Importance of Front-Line Worker in SMS

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IFALPA Background

- IFALPA Position Paper – Positive Safety Culture December 2021
  - Highlighted the importance of voluntary safety information, as an uninhibited flow and exchange of information is vital to improving safety.
  - Positive Safety Culture is the cornerstone to a successful SMS
- Current guidance does not require participation from experienced front-line employees through the SRA process
 - Emphasizes 'organizational experience' vs. 'operational experience'

Background from ICAO SMP

- ICAO Safety Management Panel Presented concepts to the ICAO SMP in May 2023
- Current risk assessment practices only involve handpicked employees with potentially limited practical operational knowledge of scenarios being assessed, resulting in possibly incomplete assessments
- Action by SMP: Consider the addition of guidance that supports the inclusion of representatives of current workers at the front-line of operations in the safety risk analysis process in the next revision of the SMM

For Consideration:

- Representation of front-line workers to foster an environment of transparency and reinforce safety culture concepts

- Flight crew perspective and operational experience contributing at multiple points of an SMS

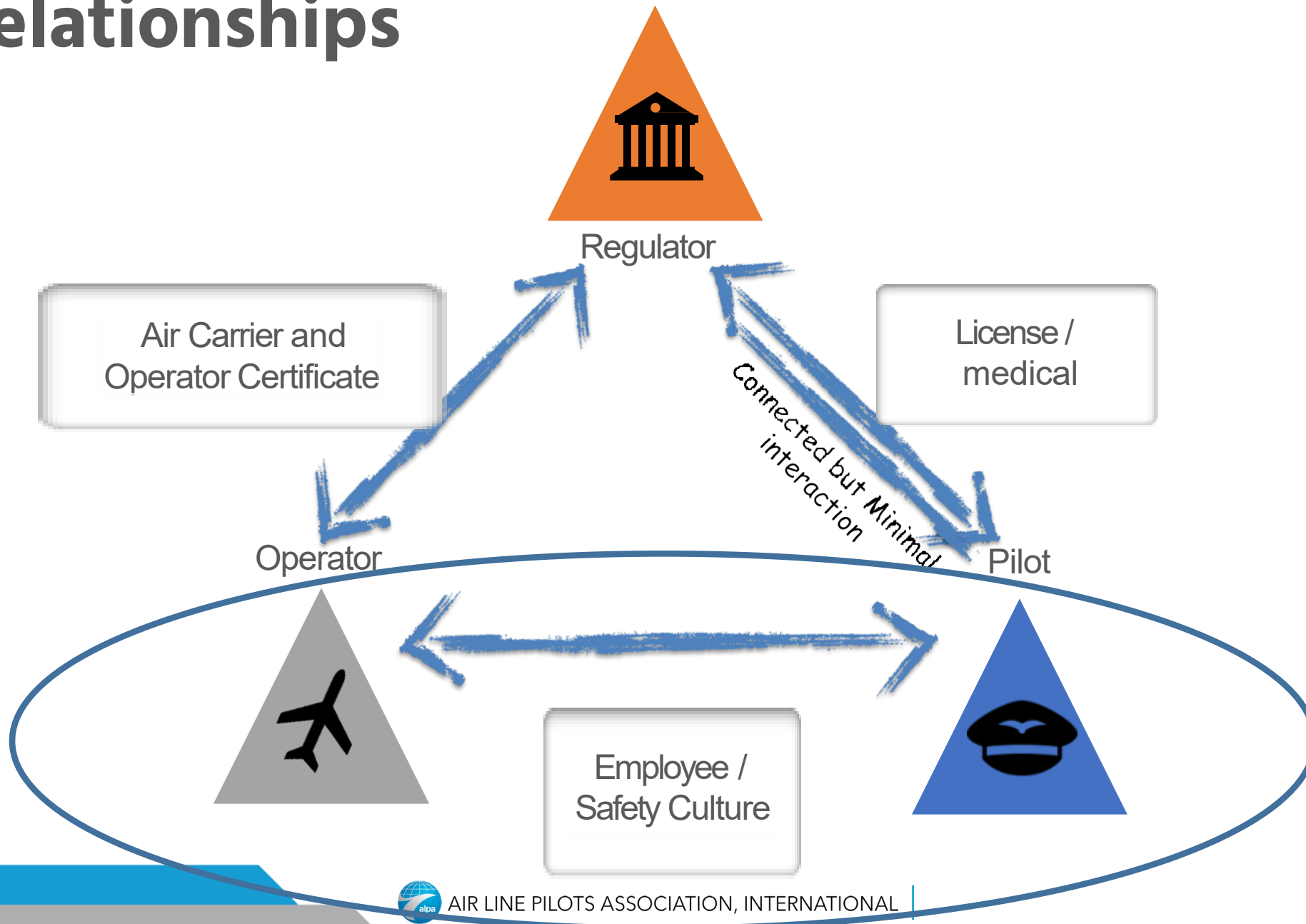Transparent SMS

Labor

Regulator

Operator
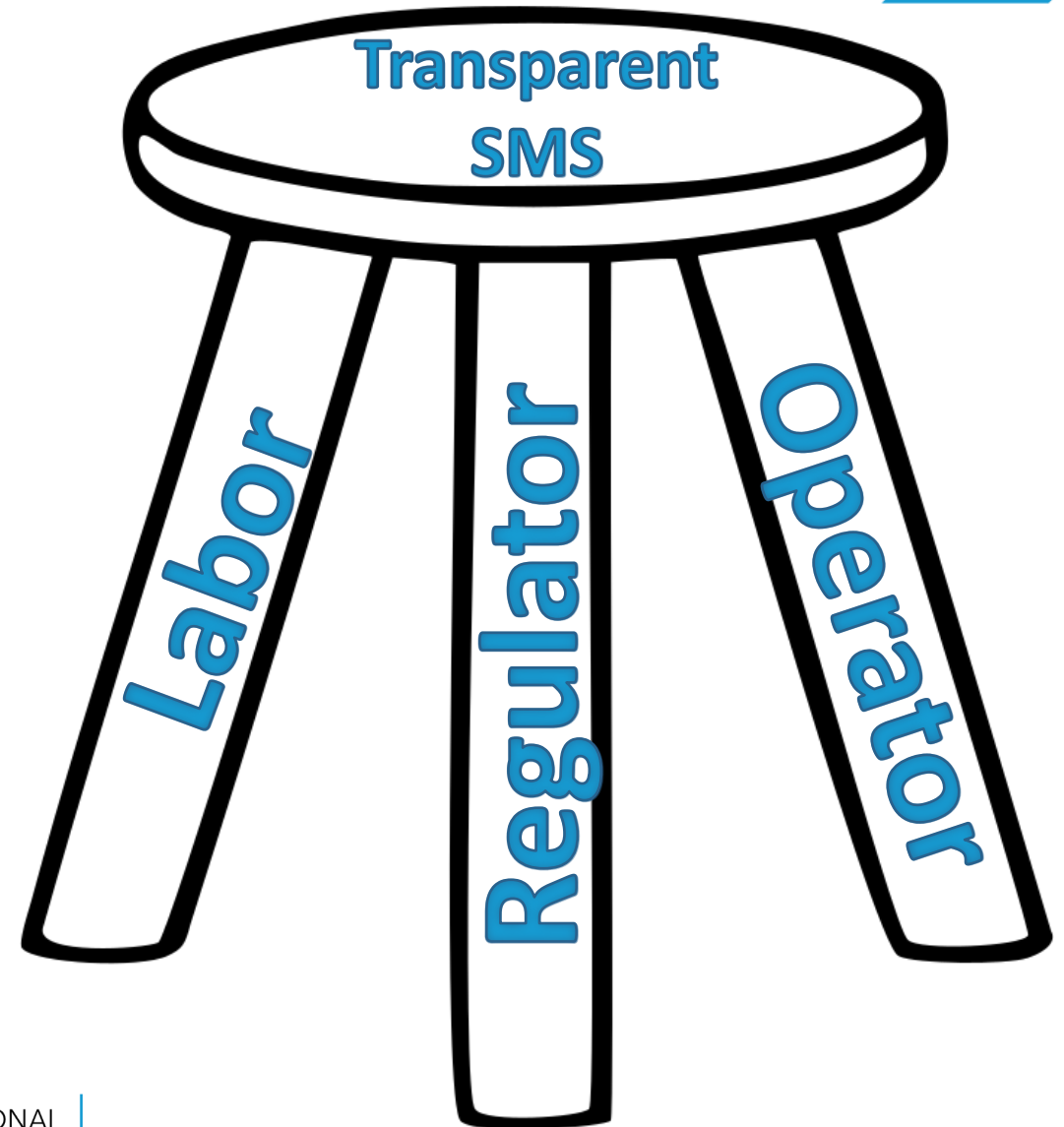
Recommendations

- Transparency in company SRAs and front-line workers participation in SRAs

- Thorough risk assessments which includes all stakeholders to ensure in-depth safety analysis

- Feedback from all groups should be encouraged and efforts should be made to create space for conversations

- Awareness of barriers to trusting culture

Results of Transparent Practices

- Prevent bias when making decisions and ensure operational experience is represented
- Consider sharing relevant SRAs with front line employees
  - Emphasize and explain the importance of risk controls
  - Generate buy-in
  - Foster credibility and trust

Relationships

Regulator

Air Carrier and Operator Certificate

License / medical

Connected but Minimal interaction

Operator

Pilot

Employee / Safety Culture

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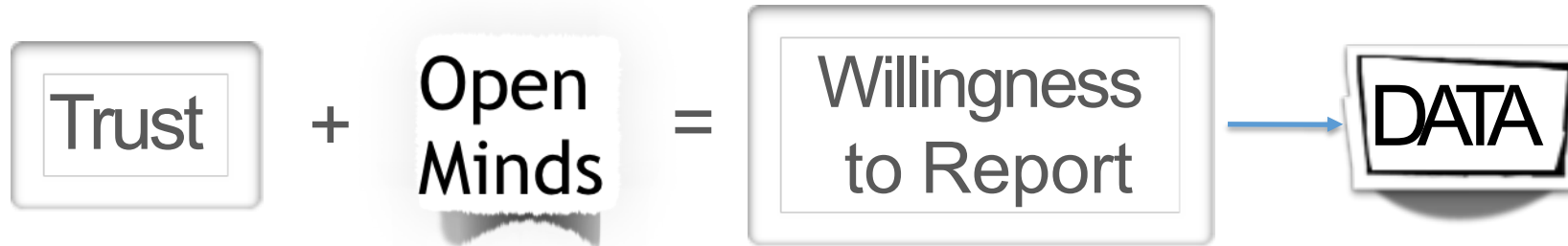
Do you have Trust / Just , Positive Safety Culture?

… TRUST is "the extent to which one is willing to ascribe good intentions to and have confidence in the words and actions of other people."
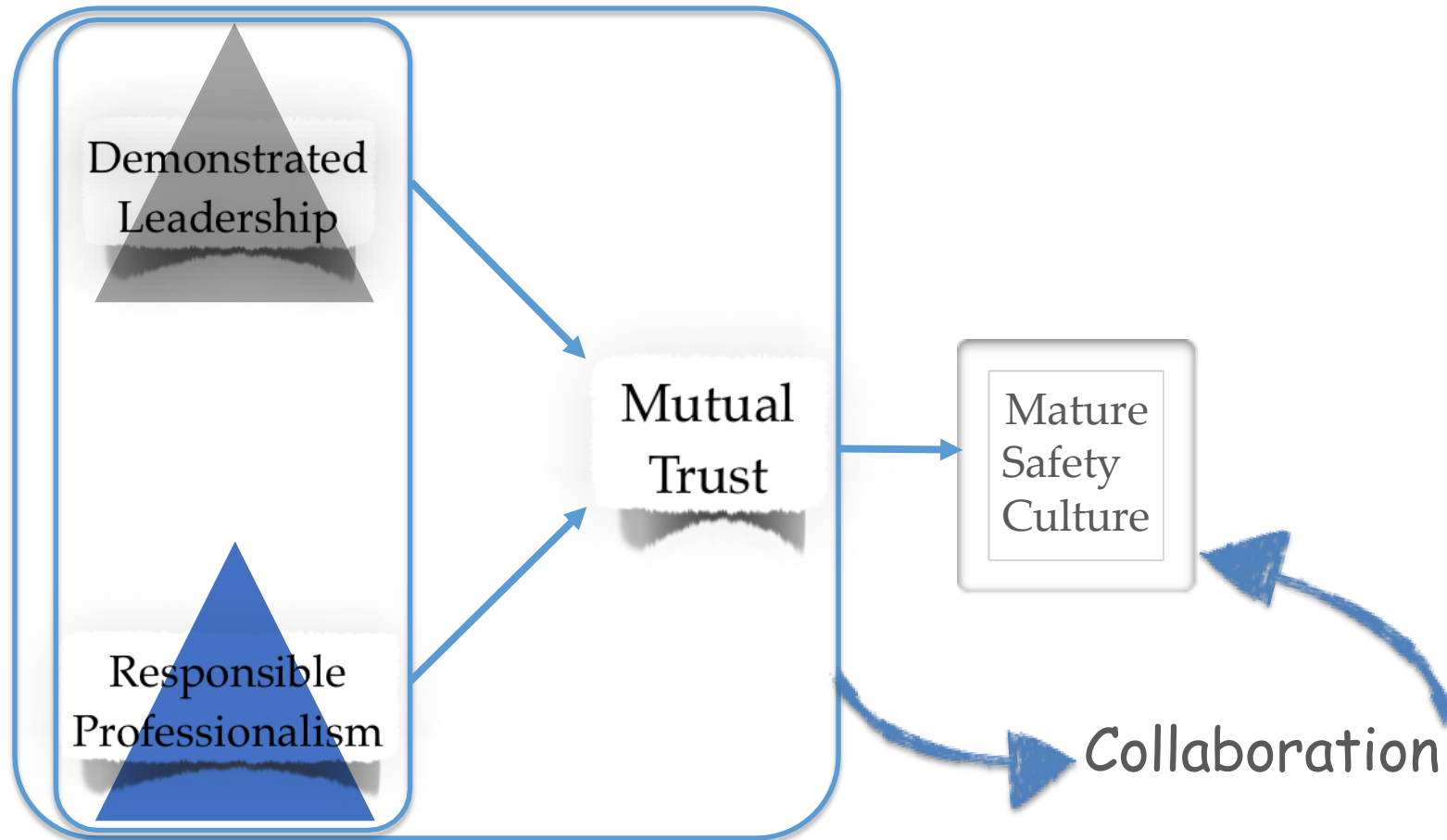
Cook and Wall (1980)

A just culture helps create an environment where individuals feel free to report errors and help the organization to learn from mistakes

Wikipedia

Trust + **Open Minds** = Willingness to Report → DATA

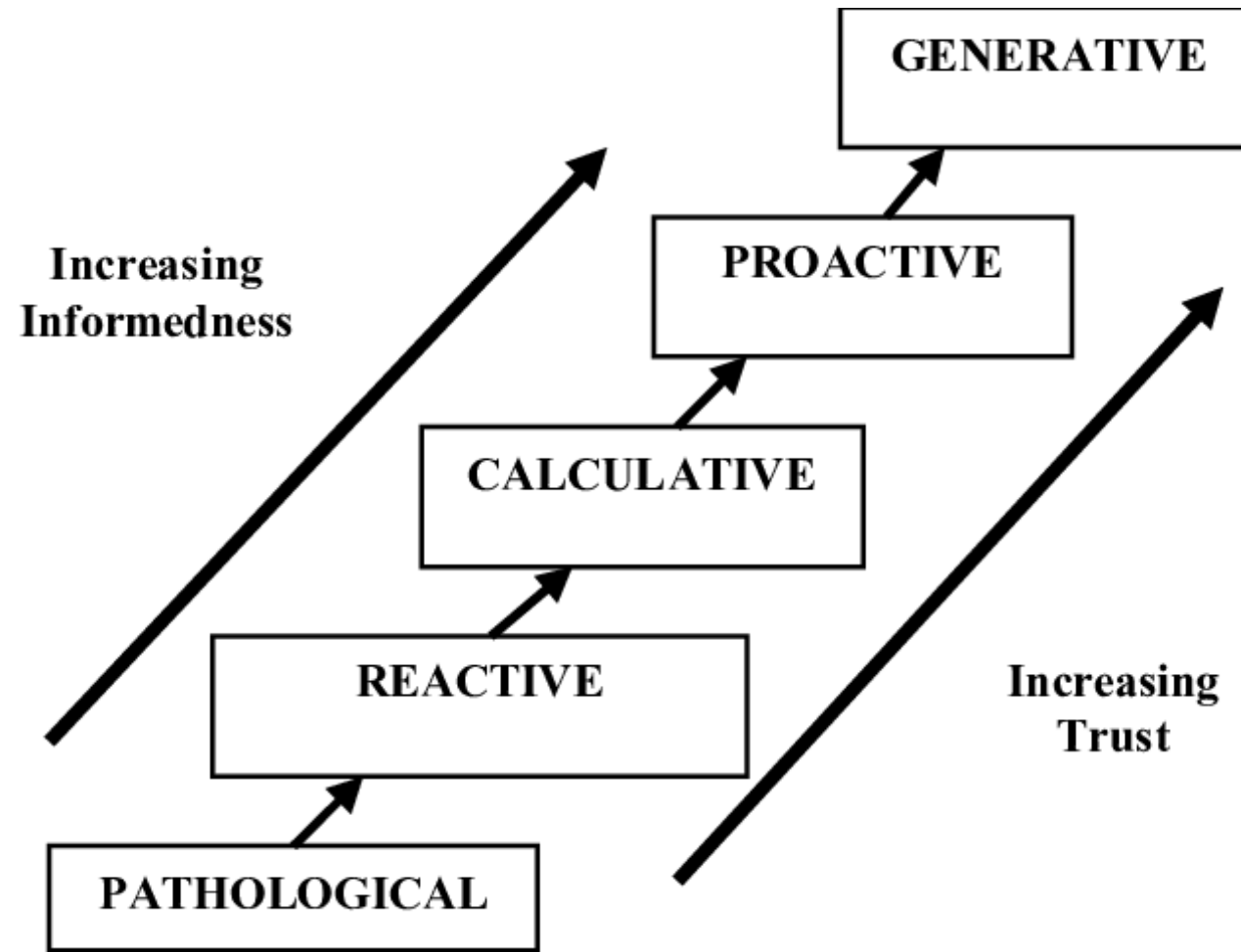DATA → SMS Processes + Oversight = Enhanced Safety

How can a Union help Safety?

- Improve trust
- Help facilitate safety conversation
- Bring credible expertise
- Safety promotion
- Promote accountability and professionalism
- Assist with workload

Organizational Maturity

Safety Programs (Assurance)

- ASAP (2000)
  - Labor association Signed MOU

- FOQA (2004)
  - Labor Association
  - Contractually addressed at nearly all carriers

- LOSA (2006)
  - Labor Association
  - Contractually addressed at most carriers

- SMS (2006)
  - There is no mention of Labor Association
  - Not contractually addressed

Safety Risk Management

- Risk tolerance and acceptance (Right to Manage)
- Informed risk assessments
  - Union/Labor participation
  - Union/Labor concerns considered
  - Union/Labor support
- Confidentiality/Sensitivity of risk assessments

Safety Promotions

- Union Communications
  - Email
  - Newsletter
  - Podcast
- Meetings
- Events/Road Shows

Conclusion

- Front line worker participation benefits the system through
    - More informed risk assessments
    - Strengthen trust between stakeholders, improve reporting and overall buy-in and support
    - Strong/Healthy positive safety culture

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Thank you

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