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## **GUIDANCE FOR AIR OPERATORS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FLIGHT SAFETY DEPARTMENT**

### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 This Circular provides guidance for air carriers for the development of an effective safety department. Guidance is also provided on the functions, qualifications, and responsibilities of a Director of Safety.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Air operators should have a safety department that addresses the broad range of risks involved in commercial aviation, including flight operations, maintenance, and ground safety. Since operators vary in size and scope of operations, when determining the size and complexity of a safety department, it is appropriate to consider such criteria as the kind of operations involved, the number and type of airplanes used, and the areas of operations.
- 2.2 Any safety program should be designed to prevent personal injury and property losses. Thus the primary objectives of a safety program should be to motivate safe actions through the establishment of a positive corporate safety culture; identifying hazards to safe operations; working with other company departments to develop and implement safety interventions; monitoring intervention strategies to validate effectiveness; and communicating the results of safety efforts throughout the company.
- 2.3 The DCA encourages certificate holders to identify and correct instances of non-compliance with company procedures and DCA regulations, using internal safety audits as a tool for continuously monitoring and evaluating practices and procedures. The DCA believes that the implementation of a comprehensive and effective safety department will benefit both the certificate holder and the flying public.
- 2.4 To ensure an effective flight safety programme it is essential that each certificate holder has a focal point for safety activities, such as a Director of Safety (DOS) or Vice-president of Safety. This person would be responsible for keeping the certificate holder's senior management fully informed about the safety status of the certificate holder's entire operation. The DCA believes that an independent, full time safety position is important, for large operations. However, the DCA recognizes that in smaller operations, the Director of Safety function might be an additional function of a current manager.

### **3. DIRECTOR OF SAFETY (DOS)**

#### **3.1 Functions**

- 3.1.1 To enable the Director of Safety to implement and manage the company flight safety programme, the post-holder must have access to all departments at all levels. The primary responsibility of the DOS is to ensure the highest level of safety in the company flight operations.
- 3.1.2 The Director of Safety is normally responsible to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for:-
- a) Providing information and advice on flight safety matters to the CEO.
  - b) Ensuring that a Flight Safety Handbook / Manual is prepared which describes the airline's safety policy and procedures, and that all employees comply with the same.
  - c) Establishing a reporting system which provides for a timely and free flow of safety-related information.
  - d) Maintaining the air safety occurrence database
  - e) Monitoring corrective actions and flight safety trends
  - f) Coordinating the DCA's Mandatory Occurrence Reporting requirements.
  - g) Soliciting and processing safety improvement suggestions
  - h) Developing and maintaining a safety awareness programme
  - i) Liaising with the heads of all departments company-wide on flight safety matters
  - j) Acting as Chairman of the Company Flight Safety Committee.

- k) Disseminating flight safety-related information company-wide
- l) Liaising with manufacturers' flight safety departments, government regulatory bodies and other flight safety organisations world-wide
- m) Assisting with the investigation of accidents and incidents
- n) Carrying out safety audits and inspections
- o) Maintaining familiarity with all aspects of the Company's activities and its personnel
- p) Reviewing and updating of the company emergency response plan
- q) Planning and controlling the Flight Safety budget
- r) Managing or having oversight of the FDA Programme
- s) Publishing the Company flight safety magazine
- t) Participation in corporate strategic planning

3.1.3 The Director of Safety position in large airline should be established as a full time position. In small airlines (less than 5 aircraft) it may not be necessary to establish a full time Director of Safety position. These operators are, however, encouraged to designate a company manager to monitor and evaluate flight operations, maintenance, and ground safety practices, procedures, and programs.

### 3.2 Qualifications

3.2.1 The suggested minimum attributes and qualifications required for a DOS are:-

- a) A broad aviation/technical education
- b) A sound knowledge of commercial operations, in particular flight operations procedures and activities
- c) Experience as a flight crew member or engineer
- d) The ability for clear expression in writing
- e) Good presentation and interpersonal skills
- f) Computer literacy
- g) The ability to communicate at all levels, both inside and outside the Company
- h) Organisational ability
- i) To be capable of working alone (at times under pressure)
- j) Good analytical skills
- k) To exhibit leadership
- l) Be worthy of commanding respect among peers and management officials

### 3.2.2 Training

- a) The DOS would be expected to become familiar with all operational aspects of the organisation, its activities and personnel. This will be achieved in part by in-house induction training. However, such knowledge is best acquired by self-education and research.
- b) External training should at least cover the management of a flight safety programme and basic accident investigation and crisis management.

## 4. APPLICABILITY

Air Operators should review their Flight Safety Departments to ensure that:

- 4.1.1 The established safety department is appropriate to the size and scope of operations and that it addresses the broad range of risks involved in commercial aviation, including but not limited to, flight operations, maintenance and ground safety.
- 4.1.2 That air operator manual(s) include the duties, responsibilities, and authority of the Director of Safety.
- 4.1.3 The qualifications of an individual serving as a full time Director of Safety are similar to those outlined above.