



## 2008-February : Newsletter

I am pleased to announce that at this year's Annual Conference in Houston there will be two new enhancements to safety training programs. First, there will be a 3-day pre-conference course on Safety Management Systems (SMS). This is the hot topic in the helicopter aviation community. This is a must for safety officers, unit managers, and those who want to enhance their knowledge on the latest in safety systems and risk management. This course will be held July 14-16. Mark your calendar now.

Unit Managers - The first 20 people to register for this year's Aviation Unit Managers' Course will have their tuition for the course and conference registration waived. This is offered on a first-come, first-served basis for ALEA members who have been newly assigned as unit managers/supervisors and/or have never attended this course as a unit manager/supervisor. There will be only one "scholarship" per unit. You will receive the latest information on law enforcement aviation management including safety management systems, flight operations, aviation personnel mishap management and corrective action methodology, personnel selection and training, maintenance management systems, and much more.

There will be an all-day track on Safety Management Systems. This will include an overview of SMS including, how to implement a "Just Culture" in your organization. What do you do when people make honest mistakes or intentionally violate organization standards? This can be difficult if you don't know. This 1-hour class will eliminate the guesswork. Learn how to handle any situation. The SMS track will also include a 4-hour session on how to use a computer software system that will enable attendees to demonstrate the "return on investment" when implementing SMS and other aviation services. Attendees completing this class will be authorized to use the ROI software to help leverage the benefits of implementing specific safety and other strategies in their organizations. You don't want to miss this. Dr. David Eherts, Ph.D., Sikorsky Aircraft Vice President of Environment, Health and Chief Safety Officer will be the presenter. Attendees are in for a real treat. This session will enable you to demonstrate how using a proven software system actually saves your organization money. The best news is that the software is FREE, but you must attend the training session.

Last month's newsletter addressed the Joint Helicopter Safety Analysis Team's (JHSAT) recommendations pertaining to flight training. This article pertains to Safety Management System recommendations.

The JHSAT identified the need for formalized programs to manage safety through the creation of a positive culture that increases employee safety awareness and acceptance of safety responsibility, and through routine assessment and management of flight operational risks. Safety Management Systems provide a comprehensive solution. The creation, training and management of standards for flight operations, particularly for potentially high-risk missions, are another means of managing safety. The overall purpose of an SMS is to collect and use safety information to identify hazards and reduce risk. Risk might be reduced by designing the hazards out, establishing barriers, providing warnings through advisories or safety education, making procedural changes as needed and/or by addressing the hazards through training. It is important that pilots and crewmembers are not faced with mission risk without standards, training and preflight evaluations to help them manage risks. The following safety recommendations were based on similar accident

circumstances that suggested the lack of a structured safety management program; the culture and structure of existing operator safety programs was typically not documented in the accident investigation reports.

Develop a systematic approach:

Promote a culture of safety and regulatory compliance, risk assessment and management.

Develop and use a formalized systems safety approach (i.e. SMS) to risk assessment and management to improve personnel and organizational decision-making.

Without consideration for size of the organization, complexity and variety of aircraft used, or level of risk associated with missions; create a "right-sized" SMS to manage safety in your organization. The SMS needed to manage risk in a small organization will be less than that which will be required for a larger, more complex operation.

Make a proactive use of safety information to create awareness of known hazards and reduce the risk of accidents.

Formalized approaches for assessing and managing risk in different operational missions, maneuvers and environments must be developed and implemented:

Provide comprehensive training for assessing risks associated with specific missions. The training should demonstrate that the safety culture of the organization allows and encourages aborting or canceling the flight when risk factors don't justify conducting or continuing the mission. Supervisors and managers need to actively participate in this process.

Identify the risks associated with the mission, specific in-flight maneuvers, and flying in close proximity to the ground or obstacles. This includes most law enforcement missions. The evaluation of risk should consider the difficulty of the mission, the environment in which it will be performed, the skills and experience of the pilot and other crewmembers, and the capabilities of the aircraft and mission equipment. Keep in mind: most law enforcement operations are conducted close to the performance capability of the aircraft being flown.

For more information on implementing an SMS, refer to the ALEA SMS Toolkit in the Safety First section of the ALEA website at [www.alea.org](http://www.alea.org), click on Safety First at the bottom of the homepage and go to SMS Toolkit.

Feel free to forward your comments or questions to me at: [safety@alea.org](mailto:safety@alea.org). Remember, SAFETY FIRST.

***Remember – Safety First!***

Keith Johnson

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