

Station #5: Safety Assurance

Safety Assurance (SA) – Evaluates the continued effectiveness of implemented risk control strategies; supports the identification of new hazards.

- Systematically provide confidence that organizational outputs meet or exceed safety requirements
- Provides insight for methods/opportunities for improving safety and minimizing risk

Key Elements:

- Safety performance monitoring and measurement.
 - Acquire data with respect to your operations, products, and services.
- Safety performance assessment.
 - Determining effectiveness of risk management and achieving safety objectives.
- Continuous improvement.
 - Correct/fix safety performance deficiencies.

Safety Objectives (linked to Safety Policy)

- Method for measuring performance
- Reflective of company's type of operation
- Updated on a regular basis
- Realistic

Why monitor your operational processes and environment by reviewing data collected?

- Identify new hazards
- Measure the effectiveness of safety risk controls
- Ensure compliance with regulatory requirements applicable to the SMS
- Assess impacts on aviation safety (linked to SRM system analysis)
- Ensure the safety assurance function is based upon a comprehensive plan
- Seek out vulnerabilities

Data Collection methods

- SPIs (Specific Performance Indicators - Indicators of risk/ Examples: MEL, Hazard reports, Hot Starts)
- SPTs (Specific Performance Targets support organization safety objectives)
- Auditing and evaluations of operational processes and systems
- Employee reporting system
- Personal interviews
- Accident/Incident reports
- Monthly Safety Meetings and Quarterly Safety Council Meetings
- "Toolbox Talks" or "Tailgate" Meetings

Internal Audit Program

- Monthly or quarterly tasks by company departments - reviewed by Safety Director
- Establish an Internal Audit Program (IAP) to assess the full scope of processes

- IAP focuses on policies, processes and procedures that provide risk controls to confirm their effectiveness

Safety Performance Assessment (SPA)

The SPA process is where these decisions are made about safety performance. The SPA process should consider who makes the decisions regarding whether the company's safety performance is effective and whether the company is meeting its safety objectives and expectations that are identified in the safety policy.

- Decisions are typically made by personnel with assigned responsibility and authority (i.e. Process Owners/managers, Safety Review Committee or working group).
- The conclusions of the SPAs are reported to the Accountable Executive, who possesses ultimate authority to act on such conclusions, as necessary.
- SPAs should be accomplished at a frequency to permit a change in processes or procedures to better align the organization to meet the safety objectives.

Continuous Improvement

Safety assurance processes support improvements to the SMS through continual verification and follow-up actions.

- Continuous improvement is a characteristic of a "learning culture" that enables proactive risk management through process assessment and improvement.
- This process is designed to ensure that you are correcting sub-standard safety performance identified during the safety performance assessment.

Corrective and Preventative Action (CAPA) Plans

- The identification of planned actions that must be taken in response to the finding.
- An implementation schedule, including a timeframe for putting corrective actions in place.
- The assignment of the individual(s) who have the responsibility for implementing each of the corrective steps (should reside with the operational departments cited in the finding).

The Management of Change (MOC)

Organizations, regardless of the size, are involved in continual change. Change may affect the effectiveness of existing safety risk controls. In addition, new hazards, and related safety risks may be inadvertently introduced into an operation when change occurs. Before implementing changes, a change management process (which includes a risk assessment) should be used to proactively identify the adverse effects to processes, procedures, products and services.

Summary

- Evaluates the continued effectiveness of risk controls
- Supports the identification of new hazards
- Ensures compliance with FAA SMS standards
- Provides insight for improving safety and minimizing risk
- SA will continue to evaluate and improve service

Note: For U.S. aviation organizations with a single pilot who is the sole individual performing all necessary functions, the following Part 5 regulatory sections for safety assurance are excepted from the implementation requirements: § 5.71(a)(7).