



Aftermath of an Aircraft Accident: ICAO's role in accident investigation For immediate release

Montréal, 22 May 2020 – Following the recent tragic loss of Pakistan International Airlines Flight 8303, the Council President and Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Mr. Salvatore Sciacchitano and Dr. Fang Liu, join the international community in expressing their deepest condolences to the families and friends of the victims.

Below is a summary of how an aircraft accident investigation is conducted in line with ICAO's provisions.



Resources for Editors

About Aircraft Accident Investigations

[What is the international definition of an aircraft accident?](#)

Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, which reflects the Standards and Recommended Practices covering *Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation*, defines an accident as an occurrence associated with the operation of an aircraft:

- in which a person is fatally or seriously injured;
- in which an aircraft sustains damage or structural failure requiring repair;
- after which the aircraft in question is classified as being missing.

[Which State or States are responsible for conducting an accident investigation, and what other States may participate?](#)

Annex 13 stipulates that the State of Occurrence shall institute an investigation into the circumstances of the accident and be responsible for the conduct of the investigation. The State of Occurrence may also delegate all or part of the investigation's responsibilities to another State, or to a regional accident and incident investigation organization.

Besides the State of Occurrence, Annex 13 also identifies the additional States which are entitled to appoint an accredited representative (with or without associated advisers) to take part in an investigation. These include:

The State of Registry: The State on whose register the aircraft is entered.

The State of the Operator: The State in which the operator's principal place of business is located or, if there is no such place of business, the operator's permanent residence.

The State of Design: The State having jurisdiction over the company responsible for the aircraft type design.

The State of Manufacture: The State having jurisdiction over the company responsible for the final assembly of the aircraft.

Additionally, a State which has a special interest in an accident, for example by virtue of the number of its citizens involved in or impacted by it, is also entitled to appoint an expert to the accident investigation. These special interest State experts are entitled to:

- visit the scene of the accident;
- have access to the factual information released by the State in charge;
- receive a copy of the accident investigation Final Report.

What is the primary objective of an Annex 13 investigation?

The sole objective of an Annex 13 investigation is to generate safety data and information to aid with the prevention of future and similar accidents or incidents. Annex 13 investigations do not concern themselves in any way with the apportioning of blame or liability.

How are Annex 13 accident investigations reported?

Per Annex 13, the State conducting the investigation of an accident or incident is expected to produce a Preliminary Report within 30 days of the accident. This Preliminary Report may be public or confidential at the discretion of the State in charge. A publicly available Final Report is encouraged to be produced by the State in charge of the investigation within 12 months of the accident.

Further resources for media

Media are encouraged to contact ICAO's Communications Unit (communications@icao.int) with any further queries they may have regarding international air accidents or incidents.

About ICAO

A specialized agency of the United Nations, ICAO was created in 1944 to promote the safe and orderly development of international civil aviation throughout the world. It sets standards and regulations necessary for aviation safety, security, efficiency, capacity and environmental protection, amongst many other priorities. The Organization serves as the forum for cooperation in all fields of civil aviation among its 193 Member States.

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