



**AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF  
AIR SAFETY INVESTIGATORS**

***Summer/Autumn News  
Journal***

# ASASI Summer/Autumn News Journal



March 2026

In this journal you can expect:

---

2 - Editorial

---

3 - The Executive Report

---

4 - ASASI Corporate Member - Focus on the ATSB

---

7 - IATA 2025 Annual Safety Report Highlights

---

10 - Air India Boeing 787-8 Flight AI-171 Accident at Ahmedabad on June 12, 2025

---

11 - ANZSASI 2026

---

12 - New Member

---

13 - The History File

---

21 - Contacts

---

## Welcome to the Summer/Autumn edition of the ASASI News Journal!

- 2026 - A new year with new challenges and opportunities. Aviation safety however does not recognize the change in the date. The tasks of aviation safety continue with similar challenges from previous years. The safety industry has made remarkable progress over many years in improving the safety of operations and reducing the risks to the flight crew and passengers, both civil and military. However, we cannot relax the emphasis on "safety". New technology introduces new risks at the same time improving operations and efficiency. The civil aviation industry worldwide is almost back to the levels before Covid. This introduces additional risks: training, congestion, longer flight hours etc.
- Although the fatality results for 2025 are slightly worse than 2024, the fatal accident rate fell to 0.14 per million flights, down from 0.19 in 2024. The deadliest accident in 2025 was the crash of Air India Flight 171 in June, a Boeing 787, which resulted in 242 deaths. EASA and IATA highlighted that while the industry is safe, "no room for complacency" exists, with focus areas including runway excursions and high-risk unstable approaches.
- In this edition of the quarterly Journal, we cover the plans for the Annual ANZSASI conference in Wellington, NZ, membership news, focus on the ASASI Corporate member Australian Transport Safety Bureau, safety statistics from IATA and update on the Air India accident, and future planning for ASASI commercial involvement.
- The history file covers the NTCA in the 1980s and one of the founding members of ASASI – John Hopkins

# The Executive Report

## ASASI Constitution

One of your Executive's major undertakings has been the full review and modernisation of the ASASI Constitution. As the ASASI AGM 2024 minutes noted, the Constitution was 'sorely in need of a review and bringing it into the 21st century.'

Over the past year our VP, Clare, has:

- led a comprehensive reformatting.
- re-aligned with updated ISASI processes,
- sought a legal review, as suggested by members; and
- incorporated contemporary governance expectations (including the ACT Associations Model Rules).

## Engagement With High-Capacity Operators

Last year, the need for stronger engagement with highcapacity operators was raised. This past year has seen a renewed engagement with that sector.

This has occurred mainly through the significant work and networking of Mr Paul Fox. Starting with the lead up to ANZSASI 2025, but further developed since that conference, Paul has fundamentally reshaped our sponsorship approach.

Where we once had a simple, transactional model, we now have a contemporary, high quality sponsorship product - one that creates enduring relationships rather than one off donations. This shift has already opened doors:

- deeper engagement with major operators,
- stronger professional connections, and, hopefully
- increased attendance from highcapacity airline staff at our events

## Strengthening Tran Tasman Collaboration

At the 2025 ANZSASI conference, ASASI and NZSASI Execs held an informal meeting that proved extremely productive. Rather than leaving everything to next year's hosts, we agreed to support one another more closely in future conferences - particularly in sponsorship development.

That agreement is already bearing fruit:

- ASASI and NZSASI now meet fortnightly via TEAMS, including.
- Sue Rice (APCSWG President) as part of that coordination.

Thanks to Paul Fox who has been instrumental in driving sponsorship engagement initially for the 2025 Sydney Conference, but currently for 2026 Wellington Conference. **This is the strongest trans-Tasman collaboration we've had in years, and it positions both societies for long-term success.**



The Australian and New Zealand and UNSW Executives at ANZSASI 2025, UNSW Sydney



ASASI President Alf Jonas Closing the ANZSASI 2025

# ASASI Corporate Member - Focus on the ATSB

## About the ATSB

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) improves safety and public confidence in aviation, marine and rail transport through our independent 'no blame' investigation of transport accidents and safety occurrences; safety data recording, analysis and research; and influencing safety action through fostering safety awareness.

Our aspirational vision is 'Transport without accidents'.

Our mission is to improve transport safety for the greatest public benefit through our independent investigations and influencing safety action.

## Our organisation

Established by the [Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003](#) (TSI Act), the ATSB is an independent Commonwealth Government statutory agency, reporting to the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.

We are governed by a Commission and are entirely separate from transport regulators (such as CASA, ONRSR and AMSA), government departments and policy makers (such as the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts, and state departments of transport), and operators.

Our approximately 100 staff are based in our Canberra head office and our field offices in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney. Our 60 or so transport safety investigators and managers come from a range of transport industry, human factors and research backgrounds. Their investigation work is supported and enabled by our safety reporting and corporate support teams.

## Our modes

The ATSB is responsible for investigating accidents and transport safety occurrences involving Australian-registered [civilian aircraft](#) (excluding recreational and sport aviation), commercial [shipping](#) (Australian-flagged ships, plus shipping in Australian waters or en route to Australian ports), and rail operations in Australia (rail investigations are undertaken either directly by the ATSB, or, under a collaboration agreement, on our behalf under the *TSI Act* in NSW by the Office of Transport Safety Investigation or in Victoria by the Office of the Chief Investigator, Transport Safety).

We also participate in overseas investigations involving Australian-registered aircraft and Australian-flagged ships, and provide support to our international counterpart investigation agencies, particularly our near neighbours.



**In 2025 the ATSB adopted a new purpose statement, to “influence transport safety improvements for the greatest public benefit through independent no-blame investigations and fostering safety awareness”.**

The updated statement highlights that our role is not just the independent investigation of transport accidents and incidents, it is also to use the reports and their safety messaging to influence safety changes across the aviation, rail and marine sectors.

But it also reflects the broader responsibilities of the ATSB in improving transport safety, such as by helping Australia's neighbours develop their own best practice safety investigation bodies, providing investigator training for other safety agencies and organisations, administering the REPCON confidential reporting scheme, and publishing and maintaining a national aviation safety occurrence database.

In 2025, in line with our purpose, the ATSB published no fewer than 304 safety products, up from 202 in 2024 and almost double the 153 published in 2023.

## ASASI Corporate Member - Focus on the ATSB

Illustrating the breadth of the ATSB's outputs, these comprised:

- 91 investigation final reports
- 34 other investigation reports, including preliminary and interim reports, safety studies and safety advisory notices
- 74 occurrence briefs
- 26 safety promotion videos, and
- 79 REPCON reports.

Significant among those 91 **investigation final reports** included, in the aviation sector, the systemic investigation of the midair collision of two sightseeing helicopters over the Gold Coast, which made 27 findings and identified 12 safety issues.

Also concluded in 2025 was a systemic investigation into two international widebody airliners taking off over a closed section of runway at Melbourne Airport, which led to safety improvements being implemented or planned by Australia's aviation regulator and air traffic management provider, the International Civil Aviation Organization and both airlines involved.

In the marine sector we released the final report from our investigation into the collision of a container ship with the Leeuwin sail training ship in Fremantle, with important lessons for marine pilots, and safety action taken by the port and marine pilot operator.

And in rail, our final report from the investigation of a washaway and derailment of a freight train at Traveston, near Gympie in Queensland, emphasised the importance of serviceable environmental monitoring equipment.

All of these significant investigations were supported by ATSB produced digital content in the form of educational videos that used graphics, animations and interviews with ATSB investigators to explain the nature of the occurrences, our findings, and broader safety lessons for industry. On social media platforms our videos can generate 10s, and even 100s of thousands of views.

In recent years we have invested heavily in producing digital content, as using footage, animations and graphics has proven to be very effective in sharing safety information in a timepoor, information-rich world.

Occurrence briefs are another platform where the ATSB has increased investment to highlight safety messaging. Briefs are short reports into occurrences that may not justify investigation under the Transport Safety investigation Act, but still offer important safety lessons. Shared on our social media accounts, the 74 briefs published in 2025 (up from 27 in 2024 and 9 in 2023) generated a high level of engagement, increased awareness and discussion.

Also driving the year's increased publication output was the ATSB's renewed focus on preliminary and interim reports. For significant accidents and incidents the ATSB aims to publish a preliminary report within 8 weeks of the occurrence, while all investigations that extend beyond a year in length will now have an comprehensive investigation update, typically in the form of an interim report, published every 12 months.

That way industry and key stakeholders are kept updated and informed, and safety information is shared even before an investigation is completed and the ATSB's findings are fully developed.

The critical role the ATSB plays in receiving and processing confidential reports, through our REPCON system, provides another platform to influence transport safety. REPCON is a voluntary and confidential reporting scheme where industry participants can raise transport safety concerns. After assessing those concerns and approaching involved parties for input and facilitating safety action, a summary REPCON report is published on our website for broader industry awareness.

Other ATSB publications in 2025 included 7 safety advisory notices, a safety study into passenger-carrying hot air ballooning, and 3 reports providing assistance to other Australian agencies conducting their own safety investigations. In addition, 7,636 aviation safety occurrences reported to the ATSB in 2025 were processed and added to our searchable online database.

## ASASI Corporate Member - Focus on the ATSB

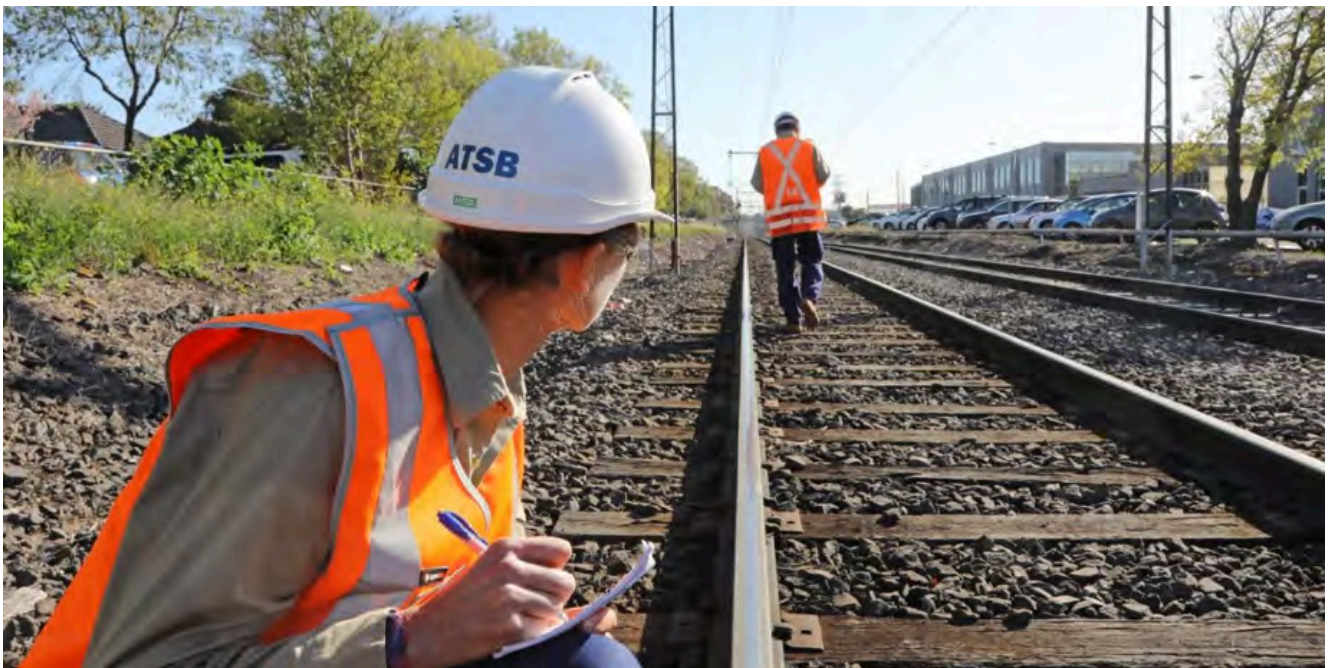
Beyond Australia, the ATSB continues to engage with and support our equivalent transport safety agencies in the Asia Pacific. For example, long standing partnerships with our counterparts in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea in 2025 continued to see investigators from these nations undertake tertiary level investigator training under the ATSB's partnership agreement with RMIT University (training that is also available to industry participants).

In addition, in 2025 the ATSB also delivered transport safety investigation training and specific investigation assistance to our colleagues in Tonga and Vanuatu – important capacity-building activities that were supported by funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

More broadly our international responsibilities continued to extend to our participation in key United Nations transport agencies, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), where we play leading roles in shaping best practice transport safety investigation globally.

But that ability to influence transport safety investigation internationally is only because the ATSB has built and sustained a reputation for high quality, timely investigation reports and safety information products – a reputation that is critical to our ability to effectively influence safety action and foster safety awareness.

Publication Date  
05/02/2026



# IATA 2025 Annual Safety Report Highlights

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) released its [2025 Annual Safety Report](#) demonstrating a solid year of safety performance with the following highlights:

- The all-accident rate of **1.32 per million flights** (one accident per 759,646 flights) was better than the 1.42 recorded in 2024 but slightly above the 2021-2025 five-year average of **1.27**.
- There were 51 accidents in 2025 among 38.7 million flights. That is fewer than the 54 accidents among 37.9 million flights in 2024, but above the 2021-2025 five-year average of 44 accidents.

Accident type	2024	2025	5-year Average (2021-2025)
<b>All accident rate (accidents per one million flights)</b>	1.42 (1 accident every 0.70 million flights)	<b>1.32 (1 accident every 0.76 million flights)</b>	1.27 (1 accident every 0.80 million flights)
<b>All accident rate for IATA member airlines</b>	1.11 (1 accident every 0.90 million flights)	<b>0.72 (1 accident every 1.38 million flights)</b>	0.80 (1 accident every 1.34 million flights)
<b>Total accidents</b>	54	51	44
<b>Fatal accidents</b>	7 (5 jet and 2 turboprop)	<b>8 (4 jet and 4 turboprop)</b>	6
<b>On-board fatalities</b>	244	394	198
<b>Fatality risk</b>	0.06	0.17	0.12
<b>IATA member airlines' fatality risk</b>	0.08	0.07	0.03
<b>Jet accident rate (per one million flights)</b>	1.23 (1 accident every 0.81 million flights)	<b>1.03 (1 accident every 0.97 million flights)</b>	0.98 (1 accident every 1.05 million flights)
<b>Turboprop accident rate (per one million flights)</b>	3.22 (1 accident every 0.31 million flights)	<b>4.08 (1 accident every 0.25 million flights)</b>	3.70 (1 accident every 0.29 million flights)
<b>Total flights (million)</b>	37.9	38.7	34.5

# IATA 2025 Annual Safety Report Highlights

- There were eight fatal accidents in 2025. That is more than the seven fatal accidents recorded in 2024 and the five-year average of six fatal accidents.
- There were 394 onboard fatalities in 2025, more than the 244 fatalities reported in 2024 and the five-year average of 198.

“Flying is the safest form of long-distance travel. Accidents are extremely rare and each one reminds us to be even more focused on continuous improvement through global standards and collaboration guided by safety data. The result of that effort is clear in how the five-year rolling average rate for fatal accidents has improved. A decade ago, the rate stood at one fatal accident for every 3.5 million flights (2012-2016). Today, it is one fatal accident for every 5.6 million flights (2021-2025). Flying is so safe that even one accident among the nearly 40 million flights operated annually moves the global data. Every accident is, of course, one too many. The goal for aviation remains zero accidents and zero fatalities,” said Willie Walsh, IATA’s Director General.

## Key insights from the report include:

- **The most common accidents** in 2025 were tail strikes, landing gear events, runway excursions, and ground damage. This underscores the importance of take-off, landing, and ground handling safety measures. Notably there were no loss of control in-flight (LOC-I) accidents in 2025. It is the second time this has been achieved (previously in 2020) and is significant as LOC-I are a leading cause of fatalities.
- **Airport facilities** contributed to 16% of accidents in 2025. This reinforces the need to fully respect global standards for runway safety areas, frangible installations within safety zones, and the effective mitigation of hazards such as runway surface contaminants, inadequate markings or lighting, and obstacles within protected areas or near runways.

“Airport infrastructure and runway environments play a critical role in accident outcomes. In several events, rigid obstacles near runways increased accident severity, likely turning otherwise survivable occurrences into fatal ones. All airports and regulators should continuously review runway safety areas and the structures near runways for compliance with global safety standards,” said Walsh.

- **IOSA airlines:** Airlines on the registry of the [IATA Operational Safety Audit \(IOSA\)](#) had an all-accident rate of 0.98, significantly lower than the 2.55 recorded by non-IOSA carriers. The all-accident rate of IATA member airlines was 0.72 per million flights, significantly lower than the 3.09 for non-IATA members. All IATA member airlines capable of being IOSA-audited are on the [IOSA registry](#).
- **Fatality risk**, which measures the potential for loss of life increased to 0.17 per million flights, higher than 2024 (0.06) and the five-year average (0.12). The increase in fatality risk was driven by a small number of fatal accidents. For example, Air India 171 (with 241 fatalities) and PSA Airlines flight 5342 (with 64 fatalities) accounted for over 77% of all loss of life on board aircraft in 2025.

## Conflict Zone Risks

The proliferation of conflict zones is driving significant rerouting and operational complexity. In some regions, military activity has occurred in or near flight corridors. The latest reminder of this is the significant disruptions that have occurred with the outbreak of war between the US/Israel and Iran. Close coordination between military and civil authorities is essential to ensure the safe operations of civil aircraft.

When conflict zones present risks that cannot be mitigated, states are responsible for restricting or closing airspace in a timely, transparent, and coordinated manner. It is essential that the process of closing and eventually to re-opening airspace remains focused on safety and security parameters and is not politicized. Moreover, clear, consistent, and professionally communicated Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) and risk advisories are critical information for airlines to consider when conducting their own risk assessments in support of safe and efficient flight operations.

# IATA 2025 Annual Safety Report Highlights

"Civil aircraft must never be placed at risk from military activity—deliberately or accidentally. When tensions rise, governments must share timely risk information, ensure effective civil–military coordination, restrict airspace where needed, and provide airlines with sufficient information for their own risk assessments. Whether closing or re-opening airspace, safety depends on transparency, facts, and coordination," said Walsh.

## **GNSS Interference**

Incidents of Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) interference capable of misleading aircraft navigation systems have risen sharply in recent years. IATA's [Incident Data eXchange](#) indicates that reported jamming events in 2025 increased by 67% compared to 2023 while reported GPS spoofing incidents rose by 193%.

"GNSS interference events are deeply concerning. Airlines rely on GNSS for safe and efficient flight operations. While system redundancies support safe operations in the face of these deliberate acts, immediate steps by governments and air navigation service providers are needed to improve situational awareness and enhance mitigation tools for pilots. Ultimately, the practice of GNSS interference must be stopped. Anything less is both unacceptable and irresponsible," said Walsh.

## **Timely, Comprehensive, and Public Accident Reports**

Accident investigation reports that are delayed, incomplete, or unpublished withhold valuable safety insights that can improve safety. IATA's analysis of investigations conducted between 2019 and 2023 indicates that only 63% of accident reports were completed in line with state obligations under the Chicago Convention. Because investigations routinely take more than one year to finalize, a five-year dataset ending in 2023 provides an accurate view of global performance.

Investigations are the responsibility of the states in which accidents or incidents have occurred. When grouped regionally, significant variations in completion rates are noted. The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) recorded the highest completion rate (81%), followed by North America (78%), Europe (75%), Asia-Pacific (68%), North Asia (67%), Middle East and North Africa (67%), Latin America and the Caribbean (60%), and Africa (19%).

"Accident investigation helps us improve safety, but many reports are not published in a timely, complete, or accessible way. Some are not made public while others lack clear recommendations. Annex 13 of the Chicago Convention is clear about state obligations. While compliance with this obligation is improving, anything less than 100% shortchanges everyone on opportunities to improve. Where accident investigation capacity is the challenge, coordinated global support to strengthen investigation capabilities is needed," said Walsh.

To support transparency and strengthen industry-wide safety learning, IATA has established a [centralized platform](#) that consolidates safety recommendations from final investigation reports into a single global repository. This improves access to critical safety insights, enables data-driven analysis, and supports industry efforts to prevent similar events in the future.

# Air India Boeing 787-8 Flight AI-171 Accident at Ahmedabad on June 12, 2025

After the preliminary report was released (copied in the Winter Newsletter) which introduced questions about the “electrical failure” and flight crew actions, there has been no further official information.

Officially the investigation is still in progress by the Indian Air Accidents Investigation Bureau (AAIB) which has dismissed media reports that the investigation is complete and the report points to an intentional act by the flight crew.

Additional the United States Foundation for Aviation Safety has reportedly submitted material new evidence to the US Senate, regarding crash flight AI 171 (VT ANB).

*“These include:*

- 1. Issues with the maiden flight*
- 2. A major fire in January 2022 involving a P100 power distribution panel*
- 3. A Rack Power Distribution Unit (RPDU) arcing in the common core system (CCS)*

*Fault patterns and components similar to what happened between June 9-12, 2025. They claim that they have leaked documents from 2014 - showing that Boeing was well aware of this issue. The internal document shows Boeing warning that “failure of a single component in the common core system could result in multiple components failing.”*

*There are multiple documents -- leaked by concerned Air India engineers -- that clearly show that this plane had NO GO faults across multiple domains 15 minutes before take-off. That this plane had faults in its power controllers, flight control logic, hydraulics, fault monitoring and processors - 15 minutes before take-off.”*

The discussion and rumours will continue until the official report and findings are published in March.



# ANZSASI 2026

ANZSASI 26 will be held in Wellington NZ over the period 05-07 June 2026 at the James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor, which is just off Lambton Quay in the heart of the CBD.

The welcome reception will start at 1800 on Friday 05 June and will provide a chance to catch up with old mates and an excellent opportunity for professional development networking. There will be two full days of presentations Saturday and Sunday, with a buffet-style dinner on the Saturday evening.

For those that have never been to Wellington, have a look at <https://www.wellingtonnz.com/> for inspiration – there's plenty to see and do. It's a compact city nestled between the hills and the harbour and, as they say, you can't beat it on a good day. It has fantastic caf  s, bars and restaurants (not to mention craft beer!) – let me know if you want any recommendations. It's also the home of our national museum – te Papa (which has an excellent Gallipoli display) and W  t   Workshop (for LotR & Avatar fans). There are direct flights to/from Australia as well.

Wellington is also the home for CAA and TAIC (and the NZDF), so plenty of opportunity for pre- or post-conference meetings, if that helps getting any travel budgets approved!

If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to contact Wayne:  
[nzsasi.sec@gmail.com](mailto:nzsasi.sec@gmail.com)

To make crossing the ditch a bit easier, we have a discount code available for ASASI members. The details are:

- Promo code: TAKINA2
- Can only be used for bookings made via <http://www.qantas.com/>
- AUD\$100 discount off return Qantas flights from AU to Wellington
- Valid for all Qantas Australian ports to Wellington
- Only valid for Qantas operated services (not valid for Jetstar or other partner airlines)
- Code covers travel before and after your conference dates
- Excluded forms of payment: Flight credit, points, in-conjunction with secondary promo code

We have organised a conference room rate with the hotel, but rooms are limited so best to get in early. Book directly with the hotel using the link below.

## Booking Details:

Arrival Date: 05<sup>th</sup> June 26  
Departure Date: 07<sup>th</sup> June 26  
Attendee/Group Code: 574965  
Online booking link:  
<https://reservations.travelclick.com/10799?groupID=4923328>

## Room Type and Rates:

Terrace Room  
- \$189 per night per room (Breakfast Included in Rate for 1 person),  
- \$219 per night per room (Breakfast Included in Rate for 2 people)  
Executive Room  
- \$239 per night per room (Breakfast Included in Rate for 1 person)  
- \$269 per night per room (Breakfast Included in Rate for 2 people)

Method of Payment: All guests to book & pay direct

Prices include GST tax of 15%  
Rates quoted are per room, per night on a single, double or twin occupancy.  
All rooms and rates are subject to availability.

Planning for the **Grand Trans-Tasman Grudge Match** is also well in hand and AB has locked in a course, so if you like to ruin a good walk by playing golf, the booking at present is for Friday 05 Jun 26, 12 players, Ambrose format, T/O 1000.

The course is:  
Judgeford Golf Club  
328 Paramata Haywards Rd  
SH58 Porirua  
<https://www.judgefordgolf.co.nz/>

For more info on the golf, contact Alister Buckingham.



# Welcome to a New Member

So far this year we have had 11 new members who Joined ISASI and, as they are from Australasia, they automatically join our ASASI team. We are very pleased to grow our membership and welcome the new members. They have a wide range of backgrounds and experience which illustrates the scope of contemporary aviation safety and investigation. Details of a new member follows and we plan to introduce other new members in future editions.

## Deborah Loats

My career started in psychophysiology and health science research at Swinburne University of Technology. I first stumbled upon Human Factors working for Defence Science & Technology Group, where I learnt to conduct Cognitive Work Analysis to support the RAAF P8-A Poseidon design changes.

I then began applying my HF skills at Metro Trains Melbourne across a range of rail projects, and spent lots of time in Fatigue Risk Management. I have been an investigator at the Australian Transport Safety Bureau for the last 3 years, working on aviation and rail investigations, now based in the Rail team.



## Positions Vacant - Volunteers Needed

To support our 'recharge' initiative and strengthen our engagement with the next generation, I'm calling for volunteers for three important roles:

- Student Ambassador – our point of contact for universities and students
- Mentor Coordinator – to help match mentors with early-career investigators
- Scholarship Coordinator – to oversee our evolving scholarship model

These roles don't require huge time commitments—but they will have a huge impact. Indeed, if any of the members have any other ideas or wish to assist in a voluntary capacity the Executive are more than happy to hear from you.

If you're interested, please speak with any of the Executive team members

# The History File

We look back at the 1980s in Australia : a very momentous time on the Australian aviation scene. Aviation was changing rapidly and the expansion of the National Safety Council (NSCA) in Victoria was an auspicious event.

One of the founding members of ASASI in 1970/80 was John Hopkins and we have a short biography of his contribution to Australian aviation safety. His background and experience was typical of the air safety investigators in those days.

## **National Safety Council of Australia (NSCA)**

The SBS recently showed a documentary on the National Safety Council of Australia (NSCA) developed in the 1980s by John Friedrich . This was an interesting time for Australian aviation with the extensive NSCA operations originally in Victoria.

Friedrich joined NSCA Victorian Division in January 1977 as a safety engineer, and was appointed executive director in 1982 and began to transform it into a national search and rescue organisation. He built up the company with loans from 27 banks that agreed to lend millions of dollars to NSCA with little more surety than Friedrich's word. McGregor-Lowndes attributes this lack of probity to the halo effect of NSCA and Friedrich himself. In 1988, he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) "in recognition of service to the community, particularly in the area of industrial safety and search and rescue services"

NSCA was largely run by volunteers. Following the Ash Wednesday fires in 1983, Friedrich saw the opportunity to transform NSCA into a search and rescue organisation. Over the subsequent six years, NSCA purchased a considerable amount of equipment, and established a network of bases around Australia.

By 1989, it employed 430 people, who were known colloquially as "The Thunderbirds" after the television series of the same name, and had an annual operating budget of A\$90 million. It amassed an impressive array of equipment including ships, aircraft, helicopters, trained rescue dogs, satellite communications, parachute rescue teams and even a mini submarine. As well as search and rescue, its staff were trained in firefighting, and many of its rescue helicopters were fitted with belly tanks for aerial firefighting.



NSCA operational personnel were given ranks and insignia equivalent to fire fighters. It regularly conducted joint training with emergency services, the Royal Australian Navy and Royal Australian Air Force. It provided search and rescue services for the Royal Australian Air Force, state and federal governments and industry. By the late 1980s, NSCA had more advanced search and rescue equipment than Australian Defence Force and there were reports that personnel received weapons training. As a result, it was widely believed to be a government-backed or paramilitary organisation. The State Bank of Victoria wrote in an internal memo that "NSCA's status (nonprofit-making and tax exempt) and its role as a provider of community service in the fields of health, safety and emergency services render it for practical purposes a quasi-government body.

John Friedrich was very inventive and a hands-on leader. Many politicians and senior people ( police, military etc ) were impressed by his operations which were expanded around Australia and overseas. Unfortunately, his financial management was also 'inventive' and the NSCA was placed into liquidation in 1989.

# The History File

ASASI was formed in March 1978 so it has been in operation for 48 years. One of the founding members was John Hopkins who is featured in this edition and we have added a copy of the original minutes of the Inaugural Meeting. There are several names of people at that meeting that some of us older members might remember?

## John C Hopkins

John C Hopkins was born in London in 1930.

About the age of eleven John was awarded a government scholarship for secondary schooling, which he completed in 1948.

John's family emigrated to Australia, arriving in July 1948. They were based in Adelaide.

When the Korean War started the Australian Government formed The Citizen Air Force, which ran a recruiting program for trainee pilots. John received a place in the force and was taught to fly by ex-World War Two pilots at Parafield.

John moved to Melbourne for a job in CSIRO. He was a member of 21 Squadron and flew vampire jet fighters. At about the same time John enrolled in Bachelor of Art studies at the University of Melbourne.

John applied to Trans Australian Airlines (TAA) & they gave him a job flying DC3, DC4, DC 6, Fokker Friendships, and Convair 240 Aircraft.

John applied for a job with Cathay Pacific in Hong Kong, where he flew DC6s, Conair 880 & Lockheed Electras.

After this John was offered a Job with Quebec Air in Montreal flying F27s. John moved to Montreal but the Job did not materialize. He also did a De Havilland Twin Otter Course in Toronto.

John moved back to Australia looking for work. He was offered a good flying job, but he thought he might do something else for a while. So, he applied to DCA for a job as an aircraft accident investigator.

John took up the job with the DCA in Melbourne. The DCA Air Safety Investigation Branch became the Bureau of Air Safety Investigation (BASIS). When the Bureau moved to Canberra John went with it and specialized in flight recording readouts. At that time flight recorders were being made mandatory, but they only recorded five parameters, Time, Altitude, heading, Pitch & cockpit area microphone.

This was a period in late 1970s when the aviation industry was expanding rapidly and aeronautical engineering and aircraft operations were becoming more complex. The maintenance of aviation safety relied on greater understanding of operations through data and audio recordings.

John was a strong supporter of the development of digital flight recordings and developed liaison with the NTSB in Washington and the recoding industry. He arranged the purchase of the latest readout equipment for BASIS to be able to conduct contemporary accident and incident investigations and analysis.

John attended an eight-week course at Cranfield College of Aeronautics in the UK for Aircraft Accident Investigation.

John continued with these specializations & was promoted over time to second in command at the Australia Bureau of Accident Investigation (BASIS). He was aware of the advantages of international cooperation and arranged for BASIS investigators to attend NTSB and AAIB investigations of major accidents in the USA and UK.

John retired in 1989.

He was a founding member of ASASI in Australia in 1978. John was Vice President of ASASI for several years assisting with the organization of the annual ANZSASI conferences.



The ASASI Inaugural Minutes

THE  
AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY  
OF  
AIR SAFETY INVESTIGATORS

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1 MARCH 1978

# The ASASI Inaugural Minutes

## The Australian Society of Air Safety Investigators

Minutes  
of Inaugural Meeting held at  
Aviation House  
188 Queen Street, Melbourne  
on 1 March 1978

### PRESENT :

Paul Choquenat	John Benton
Jim Sandercock	John Jay
Griff Hughes	George Dodkins
Bob Whitecross	Mike Lewino
Ted McKenzie	Alan Woodward
Ian Stacy	Peter Graham
Alan Green	Ron Smith
Frank Yeend	Jim Doubleday
Harry Mortlock	Ted Tovell
Geoff Banfield	Don Ende
Don Whalley	Ian Mason
John Hopkins	Ian Smith

### APOLOGIES :

Tony Harris	Col Gersaghty
Ian Leslie	Ian Milligan

The meeting opened at 1700 hours EST  
Provisional Chairman : Paul Choquenat  
Provisional Secretary/Treasurer : Jim Sandercock

Paul Choquenat outlined the proposed agenda for the meeting and discussed the developments in the work to form an Australian Society. The idea for an Australian Chapter was considered some years ago and a small group of members of the Society had worked towards this end. Formation of the

## The ASASI Inaugural Minutes

3

Australian Chapter was delayed by the by formation of the International Society of Air Safety Investigators. Work continued to form an Australian Society and a provisional Constitution was drafted.

On 1 February 1978 a meeting of seventeen members and prospective members was held at Air Liquide House to discuss the proposed formation of The Australian Society of Air Safety Investigators. The minutes of the meeting on 1 February 1978 were read. Moved by Bob Whitecross that the minutes be accepted as read. Seconded by Jim Doubleday. Motion carried.

Paul Choquetat described the subsequent events arising from the meeting of 1 February 1978 and the nominations for office bearers in the Australian Society. He sought a motion of approval of actions of the Provisional Committee.

The motion was moved by Don Ende. Seconded by Ted McKenzie. Motion carried.

Bob Whitecross moved that a motion be put to form The Australian Society of Air Safety Investigators. Seconded John Bentan. Motion carried.

Paul Choquetat detailed the outcome of the nominations for office bearers. A committee consisting of George Dodkins and John Day were appointed to scrutinise the nominations received by the closing date 20 February 1978.

The Committee found the nominations to be valid. The Committee agreed that as the nominations for President - Paul Choquetat  
Vice President - John Bentan, and  
Secretary/Treasurer - Ian Smith

were unanimous, a ballot of members was not necessary. The three named office bearers were then proclaimed duly elected and they then commenced their respective duties. The President and Choquet took the Chair.

The President then discussed the proposed Constitution of the Australian Society of Air Safety Investigators.

The draft Constitution had been submitted to Bob Edwards (ACS) who had checked the document for legal correctness. This move had been recommended and he believed resulted in a better document.

Jim Doubleday asked the Chair if the final draft had been sent to each Region.

The Chairman explained that time had not permitted this action. The original draft had been circulated for comment and the few changes proposed had been of a minor nature only.

Frank Yeend asked the Chair if the meeting accepted the Constitution in its present form could it be changed at a future date.

The Chairman explained that the Constitution and By-Laws could be amended, repealed or altered in part or in whole by the vote of two-thirds of the members.

Motion that the draft Constitution placed before the meeting be accepted.

Moved Jim Samplecock

Seconded Jim Doubleday

Motion carried.

The formation of the various committees set out in Article VI of the Constitution was discussed. The Membership Committee was considered to be

## The ASASI Inaugural Minutes

the most important at this stage and it was agreed that such a committee would be formed in the near future

Frank Ueend sought clarity on the Australian Society members relationship with ISASI.

The chairman stated that ISASI will continue to issue badges and scrolls. We will administer the Australian Society for ISASI. We will handle the fees for ISASI. We may call for \$1 or \$2 above the ISASI charge to cover Australian administration costs. Exchange should provide additional funds and it is expected that ISASI will grant the Australian Society \$US 200 as a starting up fund.

### General Business

Bob Whitecross tendered apologies for Arthur Lowell who is in Brisbane.

John Hopline on membership. Are all those eligible already members.

Chairman No. Time has not permitted full canvassing of industry. The major airlines and organisations such as Hawker De Havilland etc will be approached

Bob Whitecross on meetings. As a professional Society it would be desirable to have regular meetings with a guest speaker and invite prominent people who may have an interest in air safety investigation. The Chairman stated that the executive will look closely at this aspect and a committee will be formed to develop such meetings.

The Vice President spoke on the hard work

# The ASASI Inaugural Minutes

9

and time which Paul Choquet, Jim Sandercock  
and their helpers had expended in the forming  
of the Australian Society

No further business

The chairman invited the members present  
to attend the Hardware Club to launch the  
new Australian Society in a fitting manner

1750 hours EST the meeting was closed

  
1/5/79

*Thank you for reading!*

<b>PRESIDENT</b>	<b>ALF JONAS</b>
<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b>	<b>CLARE FRY</b>
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