



International Civil Aviation Organization

**First Meeting of the APRAST – Accident Investigation Ad hoc Working Group
(APRAST-AIG AWG/1)**

(Bangkok, Thailand, 6-8 June 2012)

Agenda Item 5: Investigator Training

TRAINING OF ACCIDENT INVESTIGATORS

(Presented by Singapore)

SUMMARY

This paper suggests a basic framework of training for investigators and highlights that it is essential to have a dedicated core of trained accident investigators lest the effort in training goes to waste through frequent changes of personnel.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 An accident/incident investigation unit needs to have a system of training for its investigators to ensure that they can discharge effectively their investigation duties as well as their other Annex 13 related duties (e.g. mastering Annex 13 protocol, putting investigation policies and procedures in place, coordinating with other agencies and institutions within the State/Administration, identifying resources/assistance/facilities that may be needed, maintaining occurrence database, planning for and organising/ conducting training, corresponding with ICAO and investigation agencies in other States/ Administrations). Typically the purposes of training are for:

- Managing the investigation unit;
- Readyng the investigation unit to respond to an occurrence;
- Bringing newly recruited investigators to the necessary standard as quickly as possible;
- Replacing the expertise lost through the retirement of more experience investigators;
- Keeping abreast of technological developments as aircrafts become more complex; and
- Meeting new challenges posed by the increasing complexity of the aviation industry (e.g. pressure from the media and the public).

1.2 The training typically takes the following forms:

- In-house indoctrination training
- On-the-job training
- Courses on basic investigation techniques
- Investigation management courses

- Investigation exercises
- Specialised investigation courses (e.g. flight recorder, fire, explosion)
- Training on handling issues peripheral to investigation (e.g. media communications, handling next-of-kin)
- Observer attachment to others' investigation
- Conferences, seminars, workshops, etc.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Given the objectives and forms of training as highlighted above, and considering that the accident/incident profession is knowledge-intensive and years are needed before an investigation practitioner can gain enough experience and exposure to a wide range of accident/incident scenarios, one can easily see that to groom an investigator requires a significant investment.

2.2 It goes without saying that such an investment should not be allowed to go to waste. Frequent changes in investigation personnel will not allow a profession investigation team to be formed. It is very essential for an investigation unit to have person(s) made accountable for investigation and management matters and to have a core group of personnel to be trained in investigation, even if it means an investigation unit of one person¹.

2.3 Having a permanent and core group of investigators also means there will be continuity in the investigations being conducted, in management policies and in international cooperative relationship. It has to be noted that international relationship is an important asset for an investigation unit, as this will enable assistance from foreign investigation units to be organised even with a short notice.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to consider suggesting to APRAST that:

- a) RASG-APAC note the importance of providing adequate training to accident investigators in order that they can discharge effectively their duties of conducting investigations on behalf of their States/Administrations and of managing the investigation units; and
- b) RASG-APAC encourage States/Administrations to have a dedicated core of trained accident investigators, be this a core of only one person, lest the effort in training goes to waste through frequent changes of investigation personnel; and
- c) RASG-APAC request States/Administrations to indicate the types of accident investigator training that they critically need.

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— END —

¹ The European Union requires its member States to each have a permanent safety investigation authority which shall comprise at least one investigator able to perform the function of the investigator-in-charge in the event of a major air accident.