

Regional Focus: Accident and Incident Investigation for the Latin America and Caribbean Region – Questions and Answers – Webinar 2

1. Can multitasking affect memory, more so, one's prospective memory? How can one overcome the issue of multitasking so that it minimizes the effect on one's prospective memory?

As we all know, there is no such thing as multi-tasking. We are actually doing two tasks in parallel and dividing attention. Memory aids or standard training are a guard against prospective memory failures

2. Some argue that the solution to human error is automation. What are your thoughts on this?

Automations helps reduce workload if the right tasks are automated and humans can stay sufficiently in the loop and situationally aware to be able to intervene/act as needed. The decision to automate should be made with conscious analysis as to the impact on workload, situational awareness and desired outcome. Often organizations automate what is easy to automate and not what should be automated.

3. Accident investigation science is migrating towards systems-theory tools. How well would STAMP/STPA methodologies fit our current human Performance investigations?

Every model and methodology have their place for different purposes of Safety Analysis. Needs to be the right tool for the right analysis in the appropriate organizational culture and maturity.

4. What is automation complacency?

The poorer detection of system malfunctions under automation compared with under manual control or to the opposite, over trust in the automation and assuming it is more accurate and correct than it might be.

5. *In our airspace, the Controller is responsible for changing the callsigns of similar sounding aircraft. Are Controllers allowed to have cellular phones in their facilities, at working positions??*

Controllers are not allowed to have cellphones at their positions. They can be in the facility for use during breaks but not to be used while working traffic.

6. *What do you think about the use of electronic flight progress strips? Do you think is better for ATC to use the paper ones? How about if the system fails and you only have the electronic ones??*

I think with the reliability of systems and availability of technology, Electronic Flight Strips are inevitable. The point of a flight strip is to serve as a memory aid, reducing what has to be remembered and reminding the controller of needed actions. As long as the purpose/role of memory aids is designed in to the Electronic version, I see no issues.

7. *In the presentation of investigation reports are both organisational and human factors presented to the stakeholders (including ATCOs) or are certain organisational findings kept from the ATCOs??*

Different reports have different purposes so sometimes this information is presented together and other times separately. I am not aware of findings being kept from controllers.

8. *In processing Human Factors of an event, can panic lead to a judgement error which can then lead to a violation?*

Yes. Under pressure, we may make suboptimal decisions than result in a need to correct that error as needed to safety separate traffic. There is no reason that this decision might not be a violation but there is also no reason to say that a judgement error might lead to a violation any more than any kind of error.



9. *Why do companies use the same flight number for 2 different flights?*

The system does not allow this to happen but there are flights that operate from City A to City C but that stop in City B. Sometimes the aircraft is changed in City B. If a flight from A to B is delayed, the airline may keep the flight from B to C on time using the other aircraft and that is how this situation occurred with two of the same aircraft call signs. This is easily fixed normally but in this event, the resolution was not successfully implemented.