GCAA

SAFETY

SEMINAR REPORT

NATIONAL AVIATION SAFETY SEMINAR

"Safety, it starts from the ground up"

Georgetown, 27 November 2023

OPENING OF THE SEMINAR

INTRODUCTION

The Guyana Civil Aviation Authority held the National Aviation Safety Seminar at the Pegasus Hotel on November 27th, 2023, under the theme **"Safety: It starts from the ground up".** The cooperatively organized event was endorsed by the Ministry of Public Works.

Hon. Bishop Juan A. Edghill, Minister of Public Works provided the opening address. In keeping with the theme of the seminar, the Minister noted that aviation culture is not shaped by technology or equipment, but rather, it is shaped by people. He further posited that whenever the topic of safety or safety culture arises, it must be looked at as a fluent, dynamic and complex part of a people-oriented system.

The National Aviation Safety Seminar aimed to spread awareness of the need for heightened safety in Guyana's aviation industry and how imperative it is to develop a safety culture. The challenges faced and mitigating actions that can be taken to improve safety practice in the industry were key features of the seminar as well.

Education and empowerment concerning contemporary and pertinent issues within the Guyana aviation sector were employed throughout the seminar. Safety culture, human factors, safety management systems, safety management systems, and other relevant areas that currently pose pressing concerns were defined and further expanded upon.

The Seminar was aimed at Managers, CEOs, Directors, Airport Operators, and Ground Handlers etc., essentially targeting all those who operate within the aviation industry. Safety is everyone's business, and it plays an extremely crucial role is the rapidly growing aviation sector to ensure growth and sustainable development.

OPENING CEREMONY

The seminar was opened by the Master of Ceremony, Mr. Christopher Nascimento who greeted the audience with a warm welcome. The participants also engaged in an act of solidarity with the Government of Guyana's efforts regarding the Venezuelan aggression against the Essequibo region via a patriotic chant of "Essequibo is We Own".

Other keynote speakers were Lt. Col (Ret'd) Egbert Field, A.A Director General of the Guyana Civil Aviation Authority; Hon. Deodat Indar, M.P., Minister within the Ministry of Public Works; and, Hon. Bishop Juan Edghill, M.P., Minister of Public Works.

ATTENDANCE

The one-day seminar was attended by over 100 individuals. Representation at the event spanned a diverse spectrum, encompassing a range of participants such as Managers and CEOs of airports and aircraft operators, seasoned pilots, students from the Art Williams & Harry Wendt Aeronautical Engineering School, students from city secondary schools, Aviation Maintenance Services personnel, members of the Guyana Defense Force. Appendix 2 provides a comprehensive list of the agencies involved.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

BLOCK 1: SAFETY CULTURE

It is imperative to underscore that safety constitutes a daily endeavor, involving every individual and entity. It is not merely a set of procedures but a pervasive way of life, shaped by the conduct of both employees and organizations, relying on the foundation of trust and respect between staff and management. The degree of management's dedication to fostering a positive safety culture reverberates throughout the entire organization.

Building on this, the audience was educated on the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Annex 19 which emphasizes the pivotal role of safety culture in effective safety management. States and service providers are urged to champion safety culture through the implementation of the State Safety Program (SSP) and Safety Management Systems (SMS). Neglecting the significance of the presence of a safety culture can lead to the omission of critical steps, the compromise of standards, and the adoption of shortcuts, potentially resulting in adverse consequences.

The discussions also emphasized that pilots, particularly in the challenging operational environments of Guyana, often rely on their expertise to navigate out of difficult situations with demanding conditions.

In the pursuit of cultivating a robust safety culture within the aviation industry, various challenges are encountered, encompassing:

- Complacency and a lack of vigilance towards risks and safety protocols.
- Deficiencies in communication skills.
- Constraints faced by small companies, such as limited financial resources, inadequate infrastructure, and restricted access to advanced training programs.

- Resistance to change, disrupting established workflows and protocols.
- Inconsistencies in implementation by leadership.
- Striking a balance between compliance and improvement.
- Fatigue in human factors, including workload management and stress management.
- Complexities in achieving standardization across the industry due to malpractice.
- The challenge of adapting to technological advancements.
- Motivating employees in the pursuit of safety objectives.

Confronting these challenges necessitates a substantial commitment from stakeholders in the aviation industry to consistently promote a safety culture characterized by ongoing learning, transparent communication, adaptability to change, and a collective dedication to enhancing safety.

Furthermore, advocacy had been made for the ongoing enhancement of airstrips. Additionally, it is highly imperative for pilots to adhere diligently to established Standards and Procedures (SOP) during their flights.

BLOCK 2: HUMAN FACTORS

The second block of the safety seminar delved into the intricate dynamics of Human Factors, featuring insightful presentations from three distinguished speakers. Each presentation brought forth unique perspectives and emphasized the indispensable role of human elements in the aviation industry.

The first presenter underscored the people-centric nature of aviation; human involvement spans from construction to flight operations. While acknowledging the inevitability of lapses and errors, the pivotal role of the individuals engaged in aviation activities in identifying and mitigating risks was emphasized.

Next, some challenges faced by human performance in ANS were presented. These challenges encapsulated six key facets: designing the right technology, selecting the right people, organizing the right people in the right roles and responsibilities, ensuring the people have the right procedures and training, managing human factors at the project and ANSP level, and managing the change and transition level.

The following presenter artfully delved into the heart of Human Factors in airport operations. The vivid portrayal of air traffic controllers and ground crews set the stage for a nuanced exploration.

Notably, it was expressed that the passenger experience is not just a transaction, but rather a journey which is influenced by every interaction, from check-in counters to guidance from airport staff. Participants were also cautioned against an overreliance on technology and were urged to strike a balance between technological advancements and the human touch in airport operations. Challenges in airport operations, including fatigue, stress, and the evolving technological landscape, were explicitly detailed. A call for open discourse on human factors, coupled with an awareness of cultural sensitivities, highlighted the need for a holistic approach led by airport managers as custodians of safety culture.

The presenter also delved into human conditions affecting decisions and safety, highlighting the evolving focus on both software and the human element. Their approach to system safety design encompassed hazard analysis, classification, and corrective actions. Addressing the unique aviation environment, the importance of proper airport planning to facilitate ease of transition for workers was stressed. The presenter concluded by emphasizing the perpetual presence of human factors in aviation, calling for effective and ongoing strategies to address this ever-evolving challenge.

The presentations in Block 2 of the safety conference illuminated the intricate interplay between human elements and aviation safety. Each speaker brought forth a unique perspective, offering profound insights into the challenges and strategies associated with managing the human factor in this dynamic industry. As this block was concluded, a common thread

emerged: the undeniable presence and influence of human elements in every facet of aviation. Whether in air navigation services, airport operations, or the broader civil aviation system, understanding, and effectively addressing human factors is imperative for ensuring the safety, efficiency, and success of the aviation industry.

BLOCK 3: SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS – PANEL DISCUSSIONS

This penultimate block of the seminar featured panel discussions on dual perspectives in safety management systems: the regulator's and the industry's perspectives, as well as best practice in safety management.

SMS: The Regulator's Perspective. The Safety Management System is a proactive approach to mitigate safety risk and is mostly guided by ICAO Annex 19. The Safety Management Systems process began at the airports, and it was later extended to Aviation Training Organizations (ATO), Aviation Maintenance Organizations (AMO), Aerodromes, Air Navigation Service Provider and Aircraft Operators. The Safety Management System mandate will be promulgated in updated regulations.

SMS: The Industry's Perspective. The Safety Management System must be implemented and followed at all times. Safety Management System is driven by regulatory and customer requirements. It also benefits from technology and innovation. Safety Management System implementation ultimately allows for savings and so should not be viewed as a cost hindrance to the organization. The Safety Management System is a shared responsibility between the Regulator and Service Provider. Data gathering is a key feature of the system.

Best Practice in SMS. New approaches need to be examined as part of the SMS Implementation System. The Safety Management System should match the organization and its size. The Safety Management System must feature continuous improvements through safety assurance. Safety management also requires senior leadership commitment. There is no competition when it comes to safety, and there should exist open sharing of safety investigation reports, safety alerts and safety bulletins.

BLOCK 4: SAFETY ENHANCEMENT – PANEL DISCUSSIONS

The final block comprised another series of panel discussions centered on safety enhancements regarding key aviation stakeholders.

Air Navigation Services. The Air Traffic Management System encompasses people and procedures all of which contribute to safety. The provision of insights into the effectiveness of SMS Systems and TEM Counter Measures for Air Traffic Controllers, including Team Climate, Planning, Execution, and Review are all elements of safety enhancement as well. Management led safety-oriented culture is another safety enhancement contributor. The promotion of a non-punitive approach for reporting safety-related issues is also an important element. The implementation of SME and ADS-B was recommended.

Airport and Aircraft Operations. Collaboration among operators in the aviation industry was highlighted as a key element for improving safety standards. Implementation of Safety Management Systems (SMS) was discussed as a proactive measure to identify and mitigate potential risks. The importance of adopting the Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADSB) system for enhanced situational awareness was underscored. The use of contemporary software by operators to reduce human errors and improve overall operational efficiency was advocated for. Ultimately, safety is a collective responsibility involving all stakeholders in the aviation sector.

Aviation sector. Aviation is a highly regulated sector. Learning from past occurrences is essential as the failure to continuously evolve safety management in line with the growth of aviation can be detrimental to the sector in its entirety. Prudent safety culture is key to embedding this pattern of continuous learning. In this context, culture can be described as how people behave in relation to safety and risk when no one is watching; it is the expression on how safety is perceived, valued, and prioritized by management and employees in an organization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

SAFETY CULTURE

a) Advocate for the State Safety Program and Safety Management Systems to promote a positive safety culture.

b) Encourage pilots to proactively prevent challenges rather than relying solely on expertise to navigate difficult situations.

c) Tackle challenges such as complacency, communication deficiencies, constraints faced by small companies, resistance to change, and inconsistencies in leadership implementation.

d) Balance compliance with a culture of continuous improvement.

HUMAN FACTORS

a) Recognize and address the facets of human performance challenges in the Air Navigation Services to foster growth and development.

b) Advocate for a balanced approach between technological advancements and the human touch in airport operations.

c) Advocate for open discourse on human factors, considering cultural sensitivities.

d) Call for effective and ongoing strategies to address the ever-evolving challenge of human factors in the industry.

SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS: PANEL DISCUSSION I

a) An Appeal was made to all Operators to have their Safety Management System (SMS) up and running.
b) Recommendation was made to strengthen the Regulatory Framework to support Safety Management.
c) Operators must build a Positive Safety Culture for employees.

SAFETY ENHANCEMENT: PANEL DISCUSSION II

a) To implement the use of software to enhance Data Analysis and Risk Assessment.
b) Improvement of Infrastructure and Security of Interior Airstrips.
c) To have continuous development of training & re-current training for Employees.
d) To enhance Safety Awareness Programs for all stakeholders.

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF PRESENTERS

LIST OF PRESENTERS

1. Captain Gerry Gouveia – National Security Advisor, Office of the President
2. Mr. Abraham Dorris – Director, Aviation Safety and Security, GCAA
3. Mr. Raj Ramjit – Safety Manager, Trans Guyana Airways
4. Ms. Chaitrani Heeralall – Deputy Director General – Regulatory Affairs, GCAA
5. Mr. Joshua Kunjbehari – Instructor, Training Department, CJIA Corp.
6. Dr. Pauline Yearwood – Deputy Programme Manager, CARICOM Secretariat
7. Col. Cargill Kyte – Airworthiness Inspector, GCAA
8. Capt. Learie Barclay – Director of Operations, Roraima Airways
9. Mr. Paulo Machado – Safety Manager, OMNI Helicopters
10. Mr. Rickford Samaroo – Director, Air Navigation Services, GCAA
11. Mr. Phillip Lynch – Airport Manager, Ogle Airport Inc.
12. Major Damon Joseph – Maintenance Manager, GDF
13. Mr. Derry Gosine – Quality and Maintenance Manager, Caribbean Airlines Ltd.

LIST OF MODERATORS

1. Mr. Saheed Sulaman – Deputy Director General (Corporate Administration), GCAA
2. Lt. Col. (Ret'd) Egbert Field, A.A. – Director General, GCAA

3. Ms. Chaitrani Heeralall – Deputy Director General – Regulatory Affairs, GCAA
4. Mr. Clifford Van Doimen – Principal, Civil Aviation Training School, GCAA

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF ATTENDEES (ORGANISATIONS)

1. Air Services Limited
2. American Airlines
3. Art Williams & Harry Wendt Aeronautical Engineering School
4. British Airways
5. Canada Airlines
6. Caribbean Airlines
7. Caribbean Community Secretariat
8. Cheddi Jagan International Airport (CJIA)
9. Demerara Harbor Bridge Corporation
10. Fly Allways
11. Guyana Civil Aviation Authority
12. Guyana Defence Force (Air Corps)
13. Guyana Defence Force (Aviation)
14. Guyana National Shipping Corporation
15. Inter Caribbean
16. JAGS Aviation

17. Laparkan
18. New Timehri Handling Services
19. Ogle Airport Inc.
20. OMNI Taxi Aero SA
21. Roraima Airways
22. Surinam Airways
23. Trans Guyana
24. Wings Aviation
25. Xen Aviation