

The Director General's report

The AIBN succeeded in achieving its main goal in 2017. The Accident Investigation Board Norway (AIBN) has investigated more accidents and incidents in 2017 and submitted the same number of reports as in 2016. The AIBN has received a lot of positive feedback on its contribution to improving transport safety, and the clear impression is that the organisation continues to build society's trust. At the same time, major accidents have resulted in a very heavy workload. The AIBN's workload has been heavy for several years, particularly in the Aviation Department. The investigations of the Turøy accident involving Airbus Helicopters EC225 and the accident involving a Russian Mi 8AMT helicopter that crashed into the sea off Barentsburg are highly complex and demanding. Unfortunately, there were several fatal accidents in general aviation in 2017. The major accidents have required far more resources than the AIBN is normally dimensioned for. Therefore, resources and expertise have as far as possible been utilised across departments.

For all four transport sectors together, a total of 46 investigations were initiated. That is more than in 2016. The organisation's overall work load is therefore great, with 49 ongoing investigations. This represents an increase compared with 2016. The AIBN is developing an investigation backlog in the aviation sector. A heavy workload over time poses a risk and leads to strain on the staff. The AIBN is therefore focusing on measures to reduce the work load for individual employees, at the same time as it endeavours to practise strict prioritisation in its investigative work.

Cooperation and communication with ministries, supervisory authorities, affected parties and other accident investigation boards have worked well. This has been particularly noticeable in connection with the big international and complex investigations.

The AIBN published 39 reports on its website in 2017. Many of these reports have been translated into English, which contributes to learning and helps to improve safety. The investigations and reports have attracted a lot of media coverage. The use of videos and animations was very well received. Media relations in cases involving strong and conflicting interests is demanding in terms of resources.

The AIBN's investigations in 2017 contributed to greater national awareness of transport risks. This is particularly true of the reports on tunnel fires, winter road operation and maintenance, and derailments resulting from landslides and floods. It is positive that the Road Department has been strengthened in 2017 so that it will be able to make an even greater contribution to improving transport safety.

In addition to the many safety findings contained in the reports, the AIBN submitted a total of 31 safety recommendations in 2017. The reports and safety recommendations were sent to operators, supervisory authorities and ministries for follow-up. Overall, follow-up has been good, but 61 recommendations remain open.

2017 has been another year of debureaucratisation and efficiency reform and more tasks. The AIBN is becoming ever more efficient through improved methods and IT development, but other than better investigations and reports, there is not much to gain for a small agency

such as the AIBN. The repeated realisation of efficiency gains and tighter budgets make the situation more demanding, and have resulted in a reduction in competence-raising measures and international participation. It is becoming more challenging to maintain secure and good IT operations and satisfactory information security. The risks in the IT field are growing and accelerating.

The AIBN is also under great pressure to conduct more investigations. This applies in particular to accidents involving recreational crafts, road accidents and aviation incidents. The AIBN's budget for 2017 has been increased to enable it to meet some of these challenges. The AIBN will in 2018 carry out an extensive mapping of accidents involving recreational crafts in Norway. The purpose of this is to establish a better factual basis for describing the scope of and circumstances surrounding such accidents. This will strengthen our knowledge base as regards measures that could improve safety at sea.

The AIBN's management remains unchanged, and there is low turnover in the organisation. The AIBN is a small, knowledge-based organisation, and this makes it vulnerable to absence and sickness. This represents a risk, and the AIBN therefore has a strong focus on health, safety and the working environment (HSE). Work to improve the AIBN's psychosocial emergency response started in 2017. The goal is to have better emergency preparedness in place in the course of 2018.

The overall resource consumption did not exceed the approved allocation. The AIBN considers that its management and control of systems, procedures and processes are satisfactory and can be documented in accordance with the Regulations on Financial Management in Central Government etc. This is confirmed by the Office of the Auditor General and our own internal audits.

Evidence-based safety work is becoming increasingly important in our endeavours to achieve the zero vision. The number of fatalities in the transport sector is generally decreasing, while reducing the number of serious injuries seems to be more demanding. Each new step requires greater and greater resources. I am proud to acknowledge that the AIBN, also in 2017, contributed to improving transport safety for us all.

Lillestrøm, 15 March 2018



William J Bertheussen
Director General
Accident Investigation Board Norway

Introduction to activities and key figures

The AIBN is an administrative agency that reports to the Ministry of Transport and Communications. The AIBN is an independent expert body.

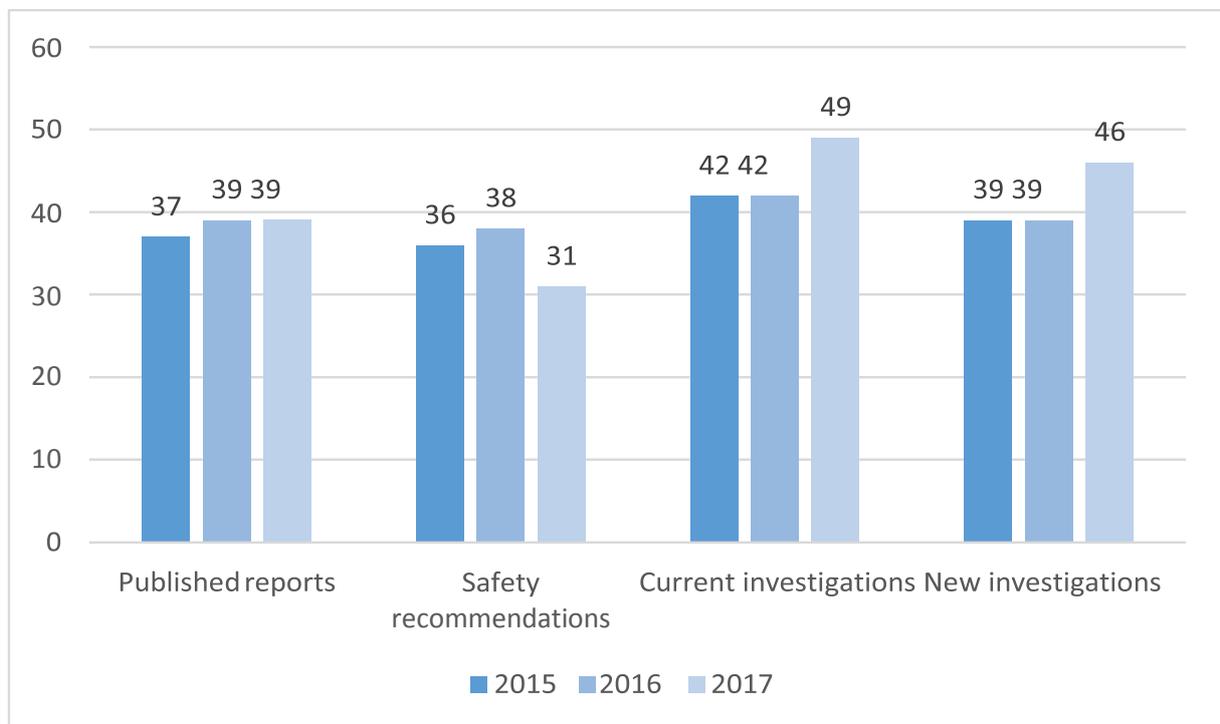
The AIBN shall investigate accidents and serious incidents in the aviation, railway, road and marine sectors.

The object of the investigations is to examine factors that are assumed to be significant in the prevention of transport accidents. It is not the AIBN's task to apportion blame or liability under criminal or civil law.

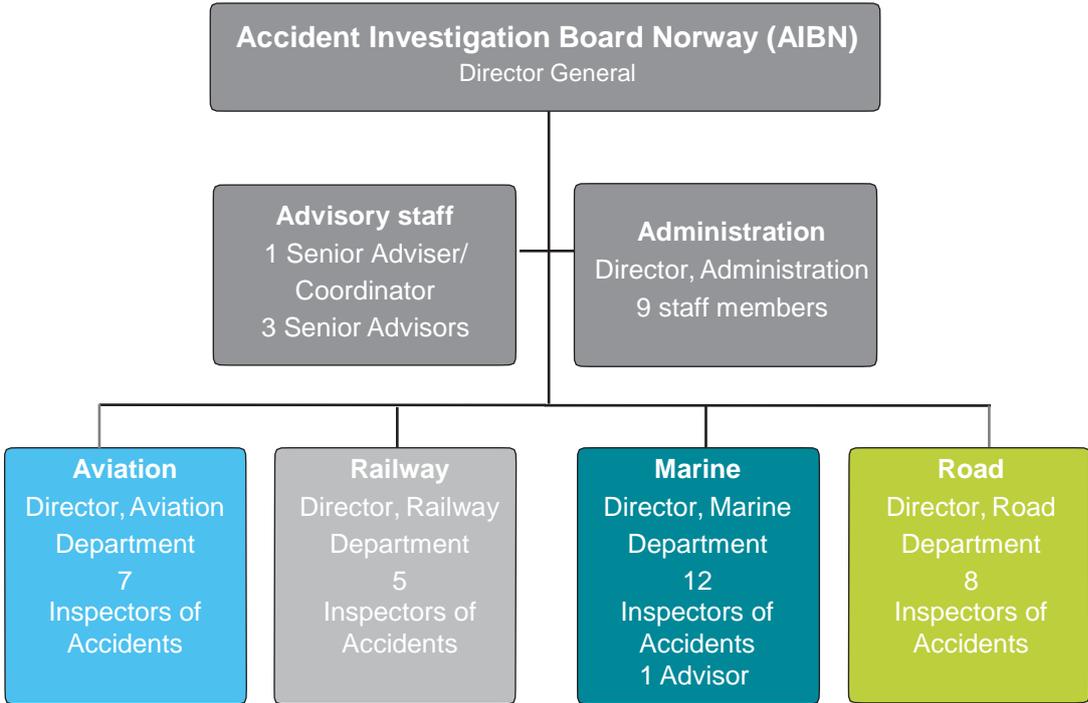
The AIBN itself decides the scope of the investigations it conducts, including considering the investigation's expected safety benefit in relation to the necessary resources.

The discipline areas road, aviation and railway transport fall under the Ministry of Transport and Communications' area of responsibility. The marine transport area falls under the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Fisheries' area of responsibility.

The diagram below shows the AIBN's total production of reports and safety recommendations, the number of ongoing investigations at the turn of the year and investigations initiated per year for the past three years. In Part III, the figures are broken down by department in connection with the description of the activities of each transport department.



Organisation as of 31 December 2017



The number of employees increased in 2017. The Road Department grew by two new accident investigator positions, and the Marine Department filled two new accident investigator positions and one advisor position in 2017. In addition, two positions that were vacant last year have been filled. The number of employees as of 31 Dec. 2017 was 51. One administrative employee has retired.