World Overflight Risk Conference

Conference Summary: World Overflight Risk Conference 2024

Introduction

The World Overflight Risk Conference 2024 (WORC2024), organised by Osprey Flight Solutions, the European Union Aviation Safety Agency, and The University of Southampton, took place in Warsaw from July 2nd to 4th. This inaugural educational event provided a platform for the global aviation community to collectively address and navigate the dynamic challenges posed by overflight risk.

In an industry-first, regulators, airlines, and insurers gathered to discuss overflight risk, to gain greater mutual understanding, and break down existing silos. The event attracted **249 attendees from 45 countries**– including 75 Operators, 37 Governments, and 11 Insurers– who were educated on current risk management approaches, existing gaps, emerging threats, and available technological solutions. A key concern addressed was enabling flights in an increasingly dynamic geopolitical environment, where public information is accessible to a wide range of stakeholders beyond the risk management team.

WORC2024 has been an immense success, with **96%** of survey respondents very satisfied-satisfied and **100%** expressing their wish for a future event. Feedback showed that the content was highly relevant to delegates' roles and the quality of the speakers was extremely high. The event was considered a significant step forward for industry efforts, providing knowledge and tools that participants have already started using.

Despite recent improvements to overflight risk management there is still room for further enhancement. The key takeaways from the conference that require more attention in overflight risk management were identified as the need for

1. Timely and Accurate Intelligence Gathering Capabilities

- It was agreed that state information should not be the sole source of overflight risk information. Open airspace does not mean safe airspace, a lack of state published notices does not always indicate safe airspace, rather a gap in the intelligence picture

- High resolution data and intelligence, once the purview solely of classified sources, is now more widely available. Adoption of open-source intelligence, enhanced where possible with classified information, is essential to maximise accuracy and timeliness of information received on overflight risk

- Technology to manage the volume, speed and breadth of open-source intelligence is essential to ensure efficiency, scalability and accuracy

2. Proactive Risk Assessments & Documented Decision Making

- Outdated airspace restrictions published by states, operators, and insurance providers can cause safe airspace to be incorrectly perceived as unsafe
- Traditional risk assessment methods need to be reevaluated, in some cases they can be a source of risk themselves, as they can be a source of risk themselves, as they might not measure the effectiveness of risk management efforts
- Documenting the entire risk assessment process and decision-making is essential for both liability purposes and learning from past experiences

3. Transparent and Collaborative Approach to Intelligence Sharing

- Information sharing remains conditional, there is a particularly strong interest in learning about the mitigation measures being implemented by industry colleagues
- There is a need to consider communication with the crew and explore ways to ensure a trusting relationship between them and management.
- National interests and limited mandates to publish information may prevent States being fully transparent with the wider aviation community about overflight risks

4. Improved consistency and standardisation in terminology and methodology

- Terminology consistency and standardisation would improve understanding between operators, regulators and insurers, and the effectiveness of training and information sharing efforts globally
- ICAO Doc10084 is a good start, but global implementation and continuous improvement through further iterations is required

Next Steps

1. Maximise engagement in the University of Southampton project to quantify the impact of mitigation
2. Publish a co-authored whitepaper highlighting the key findings and industry next steps from WORC2024
3. Gather industry feedback for fourth edition of ICAO Doc 10084
4. Continue to explore mechanisms to enhance industry engagement and discussion on overflight risk, with findings to be shared in the whitepaper