

Report of the ICAO Safety Management Panel (SMP)

Presented by Andrew Belshaw

SUMMARY

Following the in-person meeting at ICAO HQ in Dec 2024, the SMP was hosted by Spanish Aviation Safety and Security Agency (AESA) in Madrid in October 2025. The meeting addressed progress on safety management guidance, updates to Annex 19, coordination with other ICAO expert groups, and the advancement of several SMP job cards. The in-person session in Madrid further refined work plans, established new task teams, and reviewed proposals related to safety intelligence, artificial intelligence, and safety culture.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Since the last IFATCA conference, the ICAO SMP has taken on a new structure, from 5 to now 3 working groups.
- 1.2. The new groups are now:
 - Safety Management Strategy & Implementation (SMSI)
 - Safety Assurance (SA)
 - Safety Risk Management (SRM)
- 1.3. The IFATCA nominated member is now part of the SRM working group and has participated in several virtual meetings over the course of the year, including being part of a small task team to review a number of papers.
- 1.4. By way of information, the previous groups were:
 - WG1 State Safety Programme (SSP) (No IFATCA participation),
 - WG2 Safety Management System (SMS) (Andrew Belshaw)
 - WG3 Safety Intelligence (SI) (No IFATCA participation)
 - WG4 Safety Performance Management (SPM) (No IFATCA participation)
 - WG5 Safety Risk Management (SRM) (Andrew Belshaw - Virtual participation only)
- 1.5. The SMP/WGs/9 meeting was conducted in two segments: a virtual session on 6 October 2025 and an in-person session in Madrid from 28–31 October 2025. Representatives from 17 States and 8 international organizations participated, supported by advisers and ICAO Secretariat staff. The virtual meeting facilitated updates and briefings, while the in-person meeting focused on detailed work programme activities. Andrew Belshaw attended as the IFATCA nominated member.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1. As with previous meetings, the Madrid meeting was no different and had a packed agenda. Unexpectedly the SMP Chair had to, at short notice, step-down from both the position as Chair and the SMP. This left the deputy Chair and the Secretary to run the meeting between them which, notwithstanding the circumstances, did extremely well and with utmost professionalism.

2.2 Updates of interest are as follows:

- The Secretariat reported progress on key ICAO manuals:
- The Safety Intelligence Manual (Doc 10159) reached its finalized edited version.
- Publication of the Safety Management Manual (Doc 9859, 5th edition) was delayed to Q1/Q2 2026 due to the postponed Final Review of Annex 19 Amendment 2 and resource constraints. Work is underway to ensure availability before the November 2026 applicability date.
- The Secretariat encouraged increased submission of practical examples for the Safety Management Implementation (SMI) website, noting gaps in areas such as safety culture and safety performance management.

2.3 The ANC has approved a revised schedule for Annex 19 Amendment 3 as follows:

- SMP/8 Moved to March 2027
- Preliminary review Q1 2028
- Final review Q1 2029

2.4 Specific to the SRM working Group, discussions focussed on how safety intelligence initiatives might be supported through the use of artificial intelligence. In addition, there was a paper presented on Variable Noise Reduction Systems and how SMS provisions should be used to support such systems; the WG concluded that provisions were adequate. An additional task was and is to look at drafting an updated definition of 'safety risk' for Annex 19.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1. The main headline from the last year is the change in the structure of the SMP and the need to elect a new Chair. It was originally planned to hold an extraordinary virtual meeting for an election but this action has now been postponed until the next in person meeting in Montreal (TBA).

4. RECOMMENDATIONS/ACTIONS

4.1. Review of Human Factors material: The IFATCA nominated member has completed an initial review of references to Human Factors in all the ICAO Annexes and the majority of document and circulars. This has been submitted to the secretariat. That task has now been paused.

4.2 The SMP Secretary presented SMP/WGs/9-WP/01 – Enhanced Guidance on Positive Safety Culture, based on an A42 paper presented by IFALPA on behalf of and with support from a number of States and international organizations. She requested the SMP to consider the contents of the paper for inclusion in the 5th edition of the SMM. The IFATCA nominated member has suggested that IFATCA, in conjunction with the CANSO member, liaises with IFALPA and IATA with a view of further expanding this work. – no dates agreed on when this is likely to take place.

4.2. Next meeting is: SMP/WGs/10 in May 2026 in Brisbane hosted by the Civil Aviation Authority of Australia (CASA). However, due to taking on a new role as the Air Traffic Services Manager at Norwich International Airport (EGSH), the IFATCA nominated member will be unable to attend in person but has EGSH's full endorsement to continue to support IFATCA & the ICAO SMP.

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