



Recent Developments and Experiences – France

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Covid 19 update, Current Status at the BEA :

For most of the 2020-2021 winter months, and up to today, as per government staff policy, BEA staff are required to work on teleworking wherever possible, with an allowance for one day per week at the office to help maintain working social relationships. Staff may assess themselves when they would work from home or at the office, under the supervision of the management. As a result, most BEA staff are on teleworking for 3 or 4 days a week.

A questionnaire has been set up and sent to all staff to assess the teleworking current teleworking conditions, and long term aspirations of the staff with regard to teleworking practices. Questionnaire results are being processed. A significant proportion of the staff is aspiring at a lower rate of teleworking, and more presence at the office, to satisfy social needs and maintain motivation.

No major organisation change in 2020

No major staff changes in 2020

My initial 7 years mandate expired on 31st December 2020. I applied for a second mandate, and was renewed in the position of BEA Director on 1st January 2021

Staff turnover during 2020 was as usual, about 10 %.

Budget

Direct operating expenses for 2020 were reduced by about 10%, this reduction was mainly associated to the reduced international activity and associated reduction of travel cost.

For 2021 BEA has been requested to reduce its admin/support staff workforce. Investigators staffing, operating and investment budget remain unaffected, but prospects for the coming years are uncertain, due to the increased government debt level associated to the covid crisis.

Investigation activity 2020

200 Aviation accidents (mostly General aviation) in France in 2020, which is about 12% less than 2019. However, 33 fatal accidents in 2020, which is 11% more than 2019. Surprisingly, the total number of fatalities (58) is significantly higher than 2019 : we had a series of general aviation accidents with a relatively high number of persons on board, this might be related to



the development of internet platforms allowing GA pilots to offer “flight services” and to share costs with passengers.

As a result, the level of BEA domestic investigation activity as remained comparable to last year (120 new investigations opened, vs 137 in 2019). The number of field deployments (go teams) as also remained the same : 42. Except during the severe lockdown during the spring 2020, no significant difficulties related to covid sanitary restrictions were encountered for the deployments in France.

The lockdown periods were used to work on the reduction the ongoing investigation backlog. This, and the increased management oversight of the report production process, resulted in the publication of 189 investigation final reports. By 31st dec 2020 the number of ongoing investigation of more that one year had been reduced to 59 (against 125 the previous year)

Participation to foreign investigation activities has been significantly less than previous years:

Less notifications have been received, most likely as a result of reduced commercial aviation activity due to the covid crisis. However BEA was involved in 3 major aviation accident investigations :

1 – continued participation to the Ethiopian investigation into the B737Max accident in addis abeba : BEA contributed to the preparation to the interim report, and of the final report which is currently under review by Ethiopian AIB

2- participation into the accident of Pakistan Airline A320 in Karachi on 22d May : the BEA team travelled to Karachi to assist for the site phase of the investigation. Due to the covid crisis, no commercial flights were available, and the BEA Team travelled with the Airbus team of advisers on an Airbus A330 test aircraft private flight. The recorders readout was performed at the BEA in Le Bourget

3-read out of the Ukrainian airline flight PS752 on request of Iranian authorities

The BEA 2020 activity report (as well as previous years reports) is available here : <https://www.bea.aero/le-bea/rapports-annuels/>

The 2020 report is only available in French for the time being, the English version will be available in a couple of weeks (select the English version of the website to access the documents in English)

Interesting case study/recommendations of global concern:

See technical presentation of the results of the investigation into the loss or engine 4 fan on A380, and associated final report : <https://www.bea.aero/en/investigation-reports/notified-events/detail/accident-to-the-airbus-a380-861-registered-f-hpje-and-operated-by-air-france-on-30-09-2017-en-route-over-greenland-investigation-delegated-to-bea-by-the-authorities-of-denmark/>