3. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

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3 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This SPAS LV Chapter 3 includes all strategic priorities published in EPAS Volume II – 2023 edition. To keep strategic overall view all priority areas and issues identified by EASA are listed herein. Tasks assigned by EASA to MS are specified under deliverables of each paragraph. If any of such tasks are not relevant to Republic of Latvia the appropriate justification is stated.

3.1 Systemic safety and resilience

This area addresses system-wide issues that affect aviation as a whole. In most scenarios, these issues are related to the impact of security on safety, human factors and human performance, socio-economic factors, or to deficiencies in organisational processes and procedures, whether at CAA LV or industry level.

Fostering risk management capabilities that address various types of risk and are built on the foundation of effective management systems constitutes the main priority under this section. Safety management implementation at State and industry level is at the heart of this.

3.1.1 Risk interdependencies

3.1.1.1 Management of information security risks

Rationale:

The management of information security risks that have an impact on safety is a strategic priority.

The global civil aviation ecosystem accelerates towards more digitalisation. This implies that any exchange of information within any digital workflow of the aviation community needs to be resilient to information security (cybersecurity) threats which have far reaching consequences, such as on flight safety or the availability of airspace.

The safety actions in this area are aimed at mitigating the information-security-related safety risks.

Desired outcome:

Increase aviation safety by managing the impact of information security risks on safety and mitigating the related safety risks.

Deliverables:

No action designated to Member States.

3.1.1.2 Management of security risks that have an impact on aviation safety

Rationale:

The Basic Regulation addresses some of the interdependencies between safety and security in civil aviation and requires the EC, the Agency and the Member States to cooperate on security matters where interdependencies between civil aviation safety and security exist.

The implementation of aviation security measures can have a direct impact on the safety aspects of aerodrome or aircraft operations. Airport, aircraft or in-flight security are the areas where the interdependencies are highly visible and where any security requirements should also consider possible potential impacts on aviation safety.

Desired outcome:

Increase safety by managing the impact of security on safety and mitigating related safety risks. Encourage an integrated approach to management of safety and security risks across the spectrum of aviation activities.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0040 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under Systemic safety and resilience.

3.1.1.3 Management of the risks arising from conflict zones

Rationale:

Managing the risks arising from conflict zones is a strategic priority.

The safety actions in this area are aimed at mitigating the risks and threats posed by flying over or in the vicinity of zones where armed conflicts exist.

Desired outcome:

Enable the effective information sharing about possible risks and threats in conflict zones. Manage the risks arising from conflict zones.

Deliverables:

No action designated to Member States.

3.1.1.4 Management of the risks arising from socio-economic factors

Rationale:

Article 89 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1139 formally requires the Commission, the Agency, other Union institution bodies, offices and agencies and the Member States, within their respective fields of competence, to cooperate with a view to ensuring that interdependencies between civil aviation safety and related socio-economic factors are taken into account including in regulatory procedures, oversight and implementation of just culture as defined in Article 2 of Regulation (EU) No 376/2014, to address socio-economic risks to aviation safety.

One of the main discussions on socio-economic factors is currently focused on the employment and working conditions of pilots in commercial air transport. Several EU-wide studies suggest that there may be concerns about the possible impact of the working conditions on safety culture and safety reporting (data for other safety critical personnel is limited).

However, these studies, and data available to the Agency, fail to establish a correlation between employment and working conditions and level of safety. The absence of an established correlation could also be due to the lack of adequate data and the lack of reporting from safety-critical personnel.

Desired outcome:

Enable a better understanding of the possible risks arising from socio-economic factors, and manage them.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0042 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under Systemic safety and resilience.

3.1.2 Safety Management

3.1.2.1 Achieve effective implementation of SSP/SPAS in Member States

Rationale:

Effective implementation of SSP/SPAS at Member State level throughout Europe is maintained as a strategic priority; it is an important pillar of EU aviation safety management as outlined in the EASP. It also constitutes an essential enabler for resilience.

The proactive implementation of safety management considering all known safety data and information has proven essential for the ability of the aviation system to deal with safety issues, including new items coming from disruptive events or from a crisis (recovery). Both the SSP and SMS will be increasingly instrumental within the EU aviation safety management system, not only in ensuring that safety issues are addressed at the right level, but also in guaranteeing the availability of required data and safety intelligence to support the timely identification of safety risks and issues.

Desired outcome:

Improve the level of safety through the effective implementation of safety management by CAA LV and organisations.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0001, MST.0002, MST.0032, MST.0028 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under Systemic safety and resilience.

3.1.2.2 Achieve effective implementation of management systems (SMS) in industry

Rationale:

This strategic priority aims at the development of robust risk management capabilities, making use of all available safety data and safety intelligence, encompassing organisational factors as well as human factors and human performance management, and raising the level of awareness with regard to the most significant risks affecting the organisation. The competence of the safety practitioners is a key enabler to enhance risk management capabilities. With this, SMS should be seen as a powerful business management tool for informed decision-making. Disruptive events such as the COVID-19 pandemic have demonstrated the added value of investments in the management system.

With the accelerating pace of digitalisation, capabilities for safety data collection, analysis and exchange will be augmented for the benefit of data-driven decision-making in a more dynamic and proactive manner.

Desired outcome:

To increase safety with a combination of actions that address more than one issue.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0002 and MST.0003 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under Systemic safety and resilience and Flight operations

3.1.3 Human factors and human performance

Rationale:

Human factors and human performance are strategic priorities. As new technologies and concepts of operation emerge on the market and the complexity of the aviation system continuously increases, it is of key importance to properly address human factors and human performance in terms of both limitations and their contribution to delivering safety, as part of the safety management implementation.

The health, well-being and fitness of aviation personnel are intrinsically linked to the resilience of the aviation system. Risks in the area of medical fitness have increased during the COVID-19 crisis. Those risks have an impact on the performance of key personnel in the aviation system due to their effect on mental or physical state, which are influenced by multiple factors.

Desired outcome:

Ensure continuous improvement in safety management activities as related to human factors and human performance.

Exploit new advances in medicines and health monitoring.

Harmonise MED and FTL requirements where this ensures fair competition or facilitates the free movement of goods, persons and services.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0037, MST.0034 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under Systemic safety and resilience.

3.1.4 Civil-military coordination and cooperation

Rationale:

Closer cooperation is needed between the civil and the military aviation stakeholders, including at the level of State safety management, both to reconcile the airspace needs and to achieve a safe and efficient use of airspace as well as to protect fundamental principles such as security or interoperability. Indeed, airspace should be considered as a single continuum, planned and used in a flexible way on a day-to-day basis by all categories of airspace users.

Desired outcome:

Safety risk management at state level.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0001, MST.0024 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under Systemic safety and resilience and Flight operations.

3.1.5 Capable and streamlined oversight

Rationale:

The Regulation 2022/410 introducing the “One CAMO” concept enhances the cooperation mechanisms between different national competent authorities responsible for the oversight of the CAMO and AOC holders, when these organizations’ principal place of business are located in different Member States. This cooperation includes sharing the result of the oversight activities and encourages the performance of some oversight tasks on the CAMO by the national competent authority responsible for the operators. The use of this possibility will not transfer the responsibility of the national competent authority, which is kept by the NCA where the principal place of business of the organisation is located.

Desired outcome:

Group operations, implementation of “One CAMO” for airline groups’.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0019 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under Flight operations.

3.2 Competence of personnel

3.2.1 Cross-domain priorities

3.2.1.1. Improve the level of language proficiency in aviation

Rationale:

EASA considers language proficiency as an important aviation safety element and joins efforts with ICAO to streamline and harmonise language proficiency requirements (LPR)-related activities, as well as to optimise the support provided to Member States and the industry. LPRs are important not

just for pilots and ATCOs but also for certain aerodrome personnel such as vehicle drivers, and this requirement has recently been reflected in the amendment of the aerodrome regulation with Regulation (EU) 2020/2148 on runway safety. Building on the successful joint endeavours, ICAO and EASA conduct in close coordination a joint ICAO-EASA activity on LPR implementation.
The following additional points have been brought to the attention of EASA (some came directly from industry):
• The lack of standardisation in assessment of language proficiency and lack of standardisation in the outcome of the testing is an area of concern, such that the stated level of an English LP endorsement might not always be a reliable indicator of the holder's actual ability.
• Raw safety data show only a very low number of incidents related to a lack of language proficiency, whilst a significant number of incidents are related to a lack of situational awareness because the radio communications were only in the local language.

Desired outcome:

To increase safety by reducing the risk of ineffective communication or even miscommunication when pilots and/or air traffic controllers are faced with an unexpected situation and need to use plain language.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0033 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under Competence of personnel.

3.2.1.2. PPL/LAPL learning objectives in the Meteorological Information part of the PPL/LAPL syllabus

Rationale:

Weather is an important contributing factor to GA accidents, often related to pilots underestimating the risks of changing weather conditions prior to take-off and during the flight, as weather deteriorates. Dealing with poor weather may increase pilot workload and affect situational awareness and aircraft handling. Decision making can also be impaired, as a plan continuation bias may lead pilots to press on to the planned destination despite threatening weather conditions.

Desired outcome:

Increase safety by reducing the number of weather-related accidents.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0036 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under Competence of personnel.

3.2.2 Aviation maintenance personnel

Rationale:

At present, Part-147 forbids the use of distance learning for the purpose of basic knowledge and aircraft type training as the training locations are part of the approval. Part-66 allows the use of 'synthetic training devices' but does not define them. According to Appendix III to Part-66, 'Multimedia Based Training (MBT) methods may be used to satisfy the theoretical training element either in the classroom or in a virtual controlled environment […]'; however, that Appendix does not define these methods, and no guidance exists on how to evaluate, validate and/or approve courses based on MBT methods.

Desired outcome:

Ensure the continuous improvement of all aviation maintenance personnel competence.
Part-147: The introduction of new methods and technologies will lead to a level playing field and will improve the efficiency, quality and safety of maintenance training. Additionally, this way, the training provided by approved maintenance training organisations will be at a similar level. Moreover, it may result in an increased number of young people choosing to embark on maintenance careers, which may help tackle the expected shortage of aviation maintenance personnel in the near future.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0035 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under Competence of personnel.

3.3 Operational safety

3.3.1 Ensure operational safety in CAT aeroplane operations (airlines and air taxi passenger/cargo) and NCC aeroplane operations

3.3.1.1. Address safety risks in CAT aeroplane and NCC aeroplane operations

Rationale:

Loss of control usually occurs because the aircraft enters a flight regime which is outside its normal flight envelope, usually, but not always, at a high rate, thereby introducing an element of surprise for the flight crews involved. Prevention of loss of control is a strategic priority. Aircraft upset or loss of control is the key risk area ranking highest with regard to its cumulative risk score related to fatal accidents in CAT and NCC operations with aeroplanes.

This section deals with runway excursions, runway incursions and runway collisions, and is a strategic priority.

Aeroplane runway excursion includes all occurrences that involve actual or potential situations where an aircraft leaves the runway or the movement area of an aerodrome or landing surface of any other predesignated landing area without getting airborne.

Runway incursion covers any occurrence at an aerodrome involving the incorrect presence of an aircraft, vehicle or person on the protected area of a surface designated for the landing and take-off of aircraft

Runway collision covers collision between an aircraft and another object (other aircraft, vehicles, etc.) or person that occurs on a runway of an aerodrome or other predesignated landing area; it does not include collision with birds or wildlife.

Desired outcome:

Increase safety by continuously assessing and improving risk controls to mitigate the risk of loss of control.

Increase safety by continuously assessing and improving risk controls to mitigate the risk of runway excursions, runway incursions and runway collisions.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0028 (for Member States: loss of control in flight by taking actions at national level and measuring their effectiveness and runway safety by taking actions at national level and measuring their effectiveness) and MST.0029 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under 4.3 Flight operations.

3.3.2 Ensure operational safety in rotorcraft operations

Rationale:

The Rotorcraft Safety Roadmap aims to significantly reduce the number of rotorcraft accidents and incidents, and focuses on traditional/conventional rotorcraft including GA rotorcraft where the number of accidents is recognised to be higher. It focuses on safety and transversal issues that need to be tackled through actions in various domains, including training, operations, initial and continuing airworthiness, environment, and facilitation of innovation.

A dedicated SRP was introduced with EPAS 2022-2026 to support the identification and mitigation of safety issues within the variety of rotorcraft operations.

Desired outcome:

Increase safety by continuously assessing and improving risk controls. Increase efficiency by enabling the implementation of appropriate and proportionate regulations.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0041 and MST.0015 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under Flight operations.
EPAS action MST.0031 not included because Based on small number of rotorcraft operators the need for low-level IFR routes in Latvia airspace to facilitate safe helicopter operations, was not identified.

3.3.3 Ensure operational safety in General Aviation (GA)

Rationale:

Safety in GA will remain a priority considering the consistently high number of accidents and fatalities in this domain every year.

Desired outcome:

Safety promotion is the backbone for mitigations against accidents in the GA domain.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0025, MST.027 and MST.0038 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under Flight operations.

3.4 Safe and sustainable integration of new technologies and concepts

3.4.1 Ensure safe and transparent conditions for airline group operations

Rationale:

Current regulations are primarily “State-centric” in that they assume that a single operator will be overseen by one competent authority mainly, whereas there are more and more cases involving several competent authorities.

MST 0019 “Better understanding of operators’ governance structure” is intended to support competent authorities in the oversight of group operations.

This priority item is closely linked with priority item 3.1.5 Capable and streamlined oversight’, which includes to support NCAs’ cooperative oversight: Group operations, implementation of “One CAMO”for airline groups.

Desired outcome:

Ensure oversight capabilities.

Deliverables:

Include EPAS action MST.0019 in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under Flight operations.

3.4.2 Unmanned Aircraft Systems

Rationale:

The current situation in the sector points the fact that the industry and the use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) are developing more rapidly than regulations. Based on identifiable targets UAS are used for various types of inspection, search and rescue, surveying, low-altitude specialised works, filming etc. in the future, human and cargo transport in view of the above UAS may pose risks to the public and to manned aviation.

Desired outcome:

Ensure oversight capabilities, information for public, UAS operators and pilots.

Deliverables:

Include in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under National action number EME.001 Unmanned Aircraft Systems.

3.5 Environment

3.5.1 Lasers

Rationale:

The CAA LV co-ordinates industry/CAA group to identify risks, agree and deliver actions to prevent laser attacks and mitigate their consequences.

Desired outcome:

Identification of and engagement with national and international key stakeholders with the aim to capture best practice for implementation in Latvia and sharing lessons learned. Introduction of tighter measures against laser attacks into legislation. Increase the public's awareness of the risk associated with laser attacks

Deliverables:

Include in SPAS LV Chapter 4 under National action number EME.002 Lasers.