

MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

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Editorial

It's thanks to you and your reports that we can help to make change happen

In Memoriam: Peter Tait, Chief Executive of CHIRP 1995-2013.

Just prior to preparing this edition of Air Transport FEEDBACK, CHIRP learned that Peter Tait, the inaugural Chief Executive of the CHIRP Charity had sadly passed away. The CHIRP team would like to offer Peter's family our deepest and most sincere condolences.

Although CHIRP had been in existence since 1982, it was Peter who placed us on a firm footing by transitioning CHIRP to a charitable trust over the period 1995-2013 and was responsible for setting up many of the processes and structures that still survive to this day. After a distinguished career that embraced RAF pilot, test pilot, display pilot and senior positions in commercial aviation and aerospace, Peter guided CHIRP as it expanded from being solely a conduit for Flight Crew/ATCO reporting to include Cabin Crew, Engineers, General Aviation and Maritime. His leadership of the CHIRP team and its contribution to aviation safety received international recognition in 2013 from

the International Federation of Airworthiness who awarded CHIRP the Whittle Safety Award *"In recognition of their contribution to aviation safety, through the development of a confidential reporting programme on human performance issues and concerns. An addition to formal reporting systems within the United Kingdom, the programme covers all aviation related sectors and disciplines."*

In remembering his contribution, I looked up the January 2013 edition of Air Transport FEEDBACK ([Edition 105](#)) where we publicised the International Federation of Airworthiness Whittle Safety Award to see what was topical at the time and what might have changed since. Imagine my chagrin to see, almost 10 years ago to the day, the title of his editorial as 'Tiredness, Fatigue and Sickness'. Within, Peter commented on the regularity of reports that had been received about fatigue, offered some insights into contributory causes of fatigue, highlighted the contemporary CAP371 and scientific research from QinetiQ in their 'SAFE' Work/Rest model, lamented that some operators were pushing FTL/rostering boundaries, and posed the question about why an operator's SMS/FRMS did not seek to establish why operating flight crew required to take controlled rest as a matter of course. He went on to comment that fatiguing rosters/schedules needed to be identified through the review of flight crew reports and stated *'For this process to be effective it is essential that the review of fatigue reports is conducted in accordance with a clear Fatigue Reporting Policy that is published, reviewed and accepted by all stakeholders'*. Well, *plus ça change...* Here we are at CHIRP still banging on about fatigue, rostering, absence management and the need for companies to listen to their crews about fatiguing duties and act on their fatigue reports!

In this edition of FEEDBACK you'll see that I've linked together a number of reports with some common themes to at least show that we are dealing with them even if we can't print them individually due to confidentiality concerns. Use of commander's discretion, sickness policy, and rostering & duty periods are presented in this manner, all of which have been the subject of considerable interaction with the CAA and individual airlines in the recent past. We sometimes aren't good at publicising this aspect of our role where we conduct detailed work in the background that can't be published but it was particularly pleasing to see that our intervention on sickness policy at one airline has resulted in a positive outcome whereby the associated company's policy has been changed. Our thanks go to all those who reported the issue to us, it's unlikely that the change would have been made without your contribution, and this highlights the value of reporting. Hopefully we'll have similar success stories with other issues in the coming months.

Steve Forward, Director Aviation

Engineering Editorial

Where is our industry now and what is in store for Engineering in the future? We all know that the current staff shortages are not going to disappear any time soon, and this has come just as the last of the "Post-War, Jet-Engine Generation" are retiring and who have not been replaced by

apprentices for many years in anticipation of the inevitable need. Will expansion of the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) to include Heathrow, kill off a massive chunk of the local airline labour market? Will other major cities and their airports follow suit?

The result of all this inevitably means the cost of air travel is likely to increase, not just for the bucket-and-spade brigade but for business travel and air freight also. Continuing with the airline industry theme, putting business and first class to one side, budget travel can be a pretty unpleasant experience. Will a price increase to return operations to what they were lead to a more discerning public? Are passengers tiring of happily pursuing an initial ticket price only to log out at the end of booking a trip with the bitter taste of the final cost? Now we all have our little foil coffee pods at home, are we going to accept being charged for below average coffee on board anymore? Considering all airline classes, will this summer lose as many bags as last year? Ten security reports have been received by CHIRP in the last twelve months where staff have experienced concerns, and this should remind us that passengers can experience the same stressors at security as staff.

How does all this affect staff and, more importantly, engineers? CHIRP has received reports of contaminated potable water, cabin panels unsecure and some even missing! Is staff shortage leading to an acceptance of poor cabin cosmetics? If cosmetics are lower down the priority, is the safety and security of the cabin slipping?

Whilst operators review and hopefully improve their tourist and budget products, what has Engineering got to look forward to? Apart from a marked increase in remuneration, will we perhaps see the end, or a decrease in bonding staff until the cost of their type training has been recovered by length of service? There now are more than a couple supersonic transport aircraft in development, globally we are into double figures, and most of you will already know that United Airlines have said they will purchase fifteen of Boom's Overture. We already have electric fixed- and rotary-wing development aircraft flying and plans for an all-electric BAe 146! Plus an increase in aircraft burning sustainable alternate fuels. What challenges will environmentally-friendly aircraft technology introduce for maintenance and servicing?

Apprentices are coming on-stream both within operators and MROs. A quick straw poll of seven operators and MROs (including corporate jets) indicated that some employers had sophisticated relationships with training organisations with impressive facilities who expect to train apprentices into three figures next year. Apart from apprentices, existing staff in some organisations are being given a formal opportunity to obtain A & B licences. Figures for the limited sample of organisations who responded stand at over 160 current and projected apprentices this year. The next few years of projected recruitment is assumed to be a similar number. Additionally, one operator with a large apprentice intake has a vehicle for ex-military staff to enter the civil aviation B licence world. Licenced Engineers will welcome the extra manpower with open arms, and the retired old post-war, jet-engine generation will wish all these young people the very best of luck.

Those of you that subscribe to CAA SkyWise will have seen that a consultation opened on the 8th March for Acceptable Means of Compliance & Guidance Material to UK Regulation (EU) No 1321/2014 SMS in Part-145 and Occurrence Reporting. This AMC & GM relates to Part-145, Part-M, Part 66, Part-CAMO and Part-CAO of UK Regulation (EU) No 1321/2014. If and when you are mentoring any of these new apprentices coming on stream, it is important to teach them the correct terminology. This AMC (in the Part 145 section), includes all the SMS phraseology that we have started to notice appearing in the last couple of years. For example, Continuation Training (Company & A/C type) and Human Factors refresher, are both part of Recurrent Safety Training. Occurrence Reporting is termed Safety Reporting. Quality Managers have gone the way of the Chief Inspectors before them. Compliance Monitoring Manager and Safety Manager are the latest concepts. They could of course be one and the same person. Lastly, any engineering staff involved in the issue of Flight Crew Authorisations should know that the AMC allows issue to Pilots, not just Commanders. That's enough Air Leg for one day but now we should all read the Part 66 and Continuing Airworthiness sections of the NPA. So much to look forward to.

Phil Young, Engineering Programme Manager

I learnt about flying from that (ILAFFT)

This edition's ILAFFT is taken from NASA's [Aviation Safety Reporting System \(ASRS\) 'CALLBACK' Newsletter](#) Issue 515, December 2022. The article provides a good illustration of the importance of prioritising tasks, adhering to good CRM principles and taking time to make a Threat and Error Management (TEM) assessment of the relative inexperience and recency of the Captain that was compounded by an early morning duty where both pilots were tired. Perhaps pressures to depart on time took over but pilots need to be scrupulous in prioritising any amendment of performance data – both pilots should have stopped what they were doing to cross-check this rather than carrying on with other tasks simultaneously. Finally, although undesirable, ground handling teams may have different procedures for the same activity with different airlines and so its important to avoid any confusion by making sure that everyone understands what is required, and who's doing what, at all times rather than assuming that everyone knows what's going on.

"During pushback, the new ATIS stated conditions codes 5,5,5 and 100% wet for our departure runway. The performance data indicated dry conditions, so I contacted Operations during pushback to have them change the condition code to wet. I also started the Number 1 Engine, then requested new performance data through ACARS. As the ground crew stopped the pushback, the new performance data printed out, and I began inputting the data into the FMS. Simultaneously, the Captain conducted a control check as I monitored and called, "Flaps 2, taxi," to begin movement. I looked at the EICAS and verified steering was disengaged and the flaps were set to 2. I looked up and didn't see any ground crews. I then said, "Flaps set, steering engaged." The Captain then began to taxi forward. That's when I noticed the tug and ground crews directly under the airplane walking

back. I immediately yelled, "STOP, STOP, STOP," and applied brakes. The aircraft moved forward about 3 to 5 feet before coming to a complete stop with equipment and personnel directly under the aircraft. The Captain acknowledged and set the parking brake. No ground personnel or equipment contacted the airplane. We then received a salute from ground personnel as they departed the area of operations. The Captain and I discussed the situation and continued the rest of the flight without incident.

This event occurred early in the morning when both crew members were tired. Airfield conditions called for new performance data which caused a slight distraction for both crew members. The Captain has just over 80 hours as Pilot in Command (PIC) following a long break from the Company. Distraction with the performance data, inexperience, and lack of situational awareness caused the Captain to lose focus and forget to wait for ground personnel to leave the area before conducting the control check and calling for taxi. As the First Officer, I should have been more situationally aware of what the Captain was doing and of the location of ground personnel."

We need your ILAFFT stories! The value of ILAFFT is that it provides insights from those who have been there, done it, and have lessons for all of us to learn. If you have any anecdotes or amusing 'there I was...' stories then please do share them with us so that we can pass on the messages and inform others (ideally in a light-hearted and engaging manner). Send any interesting tales to mail@chirp.co.uk and put ILAFFT in the subject header – we promise full confidentiality to protect the innocent (and not so innocent!).

Comments on Previous FEEDBACKs

Comment No1 – Words matter

CHIRP always welcomes feedback from readers and we strive to make necessary improvements and address issues brought to our attention. In our introductory comments in Air Transport FEEDBACK Ed 145 Report No5 (ENG723 – Differences in corporate risk taking and application of the MEL) we unintentionally inferred that trying to outwit an aircraft with work-arounds was a criticism afforded to this particular report that described a protracted fault-finding process where Company Base Engineers were attempting to guide non-Company engineers at a remote location. The CHIRP Comment was intended to be a generic caution but those involved in this incident were unhappy with this conflation and so we unreservedly apologise for giving the impression that they were being unprofessional in any way. On the contrary, CHIRP is aware of reduced staffing levels in Base Engineering at the time, and it was commendable under such circumstances that they also stepped in for Flight Operations in communicating with the flight crew.

Comment No2 – V1 callouts

I have just read the article concerning automated V1 callouts in Report No7 of Air Transport FEEDBACK Ed 145 (FC5206). While I cannot disagree with the views expressed by either the

company or CHIRP, an essential element of the author's concern regarding automated callouts was missed: if an aircraft has automated V1 callouts, should the flight crew rely on them completely or should the flight crew back them up?

A point for consideration is that flight crew awareness of V1 is essential during this critical phase of flight. Having had to reject take-off on more than one occasion, I can attest to the fact that the startle [surprise] effect is great and that an automatic 'muscle-memory' response is required when the aircraft is close to V1. I would therefore argue that not only should the flight crew brief V1, but one of the flight crew should also call it, regardless of the automatic call. In this way, not only is the numerical value of the V1 reinforced, but also its importance as a decision point. The risk is that, in relying on the automated call-out without any active participation, the automatic V1 call becomes just another event that happens during every normal take-off, as opposed to a point of change in flight crew response to a failure condition.

CHIRP Response: In our original comment the point was made within our penultimate sentence "...and non-handling pilots should be monitoring speeds such that they are prepared to make check-point calls if the aircraft does not for some reason..." Whether they make such calls anyway even if the aircraft does have an auto-call system as a mitigation for any potential failure is something that should be covered in company SOPs; although we recognise the value of this as a fail-safe approach, we demure from making any specific recommendations in this respect so that we don't conflict with actual company policies and thereby potentially cause confusion.

Comment No3 – New flight planning system woes

Regarding Report No6 'New flight planning system woes' (FC5203) in Air Transport FEEDBACK Ed 145. This issue [introducing new systems without comprehensive user interaction or training] is so commonplace in all areas of business it is embarrassing. Many years ago, I commenced study for a BSc Software Engineering degree. One of the first books I was advised to buy was Structured System Analysis & Design Methodology known as SSADM. Rule 1 of SSADM – when developing any new software system: TALK TO THE END USERS! Not the management, not the budget holder, not the CEO! The actual end users, i.e. the people who will be using the system on a day-to-day basis. From personal experience, how many companies allow developers to do this? ZERO! Therein lies the problem, and until developers are given free access to end users before they compile the system, the problem will not stop. We will keep being supplied what are essentially beta versions of the final product, which need patch after patch as developers fire-fight their way through problems. And one final point, just for management, it costs more doing it this way!!

CHIRP Response: Acknowledging that there will be differences in what management might see as critical (or affordable given that budgets are not limitless) and the desires and perceptions of users, the development of any such system should ideally involve end-users. This should not just be selected end-users with a vested interest or who have participated in the development, but fresh

end-users exposed to the system without prior involvement so that they can give their unprejudiced experiences. This is especially important when third-party or 'off-the-shelf' software developers are involved in the development who, although they may well have their own experiences and a company brief to draw on, will not be steeped in the way a particular company operates or the nuances of their actual operations.

Comment No4 – Change management

I read this month's [Air Transport FEEDBACK Ed 145] editorial about "Change? It's a question of management" with great interest. It is interesting to understand the ICAO view about how change should be managed, and the Safety Management Manual about managing change is a great idea for best practice. However, to manage change going forward it is important we acknowledge mistakes made in the past, otherwise we keep making the same mistakes. This is the basic principle in the reporting and Just Culture that CHIRP is based upon.

CHIRP Response: As the commentator states, conducting a thorough review of circumstances, procedures and resources that were in place prior to a change is an important element of the change management process so that previous mistakes or sub-optimal elements are identified and associated lessons learned for better future structures and procedures. Within this, it can be difficult for those who are a part of the previous iteration to recognise deficiencies because they may themselves be a part of the problem or have ownership of the previous solution. As the commentator in Comment No3 states, when designing new systems or processes then talking to end users can be invaluable in understanding not just what the new system should look like but also what may have been wrong with the old system. That way, an informed view about what did or didn't work before can inform the design of the new system or processes so that the same problems are avoided. Ultimately, change is something best done 'with people', not 'to people'.



There are no comments yet.