



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation  
Administration**

# InFO

Information for Operators

InFO 11010  
DATE: 4/11/11

Flight Standards Service  
Washington, DC

[http://www.faa.gov/other\\_visit/aviation\\_industry/airline\\_operators/airline\\_safety/info](http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info)

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*An InFO contains valuable information for operators that should help them meet certain administrative, regulatory, or operational requirements with relatively low urgency or impact on safety.*

**Subject:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Safety Management System (SMS) Developments for General Aviation (GA) Operators

**Purpose:** The purpose of this InFO is twofold:

1. To encourage all GA business and corporate operators (Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) parts 91 and 125) to develop and implement an SMS; and,
2. To provide information to GA operators of large *and* turbojet airplanes on International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) SMS requirements and other additional requirements.

**Background:** Following investigation of a fatal accident involving a GA aircraft, the National Transportation Safety Board recommended (A-09-16) that the FAA encourage all GA business operators to implement an SMS. Additionally, operators of large and turbojet airplanes that fly internationally have a requirement to establish an SMS. Amendment 27 to ICAO Annex 6 Part II (Section 3) establishes an international standard for GA operators flying large *and* turbojet aircraft to implement an SMS by November 18, 2010. Under the Annex, there is no responsibility for the State (FAA) to accept or approve GA operators' SMS. Implementation and maintenance of GA operators' SMS is the responsibility of the operator. The ICAO standard allows the use of "industry codes of practice" as guidance for GA operators' SMS. Under provisions of 14 CFR part 91, § 91.703, operators are responsible for compliance with foreign countries' flight rules and international standards when operating outside of the United States.

**Discussion:** An SMS integrates control of risk into normal day-to-day business practices. Safety is managed as a "core business function" where the organization treats safety in the same way it manages other functions (e.g., financial, quality, marketing, etc). The components of an SMS are:

- **Policy.** Management systems must define policies, procedures, and organizational structures to accomplish their goals. The policy component provides these elements.
- **Safety Risk Management (SRM).** This component uses task analysis, hazard identification, risk analysis, and risk assessment to develop risk controls.
- **Safety Assurance.** The safety assurance component provides for system monitoring, measuring, assessment, and corrective action to assure the effectiveness of risk controls.
- **Safety Promotion.** The safety promotion component provides guidance for training and communication to promote safety as a core value in the organization.

The ICAO standard states that GA Operators of large aircraft (Gross Weight >12,500 lbs.) and turbojet aircraft must establish and maintain a Safety Management System "appropriate to the size and complexity of the operation." ICAO *recommends* that GA SMS include:

- A process to identify actual and potential safety hazards and assess the associated risks;
- A process to develop and implement remedial action necessary to maintain an acceptable level of safety; and
- A provision for continuous monitoring and regular assessment of the appropriateness and effectiveness of safety management activities.

In addition, the same amendment to Annex 6 Part II also requires the following documentation and programs:

- Operations Manual,
- Fatigue Management System,
- Operational Control Procedures,
- Flight Crew Training Programs, and
- Minimum Equipment Lists (MEL) (Where an Master Minimum Equipment List (MMEL) has been established), and
- Aircraft Maintenance Program,

**Options for Operators:** A successful SMS implementation will require more than simply writing a manual. Operators may wish to use the services of organizations authorized by sponsors of third party systems to validate their SMS. Operators should also determine what evidence of compliance is acceptable to the countries of intended operation. Strategies to develop and implement an SMS include:

- Design an SMS using information in the ICAO Safety Management Manual (ICAO doc. 9859). It would be the organization's responsibility to "self declare" compliance or to use the services of an auditing organization to validate implementation.
- Use AC 120-92 to design an SMS. However, the FAA currently does not accept or approve the implementation or continued operational performance of any operators' SMS.
- Several third party organizations have developed materials that meet the ICAO SMS standards for GA operations and sponsor practices to validate these programs' implementation. Third party organizations offering SMS services include:<sup>1</sup>
  - International Business Aviation Council (IBAC): International Standard for Business Aviation Operations (IS-BAO),
  - Air Charter Safety Foundation (ACSF) Industry Audit Standard, and
  - Medallion Foundation in Alaska.
- The International Helicopter Safety Team (IHST) also offers an SMS Toolkit that is tailored to rotorcraft operations but does not currently offer system validation services.

**Recommended Action:** General Aviation Operators are encouraged to incorporate Safety Management Systems as a standard business practice regardless of type of aircraft operated. GA Operators of large or turbojet airplanes should further review and consider the information in this InFO.

**Contact:** Please direct questions or comments regarding this InFO to Dr. Don Arendt, Manager, AFS-900, SMS Program Office, [don.arendt@faa.gov](mailto:don.arendt@faa.gov) or 703-661-0516. Additional information is also available at: <http://www.faa.gov/about/initiatives/sms>.

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<sup>1</sup> *This list is not exhaustive and is offered as an example of currently available programs. The FAA does not regulate the products and services of third party providers. Operators must ensure that their SMS meets all ICAO requirements and they should also be cognizant of the implementation requirements of State into whose territory they operate.*