



# Safety Evolution Guide: Just Culture

## 1. OBJECTIVE OF GUIDE

Members of the Civil Air Navigation Services Organisation (CANSO) are committed to the improvement of their services. As part of this commitment, organisations share their practices in efforts transfer learning across the industry.

This guide captures either:

- the practices of an Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP) in one element of the CANSO Standard of Excellence (SoE) in Safety Management System (SMS). The practices of this ANSP have been recognized by their peers as being an optimised practice within the industry (see Figure 1). The optimized practices have been selected on the basis of their novelty, innovation or the recognition of their potential to manage operational risks; or
- proposed practices which are based on contemporary thinking in the safety management sphere. These proposals have yet to be fully adopted by any ANSP, but they are viewed by the CANSO SSC as having significant potential in the industry's efforts to evolve how safety is managed.

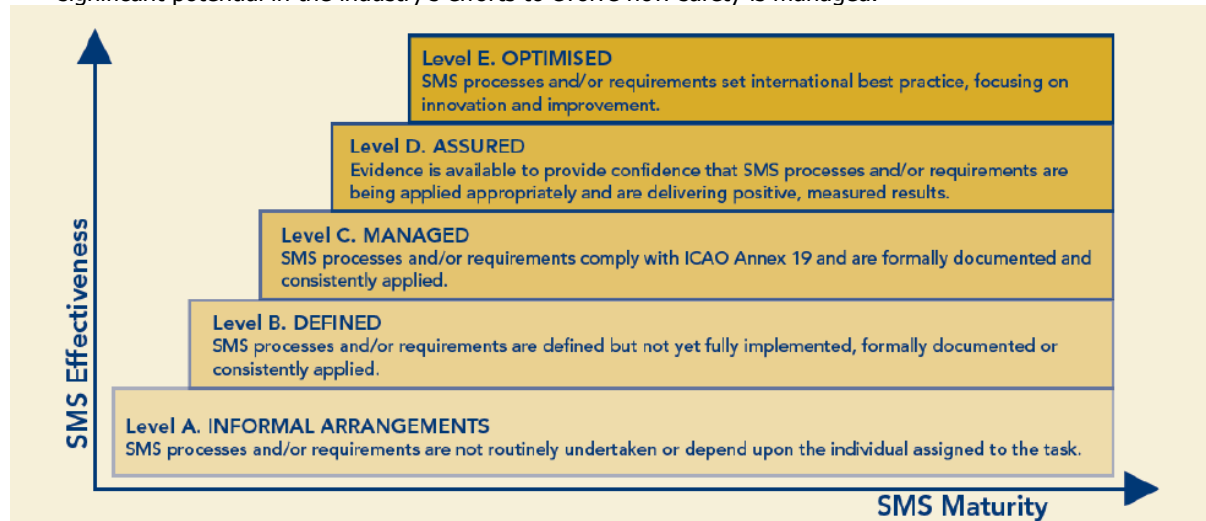


Figure 1: SMS Maturity Pathway

Given the dynamic nature of safety management, the practices presented in this document may be superseded. CANSO will publish updated best practice guidance.

## 2. APPLICATION OF THE GUIDANCE

CANSO recognizes that this guidance will not be relevant to all ANSPs. The maturity of any ANSP's Safety Management System will be dependent on their specific context. This context will be a reflection of factors including the size and complexity of the organisation, domestic regulations and the risk appetite of the organisation.

ANSPs do not necessarily need to adopt all the practices and processes promoted by CANSO but consider the relevance of the practices promoted in this guide to their operational environment.

IAA ANSP has shared this process and corresponding documents, and/or has provided briefings on the topic subject to request from the following ANSPs: LVNL, DANS, Avionor and Estonia. The briefings/presentations were also made available to all ANSPs on Eurocontrol and CESAF Safety Teams members. In 2018, IAA were invited to ISAVIA to present the process in a workshop scenario on the IAA Just Culture.

## 3. OPTIMISED PRACTICE/SCOPE OF THE GUIDE

*CANSO Members are committed to maintaining and, where possible, improving safety. To achieve this, we recognise staff safety reports as one of the most valuable sources of information for learning safety lessons. Therefore, in order to receive as many reports as possible, organisations must foster a culture in which staff feel secure that the organisation will treat them justly and fairly when they do report. This fairness must extend to circumstances where staff may feel concern that their report could implicate themselves because of their actions. (CANSO Guidelines on Just Culture).*

The IAA has, for many years, adopted Just Culture throughout the organisation. The purpose of this guide is to explain and describe the Irish Aviation Authority's process of developing and implementing a Just culture, which is in use and has been recognised as an Optimised Practice since 2014.

The process for the Just treatment of an individual in accordance with the Irish Aviation Authority's Just Culture Policy applies to all professional staff, Station Managers, ATCO, RO's, DA's and Engineers, involved with or contributing to an ATM occurrence.

## 4. CONTEXT

*Individual organisations should have a clearly defined Just Culture Policy. This policy should be supported by a set of procedures, which help to deliver the policy. All staff are recognised for the role they play in delivering a safe service to our customers. We will provide staff with the appropriate environment, tools, training and procedures required to perform the job. We will encourage all staff to demonstrate the appropriate safety attitude and safe behaviour at all times. We will aim to manage our organisations in such a way that staff will not be put in situations where safety is compromised because of organisational factors. (CANSO Guidelines on Just Culture)*

The rationale for an IAA Just Culture:

- Enhance ANSP Occurrence Reporting;
- Enhance Safety Culture in ANSP;
- Develop trust in an open and transparent investigation process;
- Meet RP2 EoSM requirements;
- IAA Corporate Safety Strategy 2012-2015 Objective;
- Full implementation required by regulation; EU 1035 'Common Requirements 691/2010 & latterly 376/2014;
- SKPI for RP2 – Performance Monitoring;
- FAB Performance.

Just Culture and its application by ANSP's in the Single European Sky framework, is a Safety Performance measurement, classified as a Safety Key Performance Indicator (SKPI), in accordance with regulation(s) EU 390/2013 requirements and in addition to the EU 376/2014 on the reporting, analysis and follow-up of occurrences in civil aviation requirements. The measurement and robustness of an ANSP's process and procedures are assessed and measured annually by EASA as part of the Effectiveness of Safety Management (EoSM) safety framework survey SKPI.

In accordance with EU 390/2013 Just Culture will be measured as a safety target, in addition it will also be measured in the EoSM process and will therefore impact on the ANSP's level and score of Safety Maturity. This regulatory measurement is intended to ensure that ANSPs will apply fair treatment throughout the Just Culture process.

The expected improvements after implementation are the following:

- Employees are motivated to develop and apply their own skills and knowledge to enhance organisational safety;
- Staff and management communicate more frequently and openly concerning safety hazards;
- Personnel and management understand and agree on what is acceptable and unacceptable;
- Human error is inevitable, and your system needs to be continually monitored and improved to accommodate these errors;
- Individuals are accountable for their actions if they knowingly violate safety procedures or policies;
- Errors are understood, efforts are made to eliminate potential errors and wilful violations are not tolerated.

## 5. Challenges

Just Culture is all about balancing safety and accountability and can only flourish if individuals – whether they be ATCOs, HDAs, ROs, Engineers, Watch and Station Managers – all understand their individual accountability for safety. Individual accountability should not be confused with the IAA formalised Safety Accountabilities. Put simply, individual accountability means being held to account for our actions. For the IAA, Just Culture applies to the actions and behaviours displayed by everyone and which directly affect the delivery of safe operations.

A Just Culture is the keystone to creating the kind of organisational Safety Culture that we all wish to see, where frequent open reporting is the norm. One where we learn safety lessons from the past in order to make the present and the future safer and where we have an honest, self-analytical approach to how we are and how we want to be.

The main inhibitors to an effective Just Culture are the following:

- Lack of Trust
- Poor Staff Communication
- Inadequate Training and Education

## 6. IAA ANSP Just Culture development steps

"A culture in which front line operators or others are not punished for actions, omissions or decisions taken by them that are commensurate with their experience and training, but where gross negligence, wilful violations and destructive acts are not tolerated." (ICAO, Annex 19 & Article 2 EU Reg. 691/10)

Objective	Initiating	Planning / Initial Implementation	Implementing	Managing & Measuring	Continuous Improvement
<p>1.2 A just and open climate for reporting and investigation of occurrences</p> <p>NB: Thorough reporting and investigation must include the complete process from notification, data gathering, reconstruction, analysis, safety recommendation and implementation of remedial actions, up to final reporting, exchange of lessons learned and effective monitoring.</p>	<p>Management believes there are no issues regarding the existing reporting and investigation culture and therefore does not see the need for any activity or dialogue with the staff in this area.</p>	<p>Discussions between staff and management to define a just and open reporting and investigation climate are underway. However, no agreed policy and procedures are in place yet.</p>	<p>Policy and procedures which support an open reporting climate, and Just Culture principles are in place.</p> <p>Safety data-sharing and publication policies are supported by the staff.</p> <p>Safety data are sufficiently protected from external interference within legal limits.</p>	<p>Within the organisation, the line between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours is established and is known and accepted by the all levels in the organisation.</p> <p>Just culture reporting and investigation principles and processes are systematically applied within organisation.</p>	<p>Under certain legal regimes, there is a clear and published policy on how dialogue with judicial authorities and media is established and followed.</p> <p>As the organisation changes and evolves, the organisation sustains and maintains its Just Culture approach.</p> <p>Lessons from within the organisation and different industry sector are used to enhance to organisation's approach to Just Culture.</p>

(Source: CANSO Standard of Excellence in Safety Management Systems)

The Just Culture Policy and Procedure was implemented as a key Corporate Safety Strategy objective. The following is a historical development overview of the implementation of this objective:

### **Development Steps 2013:**

- The initial procedure was finalised and published;
- A Strategy and Business Case was developed for transfer of O.R. Investigation Management to the SMU (Safety Management Unit) to ***develop Trust in an Open and Transparent investigation process.***

### **Development Steps 2014:**

- The procedure was updated based on collaboration and agreement with staff association and management;
- Developed Documents and procedures for transfer of O.R. Investigation to the SMU;
- The JC Procedure was implemented
  - Training Roadshow – Workshops & Presentations to all Operational staff & Management. ***There was noted a positive staff acceptance;***
- One Union issued a statement to their members not to co-operate with process. Process continued to be implemented i.a.w. Policy
  - There was On-going dialogue with remaining union to achieve their support and sign-up for policy;
- 1<sup>st</sup> edition of the JC Handbook was published and provided to all staff individually.

### **Development Progress 2015:**

- A strategy for transfer of O.R. Investigation to SMU was established
  - ***This has been approved by CEO and Executive;***
- Process documentation reflecting new transfer of responsibility was developed and published on Intranet for all Staff access, including internal SLA with Op Management and SMU;
- JC Procedure in operation i.a.w. ***trigger criteria;***
- Continuing dialogue with remaining union to achieve their support and sign-up for policy;

### **Development Progress 2017:**

- All Staff Representatives bodies have confirmed acceptance and co-signed the JC Policy with Senior Management;
- JC review Processes have been used on four occasions in Q1 2017;

- The feedback from all parties involved, including a follow-up meeting with ATCO Staff Representative body has been very positive, indicating satisfaction with the process;
- Continued positive support and engagement by Unions;
- 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the JC Handbook was published and provided to all staff individually, reflecting process changes.

#### **Development Progress 2018:**

- IAA ANSP was requested to share and brief ISAVIA management of our process and policy with the intention of assisting them to adopt the principles and central elements of this process;
- On the foot of request from Eurocontrol NM SAF Unit, HoSM delivered presentation and briefing to Eurocontrol Just Culture Task Force group to share the IAA development and experience of Just Culture process;
- Just Culture review process was continued to be applied as required to events meeting the triggering criteria; reports were produced on these occurrences. Feedback continues to be very positive with the process now being an accepted and embedded element of our occurrence investigation process and Safety Culture in general. Unions continue to be fully supportive of this process.

In order for the Just Culture to be effective, it must all be clear where the line is between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in the course of delivering a safe Air Traffic operation. With this regard, IAA ANSP issued to staff the '*Just Culture Information Handbook*' explaining the principles and operation of our peer centred published procedure for the application of Just Culture review, to events that may require it. This material provides practical guidance and information on how we ensure that a Just Culture is an embedded element of the overall IAA Safety Culture.



Figure 2: Just Culture Handbook 3rd Edition 2017

## 7. IAA Just Culture Policy Overview

**JC Policy extract:** *A Just Culture is the keystone to creating the kind of organisational Safety Culture that we all wish to see, where frequent open reporting is the norm. One where we learn safety lessons from the past in order to make the present and the future safer and where we have an honest, self-analytical approach to how we are and how we want to be.*

*We acknowledge that all staff, as humans, are fallible. We are, therefore, supportive of individuals who make honest mistakes and recognise that disciplining on that basis is counter-productive. However, situations are not condoned where individuals act outside appropriate rules and procedures or behave in a manner which may endanger themselves or others. The failure to take action if staffs act in a reckless or negligent way may create a risk to the safety of our operation. Indeed, the foundations of our Just Culture could be weakened if we do not act appropriately in such circumstances.*

*In order for our Just Culture to be effective, we must all be clear where the line is between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in the course of delivering a safe Air Traffic operation.*

## 8. IAA Just Culture & the Just Treatment of Individuals Procedure

**This procedure is published as a controlled document and is an integrated part of the ANSP SMM.**

Once an occurrence has taken place and based upon a RAT Severity classification of "C1" or greater with ATM contribution (Direct or Indirect) then the Just Culture determination process will be undertaken, as part of the investigation process. The treatment of the individual will be in accordance with and will adhere to, the IAA Just Culture principles and international Just Culture doctrine. Notwithstanding the initiation criteria, an individual may request, or the Safety Investigations of Occurrences Management specialists may initiate a JC review for any event should the event warrant it.

The JC process provides for open and transparent engagement with all relevant stakeholders. When a JC review is to commence the individual is notified by the Safety Investigation Manager.

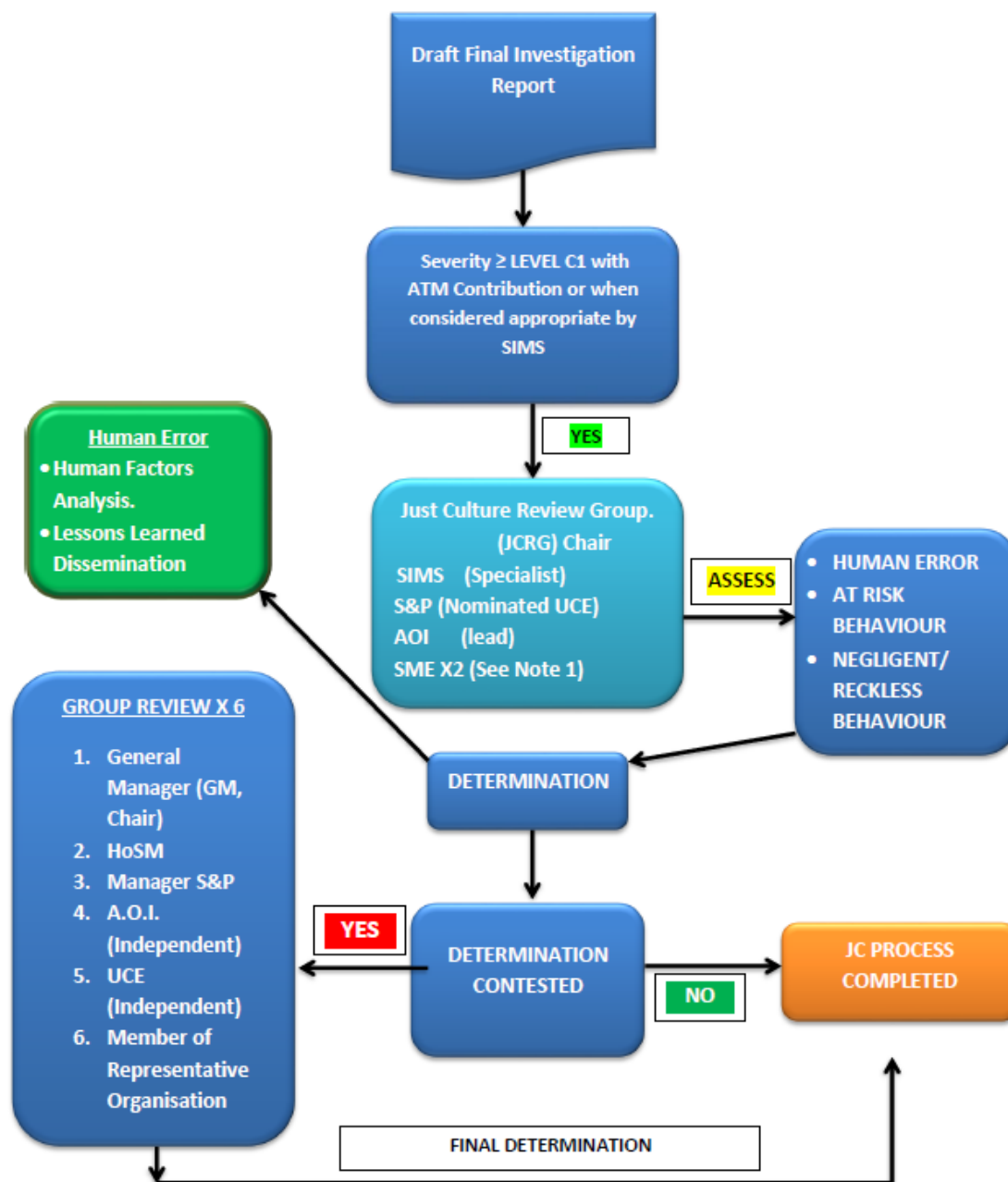
The process, associated guidelines and potential future actions are explained to all participants.

The review group is peer led, and only currently rated peers are permitted to conduct and apply the substitution test. **(core element of the process)**

A report is generated from the JC review detailing the rationale behind proceeding from one step of the flowchart to the next.

This report is sent to the JC review participants for their comment and agreement. Once this is completed the individual and all relevant stakeholders are advised of the outcome. The JC review group report is distributed to stakeholders on request.

**Determination Appeal:** The JC Review Group determination can be appealed by the Operational Staff member involved to a High-Level Review Group which includes the participation a Staff Associations /Union representative. This is proven to be a successful appeal process.



**Note 1; SME;** A Subject Matter Expert may be required to participate with the JCRG where the review group consider specific expert advice is necessary, in any particular field. SME may include but not restricted to, any of the following; Station Manager, USM, Engineer, ATM specialist (Eng., ATCO, R.O.) or any person considered to have the required expert knowledge.

Figure 3: IAA High Level Diagram for the Just Treatment of Individuals



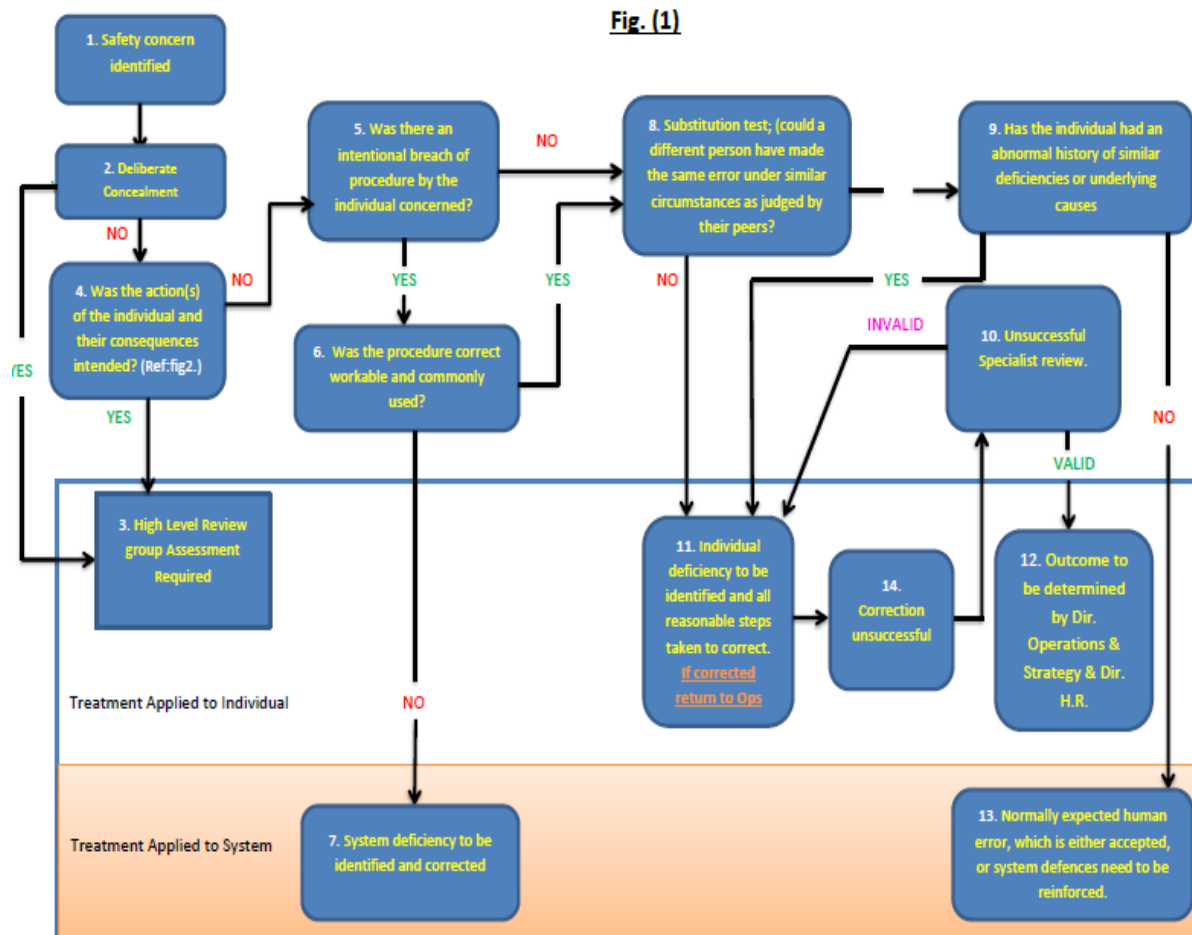


Figure 4: Process flowchart for the Just Treatment of Individuals

## 9. Conclusion

Benefits of the IAA Just Culture Process:

- Increased Incident Reporting
  - Particularly regarding any previously unreported event types;
  - Further identification of trends;
  - For every incident there are many unreported occurrences that may have prevented it;
  - Increased reporting seen as a healthy safety indicator; the rate of reporting has significantly exceeded the associated growth in traffic.
- Trust Building
  - Most violations are caused by a desire to please rather than wilfulness;
  - Majority of safety violations are inadvertent and are intended to further the organisations operational objective; However, this may not be evident during investigation analysis;
  - Just Culture Process has increased staff confidence in management's commitment and prioritisation of safety over apportioning "blame" on individuals.
- More Effective Safety and Operational Management
  - Just Culture Process has enhanced the organisations effectiveness by defining job performance expectations, with clear guidelines for the consequences of deviance from procedures;
  - Promoting continuous review of policies and procedures;
  - Establish if violations are infrequent or part of normal behaviour.

The Eurocontrol/IAA Safety Culture Survey 2016 confirmed that staff confidence and trust in the occurrence investigation and JC Process were at a high level.