



"Civil Aviation Accident Emergency Plan at National Level"

31 January 2014, Brussels

Workshop Conclusions

- A number of Member States have difficulties to implement the legislative provisions imposing the establishment of an emergency plan at national level.
- Member States that have faced major civil aviation disasters have, based on their experience, reinforced their procedures in relation to their national emergency plans and notably regarding the assistance to the victims and their relatives.
- The difficulties experienced by the Member States are mainly due to the following factors (in isolation or in combination):
 - National emergency plans are strongly linked to the administrative structure of Member States. For Member States structured around regions, the coordination of a unique plan or of consistent plans at regional level is very challenging.
 - The establishment of the plans requires the involvement of many different actors belonging to various institutions, with sometimes different perspective and objectives.
 - Factors such as geographical location and language barrier can become challenges when the authorities should deal with victims and their relatives with various nationalities and religious backgrounds, in particular in the case of large commercial air transport accident.
- National emergency plan should include the following aspects:
 - Assistance to victims and their relatives (guidance contained in the new ICAO policy on assistance to aircraft accident victims and their families which details roles for governmental and non-governmental organizations with emphasis on the role of a national coordinator).
 - Particular attention should be given to the support to and the communication with victims and their relatives, and their associations (Recital 33).

- Procedures regarding the designation of contact person to deal with information towards victims and relatives - Art.21(3) A contact person independent from the airline and from the accident investigation authority might facilitate the communication with relatives.
- Procedures regarding information on the progress of the accident investigation towards accident victims and their families in a timely manner. Families should be informed on the respective objectives of the different processes (judicial, technical accident investigation) and it should be emphasised that the sole objective of an aircraft accident investigation is the prevention of accidents and incidents.
- Procedures for airport emergency services (Recital 33).
- Procedures for the consolidation and validation of the list of all persons on board of the aircraft within two hours and of contact information of victims' relatives for both passengers and crew.
- Procedures for the audit of national airlines' assistance plan - Art.21(2) and where relevant to encourage third-country airlines to adopt a plan for the assistance; need to take into account specificities of certain airlines in particular possible need to subcontract assistance plans.
- Ensure cooperation between the different entities involved at State or regional level is crucial.
- Particular attention should be given to the handling and coordination of media communication notably in the context of large commercial air transport accident.
- Training exercises are useful to continuously improve the plans.
- Need to harmonise plans of the Member States to ensure similar level of protection and rights across the Member States.
- Need also to harmonise essential elements of airlines assistance plan across European air carriers.
- Need to share good practices, the Commission is willing to help Member States by facilitating exchange of good practices.
- Need to develop guidance for the establishment and content of national emergency plan.
- Need also to develop guidance for assistance plans of airlines with particular attention to adapt to the scale of the airline.
- An ad-hoc group could be set up to develop guidelines, the Commission will take contact with volunteers (from MS and from the industry) in the next months.

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