



Australian Government
Australian Transport Safety Bureau

Corporate Plan 2016–17



Australia's national transport safety investigator

AVIATION | MARINE | RAIL

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Published by: Australian Transport Safety Bureau
Postal address: PO Box 967, Civic Square ACT 2608
Office: 62 Northbourne Avenue Canberra, Australian Capital Territory 2601
Telephone: 1800 020 616, from overseas +61 2 6257 4150 (24 hours)
Accident and incident notification: 1800 011 034 (24 hours)
Facsimile: 02 6247 3117, from overseas +61 2 6247 3117
Email: atsbinfo@atsb.gov.au
Internet: www.atsb.gov.au

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Introduction

As the accountable authority for the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB), I am pleased to present the ATSB's 2016–17 Corporate Plan, which covers the period 2016–17 to 2019–20.

This Corporate Plan sets out the ATSB's purpose, its strategies for achieving that purpose and how the effect of the strategies and the attainment of the ATSB's purpose will be measured. It has been prepared consistent with paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. The Plan takes account of the relevant provisions of the *Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003* (the TSI Act), which establishes the ATSB. It also has regard to the views of the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport on the ATSB's strategic direction as notified under Section 12AE of the TSI Act.

The TSI Act provides that the ATSB's primary purpose is to improve the safety of aviation, rail and marine transport through accident investigation, data analysis and safety education. It must do so independently, but in cooperation with the other organisations that share responsibility for transport safety, including counterpart organisations in other countries. Successive governments have indicated that, in carrying out its role, the ATSB should give priority to the safety of the travelling public.

To accomplish its primary objective, legislated key functions and broader portfolio responsibilities, the ATSB must take into account the financially constrained environment in which it operates. Since becoming an independent statutory authority in July 2009, the ATSB's base appropriations have continued to reduce over successive financial years with further reductions projected over the forward estimates. Within this setting the ATSB must also remain vigilant of the opposing continued growth in, and progressive changes to, the composition of the aviation, rail and marine transport sectors.

In response, the ATSB will need to further enhance its data-driven approach to transport safety through increasing its capacity to carefully analyse available occurrence data. This will enable the ATSB to selectively allocate its limited resources towards investigating those accidents and incidents that will have the greatest potential for safety learnings and enhancement. It will also expand the ATSB's capacity to identify emerging threats to transport safety.

The ATSB strives to maintain the people, information and systems to be a world leader in its field. This includes having the residual capability to manage an immediate and sustained response to a significant transport safety event, whether it be a major accident or, as is the current case, to undertake a major safety project such as the search for the missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370. The ATSB's ability to meet this overarching responsibility will remain subject to the limitations imposed by increasingly constrained resources and growing demands.

As the recently appointed Chief Commissioner, I am fully committed to maintaining the ATSB's reputation as a world leading safety investigation body. Consistent with this commitment, I will work collaboratively with the relevant authorities to ensure the ATSB is appropriately resourced to fulfil its legislative duties and positioned to meet the expectations of our stakeholders and the broader travelling public.



Greg Hood
Chief Commissioner
31 August 2016

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Purpose

The ATSB is an independent statutory agency of the Australian Government. It is governed by a Commission and is entirely separate from transport regulators, policy makers and service providers. At the same time, it is required to cooperate with others who have a role to play in maintaining and improving transport safety, in particular its counterpart agencies in Victoria and New South Wales.

The ATSB performs its functions in accordance with the provisions of the *Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003* (TSI Act) and, where applicable, relevant international agreements. The TSI Act makes it clear that, in carrying out its purpose, the ATSB cannot apportion blame, assist in determining liability or, as a general rule, assist in court proceedings. Its sole focus remains the prevention of future accidents and the improvement of safety.

The ATSB's purpose is to improve the safety of, and public confidence in, aviation, marine and rail transport through:

- the independent investigation of transport accidents and other safety occurrences
- safety data recording, analysis and research
- fostering safety awareness, knowledge and action.

The ATSB is responsible for investigating accidents and other transport safety matters involving civil aviation, marine and rail operations in Australia, as well as participating in overseas investigations involving Australian-registered aircraft and ships and cooperating more broadly with overseas counterparts. A primary focus of its work is the safety of commercial transport, with particular regard to operations involving the travelling public.

The ATSB maintains a national information dataset of all safety-related occurrences in aviation and of all accidents and significant safety occurrences in the rail and marine sectors. The information it holds is essential to its capacity to analyse broad safety trends and inform its investigation and safety education work.

The ATSB has a specific mandate to report publicly on its analysis and investigations, and to conduct public education programs so as to improve transport safety.

At the time of preparing this plan, the ATSB is also undertaking a major underwater search program aimed at locating the missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370. This activity is in support of a Malaysian transport safety investigation into this tragic event.

Environment

The ATSB operates in an environment of continuing growth and emerging trends across the aviation, rail and marine transport sectors. In contrast, the ATSB has been subjected to successive reductions to its base appropriations with further reductions projected over its forward estimates. This has resulted in a reduction in the ATSB's core capabilities (staffing profile including specialist investigators) by about 25 per cent over the period from when it was established as an independent statutory authority in July 2009.

Should the ATSB be unable to secure additional long-term funding, it will need to further revise its ability to undertake and meet prescribed functions and key deliverables. This is within the context where the ATSB has already determined that it has limited capacity to address a number of underlying organisational objectives, programs and broader portfolio responsibilities. Such examples include the Intergovernmental Agreement on Rail Safety Regulation and Investigation Reform, trend monitoring of rail and marine occurrence data, and fostering safety awareness, knowledge and action through targeted safety education programs.

The ATSB also anticipates that a significant number of experienced investigators are likely to transition to retirement over this planning period. While the ATSB will implement a range of workforce planning strategies to mitigate the resulting loss of organisational knowledge and experience, people with skills and capabilities to replace these staff are in high demand and can often command a market premium beyond what the ATSB is capable of remunerating.

Aviation

Within the aviation sector, the key environmental factors of direct relevance to the ATSB are:

- continuing growth of high capacity regular passenger transport (RPT) departures¹ (already at one-and-a-half times more departures than 10 years ago), where there is a continuing low level of safety risk, but the remote but real possibility of a catastrophic accident
- reduction (based on departures) in the low capacity RPT sector, which is marked by infrequent but significant accidents resulting in multiple fatalities
- charter operations (non-scheduled passenger transport) remaining at a level comparable to high capacity RPT based on departures, noting that charter operations historically pose the greatest risk to the travelling public in terms of accidents and fatalities
- ongoing stakeholder and broader community expectations that all general aviation fatal accidents are investigated
- the continuing expansion of the recreational sector (non-VH registered aircraft), with concomitant expectations of an increased role for the ATSB
- continuing developments in aircraft and air navigation technologies
- increasing numbers of remotely piloted aircraft (RPAs).

The ATSB concentrates its allocated resources on investigating the majority of accidents and serious incidents involving the travelling public. This is where there is the greatest risk of loss of life as well as the greatest likelihood of finding significant safety issues that lead to important safety actions. The ATSB currently investigates approximately 65 per cent of air transport accidents and 60 per cent of serious incidents in this sector.

The ATSB investigates approximately 60 per cent of accidents and 30 per cent of serious incidents involving general aviation aircraft. To maintain focus on the growing public transport sector, the ATSB will need, over time, to reduce the resources it allocates to investigating every general aviation fatal accident. Wherever possible, the ATSB will also need to constrain the scope of investigations into non-fatal accidents in the sector.

¹ Each individual take-off of an aircraft is classified as a 'departure'.

Most general aviation accidents are the result of pilot actions, with the same limited types of avoidable accidents recurring regularly. As a result, most investigations do not lead to improved safety outcomes, although there are some occasional exceptions where system-wide issues can be identified.

Recreational aviation activity (non-VH registered aircraft) hours flown is about a fifth of general aviation (VH-registered aircraft), although the number of accidents per year within each group is similar. Some projections indicate that this part of the sector will continue to grow significantly. Generally, the ATSB has not investigated (or been resourced to investigate) accidents in the recreational aviation sector, although they may be investigated by the relevant administering body. The ATSB investigates about 3 of the 100 accidents a year in this sector, principally because third parties were involved.

Rail

This plan will cover a period of growth in rail transport as well as the consolidation of national reform processes within the Australian rail safety framework. The changes in safety oversight introduced in 2013 will be notionally completed, with independent rail safety investigations being undertaken in all states and territories under the auspices of the ATSB.

This development requires the ATSB to progressively increase the extent and reach of its rail safety activity. The national rail safety investigation function is currently critically reliant on cost-recovery or other activity-based funding and on the collaboration of state-based investigation agencies in Victoria and New South Wales. Investigations are undertaken in reaction to events, leading to unpredictable levels of resources to sustain core investigation capabilities. Therefore the ATSB will need to revise its existing Intergovernmental Charging Agreements, with an up-front annual fee for service being core to all future agreements.

With its responsibility expanding to all rail services, the ATSB's activity has shifted to ensure a focus on the safety of the travelling public, while maintaining a responsiveness to the significant issues affecting freight and other commercial services. There will be an increased scope for broad, industry-wide analysis of occurrence risk to identify emerging issues and areas for targeted attention. At present, the overall system for acquiring, maintaining and analysing safety information in this sector is very limited by comparison with aviation and progress in improving it remains slow.

Marine

Similarly to rail, the maritime transport industry will expand while also consolidating a new national safety regulatory framework. There has not yet, however, been a parallel impetus to establish and consolidate a national safety investigation framework, although there is a general view in the sector that such a framework could have merit.

The ATSB's independent investigation capability, subject to modest additional resources, could expand from the current coverage of large international vessels to encompass vessels operating under the national system for Domestic Commercial Vessel (DCV) safety. Other than cruise vessels, the bulk of the travelling public are transported in this sector through passenger ferries, charter and commercial entertainment services that are under the DCV safety system.

If the necessary resources were available, the ATSB's established operational structure with offices in most states would provide a sound basis from which to provide a timely and responsive domestic marine safety investigation service. The ATSB's common legislative and procedural platforms would ensure consistency in investigation engagement and conduct.

Like rail, the marine sector is limited in its capacity to analytically identify trends in operational safety, although progress is being made. Considerable work remains to be done to make feasible the targeted advisories and proactive recommendations necessary for addressing safety issues before they manifest by way of a more serious accident.

Financial environment

The ATSB enters this planning period with a resource and staffing base considerably lower than when it was established in 2009. Financial projections show a continuing slow decrease in financial resources in real terms (Table 1).

A comparatively small amount of core funding for our expanded rail activities is supplemented by fee-for-service agreements with some states and voluntary provision of investigation resources by others. Our funding for maritime activity remains consistent with our traditional jurisdiction of large international and interstate vessels, rather than the national regulatory scheme for domestic commercial vessels that is being established.

The ATSB's capabilities depend on its greatest resource, its people, who represent 65 per cent of the total organisational costs. There is a two-year lead-time in acquiring and training new investigators, but the current employee budget only allows for replacement of staff after their departure. The ATSB, through its strategic workforce plan, will continue to develop strategies to optimise the transition of new staff including the potential for entry level recruitment programs.

In addition, the comparatively small non-employee budget is principally directed towards fixed support costs and is vulnerable to the significant and unpredictable budgetary variations that are inherent in the investigation task. In particular, the budget provides little capacity to acquire the temporary external expertise that is sometimes necessary for individual investigations.

The ATSB's projected capability for capital investment remains very limited and will not meet the projected refreshment needs of its capital base, both in terms of essential technical equipment and in its core enterprise system.

Table 1: Comprehensive income statement 2016–17 to 2019–20

	2016-17 Budget \$'000	2017-18 Forward estimate \$'000	2018-19 Forward estimate \$'000	2019-20 Forward estimate \$'000
EXPENSES				
Employee benefits	14,220	13,988	13,866	14,202
Suppliers	7,016	6,937	7,101	7,065
Depreciation and amortisation	1,121	1,013	739	665
Finance costs	2	2	-	-
Total expenses	22,359	21,940	21,706	21,932
LESS:				
OWN-SOURCE INCOME				
Own-source revenue				
Sale of goods and rendering of services	952	760	760	760
Other	2,117	2,117	2,117	2,117
Total own-source revenue	3,069	2,877	2,877	2,877
Total own-source income	3,069	2,877	2,877	2,877
Net (cost of) / contribution by services	(19,290)	(19,063)	(18,829)	(19,055)
Revenue from Government	18,169	18,050	18,090	18,390
Surplus / (Deficit) attributable to the Australian Government	(1,121)	(1,013)	(739)	(665)
Total comprehensive income / (loss) attributable to the Australian Government	(1,121)	(1,013)	(739)	(665)
Note: Impact of net cash appropriation arrangements				
	2016-17 \$'000	2017-18 \$'000	2018-19 \$'000	2019-20 \$'000
Total comprehensive income / (loss) less depreciation/amortisation expenses previously funded through revenue appropriations	-	-	-	-
plus depreciation/amortisation expenses previously funded through revenue appropriations (a)	1,121	1,013	739	665
Total comprehensive income / (loss) - as per Statement of Comprehensive income	(1,121)	(1,013)	(739)	(665)

Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 – international contribution

The ATSB will utilise the balance of resources provided by the Tripartite Governments (Australia, Malaysia and People's Republic of China) during 2016–17 to continue to assist the Malaysian Government with its investigation into the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 (MH370). Available resources in 2016–17 consist of a carry forward from 2015–16 of around \$1.5 million. The ATSB will continue to work with primary and secondary stakeholders in relation to decisions made by governments in relation to the search and/or potential recovery operations of MH370.

View from the stern of *Fugro Discovery* as she sails across the southern Indian Ocean



Source: ATSB, photo by ABIS Chris Beerens, RAN.

Crew members aboard *Fugro Discovery*, working on 'Dragon Prince', the EdgeTech DT-1 towfish



Source: ATSB, photo by ABIS Chris Beerens, RAN.

Performance

Primary outcome

To ensure we achieve our legislative purpose, the ATSB has set the following outcome statement which also serves as our main objective:

Improved transport safety in Australia including through: independent 'no blame' investigation of transport accidents and other safety occurrences; safety data recording, analysis and research; and fostering safety awareness, knowledge and action.

Key strategies

To achieve this outcome, the ATSB will implement the following strategies:

- maintain its capability and effectiveness through attracting, retaining and developing professional staff and delivering those investigations of accidents and safety occurrences that have the greatest potential to deliver improved transport safety outcomes, with a particular focus on the safety of the travelling public
- enhance stakeholder relationships, with a particular focus on ensuring a strong culture of reporting safety matters through transparent arrangements for the appropriate reporting, sharing and use of safety information
- deliver a program of safety research and analysis that draws on the results of investigations and safety occurrence datasets
- undertake safety communication and education with an emphasis on identified priority areas where safety risk can be reduced
- engage with and, as appropriate, provide support to regional and international partners, focussing on developing cooperation in our region and on ensuring that safety lessons and operational innovations are shared internationally
- continue the transition to being the national rail safety investigator, as established through the Council of Australian Governments' Intergovernmental Agreement on Rail Safety Regulation and Investigation Reform.

Key deliverables

The following deliverables represent the goods and services produced and delivered by the agency in meeting its primary outcome (main objective):

- assess, classify and publish summaries of accident and incident occurrences received. Details of occurrences being investigated are published within one working day. Summaries of aviation occurrences are ready to be published in the public online database within 10 working days of receipt
- assess confidential reports for clarity, completeness and significance for transport safety and, where appropriate, advise within six weeks any responsible party in a position to take safety action in response to the safety concern
- complete and publish up to 60 more complex investigations and up to 100 short investigations per year
- complete and publish the annual Aviation Occurrence Statistics report and other research publications as informed by the annual research programme. Reports on aviation safety trends will be provided to the Minister and safety entities twice per year

- ensure preparedness for a major accident by reviewing and testing major accident response and management capabilities through participation in one major exercise per year
- assist transport safety in the international region, through direct cooperation and the delivery of approved projects and other support activities provided for by programme funding agreements.

The ATSB will continue to assist the Malaysian Government with its investigation into the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 (MH370) consistent with Annex 13 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation. The ATSB will continue to work with primary and secondary stakeholders in relation to decisions made by Governments in relation to the search and/or potential recovery operations of MH370.

Key performance indicators

The following quantitative key performance indicators (KPI) help measure our effectiveness:

Key Performance Indicators	2015-16 Results	2016-17 Budget	2017-18 Forward estimate	2018-19 Forward estimate	2019-20 Forward estimate
Safety actions completed that address safety issues identified by ATSB investigation reports:					
Critical safety issues.	N/A	100%	100%	100%	100%
All other safety issues.	54%	70%	70%	70%	70%
Complex investigation reports are published within 12 months.	28%	90%	90%	90%	90%
Short investigation reports are completed within two months.	31%	90%	90%	90%	90%
Stakeholder awareness of safety issues is raised as a result of investigations, research and analysis findings and through safety education activities as measured through a biennial survey, scored on a 5-point rating scale.	4	N/A	4 or higher	N/A	4 or higher
Safety action is taken by stakeholders to address valid safety concerns identified in confidential reports.	50% actioned	70% actioned	70% actioned	70% actioned	70% actioned

The ATSB has continued to meet its key deliverables being the number of investigation reports completed and published per year. However, it is evident the ATSB has not been able to complete these reports within the set timeframes. While the number of deliverables has been maintained, with fewer investigators having to take on greater workloads, completion times have been delayed. To address this situation, the ATSB will initially undertake fewer investigations and will need to carefully consider and constrain the scope of investigations initiated. Concurrently, the ATSB will strengthen its investigation management techniques for planning investigations, assigning resources and tracking resource commitment. By maturing their investigation management practices, ATSB investigators will be better positioned to apply developed project management skills capable of achieving a defined outcome, with agreed resources within a prescribed time period.

Capability

Business planning

The ATSB has a business planning process that analyses the anticipated strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats over the forward years. From this process, priorities, activities, targets and risk treatments are developed. The Corporate Plan, which is reviewed each year, is underpinned by the Annual Business Plan and individual staff performance plans. Other key documents which complement and inform this business planning process include the 2015–19 Strategic Workforce Plan, 2015–19 Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Capability Plan and the 2015–19 Capital Investment Plan.

Workforce planning

The ATSB's Strategic Workforce Plan is designed to outline the agency's approach to meeting and maintaining its future workforce needs, within the level of available financial resources, over the next four years. It also aligns the ATSB with whole-of-government workforce planning strategies.

Given the finite nature of ATSB human resources (capital), representing an associated employee cost of approximately 65 per cent of the agency's current and projected budgets, it is imperative that strategies are developed and implemented to maximise the utilisation of these resources. These strategies include:

- **Reshaping the workforce** – designed to maintain our operational efficiency and offset further projected reductions in our staffing profile (Full Time Establishment).
- **Developing a pool of capable staff** – with a particular focus on our technical staff (Transport Safety Investigators) and establishing a contingency arrangement where there is an identified shortfall of available staff with the required industry-based technical skills and knowledge.
- **Attracting and retaining high quality staff** – despite increasing market forces and our salary rates being below the APS median, and less competitive in comparison with other portfolio agencies.
- **Building management and leadership capability** – through enhancing leadership and management skills to enable our managers to utilise and harness our workforce's capabilities to greater effect.
- **Fostering our mature culture and key principles** – through careful analysis of a range of health and wellbeing indicators including the APS Census results and other benchmarked data sets.
- **Addressing workforce risks** – through the established risk controls and treatments, particularly in respect to maintaining sufficient resources to effectively deliver prescribed functions and priorities.
- **Increasing our core appropriations** (out-years) – not only to fund a range of initiatives designed to maintain our current effectiveness, but to provide opportunities to better respond to the changing environment and our future workforce needs.
- **Creating tools to support a more systemic and rigorous workforce planning process** – ensuring these advancements are fully integrated within our business and risk management planning processes.

ICT capability

The ATSB's ICT Capability Plan is designed to provide a roadmap for the information, communications and technology in support of our organisational objectives. It covers all applications and technology supporting investigation, research and corporate functions such as finance, human resources, legal, and corporate communications. It also covers the people, processes and technology as they apply to the ICT function of the agency. When taking into account the main business drivers including active participation in National Transport Safety Reforms, sharing safety information and regional and international engagement, the primary ICT objectives and goals for the agency are as follows:

Our ICT objectives:

Capture data once, publish many
Increase the capability and capacity of
underlying ICT infrastructure
Enable use of knowledge assets
Enable the investigation workforce

Our ICT goals:

Higher data quality
A reduction in operating costs
Information which is more accessible to
stakeholders
Reduced business risk
Timely solutions

Capital investment strategy

During 2016–17 the ATSB will be investing \$356,000 in capital expenditure. These investments include upgrades to infrastructure plant and equipment in relation to the agency's investigatory functionality, along with corporate information technology systems, publishing equipment and supporting infrastructure.

The ATSB's investment profile for the period of the corporate plan is:

- 2017–18 - \$371,000
- 2018–19 - \$372,000
- 2019–20 - \$379,000.

As the capital available to the agency is significantly low for the forward years, the majority of this allocation will be used for maintaining plant and equipment on a needs basis to try and ensure the agency has the necessary equipment to conduct its investigative functions.

ATSB technical staff engaged in detailed component examinations (ATSB laboratories)



Risk oversight and management

The ATSB has established a risk management framework which facilitates the assessment of risk across the ATSB's broad range of business activities. The ATSB uses its enterprise risk assessments to identify obstacles to achieving its objectives as well as to identify opportunities for improved service delivery. Risk management in the ATSB is about improving organisational performance and resilience, providing the ATSB with confidence to make difficult decisions and seize opportunities.

The ATSB's Risk Management Policy and Guidelines are reviewed and updated annually and approved by the Chief Commissioner as the Accountable Authority, the Commission and the Audit Committee. The Policy and Guidelines are intended to be read with the ATSB Enterprise Risk Register and Management Plan. These documents facilitate an agency-wide understanding of the ATSB's risk profile which, in turn, informs the identification, control and treatments of risk at both the Enterprise and business unit level.

As Australia's national aviation, maritime and rail safety investigator, the ATSB is experienced in risk management for the purpose of identifying safety risks in the industry so that they can be effectively managed. In a risk management framework, these safety risks are shared risks where the ATSB, the regulator and industry participants need to work together to improve safety.

In its Enterprise Risk Register the ATSB has recognised that its ability to identify significant risks to aviation safety is at risk due to factors such as the tight resource environment which affects the ATSB's capacity to analyse data and conduct systemic investigation. The ATSB has a number of controls in place to try and manage this risk including scoping and prioritising investigations. The ATSB Strategic Workforce Plan will assist the agency with the management of its tight resources to the greatest effect.

The ATSB continues to implement its risk management framework to assist the agency with overcoming major challenges related to growth and change. Recently the ATSB risk managed its expansion to become the national rail investigator as part of the National Rail Safety Reforms. The ATSB is currently using a mature approach to risk management to guide its activities in the search for the missing Malaysia Airlines aircraft MH370. Searching for missing aircraft and planning for their recovery are not part of the ATSB's core business. However, the ATSB has been able to undertake the lead role in the search by ensuring that it is proactive in identifying the obstacles to a successful operation and adapting and mobilising resources expediently to overcome these obstacles.

To ensure the ATSB continues to overcome risks to its core business and take on challenges that require the agency to adapt and change, the ATSB will advance its risk management framework, in line with the Commonwealth Risk Management Framework. The ATSB will align its risk management framework with its Corporate Plan and other business planning documents to ensure risk management is fully integrated into all the ATSB's business activities in order to:

- inform the overall strategic picture with consideration of individual business unit risks
- inform strategic planning and the allocation of resources
- encourage an appreciation of entity wide risk and allow business units to individually contribute to the ATSB's enterprise risk mitigation
- provide an ATSB-wide perspective on risk management across the range of enterprise and individual business unit risks
- inform decision making on optimising the design and efficiency of risk controls
- implement a consistent approach to the assessment and management of risks for both operational tasks and corporate service delivery
- minimize exposure to risk by having enterprise risk treatments and risk controls integrated into all aspects of the ATSB's business

- ensure that all business units consider contributing treatments at business unit level in mitigating agency enterprise risks
- ensure that ATSB management and staff maintain a focus on risk and risk management in their day-to-day activities, contract management, service delivery and forward planning
- ensure that ATSB staff consider risk in both an external and internal context
- provide assurance that shared risks are properly identified and addressed
- assist in an understanding whether the risks associated with ATSB business processes impact the ATSB and/or external parties
- ensure that, for all risks rated medium and above, contingency plans are in place if the risk event is realised.

Accident site risk assessments are an essential component of our operational activities



Values and principles

The ATSB has in place the systems and controls to ensure that its resources are managed efficiently, effectively, economically and ethically in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

We are committed to the Australian Public Service (APS) Values set out in the *Public Service Act 1999*:

- **Impartial:** The APS is apolitical and provides the Government with advice that is frank, honest, timely and based on the best available evidence.
- **Committed to service:** The APS is professional, objective, innovative and efficient, and works collaboratively to achieve the best results for the Australian community and the Government.
- **Accountable:** The APS is open and accountable to the Australian community under the law and within the framework of Ministerial responsibility.
- **Respectful:** The APS respects all people, including their rights and their heritage.
- **Ethical:** The APS demonstrates leadership, is trustworthy, and acts with integrity in all that it does.

While protecting our independence, we work closely with transport safety regulators and the aviation, marine and rail industries. 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.

The ATSB fosters a culture where we:

- treat each other with dignity and respect, valuing our people as our greatest resource
- will work across the ATSB as “one Team”
- in an uncompromising, timely and collective manner, search for the truth to enhance transport safety.

Australian Transport Safety Bureau

Enquiries 1800 020 616

Notifications 1800 011 034

REPCON 1800 011 034

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Email atsbinfo@atsb.gov.au

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