

AI Readiness Checklist

Before you invest in an AI tool, where does your data foundation actually stand?

A companion tool to the article "AI in Aviation: Why the Data Foundation Comes First"

Why AI-readiness is important

Every operator is being pitched AI right now, from predictive maintenance dashboards to safety-risk scoring and automated scheduling. What most vendors don't mention is that rather than fixing fragmented data, AI amplifies whatever is already there.

If the records underneath are scattered, inconsistent or hard to trace, an AI model trained on them won't produce reliable output. It'll just be confidently wrong more quickly.

This practical, ordered checklist lets you know what to get right before you invest in any AI capability, so the foundation is solid before the algorithm arrives.

How to use this checklist

Unlike a maturity ladder, this checklist is sequential, so the five steps build on each other in order: consolidate, standardise, trace, govern, then pilot. Work through them in order and tick whichever statements sound true for your operation.

It's common to tick most of the boxes in an early step and a small number in a later one. This shows you exactly which step to focus on, rather than which tool to buy next.





The AI-Readiness Checklist

Step 1: Consolidate onto one platform

Stop operational evidence scattering across systems, spreadsheets, shared drives and email threads.

- ☐ Our SMS, audit, corrective action and training records live in one platform, not spread across several systems.
- ☐ No critical operational decision lives only in someone's personal inbox or spreadsheet.
- ☐ A new starter could find where the "real" record is without having to ask around.
- ☐ We're not maintaining parallel logs that different teams keep for the same thing.

Step 2: Standardise and structure data

Adopt consistent taxonomies and fields so records are genuinely comparable across time and sites.

- ☐ Similar records use consistent fields and categories across sites and teams, not a different format per team.
- ☐ Hazard, incident and risk records use consistent classification, not free-text that varies person to person.
- ☐ Two people looking at the same underlying data would produce the same summary of it.
- ☐ Records are structured enough that a pattern across sites or seasons would actually be visible if it existed.

Step 3: Ensure traceability

Every record traces back to its source and its evidence trail, satisfying regulators and any AI model checking its own inputs.

- ☐ Every record can be traced back to its original source, timestamp and the person or system that captured it.
- ☐ Nothing gets overwritten silently, full history is preserved as processes evolve.
- ☐ We could produce a clean evidence trail for a specific incident or decision without digging through email.
- ☐ Our audit trail would satisfy a regulator asking "how do you know this is accurate?"





The AI-Readiness Checklist

Step 4: Define governance and human review

Decide who reviews AI output, and build that review into your safety management system, not around it.

- ☐ We've decided, in writing, who is accountable for reviewing any AI-generated output before it's acted on.
- ☐ AI governance would sit inside our existing SMS, not as a separate bolt-on policy nobody reads.
- ☐ We have a basic understanding of which risk tier our use case would sit in under frameworks like the [EU AI Act](#).
- ☐ Every real AI use case we'd consider keeps a qualified person making the final call, not the model.

Step 5: Only then pilot AI

Test on a narrow, well-understood use case once the foundation is solid, not before.

- ☐ We have one specific, narrow use case in mind, not "add AI everywhere at once".
- ☐ We know exactly what data that use case depends on, and we've confirmed that data is clean.
- ☐ We have a plan for human review of the pilot's outputs before it touches an operational decision.
- ☐ We're treating this as a pilot to learn from, not a rollout to commit to.





Where does your organisation sit?

Because these steps build on each other, the step where your ticks run out is roughly where your foundation work should focus next.

Ticking boxes in Step 4 or 5 while Steps 1 to 3 are mostly empty is the pattern to watch out for, it usually means the underlying data isn't ready yet, even if a pilot feels within reach.

Mostly at Step 1 — Consolidate

Start here before doing anything else. Get SMS, audit and corrective action records into one place, even before you standardise or connect them.

Mostly at Step 2 — Standardise

You have one place for records, now make them comparable. Consistent fields and classification are what let a pattern actually be visible.

Mostly at Step 3 — Traceability

Your data is structured, so now make sure every record can be traced back to its source. This is what both regulators and any AI model checking its own inputs will ask for.

Mostly at Step 4 — Governance

Your foundation is solid. Now decide, in writing, who reviews AI output and how that sits inside your SMS before you pilot anything.

Ready for Step 5 — Pilot

You've done the foundation work most operators skip. Pick one narrow, well-understood use case and test it with human review built in from day one.

The regulatory direction is the same

EASA's Artificial Intelligence Roadmap, first published in 2020 and updated to [Roadmap 2.0 in May 2023](#), has been building towards this for years. Alongside it, the [EU Artificial Intelligence Act](#) sorts AI systems into risk tiers, with much of the AI used in safety-critical aviation contexts likely to sit in or near the high-risk tier, carrying strict obligations around documentation, human oversight and risk management.

Whichever step you're working on, the direction of travel is the same: AI governance is moving from best practice to a regulatory expectation, and it fits best as an extension of the SMS you already run, not a separate initiative.





The foundation AI needs

OneReg offers the connected, governed data foundation that makes AI viable, without claiming to run autonomous AI decisions. There's one source of truth for operational data, replacing the disconnected legacy systems, spreadsheets and email trails that undermine both compliance visibility and any future AI initiative.

Configurable workflows keep full history intact so nothing is overwritten or lost as processes evolve. Data is isolated per tenant, with no cross-customer visibility into raw records.

Beyond the data layer, OneReg enables AI governance support built around human-in-the-loop review, consistent with the direction [EASA](#) and the [EU AI Act](#) are both setting.

"AI is positioned as decision support, not decision authority."

— Clinton Cardozo, OneReg Co-Founder & CEO

See what a connected data foundation looks like for your operation.
[Book a demo.](#)

