety risks, as well as minimize deviations from regulations. Through access to de-identified aggregate data, the United States can identify and analyze national trends and then target resources to reduce operational risks in the National Airspace System, air traffic control, flight operations, and airport operations.

2.8 CAST has leveraged the Aviation Safety Information Analysis and Sharing (ASIAS) program by using its capability to analyze de-identified aggregate FOQA and ASAP data and fusing this data with other information sources.

2.9 Ultimately, CAST applies this information to establish safety enhancements. These safety enhancements are used as the basis for outreach to safety professionals throughout the world. Under the auspices of ICAO, safety teams, for example, Regional Aviation Safety Groups (including RASG–Pan America (PA) and RASG–Asia and the Pacific (APAC), and RASG–Middle East) are committed to implementing safety enhancements worldwide.

2.10 CAST has agreed to provide ASIAS data to international safety teams (including RASG-APAC and RASG-PA) to use to identify and correct deficiencies in their own flight operations. These safety teams are fusing this data from various sources, including the International Air Transport Association's Flight Data eXchange (FDX).

3. Conclusion

3.1 The United States fully supports protecting voluntary sources of safety information to ensure collected data is de-identified and used only for safety analysis, rather than to take punitive action against individuals or organizations providing this information.

3.2 The United States supports the recommendations of the SIP TF and encourages ICAO Member States and stakeholders to review the products of the SIP TF and the ICAO Safety Management Panel.

4. Recommendations

4.1 States and other stakeholders are invited to support the recommendations of the SIP TF and implement these recommendations once they are incorporated to ICAO Annex 19, Safety Management.