



ASSEMBLY — 42ND SESSION

TECHNICAL COMMISSION

Agenda Item 24: Aviation Safety and Air Navigation Priority Initiatives

PUBLICATION OF FINAL ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION REPORTS

(Presented by Air Crash Victims' Families' Federation International (ACVFFI))

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2015, the Air Crash Victims' Families' Federation International (ACVFFI) has been aware of concerning data from Member States regarding unsatisfactory levels of compliance with the publication of final reports following aviation accidents by Contracting States. This working paper highlights the growing concern of ACVFFI and key aviation industry stakeholders over delays and, in some cases, the absence of final reports, in contravention of ICAO Annex 13 — *Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation Standards*. Statistical evidence is cited to illustrate the level of non-compliance and to emphasize why the timely and complete publication of final reports is essential to operational safety, institutional transparency, and public trust. Member States are urged to fulfil their obligations, allocate the necessary resources, and ensure that preliminary and final reports are published within the timeframes established under Annex 13.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- urge States to make public comprehensive preliminary and final reports of aviation accidents publicly available to ensure operational safety in accordance with the timeframes and procedures established in Annex 13;
- urge the Council to identify and take appropriate measures to support States in complying with their obligation to conduct thorough investigations and to publish their findings to improve safety;
- reaffirm and emphasize to Member States that preliminary reports must not replace or indefinitely delay the issuance of a final aviation accident report; and
- request the Council to strengthen monitoring of States' compliance levels through USOAP audits, with a view to promoting results that support operational safety.

<i>Strategic Goals:</i>	This working paper relates to the Strategic Goals <i>Every flight is safe and secure</i> .
<i>Financial implications:</i>	Not applicable.

¹ English and Spanish versions provided by ACVFFI.

References:	Doc 7300, <i>Convention on International Civil Aviation</i> Annex 13 — <i>Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation Standards</i> Joint Position Paper: Publication of Final Reports by ACI Europe, ECA, FSF, IATA, ICCAIA, IFALPA and IFATCA
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 On 10 February 2025, the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) published a Joint Position Paper together with Airports Council International (ACI) Europe, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Flight Safety Foundation (FSF), the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Coordinating Council of Aerospace Industries Associations (ICCAIA), the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) and the International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA), highlighting concerning indicators regarding the publication of final reports following aviation accidents. These reports are fundamental to ensuring improvements in operational safety and preventing future accidents caused by similar factors.

1.2 Article 26 of the *Convention on International Civil Aviation* (Doc 7300, Chicago Convention) establishes the obligation of States to investigate the circumstances of aviation accidents when such events involve fatalities, serious injuries, significant technical failures of the aircraft, or issues related to navigation facilities.

1.3 Annex 13 — *Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation Standards* to the Chicago Convention calls on States that are responsible for investigating an accident to: (1) Within 30 days of the accident, file a preliminary report with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). (2) It is also required to make the final report publicly available as soon as possible and, if possible, within 12 months. (3) If the report cannot be made publicly available within those 12 months, an interim statement shall be made publicly available on each anniversary of the occurrence, detailing the progress of the investigation and any safety issues raised.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Statistics provided by IATA indicate that between 2018 and 2023, out of 268 accidents recorded in the IATA Annual Safety Report, only 140 investigations were completed, representing 52 per cent of the total, leaving nearly half (48 per cent) without final reports. Similarly, data from FSF for the period 2018 to 2022 show that, for accidents or serious incidents involving aircraft over 5 700 kg, a total of 448 cases required reports under ICAO Annex 13, of which only 160 (36 per cent) were completed.

2.2 The publication of final reports enables a timely understanding of the events that led to the accident, assisting aviation authorities and industry stakeholders in quickly identifying and addressing safety issues, and in implementing corrective and preventive measures to avoid similar incidents. Delays in the publication of such reports hinder States, operators, and other involved parties from preventing further loss of life or injury, and from fulfilling the intended outcome of Article 26 of the Chicago Convention.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 A strong commitment to transparency and the continuous improvement of aviation safety requires that States ensure the complete, timely, and accessible publication of investigation reports. Reinforcing this standard and its compliance is essential to the credibility of the international safety system, institutional learning, and the respect owed to victims and their families.

3.2 It is important to recall the commitment of States to ICAO and the Chicago Convention to adhere to international standards, particularly when these contribute to improvements in operational safety that ultimately serve to protect the lives and physical integrity of users of the civil aviation system.

3.3 The commitment to transparency and continuous improvement of aviation safety requires States to comply with the full, timely and accessible release of investigation reports. Strengthening this obligation through ICAO Council oversight is essential to maintaining confidence in the global aviation safety framework and upholding the rights of victims and their families.

3.4 It is also necessary to clarify to Member States that preliminary reports are not sufficient, as they are not comprehensive and do not identify or analyze the systemic failures that may have led to the accidents in question. The publication of a preliminary report does not exempt a Member State from fulfilling the requirement to issue a final report in accordance with Annex 13.

3.5 It is considered necessary that ICAO monitor State performance and identify the reasons why final reports are not being published and take the appropriate initiatives to address these gaps.

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