



INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

FIRST MEETING OF THE AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN REGIONAL AVIATION SAFETY GROUP (RASG-AFI/1) Kampala, Uganda (26 – 27 March 2012)

Agenda Item 6: Other Safety initiatives and Regional organizations in the AFI Region

IMPLEMENTATION OF SMS IN SOUTH AFRICA

(Presented by South Africa)

SUMMARY
<p>Aviation safety has traditionally focused on compliance with regulatory requirements and reacted to undesirable events by prescribing measures to prevent recurrence. A different approach is needed to keep safety risks at an acceptable level as the industry continues to develop.</p> <p>The performance-based approach engendered by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) describes safety programmes for States, complemented by safety management systems (SMS) for service providers and operators. This approach is designed to supplement regulatory compliance by the proactive use of best practice.</p>
REFERENCE(S):
Related ICAO Strategic Objective(s):

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Use of Safety Management Systems by ATM Service Providers, provides the following rationale for the establishment of an SMS: “Safety management is that function of service provision, which ensures that all safety risks have been identified, assessed and satisfactorily mitigated. A formal and systematic approach to safety management will maximise safety benefits in a visible and traceable way.”

1.2 It is believed that SMS should lead to the achievement of one of civil aviation’s key business goals: the enhanced safety performance aiming at best practice and moving beyond mere compliance with regulatory requirements. According to ICAO, the SMS is a toolbox that contains the tools that an aviation service provider needs in order to be able to control the safety risks of the consequences of the hazards it must face during the delivery of the services for which the organisation is in business.

1.3 Proactive safety management and implementation of safety management systems (SMS) were put on the agenda of international organisations, national authorities and air navigation service providers in the late 1990s due to the continuing traffic growth and the need to ensure improved safety levels in line with the strategic safety objective of ATM - the absolute number of accidents with ATM contribution should not increase, and should where possible, decrease. Whilst it is essential that top management commit to doing whatever it takes to improve safety, it is equally important that all employees feel that they have a system that values their input and is responsive to their contributions and ideas. In order to achieve this, all employees should have the opportunity to contribute to the development and implementation of the SMS. Individuals need to believe in the risk assessments, and that moderators are appropriate. The importance of finding out their safety concerns at the outset must be understood.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Because of the diverse relationships between the rule-making bodies and the variety of aviation service provider organisations, it is of critical importance to standardise the SMS functions to the point that there is a common understanding of the meaning of SMS among all concerned organisations and authorities, both domestically and internationally.

2.2 An organisational safety effort cannot succeed just by the implementation of the referred SMS components and procedures. An effective SMS is built taking due account of the interaction between these components with the human element of the aviation system. A successful implementation and operation of an SMS is highly dependent on organisational aspects such as individual and group attitudes, values, competencies and patterns of behavior which are frequently referred to as elements of the “safety culture”. A positive safety culture is characterised by a shared awareness of organisations’ personnel of the importance of safety in their operational tasks

2.3 Growing awareness of the performance-based approach in aviation creates a sense of everyone moving forward together to adopt new strategies and ways of thinking about safety. SMS evaluation should provide a dividend in terms of mutual understanding and support for regulators and the regulated organisations alike.

2.4 The SACAA has incorporated SMS requirements in its Regulations & Technical Standards. A specific Part (Part 140) has been promulgated which specifies SMS requirements in accordance with ICAO. Audits of local service providers are carried out on a regular basis.

2.5 To start with, find out what components and elements are already in place, and identify the parts that are missing. This is called "Gap Analysis" and is an excellent way to identify the areas that will need to be addressed. In an established organisation it is likely that the majority of the functions needed for SMS will already be in use. It is important to ensure the effective functioning of current arrangements, in particular the company occurrence reporting scheme, and take steps to encourage all personnel to use these arrangements to full effect.

2.6 The Air Traffic Service provider shall develop and maintain a formal process to identify changes within the organization which may affect established processes and services:

- to describe the arrangements to ensure safety performance before implementing changes; and

- to eliminate or modify safety risk controls that are no longer needed or effective due to changes in the operational environment.

3. ACTION BY THE MEETING

3.1 The meeting is invited to:

- a) take note of the information provided in this paper

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