

“Safety Management Systems (SMS): Improving Tomorrow... Today!”

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Abstract

This presentation defines the basic components of Safety Management Systems as a prelude to the “Fatigue Risk Management System” (FRMS) discussion and provides the audience with practical lessons learned from an operator’s perspective.

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) defines Safety Management System (SMS) as “an organized approach to managing safety, including the necessary organizational structures, accountabilities, policies, and procedures.” Universally touted as a breakthrough in operational safety, this strategy provides operators with a framework for identifying and reducing the effects of systemic hazards while continuously improving the quality of the program. This process is based on four supporting concepts (commonly referred to as the “four pillars”)—safety policy, risk management, safety assurance, and safety promotion.

Using a “top-down” approach, SMS begins with a written policy statement which establishes senior management’s commitment to, and expectations of, the program (safety policy). At the heart of this strategy are the formalized hazard identification, risk assessment, and resource allocation processes (risk management). To ensure the objectives of the program are accomplished, the processes are continuously monitored and routinely audited (safety assurance). In the end, most of the benefit of an SMS results from the active

sharing of safety values in support of a strong safety culture (safety promotion).

This structure provides a solid foundation upon which to evaluate error-reducing, efficiency-increasing initiatives, such as FRMS. In other words, SMS facilitates effective problem-solving and, therefore, is good for business.

Main Points

- Describe basic components of SMS to set the stage for FRMS discussion.
- Share lessons learned during SMS implementation.

A copy of Dr. Michael D. New’s biographical information and presentation slides are provided in Appendix B.