

GENERAL AVIATION SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

UNDERSTANDING SMS



The “Safety Management System” approach began in the late 1980s and early 1990s as an effort to immediately improve safety across the scope of military aviation. The Airline industry followed. SMS for General Aviation was adopted by the International Business Aviation Council (IBAC) as part of their comprehensive International Standard for Business Aircraft Operations (IS-BAO). In fact, SMS is considered by the IBAC as the core value of an IS-BAO compliant organization.

Regulations applied to commercial operators will soon include requirements for formal Safety Management Systems. Airlines and Part 135 operators will be required to demonstrate their systems. Turbine aircraft operators under Part 91 in the United States are not currently required to show evidence of a formal SMS. But, in Canada, Transport Canada requires Canadian operators to show that evidence before they are issued an operating certificate. In 2010, other countries, including most European states, will require an IS-BAO equivalent SMS for operation in their countries.

How you manage safety is a reflection of your system. Your business, your company and your flight department is unique. And your Safety Management System will be unique. You can optimize your SMS by following guidelines and using tools developed by teams of experts.

As your aviation operation increases in complexity, your SMS should keep pace. Your safety system should be designed to require each of your team members (including senior leaders) to be accountable for safety and risk management. Your SMS should not be passive. It should actively encourage the identification and reporting of hazards, the investigation of accidents or incidents, the measurement of your safety readiness and the intelligent analysis of information.

Safety experts now agree, without exception, that a formal approach to safety management will improve an organization’s safety potential. If you are a Global



Aerospace policy holder, we are standing by to discuss your Safety Management Systems. Don’t hesitate to contact us.

Here are some links to further information.

- The IBAC portal for SMS research.
http://www.ibac.org/isbao_sms.php.
- The FAA’s initial Advisory Circular that defines SMS requirements: www.faa.gov. This will take you to the FAA homepage. Click on “Advisory Circulars” in right hand box. Query circular #120-92.
- A “Business Aviation” article about why Part 91 operators should become knowledgeable about SMS.
http://www.aviationweek.com/aw/generic/story_generic.jsp?channel=bca&id=news/bca0409p1.xml
- The Airborne Law Enforcement Association’s comprehensive SMS “Tool box.” This is especially helpful if you are a helicopter operator but small to mid sized operators of any class of aircraft will gain insight.
<http://www.alea.org/public/safety/SMS-Toolkit.pdf>
- The NBAA (www.nbaa.org), the NATA (www.nata.aero) and IATA (www.iata.org) are good sources of up to date information.

Contacts:

Bob Conyers

VP, Manager General Aviation Safety
973-379-0863 bconyers@global-aero.com

Richard Keltner

Program Manager, General Aviation
206-818-0877 rkeltner@global-aero.com