

STATEMENT :

The JCAB Must Implement Genuine Aviation Safety Measures That Go Beyond Mere Formality.

- The JCABs Unchanged Culture Even After Aircraft Collision Accident -

It is an extremely unusual occurrence that aircraft attempting to take off or taking off from RWY05 at Tokyo International/Haneda Airport (RJTT/HND) damaged multiple runway lights on two occasions in April and October 2025. When such abnormal aircraft operations occur, the public investigative body (in Japan's case, the Japan Transportation Safety Board) should, as an independent agency, determine on a case-by-case basis whether to conduct an investigation based on its authority. However, in Japan, the aviation authority (the Japan Civil Aviation Bureau = JCAB in Japan's case) assesses the severity of abnormal operations. In this instance, the JCAB concluded, in accordance with regulations, that the incidents constituted “irregular operations” not warranting investigation. Consequently, no root cause analysis will be conducted for these events. The countermeasures implemented by the JCAB were limited to distributing an “advisory notice” to the airlines. Separately, recurrence prevention measures will be discussed within the “Runway Safety Team” * established at Haneda Airport.

**Runway Safety Team (RST):*

The Global Runway Safety Action Plan (GRSAP) developed by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) recommends establishing RSTs. These teams discuss the collection and evaluation of information on unsafe occurrences in airport environments, as well as the consideration and review of countermeasures. The Japan Federation for Air Safety (JFAS) has consistently requested the JCAB to establish an RST since 2011, based on ICAO discussions and related document issuance. Following the Haneda Airport aircraft collision accident on January 2, 2024, the Federation also called for establishing an RST as one countermeasure during a press conference held on February 8 of the same year. Subsequently, the interim summary of the Countermeasure Review Committee released in July recommended considering the establishment of RSTs. Consequently, the revision of the Aviation Act on December 1, 2025, added provisions related to runway incursions to the functional safety standards that airport operators and others must comply with. This revision explicitly stipulated the installation of RSTs at Japan's eight major airports.

The recurrence prevention measures currently being discussed within RST and advanced as decisions are clearly unrelated to the recent incident. Furthermore, from the perspective of pilots, these measures are entirely useless for preventing recurrence. The Federation has expressed strong concerns regarding the RST's handling of this matter. Consequently, we independently discussed the potential hazards within airport facilities and the circumstances that could have contributed to this incident. We compiled our own recurrence prevention measures and submitted a document to the Civil Aviation Bureau of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) and the Tokyo Airport Office of the Tokyo Civil Aviation Bureau, stating our intention to participate as observers in the RST meeting to present these measures (December 11, 2025). In response, we have not received a formal reply from the Civil Aviation Bureau of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism. Worse still, the Tokyo Airport Office responded the very next day stating, “If you have any opinions, please submit them through the airline.” Not only did they refuse to allow our observer participation, but they shockingly refused to even accept the document outlining our recurrence prevention measures.

ICAO, which discusses various measures aimed at ensuring aviation safety including RST, has established a system to encourage open discussion. This involves inviting members representing diverse positions—such as airline representatives (IATA¹), pilot representatives (IFALPA²), and air traffic controller representatives (IFATCA³)—as observers to its meetings and actively seeking their input. ICAO also maintains that members from diverse backgrounds should participate in RST discussions. JCAB, in its “Guidelines for Ensuring Runway Safety,” similarly calls for participation in RSTs, acknowledging the significance of broad stakeholder involvement. The clear purpose is to incorporate diverse perspectives into RST discussions. RST must therefore maintain an attitude of actively listening to external opinions. Conversely, the approach taken this time must be seen as running counter to this global trend.

Based on the lessons learned from the aircraft collision accident that occurred at Haneda Airport on January 2, 2024, we at the JFAS have made various proposals, believing that establishing an open system similar to those overseas is essential in Japan as well. We had hoped the revised Aviation Act, enacted on December 1, 2025, would respond to these voices and establish a new system. However, judging by the JCAB's response to the recent incident occurring just ten days later, we must conclude that this legal revision was merely superficial. The JCABs' approach to aviation safety has not changed in any meaningful way before or after the Haneda Airport aircraft collision accident.

The Federation hereby reiterates its call to the JCAB to earnestly confront what must be done to protect the safety of the public. We will continue to think and act toward the goal of “achieving aviation safety.” This is because it is the absolute mission of those working in aviation to carry forward the will of our predecessors who pledged to achieve safety for those who lost their lives in Japan's aircraft accidents and worked for 60 years in the Federation, and to act to vindicate the unfulfilled wishes of those who perished.

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Reference:

Regarding the incidents that occurred at Haneda Airport in April and October 2025, the JFAS's findings on the causes and measures to prevent recurrence can be found in Aviation Safety News 60-03:

[“Erroneous Takeoff from HND RWY05.”](#)

¹ IATA: International Air Transport Association

² IFALPA: International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations

³ IFATCA: International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations