SASO Outreach
SYSTEM APPROACH FOR SAFETY OVERSIGHT

A QUARTERLY UPDATE OF
SASO ACTIVITIES

March 2009

this issue

Hot Topics

New SASO Safety Promotion Outreach Team (SPOT) :

SASO SPOT will promote safety by briefing AFS field office and headquarters employees on SMS beginning Spring 2009. Check out the SASO website for more information.

www.faa.gov/safety/programs_initiatives/oversight/saso/

Acronym Quick Reference

AFS
Flight Standards Service

IFOs
International Field Offices

SAS
Safety Assurance System

SMS
Safety Management System

SPOT
Safety Promotion Outreach Team

Meet SASO's New Safety Promotion Outreach Team

We announced in our last newsletter that the SASO Program Office (PO) was in the process of forming a new Safety Promotion Outreach Team (SPOT) to share information with the field and headquarters on Safety Management Systems (SMS), the AFS Safety Assurance System (SAS), and SASO's role in implementing SMS and SAS. In this issue, we are pleased to announce the volunteers chosen to join this important team; please find your region's representatives in the list of names below.

We released the SPOT solicitation in October 2008 and accepted applications through November. In that time, we received an overwhelming response: over 100 AFS employees applied to join this dynamic new team. The SASO PO selected 39 of these applicants, from a variety of job roles and geographic locations.

Over the last few months, the SASO Program Office has been educating the SPOT members on SASO basics, Safety Management Systems (SMS), and the AFS Safety Assurance System (SAS), while also building their change management and presentation skills. Similar to previous activities of the former SASO Outreach Team, SPOT will promote safety by briefing AFS offices nationwide and International Field Offices (IFOs) from April to September 2009. Please visit the SASO Web site for more information on the new Safety Promotion Outreach Team, and expect a briefing at your office in the coming months.

Please join us in congratulating the new Safety Promotion Outreach Team (SPOT) members:

Alaskan Region
Stan Pitts

Eastern Region
George Bishop
Rob Jaffe
Ed Lambert
Renee Schrupp

Southern Region
Dan Balash
Sheryl Bodron
Greg Carroll
Liesa Johnson
Bruce Kalt
Judi Palmer
Chad Ronnebaum
Scott Strickland
Laurey Trailer

Central Region
Shannon Bengeyfield
Wayne Cummings
Adam Novak
Randy Ottinger
Joel Pettus

Great Lakes Region
Les McCraw
Wayne Phillips
Ellen Tom

Northwest Mountain Region
Jason Crain
Jim Hawks
Tim Mason
Paul Ramirez
Susan Wood-Butorac

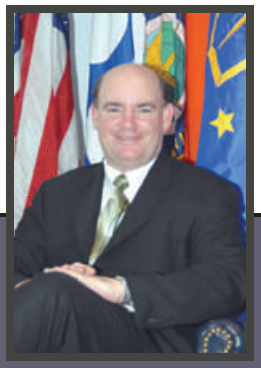
Southwest Region
Jude Sellers
Calvin Tillman

Western Pacific Region
David Binder
Steve Dahlen
Michael Evans
Jerry Pendzick
Cathy VanAssche
Rick Van Keuren
Pete Yiakos

Headquarters
Maryann Carr (AFS–500)
Dominic Hammond (AFS-500)

AMA
Janice Lee (AMA-230)

From the desk of John Allen



Colleagues,

Though our job roles within Flight Standards (AFS) may differ, we all share a common goal: fulfilling the AFS vision and mission. As AFS continues to work toward enhancing the future of safety oversight, I wanted to take some time to reiterate and reflect upon this vision and mission:

AFS Vision:
To be recognized and respected as the world leader on system safety through regulation and certification.

AFS Mission:
To promote safety of flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by:

- Setting regulations and standards that consider the air carriers' duty to operate in the public interest at the highest possible degree of safety;
- Setting regulations and standards for other air commerce, air agencies, and airmen at the appropriate level of safety in the public interest;
- Accomplishing certification, inspection, surveillance, investigation, and enforcement activities; and
- Managing the systems for registry of civil aircraft and all official airmen records.

In using system safety principles as the foundation to redesign AFS oversight processes to achieve increased safety and efficiency, the SASO Program Office is supporting the AFS vision and mission. I appreciate your continued dedication and efforts in service to our vision and mission, and look forward to accomplishing this common goal together.

John Allen
Director, Flight Standards Service

Safety Assurance System (SAS) Update

The SASO Program Office (PO) is currently designing the AFS Safety Assurance System (SAS), which is a combination of people, processes, and technologies that will constitute AFS's safety assurance capability. By incorporating system safety principles, the AFS SAS seeks to increase safety and assure that AFS and certificate holders meet their distinct responsibilities in accordance with 49 USC and FAA policy. The implementation of the AFS SAS helps fulfill Flight Standards mission elements in the areas of certification, surveillance, and resolution of safety concerns.

To design the AFS SAS, the SASO PO formed collaborative workgroups – which include participants from field offices and headquarters divisions – to provide, review, and verify information for the SAS. Volunteers in these workgroups reflect the diverse organization with members from different job roles and geographic locations. Workgroup activities began in November 2008 and will continue through September 2009. Workgroup discussions focus on processes and functions needed to support risk-based oversight for CFR Parts 121, 135, and 145.

As of March 1, the SASO PO has conducted 12 design workshops. Discussions in the first workshops focused on Process Models, which depict who, when, and in what sequence oversight functions will be performed in the future. In addition, workshop participants also discussed Detailed Business Functionality of the SAS, which aims to define the functions and logic that will enable a risk-based approach to safety oversight in the future.

Southern Region Organizational Assessment Project

The Southern Region Organizational Assessment Project is a collaborative partnership between the SASO Program Office's Change Management Team and the Southern Region (ASO) Management Team and staff. Dawn R. H. Veatch, Division Manager for the Southern Region, stated, "It is not often that a management team has the opportunity to facilitate change. Change within any organization is difficult at best, and takes not just the dedication from everyone involved, but also what is most precious to us – time."

The project aims to help ASO move past standards developed 20 years ago and develop new processes and procedures to become a "lean organization". To achieve this goal, SASO's Change Management and Implementation Team will explore five critical areas related to ASO's environment, work structure, and processes. The areas include leadership, strategy, organizational structure, operations, and work environment. The objective of the organizational assessment is to identify and maintain the best of what is working well, and to identify opportunities for ASO to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness.

ASO management recognizes that its employees are the key to the future success of the organization, and it is critical that employees take an active role and fully engage in the design of the future of ASO. To that end, the organizational assessment will include employee feedback on organizational processes, the work they perform, and the role of management. The feedback process will also give ASO staff an opportunity to share their skills with management, including those not used in their current role. This will enable ASO management to utilize employees' skills more effectively, provide additional opportunities for the use of those talents in a variety of assignments, and encourage continued professional development when conducting career-path discussions with employees.

As John Allen, Director of Flight Standards, has said, "Make way for the new Southern Region."

Acronym Quick Reference

AFS
Flight Standards Service

ASO
AFS, Southern Region

14 CFR
Code of Federal Regulations for Aeronautics and Space

CFR Part 121
Domestic, Flag, and Supplemental Operations

CFR Part 135
Commuter and On-Demand Operations

CFR Part 145
Repair Stations

SAS
Safety Assurance System

Systems Alignment Update

The System Approach for Safety Oversight (SASO) Program Office aims to adapt AFS business processes to better align with the way oversight will be performed in the future, including streamlining the many IT systems and computer programs that AFS employees use. As a follow up to the article in SASO's October newsletter, below are updates on three of these IT systems and also new information on the Flight Standards Automation Subsystems (FSAS) modernization.

Internet-based Operations Safety System (WebOPSS)

The FAA Operations Safety System (OPSS) is an automated system of standardized templates used to capture mission critical configuration data on aviation certificate holders. OPSS is recognized as the central repository for Letters of Authorization issued to air carriers and air operators.

To continue to align with aviation safety inspector (ASI) responsibilities and meet the AVS standards for functionality and integration, the current OPSS and industry OPSS (IOPSS) are being modernized and updated into a Web environment called WebOPSS. WebOPSS will combine OPSS and Industry OPSS (IOPSS) into one Web-based system with expanded functionality. The design and development of WebOPSS began in August 2007.

March 2009 Update:

The continued development of WebOPSS has focused on developing and validating the OPSS paragraph templates as they transition from the client-based system to a Web environment. The validation effort has required significant subject matter expert resources from AFS and Quality, Integration, and Executive Services (AQS-230) for completion. Key site testing began in February with problem resolution completed in early March. Computer based training (CBI) is on schedule for completion for the key test sites. Full deployment of WebOPSS is expected to begin in the first week of April, with one region deploying at a time to ensure each office can successfully transition from OPSS to WebOPSS for all certificate holders.

Master Minimum Equipment Lists (MMELs)

The Master Minimum Equipment List (MMEL) is a list of all equipment on an aircraft type; it details which equipment is allowed to be inoperative without grounding the aircraft. Aircraft must have a MMEL on board and the FAA must approve the MMEL prior to certification. MMELs are critical and required for the operation of an aircraft.

March 2009 Update:

Planning, design, and development continue to migrate the MMEL subsystems from the mainframe into a new system: the Aircraft Evaluation Group (AEG) workspace and Inspector Reporting (MEL), with the MMEL documents stored in the Flight Standards Information Management System (FSIMS). The new MMEL system will be available in 2009 and there is now a production schedule for the conclusion of the project:

- April 30: Final testing on the AEG Workspace and Inspector MEL Reporting
- May 31: Go live production for AEG Workspace and Inspector MEL Reporting and final testing for Type Rating Workspace
- June 30: Go live production for Type Rating Workspace and final testing for MMEL Policy Workspace (AFS-260)
- July 31: Go live production for MMEL Policy Workspace

Acronym Quick Reference

AEG
Aircraft Evaluation Group

AFS
Flight Standards Service

ASI
Aviation Safety Inspector

FSAS
Flight Standards Automation Subsystems

AVS
Aviation Safety Service

SAS
Safety Assurance System

SMS
Safety Management System

WebOPSS
Internet Based Operations Safety System

MMELs
Master Minimum Equipment Lists

Systems Alignment Update *(Cont.)*

Logbook

Logbook provides tools to AFS office managers in Certificate Management Offices (CMOs) and Flight Standards District Offices (FSDOs) to make data analysis, office tracking, and suspense files more efficient.

Currently Logbook only uses data that is stored on local office servers, and in order to be deployed at the national level, Logbook must be designed to interface with national databases. The new Logbook will be a Web-based reporting tool at the national level, with data sources from national databases such as the Vital Information Subsystem (VIS) and the Program Tracking and Reporting Subsystem (PTRS). National Logbook will capitalize on a great idea, originating in the Northwest Mountain Region Portland FSDO, to provide a consolidated tracking and reporting tool for office managers and inspectors. It will be able to provide enhanced tracking and reporting capabilities based on the national data architecture, data management, and quality control. In addition, it will integrate with Microsoft Office SharePoint Server (MOSS) to provide office managers with Microsoft Office Suite software capabilities.

March 2009 Update:

The phased roll-out of Logbook will continue with additional reporting and query functionality in the Technical Analysis Program (TAP). Tracking and suspense capabilities are expected to be available by the end of June 2009. Logbook functions that are currently available in all offices are designated by asterisks on the main menu. Computer based training (CBI) for office managers, front line managers, inspectors, and staff will be available by the end of July 2009.

Flight Standards Automation Subsystems (FSAS) Modernization

The Flight Standards Automation Subsystems (FSAS) are a set of subsystems used in Flight Standards field offices to store and organize inspection and safety data, ranging from certifications to routine inspections.

March 2009 Update:

FSAS Modernization is the design and development associated with updating the client versions of the Vital Information Subsystem (VIS) and the Program Tracking and Reporting Subsystem (PTRS) into a Web environment. Design and development have been ongoing for many months and deployment to the AFS regions and field offices is expected by the end of FY2009. This important transition will move VIS and PTRS into a Structured Query Language (SQL) environment that can interface with all AFS applications and Standard Reference Tables. This will, in turn, facilitate real-time data replication to national databases.

For More SASO Information Please Contact:

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Dulles VA 20166
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Or visit us on the Web at: http://www.faa.gov/safety/programs_initiatives/ oversight/saso/

SASO Events

March 16-20
SPOT Orientation Part II

Acronym Quick Reference

AFS
Flight Standards Service

CMO
Certificate Management Office

FSAS
Flight Standards Automation Subsystems

FSDO
Flight Standards District Office

MOSS
Microsoft Office SharePoint Server

PTRS
Program Tracking and Reporting Subsystem

SQL
Structured Query Language

TAP
Technical Analysis Program

VIS
Vital Information Subsystem