



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**

Air Traffic Organization Policy

**ORDER
JO 1000.37C**

Effective Date:
10/1/2021

SUBJ: Air Traffic Organization Safety Management System

The core business function of the Air Traffic Organization (ATO) is to provide safe and efficient Air Traffic Management (ATM) services in the National Airspace System (NAS) and in United States-controlled international/oceanic airspace. ATM services include communications, navigation, and surveillance services. Safety is fundamental to the provision of these services; the ATO develops, implements, and maintains processes, tools, and guiding principles within the framework of a Safety Management System (SMS) to ensure that performance-based NAS safety goals are achieved. The ATO ensures that the management of safety is a primary and defined responsibility of all managers and employees. This order establishes the SMS as the foundation upon which the ATO's safety efforts are conducted and measured.

All ATO employees must strive not only to maintain safety in the NAS for those services they provide but also to continuously improve the ATO SMS. The ATO must continually refine its SMS to maintain acceptable safety performance and support a positive safety culture. The Chief Operating Officer is accountable for the continued maturation of the SMS and its processes, tools, and initiatives to promote and improve safety.

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Contents

- Chapter 1. General Information 1-1
 - 1. Purpose of This Order. 1-1
 - 2. Audience..... 1-1
 - 3. Where to Find This Order..... 1-1
 - 4. Cancelation..... 1-1
 - 5. Explanation of Policy Changes. 1-2
 - 6. Authority to Supplement. 1-2
 - 7. Scope. 1-2
 - 8. Background..... 1-2
- Chapter 2. ATO SMS Roles and Responsibilities 2-1
 - 1. Safety Policy..... 2-1
 - 2. SRM..... 2-3
 - 3. Safety Assurance. 2-7
 - 4. Safety Promotion. 2-10
- Chapter 3. Administrative Information..... 3-1
 - 1. Distribution..... 3-1
 - 2. Acronyms. 3-1

Chapter 1. General Information

- 1. Purpose of This Order.** This order establishes Safety Management System (SMS) policies for the Air Traffic Organization (ATO). It defines the scope, requirements, and applications of the SMS in the ATO and gives the responsibility for owning and executing the SMS to all employees at all levels of the ATO, from the ATO Chief Operating Officer (COO) to the individual air traffic controllers and airway transportation systems specialists at a Service Delivery Point (SDP). The ATO COO is the ultimate accountable executive for ensuring the effectiveness of the SMS.

Specifically, this order requires the ATO SMS to be the framework for the:

- Development of safety policy and processes;
 - Promotion of a safety culture that identifies and reports activities that are potentially or actually detrimental to system safety;
 - Identification, analysis, assessment, and treatment of safety risk within the National Airspace System (NAS) and United States–controlled international/oceanic airspace; and
 - Continuous collection, analysis, and assessment of safety data to determine if the ATO is meeting or exceeding its safety performance objectives and to determine the effectiveness of safety risk controls.
- 2. Audience.** This order applies to all employees and contractors at all levels of the ATO to include its Service Units engaged in the provision of Air Traffic Management (ATM) and communication, navigation, and surveillance services.

NOTE–

The ATO Service Units include Safety and Technical Training (AJI); the Program Management Organization (AJM); Technical Operations (AJW) and Air Traffic Services to include Headquarters (HQ), the Service Areas, and SDPs; System Operations Services to include HQ and the Air Traffic Control System Command Center; Mission Support Services (AJV) to include HQ and the Service Center; and Management Services. Although Flight Program Operations, AJF, is an ATO Service Unit, it adheres to an SMS per Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 5, SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS.

- 3. Where to Find This Order.** This order is available on the [Federal Aviation Administration \(FAA\) Orders and Notices webpage](#) and on the [FAA Air Traffic Plans and Publications webpage](#).
- 4. Cancellation.** This order cancels FAA Order JO 1000.37B, *Air Traffic Organization Safety Management System*, dated October 31, 2018.

- 5. Explanation of Policy Changes.** This order includes revisions that address needed improvements to mature the ATO SMS and clarify requirements. Changes include:
- Clarifying AJI Safety Policy roles and responsibilities, including:
 - Reassignment of the roles previously carried out by the ATO Chief Safety Engineer, and
 - Removal of ATO Safety Manager designation and reassignment of the ATO Safety Manager roles and responsibilities to the Safety Management Group, AJI-31, Manager.
 - Aligning SMS definitions with the ATO SMS Manual.
- 6. Authority to Supplement.** This order may be supplemented to add further detail and clarification; however, supplements may not subtract from, conflict with, or void the policy described herein. All supplements to this order must be approved by AJI in accordance with FAA Order JO 1030.1, *Air Traffic Organization Safety Guidance*.
- 7. Scope.** The ATO SMS focuses on the safe provision of ATM and communication, navigation, and surveillance services. Accordingly, this order does not directly apply to issues related to the environment, occupational safety and health, physical security, cybersecurity, or information security, unless those issues affect the operational safety of NAS services provided by the ATO.
- 8. Background.**
- a. About the SMS.** The SMS is a multidisciplinary, integrated, and closed-loop framework used to help maintain safe and efficient air navigation services and infrastructure throughout the NAS and in United States–controlled international/oceanic airspace. It supports International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards and recommended practices. The four components that make up the SMS are:
- (1) **Safety Policy.** The documented organizational policy that defines management’s commitment, responsibility, and accountability for safety. Safety Policy identifies and assigns responsibilities and accountabilities to key safety personnel.
 - (2) **Safety Risk Management.** A process within the SMS composed of describing the system; identifying the hazards; and analyzing, assessing, and treating risk. Safety Risk Management (SRM) includes requirements to define monitoring strategies for the identified safety risk in the NAS. SRM complements Safety Assurance.
 - (3) **Safety Assurance.** A set of processes within the SMS that verify that the organization meets or exceeds its safety performance objectives. These processes function systematically to determine the effectiveness of safety risk controls through the collection and analysis of data and assessment of information.

- (4) **Safety Promotion.** The communication and distribution of information to improve the safety culture and the development and implementation of programs and/or processes that support the integration and continuous improvement of the SMS within the ATO. Safety Promotion allows the ATO to share and provide evidence of successes, best practices, and lessons learned.
- b. Establishment of the SMS.** The ATO SMS, as approved by the Air Traffic Safety Oversight Service (AOV), has been implemented in accordance with FAA Order 1100.161, *Air Traffic Safety Oversight*, and FAA Order 8000.369, *Safety Management System*. It also complies with ICAO SMS standards and recommended practices, including those in ICAO Annex 19, *Safety Management*. The ATO SMS is executed in accordance with the ATO SMS Manual and the Safety Risk Management Guidance for System Acquisitions (SRMGSA) and through the concerted application of various FAA/ATO safety documents, including ATO Safety Guidance (ATO-SG) documents. Some of these safety documents are listed in Chapter 1, Paragraph 8e.
- c. Improvement of the SMS and Safety.** The ATO is committed to continuously improving SMS processes used to identify and address safety issues associated with ATO-provided services and NAS equipment and infrastructure. To manage safety, the ATO utilizes available data to assess risk from multiple points of view, considering the combined effects of processes, human operators, hardware, and software. The ATO measures the performance of each of those system elements to ensure lapses do not create unacceptable risk or lead to accidents.
- d. ATO Leadership Roles.** There are three key ATO safety leadership roles: the Vice President of Safety and Technical Training, AJI; the Director of Policy and Performance, AJI-3; and the AJI-31 Group Manager. They are responsible for overseeing the ATO SMS and ensuring that unacceptable risk is not introduced into the NAS.
- e. Relevant Safety Documents.** Compliance with the current versions of the following documents is integral to and supports the successful execution of the ATO SMS:
- (1) Safety Management and Risk Assessment
- FAA Order 8000.369, *Safety Management System*
 - FAA Order 8040.4, *Safety Risk Management Policy*
 - The ATO SMS Manual
 - The SRMGSA
 - FAA Order JO 1030.1, *Air Traffic Organization Safety Guidance*
 - FAA Order 1100.161, *Air Traffic Safety Oversight*
 - FAA Order 8040.6, *Unmanned Aircraft Systems Safety Risk Management Policy*
 - FAA Order JO 1030.7, *Air Traffic Organization Fatigue Risk Management*

- FAA Order JO 2900.2, *Air Traffic Organization Audits and Assessments*
 - FAA Order JO 3000.57, *Air Traffic Organization Technical Operations Training and Personnel Certification*
 - FAA Order JO 3120.4, *Air Traffic Technical Training*
- (2) Facilities and Equipment Management
- FAA Order JO 6000.50, *National Airspace System (NAS) Integrated Risk Management*
 - FAA Order 6000.15, *General Maintenance Handbook for NAS Facilities*
- (3) Hardware and Software System Development
- The Reliability, Maintainability, and Availability (RMA) Handbook
 - FAA Acquisition Management System (AMS) Policy / FAA Acquisition System Toolset
- (4) Safety Reporting
- FAA Order JO 7200.20, *Voluntary Safety Reporting Programs*
 - FAA Order 7050.1, *Runway Safety Program*
 - FAA Order JO 7210.632, *Air Traffic Organization Occurrence Reporting*
 - FAA Order JO 7210.633, *Air Traffic Organization (ATO) Quality Assurance (QA)*
 - FAA Order JO 7210.634, *Air Traffic Organization (ATO) Quality Control*
 - FAA Order JO 7200.21, *Partnership for Safety Program*
 - FAA Order JO 1030.3, *Initial Event Response*
- (5) Directives Management
- FAA Order JO 7000.5, *Procedures for Submitting Changes to Air Traffic Control Publications*
 - FAA Order 1320.1, *FAA Directives Management*
 - FAA Order JO 1320.62, *Air Traffic Organization Directives Management*

Chapter 2. ATO SMS Roles and Responsibilities

1. Safety Policy.

a. ATO Safety Policy Responsibilities. The ATO must establish and maintain ATO safety policy, guidance, and processes that support mission requirements. Documents and processes must:

- (1) Comply with FAA policy, requirements, and guidance (e.g., FAA Order 8040.4, FAA Order 8000.369, and the FAA AMS).
- (2) Meet the NAS safety management requirements established by FAA Order 1100.161.
- (3) Adhere to the basic principles and elements of safety management established by the ATO SMS Manual.
- (4) Maintain required NAS service-level availability.

NOTE–

See the [Reliability, Maintainability, and Availability \(RMA\) Handbook](#).

b. AJI Safety Policy Responsibilities. The AJI Vice President is accountable for ensuring that the ATO SMS and supporting ATO safety policy are adhered to at all levels of the organization. Therefore, the AJI Vice President assigns roles and responsibilities to the following:

- (1) **AJI-3 Director.** The AJI-3 Director is accountable for the management of the identification of operational safety risk in the services provided by the ATO. Among other duties, the AJI-3 Director must:
 - (a) Oversee the ATO SMS and ensure that unacceptable risk is:
 - Not introduced to the NAS
 - Mitigated to an acceptable level
 - (b) Approve safety documentation per the ATO SMS Manual guidelines.
 - (c) Represent the ATO at meetings concerning safety issues, including meetings of the Acquisition Safety Advisory Group, the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen) Management Board, and the Joint Resources Council (JRC), when required. (Workgroups listed are not all-inclusive.)
 - (d) Ensure that safety risk is mitigated to an acceptable level in all stages of development of NAS equipment and systems.

- (2) **AJI-31 Group Manager.** The AJI-31 Group Manager is accountable for maintaining and continuously improving the ATO SMS. Among other duties, the AJI-31 Group Manager must:
- (a) Serve as the ATO SMS liaison to the Service Units and other FAA Lines of Business (LOBs).
 - (b) Develop, update, and approve ATO SMS policy, guidance, and processes needed to manage, implement, and apply best practices.
 - (c) Develop, update, and approve ATO SMS policy, guidance, and processes that address ATO involvement in the integrated safety management of large, complex initiatives or capabilities that span multiple programs, Service Units, and/or FAA LOBs.
 - (d) Manage the identification process for operational safety risk in the services provided by the ATO.
 - (e) Review safety documentation per the ATO SMS Manual guidelines.
- (3) **AJI.** In support of the ATO SMS, AJI must:
- (a) Maintain the ATO's SMS orders, ATO-SGs, the SRMGSA, the ATO SMS Manual, and associated guidance.
 - (b) Approve ATO safety input to the NAS Enterprise Architecture Safety Roadmap and the National Aviation Research Plan.
 - (c) Maintain the consistent application of safety and safety-related policy by reviewing all ATO Safety Orders and guidance materials.
 - (d) When other ATO policy includes integrated safety doctrine or processes within an order that is not otherwise focused on safety, ensure that the policy of the order aligns with the ATO safety policy.
 - (e) Provide guidance and input to the Service Units concerning their developed safety processes and standard operating procedures.
 - (f) Review any ATO notifications of proposed differences to be filed with ICAO and provide a statement of concurrence or non-concurrence from a safety perspective.
 - (g) Provide feedback on behalf of the ATO on draft FAA safety policy or safety policy proposed by other FAA LOBs, as requested.
- c. **Service Unit Safety Policy Responsibilities.** The ATO Service Unit Vice Presidents are accountable for ensuring that their Service Units' processes and procedures align with ATO safety policies and guidance. In addition, the ATO Service Units must:

- (1) Include safety considerations in business planning activities that are integrated into ATO strategic plans at all organizational levels.
- (2) Align individual business plans with ATO SMS initiatives.
- (3) Ensure that all orders for which the Service Unit is the Office of Primary Responsibility (e.g., orders that are not specifically focused on SMS) align with ATO safety policy.
- (4) Develop and maintain emergency response plans that provide for the safe transition between normal and emergency operations where applicable, as required by FAA Order 8000.369.
- (5) Ensure that safety responsibilities are included in employee performance plans so that ATO safety professionals can perform their SMS-related work functions.

2. SRM.

a. ATO SRM Responsibilities. The ATO must:

- (1) Conduct SRM on ATO-provided NAS changes and improvements, as well as on existing safety issues with ATO operations, facilities, equipment, and systems identified through Safety Assurance, in accordance with FAA/ATO directives, the ATO SMS Manual, and the SRMGSA, if applicable.
- (2) Accept safety risk into the NAS per the requirements established in the ATO SMS Manual.
- (3) Comply with the ATO SMS Manual. For a confirmed existing high-risk hazard, the ATO COO must:
 - (a) Approve interim mitigations along with an acceptable predicted residual risk, or
 - (b) Require the operation causing the high-risk hazard be stopped.

b. AJI SRM Responsibilities. AJI must:

- (1) Conduct cross-LOB SRM in accordance with FAA Order 8040.4, when applicable. In particular, for ATO-led cross-LOB SRM efforts, AJI must:
 - (a) Coordinate hazards that cross between the ATO and other FAA LOBs.
 - (b) Invite other FAA LOBs to participate in ATO SRM efforts, as appropriate.
 - (c) Resolve disputes with other FAA LOBs or elevate to the SMS Committee, when necessary.
 - (d) Inform each affected FAA LOB of any risks and/or safety requirements for which they are responsible.

- (e) Coordinate with other FAA LOBs to verify that mitigations are approved by the appropriate management officials.
 - (f) Coordinate with other FAA LOBs to ensure they have the opportunity to review SRM documents for accuracy and correctness with regard to the proposed change or existing safety issue and to facilitate their approval of the documents.
- (2) Participate in SRM efforts initiated by other FAA LOBs when requested and as resources permit.
 - (3) Provide SRM expertise, guidance, review, and input to the Service Units to ensure compliance with ATO SMS policy.
 - (4) Facilitate/conduct SRM for NAS changes, as directed by the AJI-31 Group Manager, and in accordance with the ATO SMS Manual and the SRMGSA, if applicable, for SRM that meet any of the following criteria:
 - (a) Air traffic operations and equipment and systems acquisition modifications.
 - (b) Changes and waivers associated with training requirements for air traffic control and airway transportation systems specialists.
 - (c) Changes to policies, procedures, or NAS equipment for which training was originally developed by AJI.
 - (d) Removal of or modifications/waivers to existing national and/or local training requirements that could affect the NAS or NAS operations, except for the purposes of individual performance management.
 - (e) Potential NAS-wide safety issues identified through safety data trends.
 - (5) Input SRM documentation for which AJI facilitated/conducted the SRM process into the ATO Safety Management Tracking System (SMTS).
 - (6) Review and approve SRM documentation of NAS changes that meet the criteria for AOV approval per the ATO SMS Manual. These documents must be reviewed by the AJI-31 Group Manager and approved by the AJI-3 Director.
 - (7) Review and approve SRM documentation requiring the signature of the AJI-3 Director, per the ATO SMS Manual.
 - (8) Provide safety input for JRC and In-Service Decisions. Review and approve SRM documentation as necessary per the ATO SMS Manual and the SRMGSA.
 - (9) Review and approve SRM documentation for NAS changes that impact ATO-provided services and cross or impact other FAA LOBs. These documents must be approved in accordance with the ATO SMS Manual.

Chapter 3. Administrative Information

1. Distribution. This order is distributed to all levels of the ATO, including but not limited to the Service Units and FAA contract service providers. It is also distributed to ANG and AOV.

2. Acronyms.

AJI	Safety and Technical Training
AJM	Program Management Organization
AJV	Mission Support Services
AJW	Technical Operations
AMS	Acquisition Management System
ANG	NextGen
ANSP	Air Navigation Service Provider
AOV	Air Traffic Safety Oversight Service
ATC	Air Traffic Control
ATM	Air Traffic Management
ATO	Air Traffic Organization
ATO-SG	Air Traffic Organization Safety Guidance
CAP	Corrective Action Plan
CAR	Corrective Action Request
COO	Chief Operating Officer
ECV	External Compliance Verification
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
GAO	Government Accountability Office
HIRMT	Hazard Identification, Risk Management, and Tracking
HQ	Headquarters
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
JRC	Joint Resources Council
LOB	Line of Business
NAS	National Airspace System
NATCA	National Air Traffic Controllers Association
NextGen	Next Generation Air Transportation System
NTSB	National Transportation Safety Board
OIG	Office of the Inspector General

