

Risk-based IOSA

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IOSA: 20 years of enhanced
operational safety audits



In today's dynamic environment, airlines need an [IATA Operational Safety Audit \(IOSA\)](#) that focuses on a deeper understanding of operational safety risks. A [risk-based approach](#) tailors the audit scope for each airline audited under IOSA. Furthermore, the new approach introduces a maturity assessment of an airline's safety-critical systems and programs.

This newsletter provides information and updates regarding the IOSA move to a risk-based audit program.

Trial Audits

- In the last six months, six trial audits were conducted with volunteering operators.
- IATA collected comprehensive feedback from all involved stakeholders, with the intent to validate whether defined success criteria and the expectations from the new concept were met.
- The trial audits validated the success criteria and expectations, that a risk-based approach will lead to new safety insights which the airline can use to improve its operational safety. The operators, auditors and key regulatory stakeholders were satisfied with the new audit process and outcomes delivered.
- Key takeaways from the trial audits were:
 - Briefing packages for auditors, and onsite audit tools, require further refinement to support understanding and adoption.
 - Adherence to submission deadlines, for operator manuals and documents prior to audit start, are critical for a successful audit within the allotted timeframe.
 - Risk-Based IOSA auditor training and standardization with the new processes is vitally important.

All volunteers saw that participating in the Risk-Based IOSA audit trials provided a unique opportunity to understand how the new program may, through its focus on specific operational areas, highlight new areas for improvement that were not identified under the traditional IOSA audit. Demonstrating their Safety Leadership, as a learning organization, they took the opportunity to refine internal processes and procedures through the findings and observations presented to them. Special thanks go to volunteering operators and Risk-Based IOSA auditors.

Risk-Based IOSA Audits in 2023 and 2024

- Following the trial audits, the first official Risk-Based IOSA Audits have commenced in April.
- IATA is in contact with all IOSA operators that will undergo a Risk-Based IOSA audit in 2023.
- In due time, IATA will publish the policy for identifying the operators for risk-based audits in 2024.
- All IOSA operators not undergoing Risk-Based IOSA in 2024 will be allocated to an Audit Organization (AO) by IATA. This policy has been agreed by the IATA governance groups. It will be released through an IOSA Operator Alert on the [IOSA Documentation site](#). To be notified of any new IOSA publications such as Operator Alerts, [please subscribe here](#).

Risk-Based IOSA Workshops

- The Risk-Based IOSA workshops announced in [IOSA Operator Alert 31](#) have seen great demand. Our team looks forward to meeting you and answering your questions on Risk-Based IOSA at these events.
- Further workshop dates will be announced when available. Stay tuned and subscribe to the IOSA documentation site [here](#) and [follow our IOSA Community on Safety Connect](#)
- In addition, IATA is developing training and consulting solutions to address the needs of individual operators.



Operator Webinars

- IATA has delivered and recorded a number of public Risk-Based IOSA webinars.
- The recordings of the webinars can be accessed [here](#) after registration.
- The IOSA program office also delivered a presentation on Risk-Based IOSA at the ICAO SkyTalks during the 41st ICAO Assembly. The recording can be accessed on ICAO TV [here](#).

Auditor Engagement and Training

- IATA continues to recruit qualified auditors to form part of the upcoming Risk-Based IOSA trial audits including currently qualified IOSA Auditors. Among others, auditors in the IATA Asia-Pacific, Africa and North Asia regions are encouraged to apply, as well as Flight Operations auditors.
- More information on how to become an auditor under Risk-Based IOSA is available [here](#).

Operator Questionnaire

- The IOSA operator questionnaire has been revamped and was released in March 2023 through [IOSA Operator Alert 30](#), and it:
 - replaces the Covid-19 operator questionnaire which was in place; and
 - provides a template for code-share partners to exchange information; and
 - replaces the IOSA self-evaluation form SAR.F17; and
 - feeds the risk based IOSA process of an IOSA registered operator.
- The questionnaire will be required:
 - recurrently every six (6) months,
 - thirty (30) days prior to any Audit,
 - in case of reportable circumstances or events as per IPM

Further updates to the Operator Questionnaire will be released through IOSA Operator Alerts. Operators that cannot access the repository will be provided an alternative solution.



Who will perform the Risk-Based IOSA audits during the transition period?

The Risk-Based IOSA audits are performed by IATA. During the transition period the Audit Organizations will conduct the traditional IOSA audits.

Is IATA making these changes to generate a profit?

The IOSA Program is intended to support the continuous improvement in aviation safety performance and to reduce redundant audit/assurance activities. IOSA is not a commercial product and is not intended to generate a commercial surplus to IATA.

Will the audit fees change under Risk-Based IOSA?

The audit fees will remain unchanged. The variable costs such as travel, and accommodation of the auditors will be payable by the operator, which has also remained unchanged as a policy.

Are Risk-Based IOSA audits in alignment with regulations?

The risk-based approach is recognized as the next step in safety oversight to achieve safety improvements. Risk-Based IOSA will enhance the effectiveness of audits, continue to contribute to regulatory safety oversight, and support code-share safety monitoring as the industry safety standard for airlines.

In this context, IATA is in close contact with key regulators who provide input into the program's evolution. There has been broad support for the change, and feedback on the move to risk-based auditing has been positive.

Will the introduction of Risk-Based IOSA change the closing period for nonconformities?

No, the closing period for nonconformities will remain unchanged.

Will the Risk-Based Audit result in more findings than usual?

Under Risk-Based IOSA, the audit process allows auditors to dedicate more time to relevant areas. This may lead to new opportunities for improvement.

Note: It is important that safety leaders do not regard findings as a measure to be leveled to zero but rather embrace them as opportunities to improve. However, the operator should continue to internally monitor its conformity with the ISARPs.

Will there be a training for operators on the IOSA Risk-Based IOSA audit methodology?

In 2023, IATA will provide Risk-Based IOSA training for operators. Follow the [IATA Training site](https://www.iata.org/risk-based-iosa) for new developments.



Stay Up-to-date

Other Questions?

Do you have a question that isn't covered by our FAQs? Please don't hesitate to reach out to the IOSA program office by emailing iosa@iata.org. More information about the important changes in the IOSA program is available on the [Risk-Based IOSA](#) page.

World Safety and Operations Conference (WSOC)

The IATA World Safety and Operations Conference will be held 19-21 September in Hanoi, Vietnam. Expect a rich program addressing Safety, Flight Operations and Cabin Operations as well as Emergency Response Planning and Aircraft Recovery. There will be numerous dedicated sessions on Risk-Based IOSA including, on Monday 18th September, a Risk-Based IOSA workshop. More information [here](#).

Risk-Based IOSA Workshops

In 2023, IATA will hold numerous Risk-Based IOSA workshops worldwide. These will target operators, regulators as well as Risk-Based IOSA Auditors. Stay tuned on and keep watching out for alerts and other information on www.iata.org/risk-based-iosa.

