

Annual Plan

2011-12



Australian Government

Australian Transport Safety Bureau



Who we are

The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) is Australia's national transport safety investigator. The ATSB is established as an independent agency by the *Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003* (TSI Act). It is funded by the Australian Government to deliver improved transport safety in Australia, including through:

- independent 'no blame' investigation of transport accidents and other safety occurrences
- safety data recording, analysis and research
- fostering safety awareness, knowledge and action.

What we do

The ATSB's primary function is to improve transport safety by investigating safety occurrences and communicating what we learn. To achieve this, we:

- focus our resources where they are most likely to result in safety improvements
- harness the expertise and information necessary to our safety role
- conduct impartial, systemic and timely safety investigations
- identify safety issues based on evidence and expert analysis
- report safety issues clearly and objectively, without attributing blame or liability
- ensure the significance of safety issues is clearly understood by all concerned
- promote effective safety action.



How we do it

The ATSB works actively with the aviation, marine and rail industries, transport regulators and governments at a state, national and international level to improve transport safety. Through rigorous investigation, supported by focussed research and analysis and clear communication, we identify safety issues and advocate action to improve future safety.

Why we do it

Independent ‘no blame’ investigation of transport accidents and other safety occurrences

Independent investigations that focus on systemic issues, and on future safety rather than on blame, ensure that stakeholders are aware of safety issues and what needs to be done to address them. Rigorous investigation reports and consequent safety action foster public confidence in the safety of the transport system.

Safety data recording, analysis and research

Timely receipt and assessment of transport accident and other safety occurrence notifications allows the ATSB to identify possible safety issues at the earliest opportunity. The maintenance and analysis of a body of safety information (including transport safety data, and research and investigation reports) enables better understanding of safety trends and safety issues.

Fostering safety awareness, knowledge and action

Awareness and understanding of transport safety issues is increased through a range of activities including consultation, education, and the promulgation of research and investigation findings and recommendations. These contribute to the national and international body of safety knowledge and foster action for the improvement of safety systems and operations.

Our principles

We approach our work in accordance with five key principles intended to maintain trust in our organisation:

- Independence:*** *we think for ourselves*
- Engagement:*** *we work with others*
- Rigour:*** *we rely on evidence*
- Innovation:*** *we are open to new ideas*
- Relevance:*** *we make a difference*

Our priorities for 2011–12

The ATSB Statement of Intent identifies the following priorities.

No.	Description	Activity
1	Safety communication and education	<p>We will plan and allocate resources to meet the ATSB's commitment to enhancing safety communication and education.</p> <p>We will ensure that the safety messages resulting from investigations are clearly stated and communicated well, thereby maintaining industry awareness and public confidence.</p>
2	Active participation in the transport reform agenda	<p>We will work to meet the Council of Australian Governments' commitment to establish the ATSB as the national investigator of rail accidents and other safety occurrences.</p> <p>We will collaborate on marine safety investigation arrangements to complement an expanded role for the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) in the safety of commercial shipping.</p> <p>We will implement the government's commitments regarding safety investigation as outlined in the National Aviation Policy White Paper - Flight Path to the Future.</p>
3	Improved efficiency, effectiveness and timeliness of investigations	<p>We will continue to ensure our resources deliver the best safety benefits and outcomes to the travelling public.</p> <p>We will continually improve our investigation policies and practices to maintain our status as a best practice safety investigation agency.</p> <p>We will monitor our efficiency, effectiveness and timeliness through benchmarking with like agencies.</p> <p>By December 2011, we will establish and implement updated investigation management policies and procedures and supporting tools.</p>
4	Strengthening stakeholder relationships	<p>By December 2011, we will revise our MoUs with the Department of Defence and AMSA.</p> <p>We will strengthen our relationship with industry participants and the travelling public through safety communication and education, and through objective and transparent investigations that include appropriate levels of consultation.</p> <p>We will develop and agree a MoU with the national rail safety regulator for use from 2013 onwards.</p>
5	Sharing safety information	<p>We will cooperate with other state, national and international safety agencies to share safety data and other safety intelligence to allow all parties to better perform their important safety functions.</p> <p>In responding to the Declaration of Open Government, we will promote public access to transport safety accident and incident occurrence data and statistical holdings.</p> <p>We will implement the ATSB Information Publication Plan, consistent with the government's FOI reforms.</p>
6	Focussed safety research and data analysis	<p>We will develop a proactive safety occurrence trend monitoring capability, including developing occurrence risk ratings to allow indications of safety risk from occurrence data.</p> <p>We will publish and undertake a research program informed by: analysis of safety data holdings and investigation findings; and consultation with relevant stakeholders, including other safety agencies, educational institutions and transport industry participants.</p> <p>We will work to improve consistency and comparability of transport safety datasets, including those that focus on the collection, collation and analysis of data.</p> <p>We will contribute to the creation of national safety occurrence datasets in rail and marine to ensure that the ATSB will have ready access to the data, and that the databases will be conducive to proactive data analysis for measuring safety within these industries.</p>

No.	Description	Activity
7	Regional and international engagement	<p>We will be an active and constructive player in International Civil Aviation Organization, International Maritime Organization, and other international and regional forums that have a role in transport safety.</p> <p>We will promote engagement with our international counterpart agencies and with relevant multilateral organisations, ensuring that safety lessons and operational innovations are shared internationally. We will collaborate on improving the international standards for transport accident investigation.</p> <p>We will actively support initiatives to build aviation and maritime safety investigation capability in the Asia-Pacific region.</p> <p>We will assist Australia's regional neighbours through international agreements and participation in intergovernmental programs such as the Indonesian Transport Safety Assistance Package (ITSAP) and cooperation with Papua New Guinea (PNG) in line with the Australia-PNG MoU on Cooperation in the Transport Sector.</p>
8	Building capability	<p>We will progressively acquire and train the additional staff necessary to carry out our expanded roles in the rail and maritime sectors.</p> <p>By December 2011, we will issue revised investigator work level standards to support the government's transport reform agenda that appropriately reflect project management requirements and increased emphasis on safety communication and education priorities.</p> <p>Where resources permit, the ATSB will provide technical advice and support to other organisations with a role in transport safety.</p> <p>We will ensure we are able to respond to the challenges posed by new transport vehicles and technologies.</p> <p>We will ensure that the characteristics of a good safety management system are understood by our investigators, and that our investigation findings are a valuable means of measuring and assuring the effectiveness of safety management systems.</p>
9	Preparedness for a major accident	<p>We will plan and exercise to effectively respond to a major accident within Australia or involving an Australian air carrier or ship overseas. As well as contingency planning, we will participate in regular exercises to test and improve preparedness. We will participate in emergency response and post investigation debriefs.</p>

Resource information

(\$'000)	2011-12 Budget	2012-13 Forward year 1	2013-14 Forward year 2	2014-15 Forward year 3
Total program allocations	21,308	24,021	19,396	19,581
Staffing (full-time equivalent)	116	130	130	130

Income statement 2011-12 ('000)

Revenue			
	Appropriation Revenue		21,308
	Own Source Revenue		945
Total Revenue			22,253
Expenses			
	Employee Expenses		*15,500
	Supplier Expenses		6,753
Total Expenses			**22,253
Capital budget			
	Computer equipment		105
	Other plant and equipment		73
	Intangible software		300
Total Capital			**478

* Employee and supplier expenses split post-Budget internal allocations and so differ from the forecasts in the Portfolio Budget Statements.

** Does not include \$1.25 million of depreciation and amortisation expenses, which are a direct charge to the Australian Government.

Key performance indicators and deliverables

Key performance indicators	Estimate
Safety action is taken by stakeholders to address identified critical safety issues.	100%
Safety action is taken by stakeholders to address identified significant safety issues.	70% or higher
Stakeholder awareness of safety issues is raised as a result of investigation, research and analysis findings and through safety education activities (as measured through a biennial survey; scored on a 7-point rating scale).	5 or higher
Stakeholders are satisfied with the ATSB's performance (as measured through a biennial survey; scored on a 7-point rating scale).	5 or higher

Deliverables	Target
We will assess, classify and record all accident and incident notifications and confidential safety reports that we receive.	13,000 incident notifications 130 confidential reports
We will undertake complex investigations based on safety priorities and trends and complete them in a timely manner.*	35 investigations (*365 days)
We will undertake less complex investigations based on safety priorities and trends and complete them in a timely manner.*	90 investigations (*200 days)
We will undertake research and analysis investigations based on safety priorities and trends.	12 investigations
We will ensure we are prepared for a major accident by reviewing and testing our major accident response and management capabilities.	Annually
We will comply with relevant international safety investigation obligations based on the Australian legal and governance framework.	100% compliance
We will publish final investigation reports and make them available on our website.	100%
We will measure stakeholder awareness of safety issues as a result of the ATSB's communication and education activities and the level of satisfaction in the delivery of our services.	By 30 September 2011

* As measured from the commencement of the investigation to the release of the final report.