6th August 2024

THE CHIRP CHARITABLE TRUST
AVIATION PROGRAMME REPORT FOR FY2023-24

Executive Summary

1.   CHIRP's role is to manage an independent, voluntary, confidential reporting programme for the aviation and maritime industries. Within this, The UK State Safety Programme acknowledges the CHIRP Aviation Programme as UK's independent confidential voluntary reporting scheme. The CHIRP Aviation Programme compliments the CAA Occurrence Reporting process and other formal reporting systems operated by many UK organisations by providing a means by which individuals are able to raise safety-related issues of concern without being identified to their peer group, management, or the Regulatory Authority.

2.   **Reporting activity**.   During the FY2023-24 period, a total of 489 safety-related aviation reports were received and accepted by CHIRP for further progression. This represents a moderate decrease on the previous year's reporting levels (647 reports), but is considered as being within normal reporting tolerances. Accepting the usual peaks and troughs in reporting flows as the year progressed, this represents an average reporting level of about 40 actionable reports per month to CHIRP.

- Of the safety-related reports, approximately 7% (35) were assessed as high value, 57% (297) were medium value, and 27% (144) were low value.[1]

- In addition to the 489 safety-related reports, 63 other reports were received (approximately 11% of the total), but were rejected as either having no safety value, were about terms and conditions of employment, contained incomplete material that could not be clarified/corroborated due to lack of further contact with the reporter, were general complaints (such as drone-presence complaints), or were matters of personal conflict/clashes with managers/peers.

- There were also 18 Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination and Victimisation (BHDV) reports received in the period, and these were passed to the CAA in disidentified form.

3.   **Themes and Issues**.   In FY2023-24, the top 50% of reporting themes across all aviation sectors were:

- **Duty** (rosters/rostering, rest, length, disruption, discretion, crewing)

- **Pressures/Goals** (commercial/financial constraints, from management/supervision, time, discrepancy between formal and informal practices, personal)

- **Company Policies/Organisation** (operational, safety reporting/culture, bad planning or coordination, corrupted management of business, responsibilities/accountabilities/tasks unclear, discrepancy between policy and execution)

- **Fatigue** (management of, effects of)

- **Relationship Management** (managers, lack of management commitment, planning/organisation of task, delegation/assignment of task, Team/Shift/Watch)

- **Procedures** (application of by third-party, inadequate, knowledge of, superceded by political/ reputational priority)

It is worthy of note that, historically, 'Duty' and 'Fatigue' have usually represented the two most prominent issues reported to CHIRP across all sectors by a large margin. This year though, 'Fatigue' was overtaken by 'Pressures/goals' as the second-most reported issue, followed by 'Company Policies'. Allied to an increased showing for 'Relationship Management', 'Procedures' and 'Internal Communications', there are indications of stresses in the system that may lead to people taking short-cuts to meet the task and a sense of distrust of management by the workforce due to their perception that the company are attempting to get a quart out of a pint pot. This loss of trust was also manifest in comments about lack of Just Culture in some companies where some reporters were concerned about reporting issues for fear of a negative reaction by line managers.

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[1] High   The report is an important safety issue in its own right and should be individually raised and championed with safety agencies as a priority.

Medium The report contains valuable safety concerns that should be raised in association with similar reports on this issue during routine liaison with appropriate safety agencies.

Low   The report has some safety value, and may have utility as overall background context in association with other safety issues.

4. **Outputs and messaging**. Recognising CHIRP's unique and important contribution to the UK safety system in providing safety data and intelligence that might not otherwise be available, our outputs in relation to our desired strategic outcomes included the following elements.

a. **Strategic Outcome No1 – Better leadership, awareness, and attitude towards safety issues**. CHIRP Aviation's role is to remind organisations of best practices, highlight potential risks, and provide comment on company policies or processes that might be having unintended consequences. Areas of focus this year have been on company policies such as fatigue management, absence management, and imposed operating pressures/goals that might induce normalisation of deviation from established procedures due to people taking short-cuts. Sub-optimal workforce/management relationships and internal communications have also been key themes in the year: in short, it appears to CHIRP that there was a damaging reduction in trust between the workforce and their line management as a result of pandemic restructuring, and this trust has yet to be fully repaired. Without trust there can be no Just Culture.

b. **Strategic Outcome No2 – Improved safety culture by changing behaviours, so that practices, processes, and procedures are as safe as they can be**. Of the 489 reports accepted by the Aviation Programme, 65% were from Cabin Crew, 20% from flight crew, 5% from General Aviation (GA) and 5% from engineering. Notably this year, at the request of British Skydiving, the CHIRP Aviation Programme initiated a skydiving reporting portal aimed at providing this community with an ability to make confidential reports. Also, aviation projects to investigate confidential reporting in the emerging Advanced Air Mobility and Space sectors were initiated, with the intention of establishing reporting programmes for these areas in the latter part of FY2024-25.

c. **Strategic Outcome No3 – Adoption of safety outcomes identified in CHIRP reports by regulators, managers and individuals**. CHIRP Aviation received numerous reports over the year about sickness, fatigue and rostering policies. Regulations are clear in stating that crews should only operate when fit to do so but financial and perceived management pressures can conspire to tempt crews to operate when they should not. Although confidentiality concerns limit the ability to reference many specific outcomes, the CHIRP Aviation Programme has successfully highlighted several fatigue, rostering and absence management concerns to industry and the regulator. CAA Flight Operations staff were able to conduct focused oversight activities that resulted in some companies modifying their behaviours, policies and processes as a result. In FY2023-24 CHIRP activities contributed to two notable CAA initiatives: firstly, highlighting to operators that the use of Commander's Discretion was not well understood; and, secondly, the initiation of a CAA post-BREXIT, post-implementation review into Flight Duty Periods (FDP)/Flight Time Limitations (FTL) to review the assumptions within the whole UK rostering and FTL/FDP regulatory document set in order to determine whether there are any areas that could be better defined, harmonised or re-evaluated now that we are no longer part of the European Aviation Safety Authority (EASA) regulatory regime.

5. **Future Planning**.

a. **Specific initiatives**.

i. CHIRP's FY2023-24 funding grant from CAA included £20K to investigate and initiate the development of confidential reporting programmes for the emerging Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) and Space sectors. Progress with both sectors has been slow, not helped by limited resource at CHIRP. Circa £19K of the original £20K funding remains ring-fenced for these activities, and we intend to engage an appropriately experienced contractor to take these areas forward towards the end of 2024.

ii. Confidential reporting in the Engineering and Ground Handling & Security (GHS) sectors is sporadic at best. Our GHS Programme Manager is making inroads through extensive networking that has resulted in some promising increases in reports but this needs to be further exploited. We will continue to engage in networking opportunities in both the Engineering and GHS sectors as we try to embed CHIRP in the mindset of these communities.

iii. Likewise, although GA reporting provides a steady stream of reports to CHIRP this probably under-represents the incidents and lessons that are likely to have actually occurred. We aspire to replicate the CHIRP Maritime 'CHIRP Ambassador' initiative by setting up regional aviation champions who will promote CHIRP within clubs and GA organisations as a voluntary activity (CHIRP paying expenses to cover any administrative or travel costs).

iv.   British Skydiving approached CHIRP with their desire to initiate a confidential reporting strand and an interim process was enabled. We will monitor report flows to determine whether a more integrated fully-formed Skydiving reporting process will be cost-effective.

b.   **Global objectives**.   In addition to maintaining our core reporting activities, our common future planning themes include: achieve greater penetration of our mission; become a lead participator in delivering safety-first thinking to our sectors; encourage the use of CHIRP as a forum for debating safety issues emerging from our reports and associated analyses; maintain relevance and effectiveness; encourage a greater volume of actionable reports; improve marketing and communications posture including our brand and digital footprint; make greater use of academic input to generate *Insight* articles; continue to upgrade databases to ensure excellence in enabling and tracking reports.

Background

6.   The CHIRP Charitable Trust's role is to manage an independent, voluntary, confidential reporting programme for the aviation and maritime industries. Whilst there are clear environmental differences between the aviation and maritime programmes, there are also common themes related to Human Factor actions that impact safety. Our Charitable Objects are to:

a.   Gather information on the circumstances of incidents and accidents involving aviation and maritime modes of transportation through a confidential reporting system for the collection of Human Factors safety-related issues, to analyse data and identify trends; and,

b.   Advise interested bodies on Human Factors issues relevant to air and maritime transport safety with the aim of the preservation of human life and the protection of the environment.

7.   Within these Charitable Objects, our desired strategic outcomes are:

a.   Better leadership, awareness and attitude towards safety issues;

b.   Improve the safety culture by changing behaviours, so that practices, processes and procedures are as safe as they can be; and,

c.   Safety outcomes identified in CHIRP reports are adopted by regulators, managers and individuals.

8.   CHIRP's mission is to improve aviation and maritime safety and build a Just Culture by managing an independent and influential programme for the confidential reporting of Human Factors-related safety issues. We do this by:

a.   Receiving and considering reports that might not otherwise be submitted through formal reporting processes;

b.   Analysing the data to identify issues and trends; and,

c.   Disseminating safety-related reports and trends that we consider will be of public benefit.

9.   The UK State Safety Programme acknowledges the CHIRP Aviation Programme as UK's independent confidential voluntary reporting scheme. Broadly speaking, CHIRP provides a vital safety net as another route to promote change when all else fails, and for collecting reports that would otherwise have gone unwritten with associated safety concerns therefore not being reported. Reports generally fall into two broad categories: those indicative of an undesirable trend; and those detailing discrete safety-related events, occurrences or issues. We also often act as an 'Agony Aunt' for those who seek our 'wise' counsel or just want altruistically to share with others lessons from what may not have been their finest hour. Beyond that, we often provide information and point people to the right sources/contact points for them to resolve their own issues and, depending on the concern and our resource availability, we also champion causes and act as an advocate or the 'conscience' of industry and the regulator where we can.

10.   Information explaining CHIRP's role and function is communicated to aviation stakeholders within various CAA publications such as the Skyway Code, Safety Sense Leaflet 32 Occurrence Reporting for General Aviation, CAP2521 and, more formally, within NATS AIC P 007/2024 Effective: 8 Feb 2024.

Funding & Resources

11.   The CHIRP Aviation Programme is funded entirely from a CAA grant, whereas its sister Maritime Programme is funded by contributions from the maritime industry and organisations that exist to promote the safety of seafarers, passengers and others working in maritime related industries. The terms of each grant forbid cross-funding from the CHIRP Aviation to Maritime programmes and vice versa, but both programmes contribute 50:50 to central management overheads; separation of funds being checked during an annual audit.

12.   **CHIRP Aviation Secretariat**.   The CHIRP Aviation Programme is delivered by a lean secretariat of part-time employees and contractors comprising the equivalent of 2.2 full-time employees (FTE):

Steve Forward   **Director Aviation** (Aviation Programme policy/management, Commercial Flight Crew, General Aviation, ATC, Display Flying) – 0.8FTE
Jennifer Curran   **Cabin Crew Programme Manager** (Cabin Crew, Aviation Programme admin) – 0.8FTE
Phil Young   **Engineering Programme Manager** (Engineering) – 0.2FTE
Rupert Dent   **Drone/UAS Programme Manager** (Drone/UAS) – 0.2FTE
Ernie Carter   **Ground Handling Programme Manager** (Ground Handling & Security) – 0.2FTE

13.   **CHIRP Advisory Boards**. Advisory Boards assist the Programme Director and Managers by providing subject matter expertise when reviewing reports. There are four Aviation Advisory Boards which cover:

   a.   Air Transport operations including Flight Crew, Air Traffic Control, Engineering, Ground Handling & Security.
   b.   Cabin Crew issues.
   c.   General Aviation activities.
   d.   Drone operations.

The Advisory Boards are comprised of volunteer subject matter expert panellists who contribute significantly to the Charity's aims through their deep technical expertise in their respective fields. They assist in the determination and resolution of issues raised in reports and, through the Directors, provide the Trustees with feedback on the associated programme's performance.

Function

14.   Although we recommend to all reporters to CHIRP that their Company/CAA Occurrence Reporting processes should always be the default method for reporting incidents, there are circumstances when a reporter may not wish to report through the normal process for personal reasons (for example if they fear that their identification will result in retribution) or if they have been unable to achieve a resolution through normal channels. The CHIRP Aviation Programme compliments the CAA Occurrence Reporting process and other formal reporting systems operated by many UK organisations by providing a means by which individuals are able to raise safety-related issues of concern without being identified to their peer group, management, or the Regulatory Authority. CHIRP Aviation Programme reporting is divided into 4 key streams that match the Advisory Board structure:

   a.   Air Transport (AT) reporting incorporates safety reports from professional flight crew, ATCOs, FISOs, licensed aircraft engineers, ground handling staff and security staff;
   b.   Cabin Crew (CC) reporting similarly provides an independent means by which cabin crew may report safety-related issues;
   c.   General Aviation (GA) reporting is encouraged with the principal objective of alerting the CAA to safety trends and to disseminate safety lessons identified from reported incidents as widely as possible among the GA communities;
   d.   Drone/UAS (DUAS) reporting fulfils the same function for drone pilots as the AT and GA programmes provide for manned aviation.

15.   After discussion within their associated Advisory Boards, reports with educational themes and identified value for wider dissemination are then published in the respective Air Transport, General Aviation, Cabin Crew, Drone/UAS and occasional Ground Handling & Security FEEDBACK newsletters. In essence, there is one Aviation FEEDBACK newsletter published per month, with each type have a quarterly publication cycle. In addition to email and hard-copy distribution (for GA and Cabin Crew versions only), all our FEEDBACK newsletters are posted to the CHIRP Aviation website, highlighted using the CAA SkyWise alerting system, and are also accessible using the CHIRP App. We also run media campaigns on social media to publicise our work and report outcomes; specifically, using Facebook, LinkedIn and X.

16.   In return for CAA funding, and in addition to CHIRP's own safety promotion activities, CHIRP submits a monthly report to the CAA Safety & Business Delivery Department detailing received report subjects and matters of interest. Thematic, consolidated entity reports are also routinely sent to the CAA throughout the year in order to provide processed, anonymised intelligence relating to entities under review within the CAA IRM cycle. In addition, regular liaison meetings are conducted with CAA Head of Flight Operations and Head of Aerodromes and ATM. *Ad hoc* issues and whistleblowing reports are passed to the CAA as matters arise so that timely action can be taken as appropriate. Finally, CHIRP Director Aviation attends SARG SRC

meetings in order to pass on any relevant concerns and to understand CAA emerging policy, intent and matters of the moment.

17.   In addition to these more specific CAA/CHIRP interactions, CHIRP also provides a portal for reporting Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination and Victimisation (BHDV) within aviation in UK. CHIRP staff do not have the expertise or competences to investigate such reports and so the information is simply collated and passed to the CAA in disidentified form so that CAA staff can consider whether any intervention might be warranted.

FY2023-24 Reporting Activity

18.   Annual reporting levels vary in response to contemporary events, company culture and policies, and compliance with regulation. In overview, FY2023-24 saw the first full year of flying since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated removal of general travel and social restrictions in UK. Commercial aviation activities continued their recovery over the twelve months, and generally returned to pre-pandemic levels of flying towards the end of the reporting period, albeit with some interruptions in scheduling in Summer 2023 due to pressures on crew and resource availability. For its part, General Aviation (GA) flying was much curtailed during Winter 2023/Spring 2024 due to some rather inclement weather associated with a very wet period.

19.   During the FY2023-24 period, a total of 489 safety-related aviation reports were received and accepted by CHIRP for further progression (not including Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination and Victimisation (BHDV) reports which are dealt with separately as a special case activity). This represents a moderate decrease on the previous year's reporting levels but is considered as being within normal reporting tolerances, especially given that FY2022-23 likely represented an artificially increased level of reporting due to immediate COVID/post-COVID resourcing pressures and concerns. The number of reports received and accepted in the different sectors of reporting for the last 5 years are shown in the table and chart below. COVID-19 years are shaded red in the table and represent skewed figures due to the lack of flying in those years and so the table also includes the pre-COVID 5-year averages for comparison. Note that BHDV reporting was only introduced in the latter stages of FY2021-22 and was not fully established across all sectors until FY2022-23.

20.   In addition to the 489 safety-related reports, 63 other reports were received in FY2023-24 (approximately 11% of the total received), but were rejected as either having no safety value, were about terms and conditions of employment, contained incomplete material that could not be clarified/corroborated due to lack of further contact with the reporter, were general complaints (such as drone-presence complaints), or were matters of personal conflict/clashes with managers/peers. There were also 18 BHDV reports received in the period, and these were passed to the CAA in disidentified form.

Report Sector	5yr Ave (2014-19)	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24
Cabin Crew	635	560	71	203	431	317
Flight Crew	86	118	39	36	136	98
General Aviation	38	44	20	24	25	25
Engineering	18	18	17	8	21	25
ATC	10	12	5	1	13	10
Ground Handling & Security	7	11	5	6	12	5
Drone	0	4	3	4	9	9
Display	2	2	0	0	0	0
Total	797	769	160	282	647	489
BHDV	0	0	0	0	16	18

Reports received and accepted by CHIRP Aviation in FY2022-23 by sector
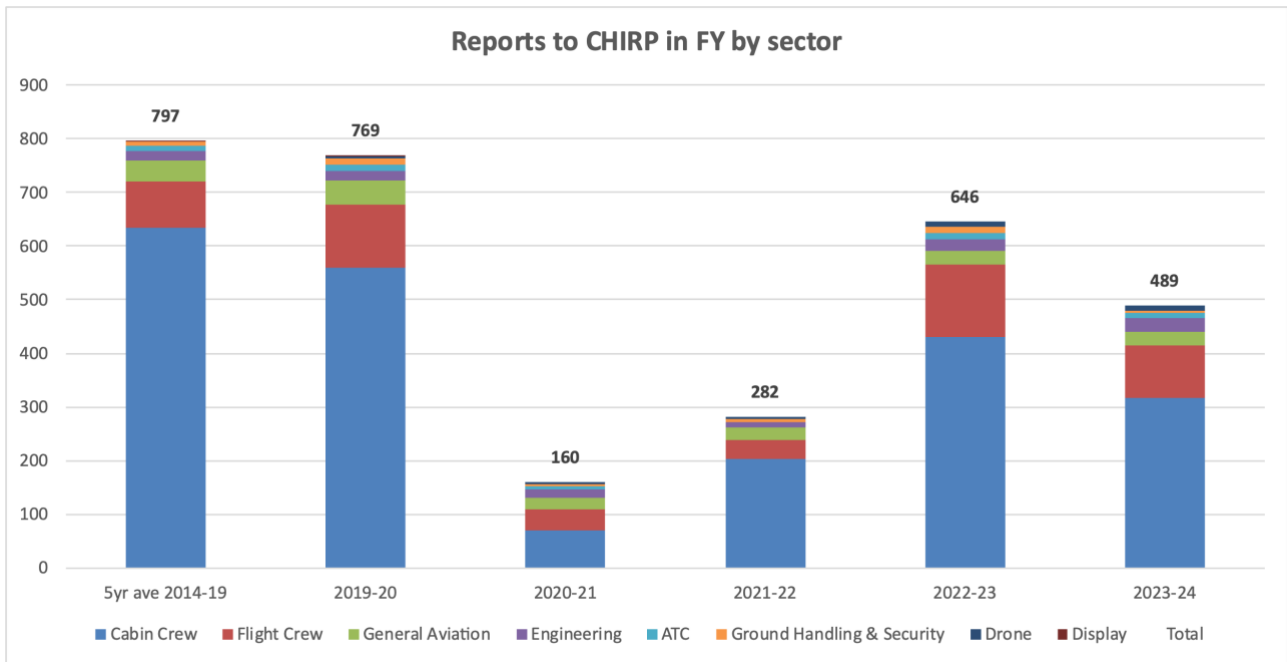
Reports to CHIRP in FY2022-23 by Sector

21.   Accepting the usual peaks and troughs in reporting flows as the year progressed, the monthly report chart below shows an average reporting level of about 40 actionable reports per month to CHIRP. Of note, the winter months were particularly sparse compared to historic norms, but we are aware that during this period there were several pay negotiations ongoing with commercial airlines and reporters tend to hold-fire during such times as they await the outcomes. Winter is also historically a quiet period for GA flying, particularly so this year due to inclement weather, and so it is usual that reporting levels from the GA sector are normally curtailed until the better weather of Spring/Summer.
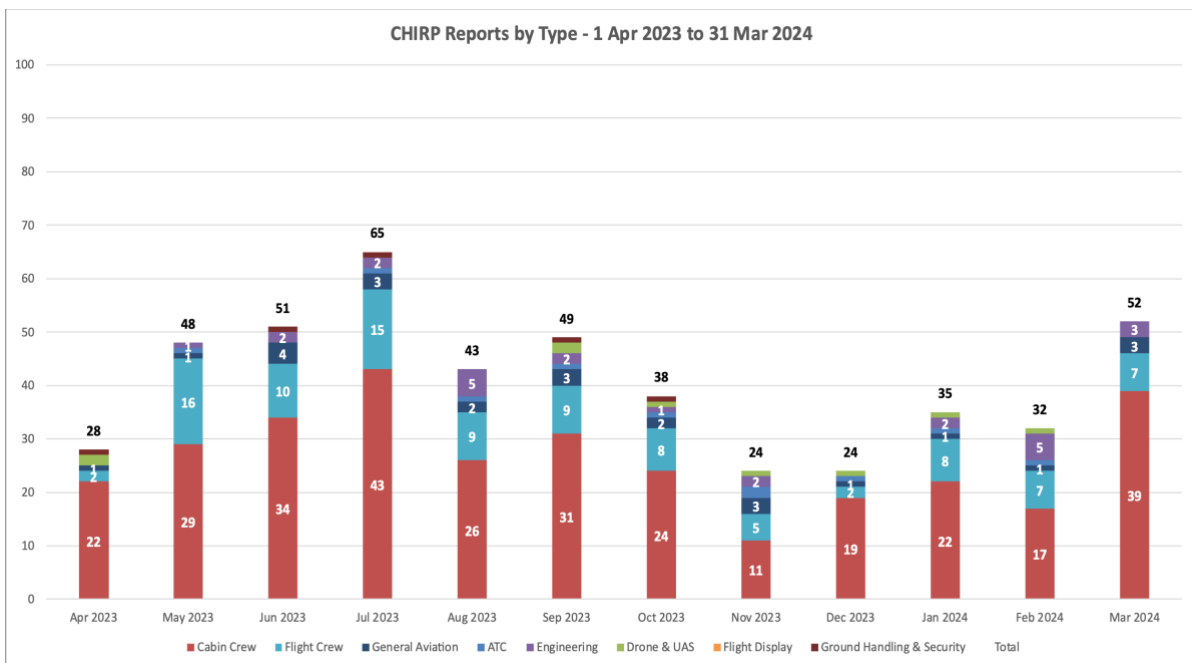

Chart 2. Reports received and accepted by CHIRP Aviation in FY2023-24 by sector and month

22.   Within our process, CHIRP classifies each received report in terms of its safety value as interpreted by the relevant programme manager. Reports are classified as high, medium, low or non-CHIRP in accordance with the qualitative assessment guidance below.

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High	The report is an important safety issue in its own right and should be individually raised and championed with safety agencies as a priority.				
Medium	The report contains valuable safety concerns that should be raised in association with similar reports on this issue during routine liaison with appropriate safety agencies.				
Low	The report has some safety value, and may have utility as overall background context in association with other safety issues.				
Non-*CHIRP*	The report has no safety content/value or is not *CHIRP* business (such as industrial disputes, terms of employment, public health issues, personality clashes or third-party reports of breaches of aviation law).				

23.   The associated report values for FY2023-24 are shown in the table below. As can be seen from the table and charts, of the received reports, approximately 7% (35) were assessed as high value, 57% (297) were medium value, and 27% (144) were low value.

Report Value	Flight Crew	Cabin Crew	General Aviation	Engineering	ATC	Drone	Total
High	12	10	4	2	2	5	35
Medium	64	192	19	17	3	2	297
Low	21	112	2	4	5		144
Non-CHIRP	4	39	4			1	48

Aviation report value - FY2023-24

Aviation report value percentage split - FY2023-24
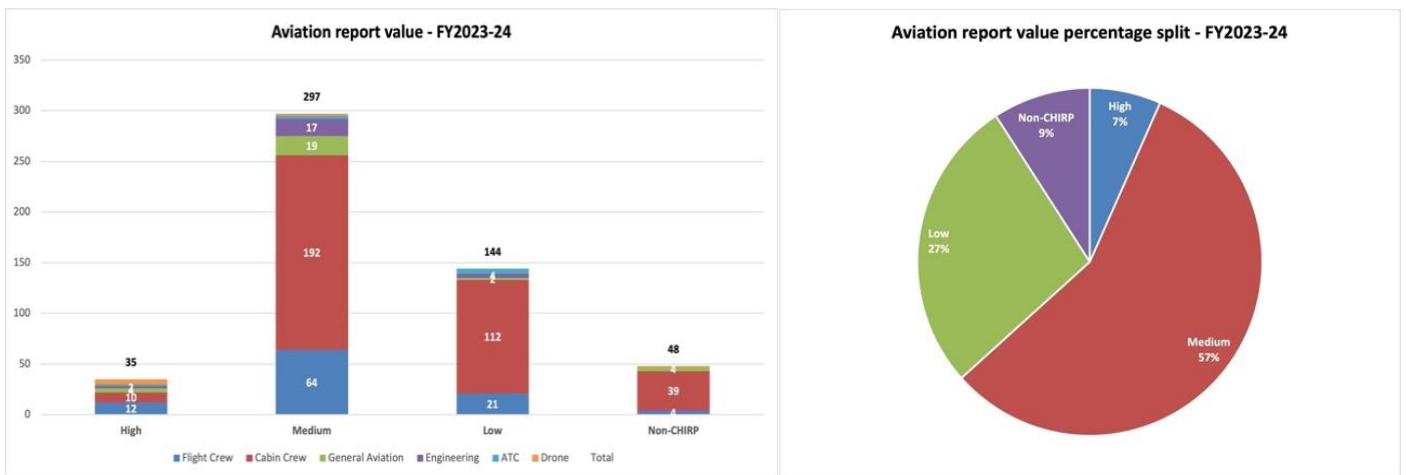
FY2023-24 Reporting Themes & Issues

24.   CHIRP Aviation conducts statistical and thematic analysis based on 2 main taxonomies – an internal CHIRP Human Factors 'Key Issues' taxonomy and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) ADREP[2] taxonomy. The former provides a high-level view of the overall Human Factors themes and trends, whilst the ADREP system provides greater granularity of insights in some respects. Both sets of statistics add their own value in understanding the underlying issues but broadly reflect the same overall themes. In reviewing the statistics, it should be noted that a single report may have multiple taxonomy entries, hence the numerical counts shown exceed the number of reports received. Also, care should be taken when extrapolating some statistics due to the small numbers of reports in some sectors that can skew interpretations.
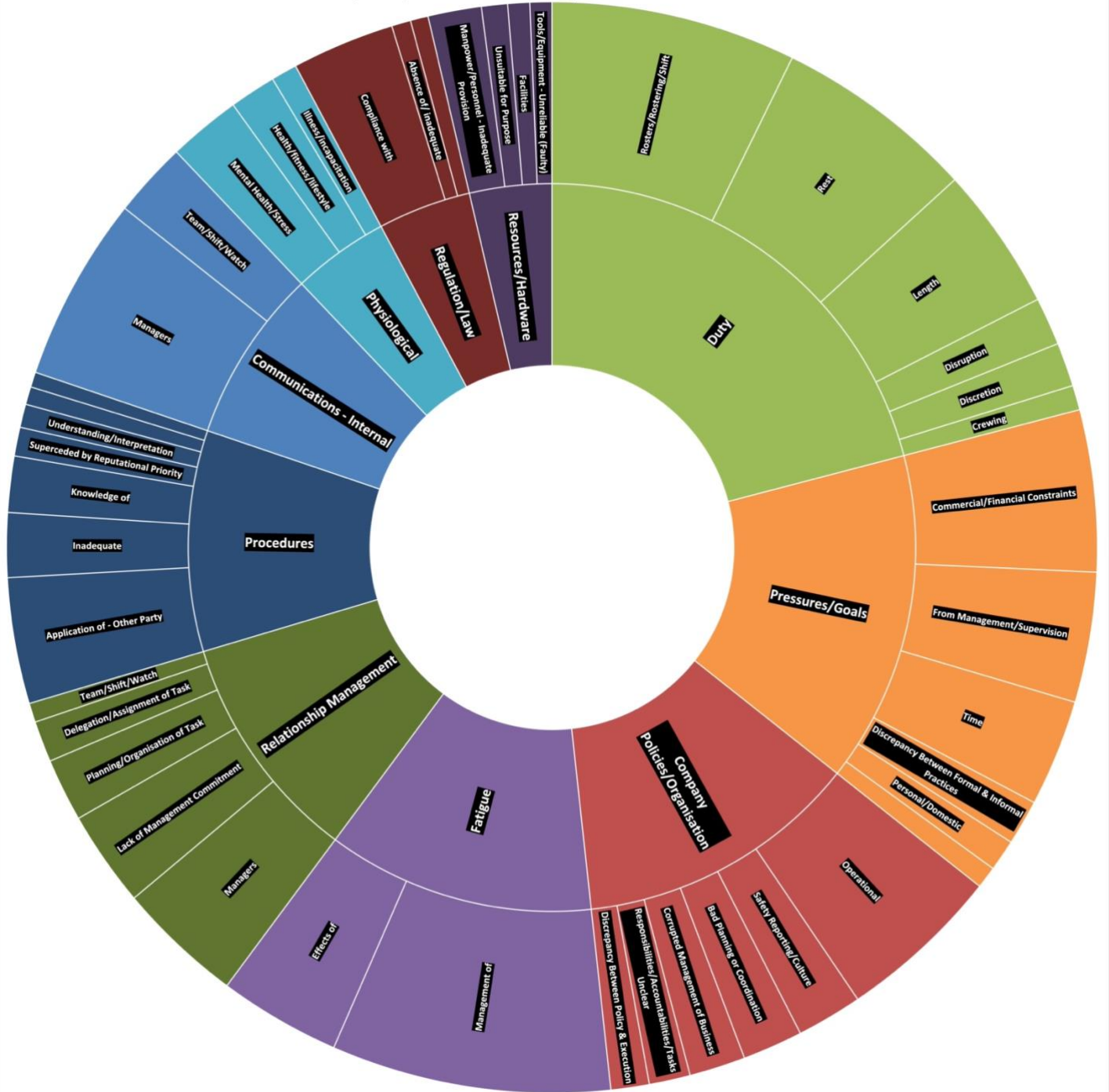
25.   In FY2023-24, the top 50% of reporting themes across all aviation sectors were:

- **Duty** (rosters/rostering, rest, length, disruption, discretion, crewing)
- **Pressures/Goals** (commercial/financial constraints, from management/supervision, time, discrepancy between formal and informal practices, personal)
- **Company Policies/Organisation** (operational, safety reporting/culture, bad planning or coordination, corrupted management of business, responsibilities/accountabilities/tasks unclear, discrepancy between policy and execution)
- **Fatigue** (management of, effects of)
- **Relationship Management** (managers, lack of management commitment, planning/organisation of task, delegation/assignment of task, Team/Shift/Watch)
- **Procedures** (application of by third-party, inadequate, knowledge of, superceded by political/ reputational priority)
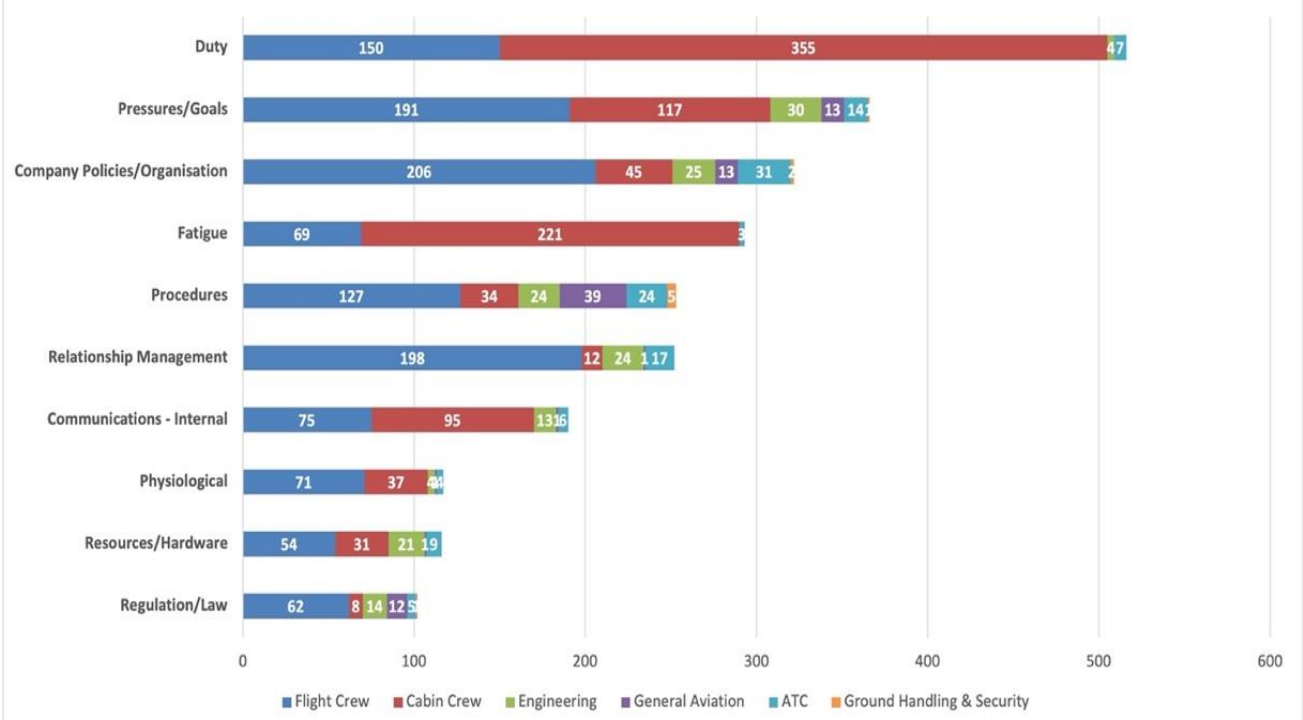
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[2] ADREP https://www.icao.int/safety/airnavigation/aig/pages/adrep-taxonomies.aspx accessed 25/7/2024.

These themes are illustrated in more granularity in the charts below, which also show the top Key Issues and ADREP codes differentiated by aviation sector. Within the sunburst chart, Key Issues are in the inner ring and their respective subcategories are in the outer ring. It is worthy of note that, historically, 'Duty' and 'Fatigue' have usually represented the two most prominent issues reported to CHIRP across all sectors by a large margin. This year though, 'Fatigue' was overtaken by 'Pressures/goals' as the next most reported issue, followed by 'Company Policies'. Allied to an increased showing for 'Relationship Management', 'Procedures' and 'Internal Communications', there are indications of stresses in the system that lead to people taking short-cuts to meet the task and a sense of distrust of management by the workforce due to their perception that the company are attempting to get a quart out of a pint pot. This loss of trust was also manifest in comments about lack of Just Culture in some companies as some reporters were concerned to raise their heads above the parapet and report issues for fear of a negative reaction by line managers.
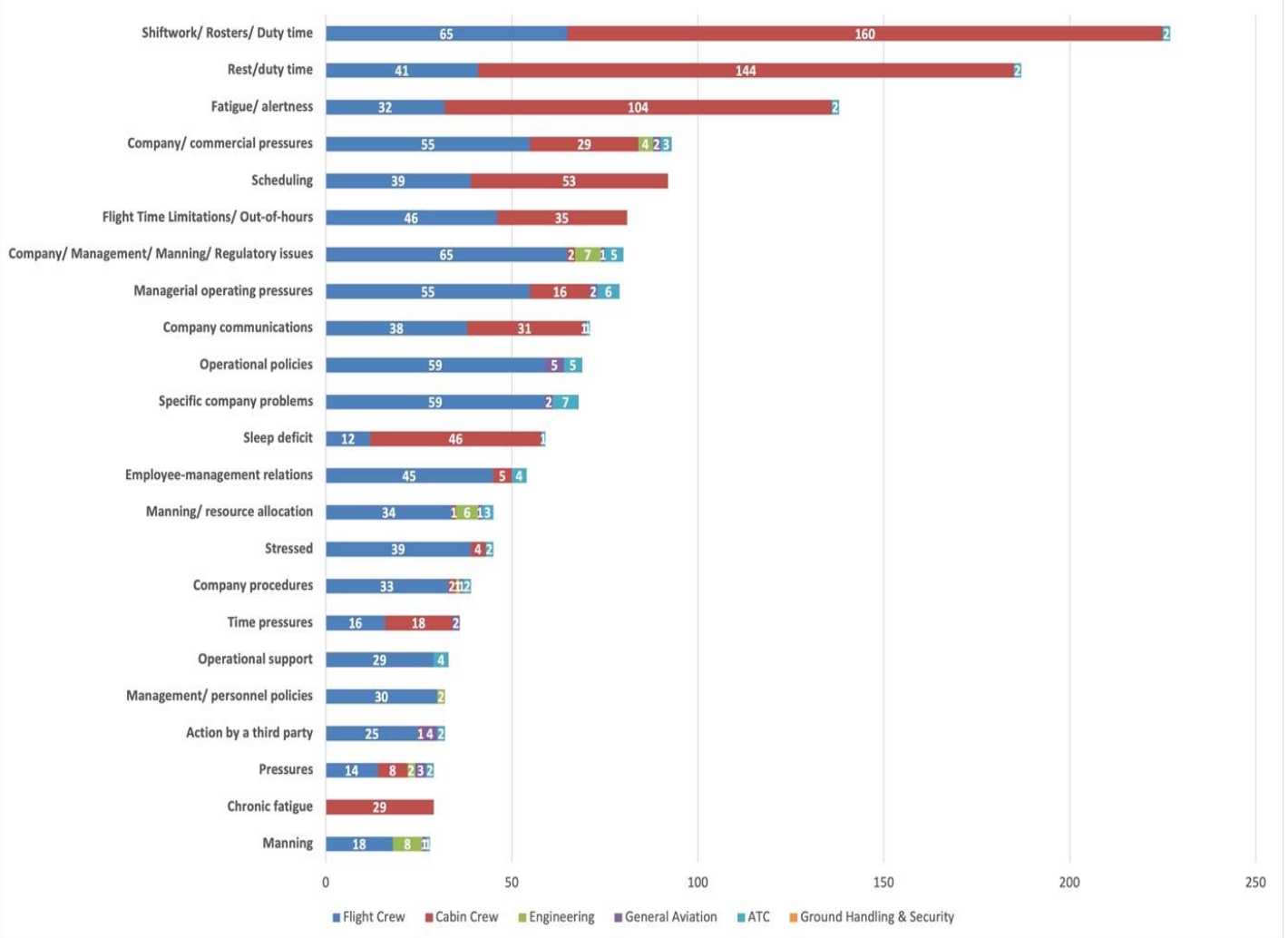

FY2023-24 - Top-10 Key Issues and sub-issues reported to CHIRP across all aviation sectors

Top-10 Key Issues reported to CHIRP in FY2023-24

Key Issue	Flight Crew	Cabin Crew	Engineering	General Aviation	ATC	Ground Handling & Security
Duty	150	355			47	
Pressures/Goals	191	117	30	13	14	1
Company Policies/Organisation	206	45	25	13	31	2
Fatigue	69	221			3	
Procedures	127	34	24	39	24	5
Relationship Management	198	12	24	1	17	
Communications - Internal	75	95	13		16	
Physiological	71	37	4		4	
Resources/Hardware	54	31	21	19		
Regulation/Law	62	8	14	12	5	

Top-20 ADREP Codes reported to CHIRP in FY2023-24

| ADREP Code	Flight Crew	Cabin Crew	Engineering	General Aviation	ATC	Ground Handling & Security
Shiftwork/ Rosters/ Duty time	65	160			2	
Rest/duty time	41	144			2	
Fatigue/ alertness	32	104			2	
Company/ commercial pressures	55	29	4	2	3	
Scheduling	39	53				
Flight Time Limitations/ Out-of-hours	46	35				
Company/ Management/ Manning/ Regulatory issues	65	2	7	1	5	
Managerial operating pressures	55	16	2	6		
Company communications	38	31	1	1		
Operational policies	59	5	5			
Specific company problems	59	2	7			
Sleep deficit	12	46	1			
Employee-management relations	45	5	4			
Manning/ resource allocation	34	1	6	13		
Stressed	39	4	2			
Company procedures	33	2	1	2		
Time pressures	16	18	2			
Operational support	29	4				
Management/ personnel policies	30	2				
Action by a third party	25	1	4	2		
Pressures	14	8	2	3	2	
Chronic fatigue		29				
Manning	18	8	1			

9

26.   Whilst the overall statistics shown provide an interesting aggregated perspective across all sectors of aviation reporting, the predominance of some sectors can mask the relative importance of issues within other less-reported sectors. Detailed Key Issue/subcategory sunburst charts for each sector are therefore shown at Annex A to show what is being reported in each sector, and headline 'Top-10 Key Issue charts' are shown within the narrative for each sector below to showcase their respective important themes.

a.   **Cabin Crew Reporting**.   Cabin Crew reporting levels have historically dominated CHIRP report flows and this was the same in FY2023-24. Cabin crew representation is high partly because the cabin crew qualification process is much less steeped in regulatory requirements than the other sectors and so many of the reporters are simply seeking information on regulations and the legality of rostered duties.   In FY2023-24, Cabin Crew primarily reported concerns about: rosters, rest and duty length; fatigue management and the effects of fatigue; commercial/financial constraints, time pressures and pressures from management/supervisors; and internal management communications and communications within their team/shift/watch.


Top-10 Cabin Crew Key Issues reported to CHIRP in FY2023-24
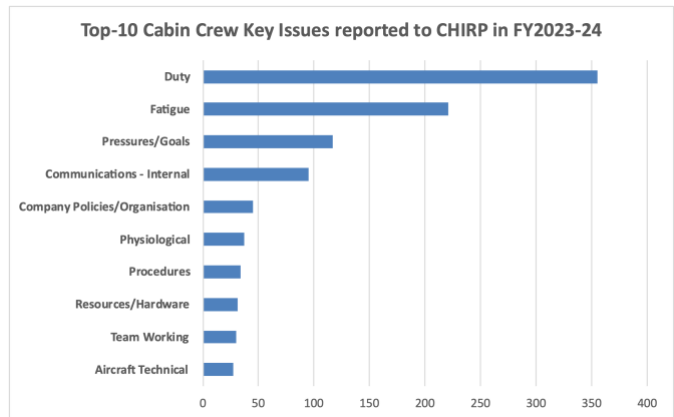
b.   **Flight Crew Reporting**.   Flight Crew reported a generally broader set of issues which, although embracing those of Cabin Crew, rated company operational policies as their main concern; followed closely by management relations, communications and perceived lack of management commitment; and then a fairly even split between rostering, application of procedures by third-parties, pressures from management, management and effects of fatigue, and pressures from commercial/financial constraints.


Top-10 Flight Crew Key Issues reported to CHIRP in FY2023-24
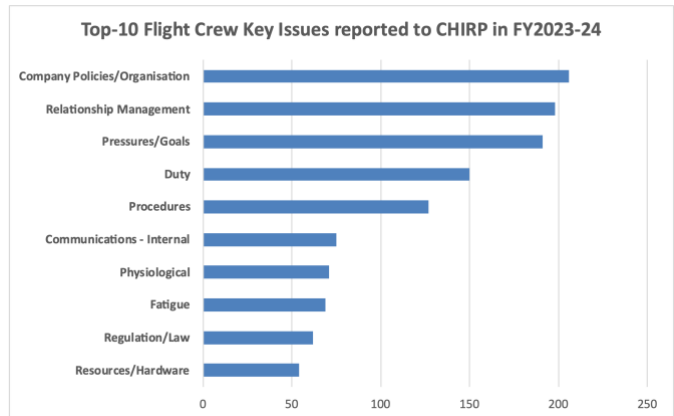
c.   **General Aviation Reporting**.   General Aviation reports were once more primarily focused on *mea culpa* narratives involving: complacency; poor airmanship; reduced situational awareness in the air; insufficient awareness of risks; application of procedures by third-parties; poor knowledge of procedures and poor communications between flight crew and ATC. This flavour of reporting reflects the fact that few GA pilots are part of a formal Safety Management System and so CHIRP is often seen as the only outlet for reporting more minor near-miss incidents beyond formal AAIB accident/serious-incident procedures.

Top-10 GA Key Issues reported to CHIRP in FY2023-24
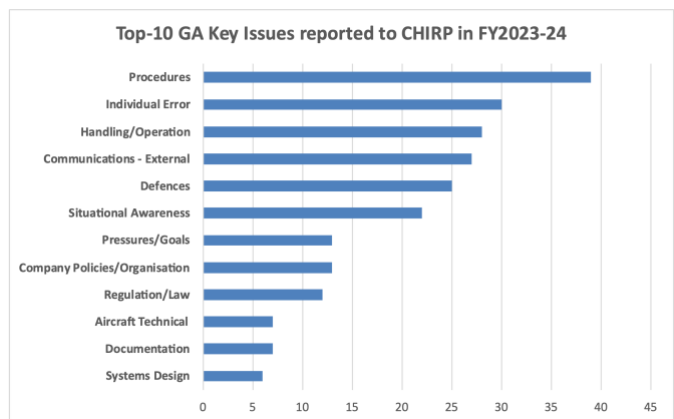
d. **Air Traffic Control Reporting**. Although much fewer in number than other sectors due to generally mature reporting through company channels, Air Traffic Control reports described concerns with company operational policies and organisation; application of procedures by third-parties; ability to deliver the level of service; and management relations. It was noted by many that the overall deficiency in controller numbers was causing significant pressures and that this would likely take a significant period to resolve due to training pipeline constraints.

Top-10 ATC Key Issues reported to CHIRP in FY2023-24
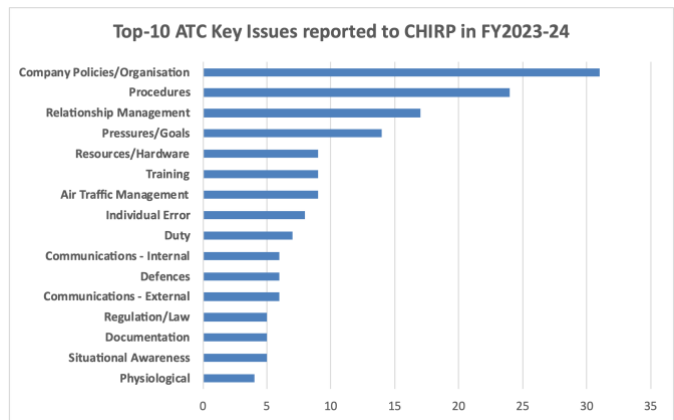
e. **Engineering Reporting**. Numbers of Engineering reports to CHIRP were again fairly low this year (25) and so care must be taken not to draw too many conclusions other than to comment that the primary key issues were: pressures on base and line maintenance; compliance with regulation; pressures from managers; application of procedures by third-parties; management communications; time pressures; aircraft airworthiness; and insufficient/unqualified maintenance staff. Although the engineering sector has robust mandatory reporting processes that will hopefully capture many concerns, the relatively few reports that CHIRP receives may be indicative of systemic reluctance to report externally in comparison to other sectors such as Flight Crew and Cabin Crew.
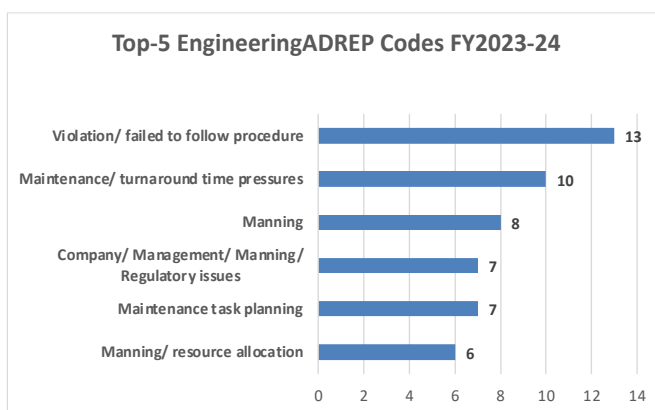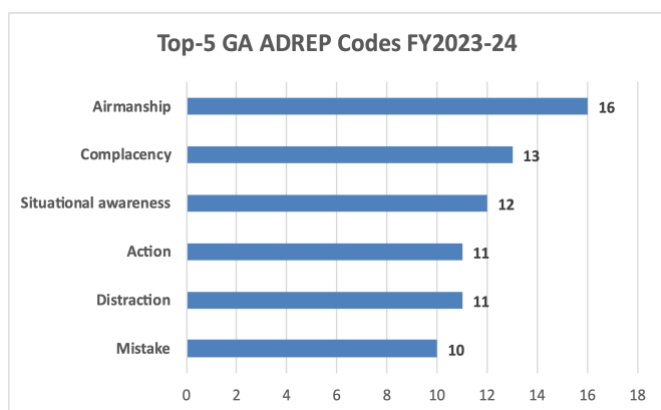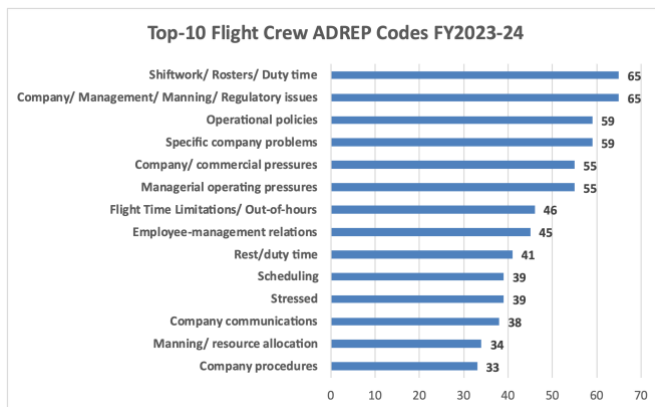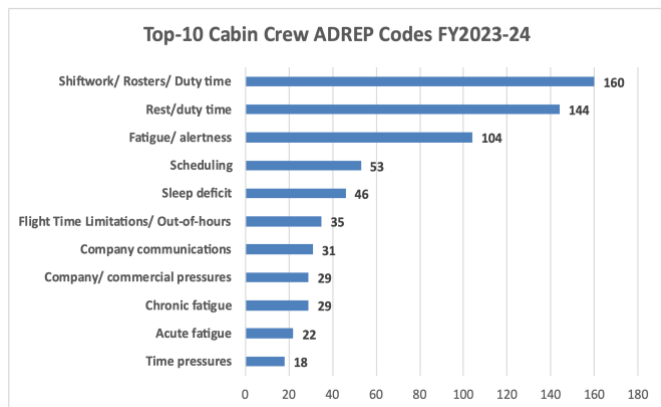

Top-10 Eng Key Issues reported to CHIRP in FY2023-24
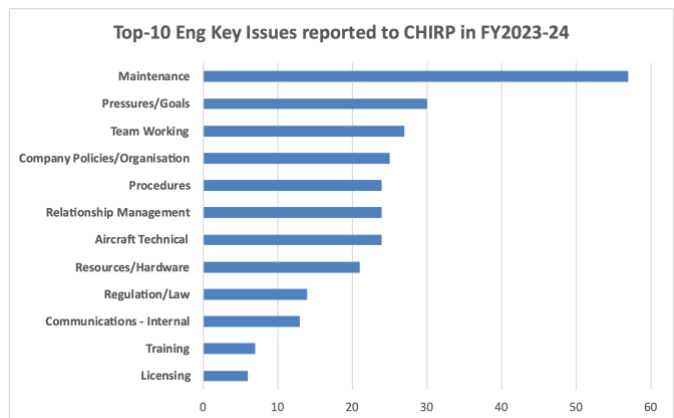
f. **Ground Handling & Security Reporting**. CHIRP Ground Handling and Security report numbers have been low for a number of years now and this has been attributed to the transitory nature of employment in the sector which disincentivises people from putting their heads above the parapet to report concerns. With the agreement of the CAA, CHIRP initiated a pilot programme to re-invigorate Ground Handling & Security reporting in FY2022-23 and this was initiated at Luton Airport in late November 2022 followed by extensive engagement at London Heathrow in Autumn 2023/Spring 2024 during their safety-week activities. Enthusiastic responses at worker level to this engagement have yet to translate into significantly increased reporting levels, although we are seeing some increased activity in recent months. Dealing with concerns about over-zealous security screening has been a feature of CHIRP reports during the period, but we have struggled to promote understanding by some stakeholders as to the safety impacts from distraction and time-pressures that overly onerous security measures can introduce. Whilst the need for proportionate security measures is self-evident, it is apparent that daily exposure to unnecessarily intrusive screening processes by some operatives can have a disproportionate effect on aviation safety that must be understood by those who cause significant delay or disruption to aviation personnel.

g. **Drone/RPASReporting**. Drone/RPAS reporting remains a growing sector for CHIRP as we establish our presence within the drone community. There have been 30 drone reports since the introduction of this reporting sector in 2020, of which 9 were received in FY2023-24 (the same as in FY2022-23). Meaningful trends and issues have yet to emerge, but it is encouraging that reporting rates are at least steady, albeit we would like to see greater penetration into the community in the coming years as the message gets out about the value of CHIRP confidential reporting activities

h. **BHDV Reporting**. Since its inception in 2021, BHDV reporting has shown a steady growth in numbers with there being 18 reports being received in FY2023-24 (16 in FY2022-23). CHIRP does not engage in resolution or analysis of BHDV reports, our function is simply to provide a reporting portal for aggregated reports to be sent to CAA. As a result, there are no Key Issue or ADREP statistics for this reporting type.

27.   As mentioned earlier, ADREP taxonomy statistics show similar outcomes to that of the Key Issue charts above but with some greater granularity in some areas that are worthy of record. The associated ADREP Statistics are shown below for the main reporting sectors.
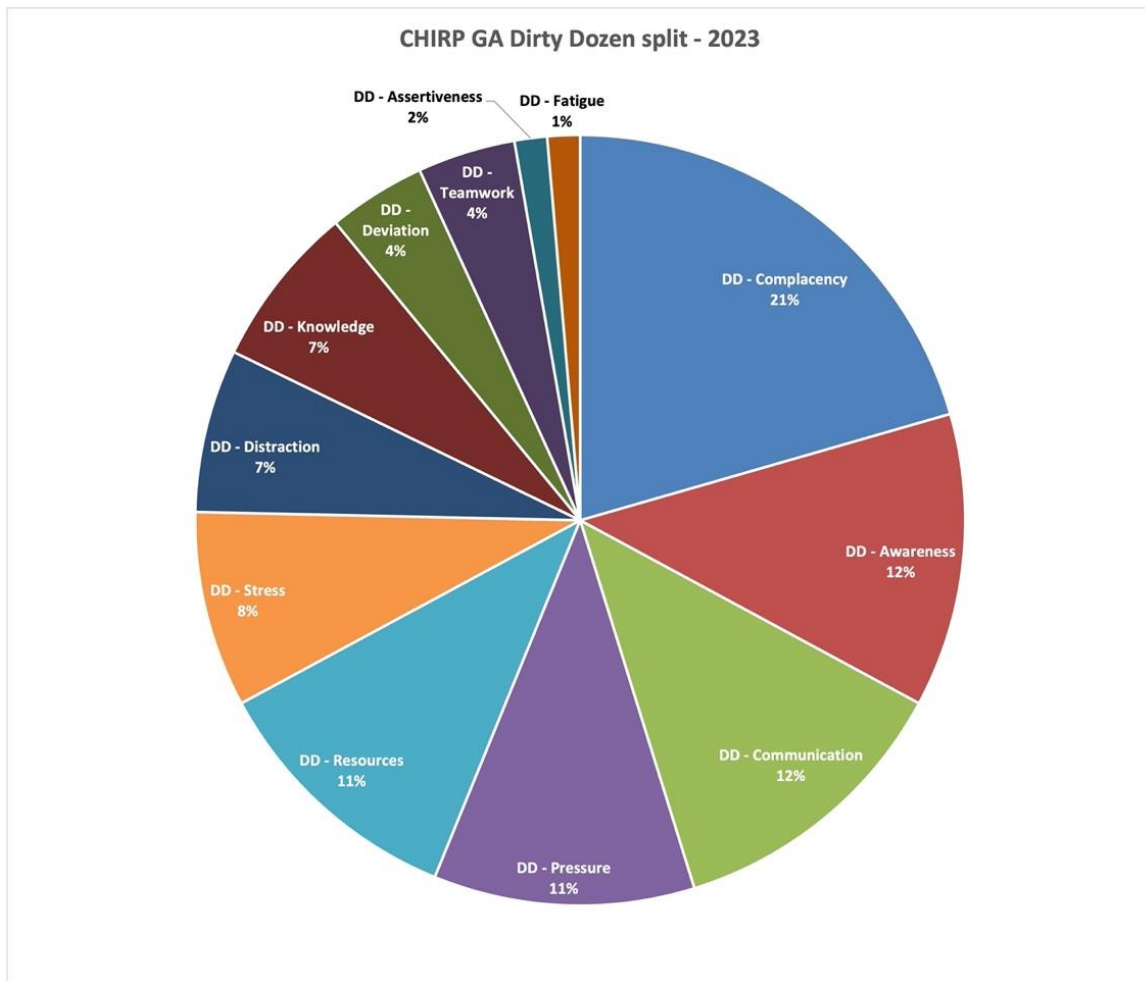
Top-10 Cabin Crew ADREP Codes FY2023-24

Code	Value
Shiftwork/ Rosters/ Duty time	160
Rest/duty time	144
Fatigue/ alertness	104
Scheduling	53
Sleep deficit	46
Flight Time Limitations/ Out-of-hours	35
Company communications	31
Company/ commercial pressures	29
Chronic fatigue	29
Acute fatigue	22
Time pressures	18

Top-10 Flight Crew ADREP Codes FY2023-24

Code	Value
Shiftwork/ Rosters/ Duty time	65
Company/ Management/ Manning/ Regulatory issues	65
Operational policies	59
Specific company problems	59
Company/ commercial pressures	55
Managerial operating pressures	55
Flight Time Limitations/ Out-of-hours	46
Employee-management relations	45
Rest/duty time	41
Scheduling	39
Stressed	39
Company communications	38
Manning/ resource allocation	34
Company procedures	33

Top-5 GA ADREP Codes FY2023-24

Code	Value
Airmanship	16
Complacency	13
Situational awareness	12
Action	11
Distraction	11
Mistake	10

Top-5 EngineeringADREP Codes FY2023-24

Code	Value
Violation/ failed to follow procedure	13
Maintenance/ turnaround time pressures	10
Manning	8
Company/ Management/ Manning/ Regulatory issues	7
Maintenance task planning	7
Manning/ resource allocation	6

28.   In 2023, CHIRP also introduced the 'Dirty/Dozen'[3] Human Factors descriptors for GA reporting in order to provide a more accessible and easily referenced taxonomy for non-commercial aviators. The associated titles and descriptors are shown in the table below and, although still evolving in its use and application, the percentage split between them for GA reports in 2023 is depicted in the pie-chart. This shows that, for GA, the top-3 key concerns were complacency (by a long margin); awareness and communication (tied second); and pressure and resources (tied third).

Dirty/Deadly Dozen Descriptors

Title	Descriptor
Stress	Feeling anxious or threatened by overbearing influences (Threat)
Fatigue	Extreme tiredness from prolonged activity (Threat)
Pressure	Compulsion or anxiety to satisfy demands (Threat)
Resources	Lack of sufficient/suitable means for the task (Threat)
Distraction	Attention diverted from task by external factors (Threat)
	Attention diverted from task by internal mis-prioritisation (Error)
Awareness	Inputs not available (Threat)
	Inputs not assimilated or sought (Error)
Knowledge	Information not available (Threat)
	Information not obtained or understood (Error)
Communication	Information flow or misunderstanding from others (Threat)
	Information flow or misunderstanding to others (Error)
Teamwork	Effectiveness of others (Threat)
	Effectiveness to others (Error)
Assertiveness	Indecisive, diffident or incurious (Error)
Complacency	Disregard for risks, over-assumption of ability or habitual behaviour (Error)
Deviation	Normalisation of divergence from formal procedures or taking short-cuts (Error)

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[3] See Skybrary reference: https://skybrary.aero/articles/human-factors-dirty-dozen.

CHIRP GA Dirty Dozen split - 2023

Category	Percentage
DD - Complacency	21%
DD - Awareness	12%
DD - Communication	12%
DD - Pressure	11%
DD - Resources	11%
DD - Stress	8%
DD - Distraction	7%
DD - Knowledge	7%
DD - Deviation	4%
DD - Teamwork	4%
DD - Assertiveness	2%
DD - Fatigue	1%

FY2023-24 Outputs

29.   **Entity Assessments**.   In addition to regular engagement on specific issues with CAA Flight Ops, AAA, GA/RPAS Unit and whistleblowing staff, CHIRP also participates in CAA entity assessments by providing processed, anonymised intelligence about entities for CAA formal safety reviews and audits in support of the Regulatory Safety Management System (RSMS). In FY2023-24, CHIRP provided 17 entity assessments to CAA as detailed in Annex B. Entity assessments are drawn from reports to CHIRP over the year and represent a consolidated view of an entity's safety performance and response to CHIRP enquiries. As such, they provide an independent perspective of an entity's activities, albeit focussed wholly on the particular issues that have been raised to CHIRP's attention by reporters.

30.   **International Engagement**.   CHIRP is a founding member of the International Confidential Aviation Safety Systems (ICASS)[4] group. In addition to sharing safety information with ICASS members, a key aim of this organisation is to assist nations to develop their own confidential reporting programmes; this aim is coherent with the ICAO policy of "no nation left behind". The group meets annually on a formal basis, this year hosted by Spain in Madrid. CHIRP Director Aviation and CHIRP Cabin Crew Programme Manager attended the event and played an active part in engaging with the other members through presentations and workshops during which they were able to articulate key messages regarding our perspective on associated Human Factors issues.

31.   **Outputs related to meeting CHIRP's Strategic Outcomes**.   Recognising the imperfect nature of 'Just Culture' aspirations, especially against the backdrop of the post-COVID return to full commercial aviation operations, CHIRP's unique and important contribution to the UK safety system provides safety data that would not otherwise be available. More specifically, our outputs in relation to our desired strategic outcomes have included the following elements.

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[4] ICASS Membership: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Japan, Korea, Peoples Republic of China, Taiwan, South Africa, Singapore, Spain, UK and US.

a. **Strategic Outcome No1 – Better leadership, awareness, and attitude towards safety issues**. Aviation safety management systems are generally well structured and mature due to ICAO's unified rule-setting role and agreements about the minimum level of safety management and leadership responsibilities. Nevertheless, commercial pressures still abound, and there are undoubtedly temptations for accountable managers to prioritise profitability over safety. CHIRP Aviation has often taken on the role of industry conscience in reminding organisations of best practices, highlighting potential risks, and providing comment on company policies or processes that might be having unintended consequences. Areas of focus this year have been on company policies such as fatigue management, absence management, and imposed operating pressures/goals that might induce normalisation of deviation from established procedures due to people taking short-cuts. Sub-optimal workforce/management relationships and internal communications have also been key themes in the year: in short, it appears to CHIRP that there was a damaging reduction in trust between the workforce and their line management as a result of pandemic restructuring, and this trust has yet to be fully repaired. Without trust there can be no Just Culture. Face-to-face liaisons and engagements with airlines, the CAA, other safety groups, individual clubs and entities were supplemented by attendance at air shows and aviation gatherings to raise awareness of CHIRP and our safety concerns and themes. We also participated in a number of aviation webinars and virtual meeting activities to engage with aviation leaders, stakeholders and practitioners to raise awareness of CHIRP, resolve specific reported concerns and champion wider safety issues.

b. **Strategic Outcome No2 – Improved safety culture by changing behaviours, so that practices, processes, and procedures are as safe as they can be**. Of the 489 reports accepted by the Aviation Programme, 65% were from Cabin Crew, 20% from flight crew, 5% from General Aviation (GA) and 5% from engineering. Notably this year, at the request of British Skydiving, the CHIRP Aviation Programme initiated a skydiving reporting portal aimed at providing this community with an ability to make confidential reports. Also, aviation projects to investigate confidential reporting in the emerging Advanced Air Mobility and Space sectors were initiated, with the intention of establishing reporting programmes for these areas in the latter part of FY2024-25.

c. **Strategic Outcome No3 – Adoption of safety outcomes identified in CHIRP reports by regulators, managers and individuals**. As a result of companies seeking to maximise their schedules and workforce usage, CHIRP Aviation received numerous reports over the year about sickness, fatigue and rostering policies. International aviation rules recognise that there are significant risks from aviation practitioners conducting their activities when fatigued or unfit to do so through sickness; maximum duty times are set, and these are intended to be approached only with caution. Although confidentiality concerns limit the ability to reference many specific outcomes, the CHIRP Aviation Programme successfully highlighted several fatigue, rostering and absence management concerns to industry and the regulator. CAA Flight Operations staff were able to conduct focused oversight activities that resulted in some companies modifying their behaviours, policies and processes to meet best practice. In FY2023-24 CHIRP activities contributed to two notable CAA initiatives: firstly, highlighting to operators that the use of Commander's Discretion was not well understood; and, secondly, the initiation of a CAA post-BREXIT, post-implementation review into Flight Duty Periods (FDP)/Flight Time Limitations (FTL) to review the assumptions within the whole UK rostering and FTL/FDP regulatory document set in order to determine whether there are any areas that could be better defined, harmonised or re-evaluated now that we are no longer part of the European Aviation Safety Authority (EASA) regulatory regime.

Delivering our messages

32. **Engagements**. We have conducted numerous external engagement events in FY2023-24 to increase our penetration of the various sectors. We regularly contribute to General Aviation Safety Council (GASCo) council meetings; UK Flight Safety Committee (UK FSC) safety information exchanges and Flight Safety Officer foundation courses; Ground Handling Operational Safety Team (GHOST) meetings; and General Aviation Partnership (GAP) meetings. CHIRP also participates with GASCo and the UK Airprox Board (UKAB) in forming a 'Safety Village' at large-scale General Aviation annual events such as AeroExpo and the Light Aviation Association (LAA) Rally. *Ad hoc* contributions and participations are also made in other forums such as British Airline Pilots' Association (BALPA) webinars, CAA/MAA display symposia, and other individual flying club and aviation organisation presentation opportunities.

33. **Publications**. Maintaining awareness of CHIRP is vital in encouraging individuals to submit discretionary reports. After discussion within their associated Advisory Boards[5], reports with educational themes and identified value for wider dissemination are then published in the respective Air Transport, General Aviation, Cabin Crew, Drone/UAS and Ground Handling & Security FEEDBACK newsletters. In addition to email and hard-copy distribution, all our FEEDBACK newsletters are posted to the CHIRP website, accessible using the CHIRP App, and advertised on the CAA SkyWise alert notification service (CAA estimates of CHIRP subscription levels being: Air Transport – 16,250; Cabin Crew – 22,200; General Aviation – 19,500; and Drone/UAS – 10,350). In addition to SkyWise and social media alerting services:

a. Our Air Transport FEEDBACK newsletter is distributed exclusively via electronic means to circa 40k Flight Crew, Engineering, Ground Handling & Security, and Air Traffic Controller email addresses. For its part, General Aviation FEEDBACK is emailed to all known GA pilots, engineers and Air Traffic Controllers (also circa 40k addressees) and, in addition, circa 2000 hardcopy GA newsletters are sent to flying clubs, flying schools and ATCUs. Very few email addresses are held for cabin crew; therefore, Cabin Crew FEEDBACK is circulated both electronically and in hardcopy to operators for them to distribute in crew rooms and via company communications methods - several operators cooperate with distribution by adding electronic versions of FEEDBACK to their intranets. The Drone/UAS version of FEEDBACK is distributed by email to registered drone operators, and a small number of hardcopies are produced for industry events.

b. Overall, during this reporting period a total of 103 aviation reports were formally published in our FEEDBACK newsletters: 50 reports in 4 editions of Air Transport FEEDBACK, 15 reports in 4 editions of General Aviation FEEDBACK, 21 reports in 3 editions of Cabin Crew FEEDBACK and 17 reports in 3 editions of Drone/UAS FEEDBACK. There were no editions of Ground Handling & Security FEEDBACK published during the period due to a paucity of reports meaning that a standalone publication was not viable. Instead, the reports we were able to publish were included in Air Transport FEEDBACKs.

FEEDBACK Audience	Number of editions published	Number of reports published
Air Transport	4	50
General Aviation	4	15
Cabin Crew	3	21
Drone/UAS	3	17
Ground Handling & Security	0	0

c. Within these FEEDBACK newsletters, other generic issues were also raised in their respective editorials for those reports that could not be sufficiently disidentified and so the actual number of reported issues publicised this year exceeded 100. Aviation FEEDBACKs also usually contain a section called 'I Learned About Human Factors From That (ILAHFFT) which takes stories from the aviation community and publishes them as narratives reflecting events that were perhaps not the contributors' finest hours but which highlight useful safety themes drawn from their actions, observations or simply good fortune.

d. The nature of CHIRP's work is such that it is difficult to know for sure how many people are reached by the organisation. This is because the work is distributed across many different contexts and communities. However, our intention over the last year was to reach out to a range of new audiences and this was achieved through campaigns on social media; particularly Facebook, LinkedIn and X.

34. **Beneficiaries and Partners**. Our beneficiaries are a large and diverse community that, in the broadest sense, include all those whose lives are touched by the aviation industry and who benefit from CHIRP's mission. The community includes:

a. Individuals who are directly affected by improved safety: aviation practitioners (flight crew, cabin crew, air traffic controllers, engineers, ground handlers, security staff, drone operators and private pilots), and the public;

b. Individuals and organisations that could or do play a role in improving safety; and,

c. Regulators who set safety policies, approved means of compliance and guidance material.

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[5] The Advisory Boards are comprised of volunteer subject matter expert panellists who contribute significantly to the Charity's aims as they have deep technical expertise in their respective fields. They assist in the determination and resolution of issues raised in reports and, through the Directors, provide the Trustees with feedback on the associated programme's performance.

We believe it is important where feasible, to work in partnership with others to build networks of organisations seeking to improve safety in the aviation industries. CHIRP brings a unique combination of 5 key features to this: we focus on the underlying human factors of reports; we are confidential; we are independent; we are impartial; and we follow up reports with the organisations concerned where possible. Whilst it is important therefore to seek collaborative partnerships, it is also important that we retain our independent and confidential approach. The CAA is the sole funding agency for CHIRP Aviation and represents our primary partner. In planning the associated CHIRP Aviation programme, the CHIRP Chair of Trustees, Exec Dir and Dir Avn met with the CAA Chair and CEO to ensure that CHIRP was meeting their expectations. CAA Chair noted that, as an important part of the UK safety system, CHIRP's voice was more relevant than ever and needed to be heard as an important but independent partner to the CAA. Independence from the CAA is ensured by CHIRP having its own autonomous, secure and confidential IT and database systems to which the CAA have no access or oversight. Any interaction with the CAA is conducted using only disidentified information to provide processed, anonymised safety intelligence, concerns and themes. CHIRP Aviation also works with the aviation industry and other entities to resolve specific problems as and when they arise. Engagement with these organisations is only conducted with the express agreement of reporters, and is also in a disidentified manner to ensure that reporters' identities are not compromised.

Future Planning

35.   Alongside our core reporting, analysis and information-sharing activities, CHIRP's FY2023-24 funding grant from CAA included £20K to investigate and initiate the development of confidential reporting programmes for the emerging Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) and Space sectors. For the AAM sector, there are numerous pioneering start-up companies that were employing cutting-edge technologies and who are under pressure from investors to deliver systems to market. As a result, there are likely temptations to cut corners in the race to achieve market share, or employ people with relatively little experience in the aviation sector, both aspects likely to profit from confidential reporting processes. For the Space sector, although well-configured for learning lessons from historic failures, processes are more immature for learning from close-call events that might not otherwise be reported or where those involved did not wish to be identified. Initial contact with both sectors identified a willingness to engage in principle, but this has yet to translate into tangible, practical outcomes. As a result, progress has been slow, not helped by limited resource at CHIRP to focus on the sectors. Circa £19K of the original £20K funding remains ring-fenced for these activities and we intend to engage an appropriately experienced contractor to take these areas forward towards the end of 2024.

36.   Engineering confidential reporting is sporadic at best (historical average about 2 reports per month), and CHIRP aspires to develop much more penetration of the engineering, manufacturing and maintenance sectors in order to tap into what is perceived to be a grossly under-represented reporting sector. The same applies to the Ground Handling & Security sector, which we are actively engaging with in order to raise our profile. Our Ground Handling & Security Programme Manager has engaged extensively with Luton and London Heathrow airports' ground handling and safety stakeholders in order to raise awareness of CHIRP and our role in delivering a safe conduit for confidential reporting. Reporting levels show promising increases, but it is as yet too early to determine how effective our initiatives will be in the long term. We will continue to engage in Ground Handling & Security networking opportunities as we try to embed CHIRP in the mindset of operatives.

37.   Likewise, although GA reporting provides a steady stream of reports to CHIRP (historical average about 3-4 reports per month), this probably under-represents the incidents and lessons that are likely to have actually occurred. CHIRP Maritime has a group of 'CHIRP Ambassadors' who proselytise CHIRP and the ideals of Just Culture etc. CHIRP Aviation aspires to replicate this in the GA world (and potentially in engineering, drone, ground handling and ATCO environments) as a way of improving our visibility and promoting reporting through face-to-face presentations and engagement activities. Although these Ambassadors would probably be unpaid volunteers as in the Maritime model, there will be support costs involved depending on the structure and regional disposition of the Ambassador Group and any associated administrative and travel expenses to cover their activities.

38.   A recent addition to CHIRP reporting, British Skydiving approached CHIRP with their desire to initiate a confidential reporting strand and an interim process was enabled by drawing on existing website development funding using modified GA reporting processes. Although early days as yet (one report received to date) we will monitor report flows to determine whether a more integrated fully-formed Skydiving reporting process will be cost-effective.

39.   In addition to maintaining our core reporting activities, our global future planning themes include:

- Achieve greater penetration of our mission;

- Become a lead participator in delivering "safety-first thinking" to our sectors;

- Encourage the use of CHIRP as a forum for debating safety issues emerging from our reports and associated analyses;

- Maintain relevance and effectiveness;

- Encourage a greater volume of actionable reports;

- Improve marketing and communications posture including our brand and digital footprint;

- Make greater use of academic input to generate *Insight* articles;

- Continue to upgrade databases to ensure excellence in enabling and tracking reports.

Role Summary

40.   CHIRP's role is to manage an independent, voluntary, confidential reporting programme for the aviation and maritime industries. Within this, The UK State Safety Programme acknowledges the CHIRP Aviation Programme as UK's independent confidential voluntary reporting scheme. The CHIRP Aviation Programme compliments the CAA Occurrence Reporting process and other formal reporting systems operated by many UK organisations by providing a means by which individuals are able to raise safety-related issues of concern without being identified to their peer group, management, or the Regulatory Authority.

41.   Maintaining awareness of CHIRP is vital in encouraging individuals to submit discretionary reports. After discussion within their associated Advisory Boards, reports with educational themes and identified value for wider dissemination are then published in the respective Air Transport, General Aviation, Cabin Crew, Drone/UAS and Ground Handling & Security FEEDBACK newsletters. In addition to email and hard-copy distribution, all our FEEDBACK newsletters are advertised on the CAA SkyWise alert notification service, posted to the CHIRP website and are also accessible using the CHIRP App. The nature of CHIRP's work is such that it is difficult to know for sure how many people are reached by the organisation. This is because the work is distributed across many different contexts and communities. However, our intention over the last year was to reach out to a range of new audiences and this was achieved through campaigns on social media; particularly Facebook, LinkedIn and X.

42.   Whilst it is important to seek collaborative partnerships, it is also important that we retain our independent and confidential approach. The CAA is the sole funding agency for CHIRP Aviation and represents our primary partner. Independence from the CAA is ensured by CHIRP having its own autonomous, secure and confidential IT and database systems to which the CAA have no access or oversight. Any interaction with the CAA is conducted using only disidentified information to provide processed, anonymised safety intelligence, concerns and themes. CHIRP Aviation also works with the aviation industry and other entities to resolve specific problems as and when they arise. Engagement with these organisations is only conducted with the express agreement of reporters, and is also in a disidentified manner to ensure that reporters' identities are not compromised.

Note prepared by Steve Forward
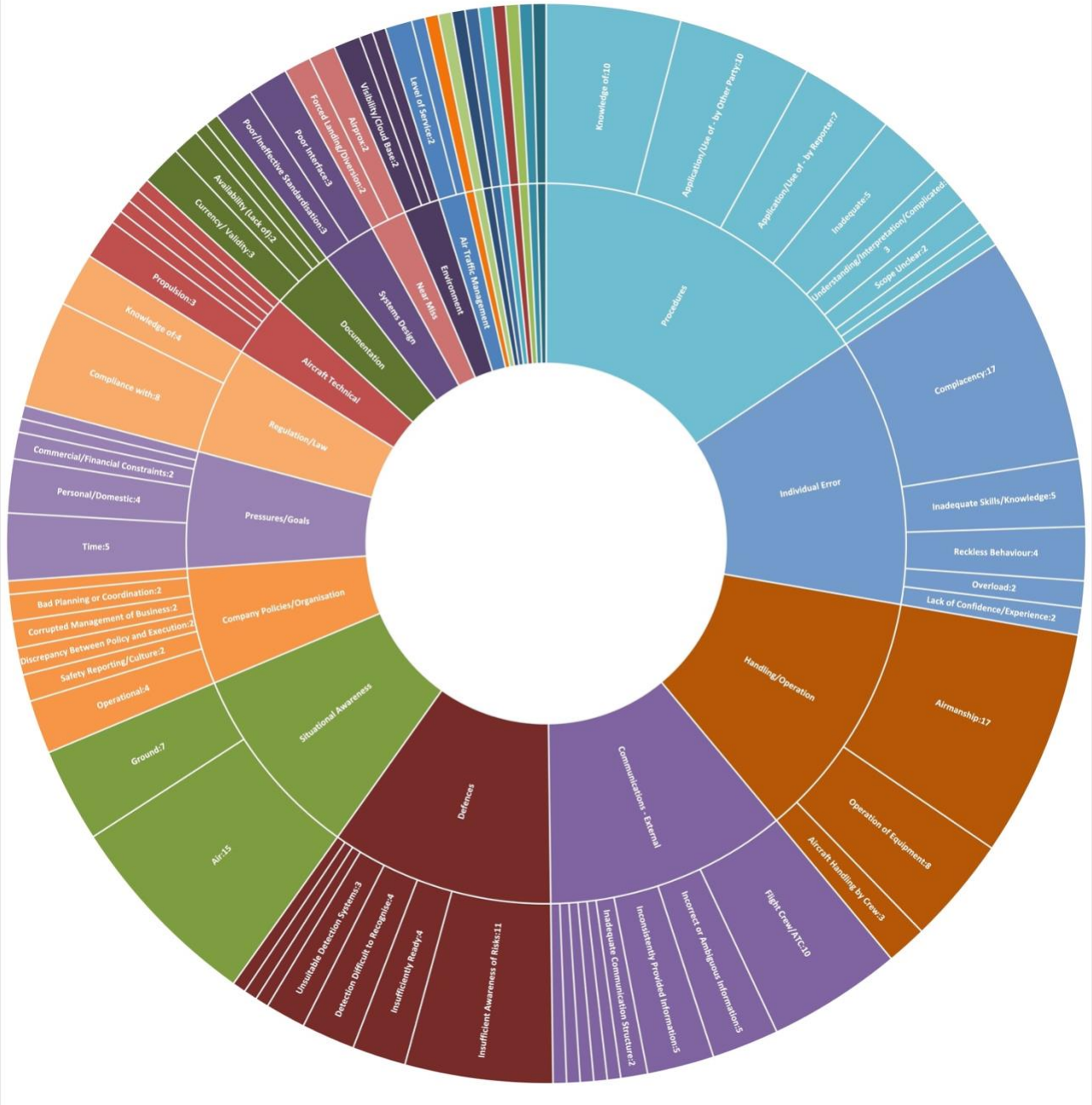CHIRP Director Aviation
steve.forward@chirp.co.uk

Cabin Crew Key Issues and subcategories reported to CHIRP in FY2023-24 (1126 entries)
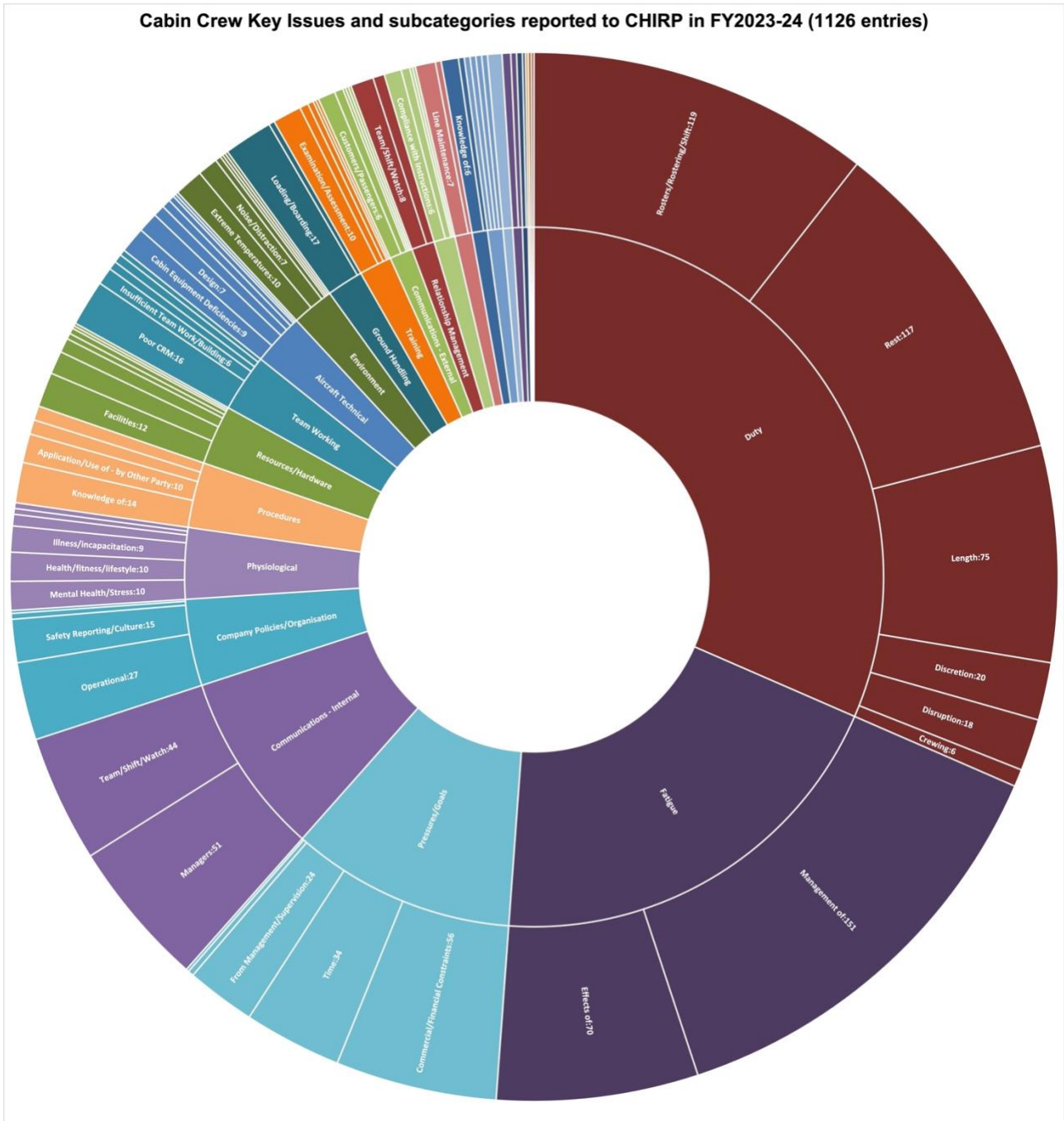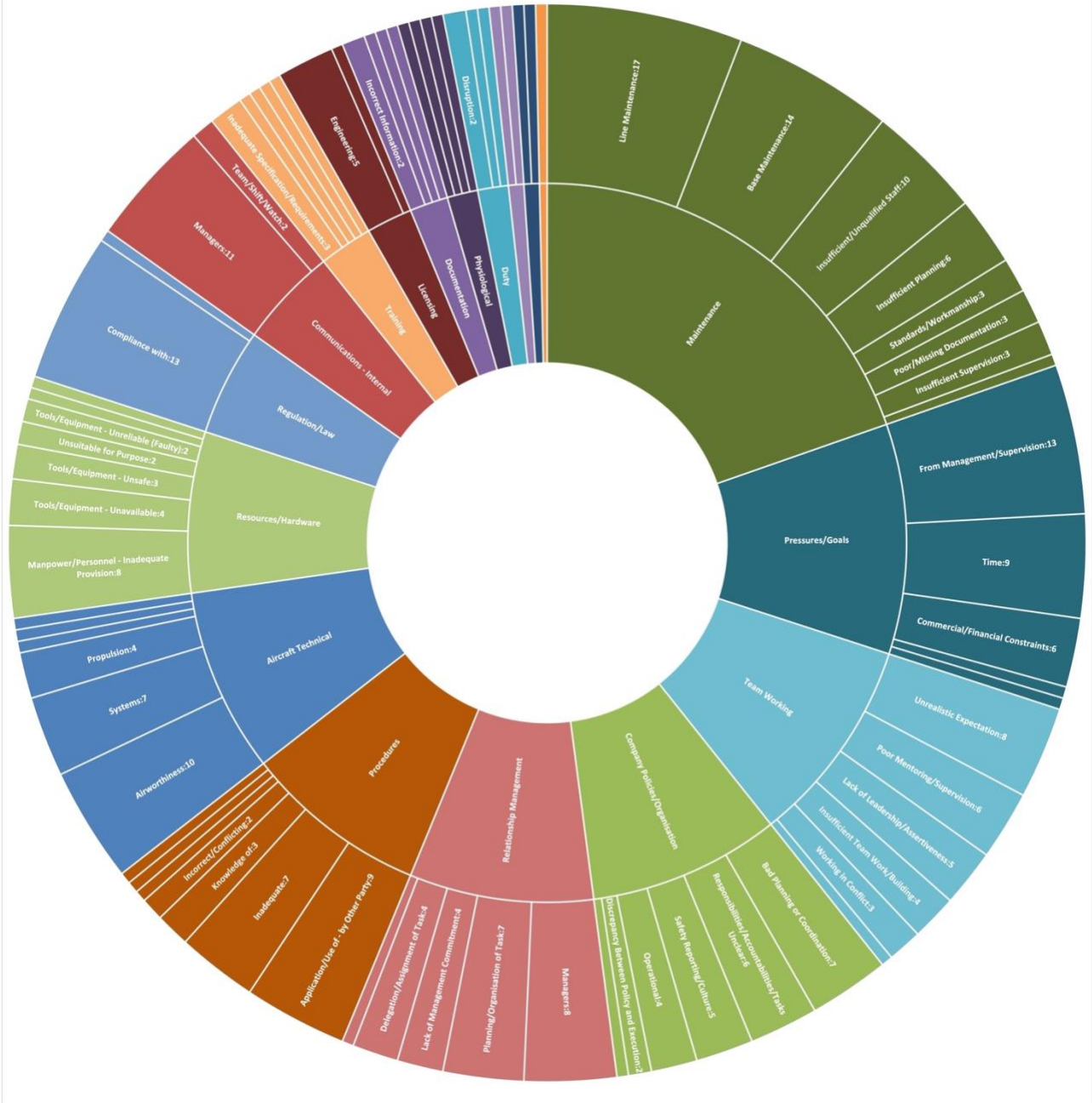
Flight Crew Key Issues and subcategories reported to CHIRP in FY2023-24 (1377 entries)
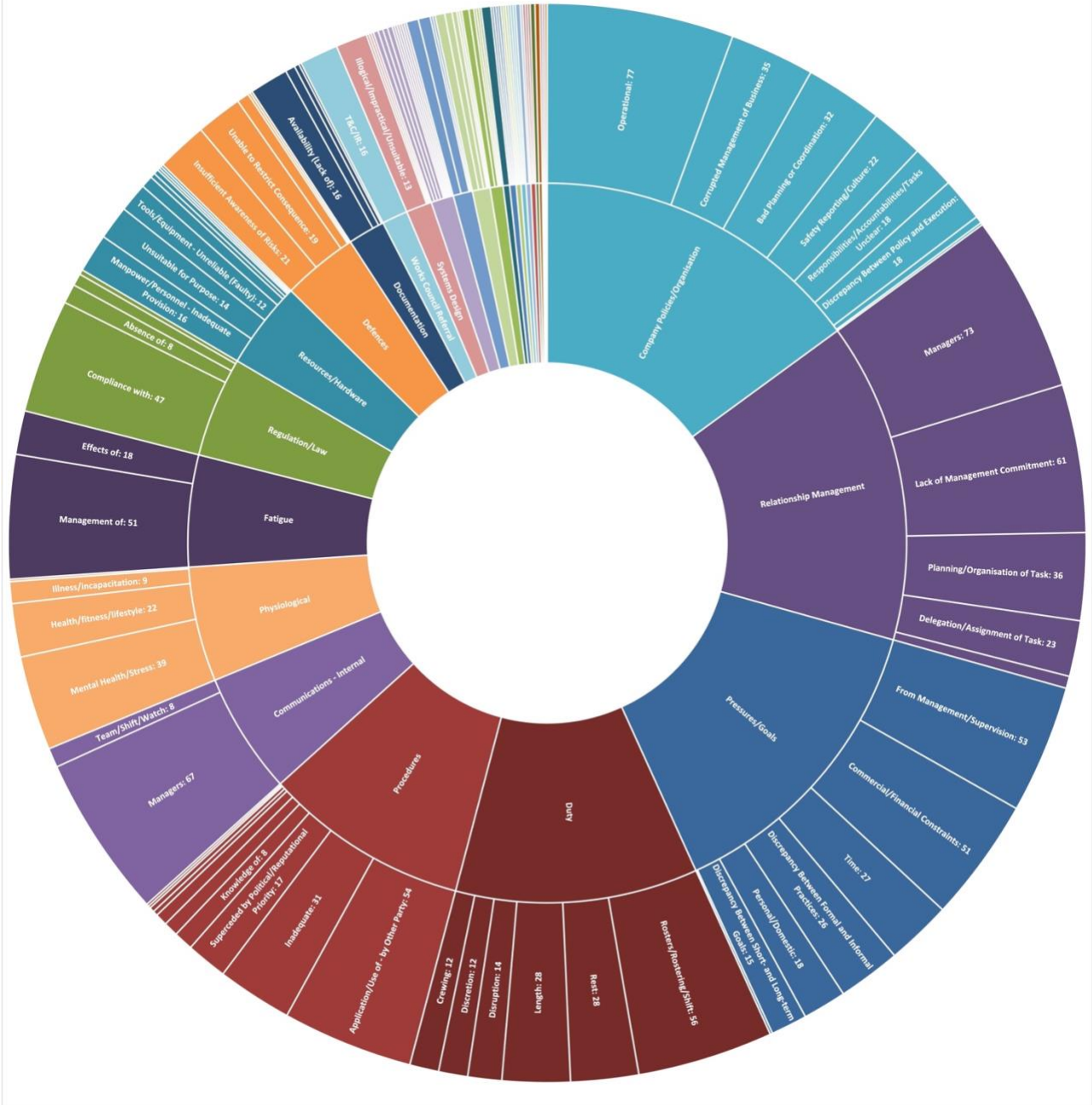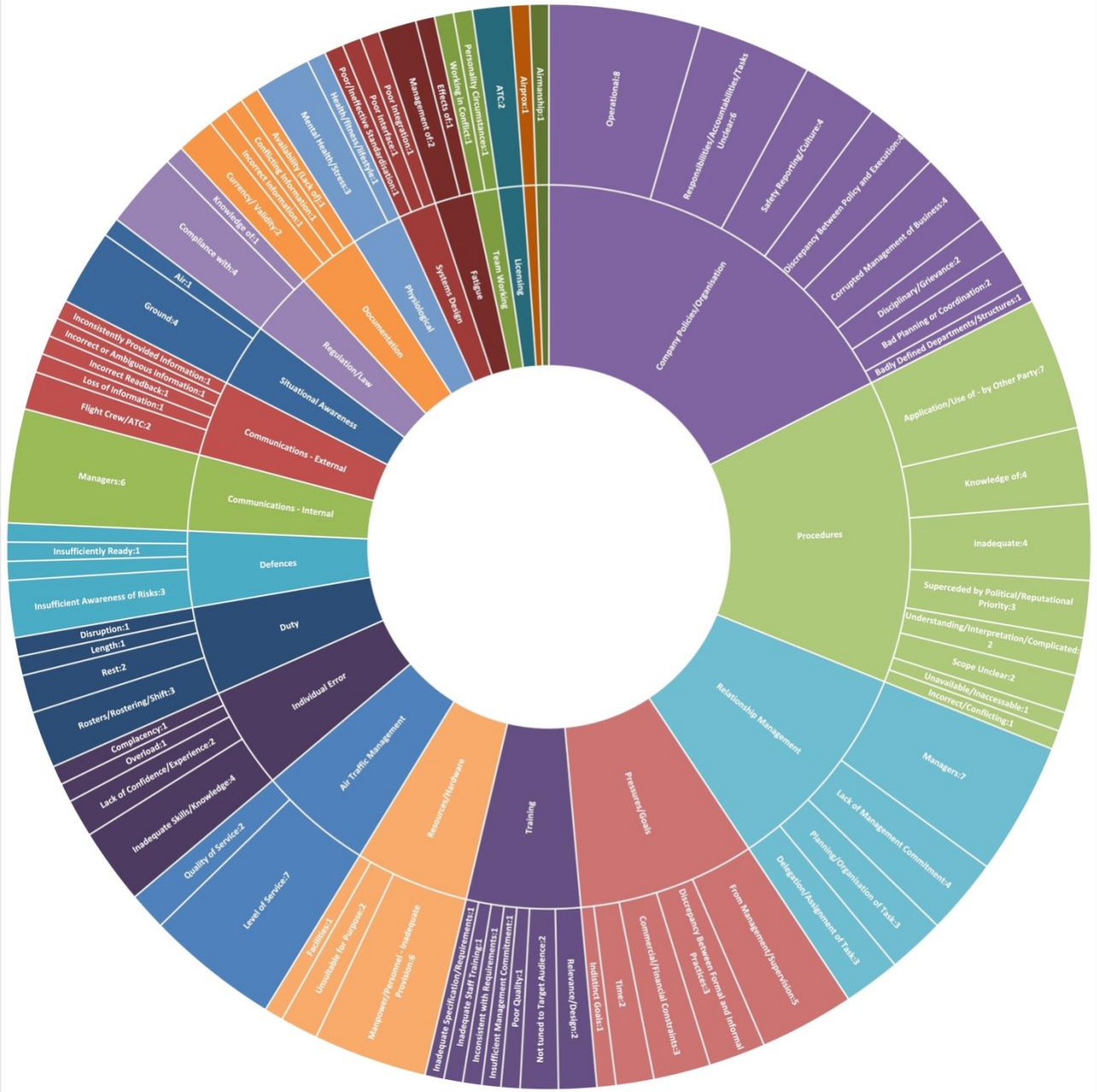
GA Key Issues and subcategories reported to CHIRP in FY2023-24 (249 entries)

Engineering Key Issues and subcategories reported to CHIRP in FY2023-24 (290 entries)

ATC Key Issues and subcategories reported to CHIRP in FY2023-24 (177 entries)

Annex B. CHIRP Entity Assessments – FY2023-24

1.   The CHIRP Aviation Programme contributed 17 entity assessments to the CAA Internal Review Team in FY2022-23 as follows:

Virgin Atlantic
London Heathrow Airport
London Gatwick Airport
TUI
Lydd Airport
Norse Atlantic UK
British Airways
NATS
Jet2
Isle of Man Airport
ANSL Edinburgh (twice)
247 Aviation
Manchester Airport
Wizz Air UK
Newcastle Airport
One Air