



# FOREWORD



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Learning from day-to-day operation is something that we tend to forget or neglect. In classical safety management, we traditionally preached learning from incidents and accidents. In an ultra-safe and reliable industry like aviation, due to the low number of mishaps, we seemed to be locked in a Catch 22, waiting for an occurrence to happen to push learning in organisations that are busy reducing cost, improving efficiency and handling pressure to do more with less.

It seems that there is a huge source of knowledge that is untapped, especially because daily operations reveal crucial context for intervention. This brings me back many years during my on-the-job training period in the ops room. It was an exponential learning curve. Why do we seem to be unable to provide organisations with what individuals get from exposure to the day-to-day operations?

Watching how the work happens first-hand provides managers with a vivid picture of how your organisation is performing. Furthermore, it's the best

way to correct mistakes, offer guidance on how tasks can be better completed, gauge efficiency and analyse any problems that may occur. This also allows to better plan for change that not only addresses problems, but identifies new opportunities. Even if operations managers, and managers in general, are already experts in their field, they should have a periodic operational reality check. Don't wait for an incident; if you stop learning, you stop leading.

At the time of writing this foreword, the world at large is shaken by not only COVID-19, but many other events, including an oil spill over the coral reef in Mauritius. On 25 July 2020, the Japanese-owned vessel MV Wakashio hit a coral reef two miles off the country's southeast coast, near Pointe d'Esny. The ship was en route from China to Brazil, carrying 3,894 metric tons of low-sulphur fuel oil, 207 metric tons of diesel and 90 metric tons of lubricant oil.

After the accident, the crew was safely evacuated, but early efforts to stabilise the ship and pump out the oil were



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unsuccessful. Eventually, a new crack appeared in the vessel's hull and oil started spilling into the pristine waters around Mauritius, endangering coral, fish and other marine life and threatening the economy, food security and health of the Mauritius Archipelago.

Many questioned why the captain of MV Wakashio had to go off route and come so close to the coral reef. This is reminiscent of Costa Concordia, which on 13 January 2012 struck a rock in the Tyrrhenian Sea just off the eastern shore of Isola del Giglio. The Captain of Costa Concordia went off his normal track to pass by close to Isola del Giglio.

None of two captains came to work on those days with the intention to collide with rocks and sunk those ships. The public and experts, however, camped on two sides – one blaming individuals and another taking a system view. I do not want to open that debate. I just want to raise a question: "How close is close, and how does this affect the safety of operations?"

The answer will be known only in the context of operations. How many maritime companies asked themselves that question after the 2012 accident of Costa Concordia? Why wait for a disaster when we can learn from day-to-day operations?

This edition of *HindSight* magazine reveals many insights and good practices on how to learn from everyday work that you can use and apply, for the benefit of safety and all other goals. Enjoy the reading.

# WELCOME

Welcome to issue 31 of EUROCONTROL's *HindSight* magazine. Over the last few issues, *HindSight* has evolved toward a more general focus on human and organisational factors in operations. We have included different perspectives on work-as-imagined and work-as-done, collaboration, competency and expertise, change, goal conflicts and trade-offs, and wellbeing. What unites all of these issues is 'work' and in this issue we focus on 'learning from everyday work'.

In this issue we have the usual blend of articles from front-line staff and specialists in safety, human factors, and human and organisational performance, in aviation and elsewhere. The articles cover all aspects of everyday work, including routine work, unwanted events, and excellence. The authors discuss a variety of ways to learn from everyday work, including observation, discussion, surveys, reflection, and data analysis. There are articles on specific topics to help learn from others' experience, including from other sectors in 'views from elsewhere'. Here you will find reflections on human performance in elite sport, and articles on learning in healthcare, shipping, and firefighting.

As mentioned in the Editorial, learning from everyday work should involve those who do it, support it, and are affected by it. Learning and change are activities that should primarily be done *BY* and *WITH* the people involved and affected, not just *FOR* them. Your conversations are crucial for learning and we hope to help support these conversations. Do your operational and non-operational colleagues know about *HindSight*? Would you be willing to ask them, and encourage them to subscribe? Search 'SKYbrary HindSight' for details.

There is also a separate supplement on COVID-19 and learning in the context of the pandemic. This will be expanded in the next issue of *HindSight* on 'The New Reality'. How have you and your colleagues adjusted and adapted to work in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic? Let us know, in a few words or more, for issue 32 of *HindSight* magazine.