

SUPPORTING  
EUROPEAN  
AVIATION



## Human Factors Newsletter

Welcome to the first EUROCONTROL Human Factors newsletter. The purpose of the newsletter is to update you about the Human Factors (HF) activities that have taken place over the last few months, and those coming up.

Within these pages, you will find updates on our HF initiatives. We bring you details on conferences, such as the recent Safety Forum 2025 on mental health, wellbeing, fatigue, and resilience in aviation.

We also highlight upcoming events like EUROCONTROL Just Culture Conference 2025 in Ljubljana in September, focusing on 'Justice and Automation'.

You'll learn about our courses, including the Human Factors Practitioner Programme for those wishing to support their organisations, and our Weak Signals courses.

Additionally, we cover insights from recent webinars and our latest publications, including EUROCONTROL's world-renowned HindSight magazine.

We hope this newsletter helps you to stay up to date with our initiatives, upcoming events, and latest developments.

**Please pass on the newsletter to anyone who may be interested.**

*Steven Shorrocks*

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PEOPLE IN  
CONTROL

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## PEOPLE IN CONTROL?



EUROCONTROL's *HindSight* magazine is a world-renowned source of information on human and organisational factors in operations, in aviation and beyond. Designed primarily for operational personnel and those who support their work, *HindSight* occupies a unique space in an information-heavy world.

The latest issue is on the theme of **People in Control? Staying in the Loop**. Once again, you will find a diverse set of articles from a range of authors in the context of aviation, maritime, rail and road. The contributors offer several takes on the intriguing title, from the perspectives of personal experience, professional practice, theory, research, and regulation.

We hope that the articles trigger conversations between you and others. Do your colleagues know about *HindSight*? Please let them know. And if your ANSP would like paper copies, please let us know! The next issue is on **Mental Health in Aviation...and Beyond**.

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## THE FUTURE OF HF...

A recent academic paper published in the journal *Ergonomics* by Dutch researchers Joost de Winter and Yke Bauke Eisma claimed (with several lines of argument) that the discipline of ergonomics and human factors is at risk of fading away. In light of the responses, the journal editors "invited each of the reviewers (and several other world-leading E/HF people from around the world) to each write a short response".

Dr Steven Shorrock (EUROCONTROL) and Dr Nuno Cebola (NATS) submitted a combined response focusing on practice and the profession embedded in industry. They outlined five practical challenges, based on their combined 50 or so years in EHF.

- There are too few EHF practitioners.
- EHF has become broad and all-encompassing, not necessarily design-led or system-oriented.
- There can be a large gap between EHF research and practice.
- The benefits of delivering high quality EHF work are not always clearly articulated.
- EHF is 'organisationally homeless', positioned variously in different and departments in different organisations and sectors (this also has advantages).

Read Steve and Nuno's response: <http://bit.ly/44iSWob>. The target paper and all commentaries are at <https://bit.ly/4ep08lN>.

This follows a multi author paper led by Prof Paul Salmon on challenges and opportunities for HFE: <http://bit.ly/44vFgrn>.

# UNDERSTANDING CULTURE AND CONVERSATION IN ORGANISATIONS

On 24 June, we brought together two prominent psychologists from London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) on the topic of **organisational culture and conversation**.

In her talk, Prof. Elizabeth Stokoe (author of the book 'Talk: The Science of Conversation') introduced us to conversation analysis, which focuses on how different words, phrases, and grammar - as well as non-lexical and embodied resources - all combine to shape what happens next in our social interactions. Liz talked through a range of examples, including from high-stakes settings, that illustrate the power of conversation analysis to reveal communication practices that have personal, legal, and societal consequences for those involved.

Prof. Tom Reader - a research partner collaborator on the EUROCONTROL Safety Culture Programme - then introduced new approaches to investigating safety culture via recent developments in AI and digital data. Tom considered new data sources and approaches that can be used to study organisational culture, focussing particularly on textual data (e.g., feedback, complaints, incidents, natural speech). He examined how this is changing the way that we understand culture.

The videos will be uploaded soon at <https://skybrary.aero/webinars>

## COMING UP!

What do hospital medicine, helicopters, space exploration, and broadcasting have in common? The answer is our fourth guest in the EUROCONTROL '**Life in Ten Pictures**' interview series: Dr Kevin Fong. Dr Fong will reflect on ten pictures to tell the story of his life in hospital and helicopter emergency medicine, space exploration, and extreme environments, as well as TV and radio broadcasting. Hosted by Steven Shorrock on 26 September.

Meanwhile, if you're interested in improving everyday work, don't miss the webinar on '**Advancing safety management through pro-active weak signal detection**', on 14 October 2025. Riccardo Patriarca (Associate Professor, Sapienza University) and Adriana-Dana Schmitz (Human Performance Expert, EUROCONTROL) will join to introduce a practical method to unearth weak signals in modern socio-technical systems.

Don't miss the talks and the live interaction. Sign up at <https://skybrary.aero/webinars>

## CATCH UP

Earlier this year, Steven Shorrock summarised and synthesised the latest *HindSight* magazine, People in Control? Staying in the loop. And the latest episode of Life in Pictures featured emergency planner and disaster recovery specialist Dr Lucy Easthope, author of When the Dust Settles and Come What May. Her stories are not to be missed.

Catch up at <https://skybrary.aero/webinars>

# SAFETY FORUM 2025 VIDEOS OUT NOW!

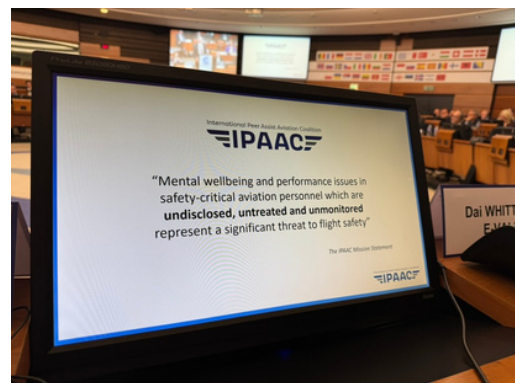
The 12th Safety Forum was held on 5-6 June 2025, at EUROCONTROL headquarters in Brussels. The Forum, organised by Flight Safety Foundation in partnership with EUROCONTROL and the European Regions Airline Association, was on the theme of **People in the Centre of Aviation Safety**.

The Forum took a holistic and proactive approach to mental health, wellbeing, fatigue and resilience in aviation. The presentations came from the perspectives of pilots, controllers, regulators, Human Factors, psychological, and more.

EUROCONTROL's Steven Shorrock opened with a keynote slot featuring a video of five people with significant experiences relevant to mental health in aviation.

- Captain Adrian Abraham (formerly of Malaysian Airlines)
- Captain Andreas Poehlitz (formerly of Germanwings)
- Captain Richard de Crespigny AM (author of QF32 and FLY!)
- Paul Dickens (Clinical Psychologist)
- Dr Lucy Easthope (Emergency planner and author)

The video and all recorded talks are at <https://bit.ly/SAFETYFORUM2025>





# EUROCONTROL PUTS SAFETY-II IN PRACTICE

Adriana-Dana Schmitz recently co-delivered a tabletop training on Weak Signals and the SECA method (Structured Exploration of Complex Adaptations), together with Prof. Riccardo Patriarca during the 7th **International Safety-II in Practice workshop** held at TU Delft.. The event has historically been supported by EUROCONTROL's Human Factors experts, who have co-produced theories and approaches to understanding everyday work.

*"The event was rich in discussions and knowledge exchanges with professionals from the space, rail, nuclear, medicine and aviation sectors,"* wrote Dana. *"Collaboration across high-risk industry domains is key to advancing safety practices."* The proceedings can be found at <https://zenodo.org/records/15635186>



# JUST CULTURE CONFERENCE 2025: JOIN US IN LJUBLJANA!

EUROCONTROL, in association with Slovenia Control, are pleased to invite you to the bi-annual Just Culture Conference, which will be held at the Four Points by Sheraton Ljubljana Mons Hotel, on 23-24 September 2025. The theme of the conference is Justice and Automation.

We have a limited number of places available, so early registration is essential! If interested, please register here <https://bit.ly/ECJC2025>

The registration will cover all conference expenses, including lunches on both days. Also, all participants are warmly invited to a welcome cocktail, to be held at the hotel on the evening of 22nd September.

We strongly recommend booking the conference hotel. Please keep in mind that if you choose to stay at a different hotel, a conference fee of €75 will have to be paid on site.

We have an exciting line up of contributors from various areas, supporting the theme of the Conference: Justice and Automation. The agenda will be distributed shortly.

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## CALLING FUTURE HF PRACTITIONERS

Some with operational, technical or management backgrounds wish to develop their expertise in Human Factors to support their organisations. If this is you, or someone you know, then EUROCONTROL's Human Factors Practitioner Programme [[HUM-PRG-PP](#)] has been developed with this in mind.

The programme consists of:

- 2 mandatory introductory classroom courses – [HUM-HFA](#) and [HUM-DESIGN](#);
- 2 mandatory e-learning courses [HUM-FAT-ATC](#) and [HUM-STRESS](#);
- a minimum of 2 out of the following specialised classroom courses - [HUM-SFM](#), [HUM-SYS](#), [HUM-HF-CASE](#) and [HUM-TRM-ADV](#).

After completing this training programme, you will be able to explain the essential HF concepts for ATM and elements of relevant applied psychology, and provide support in projects related to HF and better integration of HF in operations.

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## IMPROVE YOUR (SYSTEMS) THINKING

Systems thinking is fundamental to understanding and intervening to improve how sociotechnical systems work. EUROCONTROL's Systems Thinking course ([HUM-SYS](#)) will take place at Aviation Learning Centre 21-24 October 2025.

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## UNDERSTAND AND IMPROVE EVERYDAY WORK

Do you want to understand everyday work, not just incidents? The EUROCONTROL Weak Signals courses may be for you. The 'Theoretical Foundations' course ([SAF-WS-INTRO](#)) provides an overview of the fundamentals of systems theory and knowledge management for weak signals and introduces a practical method to unearth them known as SECA (Structured Exploration of Complex Adaptations).

On completing the course, you will understand the theoretical fundamentals of systems thinking, resilience engineering, and weak signals management. You'll also appreciate the practical applications of the SECA method. That's not all: the course will also equip to perform interviews following SECA guidelines to collect significant data on normal everyday work.

The 'Practical Applications' course ([SAF-WS-APPL](#)) provides practical guidance and hands-on experience on the use of SECA to capture and analyse weak signals.

The course is designed for aviation stakeholders, but also benefits other safety-critical industries. The 2026 courses will be at EUROCONTROL Brussels in March and April ([SAF-WS-INTRO](#)) and June and September [[SAF-WS-APPL](#)].

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# HUMAN PERFORMANCE AT HELSINKI

In May, almost 40 human performance and safety professionals representing 25 air navigation service providers in Europe and beyond, and two related organisations, gathered in Helsinki, kindly hosted by [Fintraffic](#).

We started the Safety Human Performance Subgroup (SHPSG) with a creative Team Resource Management Experience: 'Connecting Through Creative Drama', under the guidance of [Saliha Ünsal Açikel](#), [Hande Yalçınkaya Can](#) and [Özlem Keleş Galik \(TATCA Türkiye Hava Trafik Kontrolörleri Derneği\)](#). The exercises were about creativity, connection and conviviality.

The theme continued as [Istvan Hegedus](#) (ATM Safety Promotion Specialist, [HungaroControl](#)) introduced us to the use of creative drama to bring safety investigation to life - "Safety Holmes".

[Alexandra Savy](#) (Human and Organisational Factors Coordinator, DSNA), introduced a unique board game to understand organisational dynamics developed for [Direction Generale de l'Aviation Civile](#) "Dej & Assiette: Safety's on the Menu".

Again, creative approaches to mutual understanding.

[Jelle Lit](#) and [Lennert Hoogduin](#) (Human Factors Designers, [LVNL](#)) introduced us to Human Factors at the agency in charge of air traffic control in the airspace of the Netherlands. HF specialists in aviation and other industries face similar challenges and opportunities. Sharing these is one way to ensure we can succeed better together.

[Steven Shorrock](#) went on to outlined the derailment at Santiago de Compostela, including the 1st, 2nd and 3rd stories, 12 years on. Who is 'in control' and whose work are we learning from?

[Mika Virolainen](#) and [Anna-Maria Teperi](#) (Research Professor, Occupational Safety - Finnish Institute of Occupational Health) outlined the implementation of an HF approach to ATM culture and practice via pragmatic HF tools.

Special thanks to [Mika Virolainen](#) (Head of Competence, [Fintraffic ANS](#)) and [Fintraffic](#), for hosting us. It's a unique organisation that controls traffic on land, at sea and in the air.

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# SAFETY CULTURE EVENT

The **EUROCONTROL safety culture programme** is the world's largest in ATM, having surveyed over 30 ANSPs around Europe, with a combined approach of questionnaires, workshops and interviews. To share experience, safety professionals from ANSPs and other aviation organisations come together each year. This year, the workshop was held online on 27 May. Almost 56 participants from Europe, Asia and North America shared experience, representing 26 ANSPs, 3 international organisations (EUROCONTROL, IATA, CANSO) and 2 airlines

On the agenda were:

- EUROCONTROL NM Safety Culture Survey: Lessons Learned
- EUROCONTROL Safety Culture Questionnaire: Process & Tools
- Enhancing Safety Culture - the Role of Psychological Safety & Behaviours
- People in Control? Lessons from the Santiago de Compostela Accident
- Enabling a Culture of Safety: From Strategy to Trust and Performance
- Experience Sharing

The EUROCONTROL programme continues to offer questionnaire administration for Member States. Contact:

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# HF IN THE PROSECUTOR EXPERT COURSE

The **EUROCONTROL Prosecutor-Expert Course** was launched in 2012 as a collaborative initiative with IFATCA (International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations), and with support from ECA (European Cockpit Association). The course offers specialised training to professionals engaged in the prosecution of aviation-related incidents. The course is held twice a year. To date, controllers and pilots from around 36 countries have participated, along with judicial professionals from around 23 countries. This includes public prosecutors, legal advisors, judges, and a high court president. The HF contribution from Steven Shorrock focuses on work-as-imagined, work-as-done and work-as-judged.

# JUST CULTURE TASK FORCE

EUROCONTROL hosted the **Just Culture Task Force** on 28 May 2024 at the EUROCONTROL HQ in Brussels. The Task Force includes stakeholders from across the aviation community, led by EUROCONTROL's Radu Cioponea (contact Radu for more information).

The HF input involved a practical exercise on handling fragmented information, based on a mountain climbing scenario, designed by Sebastian Daeunert and co-delivered with Steven Shorrock.



# TEAM RESOURCE MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

EUROCONTROL's **Team Resource Management (TRM) Working Group** gathered for their yearly face-to-face meeting to discuss the status of some on-going projects, to benchmark and to explore new TRM applications.

*"Rarely is more evident than with this group that you have to burn to be able to spark", wrote co-chair Mika Virolainen (Head of Competence, Fintraffic ANS). "Members of this group being so motivated and interested. When the atmosphere is positive, right and safe, it facilitates learning and innovativeness."*



*"I have the honour to be member of this group", wrote Monika Sekita (National Team Resource Management and HF Specialist at PANSAs). "Best group ever. So many open minded people with so many super ideas! I want to thank all of the members for open speaking, sharing their ideas, and for support."*

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# REMOTE TOWERS EXPERT GROUP

EUROCONTROL hosted the 4th meeting of the **EASA Remote Towers Expert Group**, led by Johan Grauers. Leaders from the community discussed the present and future of remote towers. *"It's inspiring to see how far this field has come and the momentum only keeps building!"*, wrote EUROCONTROL Human Performance Expert Adriana-Dana Schmitz.



## CELEBRATING FELLOWSHIP AND PROFESSORSHIP

EUROCONTROL's Dr Steven Shorrock was recently elected to **Fellow of The British Psychological Society** - FBPSS (see the LinkedIn post <https://bit.ly/4ltj5m4>). This requires an advanced knowledge of psychology in at least one of its fields and an "outstanding contribution" to the advancement or communication of psychological knowledge or practice. The award was made on the basis of diverse research, teaching, publications, public service, and developing the work of others - in aviation, healthcare and other sectors.

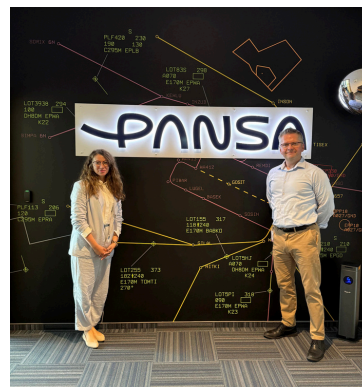
Steve's voluntary work in the healthcare sector has included teaching healthcare professionals at The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh on team based quality management, The University of Edinburgh on patient safety and clinical human factors, and University College London on risk and safety in medical practice and other complex systems, and keynote talks for over ten other healthcare associations and organisations.

*"I'm grateful to many who have influenced, informed and inspired my practice and thinking over the years", wrote Steve.*

Steve was also recently appointed as **Adjunct Professor at University of the Sunshine Coast**, Centre for Human Factors & Sociotechnical Systems, where he collaborates in research activities with a world-leading group.

## SUPPORT TO PANSA

In May, we spent three great days with Polish Air Navigation Services Agency (PANSA) in Gdansk with safety investigators and in Warsaw with CEO Magdalena Jaworska and her senior management team on safety, complexity, and work.



## FROM ATM TO RADIOTHERAPY AND RADIOLOGY

Adriana-Dana Schmitz was invited as a keynote speaker at the 40th Symposium of the Belgian Hospital Physicists Association, bringing together experts in Radiotherapy, Nuclear Medicine and Radiology.

*"It was a pleasure discussing how automation can impact Human Performance from an aviation perspective and how these lessons can be relevant to the world of medical physics", wrote Dana.*



HindSight 35



HindSight 31



"...climb to next level and wait...turn left and continue 1000...target coming from right...look up and hurry"  
"It looks like the Call of Duty TRM training session is going well?"

HindSight 33



In the system of the future, most tasks will be delegated to the human.

Cartoons by [Daniel Avram](#)  
(Senior Expert, EUROCONTROL)

AND FINALLY...

## GET IN TOUCH

*People in Control* is published three times a year by the Human Factors Team of the EUROCONTROL Network Management Directorate.

For more information about any of the topics in this newsletter, please contact the Editors:

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## PASS IT ON

Please forward this newsletter to anyone who may be interested in Human Factors in air traffic management, aviation, and beyond.

If you'd like to receive future issues personally, please [let us know](#).

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