58ᵗʰ CONFERENCE OF

DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION

ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONS

Dhaka, People's Republic of Bangladesh
15 – 19 October 2023

AGENDA ITEM 3:   AVIATION SAFETY

ADDRESSING POTENTIAL SAFETY CULTURE ISSUES IN ASIA PACIFIC

(Presented by Association of Asia Pacific Airlines and Flight Safety Foundation)

SUMMARY

Aviation's safety record is commendable. The low accident rate is being maintained in 2023, however, reports on recent accidents highlight the potential for safety culture issues to pose a risk and the need to focus the industry's attention on safety culture for continuous improvement in aviation safety. Proposed actions include promoting a culture of safety, enhanced training, robust reporting, fostering collaboration, implementing advanced technology, and culture change initiatives.

Directors General of Asia Pacific are urged to foster the establishment of safety culture improvement programmes within the aviation industry and to promote the establishment collaborative platforms where industry stakeholders can share best practices and address gaps in expertise, experience, insights, knowledge and information across the Asia Pacific air transport industry.

ADDRESSING POTENTIAL INDUSTRY SAFETY CULTURE ISSUES IN ASIA PACIFIC

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Despite the general lack of aviation accidents in the region in the first half of 2023, reports on recent accidents indicate that there are safety culture issues to be addressed to maintain and improve safety standards on an ongoing basis.

1.2   During 2023, the Flight Safety Foundation, Asia Pacific Centre for Aviation Safety, in collaboration with AAPA and IATA, embarked on detailed study on the role that managers in the Asia Pacific have on forming a positive safety culture within their organizations. This study provides a useful guide as to the areas to focus on for the region to uphold and improve the safety culture across the Asia Pacific air transport industry. One of the primary conclusions of the study is the profound influence that the senior managers in aviation can have on forming a positive safety culture.

2.   DISCUSSION

2.1   **Identifying the Problem:** In various geographical areas, there are elevated operational challenges, such as complex terrain and unpredictable weather conditions. If these factors are compounded by potential deficiencies in safety culture and/or a lack of support of governmental and other aviation professional organizations, a poorer track record of serious incidents and accidents could result.

2.2   Furthermore, countries with inherent terrain and visibility challenges to flight operations, face unique difficulties in maintaining the high safety standards expected in air transport, making it imperative to focus on safety culture improvements within their national industries.

2.3   **Resolving the Issue**: To address these safety culture threats and challenges, we propose the following actions:

1. **Promoting a Culture of Safety**: Stakeholders, including government transport departments, national aviation authorities, and airlines, should prioritize an uncompromising culture of safety as the core value of the air transport sector. This entails a deliberate and relentless identification of potential safety risks, especially in challenging circumstances, disseminating the risks across the industry as well as drawing up and implementing action plans to mitigate the risks with full transparency and collaboration across the industry and authorities.

2. **Enhanced Training and Education:** Pilots, engineers, and all key air transport personnel should undergo regular surveys to determine individual levels of aviation safety awareness, identify gaps in safety culture as well as learning needs and be offered continuous training to foster a shared understanding of safety culture and be enabled to handle challenging situations effectively.

3. **Robust Reporting and Investigation:** Encourage open reporting of safety incidents without fear of retribution. Establish comprehensive and transparent investigation processes to identify root causes and implement corrective actions.

4. **Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing:** Foster an environment of collaboration among airlines, industry associations, and regulatory bodies. Share best practices and lessons learned to enhance safety standards across the industry.

5. **Implementation of Advanced Technologies:** Invest in state-of-the-art technology, such as increased FDR/CVR data capacity and airline flight data monitoring (FDM) systems. These technologies will provide valuable insights into flight operations and aid in identifying potential safety risks.

6. **Compliance with International Standards:** Ensure strict compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards for thorough accident investigation and timely reporting. IATA's guidelines on timely accident data reporting should be adhered to by all signatory states.

7. **Cultural Change Initiatives**: Initiate safety culture improvement programs within airlines, encouraging a proactive approach towards safety and fostering a sense of responsibility among all employees.

3.   ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE

3.1   The Conference is invited to:

a) encourage Directors General of Civil Aviation to foster the establishment of safety culture improvement programmes within their aviation industries and across the Asia Pacific Region. These programmes should focus on cultivating a positive safety culture including promoting reporting cultures, proactive safety mindsets among employees and continuous improvement; and

b) actively promote the establishment collaborative platforms where industry stakeholders and regulators can share best practices and address gaps in expertise, experience, insights, knowledge and information on a national sub-regional and regional basis.

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