

# ***SAFETY INFORMATION 05/2023***

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## ***AWARENESS ON SAFETY CULTURE IN AVIATION PERSONNEL***

### **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 This Safety Information (SI) is to raise awareness of the safety culture in Malaysia among Air Traffic Controllers (ATCOs), Pilots, Engineers and Aerodrome Operators.

### **2 Background**

- 2.1 Safety is a crucial component in the aviation industry and an organization's competence in the field of safety is reflected in its Safety Management System (SMS), thus, having qualified safety personnel to carry out this duty is vital. For organizations to attain acceptable safety performance, both SMS and a strong safety culture are required. Safety culture is the way safety is perceived, valued, and prioritized in an organization. It reflects the real commitment to safety at all levels in the organization. It is also described as "how an organization behaves when no one is watching".
- 2.2 An optimum safety culture, that is at its best, will provide a clearer, more complete view of operational risk, one that includes all facets of the organization's operations. This is facilitated by improving information flow and maintaining a productive conversation about safety performance inside the organization.
- 2.3 The aviation sector places a high value on safety culture since it guards the environment and aircraft equipment, ensures the safety of passengers and crew, and helps to prevent accidents and mishaps. Open communication, ongoing learning, and proactive risk management are encouraged by a strong safety culture, which aids businesses in achieving their safety objectives and preserving public confidence in aviation.
- 2.4 Elements of Safety Culture
- 2.4.1 To develop an effective and resilient safety culture, organizations need to develop key elements of safety culture in their organizations. The key elements of a strong safety culture in the aviation industry are as follows:
- a) **Leadership Commitment:** The top leadership in an organization must demonstrate a strong commitment to safety and communicate this commitment to employees. This creates a culture where safety is prioritized and employees feel valued and supported.

- b) **Employee Involvement:** All employees should be encouraged and empowered to actively participate in safety initiatives. This creates a sense of ownership and accountability among employees and can lead to a higher level of engagement and motivation.
- c) **Hazard Identification and Reporting:** Encouraging employees to identify and report hazards and near-miss incidents is an important aspect of a strong safety culture. This helps organizations to continuously improve and identify areas for improvement.
- d) **Risk Management:** Organizations in the aviation industry must have robust risk management processes in place to ensure that all operations are carried out safely. This includes identifying potential risks and implementing strategies to mitigate these risks.
- e) **Continuous Improvement:** A strong safety culture requires a continuous improvement mindset. Organizations must continuously strive to identify and eliminate potential hazards and improve their safety processes and procedures.
- f) **Safety Performance Monitoring and Measurement:** Measuring and monitoring safety performance is important to ensure that safety goals are being met. This helps organizations identify areas for improvement and track progress over time.
- g) **Training and Communication:** Providing regular training and clear communication about safety procedures and policies is crucial for building a strong safety culture. Employees must be equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to carry out their duties safely.
- h) **Just Culture:** A just culture is one where employees are not punished for making mistakes, but rather encouraged to learn from them and make improvements. This creates an environment where employees feel comfortable reporting incidents and near-misses, which can help organizations to identify areas for improvement.
- i) **Resilience:** The aviation industry is complex and dynamic, and organizations must be resilient in the face of change. This includes being able to respond effectively to incidents and crises and to recover quickly.
- j) **Independent Oversight:** Independent oversight from organizations such as regulatory bodies and auditors helps to ensure that safety standards are being met and that organizations are held accountable for their safety performance.

2.4.2 A strong safety culture is essential for ensuring the highest level of safety in the aviation industry. By prioritizing these key elements, organizations can create a culture where safety is at the forefront of all decision-making and where employees are empowered to actively participate in safety initiatives.

## 2.5 Promoting Safety Culture in the organizations

2.5.1 A strong safety culture helps prevent accidents and incidents by promoting a proactive and responsible attitude towards safety among all employees and stakeholders. A strong safety culture encourages reporting and analysis of safety incidents, leading to continuous improvement of safety practices and processes. Additionally, it ensures compliance with regulations and standards, enhances public trust in aviation and contributes to a positive work environment. To ensure safety culture is embedded in the employee's working culture, organizations need to:

- a) Establish and carry out a defined safety policy;
- b) Promote open dialogue and the reporting of safety incidents;
- c) Regularly educate and train personnel about safety;
- d) Execute assessments and audits of safety;
- e) Establish a just culture that encourages reporting without fear of punishment;
- f) Incorporate safety considerations in all levels of decision-making;
- g) Promote a healthy safety culture by setting an excellent example; and
- h) Constantly keep track of and assess the success of safety programs.

## 2.6 Just Culture

2.6.1 Just culture is a concept that emphasizes the importance of fairness and balance. It is a culture that encourages the reporting of safety issues, incidents, and accidents without fear of blame or punishment. Just culture promotes transparency and encourages the reporting of incidents, which helps to improve the overall safety of the aviation industry. It fosters an environment where employees feel comfortable reporting incidents and feel confident that their reports will be taken seriously and acted upon. This, in turn, leads to a better understanding of the root causes of incidents and accidents, which enables organizations to take the necessary steps to prevent them from happening again in the future.

2.6.2 To encourage employees to have the just culture embedded in them, organizations can promote it via:

- a) Employee training: Employee training is a key component of promoting just culture. Employees should be trained on the principles of just culture, and how it affects their work and safety culture. This will help them understand their role in promoting a just culture, and how they can contribute to the overall safety of the aviation industry.
- b) Encouraging reporting: Encouraging employees to report incidents, accidents and safety issues is essential to promoting just culture. Organizations should provide clear channels for reporting, such as a confidential hotline or an online reporting system, and ensure that employees feel comfortable using them.

- c) Fair and transparent investigations: Fair and transparent investigations are an important aspect of just culture. Organizations should ensure that investigations are carried out in an impartial and transparent manner and that employees are not unfairly blamed or punished for incidents.
- d) Root cause analysis: Root cause analysis is a key component of Just Culture, and helps organizations to identify the underlying factors that contributed to an incident or accident. This information can be used to make improvements to processes, procedures, and training to prevent similar incidents from happening in the future.

2.6.3 Just culture is a concept that is critical to the overall safety of the aviation industry. By promoting just culture, organizations can foster a culture of transparency, encourage reporting, and ensure that incidents and accidents are investigated in a fair and transparent manner. The benefits of just culture, including improved safety, a better understanding of root causes, and increased employee engagement, make it a vital aspect of the aviation industry.

### 3 Conclusion

3.1 The aviation industry has a strong commitment to safety culture, demonstrated by regulations, guidelines, and initiatives implemented to ensure that safety remains a top priority. The industry has made large investments in infrastructure, technology, and training to support this because it understands the fundamental need of taking a proactive approach to risk management. Nevertheless, the industry must remain vigilant and continue to evolve its safety culture to ensure that it remains effective in preventing accidents and incidents. By fostering a positive and proactive safety culture, the aviation industry can ensure that it continues to provide safe and efficient air travel for all passengers.



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