RUNWAY SAFETY TEAM WORKSHOP

Summary Report and Key Takeaways

Workshop Dates: 26–27 October 2026
Venue: Mapletree Business City, Singapore
Host: Pilots' Association of Singapore
Prepared by: Capt. Shihanka Samarasinha
Representing: Airline Pilots' Guild of Sri Lanka (ALPGSL)

Purpose of This Report

This document has been prepared by me following my participation in the Runway Safety Team Workshop held in Singapore on 26–27 October 2026. It summarises the key discussions, observations, and safety-related takeaways from the workshop for record purposes and to keep the Executive Committee (ExCo) of ALPGSL informed of the matters discussed.

The recommendations outlined are my observations and potential areas for further consideration. They should not be interpreted as formally adopted workshop decisions.

1. Introduction

The workshop brought together aviation stakeholders to discuss runway safety challenges, share international best practices, and identify opportunities to improve safety through collaboration.

The main topics included wildlife hazard management, runway and taxiway safety, ground vehicle operations, communication standards, aerodrome construction, and disabled aircraft recovery.

A key message throughout the workshop was that **runway safety is a shared responsibility requiring proactive hazard identification, effective communication, and cooperation among all stakeholders operating within and around an aerodrome.**

2. Wildlife Hazard Management

Wildlife hazards, particularly bird strikes, were a major topic of discussion.
The Canadian experience was highlighted, with approximately three bird strikes per day cited as an example of the scale of the challenge.

Key takeaways included:

- **Bird hazard index:** The possibility of developing a structured bird hazard index, similar in concept to the Runway Condition Code (RCC), was discussed. Such a system could help communicate wildlife risk more consistently to flight crews.
- **Local knowledge:** Grass-cutting personnel, maintenance teams, construction workers, ground handlers, and other airport staff may possess valuable knowledge of local wildlife movements. Everyone should be encouraged to report unusual activity.
- **Changes in wildlife activity:** New species, seasonal variations, and changes in bird movements should be monitored, as historical data alone may not identify emerging risks.
- **Beyond bird strikes:** The presence of otters at Singapore Changi Airport was mentioned as an example of the need to consider wildlife hazards beyond birds.
- **Operational decision-making:** Significant wildlife activity should be considered alongside weather and other operational hazards when assessing whether a departure or other operation should proceed.

The importance of reviewing wildlife hazard reporting, monitoring, and communication procedures was emphasised. Information provided to flight crews should be accurate, timely, and relevant to operational decision-making.

3. Safety Management Systems – ICAO Annex 19

The workshop highlighted the importance of addressing runway safety hazards through an effective Safety Management System (SMS), consistent with the principles of ICAO Annex 19.
Key areas include:

- Systematic hazard identification and reporting.
- Risk assessment and implementation of mitigation measures.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of safety controls.
- Sharing safety information among relevant stakeholders.
- Identifying trends and addressing emerging hazards before they lead to incidents.

The overall emphasis was on adopting a proactive approach rather than relying solely on corrective action after an incident has occurred.

4. Communication and Ground Vehicle Safety

Effective communication between aircraft, air traffic control, airport operations, ground vehicle drivers, maintenance personnel, and emergency services is essential to runway safety.

The workshop highlighted the importance of appropriate English language proficiency and clear communication among personnel performing safety-critical duties.

Training and procedures should emphasise clear instructions, correct readbacks where applicable, standard phraseology, and effective communication during abnormal situations and emergencies.

Ground vehicle training was another important area of discussion. Heathrow Airport was cited as an example of an airport using simulators to train ground movement vehicle drivers.

Simulator-based and scenario-based training can help drivers develop competence in:

- Aerodrome layouts and runway holding positions.
- Runway crossing procedures and compliance with ATC instructions.
- Low-visibility operations.
- Communication failures and abnormal situations.
- Maintaining situational awareness within the maneuvering area.

The potential application of simulator-based training at Sri Lankan aerodromes could be considered when reviewing existing driver training programmes.

5. Taxiways, Taxi Lanes and Ground Movement

The distinction between taxiways and taxi lanes was discussed, particularly in relation to aircraft movement, wingtip clearance, and operating constraints.

Although both facilitate aircraft ground movement, their functions, locations, and applicable operational requirements may differ.

The main safety considerations are:

- Maintaining adequate clearance from parked aircraft, buildings, equipment, and other obstacles.
- Complying with published aerodrome charts and local procedures.
- Maintaining an appropriate taxi speed for the prevailing conditions.
- Exercising additional caution in congested apron areas.

The applicable restrictions and clearance requirements should always be determined from relevant aerodrome information and aircraft operating documentation.

6. Aerodrome Construction and Wildlife Coordination

The importance of including construction project representatives in Runway Safety Team discussions was highlighted.

Construction and maintenance activities can introduce hazards through temporary access routes, vehicle movements, changes to aerodrome layouts, and obstructions. They may also affect wildlife activity through changes in vegetation, drainage, and water accumulation.

Early coordination with construction teams can help identify and manage these risks before work begins or operational conditions change.

This reinforces the need for all activities capable of affecting runway and taxiway safety to be incorporated into the aerodrome's safety coordination process.

7. Disabled Aircraft Recovery and Emergency Preparedness

The workshop raised the importance of ensuring that appropriate equipment, personnel, and procedures are available to recover a disabled aircraft.

An aircraft immobilized on a runway can cause significant operational disruption and prolonged runway closures.

Aerodromes should periodically review:

- The availability and suitability of aircraft recovery equipment.
- The responsibilities of the organisations involved.
- The availability of trained recovery personnel.
- Coordination between airport operators, airlines, engineering teams, and emergency services.
- Contingency arrangements for prolonged runway closures.

Recovery arrangements should be appropriate for the types of aircraft operating at each aerodrome.

8. Aeronautical Information and Operational Considerations

The discussions also addressed the need to ensure that aeronautical information relating to wildlife hazards is accurate and appropriately communicated.

The possibility of updating the Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) and the reference to British Airways potentially considering additional fuel in response to bird hazard considerations were noted.

Any publication of wildlife information should follow the appropriate aeronautical information procedures. Persistent hazards may warrant formal publication, while rapidly changing wildlife activity may require timely operational reporting.

Similarly, any additional fuel carried in response to a wildlife hazard should be based on an appropriate risk assessment and applicable company procedures rather than being treated as an automatic requirement.

The main takeaway is the importance of providing flight crews with reliable, current information to support safe operational decisions.

9. Reference Material

The following guidance was highlighted as useful for further study and review:

- **ICAO Annex 19 – Safety Management:** For the safety management framework.
- **ICAO Doc 9137, Airport Services Manual, Part 3 – Wildlife Hazard Management:** For wildlife hazard assessment, monitoring, and mitigation.
- **Canadian wildlife hazard guidance:** For practical examples of wildlife monitoring, risk assessment, and reporting.

These resources could support future reviews of wildlife hazard management procedures and related safety initiatives in Sri Lanka.

10 Potential Recommendations for Sri Lankan Aviation Stakeholders

Based on the discussions and observations from the workshop, the following areas could be considered for further review by ALPGSL, SriLankan Airlines, and the relevant airport authorities:

No.	Area for Consideration
1	Review wildlife hazard reporting and monitoring procedures.
2	Explore a structured bird hazard index or standardized risk communication method.
3	Encourage all relevant airport personnel to report wildlife activity.
4	Review communication standards and training for safety-critical ground personnel.
5	Evaluate simulator-based training for ground vehicle drivers.
6	Review taxiway and taxi-lane safety awareness in ground operations training.
7	Include relevant construction representatives in Runway Safety Team discussions.
8	Review disabled aircraft recovery plans and equipment availability.
9	Review the accuracy and timeliness of wildlife hazard information provided to flight crews.
10	Use ICAO and relevant Canadian guidance for further study.

These are proposed areas for consideration and do not represent formally adopted workshop recommendations.

11. Conclusion

The workshop reinforced the importance of a proactive and collaborative approach to runway safety.

Wildlife hazard management emerged as a key area requiring continuous monitoring, reliable reporting, and effective communication. Other important considerations included ground vehicle driver training, communication standards, construction safety coordination, taxiway and taxi-lane awareness, and disabled aircraft recovery preparedness.

For Sri Lankan aviation stakeholders, the discussions provide an opportunity to review existing practices and identify potential improvements that are appropriate to the local operating environment.

This report is submitted for the information and records of the ALPGSL Executive Committee, with the intention of sharing the key safety-related discussions and identifying areas that may warrant further consideration.

Prepared by:
Capt. Shihanka Samarasinha
ALPGSL Representative
Runway Safety Team Workshop
Singapore | 26–27 October 2026