



Safety Corner Corporate Air Newsletter

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SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM - STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS FOR AVIATION SAFETY

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SMS - Ongoing Safety Risk Assessments

Didrik Strand – Director of Safety

Safety Risk Assessments

Safety Risk Assessment is nothing new in flying. It has been done since the first flight in 1903. However, over time as more experience was gained, safety risk assessments became standard operating procedures and documented. Some of the things that were designed as a result of safety risk assessments are checklists. Other safety risk assessments are the walk-around, flight control checks and engine check prior to a flight.

Where Birds Don't Fly

Bush pilots are regularly operating single and multi-engine airplanes into remote areas and places where the birds don't fly. These airplanes are operated on wheels, skis or floats and on unprepared airstrips, gravel bars, mountain meadows, rivers or lakes, both summer and winter.

When a bush pilot prepare for a flight, a safety risk assessment is done, but may not documented. A bush pilot knows that even if the flight goes to a place where they have been several times before, this flight may encounter other challenges than previous flights. Each flight is a new flight and risks must be assessed continuously as the flight progresses.

Unwritten SMS System

An air operator may have flown for 30 -40 years of more without any accidents, but possible a few incidents. Processes have been established and applied, and they work well. Each pilot is memorizing the safety risk assessments and operating within their own safety management system. One pilot may do it different than another, but over the years customers were satisfied with service and come back and even recommend the operator to friends and family.

NextGen SMS Leadership

Today SMS is the Next Generation of Safety Leadership and regulatory requirements. A process must on its own merits conform to regulatory requirements. These merits may be established by reviewing and tracing the process backwards from end to beginning. A process needs a trigger to be activated which could be human, organizational or environmental factors. The process management and SMS leadership are human operational inputs that must conform to safety and regulatory requirements.

[Airport Hazard Reporting](#)



Director of Safety.

Phone: (406) 461-7560
strandb@corporateair.net

Variations are harnessed by defining roles for each person within SMS.

"Accidents are no longer accidents at all. They are failures of risk management."

— Sidney Dekker

Things to Remember

'The readiness to blame a dead pilot for an accident is nauseating, but it has been the tendency ever since I can remember. What pilot has not been in positions where he was in danger and where perfect judgment would have advised against going? But when a man is caught in such a position he is judged only by his error and seldom given credit for the times he has extricated himself from worse situations. Worst of all, blame is heaped upon him by other pilots, all of whom have been in parallel situations themselves, but without being caught in them. If one took no chances, one would not fly at all. Safety lies in the judgment of the chances one takes.'

Charles Lindbergh, journal entry 26 August 1938



SMS Knowledge Base

Check out these great [SMS Blogs](#) SMS is the management of operations for a safe environment for personnel and for the safe operations of an airplane.