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Contact: Tom Kok
Director, AviAssist Foundation
Tel: +31 (0)207143148/12
tom.kok@aviassist.org

Contact: Emily McGee
Director of Communications, FSF
Tel. +1 703.739.6700 (ext. 126)
mcgee@flightsafety.org

Safety awareness course Zambia to initiate safety management practice

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In a possible first for East and Southern Africa outside South Africa, the AviAssist Foundation yesterday finished a two day safety awareness course in Zambia. The course provided an introduction to safety management for Zambian operators. It helps them work towards the implementation of a safety management system (SMS). The oversubscribed course had 22 participants from amongst others the air force, the airports and numerous commercial operators. The implementation of an SMS will map toplevel safety concerns. At the same time, safety data collection and analysis will then have to start measuring an operator's effectiveness in dealing with these toplevel safety concerns.

“The course is part of the Foundation’s campaign to support the roll out of data driven safety management in East and Southern Africa” explained AviAssist Director Tom Kok. “The Foundation remains committed to bring knowledge on crucial safety subjects such as SMS to the African region in coordination with ICAO. The course is based on materials of a wide variety of sources, including ICAO. Elements of this course have been developed and adapted from the Hearts and Minds program (www.energyinst.org.uk/heartsandminds), with the kind permission of Shell International Exploration and Production. A move towards a positive safety culture in Africa really requires that such critical courses are also made available in-country for a wider group of staff members. It starts with staff getting an appreciation of those components and concepts. We plan to develop a shorter version of the course to address all staff of operators (incl. e.g. ground support staff) and a longer version to go beyond an introduction. At just under €200 per person for a two day in-country course, regulators and smaller operators can also afford to start pro-active safety management in their operations. The course is part of a toolkit that the Foundation aims to develop to assist in the implementation of SMS. It is crucial that the tools are within the financial & human resource capabilities of the average African operator, which is not a large IATA carrier. We plan to make the training available to operators and regulators in other countries in the region through a co-operation that we hope to set up with other civil aviation training centres. Just as in Zambia, we want to include a free train-the-trainer component to a series of 3 or 4 courses in those countries. In that way, national civil aviation colleges can work towards including the course into their regular curriculum and tap into this soft skills market. This ensures a solution that is affordable to operators and safety regulators in each country.”

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AviAssist Foundation is an independent, non-profit organization. It provides safety support to African countries and companies. As the regional affiliate of the Flight Safety Foundation, it identifies threats to aviation safety, analyzes the problems and works on practical solutions to them. It aims to replicate safety successes from elsewhere on the African continent and beyond. It does so in close coordination with the International Civil Aviation Organization, stakeholders and other safety support providers. More information at www.aviassist.org