

Presented by

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Product Safety Information

A manufacturer's view



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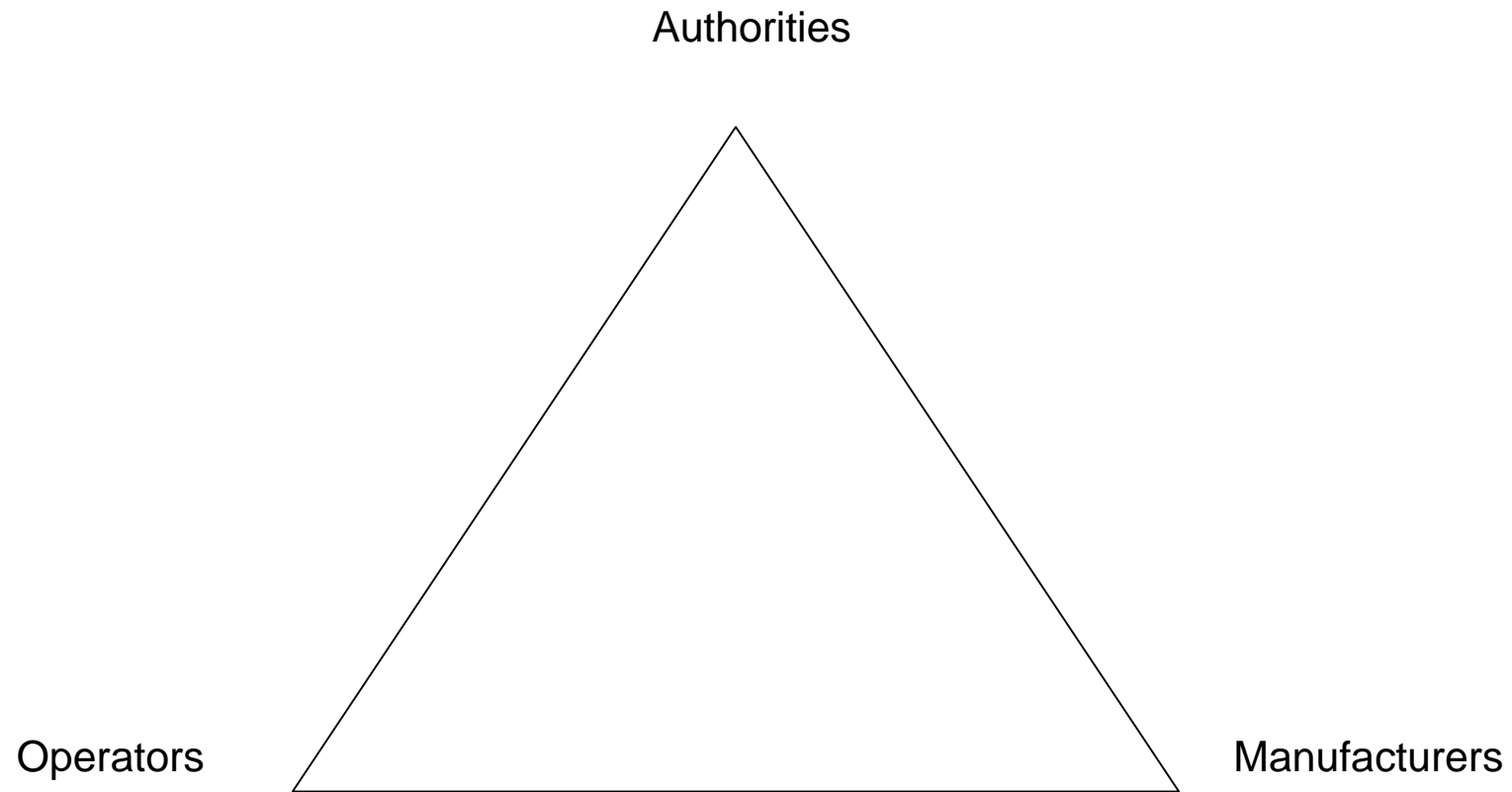
Product safety information from a manufacturer

- Can be characterized by the timing:
 - ▶ Between events
 - Background information
 - Technical developments
 - Fleet related information
 - ▶ During events
 - Basic information validated by authorities
 - Towards operators (AIT)
 - Towards general public
 - Answers to questions from media

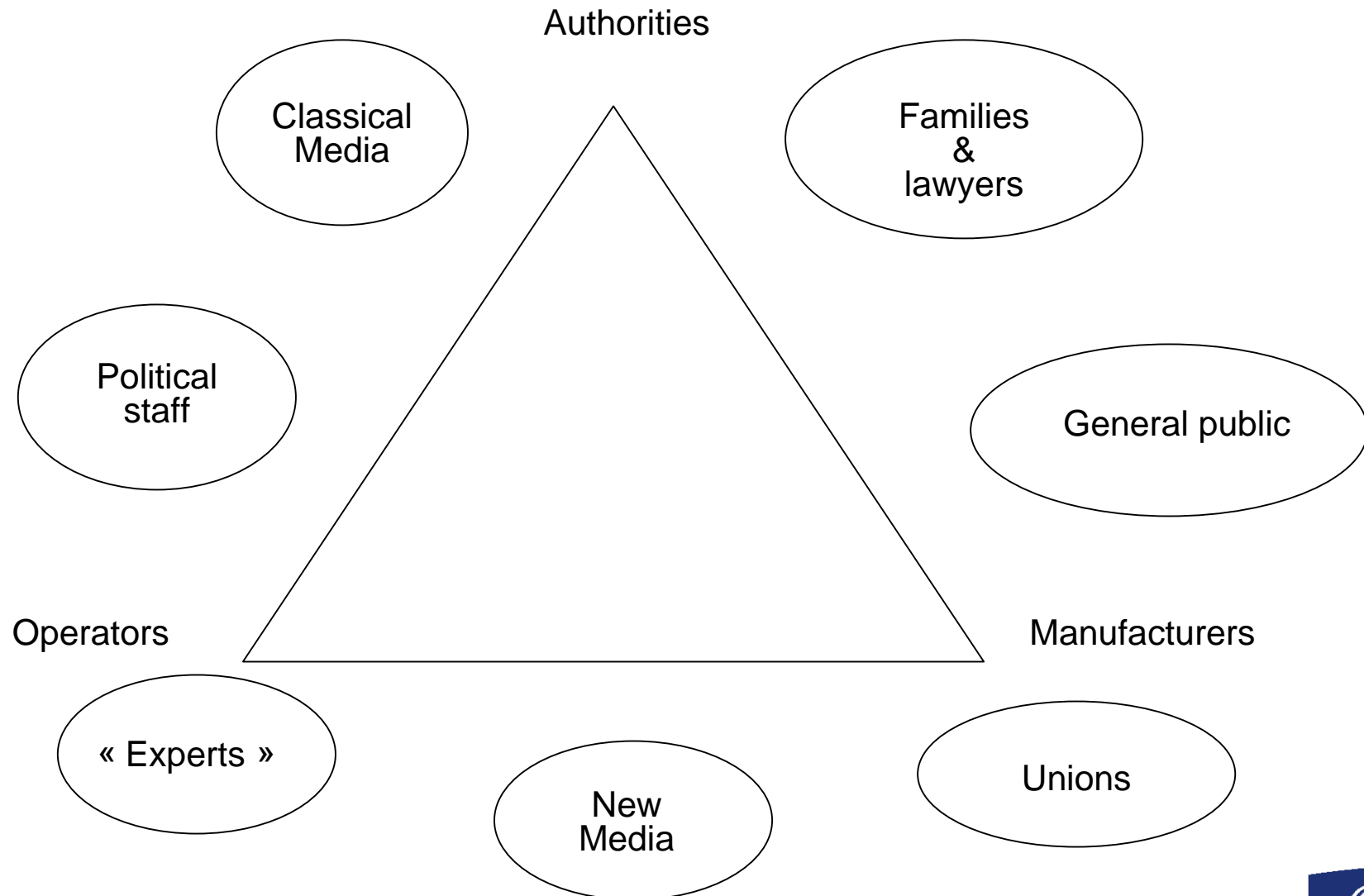
The limits of product safety information

- Between events:
 - ▶ Somewhat technical
 - ▶ May not interest all audiences
 - ▶ Could underline potential risks
 - ▶ Manufacturers may hesitate to communicate
- During events
 - ▶ Communication restricted by ICAO Annex 13
 - ▶ Strong pressure from media
 - ▶ Polemics, speculations, ...

The « safety triangle »



Safety information & events



What changed over the past 20 years?

- **Air travel safety**

- ▶ Air travel has become safer
 - ▶ Traffic has increased
 - ▶ Accidents still happen
 - ▶ Absolute numbers are what is remembered
 - ▶ Accidents may differ in terms of perception
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- ▶ **Safety improvements are not necessarily perceived by the public at large**

What changed over the past 20 years?

- **The general public**

- ▶ Less goodwill towards aviation
- ▶ More travellers, expecting zero risk
- ▶ Increasing awareness about environmental issues
- ▶ Big companies not always liked
- ▶ Feeling that conflicts of interest may prevent transparency

▶ The general feeling towards air transport is not as positive as it used to be

What changed over the past 20 years?

- **The world of information**

- ▶ Information circulates much faster than before
- ▶ New means of communication, many players
- ▶ Less time to check information
- ▶ « Conspiracy » is often suspected
- ▶ Investigations by authorities can be challenged
- ▶ Media coverage of events is more aggressive than it used to be

- ▶ Information comes through many different media and polemics are almost unavoidable

What changed over the past 20 years?

- **The authorities**

- ▶ They have become much more visible
- ▶ They are expected to find all the causes for an accident
- ▶ Communication has become an integral part of their job
- ▶ Whatever the findings, some parties will challenge them

- ▶ The job of investigation authorities has become more difficult from a communication viewpoint

What changed over the past 20 years?

- **The families & victims associations**

- ▶ More organized than before
- ▶ Influenced by specialized lawyers
- ▶ Communication strategies reflect their interests
- ▶ Benefit from public opinion sympathy
 - Increased support from political staff

▶ **Manufacturers are almost systematically targeted by lawyers**

What changed over the past 20 years?

- **The operators**

- ▶ Many new entrants
 - ▶ Some areas have poor safety records
 - ▶ Intense competition
 - ▶ Financial pressure
 - ▶ Little communication experience in case of event
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- ▶ **Operators do not all enjoy the same credibility as before**

What changed over the past 20 years?

- **The manufacturer**

- ▶ Larger fleets mean that events do occur regularly
 - ▶ Aircraft are technically more advanced
 - ▶ Investigations are more sophisticated
 - ▶ Trials are more frequent
 - ▶ Crisis are less predictable and may even occur without accident
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- ▶ **Every incident/ accident may generate a communication crisis**

If we sum up:

- Accidents still happen and will happen in the future
- Media coverage will remain extensive in many cases
- The image of the air travel industry is not improving
- The communication environment is less favourable
- Accidents often place manufacturers on a defensive mode
- Life has become more difficult for manufacturers in case of events

What is the challenge for our industry?

- Ensure that those who are interested in presenting factual, unbiased information can get a sufficient share of voice.
- Who are they?
 - ▶ Investigation authorities
 - ▶ Trade and business press (or part of it)
 - ▶ ...
- What are the difficulties?
 - ▶ Competition from « fascinating » stories
 - ▶ Time pressure due to new media
 - ▶ Talking safety between accidents is not easy
 - ▶ Lack of discipline from some parties

What is the challenge for a manufacturer?

- Work proactively on safety information
- Make life easier for those who act in the interest of air travel safety:
 - ▶ Respect Annex 13
 - ▶ Be open on safety matters
 - This must be a two-way street
 - ▶ Make safety more interesting to potential audiences

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