

Conference Report

Introduction

The World Birdstrike Association, South Asia (WBA- SA) chapter conducted a conference for the South Asia Region at Visakhapatnam, India from 11th to 13 Dec 2017. The conference hosted delegates representing from both within India and from the South Asian region. A list of delegates is attached as Appendix - A to this document.

The conference was inaugurated by the Honourable Minister of Civil Aviation, Government of India, Shri Ashok Gajapathi Raju. The State Government of Andhra Pradesh endorsed this initiative and helped us in all necessary protocols.

While addressing the delegates at the conference The Honourable Minister of Civil Aviation stated that India was poised to become the third largest aviation market in the world. He further spoke about the potential of Indian aviation and stated that there is a necessity to increase the number of airports. While touching upon the expansion plans for aviation sector he spoke about amphibious planes to be used to harness traffic potential wherever a 300m length of water body was available thereby connecting the isolated and far flung area of the countries. With the increase of air traffic a variety of measures would need to be implemented to avoid wildlife strikes.

Conference Agenda

1. Raise the level of awareness of the aviation Wildlife Hazard Management teams on various techniques being employed in different parts of the South Asian Region
2. Highlight the use of Technology and modern techniques to assist and enhance Wildlife Management team's efforts to control wildlife at airports and reduce wildlife strikes.
3. Set up and effectively use data for analysis in a bid to understand bird patterns and take informed decisions to mitigate bird strikes.
4. Current Active and Passive wildlife management measures being adopted in the region and across the world.

Conference Outcome

1. All the delegates exchanged their experiences, knowledge, Best Practices. The sessions were very interactive with exchange of active and passive measures.
2. An observation was made that the civil airports conduct wildlife surveys on a need basis, and do not conduct periodic Audit of wildlife inventory.
3. There is an involvement of the civil administration such as local Municipal corporations and bodies in the existing wildlife management meetings at various locations, however there is no accountability of the civic bodies and follow up.
4. Safety Management system (SMS) plans are existing but non - functional due to various reasons and need to be restructured to suit respective airfields.
5. Effective Risk assessments are not conducted and hence preventive measures are limited to existing SOPs. Review of existing SOPs and updating them is mandatory.

Recommendations

1. Civil and Defence airports need to share data on a regular basis as there is an inaccuracy of wildlife data reporting / strike data specifically in India. This is a cause for concern as there are a number of Defence airports being used by civil aircraft operators.
2. Technology should be adopted and a variety of bird dispersal measures both modern and traditional should be used to mitigate wildlife Strike risk
3. Regular wildlife audits should be conducted by using recognised professional wildlife management organisations and not pure ornithologists.
4. Each airfield needs to have their dedicated Wildlife management teams and biologists. There is also a need to conduct regular training for upgrading their skillset.
5. Regular knowledge sharing of techniques and measures used should be proactively exchanged.
6. Regular review and update of SOP's (Standard Operating Procedures) is mandatory

Conference sponsors

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