ISSUE 2

NEW WAYS TO IMPROVE AIR SAFETY STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTED AT INDUSTRY SESSION UPDATE

Safety concerns amid a changing global landscape is still a key issue in the aviation industry this year.

"With our aviation industry projected to grow further, we must continually seek new ways to further improve our safety standards and performance," said Tay Tiang Guan, Deputy General, Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS), during the industry session update held on 23 February at the Singapore Aviation Academy (SAA).

Tay gave an overview of some key programmes by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), which are crucial in maintaining Singapore's air safety standards.

One such programme is the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme (USOAP). The USOAP audits have been successful so far in identifying deficiencies in safety oversight systems and the results of the audits for the past 10 years have shown a strong effect on governments' air accident rates.

ICAO also mandated the use of safety management systems (SMS), starting with aerodromes and air navigation service providers, as well as air operators and aviation organisations.

"Here in Singapore, we have since mandated all air operators and maintenance organisations to have their systems in place by January last year," Tay said, adding that to facilitate the implementation of SMS, several steps were undertaken. "We held three Aviation Safety Forums and developed a comprehensive Advisory Circular to provide detailed guidance for the industry." In addition, the SAA also conducted courses on SMS.

At the government policy level, Tay said that ICAO also recently introduced the State Safety Programme (SSP) to define how safety regulation gets affected, given the constant changes in aviation services.

"SSP seeks to bring about a structured way of managing safety risks, but at the state level, states are required to determine their acceptable level of safety based on the scope of their aviation activities," he said.