

2025 EASA – FAA
International Aviation Safety Conference
Aviate, Navigate, Communicate: The Path to Enhanced Safety
10-12 June 2025- Gürzenich, Cologne

WRAP-UP SESSION – SUMMARY OF THE CONFERENCE

Note: The conference was summarized by Ludovic Aron from EASA and Caitlin Locke from the FAA at that start of the closing sequence. These are their remarks.

Thank you everyone for attending. We have had 380 participants at this conference, coming from 47 countries.

So what did we talk about? , And more importantly, what did we learn?

First, Grazia Vittadini reminded us all that “Safety is not a destination but a journey” and “Safety is a principle we live by”.

Complexity is growing fast, and it is a major challenge for safety and certification. However we cannot afford certification to take longer than before. This means that the way we work today is not fit to manage the complexity of tomorrow. So what do we do? There are three main levers:

- 1) innovation and new technologies,
- 2) interoperability, harmonization and simplification of rules and common standards,
- 3) trusted and empowered individuals, sufficiently staffed organizations with a solid safety culture.

Following this, Jodi Baker and Florian Guillermet had a fireside chat, moderated by Mark Searle. They looked back at the year that has passed since last conference, what new trends the two organisations see in the field, especially in relation to data

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collection and communications around incidents and accidents, and how we have leveraged our EU-U.S. agreement on aviation safety and enhanced our EASA-FAA cooperation.

What we heard as key messages:

- 1) we need to implement changes faster, especially in the domain of data intelligence, and communicate more/better.
- 2) we are committed to continue to build on our agreement and expand cooperation.

In a keynote speech, Michele Merkle, Director of the Air Navigation Bureau of ICAO, updated us on top safety issues that ICAO is tackling. There is a lot in front of us that represents interconnected challenges for aviation safety: increased traffic, spectrum use increase, new types of operations, new vulnerabilities, new technologies, staff shortage, just to name a few. ICAO is finalizing the 2026-28 Global Aviation Safety Plan that will lay out the top priorities.

This confirmed that we navigate in a sky that is increasingly complex. The role of ICAO is key to help us simplify, by ensuring we provide a global, standardized response.

Jodi Baker and Florian Guillermet then updated us on the key highlights and priorities of their agencies.

Jodi talked about the SMS rule, Safety Risk Management and Safety Intelligence, Drones and eVTOL regulation, MOSAIC, ATM modernization, digitalization, staffing.

Then Florian explained the adjustment made to EASA strategy and its 5 pillars: safe, global, green, innovative, resilient.

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In the first panel of the conference, entitled AVIATE-NAVIGATE-COMMUNICATE – ARE WE SOLVING THE RIGHT PROBLEMS? We heard from our industry leaders:

- Their perception of what the current and near-term challenges are for the aviation sector
- The strategic enhancement of safety risk management, safety data sharing and data science that are needed to become proactive in aviation safety, and the associated challenges
- Their definition of a robust safety culture
- And what new technologies and innovation, such as Artificial Intelligence, can bring to mitigate risks.

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On Day 2, we had two **workshops on Safety Management System**, covering:

- Challenges and opportunities of SMS for covered organizations;
- practical applications from both sides of “the pond”;
- implementation status from regulators;
- and what we have gained from this (lessons learned).

One workshop was more specifically focused on **Design & Manufacturing**:

- Daher aircraft talked about proportionality in the context of a medium-sized Type Certificate Holder, presented practical example of initial tangible outcomes, and touched upon digitalization.
- Pipistrel covered human factors and proportionality, and the challenge of ensuring regulatory compliance when resources are limited.
- GE Aerospace updated us on the SMS International Standard and on the SMS Design & Manufacturing focus group. The importance of Regulatory Oversight collaboration was emphasized and initial lessons learned were also presented.
- EASA and FAA roadmaps for SMS implementation were presented, with highlights on key differences in applicability, as well the mechanisms for continuous experience sharing between regulators.

The other SMS workshop was more specifically focused on **Maintenance**:

- AEA highlighted the opportunities and challenges faced by repair stations in implementing SMS, shared practical insights and case studies from the industry, and discussed the benefits SMS brings to safety culture and operational efficiency.

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- ARSA discussed the role of leadership in driving SMS adoption across repair stations, shared insights on industry-wide initiatives and collaborations to promote SMS, and highlighted strategies for overcoming common implementation challenges and fostering industry standards.
- MTU Maintenance presented the role of SMS in enhancing safety and quality management, provided examples of successful SMS application, and addressed the impact of SMS on organizational safety culture and communication.
- And finally the regulators covered the regulatory requirements for SMS in repair stations, provided an update on the implementation (status and challenges), and touched upon the alignment with ICAO standards and the international cooperation aspects.

These two sessions were nicely tied together by a brilliant Flash Talk from Delta's Chris Collins on SMS coordination across domains, and interconnection with the regulator safety risk management.

Meanwhile (because we had 2 parallel streams on day 2), we invited the regulators, namely Transport Canada, ANAC Brazil, the FAA and EASA, to discuss efficiency:

Efficient Certification & Validation:

- The panel discussed multilateral challenges, regulatory harmonization and the roadmap to acceptance of each other's certificates.
- The need to continue and strengthen the cooperation under the so-called CMT (Certification Management Team) was highlighted. It is particularly critical for new technologies as an enabler.

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- Examples of revised bilateral agreements or implementation procedures were mentioned, where the goal is to increase the scope of streamlined validation.

And **Efficient Approvals & Oversight:**

- The panel discussed the multilateral common challenges, efforts on harmonization, and implementation initiatives towards more mutual recognition, and key bilateral updates and multilateral milestones;
- The discussion covered digital modernization (roadmaps for a digital future), cybersecurity, reduction of duplicative oversight/surveillance activities of AMOs.

In the afternoon of Day 2, there was a panel discussion on **bridging better airworthiness and operations**, introduced by a Flash Talk on smart cockpit technologies as the next step in product safety.

- The EU industry represented by Dassault presented the activities of a Working Group on Operation Centric approach to certification, and WISK illustrated the future need for establishing a clear Conops for certification of innovative projects, allowing to take a global risk perspective.
- The regulators talked about integrated (airworthiness certification / Flight standards) program management concept, operational suitability data, and bilateral harmonization working group on Human Factor evaluation.

In the parallel session, we listened to industry stakeholders talking **about traceability of aviation parts**.

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- The discussion covered the emerging threats on traceability of parts, as well as the possible mitigation means. The role of industry standards and the importance of industry/regulator collaboration were stressed.
- It was established that new technologies should be leveraged, in particular the use of modern digital traceability technologies, the challenge being the coordinated adoption at scale and globally.

Then we wrapped up **Day 2** with two parallel workshops:

One dedicated to **Electric Hybrid Propulsion**:

- The authorities covered the current regulatory framework and developments within EASA/FAA organizations, with a focus on how harmonization is planned to be achieved (challenges and opportunities)
- The industry talked about energy storage and the risk of thermal runaway; the specific challenges of the certification of a new electric engine and of the integration of such an engine on an existing aircraft.

The other workshop was dedicated to the **central role of instructors in the rapidly evolving crew training environment**:

- It was highlighted that Innovative training tools and methodologies, like the use of Extended Reality - EX or CBTA, are changing the environment in which instructors operate, while Virtual Reality Simulators are becoming a reality and the Gen Z is knocking at the door of Training Organizations.

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- United Airlines provided the airline perspective and talked about the use of AI in the crew training environment, Leonardo Helicopters presented the use of virtual reality simulators in the training environment, and Salient Aero addressed the challenge of new generation of pilots and generational gaps in the training environment.

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We had a busy morning on **Day 3**:

First, a panel discussion on the **integration of new technologies**:

- The speakers answered the tough question: How can we integrate new technologies without sacrificing safety - by first establishing clear safety objectives and understanding the challenges ahead, while recognizing that achieving global harmonization remains a significant task.
- The discussion covered early safety risks mitigation, early stakeholders engagement and cooperation—regulators, industry, and standards bodies—, technology maturity.
- While the industry explained how they are managing the growing number of diverging approaches and expectations across different certification authorities, the regulators discussed how to make better use of their existing relationships and cooperation mechanisms to reach early harmonization.

In parallel, there was a panel discussion on **data sharing and analysis**, covering two key problematics:

- How can data be shared in a trustful environment with the required data protection? No silver bullet but a series of dimensions at stake to be addressed thoroughly: Legal; Technical; Governance; Procedural; Supervision and auditing, etc. and
- What are the main opportunities and challenges brought by AI for data analysis? AI will have a major impact at data collection, data quality assurance and data standardisation, and in terms of data crunching, it will augment what we can do with the data and our abilities to deal with

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increasingly large and complex data sets in a shorter lead time and discover knowledge nuggets; we will be able to do more, but also more efficiently.

We followed on with a workshop dedicated to **Artificial Intelligence**:

- NGFT Solutions showcased their operational AI-based tools to support of Small aircrafts, Helicopters and Drones operations, for instance for SMS and compliance showing.
- Collins Aerospace presented concrete AI applications for MRO, including for Remaining Useful Life prognostics, and highlighted the essential contribution from research projects in paving the way to AI-based systems development.
- Lufthansa presented its TechOps Copilot assistant to enable more efficient troubleshooting in the domain of Maintenance, focusing on the use of Large Language Models and Generative AI.
- And EASA recapped the work conducted in the frame of its AI Roadmap since 2020 and focused on the anticipated framework for AI-based systems used as operational tools.

And in parallel, we had a panel discussion on one of the hottest topics of the moment: **GNSS interference**.

- EASA presented data collected and analyzed covering the last 6 months and related to GNSS jamming and spoofing events in Europe.
- The panelists shared their perception of the current risks posed by GNSS interference, and their views on the most effective containment solutions.



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The FAA and EASA provided an update on their current activities to mitigate the risks, in near, mid and long term.

We will now close with a plenary panel, regulators and policy-maker only, where we will hear about what our key leaders identified as the key takeaways from this conference, and what actions need to be taken to ensure continued improvements in safety.