GLOBAL PROJECT INVESTIGATING AVIATION SAFETY DATA COLLECTION

News / Airlines

A **global project** is **investigating** how airlines, regulators and other aviation groups collect, analyse and share **safety** data.

The project began in 2012, when Flight Safety Foundation signed a memorandum of cooperation with the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) to look at ways of enhancing aviation safety through the exchange of safety information.

And while initial observations showed there were a number of different initiatives underway around the world to collect and analyse safety information, Marshall said none of them were “talking to each other”.

That led to the Global Safety Information Project.

The project has conducted focus group sessions in the Asia-Pacific and in the Americas to establish what types of safety information and data were being collected by key players in the industry and how this data was being used to enhance aviation safety.

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Flight Safety Foundation chief executive Jon Beatty said there was a lack of consistency in the way regulators, airlines air navigation service providers, unions, airports and other stakeholders collected safety data.

“It is increasingly clear that the collection, analysis and sharing of safety data and information represents the greatest potential for continued, long-term improvement of the aviation industry’s already stellar safety performance,” Beatty said in a statement.

Flight Safety Foundation vice president of global programs Greg Marshall, who was involved in those focus groups – seven were held in the Asia-Pacific region and six in the Americas – noted there was some good work being done.

However, a point of difference that became apparent between the different jurisdictions was on the protections surrounding voluntary safety information.

While some countries, such as Australia, had legal protections for those voluntarily reporting safety information, others did not.

The next step will be a series of two-day workshops starting in March 2016 designed to get more information about the sharing and collection of safety data.

The Flight Safety Foundation, a non-profit organisation focused on research, education, advocacy and publishing to improve aviation safety, has also assembled a legal advisory committee to look at the issue of legal protection and develop a legal toolkit, including some model legislation that countries could adopt to provide protection of voluntary safety data and information.

Marshall said the toolkit would be a purely voluntary measure.

“We are finding some states probably won’t because of the culture and other aspects,” Marshall told *Australian Aviation* in an interview.

“The philosophy of Just Culture just doesn’t sit within those states naturally.”

“But we are finding a number of states saying that they would actually like to something about it but don’t know how, so those toolkits will be ideally suited to those states that are willing to put in place those legal protections and establish those voluntary safety reporting systems.”

The concept of Just Culture centres around not punishing people for actions, omissions or decisions taken by them based on their experience and training. At the same time, gross negligence, wilful violations and destructive acts were not tolerated.

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