



GIBRALTAR

CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY

STATE SAFETY PROGRAMME



FOREWORD

The Gibraltar Civil Aviation Authority's (GCAA) objective is to create a world class aviation safety environment that meets international expectations and promotes best practice in partnership with - industry. That means compliance with ICAO Standards and learning from international safety leaders. International Standards and guidance are always evolving and developing, and so are we.

The State Safety Programme (SSP) is a formal activity required by ICAO Annex 19. It requires States to document how they provide the mechanisms necessary for aviation safety, ranging from the establishment of the GCAA and the operating regulations, to the identification of safety hazards and safety promotion. Annex 19 Edition 2 integrates the eight critical elements of oversight with the State Safety Programme, raises Safety Information Protection to the level of full SARPs and introduces new requirements for safety management at the State level.

Whilst the United Kingdom (UK), as the ICAO State, is ultimately responsible for a UK SSP, Gibraltar is responsible for complementing the UK's SSP with a separate programme that is commensurate with the size and complexity of Gibraltar's aviation system. Gibraltar's safety strategy is tailored to offer the right support for our aviation community. This we achieve by enabling well qualified inspectors with high safety standards to perform inspections not only in Gibraltar, but also in convenient, locations world-wide. Our inspectors not only benefit from using internationally endorsed approaches to safety but also promote a strong safety culture of professional accountability.

Christopher Charles Purkiss
Director General
31 January 2026

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Chapter 1

Introduction

General

A State Safety Programme (SSP) is defined as an integrated set of regulations and activities aimed at improving safety. It includes specific safety activities that must be performed by the State, including regulations and directives promulgated by the State to support fulfilment of its responsibilities concerning safe and efficient delivery of aviation activities in the State.

The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) requirement for an SSP recognizes that States as well as service providers have safety responsibilities. The SSP provides a framework within which service providers are required to establish a Safety Management System (SMS) and allows States to set acceptable levels of safety which the service provider's SMS aims to achieve or exceed.

This Gibraltar SSP has been developed using the ICAO SSP framework and guidance material. As much as possible, the headings proposed by ICAO in its framework document have been adopted in this document.

Background

Gibraltar is an Overseas Territory of the UK located at the south-western tip of the Iberian Peninsula, with a population of approximately 38,000 people.

The UK as a signatory to the International Civil Aviation Organisation's (ICAO) Chicago Convention (hence being a Contracting State), has extended certain privileges and requirements to Gibraltar as an Overseas Territory so that Gibraltar incurs certain obligations under the Chicago Convention, its Annexes and applicable Standards.

Gibraltar has recently established the Gibraltar Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) and regulatory regime, which have been developed in accordance with ICAO Standards. These Standards require contracting states to produce a SSP that is commensurate with the size and complexity of its aviation system. The UK, as the signatory to the Chicago Convention, has produced a SSP which in turn requires its Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories to produce their own SSP.

Scope of Aviation Activities

There is one aerodrome in Gibraltar, Gibraltar Airport, which is divided into two parts;

- a) the Civil Airport, which consists of the air terminal and associated civil aviation aircraft stands, and
- b) RAF Gibraltar, which includes the runway and taxiways, is operated by the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD).

The Air Navigation Services are provided by a civilian company under contract to the MoD. The Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP) is required by the GCAA to operate an accepted SMS. The individual civil air traffic controller licences are issued by the UK CAA and recognised by the GCAA in order that they can provide Air Navigation Services to civil aircraft in Gibraltar.

The Government of Gibraltar provides the airport fire and rescue services and the GCAA conducts

oversight activity against Annex 14 requirements.

Meteorological services and the air navigation equipment used by the ANSP are provided by the MoD and fall under the regulation of the Military Aviation Authority (MAA) although the GCAA has agreements with the MAA permitting the conduct of assurance activity in these areas. RAF Gibraltar is designated as a UK Government Aerodrome and is not required to be certified in accordance with Annex 14 as, in common with all other UK Government Aerodromes, the UK has filed a difference with ICAO to this effect. The MoD operates a military SMS to assure themselves of the safety of their operations.

Apron services for civilian aircraft, which are normally provided within the strict geographical limits of the Civil Airport aircraft stands adjacent to the air terminal, are provided by a company under contract to the Government of Gibraltar.

The majority of flights at the aerodrome are civilian, scheduled passenger services form the larger part with other commercial and General Aviation flights routinely operating. The aerodrome has approximately 4500 movements per annum.

Gibraltar has recently established a General Aviation Aircraft Register, with a focus on business aviation initially. The GCAA subsequently plans to expand its activities to include commercial operators and Approved Training Organisations.

State Safety Programme (SSP)

ICAO SARPs for the SSP are contained in Annex 19 - Safety Management. Annex 19 Edition 2, which became effective in 2016 and applicable in November 2019.

The Gibraltar SSP has been developed using the ICAO SSP framework and guidance material, including the ICAO SSP gap analysis. It has been scaled appropriately for the size and complexity of Gibraltar and its aviation activity.

The foundation of the SSP is the State safety oversight (SSO) system critical elements (CEs) found in Annex 19 Appendix 1. These are included and integrated throughout the SSP.

In accordance with ICAO SARPs, this State Safety Programme addresses four main components:

- (a) Safety Policy and Objectives
- (b) Safety Risk Management
- (c) Safety Assurance
- (d) Safety Promotion



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CHAPTER 2

State Safety Policy, Objectives and Resource

State Safety Policy

STATE SAFETY POLICY

The Gibraltar Civil Aviation Authority promotes and regulates the safety of aviation in Gibraltar. We are committed to developing and implementing effective strategies, regulatory frameworks and processes to ensure that aviation activities under our oversight achieve the highest practicable level of safety.

To this end we will;

1. continuously improve the level of safety performance;
2. promote and maintain a positive safety culture within the organization;
3. comply with all applicable regulatory requirements;
4. provide the necessary resources to deliver a safe product or service;
5. ensure safety is a primary responsibility in all matters; and
6. ensure safety is understood, implemented and maintained at all levels.

Safety Objectives

- Maintain a goal of no fatal accidents involving organisations under the oversight of the GCAA
- Through the SSP and National Aviation Safety Plan (NASP) we will establish and communicate our safety targets and measure our performance.
- Aviation safety oversight will remain aligned with ICAO Standards
- A Just Culture will be fostered throughout the aviation system
- Hazards will be assessed and mitigated to be as low as reasonably practicable
- Safety will be promoted to support awareness and continuous improvement

ICAO Critical Elements

ICAO identifies eight critical elements it considers essential for a State to establish, implement and maintain an effective safety oversight system.

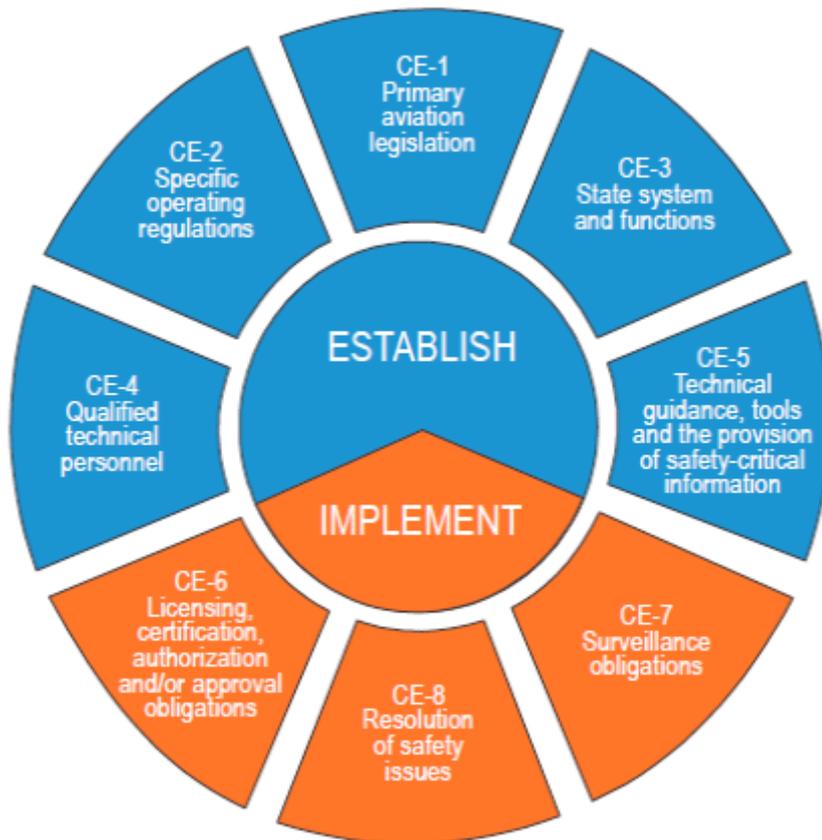


Table 1 – Critical Elements

This SSP demonstrates how Gibraltar addresses each of the Critical Elements.

Aviation Legislation (Critical Element-1)

Primary aviation legislation is essential to create the environment for a well-managed aviation activity within the State. Two pieces of primary legislation underpin the regulatory mechanism and establish the legal basis for the regulatory framework for the governance of aviation activity in Gibraltar and to aircraft registered in Gibraltar.

Civil Aviation Act 2024

The primary legislation which gives effect to the Chicago Convention for purposes of domestic aviation activity and makes provision for the establishment of an aircraft registry.

Civil Aviation Authority Act 2024

The primary legislation which establishes the GCAA, its functions, powers and composition.

Secondary Legislation (Critical Element-2)

Secondary regulation comprises regulations enacted by the Minister with responsibility for Civil Aviation, retained EU Regulation and Operating Regulations published by the GCAA under section 34 of the Civil Aviation Act 2024.

The GCAA has established a comprehensive set of operating regulations. In formulating these, it has followed the ICAO Standards and adapted some regulations and guidance material from other

established regulatory bodies, to ensure that the industry is regulated on the basis of recognised industry best practice.

In developing operating regulations, the GCAA complies with ICAO Standards wherever possible. However, in the rare circumstances where the GCAA considers it impracticable or inappropriate to transpose ICAO provisions into the CARs, and as permitted by ICAO it notifies any differences to ICAO via the Electronic Filing of Differences process. Significant differences are published in the Gibraltar Aeronautical Information Publication GEN Section.

Civil Aviation Publications

The GCAA publishes Civil Aviation Publications to provide detailed guidance to industry on how to achieve compliance with the standards established in the legislation in areas such as airworthiness of aircraft, aircraft operations, air navigation services provision and training, and personnel licensing and training.

Reviews

The GCAA conducts regular reviews of legislation and Civil Aviation Publications and consults with industry to ensure that they remain aligned with the latest Standards that are published by ICAO.

Compliance with Legislation

Compliance with Gibraltar's aviation safety legislation and regulations by organisations and persons is crucial to effective safety management.

Where there is a non-compliance, either by an individual or organisation, the focus of the GCAA will be to establish the root cause of the non-compliance and work with the individual or organisation to bring them back to compliance. Where an immediate risk to safety has been identified the GCAA will take immediate action to eliminate the risk.

The GCAA operates a Just Culture and encourages reporting and questioning in order to identify risks and improve the safety of systems. Accountability does play an important role in safety culture and a Just Culture does not permit acts of gross negligence or a wilful breaking of rules and such actions will be the subject of the strongest application of enforcement policy against organisations or individuals.

State Policies and Procedures

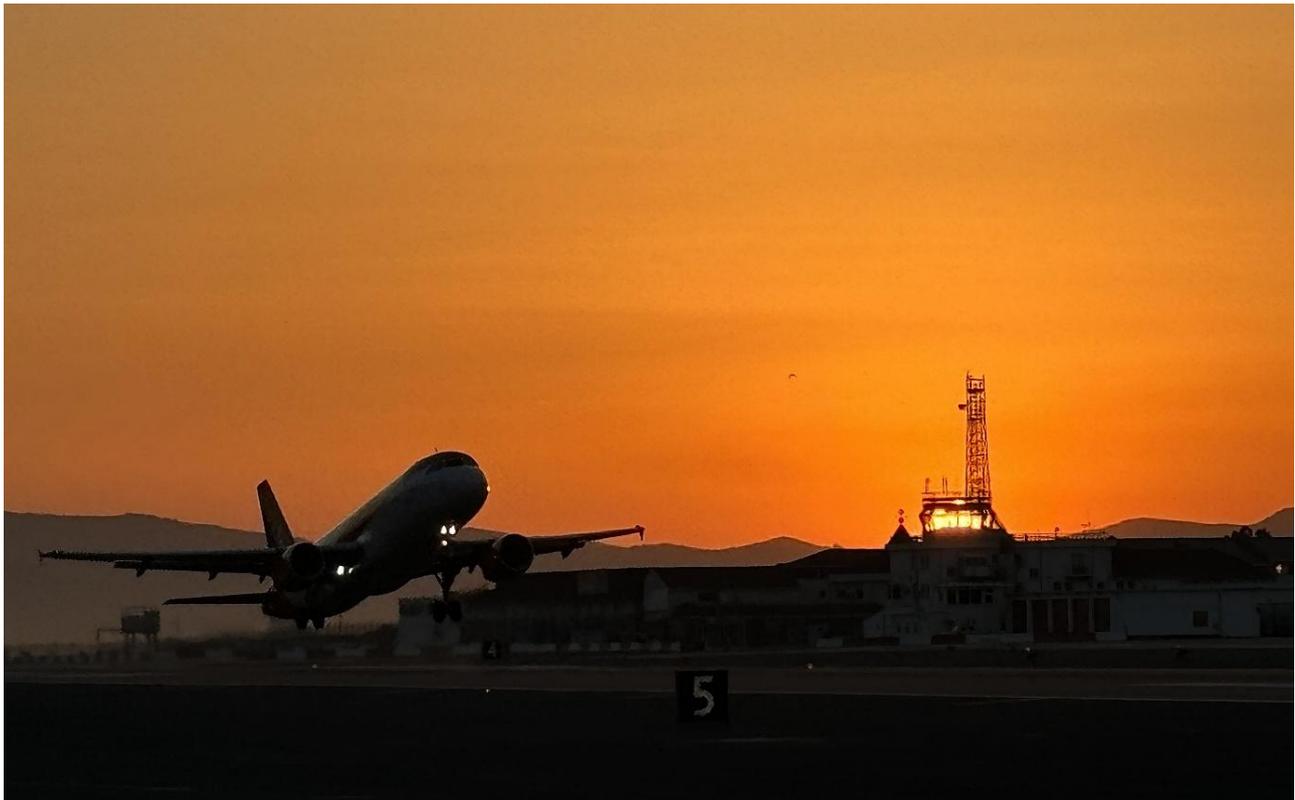
The GCAA has internal policies and procedures on safety oversight, safety management and other areas. These cover areas such as rule development, grant of licences/certificates/ approvals, delegation of powers to inspectors and enforcement personnel, surveillance, investigation and enforcement. They also provide guidance on governance matters such as personal conduct, training and capability building matters as well as administrative matters such as the management of State Letters issued by ICAO.

The GCAA has arrangements in place with the UK CAA for support in matters of oversight and the UK AAIB is appointed by the Minister with responsibility for Civil Aviation as the investigation body for accidents or serious incidents occurring in Gibraltar or affecting Gibraltar registered aircraft.

State Safety Goals, Targets and Indicators

Gibraltar's safety goals are derived from the national aviation safety risks and challenges presented in the NASP. These are based on current and emerging trends shown through detailed analysis of data available to the GCAA through reporting and oversight activity. The NASP is aligned with the ICAO GASP and the European Regional Safety Plans.

Safety goals are described and then divided into safety objectives. These goals represent the desired outcomes being sought to address an identified aviation safety risk. Each safety objective has associated safety performance indicators and safety performance targets used to measure Gibraltar's performance in relation to the safety objective.



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CHAPTER 3

State Safety Agencies and Resources (Critical Element – 3)

The Minister with responsibility for Civil Aviation has the duty of organising, carrying out and encouraging measures for the development and safety of civil aviation and has the responsibility for ensuring the obligations of Gibraltar as extended to apply under the Convention

Gibraltar Civil Aviation Authority

The Director General is responsible for the management of the GCAA.

Section 6 of the Civil Aviation Authority Act includes the following safety functions of the GCAA:

- Promote, develop and regulate safety in civil aviation.
- Perform the regulatory and oversight functions of Gibraltar in accordance with the agreed principles of the convention.
- Be the national competent authority for any applicable annexes of the convention.
- Ensure an adequate system of air navigation and air traffic services in the airspace of Gibraltar.
- Monitor and ensure compliance with all aviation legislation.
- Make recommendations to the Minister on matters related to safety.
- Develop effective oversight and enforcement strategies and programmes to ensure compliance with aviation legislation.
- Issue, renew, suspend, impose conditions or revoke aviation documents
- Conduct surveillance operations, including assessment of safety related decisions taken within the aviation industry.
- Conduct regular and timely reviews of the safety of civil aviation.
- Notify ICAO of any differences to Annexes and ensure that significant differences are published in the Aeronautical Information Publication

Key Posts Within the GCAA

Head of Safety Regulation

The Head of Safety Regulation's responsibility is to manage the technical and administrative functions of the GCAA pertaining to the aircraft registry, specifically in the areas of flight operations and airworthiness, and reports to the Director General.

Head of Domestic Aviation Affairs

Head of Domestic affairs is responsible for safety oversight activity within the territory of Gibraltar and reports to the Director General.

Safety Programme Manager

The Safety Programme Manager is responsible for coordinating activities related to the SSP and NASP and reports to the Director General.

Training Manager

The Training Manager is responsible for the implementation of the required initial and recurrent training through the development and management of a GCAA training programme and reports to the Head of Domestic Aviation.

National Continuous Monitoring Coordinator

Acts as the GCAA interface with ICAO, monitoring and managing change and ensuring interactions with ICAO are up to date.

Safety Review Board

The Safety Review Board (SRB) is chaired by the Director General and has responsibility for safety risk management at state level and to plan, organise, develop, and continuously improve the SSP and NASP in a manner that meets the GCAA's safety objectives. The Safety Review Board evaluates the effectiveness of the Gibraltar SSP to maintain or continuously improve Gibraltar's overall level of safety performance.

Safety Action Group

The SRB may direct that a Safety Action Group be formed to implement specific strategic directives, it is not a permanent body but may be convened as required.

Ministry of Defence (MoD)

The MoD is responsible for aviation safety of military aviation systems. It provides the oversight functions for the CNS, Meteorological and Aerodrome functions domestically in Gibraltar through the MAA. Safety assurance in these areas is provided for civil aviation through a memorandum of understanding with the GCAA which provides for the sharing of safety related information and the conduct of assurance activity by the GCAA.

Qualified Technical Personnel (Critical Element – 4)

The GCAA ensures that all technical personnel tasked with safety oversight responsibilities are suitably qualified, experienced and competent to perform the tasks required of them. The minimum qualification requirements are detailed in the position descriptions of inspectors by the GCAA.

GCAA Inspectors are authorised to conduct inspections and are provided with appropriate tools and transportation as required, funded by the Authority subject to the approval of the Director General. The role may frequently involve travel and subsistence to perform Inspections at locations away from Gibraltar and is an accepted element of the role.

Technical guidance and provision of safety-critical information (Critical Element-5)

The GCAA technical personnel are well supported by technical procedures for each area, such as the Flight Safety Inspector Manual (FSIM), which specify how each task must be approached. This

enables technical personnel to perform their safety oversight functions effectively and in accordance with established procedures in a standardised manner.

The GCAA also provides up-to-date guidance material to support the GCAA technical personnel and the aviation industry in the implementation of relevant regulations. Publications include CAPs, Safety Notices and Information Circulars; a full list of CAPs are placed on the GCAA website.



CHAPTER 4

State Safety Risk Management

Licensing, Certification, Authorisation and Approval Obligations (Critical Element-6)

The GCAA conducts the full range of regulatory functions required for the aviation activities performed in the State. These are supported by documented processes and procedures to ensure that individuals and organisations meet the established requirements before they perform an aviation activity.

The regulatory functions that are carried out by the GCAA include, but are not restricted to, the following services:

Registration of Aircraft

- Airworthiness including
- Type Acceptance Certificate
- Certificate of Airworthiness (including acceptance of STCs)
- Permit to Fly (to another location for maintenance)
- Maintenance and Continuous airworthiness

Operational approvals including

- ICAO 83bis Agreements (Aircraft on Gibraltar Register operating on another State's Air Operating Certificate)
- Minimum Equipment List
- Designated Airspace
- All Weather Operations
- Electronic Flight Bag
- Head-up Displays and Enhanced Vision Systems
- Controller/Pilot Data Link Communications
- Various other operational services

Licensing

- Flight Crew Licensing
- Licence Validations
- Approval of Training Organisations

Safety management Systems Obligations

The GCAA has implemented comprehensive safety management requirements applicable to the Authority itself, as well as to operators and service providers. These include operators, maintenance organisations, air navigation service providers, and training organisations.

The regulations mandate that all relevant operators and service providers implement a Safety Management System (SMS) that is structured in accordance with Annex 19.

Identification of State Level Risks

A state level risk in the context of the Gibraltar aviation system is a risk which, if not sufficiently mitigated will have significant negative impact on the safety of the aviation system. It is the role of the SRB to ensure that such risks are identified swiftly and mitigation planned in a timely manner through the mechanisms available to it.

During the risk identification process the SRB takes into account:

- a) global and regional benchmarking, including from the ICAO Global Aviation Safety Plan and the European Regional Aviation Safety Plan;
- b) developments as reported or briefed through the UK State Safety Board;
- c) safety performance, data and trends, including data from safety reporting systems and surveillance activities;
- d) outcomes of investigations into safety occurrences;
- e) hazard identification and risk mitigation activities;
- f) service providers' safety data and analysis where available.

The most significant risks identified are detailed and mitigated within the NASP, which is updated on a three yearly cycle or as required by circumstance.

Safety Performance Monitoring

GCAA Inspectors work with individual operators and service providers for agreement with the safety performance requirements of their SMS, their Safety Performance Indicators (SPIs) and Targets.

The agreed safety performance of an individual operators' and service providers' SMS must be developed within 12 months of the establishment of the SMS and will be periodically reviewed to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate.

Due to the relatively small nature of the aviation industry in Gibraltar, the GCAA will utilise safety performance indicators from worldwide sources such as the UK CAA and/or EASA and apply these whenever appropriate when determining agreement to an individual operators and service providers' safety performance.

Accident and Incident Investigation

The small size of the Gibraltar aviation system means that accidents and serious incidents are rare. It would be inefficient to retain a team of skilled investigators with no investigation work to occupy them or maintain their skills, for the unlikely possibility that an accident or serious incident may occur at some point. Gibraltar delegates the function of Accident and Incident Investigation to UK Aircraft Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB) through Section 26 of the Civil Aviation Authority Act 2024. The sole objective of any accident and incident investigation process is the prevention of accidents and incidents, and not the apportioning of blame or liability. Further provisions for accident and incident investigation are set out in the Civil Aviation (Investigation of Air Accidents and Incidents) Regulations 2018.

Hazard Identification and Safety Risk Assessment

The small size of the aviation system results in a low volume of aviation activity and a low volume of safety reports submitted. This is likely to remain the case, even with a good safety culture and high reporting rate, simply because the volume of activity remains small. This makes it unwise to base assessment of risks on safety reports alone as it may not present a fully balanced picture.

As well as reports filed within the Gibraltar aviation system, Gibraltar relies on the sharing of information with the UK and other overseas territories through the UK State Safety Board. Gibraltar also participates in the Crown Dependencies forum chaired by the UK Department for Transport, which is held twice a year. Both provide feedback on global and regional trends and inform the

SRB, assisting it in delivering its safety responsibilities and developing the NASP.

The GCAA attends operational meetings with both the Airport and the Ministry of Defence where safety data is shared. Regulatory oversight activity within the Gibraltar system further enhances the ability of the GCAA to identify and assess risks.

Safety Reporting

Mandatory Reporting

Article 4 of retained Regulation (EU) 376/2014 establishes the legal framework for the Mandatory reporting scheme in Gibraltar. The information gathered provides accounts of actual or potential safety hazards and deficiencies and will inform the need for further safety investigation.

The application of a Just Culture is very important to the effectiveness of the scheme and reports received by the GCAA are treated in the strictest confidence, with any information shared in a manner which ensures the reporter cannot be identified.

Voluntary Reporting

Article 5 of retained Regulation (EU) 376/2014 establishes the legal framework for the Voluntary reporting scheme in Gibraltar. Such reports provide a means for an individual to raise safety concerns directly with the authority, bypassing their employer, even where a safety incident has not occurred but they consider that it could occur if an issue is not addressed. Reports are treated in the same manner as Mandatory reports.

Resolution of Safety Issues (Critical Element – 8)

The GCAA may initiate independent surveillance or investigation activities for potential identified non-compliances or issues giving rise to safety related to civil aviation safety in accordance with its enforcement policy contained in its corporate manual. The policy outlines processes for securing compliance with aviation safety regulations. These processes clearly outline the opportunities available to an operator to work with the GCAA to rectify the issue.



CHAPTER 5

State Safety Assurance

General

Safety assurance exists to confirm that the situation that should exist does, in reality, exist as expected. It consists of a series of activities to measure, assess and confirm the situation that supports flight safety is maintained as it should be. These fall into three broad categories:

- Surveillance of operators and service providers' activities to ensure they comply with international safety standards;
- Reports and other measures of operational safety performance; and
- Achievement of actions and projects to fully implement the SSP.

Surveillance Obligations (Critical Element – 7)

Surveillance audits are conducted by designated GCAA inspectors in relation to aircraft registry activity and by UK CAA contracted inspectors in relation to domestic activity. The GCAA conducts surveillance activities by scheduled audits and visits by Inspectors who are qualified to conduct such inspections in their field, such as Flight Operations and Airworthiness.

Surveillance is conducted in accordance with the GCAA procedures to ensure standardisation and co-ordination of audit practices. The schedule of audits is planned by each individual Inspector according to the provided guidance material. These are adjusted to areas of greater need or concern identified by the safety priorities of Gibraltar, the Inspectors expert knowledge and specific factors such as the type of aircraft and operation. Auditing is an integral part of safety assurance and in that respect the GCAA has established a vigorous auditing schedule.

The GCAA regulates the safety of aviation by approving and overseeing the organisations and individuals involved in aviation that fall within its remit. The GCAA will continue to use and develop a performance-based approach to ensure that aviation complies with legislation requirements and that the GCAA safety resources are used efficiently.

With the introduction of SMS for operations, engineering and training, the GCAA will assist operators/organisations to establish a fully functioning SMS and conduct audits on the progress made by those operators and service providers in the creation of SMS Manual, identification of hazards, assessment of risks and safety improvement.

Safety-Data-Driven Targeting of Oversight of Areas of Greater Concern or Need

GCAA procedures recommend that inspectors take a risk-based approach to prioritize audits and surveys towards those areas of greater safety concern or need.

State Safety Performance

The safety performance of the GCAA is constantly reviewed, both internally through the SRB and externally by UK DfT;. factors that will be considered in assessing performance are:

- Achievement of NASP goals

- Compliance with targets set by and agreed with the UK SSB
- Meeting obligations under the ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme
- Hazard identification and risk management
- Change management including organisational, regulatory and operational changes



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CHAPTER 6

State Safety Promotion

Through the GCAA website, internal personnel and the external aviation community are encouraged to focus on the safety priority risk areas. The website promotes awareness of the relevant tools, guidance and training that has been produced by the international community and the guidance provided in the CAPs.

Staff attendance at on-site and online Safety Conferences provides the opportunity to share expert knowledge on aviation safety and learn of new developments. This information is used to aid the active promotion the safety priorities to Service Providers and encourage the sharing of experiences internationally.

Safety notices will be issued when a matter of safety importance is identified by the GCAA, additionally an annual Safety Notice disseminates the main points from analysis of safety data to Inspectors and industry, including safety reports, SAFA Findings and audit findings raised by GCAA Inspectors.

Inspector awareness and development is promoted by safety management elements during recurrent training sessions.

In addition, a positive safety culture is promoted by implementation of safety information protection and through the personal attitudes demonstrated by GCAA representatives in the field. Safety data and information are shared and exchanged with other relevant parties if the appropriate situation arises, always considering the sensitivity of the information and only in line with legislation.

The GCAA promotes awareness of safety and SMS through internal training and internal/external workshops and seminars.