

**CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT
HONG KONG, CHINA**

Accident Investigation Bulletin

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INTERPRETATION ON TERMINOLOGIES

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation “Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation” (Annex 13) states the international standards and recommended practices on aircraft accident and serious incident investigation. Chapter 1 of the Annex 13 provides interpretation on certain terminologies.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Bulletin is to supplement the interpretation on terminologies public.

2 Interpretations

When the following terms are used during an investigation, they have the following meanings:

- 2.1 **Accredited representative.** A person designated by a State, on the basis of his or her qualifications, for the purpose of participating in an investigation conducted by another State.
- 2.2 **Adviser.** A person appointed by a State, on the basis of his or her qualifications, for the purpose of assisting its accredited representative in an investigation.
- 2.3 **Aircraft.** Any machine that can derive support in the atmosphere from the reactions of the air other than the reactions of the air against the earth’s surface.
- 2.4 **Causes.** Actions, omissions, events, conditions, or a combination thereof, which led to the accident or incident.
- 2.5 **Flight recorder.** Any type of recorder installed in the aircraft for the purpose of complementing accident/incident investigation.
- 2.6 **Investigation.** A process conducted for the purpose of accident prevention which includes the gathering and analysis of information, the drawing of conclusions, including the determination of causes and, when appropriate, the making of safety recommendations.

- 2.7 **Investigator In-charge.** A person charged, on the basis of his or her qualifications, with the responsibility for the organisation, conduct and control of an investigation.
- 2.8 **Maximum mass.** Maximum certificated take-off mass.
- 2.9 **Preliminary Report.** The communication used for the prompt dissemination of data obtained during the early stages of the investigation.
- 2.10 **Safety recommendation.** A proposal of the accident investigation authority of the State conducting the investigation, based on information derived from the investigation, made with the intention of preventing accidents or incidents.
- 2.11 **Serious incident.** An incident involving circumstances indicating that an accident nearly occurred.

Note: The difference between an accident and a serious incident lies only in the result. The incidents listed below are typical examples of incidents as stated in Attachment C of the Annex 13 that are likely to be serious incidents. The list is not exhaustive and only serves as guidance to the definition of serious incident.

Examples of Serious Incident:

- Near collisions requiring an avoidance manoeuvre to avoid a collision or an unsafe situation or when an avoidance action would have been appropriate.
- Controlled flight into terrain only marginally avoided.
- Aborted take-offs on a closed or engaged runway.
- Take-offs from a closed or engaged runway with marginal separation from obstacle(s).
- Landings or attempted landings on a closed or engaged runway.
- Gross failures to achieve predicted performance during take-off or initial climb.
- Fires and smoke in the passenger compartment, in cargo compartments or engine fires, even though such fires were extinguished by the use of extinguishing agents.
- Events requiring the emergency use of oxygen by the flight crew.
- Aircraft structural failures or engine disintegrations not classified as an accident.
- Multiple malfunctions of one or more aircraft systems seriously affecting the operation of the aircraft.
- Flight crew incapacitation in flight.
- Fuel quantity requiring the declaration of an emergency by the pilot.
- Take-off or landing incidents. Incidents such as undershooting, overrunning or running off the side of runways.

- System failures, weather phenomena, operations outside the approved flight envelope or other occurrences which could have caused difficulties controlling the aircraft.
 - Failures of more than one system in a redundancy system mandatory for flight guidance and navigation.
- 2.12 **Serious injury.** An injury which is sustained by a person in an accident and which:
- a) requires his stay in hospital for more than 48 hours commencing within 7 days from the date on which the injury was received; or
 - b) results in a fracture of any bone (except simple fractures of fingers, toes or nose); or
 - c) involves lacerations which cause nerve, muscle or tendon damage or severe haemorrhage; or
 - d) involves injury to any internal organ; or
 - e) involves second or third degree burns, or any burns affecting more than 5 per cent of the body surface; or
 - f) involves verified exposure to infectious substances or injurious radiation.
- 2.13 **State of Design.** The State having jurisdiction over the organisation responsible for the type design.
- 2.14 **State of Manufacture.** The State having jurisdiction over the organisation responsible for the final assembly of the aircraft.
- 2.15 **State of Occurrence.** The State in the territory of which an accident or incident occurs.
- 2.16 **State of the Operator.** The State in which the operator's principal place of business is located or, if there is no such place of business, the operator's permanent residence.
- 2.17 **State of Registry.** The State on whose register the aircraft is entered.

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