



2009-November : Newsletter

JOINT HELICOPTER SAFETY ANALYSIS TEAM LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD PILOTS

The Joint Helicopter Safety Analysis Team (JHSAT) is part of the International Helicopter Safety Team (IHST) that analyzes helicopter accidents and recommends strategies in order to reduce helicopter accidents by 80 percent by the year 2016. The JHSAT meets once every three months in various parts of the United States. The member's organization is responsible for paying expenses associated with attending meetings. Interested parties should contact Keith Johnson at safety@alea.org.

ALEA SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SMS) TOOLKIT

The second edition of the ALEA SMS Toolkit is now available in the Safety First section of the ALEA website. Hard copies will soon be available from the ALEA home office or online for the cost of shipping and handling.

The Toolkit provides comprehensive guidance for law enforcement aviation units that wish to implement an SMS. SMS is a proven method that will assist your organization in managing risk and minimizing mishaps. The implementation of a safety management system represents a fundamental shift in the way the organization operates. Safety management systems require organizations to adopt and actively manage the elements detailed in this document and to incorporate them into their everyday operating practices. In effect, safety becomes an integral part of the everyday operations of the organization and is no longer considered an adjunct function belonging to the safety unit.

SMS facilitates the proactive identification of hazards, promotes the development of a proactive safety culture, and modifies the behavior and attitudes of personnel to prevent damage to aircraft or equipment and makes for a safer workplace. It also requires having a non-punitive reporting system that enables personnel to report honest mistakes without fear of punishment. Research has shown that when the organizational culture is such that people willingly report errors, mishaps go down and productivity increases. Comments and questions about the toolkit are encouraged.

The toolkit is fully compliant with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the FAA SMS guidance material.

CREW REST & FATIGUE NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULE MAKING (NPRM)

In December 2009, the FAA will be publishing an NPRM soliciting feedback from the aviation industry. ALEA is requesting feedback on the crew rest requirements from our members. Crew rest standards are an essential part of risk management in any aviation organization. They have received increased attention from the NTSB and the FAA. This was recently highlighted during the NTSB hearings on Helicopter Emergency Medical System operators. The crew rest challenges are very similar for law enforcement and HEMS operators. We work irregular and often long hours that result in the interruption of normal sleep patterns.

Research has shown that after 19 hours of being awake, you are at a state consistent with having the equivalent of a .08 percent blood-alcohol level. This requires the careful management of work and rest schedules. Research has also shown that short naps of no more than 90 minutes can help extend your work schedule up to three hours. This runs contrary to the belief that we should not sleep on duty. The reality is that short naps enhance safety and productivity.

Recommendations and questions should be sent to Keith Johnson, ALEA Safety Program Manager at safety@alea.org.

Remember – Safety First!

Keith Johnson

Safety Program Manager