

[News story: Vacancies: Inspectors of Air Accidents \(Operations\)](#)

The Air Accidents Investigation Branch (AAIB) seeks applications from exceptional individuals to join our team of professional pilots who are Inspectors of Air Accidents (Operations). Working at the leading edge of aviation safety on the world stage, these unique roles offer the opportunity to make a real difference as we strive to improve aviation safety.

Often leading multi-disciplinary teams from many organisations, Inspectors of Air Accidents (Operations) help to determine the operational causes of civil aircraft accidents and serious incidents worldwide. The scope of these roles are wide reaching and, in addition to the technical investigation, will encompass many areas of responsibility, from working closely with families, to liaising with UK embassies overseas. You will, therefore, need to have excellent communication skills with the ability to quickly adapt your style to suit your audience.

A full job description and role profile is on the [Civil Service Jobs website](#)

Read more about the work of an inspector of air accidents below.

The deadline for applications is 31 December.

Emma Truswell, Inspector of Air Accident (Operations)

As a new AAIB Operations Inspector, I quickly noticed the amount of variety in the job. Every week is filled with new learning experiences and interesting challenges. It provides a tremendous opportunity to develop a broad range of skills and knowledge, and to apply them to important real-life events. The most rewarding aspect for me is knowing that I am part of something meaningful and just. On one level we can be finding answers for bereaved families during the most difficult time in their lives, and on another we are helping to improve international flight safety.

A core part of the job is deploying to the scenes of accidents and serious incidents. A roster shows who is available for call-out any time of the day or night, and any day of the year. Once called, you could be sent anywhere in the world, so you need to have your kit ready. Time is of the essence to get to the site and start evidence collection.

Having been deployed a number of times already, it is clear that every occurrence is unique. You may be dealing with a light aircraft accident on remote terrain, or it could be a serious incident involving an airliner at a major airport. The site can be distressing, and the pace dramatic. With all kinds of people and agencies present, it is a case of prioritising and using people skills to manage the site, and be efficient in your work.

You can be away for a few days during the field phase, and then it's back to the Branch to begin the post-field and analysis phase. This phase is full of

twists and turns as you delve deeper in to the circumstances of an accident – trying to figure out the key factors and, crucially, what safety lessons can be learned by the wider industry. You may be dealing with anyone from eye-witnesses and flight crew, to operators and regulators – travelling all over to find answers and learn more. At the end of an investigation, the team produces a report to broadcast the safety message, with the aim of preventing re-occurrence. Sometimes it is also necessary to give evidence in court.

A positive aspect of the job is the continual scope for training and development. From remote terrain awareness and off-road driving training courses, to attending interesting conferences and manufacturer visits – this job represents an amazing opportunity to challenge yourself. Crucially for a pilot, you get the opportunity to continue flying in all its shapes and forms. For example, I fly regularly for an airline and have recently started my PPL(H). Also, the Ops Inspectors recently had the chance to do a Sikorsky S-92 simulator session, getting to practice landing on oil rigs at night and such like! The job really does offer the ideal balance for those passionate about aviation.

If you are a motivated and inquisitive person, who wants to improve flight safety as part of a well-established team, then grab this opportunity with both hands. Even after the short time I have been here I feel a real sense of fulfilment at the AAIB.