



Photo credit: Liew Tong Leng

Strengthening Safety Culture in Singapore's Aviation Industry

Michelle Teo, Head (Stakeholder Engagement), Safety Policy & Planning Division, CAAS
October 2022

"When people fly, they put their trust in us – regulators, aircraft manufacturers and airlines – to get them where they need to go, safely. The aviation ecosystem comprises a wide array of companies and workers. Each of us, in our respective individual and organisational capacity, will have to play our part. We are highly interconnected and need to work together."

These pertinent words from the Director-General of CAAS, Mr Han Kok Juan, at the Aviation Safety Forum 2022, resonated across the aviation community and exemplified the importance of a strong and positive safety culture to keep aviation safe for everyone.

A strong and positive safety culture provides the foundation for aviation organisations to continuously improve safety and proactively mitigate risks, for example through voluntary reporting of safety hazards. In recognition of this, CAAS, as the aviation sector lead, seeks to foster a strong and positive safety culture through various efforts and initiatives in collaboration with our aviation stakeholders.

Charter for a Strong and Positive Safety Culture in Singapore

At the Aviation Safety Forum 2022, the "Charter for a Strong and Positive Safety Culture in Singapore" was also launched. The Safety Charter is the first-ever for the Singapore aviation industry, and expresses the shared commitment by leaders in the sector to jointly uphold safety standards and strengthen the safety culture of their respective organisations. The launch of the Charter at the Forum was especially timely as the industry was emerging from the pandemic at that point, with air travel ramping up.

To date, close to 100 key organisations across various domains in the sector have signed on to the Charter as demonstration of their commitment to safety. They include major airlines, aircraft manufacturers, maintenance, repair and overhaul, design and production, and training organisations, the airport operator, ground handlers, industry associations and unions. View the full list of Charter signatories [here](#).

Signatories of the Charter pledge to:

- Uphold safety as a key priority and core value.
- Foster a strong and positive safety culture.
- Broaden and strengthen safety promotion, including in collaboration with other organisations.
- Encourage voluntary reporting of safety hazards, unsafe practices, and safety errors, including self-disclosure of mistakes, slips, and lapses.
- Promote confidentiality and protection from punitive action for self-disclosure of safety lapses and mistakes, while not tolerating conduct that constitutes gross negligence, wilful misconduct or criminal activity.
- Contribute towards strengthening the collective aviation safety culture in Singapore.

Parties interested in joining the Charter may find out more [here](#).

Safety Culture and the State Safety Programme

Beyond the Safety Charter, as part of continual efforts to strengthen industry safety culture, CAAS recently published two key safety documents:

- The second edition of the Singapore State Safety Programme (SSP) articulates Singapore's regulatory philosophy, values, and commitments to achieve our safety objectives. The SSP document elaborates on the impetus and objectives for enhancing safety culture in Singapore and the importance of nurturing a safety mindset and personal accountability among the aviation community.
- The first edition of the National Aviation Safety Plan (NASP) 2022-2024 complements the SSP document and sets out the objectives, challenges, strategic priorities and key safety actions to be taken by, or driven by CAAS. Several safety actions relate to enhancing safety culture by providing more guidance and through initiatives to understand and promote safety culture within the aviation sector.

Through these efforts, we are able to drive a more structured and holistic approach to continuously improve safety culture, and work with the industry to collaborate on safety promotion initiatives.

What's Next – Systematic Monitoring of Industry Safety Culture & Development of Guidance Material

Safety culture requires constant nurturing and reinforcement. CAAS has been engaging the industry regularly through various modes including meetings, CAAS Safety Series events, Aviation Safety Forums, ad-hoc surveys at the domain level, and our first industry-wide safety culture survey in 2021.

While the results of the survey in 2021 found that safety culture amongst companies and workers remained strong despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, CAAS remains committed to maturing safety culture in our aviation system as the operating environment evolves. This includes systematically monitoring our industry's safety culture and making improvements as needed. We aim to do so via regular industry-wide surveys and the development of action plans to address areas for improvement.

CAAS also plans to develop a safety culture handbook with support from industry stakeholders to share experiences, case studies and best practices. This handbook will serve as guidance material to help companies strengthen safety culture. While there is existing literature on safety culture, practices on nurturing safety culture are continually evolving and being fine-tuned. Many aviation companies, international organisations and State regulators have developed useful initiatives; but unless these are shared with the wider community, the benefits may be limited. By working with consultants and industry partners to consolidate such wisdom and best practices into a safety culture handbook accessible to all, CAAS hopes that the aviation industry will benefit collectively.

We thank our aviation community for the steadfast commitment to strengthening aviation safety so that we may all continue [#SoaringSafelyTogether](#).



Subscribe

Sign up [here](#) to receive notifications whenever a new edition is published.



Feedback

We value your input. Kindly provide your feedback to [The Leading Edge here](#).

Editor
Dalen Tan

Assistant Editors
Tang Kok Liang
Michelle Teo

Contact
CAAS_Safety_Promotion@caas.gov.sg
www.caas.gov.sg

The Leading Edge is a publication of the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS). The articles in this publication do not constitute advice and are for general information only. The views expressed by the contributors are not necessarily those of CAAS, and should not be attributed to CAAS.

CAAS as well as each contributor shall not be liable at any time for damages or otherwise, including, without limitation, damages for loss of any kind, arising in contract, tort or otherwise from the use or reading of any part or whole of the publication, or from any action taken or refrained from being taken as a result of using or reading any part or the whole of

this publication. Any reference to any person/entity in any article should not be taken as an endorsement, recommendation or preference by CAAS. The copyright in this publication is owned by CAAS, unless otherwise specified. Reproducing copies of this publication within your company or organisation or for your own personal use is permitted but reproduction for publication otherwise is prohibited.

All rights are reserved. If you wish to use or reference this publication for any other purpose e.g. as training material for students, please contact us for CAAS' formal agreement.