
What is VOLCON?

The sole objective of occurrence reporting is the prevention of accidents and incidents through the collection and dissemination of relevant safety information and not to attribute blame or liability. VOLCON is a voluntary and confidential reporting scheme. VOLCON allows any person who has an aviation safety concern to report it to the Aircraft Accident Investigation Authority (AAIA) confidentially. Protection of the reporter's identity and any individual referred to in the report is a primary element of the scheme.

VOLCON Reporting is established under Section 13, 14 and 15 and Subpart J of the Aircraft Accident Investigation Authority Act and Regulations respectively, and allows any person who has an aviation safety concern to report it to the AAIA confidentially without fear of retribution. In accordance with Regulations 1.465(d), a report made to the Authority under a voluntary reporting system shall not be used against the person who made the report in any disciplinary, civil, administrative and criminal proceedings.

The key objective of the Bahamas voluntary and confidential reporting system (VOLCON) is to enhance aviation safety through the collection of reports on actual or potential safety deficiencies that would otherwise not be reported through other channels. Such reports may involve occurrences, hazards or threats relevant to aviation safety. This system does not eliminate the need for mandatory reporting of aircraft accidents and incidents to the relevant authorities under the existing aviation regulations.

Reporters are encouraged to make use of their organization's internal SMS voluntary reporting system where applicable, unless they have no access to such a system or the incident or hazard is deemed beyond the scope of their organization's purview.

The VOLCON Reporting System is a voluntary, non-punitive, confidential reporting system established by the AAIA. It provides a channel for the voluntary reporting of aviation occurrences or hazards while protecting the reporter's identity.

Personal information will not be disclosed unless the individual concerned grants permission. Only de-identified information will be used for safety action.

The Scope of the Aviation Sectors / Areas covered by the System

The VOLCON Reporting System covers areas such as:

- Flight operations:
- Departure/en route/approach and landing;
- Aircraft cabin operations;
- Air proximity events;
- Weight and balance and performance.
- Aerodrome operations:
- Aircraft ground operations;
- Movement on the aerodrome;
- Fueling operations;
- Aerodrome conditions or services;

- Cargo loading.
- Air traffic management:
- ATC operations;
- ATC equipment and navigation aids;
- Crew and ATC communications
- Aircraft maintenance:
- Aircraft/engine/component maintenance and repair activities.
- Design and manufacturing:
- Aircraft/engines/components design or production activities.
- Approved training organizations:
- Training activities involving flight operations.
- Miscellaneous:
 - Passenger handling operations related to safety; etc.

Who can make a VOLCON report?

- Anyone can report a safety concern confidentially to the AAID. This means members of the travelling public or people involved in aviation.
- If you belong to any of these groups, you can contribute to aviation safety enhancement through the VOLCON Reporting System by reporting on occurrences, hazards or threats in the aviation system:
 - flight and cabin crew members;
 - air traffic controllers;
 - licensed aircraft engineers, technicians or mechanics;
 - employees of maintenance, design and manufacturing organizations;
 - aerodrome ground handling operators;
 - aerodrome employees;
 - general aviation personnel; or
 - any other person with a valid aviation related concern.

Some examples of who has made a VOLCON report in the past includes:

- an employee or contractor of an aviation transport operator who reported a matter under the operator's Safety Management System (SMS) but does not believe it will be properly dealt with.
- a person who has not reported under the SMS because they believe they will suffer retribution.

When to Make Such a Report

- You should make a report when:
- You wish for others to learn and benefit from the occurrence or hazard report, but are concerned about protecting your identity;
- There is no other appropriate reporting procedure or channel;
- You have tried another reporting procedure or channel without the issue having been addressed.

What may be reported with VOLCON

Each of the following concerns (reportable safety concerns) in relation to the safety of aircraft operations to which the Regulations apply are examples of what may be reported under VOLCON. The list is not exhaustive:

- an incident or circumstance that affects or might affect the safety of aircraft operations;
- a procedure, practice or condition that a reasonable person would consider endangers, or, if not corrected, would endanger, the safety of air navigation or aircraft operations, for example:
- poor training, behavior or attitude displayed by an aircraft operator, airport operator or air traffic control service provider;

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- insufficient qualifications or experience of employees of the aircraft operator, airport operator or air traffic control service provider;
- scheduling or rostering that contributes to the fatigue of employees of the aircraft operator, airport operator or air traffic control service provider;
- an aircraft operator, airport operator or air traffic control service provider bypassing safety procedures because of operational or commercial pressures;
- inadequate airport facilities for safe operations;
- unsafe passenger, baggage or cargo management; or
- inadequate traffic or weather information;
- any other matter that affects, or might affect the safety of or aircraft operations not reportable under a mandatory reporting scheme.

How can I make a VOLCON report?

Any of the following methods can be used to make or send a confidential report to the AAID.

- Use the [**VOLUNTARY SAFETY REPORT**](#) attached here or;
- Mail;
Air Accident Investigation Department
2nd Floor, Manx Corporate Center
#45 West Bay Street
P. O. Box CB-11702
Nassau, N. P., Bahamas
- Fax the completed form to (242) 327-2192 or
- Call the 24 hr. Hotline: (242) 376-1617 or (242) 376-8334 or
- Email: baaid@bahamas.gov.bs
- Confidential report can also be sent by filling out the message box provided here

How are VOLCON reports processed?

The VOLCON Reporting System pays particular attention to the need to protect the reporter's identity when processing all reports. Every report will be read and validated by the Chief Investigator, the administrator of the VOLCON reports. The Chief Investigator reassures any potential reporter that information will remain confidential, unless the reporter agrees to their identity being revealed. The reporter may be contacted to make sure he/she understands the nature and circumstances of the occurrence/hazard reported and/or to obtain the necessary additional information and clarification.

When the Chief Investigator is satisfied that the information obtained is complete and coherent, he will de-identify the information and enter the data into the ECCAIRS/ADREP database. Should there be a need to seek inputs from any third party, only the de-identified data will be used.

The VOLCON Report form, with the date of return annotated, will eventually be returned to the reporter. The Chief Investigator will endeavor to complete the processing within ten (10) working days if additional information is not needed. In cases where there needs to discuss with the reporter or consult a third party, more time may be needed.

VOLCON staff will assess reports for clarity, completeness and significance for aviation safety and to ensure it meets the requirements of a Reportable Safety Concern (RSC) for aviation. The de-identified text is then forwarded to the relevant organization that is best placed to address the RSC. The organization's response will then be forwarded to the bodies such as BCAA for further action as deemed necessary.

VOLCON may use the de-identified version of the report to issue an information-brief or alert bulletin to a person or organization, including BCAA, which is in a position to take safety action in response to the safety concern.

How is this information used?

When the reported observation is confirmed to represent a safety deficiency, the AAIA forwards the information, often with its suggestion for corrective action, to the regulatory authority or other appropriate agency, company or organizations directly who are able to correct the deficiency uncovered. The AAIA will not take any action that might reveal the reporter's identity.

What are the possible outcomes from a VOLCON report?

The desired outcomes are any actions taken to improve aviation safety in response to the identified concern. This can include variations to standards, orders, practices, procedures or an education campaign.

Relevant de-identified reports and extracts may be shared with the aviation community through periodic publication so that all can learn from the experiences. Relevant authorities and parties can also review their policy and plan for improvements.

If the content of a VOLCON report suggests a situation or condition that poses an immediate or urgent threat to aviation safety, the report will be handled with priority and referred, after de-identification, to the relevant organizations as soon as possible to enable them to take the necessary safety actions.

Why is VOLCON important?

VOLCON reports can serve as a powerful reminder that, despite the best of intentions, well-trained and well-meaning people are still capable of making mistakes. The de-identified stories arising from these reports may serve to reinforce the message that we must remain vigilant to ensure the ongoing safety of others and ourselves.

ASRS or VOLCON?

VOLCON is a separate scheme to the Aviation Self Reporting Scheme (ASRS). The ASRS allows for self-reports of unintentional regulatory breaches by pilots who are seeking to claim protection from administrative action by BCAA. A reporter seeking protection from administrative action by BCAA should consider reporting under the ASRS and whether they meet its criteria. VOLCON is a much broader reporting scheme designed to capture a wide range of aviation safety concerns from a large pool of potential reporters.

How to contact System Administrator

You are welcome to call the AAID to enquire about the VOLCON Reporting System or to request a preliminary discussion with the system administrator before making a report. The administrator and alternate administrator can be contacted during office hours from Monday to Friday at the following telephone numbers: 242-376-1617 or 242-397-5513/5509

What is not a reportable safety concern?

To avoid doubt, the following matters are not reportable safety concerns and are not guaranteed confidentiality:

- a) matters showing a serious and imminent threat to a person's health or life
- b) terrorist act
- c) industrial relations matters
- d) conduct that may constitute a serious crime or criminal offence.

To provide information about terrorist activity contact with the Royal Bahamas Police Force at 911 or 919 should be encouraged.

Matters, which must be reported under a mandatory reporting scheme, should not be reported under VOLCON.

What is confidential?

Personal information about the reporter and any person referred to in the report is confidential. It is advisable that if the reporter is not concerned about keeping their identity confidential, they be advised not to copy in personnel from within or outside their organization to the report. The integrity of the confidentiality of the reporter is the main concern of the VOLCON system.

Is an anonymous report via VOLCON acceptable?

VOLCON does not accept anonymous reports. VOLCON staff cannot contact an anonymous reporter to verify the report or to seek additional information. Further, VOLCON staff must be satisfied that the reporter's motivation for reporting is aviation safety promotion, and that the reporter is not attempting to damage a rival or pursue an industrial agenda.

False or misleading reports

Remember that it is an offence to knowingly give false or misleading statements to the AAIA through the VOLCON system. The purpose of your report should be to advance aviation safety through the identification of real safety deficiencies.