



FEDERATION OF INDIAN PILOTS

FIP/MOCA/26-20

25 Sep 2026

To,

✓ **Shri Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu**
Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation,
Ministry of Civil Aviation,
Rajiv Gandhi Bhavan,
New Delhi – 110003

REQUEST FOR NOMINATION OF THE FEDERATION OF INDIAN PILOTS (FIP) FOR INDEPENDENT TECHNICAL REVIEW OF THE DRAFT FINAL INVESTIGATION REPORT INTO THE AI FLIGHT AI-171 ACCIDENT

Respected Sir,

1. Reference is made to our previous emails and letter no's FIP/AAIB/26-10, FIP/AAIB/26-19 dated 14 Jun 26 and 18 Sep 26 respectively.
2. The Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP), representing the professional interests of pilots and having a longstanding commitment to aviation safety in India, respectfully submits this representation concerning the investigation into the tragic accident involving **Air India Flight AI-171 at Ahmedabad on 12 June 2025**. FIP understands that the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) is presently at an advanced stage of the investigation and that a **draft final Investigation Report is being prepared for subsequent review and consultation**. Publicly available information indicates that AAIB has been undertaking analysis across operational, technical, human-factors and organisational areas and that the draft report is expected to undergo further review before finalisation.
3. FIP has now **reliably learnt that the Government/Ministry has directed or is considering requiring the draft report to undergo examination by an independent committee before it is circulated/finalised**.
4. FIP requests that, **if such an independent review mechanism has been directed or is being constituted, FIP should be formally nominated and represented in that process as an independent technical stakeholder representing the professional pilot community**.
5. **FIP's Legitimate Technical Interest in The AI-171 Investigation**

The AI-171 accident is of exceptional significance to Indian aviation and, particularly, to the Professional Pilot community.



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6. FIP has previously submitted technical inputs and observations concerning the investigation and has consistently maintained that the investigation should be comprehensive, evidence-based, technically rigorous and free from any predetermined conclusion.

7. The AAIB must have carried out the investigation by involving experienced Pilots, Engineers, an Aviation Medicine Specialist, an Aviation Psychologist and Flight-Recorder Specialists as Subject Matter Experts. FIP always insisted that the investigation team comprises of SME's as the present investigators in the AAIB lack expertise and experience in investigating a B-787 accident.

8. It is therefore important that, before the draft report reaches its final stage, **Technical Propositions raised by an independent Professional Pilots' Federation/Organisation are objectively examined and, where appropriate, addressed in the investigation record.**

9. Material Discrepancy Concerning Simulator Evaluation and the AAIB Preliminary-Report Timeline

FIP considers this matter particularly important in view of the **Simulator Evaluations** undertaken independently to examine the aircraft's performance and the timing of the **Ram Air Turbine (RAT)** deployment and hydraulic-power generation. The **AAIB Preliminary Report** recorded that the fuel system interruption occurred at approximately 08:08:42 UTC, with hydraulic power produced by the RAT approximately four seconds thereafter.

10. Subsequent Simulator testing conducted independently and presented to FIP, however, indicated materially different timing. Public reporting of the simulator work states that the B-787 simulator required approximately 18 seconds following fuel-system interruption for RAT-generated power to become available. This is not a minor difference in a peripheral matter. If the Simulator results are representative of the aircraft/system behaviour under the relevant conditions, the difference raises an important technical question concerning the chronological relationship between fuel-system interruption, RAT deployment, RAT spin-up, hydraulic-power availability and the movement of the fuel-control switches.

11. **FIP therefore submits that this issue must** be independently reproduced and reconciled by AAIB before the final report is completed.

12. Independent Simulator Evaluation Warrants Formal Verification by AAIB

FIP submits that the existence of an independently conducted **Simulator Evaluation** which produces materially different timings from those reflected in the Preliminary



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Report creates a legitimate requirement for formal technical reconciliation. FIP is not asking the Ministry or the independent committee to accept the independent simulator results as conclusive. Rather, **FIP insists** that the independent review determine:

- a) Whether the simulator configuration accurately represents the B-787 configuration relevant to VT-ANB;
- b) Whether the aircraft software, systems configuration and relevant performance parameters were correctly replicated;
- c) The precise sequence and time required for **RAT deployment**;
- d) The time required for **RAT spin-up**;
- e) The time required before usable **hydraulic power is generated**;
- f) The relationship between **fuel-system interruption and RAT deployment**;
- g) Whether the AAIB Preliminary Report's **4 second interval** can be independently reproduced;
- h) Whether the approximately **18-second result** obtained in independent simulator testing can be independently reproduced;
- i) Whether differences in simulator configuration, aircraft configuration, environmental conditions or test methodology can explain the discrepancy; and
- j) If the discrepancy cannot be reconciled, which source of evidence should appropriately be relied upon and why.

13. This is precisely the type of technical question for which an independent review mechanism should exist.

14. FIP had Specifically Sought AAIB Simulator Validation

FIP had already raised the issue with AAIB and requested that the Bureau itself conduct comprehensive B-787 Simulator testing to verify the relevant timings. Public reporting subsequently recorded FIP's request that AAIB conduct fresh simulator tests because independently conducted testing did not support key timings contained in the Preliminary Report. FIP respectfully submits that, where a material technical discrepancy has been identified and an independent party has produced test results apparently inconsistent with the Preliminary Report, **the appropriate course is not merely to disregard the discrepancy but to reproduce the test under controlled conditions and scientifically reconcile the results**. The final investigation report should ideally be able to demonstrate that such material discrepancies were examined and resolved on the basis of evidence.

15. Importance of the RAT Timing Issue



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The RAT timing issue assumes particular significance because the sequence of events is fundamental to understanding the accident. If the chronology recorded in the Preliminary Report is correct, the **relationship between the fuel-system interruption and subsequent RAT hydraulic-power generation** needs to be technically established. Conversely, if independent testing demonstrates that the RAT could not have generated usable hydraulic power within the period stated in the Preliminary Report following the alleged fuel interruption, then the chronology requires further examination. This does **not, by itself, establish any particular cause of the accident.**

16. It does, however, establish a material technical question that deserves to be resolved before the final investigation report is finalised. FIP therefore believes that the **timeline itself should be subjected to independent technical validation rather than being treated as an established causal sequence merely because it appears in the Preliminary Report.**

17. Other Simulator Observations Concerning Take-Off Performance

FIP's concerns **are not confined to RAT** timing. The independently conducted Simulator Evaluations also raised questions regarding the relationship between the take-off performance reflected in the Preliminary Report and the results obtained during simulator testing. Public reporting has described differences between the Preliminary Report's recorded timing for V1 and VR and the timings obtained during simulator runs. One reported account states that the Preliminary Report recorded V1 at approximately 56 seconds and VR at approximately 58 seconds, whereas simulator runs produced materially shorter timings. FIP reiterates that such differences should be technically reconciled rather than simply noted.

18. FIP is Not seeking to Influence the Findings

FIP wishes to make it absolutely clear that its request is **not for any predetermined finding, conclusion or attribution of responsibility.**

19. ***FIP seeks only an opportunity for its technical submissions to be independently examined against the evidence available to the investigation.*** The purpose of such participation would be to ensure that:

- a) Relevant operational and Flight-Safety issues raised by FIP are considered;
- b) Pilot-operational aspects are examined by appropriately qualified aviation professionals;
- c) Alternative technical explanations, where supported by evidence, are not overlooked;
- d) Human factors and operational considerations are appropriately assessed;



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- e) The reasoning leading from evidence to findings and conclusions is technically robust; and
- f) Any safety recommendations arising from the investigation are comprehensive and capable of preventing recurrence.

20. This would strengthen, rather than prejudice, the independence and credibility of the investigation.

21. Need for An Independent Pilot Perspective

The AI-171 accident involves highly complex interactions between aircraft systems, flight operations, crew actions, human factors, maintenance, organisational factors, regulatory oversight and other technical domains.

22. The final investigation report will consequently be of enormous significance not merely for the parties directly connected with the accident, but for the future safety of Indian civil aviation. The Professional Pilot community has a direct and legitimate interest in ensuring that **operational conclusions concerning flight crew actions, procedures, cockpit systems, human factors, training, decision-making and other flight-safety matters are subjected to rigorous technical scrutiny before they become part of the final record.**

23. FIP therefore believes that an independent review which does not include an appropriate professional pilot perspective would leave an important technical dimension insufficiently represented. **FIP's previous representations should form part of the review.** FIP has already placed technical inputs before the competent authorities concerning the AI-171 investigation.

24. We respectfully request that **each substantive technical proposition submitted by FIP be identified and mapped against the relevant evidence, analysis and conclusions contained in the draft report.** Where a FIP submission is not accepted, FIP requests that the reason for its non-acceptance be technically explained and recorded. This approach would provide a transparent mechanism whereby independent technical submissions are either incorporated where supported by evidence or objectively addressed where they are not.

25. Request for Nomination of FIP

In view of the above, **FIP requests the Hon'ble Minister** to consider and issue appropriate directions for:

- a) **Nomination of the Federation of Indian Pilots as an independent technical stakeholder/member or invitee of the committee constituted to review the draft AI-171 investigation report;**



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- b) **Inclusion of a suitably qualified senior professional pilot nominated by FIP in the independent review process;**
- c) **Providing the nominated FIP representative access to the relevant portions of the draft report necessary for meaningful technical review, subject to applicable confidentiality and investigation requirements;**
- d) **Permitting FIP to submit written technical observations on the draft report;**
- e) **Requiring the review committee to examine and appropriately record the technical observations submitted by FIP; and**
- f) **Ensuring that no substantive finding concerning flight operations, crew actions, human factors or operational safety is finalised without appropriate consideration of relevant professional pilot expertise.**

26. This Request is Consistent with the Objective of Strengthening Aviation Safety

FIP submits that the involvement of an independent Professional Pilots' Federation in the review process should not be viewed as an adversarial intervention. On the contrary, it would provide an additional layer of **technical peer review**, which can enhance **public confidence** in the investigation and demonstrate that every reasonable technical perspective has been considered before the report is finalised.

27. The Ministry itself has previously constituted a High-Level Multi-disciplinary Committee in relation to the AI-171 accident, demonstrating the importance attached to multi-disciplinary examination of the circumstances surrounding the accident. The Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture has also examined aviation safety and has taken evidence from AAIB, DGCA, AAI and other aviation stakeholders in the context of civil aviation safety oversight.

28. FIP therefore respectfully submits that **a transparent and technically independent review of the draft report, including meaningful representation of the Professional Pilot community, would be fully consistent with the overarching objective of improving aviation safety in India.**

29. Request for Confirmation Before Circulation/Finalisation

In view of the seriousness of the matter and the advanced stage of the investigation, FIP requests that this representation be considered **before the draft final report is circulated for final consultation or otherwise progressed towards acceptance and publication.** FIP further requests that the Ministry kindly confirm:



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- a) Whether an **Independent Committee** has been constituted or is proposed to be constituted to examine the draft AI-171 report;
- b) The composition and terms of reference of such committee, if constituted;
- c) Whether **Independent Aviation Professionals** are proposed to be included;
- d) Whether **FIP will be invited/nominated** to participate; and
- e) The mechanism by which FIP's previously submitted technical observations will be considered and responded to.

30. FIP Seeks a Personal Hearing

Considering the exceptional importance of the AI-171 investigation, FIP requests an **early personal hearing with the Hon'ble Minister or an officer specifically authorised by the Ministry**, so that FIP may place its technical submissions and the basis for its request for participation before the Ministry. FIP reiterates that its sole objective is to contribute constructively towards ensuring that the investigation is **independent, comprehensive, technically sound, transparent in its reasoning and focused ultimately on prevention of future accidents.**

Conclusion

31. The AI-171 investigation concerns the loss of 260 lives and will inevitably become an important reference point for aviation safety in India and internationally. The final report must therefore not only be authoritative; it must also be capable of withstanding **independent technical scrutiny on every material aspect of the accident sequence.**

32. Where an independent simulator evaluation has raised a material discrepancy with a timing contained in the Preliminary Report, the appropriate response is to **test, reproduce, reconcile and explain the discrepancy before the final conclusions are reached.** The question is not whether one set of results should automatically prevail over another; the question is whether the evidence has been subjected to sufficient independent technical validation to eliminate any reasonable doubt concerning the underlying chronology.

33. The participation of FIP in such a review would not prejudice the investigation or advocate any predetermined finding. It would instead demonstrate that the Government of India has ensured the **broadest possible professional and technical scrutiny of an investigation of exceptional national and international significance. A final accident investigation report should leave no material technical question unanswered and no significant evidence insufficiently examined.** FIP stands ready to contribute constructively, independently and professionally to that objective in the overriding interest of aviation safety and the prevention of a recurrence.



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34. The families of the victims, the aviation industry, the professional pilot community and the travelling public have a legitimate interest in an investigation whose conclusions command the highest possible degree of technical confidence.

35. **FIP** therefore respectfully urges the Hon'ble Minister to use the proposed independent review mechanism as an opportunity to ensure that **every material technical question is examined objectively, every significant discrepancy is reconciled, and every relevant Professional Aviation perspective is heard before the investigation is brought to its final conclusion.**

36. FIP therefore earnestly requests the Hon'ble Minister to **nominate FIP as an independent technical participant in the review of the draft AI-171 final investigation report and to ensure that FIP's technical submissions receive formal and documented consideration before the report is finalised.**

We trust that this request will receive the urgent and serious consideration it warrants.

Yours faithfully,

(Captain CS Randhawa)
President,
Federation of Indian Pilots (FIP)

Copy to:

1. Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Rajiv Gandhi Bhavan, New Delhi-110011.
2. Director General, Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB), Government of India, Udaan Bhavan, New Delhi-110003
3. Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture, Rajya Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi-110011.
4. Chairman Public Accounts Committee, Lok Sabha Secretariat, New Delhi-110011.
5. Principal Secretary, PMO Office, Seva Teerth, South Block, New Delhi-110011.
6. PMO, PMO Office, Seva Teerth, South Block, New Delhi-110011.