

ENG739

Posted on 15.04.2024 by Phil Young

Category: [Engineering](#)

Report Title Engineering concerns

Initial Report

The reporter sent us a wide-ranging report about concerns about engineering practices at their company as follows:

- 1. Commercial pressure.** Almost every day in the morning meeting, the [Senior] Technical Manager presents us with the amount of money that the company has to spend on claims from passengers under the Air Passengers Rights Regulations. This number is only the expected maximum and not divided if caused by engineering or other reasons.
- 2. Lack of manpower.** During fleet transition from [Old Aircraft Type] to [New Aircraft Type] the manpower plan has not been adjusted to reflect the learning curve and the fact that the [New Aircraft Type] is a much more labour-intensive aircraft than the [Old Aircraft Type]. As a result, the amount of overtime is abnormally high and the management doesn't care that the working time regulation max hours are breached constantly. This is made even worse due to away from base AOG's where, on short notice, people get sent away to recover tech aircraft.
- 3. Lack of communication from management.** The Engineering Manager initially started with some investments in infrastructure (backed by the [Senior] Technical Manager who brought him into the organisation) but now he simply does things without asking people and doesn't even communicate his intentions.
- 4. Reporting system.** We had one occurrence where the confidentiality of our reporting system has been breached by the [Senior] Technical Manager passing the details of a report to the Engineering Manager who then reprimanded the reporter the next day about being unprofessional. Other reports have been raised via the internal reporting system and even to Human Resources but everything moves very slowly or seems to dry up.
- 5. Lack of leadership.** Since the Engineering Manager is not communicating professionally, no one knows in which direction we are going. A B1 got sent away to cover an AOG repair at another station, neither the shift Supervisor on a shift already inadequately manned, or the Station Manager, had been informed. An Internal Safety Report was raised about this but has disappeared in the system. (Refer to item 4).

New personnel get interviewed without the station Manager or a Supervisor present, which is a violation of company procedures. The result of all of the above is people are starting to leave, increasing the pressure on the remaining staff, as the company is unable to attract new engineers, and even then, it takes them about a year or two to come up to speed, as there are not many UK licensed staff with [Aircraft Category] experience.

Comment

This is a comprehensive report covering all of the same issues we have seen in many recent engineering reports received by *CHIRP*. The CAA response, understandably based on standard practice, did confirm that the *CHIRP* report-identified concerns were considered. It is disappointing to know that there are still engineering managers in our industry that fail to realise that breaking the confidentiality process in an organisation's internal reporting vehicle undermines internal reporting for a long time, possibly even years, and reprimanding reporters for raising concerns is certainly against all the principles of Just Culture. On occasion the input from maintenance management is an essential component in the investigation of a maintenance issue. It may moderate the reports record of events but it should not prevent corrective and preventative action to address the facts and under no circumstances should it be received with animosity to the reporter, or confidentiality compromised. As most of us already know, internal reporting is a benefit to safety, identifying deviations from the regulations (designed to promulgate safety) increasing productivity and impacting customer satisfaction.



