



The
Leading
Edge

Safety at the Forefront

The Power of Partnership: Growing Aviation Safely

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Global aviation is experiencing strong growth, with air traffic volumes expected to triple over the next 25 years. While this presents significant opportunities, recent incidents around the world underscore a fundamental truth: we must be safe to grow.

Aviation Safety Forum 2026 – Our Sector’s Joint Commitment to Safety

At this year’s Aviation Safety Forum¹, CAAS brought together some 300 aviation leaders and

professionals under the theme “Safe to Grow” and released findings from the second Singapore Aviation Sector Safety Culture Survey.

Positive Trends in Safety Culture

The sector-wide survey is conducted every two years to longitudinally monitor the sector’s safety culture, identify emerging trends and developments, and develop interventions as necessary. The inaugural survey was launched in 2023.

The second survey, conducted from October to December 2025, was completed by close to 5,000 personnel from some 400 aviation companies, including airlines, the aerodrome operator, ground handlers, maintenance organisations, design and production organisations, training organisations and freight forwarders.

Singapore Aviation Safety Culture Framework



Safety culture is the set of enduring values and attitudes regarding safety issues, shared among all members at every level of an organisation. It is an expression of how safety is perceived, valued and prioritised by management and employees in an organisation, and is ultimately manifested in the behaviour of people. It significantly influences how effectively safety is being managed.

A positive safety culture requires continual effort and cultivation within an organisation by every individual in their respective roles. Operational personnel who exhibit safe behaviour encourage peers and colleagues to put safety first. Senior management and supervisors who are truly committed to safety inspire others by applying safety culture principles in their decision-making and actions. Safety mindsets take root when organisations continually seek to improve their safety culture and drive improvement through policies and processes.

In a positive safety culture, safety is the core value of the organisation and is recognised as essential for the continuity of its operations. In such a desired state, people and organisations demonstrate the key elements expressed in the Singapore Aviation Safety Culture Framework, and:

- **Commit** that safety will be a key consideration in decision-making and is given due priority when faced with other competing pressures;
- **Trust** one another that safety is the motivation of their actions, and operate on a mutual understanding of acceptable behaviours;
- **Communicate** actively in the reporting, alerting and sharing of safety information;
- Are keenly **aware** of the safety risks that they are exposed to, and may be generating for others; and
- Are driven to seek **improvement** in safety, recognising that safety is a continuous journey and not a destination.

The development of a safety culture will be influenced by the prevailing societal or corporate cultures. Different socio-cultural norms influence how people behave and will indirectly impact the safety culture of the organisation. Efforts to nurture a safety culture require an understanding of the cultural practices and norms that shape the behaviour of individuals and organisations, and need to leverage the dynamic interactions of such socio-cultural factors.

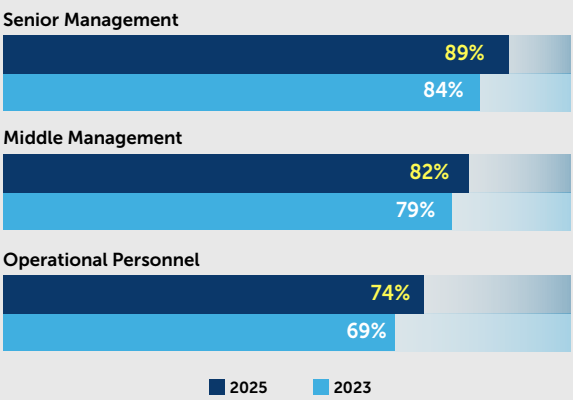
The survey was based on a safety culture framework developed with the Netherlands Aerospace Centre and comprised 65 questions which were specially customised to suit the operating context in Singapore. The framework consists of five safety culture dimensions - Commitment, Trust, Communication, Awareness and Improvement.

The results of the second survey showed significant improvements in aviation safety culture across the sector, with 77% of respondents strongly agreeing or agreeing that the Singapore aviation sector has a positive safety culture – a 4% increase from the inaugural survey in 2023.

Other key findings from the sector-wide safety culture survey are:

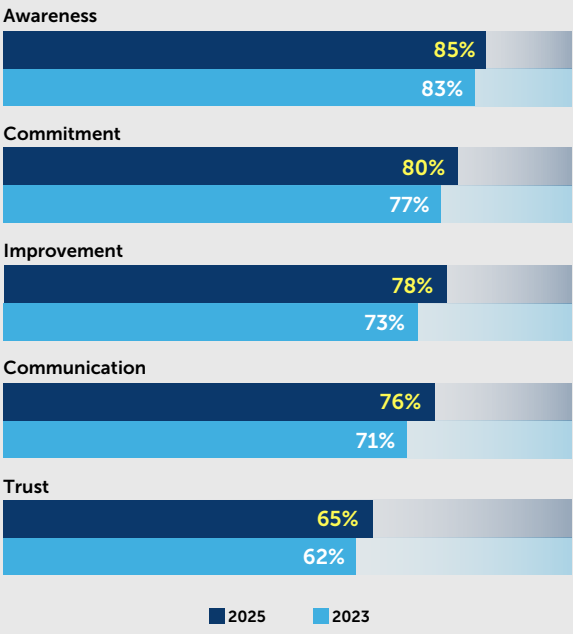
Safety culture has improved across all job roles

% of respondents who (strongly) agree the sector has a positive safety culture

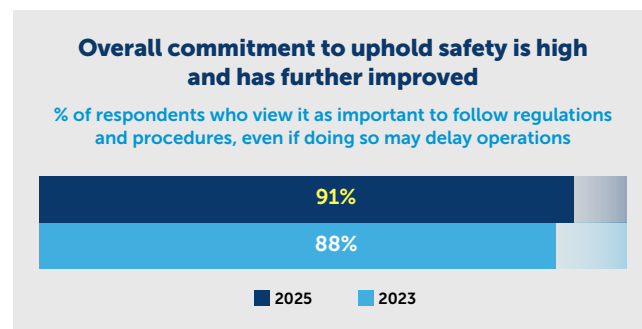


Safety culture has improved across all dimensions

% of respondents who (strongly) agree the sector has a positive safety culture



¹ The Aviation Safety Forum has served as a cornerstone event for Singapore’s aviation community, bringing together key stakeholders from across our ecosystem to discuss important issues in aviation safety.



Fostering Safety Ownership, Open Communication, and Continuous Safety Learning and Improvement

Drawing on the longitudinal insights from the survey and guided by our safety fundamentals, the Forum explored how we can further strengthen our safety regime, enhance safety culture, and hone safety leadership capabilities to ensure sustainable safe growth in the decades ahead.

In particular, discussions among guest speakers, panellists and participants from the audience centred on how organisations can better cultivate environments where everyone takes personal ownership of safety in day-to-day operations, feels empowered to speak up, proactively learns from near-misses, and continuously improves safety practices. Key themes from the discussions included:

» Managing Safety Amidst Growth and Operational Pressure

While discussing safety tensions arising from organisational growth, panellists shared experiences such as the rapid post-COVID operational ramp-up, which brought high demand and pressure on personnel and systems, requiring careful pacing to avoid shortcuts despite temptations to expedite processes. Emphasis was placed on the importance of transparency, reporting near-misses, and leadership modelling to maintain safety standards.

The Swiss cheese model was referenced to illustrate how organisational structures and supervisory roles influence safety “holes”, with the need to prevent these holes from aligning to avoid accidents. Panellists highlighted the challenge of balancing operational demands with safety, noting that sometimes grounding operations (“cheddar cheese” with no holes) is necessary following incidents to reassess and improve safety measures.

» Just Culture and Accountability

A recurring theme was the concept of just culture, which emphasises honest reporting and fair treatment without lowering safety standards or accountability. Panellists addressed misconceptions that just culture equates to leniency, clarifying that unsafe behaviours are not tolerated, and rigorous investigations are conducted to learn from incidents. The importance of leadership in holding the safety line and fostering trust was stressed, with examples of how investigations focus on systemic issues rather than blaming individuals.

Examples from both civil and military aviation were shared, including incidents involving aircraft maintenance and operational decisions where good intentions sometimes led to safety risks. These cases underscored the need for clear procedures, communication, and continuous learning to prevent normalisation of deviance and to ensure safety culture is preserved even amid change.

» Encouraging Open Reporting and Learning

Panellists discussed strategies to encourage open reporting of safety hazards and near-misses, noting that visible organisational responses to reports are crucial to maintaining trust and motivation among staff. Recognition of positive safety behaviours and publicising preventive actions were cited as effective methods to foster a positive safety culture. Discussions also acknowledged the challenges of building a strong open reporting culture and that efforts to do so are an ongoing journey closely intertwined with trust and learning.

The collaborative relationship among regulators, operators, and other stakeholders in Singapore’s aviation ecosystem was highlighted as a key enabler for open sharing and joint safety improvements. Examples included the use of surveillance technology managed in a non-punitive manner and responsive maintenance of infrastructure based on frontline reports.

» Impact of Automation and Artificial Intelligence (AI) on Safety Culture

The panel addressed concerns about automation and AI, emphasising that these technologies should serve as enablers that assist human operators rather than replace accountability. Systems are designed to support verification and reduce uncertainty, but ultimate responsibility remains with individuals and supervisors. Proper design and clear accountability are essential to prevent erosion of safety culture from over-reliance on technology.

» Intent of Regulatory Changes

There was an interesting question from the audience that enquired if recent regulatory changes were intended to increase punitive levers, as there was a perception that this may be so.

CAAS clarified that this was not the case, and explained that the legislative enhancements aim to provide more flexible tools for enforcement without undermining just culture principles; with the emphasis remaining on collaboration, safety promotion, and fair treatment rather than increasing punitive measures.

A strong safety regime and culture thrive when safety leaders through the ranks are committed to achieving common safety goals through active partnerships and shared learning. This Forum embodied that collaborative spirit and commitment to safety.

At the gathering, the candid sharing of insightful perspectives from practical experiences, compelling real-life anecdotes and best practices from industry experts with a wealth of experience provided valuable lessons on balancing growth, operational demands, and safety imperatives in the complex aviation environment.

Efforts to Drive Improvements in Safety Culture

The broad-based improvement in safety culture across the Singapore aviation sector is the result of active tripartite efforts by CAAS, aviation companies and union leaders to nurture a safety mindset, strengthen operational vigilance and encourage proactive safety reporting over the last two years, following the inaugural safety culture survey in 2023. Between 2024 and 2025, CAAS worked with companies and unions to conduct over 200 outreach sessions reaching out to over 5,000 workers in airside and operational functions; these were identified as areas of focus in the last survey.

In 2024, CAAS published a “[Handbook on Aviation Safety Culture](#)”. Developed with tripartite partners, the handbook draws on insights from the inaugural survey and subsequent focus group sessions with management and operational personnel. Tailored to Singapore’s operating context, it provides practical Do’s and Don’ts to guide company management in fostering a psychologically safe and conducive environment for safety and for individuals to take ownership of their actions and uphold professional conduct



with safety in mind. The handbook is developed to help build trust and clarify what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, another area of focus identified in the 2023 survey.

In the latest 2025 survey, 90% (+3%) of respondents indicated that it is clear to them what behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable, an improvement from 2023. Overall trust has also improved, with 65% (+3%) strongly agree or agree with statements that they trust one another that safety is the motivation of their actions and operate on a mutual understanding of acceptable behaviours.

Following the 2025 survey, CAAS will work with tripartite partners to draw lessons from the survey findings and develop new initiatives to

further strengthen safety culture. These include, but are not limited to, developing more targeted training courses and reference materials in collaboration with the Singapore Aviation Academy and safety culture experts. These initiatives will provide additional support and resources to address key areas for improvement highlighted by the survey.

Mr Han Kok Juan, Director-General of CAAS, said, "The improvement in safety culture across the whole sector over the last two years is the result of strong tripartite efforts and the dedication of aviation workers at every level. As air traffic grows and our operating environment becomes more complex, the sector must be even more vigilant to keep flying safe for all."

A Snapshot of Collective Industry Efforts to Strengthen Safety Culture



Tan Kai Ping, Chief Operations Officer, Singapore Airlines, said, "Safety is the top priority for the Singapore Airlines Group. Our safety culture is built on shared responsibility and a clear commitment to doing the right thing, guiding every decision on the ground and in the air. We will continue to invest in our people, training programmes, and technological capabilities to strengthen risk management, enhance operational resilience, and support consistently safe operations across our network."



Tan Lye Teck, Executive Vice President, Safety & Security, Changi Airport Group, said, "At Changi Airport, we focus on building a strong safety culture among all airport partners and staff through various ongoing initiatives, such as encouraging a culture of open reporting among airport workers by making various channels available to them to raise safety concerns, and acknowledging and appreciating airport workers who demonstrate exceptional commitment to safety through regular Airport Safety Awards. This alignment allows us to collectively aim for the highest level of safety, and to work towards translating this into the safety of daily operations."



Henry Low, CEO, SATS Singapore Hub, said, "Our people are the heart of everything we do at SATS, and these results reflect the steady progress in strengthening safety culture across the sector. At SATS, we have focused on strengthening communication, standardising processes, and equipping our teams with better tools and training through our Hub Handler for the Future programme. In ground handling, consistency on the ground is critical and our focus is clear — safe operations, every shift, every day."

Tom Alwyn-Jones, Managing Director, dnata Singapore, said, "At dnata, safety is a core value and underpins every decision we make. Over the past two years, we have continued to strengthen a culture where our people feel empowered to speak up, care for one another, and take ownership of safety. Our approach is reinforced through open reporting, regular briefings and audits, data-driven risk management, and strong leadership engagement. We welcome the positive results of the 2025 sector wide Safety Culture Survey and remain fully committed to continuously enhancing safety standards as a trusted ground handling partner at Changi Airport."



Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul Organisations

Foo Kean Shuh, Executive Vice President Operations and Chief Sustainability Officer, SIA Engineering Company, said, "Safety is the foundation of operations at SIA Engineering Company. We continually strengthen our safety culture by promoting positive safety behaviours and raising standards. We encourage open communication so concerns can be identified early, and we make it easy for issues to be reported and tracked. Through these sustained efforts, we aim to build a proactive safety culture where everyone is empowered to speak up and take ownership of safety. We remain committed to working closely with CAAS and industry partners to advance aviation safety."

Jason Bok, Senior Vice President, Head Quality & Safety, Commercial Aerospace Corporate, ST Engineering Aerospace, said, "Sustained national level safety leadership and industry engagement by CAAS have played an important role in strengthening safety culture across the aviation sector. Structured engagement with leadership, world class safety management training via the Singapore Aviation Academy, and national forums such as the Aviation Safety Forum and the Asia Pacific Summit for Aviation Safety have helped align safety priorities and reinforce shared responsibility. At ST Engineering's Commercial Aerospace business, this has been complemented by strong management support for incident and near miss reporting, cross-business safety forums, and targeted safety leadership and specialist training. When leaders consistently act on their safety commitments, staff confidence and safety culture response naturally improve."



CAAS, Flight Safety Foundation and Japan Civil Aviation Bureau are jointly organising the fourth Asia Pacific Summit for Aviation Safety (AP-SAS) in Osaka, Japan from 4-6 August. Join us as we bring together over 400 aviation leaders and experts to address emerging aviation safety priorities and strengthen collaboration in the Asia Pacific region.

Themed "Achieving Safety Excellence: Collaborate, Reinforce, Transform", some key highlights of this annual summit include:

- Keynote address by Mr Onuma Toshiyuki, President of the International Civil Aviation Organization Council;
- Expert discussions on operational resilience, safety culture, and human capital development;
- Insights on leveraging artificial intelligence and emerging technologies to enhance aviation safety.

Registration is now open. For programme details and to secure your spot: flightsafety.swoogo.com/ap-sas-2026.



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- Develop and implement national and airport security programmes
- Coordinate preventive security measures across stakeholder groups



June

8-12 Jun 2026	Safety Oversight Inspectors (Air Navigation Services)
24-26 Jun 2026	Cybersecurity Primer for Civil Aviation (co-organised with SUTD)
29 Jun-3 Jul 2026	ICAO Training Package: Oversight of Aircraft Leasing Operations

July

6-10 Jul 2026	ICAO Aviation Security Training Package: Aviation Security Managers <i>[New]</i>
14-17 Jul 2026	Safety Auditor <i>[New]</i>
20-23 Jul 2026	Lead Safety Auditor <i>[New]</i>
27-31 Jul 2026	Resolution of Safety Issues

August

3-7 Aug 2026	Safety Management System Implementation
11-14 Aug 2026	ICAO Training Package: Safety Management System Assessment and Monitoring
17-21 Aug 2026	ICAO Training Package: Personnel Licensing (PEL) System
	ICAO Annex 14 Requirements and Application
24-28 Aug 2026	Safety Oversight Inspectors (Aerodrome)
24 Aug - 3 Sep 2026	Safety Oversight Inspectors (Airworthiness)

September

1-3 Sep 2026	Safety Management System Recurrent Training (jointly developed by CAAS and FAA)
7-24 Sep 2026	ICAO Training Package: ICAO Government Safety Inspector Operations – Air Operator Certification
28 Sep - 1 Oct 2026	Aviation Security Management Programme

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