



## Air Accident Investigation Unit Ireland

# THE INVESTIGATION OF ACCIDENTS AND SERIOUS INCIDENTS TO COMMERCIAL TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT

### INTERVIEWS

Investigators will conduct interviews as soon as possible with those persons who were directly involved in the operation of the flight and anyone else who has information that may assist the investigation in determining the circumstances of the occurrence. Mindful of the stresses associated with being involved in an occurrence, investigators will conduct interviews with sensitivity and, if requested, will allow a support person to be present during the interview (as long as they do not impede the interview). The initial interview is purely a fact gathering exercise in order to determine the direction and extent of the investigation. Follow-up interviews may have to be conducted with specific individuals during the course of the investigation.

### AAIU REPORT FORM (ARF)

Following an occurrence the flight crew will be required to complete an ARF, which will be provided by the IIC. The ARF assists the investigation in gathering factual information pertinent to the operation of the flight. The ARF is confidential to the investigation.

### RECORDERS

The AAIU will retrieve the Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR), the Flight Data Recorder (FDR) and any other recorded information that is available and pertinent to the operation of the flight. Once within the jurisdiction of the AAIU, the recorded material will be confidential to the investigation, however, the affected flight crew may, under the supervision of the AAIU, listen to the CVR.

### THE REPORT

The AAIU aims to publish investigation reports as quickly as possible. However, it must be recognised that it takes time to complete a thorough investigation and to produce a report that will advance safety and meet the expectations of the public and the aviation industry as a whole. The

Report will protect the anonymity of the persons involved in the occurrence.

Initially, a Draft Report is prepared and sent to interested parties to the investigation. Parties will be allowed 28 days (National) and 60 days (International) to comment on the Draft Report and such comments will be considered by the investigation. The Report is finalised and sent again to all interested parties, followed by publication of the Final Report on the AAIU web site.

### SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

If during the course of an investigation, safety deficiencies are identified, the AAIU will issue, 'Interim Safety Recommendations'. Further Safety Recommendations may be issued in the Final Report.

Safety Recommendations are based on the findings of the investigation, and may address deficiencies that do not pertain directly to what is ultimately determined to be the cause of the occurrence. A Safety Recommendation shall in no case create a presumption of blame or liability for an occurrence.

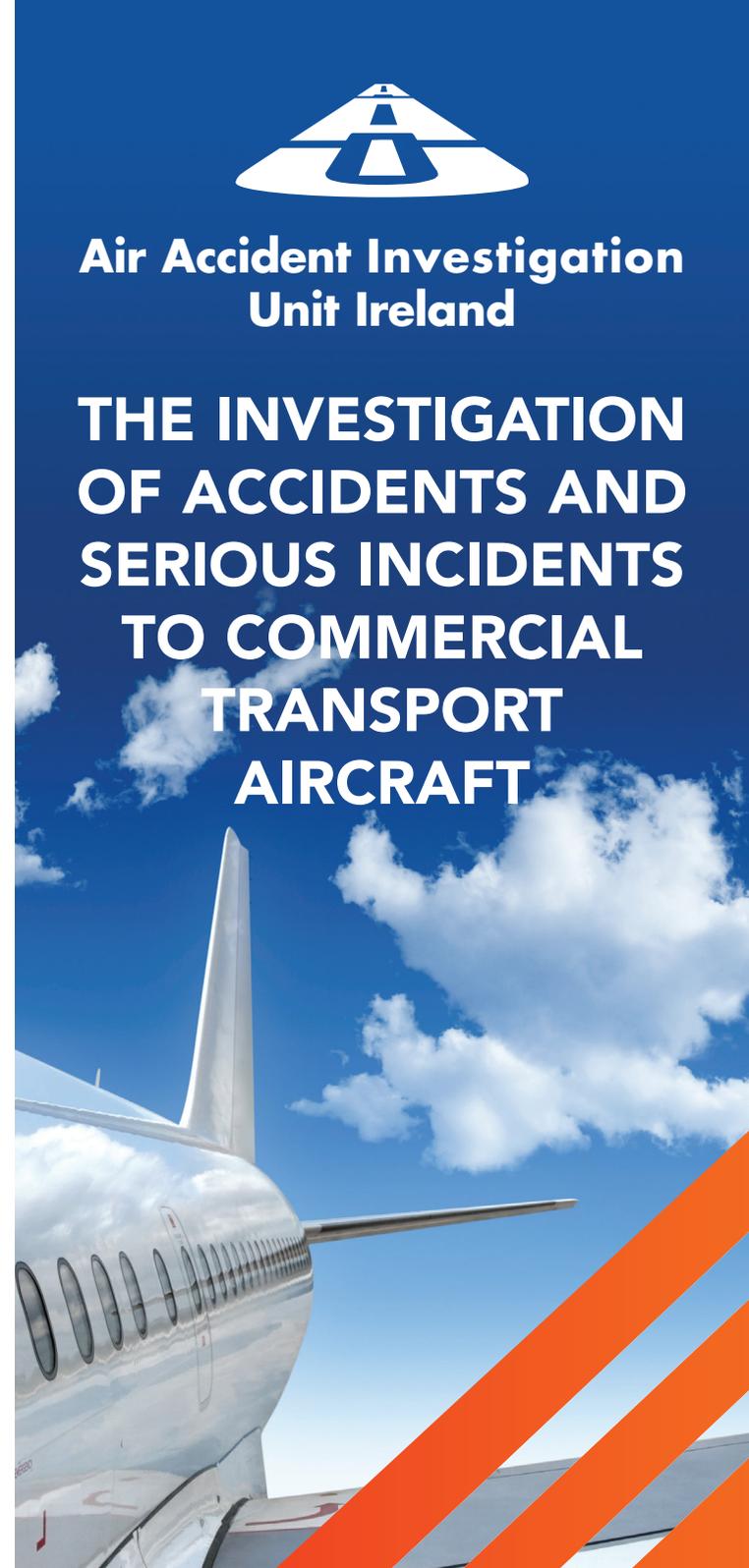
### FURTHER QUESTIONS?

If you require any further information on the AAIU, please refer to our Web Site: [www.aaiu.ie](http://www.aaiu.ie) or contact the AAIU at:



An Roinn Iompair  
Department of Transport

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Department of Transport  
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 @aaiu\_ireland





## THE AIR ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION UNIT

The Air Accident Investigation Unit (AAIU) is an independent part of the Department of Transport and is responsible for the investigation of civil aircraft accidents and serious incidents occurring in or over Ireland. In addition, the AAIU supports foreign states that carry out investigations into Irish registered aircraft abroad.

The AAIU conducts its investigations in accordance with Annex 13 to the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) Convention, Regulation (EU) No 996/2010 and Statutory Instrument No. 460 of 2009. The fundamental purpose of such investigations is to determine the circumstances and causes of these events, with a view to the preservation of life and the avoidance of similar occurrences in the future. It is not the purpose of such investigations to apportion blame or liability.

The AAIU operates a 24 hr/365-day 'On-Call' roster, in order to respond promptly and efficiently to the notification of an aviation occurrence.

## WHEN AN OCCURRENCE TAKES PLACE

On receipt of a notification of an occurrence the 'On-Call' Inspector will, in conjunction with the Chief Inspector, assess the need to initiate an investigation and determine the level of response required.

In the event of an AAIU response, the Chief Inspector will appoint an Investigator-in-Charge (IIC) and will dispatch a 'Go-Team' to the occurrence site. The IIC leads the investigation team, which is normally made up of an Operations Inspector and an Engineering Inspector. The level of response and composition of the 'Go Team' is commensurate with the circumstances and scale of the occurrence to be investigated.

International Convention requires that the State of Occurrence shall forward a notification of an accident or serious incident to the State of Registry, State of the Operator, State of Design, State of Manufacture and ICAO (when the aircraft is over 2,250 kg or is a turbojet powered aeroplane). These states are entitled (on request) to appoint accredited representatives (ACCREPS) to participate in the investigation. The ACCREPS may be accompanied by Advisors and Experts. ACCREPS will remain under the control of the IIC.

Where an occurrence happens to an Irish registered/operated aircraft abroad, it is normal for the State of Occurrence to conduct the investigation. The AAIU, as the State of Registry and/or the State of the Operator, will nominate an Irish ACCREP who will assist the foreign state with their investigation. In certain circumstances, the foreign state may delegate the investigation back to the State of Registry and/or the State of the Operator, in which case the investigation will be conducted by the AAIU.

## POWERS OF AN INSPECTOR OF AIR ACCIDENTS

Inspectors of Air Accidents have statutory powers to take statements from anyone involved, directly or indirectly, with the occurrence under investigation.

They can remove and retain evidence such as wreckage, parts, recordings, manuals, documents and can have access to inspect any aircraft, site, or building for the purpose of the investigation. All Inspectors of Air Accidents carry a Ministerial warrant identifying their appointment.

## THE INVESTIGATION

An on-site field investigation is carried out as soon as practical. The occurrence site will normally be secured by an Garda Síochána or the airport authority pending the arrival of the Investigation Team.

## Field Investigation Phase

The field phase can last from one to several days. During the field phase, Investigators will amongst other things:

- Examine and record the occurrence site
- Collect pertinent information
- Recover evidence including recorders (if available)
- Interview witnesses
- Remove wreckage and/or specific items of wreckage for further examination

For large public transport accidents, all aspects of the occurrence will normally be examined, including, but not limited to; Operations, Flightcrew, Structures, Power-plants, Systems, Meteorology, Air Traffic Control, Performance, Human Factors, Flight Recorders, Medical, Survival and Search and Rescue.

## Post-field Investigation Phase

This phase of the investigation can take many months, depending on the scale and complexity of the occurrence. During the post-field phase, the investigation will inter-alia:

- Examine all pertinent records and documentation;
- Examine selected wreckage items and test selected components and systems
- Download, read and analyse recorders
- Create simulations and reconstruct the flight or event
- Review autopsy and toxicology reports
- Conduct further interviews and briefings