PERSPECTIVES REGARDING THE EVOLUTION OF AEROSPACE SAFETY MANAGEMENT IN EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS

Eliza Ioana APOSTOL [a], Cristian Vasile DOICIN [b], Nicolae IONESCU [c], Aurel Mihail ȚÎȚU [d]*

*[a, b, c] National University of Science and Technology POLITEHNICA Bucharest,
Faculty of Industrial Engineering and Robotics, Romania
[d] Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, România*

ABSTRACT

The evolution of aerospace safety management in extreme weather conditions has been driven by advancements in technology, improved understanding of weather phenomena, and the implementation of more sophisticated safety protocols. Over the years, aerospace technology has advanced significantly, enabling aircraft to operate more safely in extreme weather conditions. Modern aircraft are equipped with advanced weather radar systems, satellite communication systems, and sophisticated onboard weather monitoring tools. These technologies provide pilots with real-time weather information, allowing them to make informed decisions and navigate around hazardous weather conditions. Overall, the evolution of aerospace safety management in extreme weather conditions has been a multifaceted approach, combining technological advancements, improved weather forecasting, enhanced training, effective communication, regulatory measures, and data analysis. These collective efforts aim to minimize risks and ensure the highest level of safety for aircraft operations in challenging weather environments. This paper aims to investigate the evolution of aerospace safety management in extreme weather conditions because it is crucial for preserving human life, preventing accidents and damage, minimizing disruptions, protecting investments, ensuring regulatory compliance, and driving technological advancements. By continually enhancing safety practices, the aerospace industry strives to improve the overall safety and efficiency of aircraft operations in challenging weather environments.

KEYWORDS: *aerospace industry, aircraft, evolution, risk management, safety management.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Safety management applied in the aeronautical field is a systematic approach to identify, assess, and mitigate risks associated with aviation operations. It encompasses various processes, procedures, and strategies aimed at ensuring the highest level of safety throughout the entire aviation system. Safety management systems are implemented by organizations involved in aeronautical activities, such as airlines, airports, maintenance facilities, and regulatory authorities.

The primary goal of safety management in the aeronautical field is to prevent accidents, incidents, and injuries by proactively managing risks. It involves a continuous cycle of identifying hazards, assessing their potential impact, implementing mitigation measures, and monitoring safety performance to make ongoing improvements.

[*] Corresponding author. E-mail address: *mihail.titu@ulbsibiu.ro*

By implementing a comprehensive safety management system, the aeronautical industry aims to create a safe and reliable aviation system. The focus is on proactive risk management, continuous improvement, and fostering a safety culture that encourages open communication and collaboration among all stakeholders. This ensures that safety remains a top priority in all aspects of aeronautical operations, from aircraft design and maintenance to air traffic control and flight operations.

2. PERSPECTIVES REGARDING THE EVOLUTION OF AEROSPACE SAFETY MANAGEMENT

Extreme weather conditions, particularly icing phenomena, present significant challenges in the aerospace field and require specific safety management measures (Bartulović & Steiner, 2023). Safety management in the aeronautical field regarding icing phenomena involves a systematic approach to identify, assess, and mitigate risks associated with ice formation on aircraft surfaces.
Figure 1 presents the key elements of safety management applied in relation to icing:

- Safety Policy: An organization involved in aeronautical operations, such as an airline or an aviation authority, establishes a safety policy that outlines its commitment to managing risks, including those related to icing. The policy sets the overall objectives and principles for maintaining safe operations in icing conditions.
- Safety Risk Assessment: A comprehensive risk assessment is conducted to identify and evaluate the hazards associated with icing phenomena. This assessment takes into account factors such as the severity and probability of ice formation, the impact on aircraft performance, and historical data on icing-related incidents.
- Safety Risk Mitigation: Based on the risk assessment, measures are implemented to mitigate the identified risks. This includes:
    a. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): Standard procedures are developed and implemented to guide flight crews in handling icing conditions. These SOPs cover areas such as pre-flight planning, recognition of icing conditions, decision-making processes, and appropriate actions to minimize risks during flight.
    b. Training and Education: Pilots, flight crews, and maintenance personnel receive specialized training on recognizing, assessing, and managing icing hazards. Training programs cover topics such as ice detection systems, aircraft anti-icing and de-icing systems, aircraft handling in icing conditions, and the effects of icing on flight performance.
    c. Communication and Information Sharing: Effective communication channels are established between flight crews, air traffic control, and meteorological services to exchange timely and accurate information about icing conditions. This ensures that flight crews are aware of potential icing hazards and can make informed decisions regarding flight routes and operational procedures.
    d. Maintenance and Inspections: Regular maintenance inspections are conducted to ensure that anti-icing and de-icing systems are functioning properly. Any discrepancies or malfunctions are promptly addressed to maintain the effectiveness of these systems in preventing or removing ice buildup.

- Safety Performance Monitoring: Continuous monitoring and analysis of safety performance related to icing phenomena are essential to identify trends, potential risks, and areas for improvement. This includes analyzing incident reports, flight data monitoring, and feedback from flight crews to enhance safety practices and procedures.

- Safety Promotion and Culture: Promoting a strong safety culture is vital in managing risks associated with icing. This involves creating an environment where all personnel are encouraged to report safety concerns and near-misses related to icing. Safety awareness campaigns, regular safety meetings, and open communication channels contribute to fostering a safety-focused culture.

- Regulatory Compliance: Compliance with applicable regulations and standards is crucial for ensuring safety in icing conditions. Regulatory authorities establish guidelines and requirements for aircraft operations in icing conditions, and organizations must adhere to these regulations to maintain safety standards.

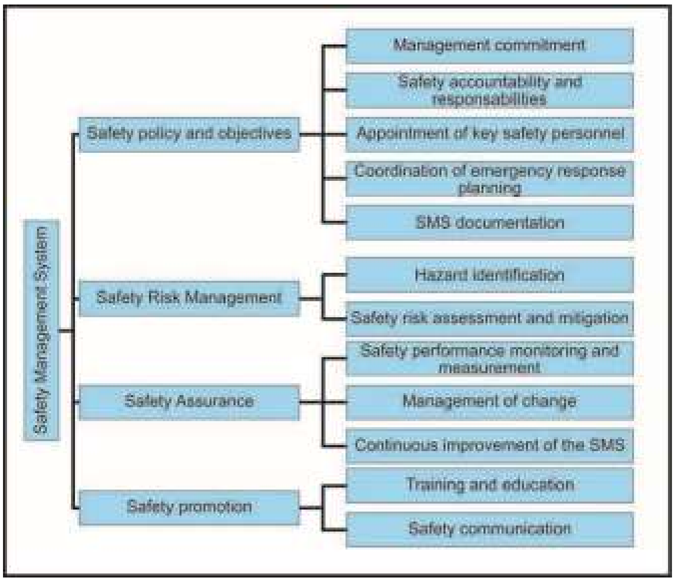

Figure 1. Safety management system applied in extreme weather conditions
Source: personal contribution

By implementing a robust safety management system and following these principles, (Apostol & Țîțu, 2022) the aeronautical industry strives to minimize the risks associated with icing phenomena and ensure safe operations in cold weather conditions.
Certainly, managing the risk of icing is a critical element of aerospace safety management. Icing can pose significant threats to aircraft, affecting aerodynamics and engine performance. Here are specific examples and case studies that illustrate key elements of safety management applied in relation to icing:

- Risk Assessment and Management:

  Case Study – American Eagle Flight 4184: In 1994, American Eagle Flight 4184, an ATR 72, crashed due to ice accumulation on the wings. The accident highlighted the importance of risk assessment and management related to icing conditions. Subsequently, the FAA introduced new regulations requiring aircraft manufacturers to provide improved training and procedures for pilots to manage icing conditions.

- Data Analysis and Reporting:

  Case Study – Air France Flight 447: While not primarily related to icing, the investigation into the crash of Air France Flight 447 in 2009 demonstrated the importance of data analysis and reporting. The aircraft encountered severe turbulence and icing conditions before crashing into the Atlantic Ocean. The investigation emphasized the need for improved pilot training and awareness of icing-related challenges.

- Training and Education:

  Case Study – Colgan Air Flight 3407: In 2009, Colgan Air Flight 3407 crashed near Buffalo, New York, in icing conditions. The investigation revealed deficiencies in pilot training, particularly in handling icing-related scenarios. As a result, there were significant changes in pilot training requirements to better prepare pilots for managing icing conditions.

- Technological Advancements:

  Case Study – Boeing 787 Dreamliner: The Boeing 787 Dreamliner incorporates advanced anti-icing and de-icing systems. These systems, such as electrically heated engine inlets and wing leading edges, are designed to prevent and remove ice accumulation more effectively, reducing the risk associated with icing.

- Human Factors:

  Case Study – Flight 90: The Air Florida Crash: In 1982, Air Florida Flight 90 crashed into the Potomac River shortly after takeoff from Washington National Airport, primarily due to ice accumulation on the wings. The accident underscored the importance of considering human factors in aircraft de-icing procedures, including crew communication, decision-making, and awareness of environmental conditions.

- International Collaboration:

  Case Study – International Icing Conferences: The aviation industry regularly hosts international conferences on icing. These events bring together experts, researchers, and aviation authorities to share knowledge and best practices for managing icing risks across borders. Collaboration in research and standards development helps enhance safety worldwide.

- Incident Investigation:

  Case Study – American Airlines Flight 587: In 2001, American Airlines Flight 587 crashed in Queens, New York, partly due to turbulence from the wake of a preceding aircraft and pilot overreaction in response to wake turbulence encounters in icing conditions. The investigation contributed to a better understanding of icing-related turbulence and prompted changes in pilot training programs.

  These case studies emphasize the importance of a comprehensive approach to managing the risks associated with icing in aerospace safety management. Effective risk assessment, training, technological advancements, and international collaboration are critical elements in ensuring that aircraft can safely operate in icing conditions while minimizing the potential for accidents or incidents.

3. EXTREME WEATHER CONDITIONS AND IMPACT ON THE AEROSPACE INDUSTRY

Extreme weather conditions, particularly icing phenomena, present significant challenges in the aerospace field and require specific safety management measures (Bartulović, 2021). Here are some key considerations related to icing and its impact on aerospace safety management:

Understanding Icing Phenomena: Icing occurs when supercooled water droplets or ice crystals freeze on aircraft surfaces, leading to the formation of ice. This ice buildup can disrupt the aerodynamic properties of an aircraft, affecting its lift, control, and performance (Patriarca et al., 2019). Understanding the physics of icing, the conditions under which it occurs, and its impact on aircraft is crucial for effective safety management.

Aircraft Design and Systems: The evolution of aerospace safety management has led to advancements in aircraft design and systems to mitigate the risks associated with icing (Kaspers et al., 2019). Aircraft are equipped with de-icing and anti-icing systems, heated leading edges, and thermal anti-icing fluids. These systems help remove or prevent ice buildup on critical surfaces, ensuring the continued safe operation of the aircraft.

Weather Monitoring and Forecasting: Accurate and timely weather monitoring and forecasting play a vital role in managing icing conditions. Meteorological agencies and aircraft operators utilize various tools and technologies to gather real-time weather data, including temperature, humidity, and precipitation, to identify regions prone to icing. This information enables pilots to plan flight routes that avoid areas of severe icing and make informed decisions to ensure safety (Chen et al., 2020).

Pilot Training and Procedures: Pilot training and proficiency in handling icing conditions are essential for aerospace safety management. Pilots undergo comprehensive training on recognizing and responding to icing conditions, including appropriate actions to mitigate the risks associated with ice accumulation (Ferreira et al., 2022). This training includes understanding the limitations of the aircraft in icing conditions, proper use of de-icing systems, and adherence to specific procedures for safe operation in icing environments.

Regulatory Guidelines and Certification: Regulatory bodies, such as the FAA and EASA, provide guidelines and certification requirements related to icing conditions. These guidelines establish standards for aircraft design, equipment, and operational procedures to ensure the safety of flight operations in icing conditions. Compliance with these guidelines and certification requirements is essential for aircraft manufacturers, operators, and pilots to demonstrate the ability to safely operate in icing conditions (Hanci-Donmez & Karacay, 2019).

Data Analysis and Research: Continuous data analysis and research contribute to the evolution of aerospace safety management in icing conditions. Analysis of incident reports, near-miss events, and icing-related accidents helps identify trends, root causes, and areas for improvement. Research studies focus on understanding the behavior of ice on aircraft surfaces, improving forecasting models, and developing more effective anti-icing and de-icing technologies.

Communication and Collaboration: Effective communication and collaboration between pilots, air traffic control, meteorological agencies, and other stakeholders are crucial for managing icing conditions (Kloutsiniotis & Mihail, 2020). Timely dissemination of weather information, including icing forecasts and updates, allows pilots to make informed decisions and adjust their flight plans accordingly. Open lines of communication also facilitate the sharing of experiences and lessons learned, contributing to the overall improvement of safety management practices (Laditka et al., 2023).

In summary, the evolution of aerospace safety management in extreme weather conditions, particularly icing phenomena, involves understanding the physics of icing, advancements in aircraft design and systems, weather monitoring and forecasting, pilot training, adherence to regulatory guidelines, data analysis and research, and effective communication and collaboration. These efforts aim to minimize the risks associated with icing conditions and ensure the safety of aircraft operations.

4. RESULTS AND DATA VISUALIZATION

Using the latitude and longitude information from the accident report, ArcGIS is used in this instance to spatially situate the accident. Other relevant details are also available in ArcGIS, such as the distribution of precipitation and average global temperatures, as well as the densities and routes of the world's air traffic. The data can then be presented on the map in layers, enabling the simultaneous presentation of several data sets. The distribution of reported icing-related accidents and events around the world is shown in Figure 2. With the help of this tool, it is able to swiftly identify accident hotspots and tie these locations to local weather conditions, such as temperature and precipitation, as well as traffic volumes.

Figure 2. Global distribution of reported in-flight icing occurrences
Source: personal contribution

The amount of traffic in a location can contribute to areas with higher documented ice encounters in addition to the weather conditions. High traffic zones are the focus of the majority of in-flight icing accidents. However, air traffic is rapidly increasing in many emerging economies. For instance, according to traffic data provided by the International Air Transport Association (IATA), (International Civil Aviation Organization, 2018) the growth of the Asian-Pacific air traffic market is outpacing that of all other geographical areas, and with a combined GDP growth predicted to reach 6% in 2023, more than three times the predicted rate in the United States or Europe, it will continue to do so well into the following ten years.
Rapid traffic growth implies the development of a hub-and-spoke network to meet the rising demand for air travel. The rising wealth of people in rural regions, who will find air travel more practical and more affordable, will continue to stimulate such demand. Travelers may find it challenging to get to airlinehub cities by vehicle or bus in underdeveloped nations due to the lack of appropriate rural road networks. The practice of feeding these hub locations with smaller, more expensive regional flights, frequently operated by propeller aircraft, is encouraged by the higher profit margins airlines may expect on the long-haul international travel that normally operates out of hubs.

In order to feed larger planes leaving from hub locations, more regional aircraft will need to fly in, therefore as international travel rises, so will the domestic and regional traffic. This tendency affects how many aircraft will be subject to icing, but it also calls into question whether pilots in emerging nations with warmer climates are adequately trained to handle aircraft with contaminated wings or control surfaces. Unfortunately, the issue of pilot training in developing countries is outside the purview of this study, but it still needs to be addressed in order to ensure the safety of in-flight ice in the future.

Figure 3. Global traffic distribution with in-flight icing occurrences
Source: personal contribution

The frequency of icing accidents and incidents in relation to the mean annual ground temperature is shown in Figure 4. It is evident that places with a yearly mean temperature from 0°C to 15 °C are where accidents occur most frequently.

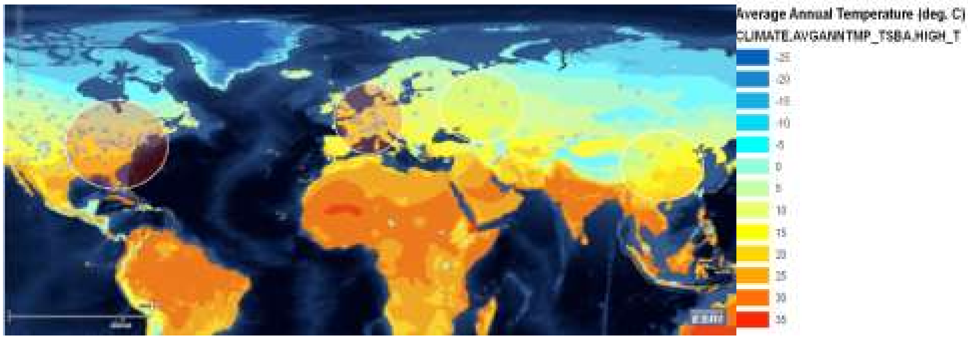

Figure 4. Global average temperature distribution with in-flight icing occurrences
Source: personal contribution

Although it may be rather warm on ground level, temperatures can be significantly lower at altitude, contrary to popular belief, icing events can occur in warm climates as well. The lapse rate, also referred to as the rate of temperature decrease with altitude, is roughly 6.5°C/km 29. Because the humidity and temperature at the targeted altitude may be favorable for ice formation, a pilot needs to be aware that ice may still accumulate on the aircraft even in warm weather on the ground.

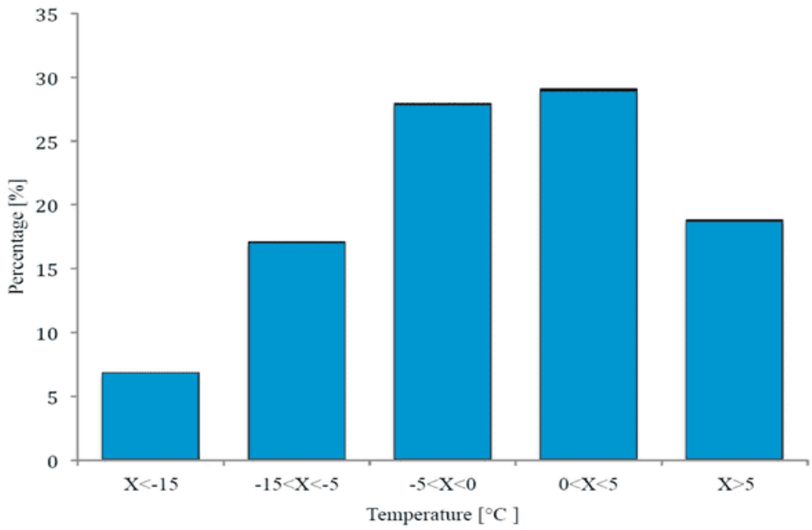

Figure 5. Percentage of accidents by ground temperature range in [°C]
Source: personal contribution

The frequency of accidents as an indicator of ground temperature is shown in Figure 5. It goes without saying that the majority of incidents take place when the ground temperature is between -5°C and 5°C. The dangerous range for glazing ice is between -10°C and 0°C, which is where the temperatures change at 1000m.

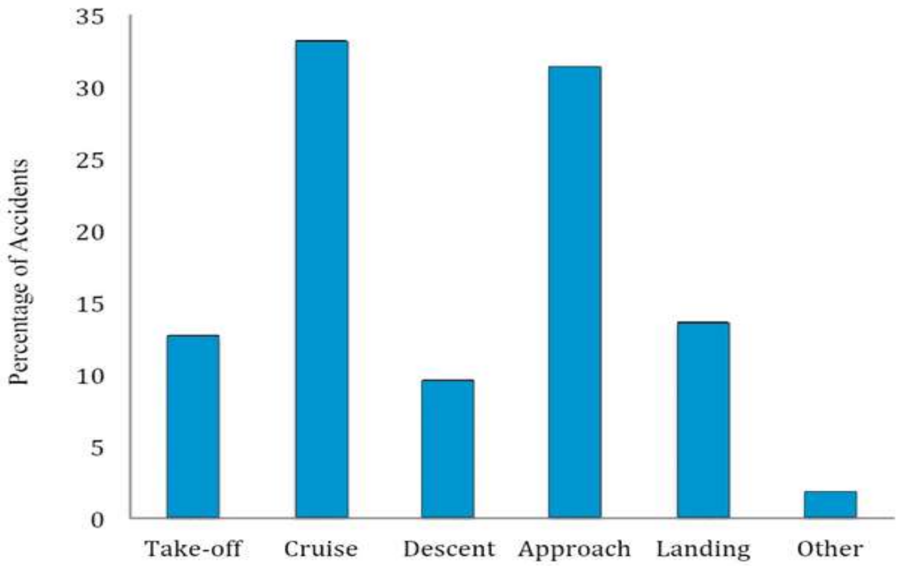

Figure 6. Percentage of accidents by phase of flight
Source: personal contribution

Figure 6 emphasizes the importance of incidents that happen during the approach stage. It's important to remember that many incidents reported icing during the low-altitude cruise phase. Additionally, both incidents noted in the crash report that ice was accumulated during cruise, but the performance degradation wasn't noticed until a maneuver was carried out that altered the aircraft's angle of attack or speed.

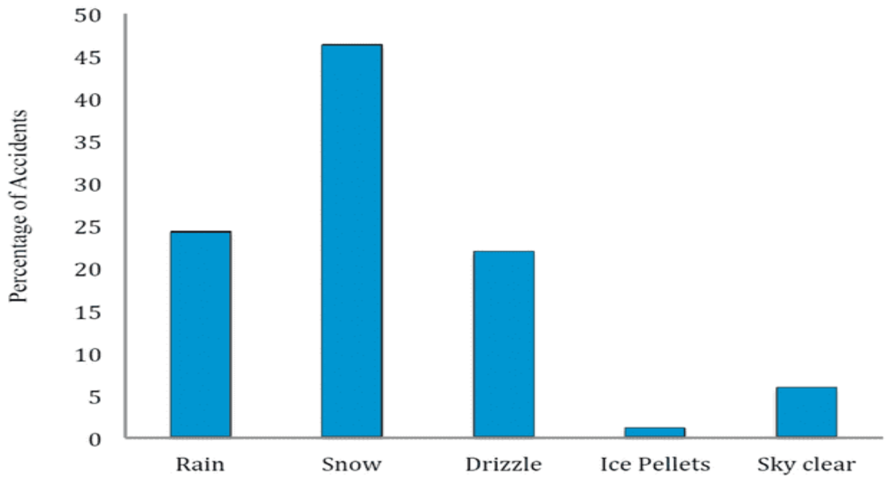

Figure 7. Percentage of accidents by precipitation type
Source: personal contribution

There was some kind of weather recorded at the moment of the accident in a significant number of situations in which weather conditions were included in the accident report. This suggests that the occurrence occurred during a period of high humidity. Figure 7 displays the various precipitation types and their usual rate of frequency in accident reports.

5. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, it has been determined that propeller-driven airplanes that operate at temperatures around -5°C and 5°C during approach phases are the most susceptible to in-flight icing issues. According to the findings, commercial air traffic is responsible for 151 of the events, with cargo and business aviation being the next closest with about 70 instances each. More than half of the ice accidents reported to ICAO result in fatalities; over the past 30 years, there have been more than 1000 fatalities.

The evolution of aerospace safety management in extreme weather conditions has been a topic of ongoing concern and improvement within the aviation industry. Various perspectives exist regarding this evolution, but after the studies presented in this paper we can present the following conclusions that help to improve safety management in the aerospace sector:

- Increased Awareness and Training: There is a growing recognition of the importance of training pilots and aviation personnel to effectively handle extreme weather conditions. This includes understanding weather patterns, recognizing potential hazards, and implementing appropriate procedures to mitigate risks.
- Technological Advancements: The advancement of weather forecasting systems and the availability of real-time weather data have significantly contributed to enhancing aerospace safety management. Improved technologies enable better monitoring of weather conditions, allowing pilots to make informed decisions and take necessary precautions.
- Regulatory Framework: The evolution of aerospace safety management in extreme weather conditions has been supported by the establishment and enforcement of regulations by aviation

authorities. These regulations provide guidelines and standards for aircraft operations during adverse weather, ensuring that safety remains a top priority.
- Collaborative Efforts: The aviation industry has recognized the importance of collaboration among various stakeholders, including airlines, pilots, air traffic controllers, meteorologists, and regulatory bodies. Cooperation and information sharing help in developing comprehensive strategies to manage extreme weather conditions effectively.
- Continuous Improvement: The evolution of aerospace safety management in extreme weather conditions is an ongoing process. Lessons learned from past incidents and accidents are analyzed and used to improve procedures, training programs, and technological advancements. The industry aims to continually enhance safety measures and adapt to emerging challenges.

Improving aerospace safety management in extreme weather conditions involves a combination of technological advancements, enhanced training and procedures, and effective communication and collaboration among stakeholders. By focusing on these areas of improvement, the aerospace industry cand continue to enhance safety management in extreme weather conditions and reduce the risks associated with such challenging operating environments.

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