

Summary on ICAO Policy on Assistance to Aircraft Accident Victims and their Families (Doc 9998)

Support programmes, to assist aircraft accident victims and their families, require planning and response by the airline, airport, State of Occurrence, non-governmental organizations, and specialized commercial companies. Regardless of the scale of an accident, the victims and their families should receive proper assistance and support.

Because of differences in the size and circumstances of aircraft accidents, the extent of the resources required to provide assistance to family will vary considerably. Therefore, planning for such events is required to ensure that in the event of a major aircraft accident the assistance provided to the victims and their families is adequate and sufficient.

Information on the progress of the accident investigation should be provided to accident victims and their families regularly and in a timely manner. It should be highlighted that an aircraft accident investigation only objective is the prevention of accidents and incidents and the investigation process is separate from the provision of family assistance.

Family assistance is the provision of services and information to address the concerns and the needs of the aircraft accident victims and their families.

Defining the scope of the family and who is entitled to assistance is perhaps the most challenging and most important aspect of the planning process.

The concept of family differs between cultures and populations.

The provision of family assistance requires the commitment of resources in several areas, including those regarding:

- a) information about the occurrence;
- b) emergency response to the accident;
- c) coordination of travel to and lodging at a family assistance center, as well as assistance to those not travelling;
- d) coordination of a visit to the accident site, where access is practicable;
- e) support for immediate financial needs;
- f) information about the location and status of the victims, and the recovery, identification and disposition of remains;
- g) information regarding the recovery, management and return of personal effects;
- h) social, emotional and psychological support; and
- i) information about the progress of the investigation and its objective.

Family assistance and support will require national legislation, regulations and/or policies to ensure that the necessary resources and commitment be provided to assistance and are available at short notice.

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