

AIRCRAFT INCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTS

WHY AIPA REPRESENTATION IS IMPORTANT

BY FIRST OFFICER CHRISTIAN ANTONIAK, ACCIDENT ANALYSIS & PREVENTION PORTFOLIO (AAP) CHAIRMAN

The safety interview process can be quite unnerving for crew. If you have been involved in an accident or incident, seeking assistance from an AIPA representative early in the process can help relieve the stress and anxiety of an impending “interview” with QANTAS and/or the ATSB.

AIPA Accident Analysis & Prevention (AAP) representatives are well versed in both the Company and ATSB investigative process. Representatives are able to help guide you after an accident or incident and prepare you for the interview process. Having an AAP representative in lieu of an unqualified support person has been shown to improve the outcome for all parties involved. QANTAS management and the ATSB fully support you having an AIPA AAP representative and feedback from crew who have previously requested assistance from AIPA has, to date, been very positive.

AAP Portfolio representatives are pilot volunteers specifically trained in the investigation and interview process. These members give up their time to assist and accompany members to both Company and ATSB Safety Interviews. AAP representatives are also IFALPA Accredited Accident Investigators (AAI) and have a good rapport with both organisations.

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

Company Safety Interviews

High Level Qantas Safety interviews will be conducted by Qantas Safety and medium level interviews by either Qantas or Fleet Safety. Interviews are conducted in accordance with the Qantas Safety Investigation Policy and Procedures manual and ‘just and fair culture’ matrix.

ATSB Interviews

Under the proviso of the Transport Safety Investigation (TSI) Act 2003, Division 2, you are required to attend an ATSB interview and answer any questions asked by the ATSB investigator (aided by a scribe). Any evidence sourced will be subject to the protections of the TSI Act 2003. Furthermore, the ATSB is a ‘no-blame’ investigator and its sole purpose of investigating is to improve safety.

OBTAINING AIPA REPRESENTATION

It is important to notify AIPA at your earliest convenience of the occurrence regardless of whether an interview has been scheduled or not, this will ensure that your Safety and Technical Officers can provide you with the appropriate support. Should an interview be scheduled, the details including time and place, as well as the names of the investigators who will be present should also be provided to AIPA.

Prior to the interview, your assigned representative will contact you to inform you of your rights, responsibilities and how the interview will be conducted.

Your current AAP representatives are:

- Christian Antoniak, B747
- Chris Watling, A330
- Jason Goldstein, A330
- Richard Tainsh, B747
- Barry Jackson, A380
- Geoff Klouth, A320
- Jason Lipson, B737
- Bruce Van Eyle, A330
- Shane Loney, A330
- Mitchell Roggenkamp, B787
- Marc Ruedegger, A380
- Brian Greeves, S&T Consultant

Under the ATSB MOU and the Qantas FAM 3.3.2.4, you are entitled to representation. Fleet Safety or your Base Manager will advise you that you can take a support person to the Safety Interview. It is strongly recommended you consider bringing a qualified AIPA AAP representative along as they are appropriately trained to assist you during the interview process.

THE PROCESS AND THE OUTCOME

As you are well aware, the aim of safety interviews is to identify the contributing factors leading up to the accident or incident and determine whether safety actions are required to mitigate future occurrences. Recommendations from the investigation may lead to changes to manufacturer or Qantas policy, education and/or improving the training process.

During the interview, it is imperative that you only state the facts i.e. what happened and what were your actions, rather than speculate about what should or could have happened.

AAP representatives do not normally provide any input during the formal safety interview process. However, if crew are feeling unduly stressed or anxious about the process, or observed as such by the representative, they or the representative can ask for a “coffee break”. This provides an opportunity to collect your thoughts and discuss any concerns with your representative before reconvening the interview process.

The feedback from most crew involved in a safety interview is they are pleasantly surprised that everyone involved is very supportive and that the process is “just and fair”.



ALCOHOL AND DRUG TESTING POST ACCIDENT OR SERIOUS INCIDENT (DAMP)

Under CASR Part 99, all crew involved in aircraft accidents and most incidents in Australia, will be required to undergo post incident Mandatory Drug and Alcohol Testing. "Testing must be conducted within 8 hours for alcohol testing and 32 hours for drug testing", although this may depend on location.

Qantas has its own requirements for DAMP testing for personnel involved in Safety Sensitive Areas (SSAs) so those involved in an accident or incident should be prepared to be tested at any time or place.

It is crucial that you ring AIPA if you are required to conduct DAMP testing after an incident to ensure that the QANTAS DAMP process is being correctly followed.

Internationally, the requirement for DAMP testing varies from country to country. Should crew be involved in an event outside of Australia, AIPA will provide guidance to crew in consultation with Qantas and The International Federation of Airline Pilots Association (IFALPA).

For further information, refer to the 'Accident Information for Pilots Contact Directory', and the 'Accident Information for Pilots Guide for Flight Crew Involved in an Accident or Incident'. Both of these documents can be found on the AIPA Website under the Resources/Safety & Technical tab.

CONCLUSION

As emphasised above, it is important that you notify AIPA as soon as possible should you be involved in an accident or incident, regardless of whether an interview is scheduled or not.

An AAP representative can be assigned to you at your request to help understand and navigate the post-accident/incident process. The quicker you inform Qantas and AIPA, the better your Managers, AAP and Welfare representatives will be able to support you in the post-accident or incident phase.

INVOLVED IN AN ACCIDENT OR INCIDENT?

- Follow your responsibilities IAW with FAM 3.4 - Post Occurrence management. The Safety and Welfare of your crew and passengers are your immediate priority.
- Notify QANTAS (IOC) and ATSB in accordance with the requirements of FAM Section 3 - Safety.
- Call the AIPA Accident/Incident Hotline +61 2 8307 7788 (24 hours).
- If you are overseas and unable to reach AIPA, call IFALPA on +44 1 202 653 110 (24 hours).