ESASI history

The international society, ISASI, has its origins (initially simply as 'SASI') in the Washington DC region of the USA in the mid-1960s. For legal and accounting purposes, ISASI remains based in the State of Virginia.

Investigators from Europe were involved in developing ISASI from an early stage and largely organised the ISASI seminar in London in 1984. ESASI was then established as the 'national society' in Europe of ISASI in 1985, to serve the interests and represent the views of Air Safety Investigators in Europe; to promote aviation safety and strengthen the cooperation between aircraft accident investigation bodies and air safety professionals within the region. Much of this was done informally, with newsletters and meetings at the annual ISASI international seminars, but ESASI was also heavily involved in organising the ISASI seminars in Paris (1994), Barcelona (1998) and Shannon (2000). The presidents in this time were Laurie Edwards, Roy Lomas and Ken Smart.

ESASI entered a new phase in 2008. Led by David King, then Chief Inspector at the UK Air Accidents Investigation Branch, ESASI initiated an annual ESASI seminar, each time to be held at a different host location within Europe. These have continued annually and increased in size under the leadership of Keith Conradi and Olivier Ferrante and routinely attract 120+ delegates from across Europe, and further afield. Meetings, with increasing attendance, were held at Cranfield (2008), Hamburg (2009), Toulouse (2010), Lisbon (2011), Amsterdam (2012), Madrid (2013) & Milan (2014). In 2015 ESASI played a major part in the organisation of the main ISASI seminar in Augsburg, Germany, and in 2016 assisted with the ISASI seminar at Reykjavik, Iceland. ESASI resumed annual seminars in Ljubljana (2017) and Riga (2018). In 2024 ESASI again played a major part in the organisation of the main ISASI seminar, this time in Lisbon.

In 2013, ESASI started its cooperation with the Military Air Safety Investigator (MASI) group. The European MASI meeting is normally held in conjunction with the ESASI Seminar.

In 2019, when the main ISASI seminar was held in The Hague, Netherlands, ESASI organised an earlier Workshop in Derby, UK, 'back-to-back' with the ECAC ACC ('Group of experts') meeting. ESASI aims to continue liaising with the MASI group and with ECAC ACC in order to encourage networking, promote exchanges on aviation safety and optimise participation. This pattern, of combining ESASI seminars with MASI and ECAC ACC meetings, has continued in Budapest (2022), Bratislava (2023), Vienna (2025) and Dubrovnik (2026).

Since 2021, ESASI has also hosted a series of online webinars, under the title 'FocusOn …', covering a range of aviation topics of interest to the safety investigation and wider air safety community. These are listed under a separate heading on the ESASI website.

ESASI continues to contribute actively to other ISASI activities, including providing a European perspective to ISASI meetings such as the ISASI annual seminar and the International Council Meeting (ICM). ESASI also aims to support the development of other national and regional Societies within ISASI, such as MENASASI (Middle East & North Africa).

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