

SINGAPORE PLAYS HOST TO SECOND INTERNATIONAL ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION FORUM



The three-day forum highlighted the need for the aviation community to work together to further improve aviation safety and investigation processes.

2012 was a good year for aviation safety. Flight departures reached a record 31 million worldwide in 2012, one million more than in 2011. Despite the increasing volumes, the safety record has never been better. This is in part testament to the hard work, commitment and continued efforts of the industry's aircraft investigators and officials, whose meticulous investigative procedures continue to provide insights and lessons that help to improve safety procedures and prevent accident reoccurrences.

Going forward, aviation safety must remain a top priority for the aviation community. Echoing this sentiment at the 2nd International Accident Investigation (IAI) Forum held at Singapore Aviation Academy (SAA) in April 2013, Mr Pang Kin Keong, Permanent Secretary of Singapore's Ministry of Transport said, "We must take advantage of such clear skies to learn, improve and work together in close cooperation to further improve safety and investigation

processes. Singapore is committed to contributing and working with our partners towards this end.”

Every three years, the international aviation community comes together at the International Accident Investigation (IAI) Forum to share these insights and explore issues surrounding the organisation, infrastructure and management of accident investigation. The 2nd IAI Forum was hosted once again by the Air Accident Bureau of Singapore (AAB), co-organised by the Singapore Aviation Academy (SAA) and strongly supported by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC), Flight Safety Foundation (FSF) and the International Society of Air Safety Investigators (ISASI). The Forum welcomed more than 190 chief aircraft accident investigators, senior investigation officials and experts from over 45 countries and administrations. Key speakers include Ms Nancy Graham, Director of Air Navigation Bureau, ICAO, and Capt. Kevin L Hiatt, the new president and CEO of FSF.



Aviation safety experts shared insights on the challenges facing air accident investigations and lessons learnt from major accidents. From left to right: Mr Pang Kin Keong, Permanent Secretary of Singapore’s Ministry of Transport, Mr Yannick Malinge, Senior Vice-President/Chief Product Safety Officer, Airbus, France and Mr Chan Wing Keong, Director (Air Accident Investigation Bureau of Singapore), CAAS.

Topics discussed over the three days included the recent amendments to standards and policies affecting air accident investigation, challenges and lessons learnt from major accidents. Some challenges faced in air safety include the lack of practical experience in various investigative work. With aviation systems getting sounder, it is harder to gain the experience to become highly proficient in investigative work. The way forward is to allow partner investigation agencies to send observers or be attached to the investigation team to provide more realistic training and simulation exercises. Rapid changes in air transport

technology also increased system complexity. As such, it is imperative for investigators to keep pace with technological advances as the industry evolves.

Protection of safety information was also an important issue raised at the forum. Agencies have been stressing that safety investigations are not meant to determine blame or liability, rather conducted for the sole objective of improving aviation safety. This is important so informers can freely provide accurate information to identify safety deficiencies and reduce accidents. A task force has been set up by ICAO to encourage an environment where those with information can come forward freely without blame or liability so that aviation safety can be upheld and lessons can be learned to prevent accident or malfunction reoccurrences.

At the forum, Bureau d'Enquêtes et d'Analyses pour la sécurité de l'aviation civile (BEA) was also presented a plaque in recognition of its extraordinary perseverance in searching for the wreckage and flight recorders of Air France Flight 447. BEA's discoveries were crucial in unlocking the mysteries of the 2009 crash and led to new proposals for safety improvement to prevent similar occurrences.