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ABSTRACT

Air strategy, or the science and art of employing air assets to achieve the vision of the Air Force, is primarily based on the safe utilization of air assets. Flight Safety Organization of Sri Lanka Air Force was established in year 1999 as a dedicated organization, with the aim of improving its flight safety standards. Despite of various improvements have been implemented to uplift the Flight Safety Organization in the SLAF from its inception, it was observed that the number of accidents/ incidents reported has not shown a remarkable decline. Hence this study is a significant endeavor which suggests recommendations for reducing accidents/ incidents in SLAF. The literature review was aimed at identifying similarities and differences between the State/ ICAO Safety mechanisms, special features of other Regional Air Forces, challenges or opportunities to implement such systems in exiting SLAF Safety Mechanism. This is a qualitative research study which analyzes secondary data and in-depth interviews as primary data. During the literature review, three distinct periods to endorse the safety in the aviation organizations were identified as the Technical Period, Human Factors Period and most recently the Organizational Period. Total of twelve respondents who are the expertise in the field of flight safety were interviewed asking questions developed by the researcher. Validation of the questions for their content and consistency were reviewed by the expertise of Command Flight Safety Inspectorate of SLAF and a Flight Safety Inspector at State Safety Programme in Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka. The SLAF flight safety mechanism includes regulatory and non-regulatory safety concepts. It has gone through few recent improvements but in the bases/ stations the importance of flight safety is not properly addressed. It was found that the allocation of sufficient funds to fulfill timely demands, and supply of materials to maintain higher serviceable level of aircraft fleet are crucial needs. Professional advancement and improving safety investigations in an independent manner is an urgent need. The study suggests feasible recommendations to overcome the above shortcomings in order to prepare the SLAF to achieve its vision while securing invaluable assets.

Key Words: Air Strategy, Flight Safety Organization