



8TH EASA INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FORUM

JOINING FORCES FOR
SAFER AND GREENER
AVIATION WORLDWIDE



MEET OUR SPEAKERS



*Africa Abajas, Senior Sustainable Aviation
Manager, ICF*

Africa Abajas works at ICF as Senior Sustainable Aviation Manager. Her role involves project management and advising on decarbonization strategies within the aviation industry. She is currently supporting EASA in the practical implementation of the Agency's new responsibilities under the ReFuelEU regulation.

Prior to joining ICF, she worked at Vertis Environmental Finance, a carbon market company, as the Head of Vertis' aviation business line. Her role involved helping clients comply with carbon regulations and working as a consultant on capacity-building projects. These projects involved supporting EASA in environmental matters, covering regions such as Southeast Asia, South Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean, and cooperating with partner states to implement global environmental initiatives.

Before Vertis, she worked for the Spanish Civil Aviation Authority as a policy advisor. She started her professional career in an airline association, serving as a liaison between clients and policymakers and regulators. Over the last 18 years of her professional career, she has always been focused on environmental policies and regulations that apply to aviation, such as the Emission Trading System (EU ETS and UK ETS), the ICAO Global Offsetting Scheme (CORSIA), and Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF).





*Ekta Agrawal, Deputy Director Aircraft Engineering
Directorate, DGCA India*

Working as Deputy Director (Aviation Environment Unit) in the office of the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), with Bachelor's Degree in Aeronautical Engineering having more than 10 years of aviation experience. Working for the environmental issues in aviation both at domestic and international level. Involved in the task of procedures and regulations framing for CORSIA and Sustainable Aviation Fuels both at domestic and international level. Being the CORSIA expert, also represents India at ICAO Working Group on CORSIA. Also, the member of ICAO Long term Aspirational Goal- Task Group which is currently working on the methodology towards net zero by 2050. Also, the nodal focal point for SAF for ICAO in India.





Paule Avomo Assoumou Koki, Director General of Civil Aviation, Cameroon

Ms Paule Avomo Assoumou Koki benefited in 1983 of a scholarship for engineering studies in France, after graduating with honours in Yaoundé, Cameroon. After two years of special and advanced mathematics, she obtained in 1988 the diploma of Master of Aeronautics at the National School of Civil Aviation (ENAC) of Toulouse, being the first Cameroonian woman to obtain that qualification. In the meantime, she obtained her private pilot's license and then specialized in computer science.

She has been in turn, Deputy Chief Service Navigation and Air Transport, Chief Air Navigation Department and Acting Representative of ASECNA in Cameroon, Expert Consultant in Air Transport at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Promoter of two enterprises, Head of Training for an Approved Training Organization, Aviation Safety Inspector and Director of Aviation Safety at the Cameroon Civil Aviation Authority.

She was appointed Director General of the Cameroon Civil Aviation Authority (CCAA) on December 30, 2015.

As Director General for the Cameroon Civil Aviation Authority, managing a team of around 1 000 staff members, she has a broad range of responsibilities including safety and security oversight of the industry, management of domestic airports, implementation of security measures on all airports, infrastructure development. Furthermore, under her leadership, the CCAA established and had it certified by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the CCAA Training School, placing Cameroon on the path to an aeronautical skills development hub in the Africa Region.

She is currently the Chairperson of the ICAO AFI Planning and Regional Implementation Group (APIRG).





*Haaba Baldeh, Acting Chief, Regional Cooperation
and Technical Planning Unit, ICAO*

Ms. Haaba Baldeh currently holds the position of Acting Chief, Regional Safety Cooperation Unit in the Air Navigation Bureau of ICAO. She has over 18 years of experience in aviation safety and international aviation cooperation. Over the past 4 years in ICAO, she has worked as a subject matter expert on regional safety cooperation, leading the coordination of ICAO's role in assisting the RSOOs, RAIOS and other investigation cooperation mechanisms (ICMs) as they work on enhancing global aviation safety around the world. She oversees activities such as the RAIO Assessment Programme (RRAP), the Regional Safety Oversight Organizations Cooperative Platform (RSOO-CP), Regional Accident and Incident Investigation Organizations Platform (RAIO-CP).

Haaba has a keen interest in developing innovative solutions to support regional aviation safety. Her experience spans from coordinating a COSCAP project consisting of 7 member States into its evolution into an RSOO, whilst working in the Flight Safety Standards department of the Gambia Civil Aviation Authority. From there, she moved on to become an Air Transport Programme Officer with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) working with 15 Member States on a range of significant policy issues, especially in the areas of aviation safety, security, and air transport economic regulations. Due to her passion and experience in regional safety cooperation, after working as a Technical Officer in Cargo Safety at ICAO for 3 years, she moved to the unit ICAO that supports the enhancement and establishment of the RSOOs, COSCAPs, RAIOS & Investigation Cooperation Mechanism (ICMs) amongst ICAO's Member States.

Haaba has a bachelor's degree in aviation science from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Air Transport Management from Cranfield University.





Sarun Benjanirat, Deputy Director General, CAA Thailand.

Sarun is a professional in Aerospace Business specialized in repair/maintenance of the aircraft components and also the regulatory side in both FAA and EASA.

He has held various posts at the CAA of Thailand since 2016. Before that, he worked as a repair engineer in Thailand and the US and as researcher at Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, US, where he achieved his MS in aerospace engineering and a Ph.D.





Brigadier General (Av) Leonardo Blengini. National Director of DINACIA Uruguay and President of the Latin American Civil Aviation Commission

Leonardo Blengini held progressively higher posts in the Uruguayan Air Force, inter alia as aeronautical maintenance officer, test pilot, flight instructor and accident investigator. He also led higher military training and education establishments and has been a lecturer in academic institutions, both military and civilian.

His international assignments included participation in the United Nations operations in Sierra Leone and Democratic Republic of the Congo as well as the role of the alternate representative of Uruguay on the Council of ICAO.

He holds a bachelor's degree in logistics from the Argentinian Aeronautical Institute and an MBA from Carlos III University of Madrid, Spain and graduated from military training courses in US, Canada, Brazil and Spain.





*Nadir Shafi Dar. Deputy Director General
Regulatory, Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority*

Multi-disciplinary experience of 32 years in Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority. Nadir's experience includes working at senior positions in organization including Safety Oversight Authority, Planning & Development, Contract Management, Airport Operations and Safety & Quality Management.

Nadir holds a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Engineering & Technology Lahore and a Master's in Business Administration (Lahore University of Management Sciences - LUMS).

Among his recent achievements he lists:

- Successful resolution of ICAO Significant Safety Concerns (SSCs) issued to Pakistan. Pakistan resumed the issuance of Pilot licences after resolution of SSCs and passing USOAP Audit in 2021.
- Enactment of Pakistan Civil Aviation Act 2023.
- Restructuring and transformation of Regulatory Oversight Authority in Pakistan.
- Spearheading PCAA engagement with ICAO, EU-South Asia, UK CAA, FAA.
- Lead role in completion of major airport projects in Pakistan.





*John Franklin, Safety Promotion Section Manager,
EASA*

John's love of aviation started at the age of 8 when his family got involved in hot air ballooning. He began his aviation career in the Royal Air Force, serving as an Engineering Officer on the Tornado aircraft first as the Junior Engineering Officer on 617 Squadron and then as the manager for the Tornado F3 maintenance facility. He then became the UK MOD FOD Prevention Officer before moving onto the Military Aviation Authority where he was responsible firstly for Maintenance Safety on Fixed Wing aircraft and then later as the lead for the introduction of the ASIMS system for reporting and investigation.

John joined EASA in 2011 in the Safety Analysis Team as Safety Analysis Coordinator where he set up the Network of Analysts to enable better collaboration on safety between the National Aviation Authorities in Europe. In 2013 he became Head of the Safety Analysis Section responsible for the European Safety Risk Management process and the Annual Safety Review. Finally, in 2018 became EASA's Head of Safety Promotion where he leads their Together4Safety promotion initiative to help the European Aviation community by providing practical information and support on a range of safety issues and other topics.





Phindiwe Gwebu. Executive: Corporate Services at the South African Civil Aviation Authority

Phindiwe Gwebu is currently employed as the Executive: Corporate Services at the South African Civil Aviation Authority. She has been part of the leadership team at the SACAA for the past 18 years. She looks after the Communications and Stakeholder Relations programmes including the Regional and International Relations programmes of the SACAA. Her area of responsibility also includes supporting the Director of Civil Aviation with the organisation’s Strategy and Performance Monitoring, Research and Development, Risk and Compliance, Corporate Security and Flight Inspection.

Phindiwe has worked as a communications expert in various companies and industries and is serving as a Spokesperson of the Authority. Her qualifications include a BA Communication degree from the University of Fort Hare, a BA Communications Honours and BA Psychology Honours degrees from the University of South Africa and a Master of Business Administration from Henley Business School.

Phindiwe’s swears by this quotation by her favourite author and philosopher Eckhart Tolle - “Life is the dancer and you are the dance”. She believes that each of us must fully embrace and appreciate our unique strengths because only then can we conquer the world.





Dr. Omar Kaddouha, Director Flight Safety at the Lebanese DGCA and Professor at Toulouse University

Dr. Omar Kaddouha, Director Flight Safety at the Lebanese DGCA and Professor at Toulouse University in France for the Global Aerospace Master's Programme. Dr. Kaddouha is responsible for the oversight entity and has acted as a project manager for the twining project established between Lebanon and Europe, underscoring his essential role in advancing Lebanon's Civil Aviation System. Dr. Kaddouha's leadership is further recognized through his contributions to accident investigations and international aviation cooperation.





Levan Karanadze, Counsellor to the First Vice Prime Minister of Georgia and Chairman of Supervisory Council of Georgian ANSP

Levan Karanadze holds positions of Counsellor to the First Vice Prime Minister of Georgia and Chairman of Supervisory Council of Georgian ANSP since October 2022. Before these appointments Levan served as Director of Georgian Civil Aviation Agency since December 2018. He joined Aviation Authority in December 2010 and held different managerial positions being Head of ANS Department, Deputy Director and First Deputy Director.

Before joining Authority, Levan worked as an en-route air traffic controller for several years in SAKAERONAVIGATSIA Ltd, Georgian Air Navigation Service Provider.

Levan holds Bachelor's Diploma and Master's Degree graduated from Georgian Aviation University. Being Associate Professor Levan teaches Air Law to students in Georgian Aviation University.

Levan has served as Vice-President during ICAO Assembly 40 in 2019. Also, he was EUROCONTROL Provisional Council's Vice-President in 2020-2023 and President of EUROCONTROL's Permanent Commission in 2023. Levan has been chairing ICAO European Region Aviation System Planning Group since 2021.





*Air vice Marshal Sagara Kotakadeniya (Retd.)
The Director General of Civil Aviation and Chief
Executive Officer of the Civil Aviation Authority of
Sri Lanka*

A highly accomplished veteran with extensive expertise in the fields of Military and Civil Aviation, Strategic Management, and International Relations, Air vice Marshal Sagara Kotakadeniya (Retd.) assumed duties as the Director General of Civil Aviation and Chief Executive Officer of the Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka (CAASL) on 14th March 2024.

He holds dual master's degrees from prestigious universities the University of Colombo Sri Lanka, Defence and Strategic Studies from the University of Madras India and, he is an Alumnus of the National Defence University Washington DC and the National Defence University of China.

AVM Sagara Kotakadeniya is an accomplished officer, with continuous exposure to aviation and strategic management training in Sri Lanka and overseas including Basic Flight Safety & Accident Investigation in Pakistan and Defence Services Command and Staff College in India, in addition to the series of symposia and courses he attended during his military career. In civil aviation, he holds a Diploma in Airline Management and a Certificate in Airline Station Management from IATA. He was instrumented in designing and conducting the first Air Symposium for the Sri Lanka Air Force.

During his distinguished 35 years career in the Sri Lanka Air Force, AVM Sagara Kotakadeniya held numerous staff and command appointments, including commanding all six Air Bases in Sri Lanka. As a senior VVIP pilot with over 5000 flying hours, he has contributed significantly to combat operations and VVIP flying.

AVM Sagara Kotakadeniya (Retd.) held in prestigious position as the Vice Chancellor of Kotalawala Defence University in Sri Lanka highlights his commitment to the higher education and leadership development.

His supreme expertise and leadership have made him a pivotal figure in Sri Lanka's Military and Civil Aviation sectors, embodying excellence, and professionalism in every endeavour.





Marcelo de Souza Carneiro Lima, Head of International Affairs, ANAC Brazil

Mr. Lima is the Head of International Affairs of ANAC (Brazilian Civil Aviation Agency), since August 2023. From 2020 – 2023, was the Alternate Representative of Brazil to ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) Council and International Transport Advisor to the Brazilian Delegation at ICAO, responsible for representing ANAC in matters related to cooperation, safety, security, environment, and others, having participated in many high-level negotiations and events at ICAO. Before, also at ANAC, he occupied other senior positions, as the Head of Operations Department at the General Inspectorate and the Head of Air Services Oversight, where he was responsible, among other important projects, for the Olympic and Paralympic Games and the World Cup in Brazil, leading a team of more than 1.000 civil servants and inspectors. He is a career civil servant at ANAC since 2008 and was a Professor-Tutor at the University of Brasilia (UnB) for Bachelor programs of Public Administration and Administration. Mr. Lima has a bachelor's degree in administration, a technological degree in business management, is post-graduated in finance and business planning, is post-graduated in business and institutional communication, and is a master's student in Disaster and Emergency Management.





*Rohan Manukulasooriya, Air Navigation Services
Expert, CAA Sri Lanka*

After obtaining B.Sc. Degree in Physical Science from University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka in 1980, and a brief stint as a Marketing Executive in the Mercantile Sector, Mr. Rohan Manukulasooriya joined Airport & Aviation Services (Sri Lanka) Limited (AASL) – the Air Navigation Provider/ANSP in 1982 as an Air Traffic Controller.

Having obtained all Ratings – namely in Aerodrome Control, Approach Control and Area Control, he further enhanced his career as an ATS Instructor, OJT Instructor, ICAO Language Proficiency Rater/Interviewer, Safety Management Systems Specialist and Senior Air Traffic Controller (Planning & Standards) until 2013, before crossing-over to Marketing Division of AASL to become its Head of Marketing for two years. He also served as a Consultant ATC Trainer & Computer Based Training (CBT) Coach at Saudi Arabia Civil Aviation Academy (SACA) in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in 2011.

In 2015 Mr. Manukulasooriya was appointed to the Post of Director – Air Navigation Services of Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka (CAASL) and was promoted to the post of Deputy Director General (Aeronautical Services, Airspace & Aviation Security Regulation) in 2017 until his retirement from CAASL in 2020. During this period, he also spearheaded UAV/Drones Regulatory functions of CAASL in addition to steering the PBN Implementation in Sri Lanka.

Since July 2023 Mr. Rohan Manukulasooriya is at present serving CAASL in the capacity of its Air Navigation Services (ANS) Expert tasked with Monitoring for Compliance with Standards & Recommended Practices (SARPs) related to ANS and Technical Assistance where deemed necessary.





*Patrick McKay. UAS Data Operations Manager,
World Food Programme*

Patrick McKay is the UAS Data Operations manager for the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), as well as the Regional UAS Co-ordinator for the Southern African region, where he manages WFPs UAS competence centre (drone hub). Patrick joined WFP in 2004 as a mobile data collection specialist before moving into IT operations management followed by UAS operations. In 2019 he was the co-ordinator for the first official activation of drones by WFP during cyclones Idai and Kenneth.





Capt. Alejandro Mena. Manager, Central American Agency for Aeronautical Safety (ACSA)

Mr. Alejandro Mena is currently the Manager of the Central American Agency for Aeronautical Safety (ACSA) since 2020.

Mr. Mena is a Maintenance Technician and an Air Transport Pilot, with over 30 years of aviation experience in different operational areas. He also, has experience as an Airline Transport Pilot Instructor within the industry.

He worked for the main Approved Maintenance Organization in Costa Rica COOPESA FAA/EASA certified Repair Station as a Maintenance Technician and Quality Control Inspector on B727, B737, B707, DC8, DC9, A320 aircrafts for over seven (7) years, then moved to GRUPO TACA AIRLINES and AVIANCA where he performed on the positions of Maintenance Quality Assurance Chief and Maintenance Manager from 1998 to 2003, then as a Operations Quality Assurance Chief and A320 Air Transport Pilot from 2003 to 2014 for the same operator.

For the last 6 years Mr. Mena has worked with ACSA as an Operations Specialists until he became the new Manager of the Agency. As an Operations Specialists he has been providing technical assistance and/or training to Civil Aviation Authorities and other aviation industries interested in operations assistance in compliance with current and updated aeronautical regulations and the application of procedures established to maintain and increase the effective implementation levels of the State in compliance with ICAO standards.

Mr. Mena holds an Aircraft Structural Repair Diploma, Aviation Mechanic Diploma, and is finishing his bachelor's degree on Transportation Administration with Emphasis on Aerodromes. He also holds Maintenance Technician Type 1 License, FAA Aircraft/Powerplant A/P License, and Airplane Transport Pilot (ATP) Flight Instructor/Ground Instructor Captain A-320 / Captain B 737-200 License.





Allan Menard – Project Advisor Airspace, Emerging Technologies Unit CAA New Zealand

Allan Menard joined the Civil Aviation Authority of New Zealand in October of 2019, engaging as a Flight Operations Inspector in the Helicopter and Agricultural Unit. He then moved on to the Monitoring and Inspection Unit as an Inspector, before coming to the newly established Emerging Technologies Unit in the capacity of Project Advisor Airspace. The position of Project Advisor Airspace is diverse and includes assisting external innovators in a collaborative manner, navigate the complexities of the regulatory environment.

Allan brings an extensive amount of knowledge and experience from Canada's Helicopter sector of the aviation industry. He flew helicopters for 22 years and held an Airline Transport Licence (Helicopters) and a Commercial Pilot's Licence (fixed wing). Allan has been a Transport Canada Approved Check Pilot (VFR & IFR) on 10 different types of helicopters for 20 years.

Allan has also held the office(s) of Chief Pilot for one of Canada's largest helicopter operators as well as for a new start up organisation that experienced rapid growth. He has also been appointed to positions of responsibility as Operations Manager and Manager of Quality Assurance during his aviation career.





*Abdulla Mohamed, Director Airworthiness, CAA
Maldives*

Abdulla Mohamed, Director Airworthiness at the Civil Aviation Authorities of Maldives, currently responsible for Airworthiness, Unmanned Aircraft Systems, and the State Safety Programme of the Maldives. The 'Regulation Change' project manager until 2015. Major task of the project was to transition into EASA airworthiness regulations. Laid the foundation for the Air Operations and Aircrew adoption project. Currently working on adapting the EASA UAS framework for the Maldives.

Deeply involved in the South Asia Regional Initiative (SARI) project for rulemaking in the SAARC region and currently the Chairman of SARI.





*Andile Mtetwa-Amaeshi, Director General of
Eswatini Civil Aviation Authority*

Andile Mtetwa-Amaeshi, Director General of Eswatini Civil Aviation Authority (ESWACAA) and CEO of KMIII International Airport, which is operated by the ESWACAA. Ms Mtetwa-Amaeshi has an aviation career that spans over 18 years, with experience in scheduled airline operations, airport operations and regulatory aviation.





*Amanda Palmer, Communications Branch Manager
at the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA),
Australia*

Amanda Palmer is the Communications Branch Manager at the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) in Australia. She leads a team to deliver a range of safety promotion, media, communication, marketing, and digital strategies in support of organisational, safety and regulatory objectives. She has substantial leadership, communications and stakeholder engagement experience within federal, state and local government. Her aviation experience spans more than 14 years across CASA and Airservices Australia, the air navigation services provider. Prior to that she worked in communication and engagement roles at a police association, in education and local council and at the then Australian Customs Services.





*Maria Nieves Rueda Garcia, Strategy & Safety
Management Director, EASA*

Maria Nieves Rueda Garcia joined the European Union Aviation Safety Agency as Strategy & Safety Management Director in October 2023. She is responsible for leading EASA’s strategy and budget, coordinating the rulemaking process, safety management and data intelligence, international cooperation and many cross-Agency themes in EASA (artificial intelligence, cyber security, digitalisation, research and innovation).

With an academic background as an aeronautical engineer specialising in airports and air navigation, Rueda was formerly Managing Director at CAA International (CAAi), the UK CAA’s international cooperation and training. She has acquired over 30 years of hands-on experience in roles of increasing responsibility. Earlier, she held senior positions at Deloitte and had been Business Development Director at George Best Belfast City Airport.

Rueda graduated from the Institute of Directors in London in 2005 with a diploma in Company Direction. She also earned a Non-Executive Director Diploma from the University of Chester in 2021.

Outside the professional sphere, Rueda is passionate about sports. Committed to giving back to the community, her primary goal is to end world hunger. To this end, she follows various organisations and actively participates in charity efforts.





*Sascha Oliver Schott, Section Manager, Drones,
EASA*

For more than 17 years, Sascha has worked in various positions within EASA. He is currently the Drones Section Manager in the Executive Directorate. Before EASA, he held managerial positions in three European airlines and in an airline safety audit company of the Lufthansa Group. Sascha holds two Master's Degrees and is an active General Aviation pilot.





Zhanna Shek. Senior Director of Sustainability and Stakeholders Management Department, Aviation Administration of Kazakhstan

Zhanna Shek holds a crucial role as the Senior Director of the Sustainability and Stakeholders Management Department at the Aviation Administration of Kazakhstan. Having worked for the organization since its establishment in 2019, she brings over four years of experience in various management positions within departments such as international relations, stakeholders' management, strategic development, and sustainability.

Zhanna Shek's educational background includes studying International Relations at Seoul University in South Korea. Additionally, she holds an IATA Diploma in Tourism, showcasing her expertise and knowledge in the aviation and tourism sectors.

Before joining the Aviation Administration of Kazakhstan, Zhanna gained valuable experience working for a construction company and serving as a director for a travel company. Her diverse background in both construction and travel management likely contributes to her comprehensive understanding of different aspects within the aviation industry.

Zhanna has received numerous appreciation letters for her noteworthy contributions to the development of civil aviation in Kazakhstan. Currently, her primary focus is on driving the sustainable development of the civil aviation industry in the country, emphasizing the importance of environmental responsibility and stakeholders' engagement in the aviation sector.





*Guillaume Soudain, Programme Manager –
Artificial Intelligence, EASA*

Guillaume Soudain has been working for the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) since 2006, first as ‘Software and Airborne Electronic Hardware Expert’ in the Agency’s Certification Directorate. In 2014, he was appointed ‘Software Senior Expert’, in charge of the coordination of software aspects of certification within the Agency, before taking his current role of ‘EASA AI Programme Manager’.

Guillaume is responsible for EASA’s AI Programme since 2022, continuing to lead efforts to implement EASA’s AI Roadmap. Since 2018, he has been at the forefront of driving innovation and ensuring safe deployment of AI in aviation through his leadership of EASA’s action plan on AI.

Guillaume is EASA Representative in the joint EUROCAE WG-114 / SAE G-34 working group on artificial intelligence, as well as in the joint EUROCAE WG-117 / RTCA SC-240 effort on Software Advancement. Previously he was also an active member the EUROCAE WG-71/RTCA SC-205 joint committee, in charge of producing and maintaining the Software standard ED-12C/DO-178C and its associated documents, as well as EASA Representative in the associated Forum for Aeronautical Software (FAS).

Before joining EASA, Guillaume worked for 5 years, from 2001 to 2006, as a ‘Software Engineer’ in the development of automatic flight control systems in the European rotorcraft industry.





Luc Tytgat, Acting Executive Director, EASA

Luc Tytgat was appointed Acting Executive Director of the European Union Aviation Safety Agency on September 1, 2023. His role is to lead the Agency with a steady hand, ensuring continuity of delivery on EASA's mission and ensuring strong relations are maintained with stakeholders and the EASA Management Board.

Tytgat joined EASA in January 2015 as its Strategy and Safety Management Director. In this role, he successfully increased the level of safety intelligence and developed a better and more agile regulatory framework. He set the strategic direction for key challenges faced by the sector, such as the need to reinforce the Agency's role in countering climate change and emerging safety risks such as cybersecurity, conflict zones and health. EASA's research and innovation activities also expanded significantly under his guidance.

Prior to that, he had been Director of the Pan-European Single Sky Directorate at Eurocontrol from 2011, having previously worked for 20 years in the field of air transport and space at the European Commission and 10 years in the Belgian Air Force.

Tytgat graduated from the Belgian Military Academy as Engineer in Aeronautics and also holds a Master's in Public Management from Solvay Business School in Brussels.





*Capt. André Vernay. Human Risks Programme
Manager, Safety Management Coordination Office,
DGAC France*

After a 20-year career as pilot, instructor, human factors specialist and investigator in charge in the Air Force, I joined in 2011 the French DGAC to become in charge of the interaction between aviation actors and systems in order to work on safety and security improvements and communication at the Safety directorate. Former French Air Force instructor 9000+ flight hours (captain 7000+), from 1992 to 2011.

Current functions:

- In charge of the interaction between aviation actors and systems for safety and security improvements.
- Involved in the French SSP construction, safety reports analysis and monitoring SMS implementation.
- Member for the DGAC of European working groups; CAT CAG, HF CAG, member of the ACARE WG4 for the European Commission SRIA.
- FSF European Advisory Committee member
- RAeS fellow member





*Rayhan Wannappa. Acting Deputy Director
General (Corporate Management), CAA Sri Lanka*

Rayhan Wannappa is an Attorney by profession and has over 20 years of work experience both in the private bar and at the Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka, where he is currently the Deputy Director General (Air Transport & Security Regulation). He is also currently the Acting Deputy Director General (Corporate Management) overseeing the human resources and finance functions of the Authority. He has wide experience in developing aviation legislation, Policy, litigation, bilateral agreements, and industry affairs.

He has represented the Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka in more than 200 inter-governmental bilateral air services negotiations including at the ICAO Conferences on Air Services Negotiations (ICAN) and negotiations with the European Union to successfully secure and expand traffic rights for Sri Lanka both at home and overseas.

He has represented the Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka at International Organizations such as the International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Labour Organisation in Geneva. He is the National Coordinator for Sri Lanka for ICAO's COSCAP-SA Program and EU South Asia's Aviation Partnership Program organizing and promoting many safety related initiatives for the Island nation.

He holds an Advance Masters in Air Transport Management from the French National School of Civil Aviation (ENAC), where he was the graduating class representative. He has also been a lecturer in Commercial and Air Law at a local university and he often speaks to Aviation Professionals and Students on Aviation Related topics.

His other interests include training the youth of Sri Lanka on public speaking and leadership. He also enjoys travelling, sports and music.





*Thilina Warnasinghe. Senior Civil Aviation Inspector
in Air Traffic Management Operations at the Civil
Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka*

Thilina Warnasinghe is a dedicated aviation enthusiast with a wealth of experience in the field. As a Senior Civil Aviation Inspector in Air Traffic Management Operations at the Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka, Mr Warnasinghe brings a unique perspective to aviation regulation.

He is a graduate from the University of London, London School of Economics, and achieved his Master's Degree from the University of Suffolk.

His journey began at the age of 23 as an Air Traffic Controller, where he swiftly acquired expertise in Aerodrome Control, Approach Control, Area Control and Surveillance control at Airport and Aviation Services Sri Lanka Ltd.

In 2021, Mr Warnasinghe transitioned into his current role, delving into the intricacies of the regulatory framework. He has been actively involved in ensuring the ANSP's compliance of ICAO and Local SARPS at ATC units, which involves conducting audits, inspections, reviewing guidance manuals, providing guidance and participating in international forums to align our industry with global aviation regulations. Notably, he played a key role in developing the National Aeronautical Search and Rescue Plan and establishing crucial MOUs between our primary SAR service providers.

His strong communication, leadership, and analytical skills earned him a position as an Accident/ Incident Investigator, where he is called upon to conduct safety-related investigations when required.

