



# SAFETY CORNER

CORPORATE AIR  
NEWSLETTER

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## NEXTGEN AVIATION SAFETY - STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS OF A SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

### SMS MAKES FLYING SAFER

A Safety Management System (SMS) makes flying safer and is a positive addition to deliver quality service to the flying public. Airlines operating within an SMS system are far better off than someone without an operational control management system. SMS in itself does not cause aviation accidents. However, as the case might be when accidents happen, it's often the new kid on the block who gets the blame. It has been implied that aviation was safer prior to implementation of SMS, during the days of traditional inspections with spot-checks of operations, crews and aircrafts. Without going into the details, the facts are that aviation accidents also occurred prior to SMS.

### SAFETY OVERSIGHT

There is no secret to SMS. The outcome is determined by process inputs. The question is what type of oversight system is desired as a functional and superior system. Some opinions are that the old and traditional method is preferable while other opinions are that the new SMS system is more effective.

A traditional system of oversight is similar to what is on the roads for heavy-trucks with scales and carrier enforcement. This is intended as a deterrent to violate the rules and with the assumption that if the rules are not violated, then the operation is safe. Similar in aviation, the assumption is that if rules and regulations are not violated the operation is safe and accidents will not happen.



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- No matter how well written the process is, it is not effective if not understood.
- When imagination is filled with endless opportunities of directions; then focus on the task assigned.



*You cannot control what happens to you, but you can control your attitude toward what happens to you, and in that, you will be mastering change rather than allowing it to master you.*  
-Brian Tracy

**1956**

In 1956 one of the worse accidents mid-air accidents happened over the Grand Canyon, with the result of creating more rules to prevent identical accidents. There was no indication of wrongdoing, or non-compliance with regulations by cancelling IFR and flying 1000-on top. In traditional oversight the result may be checked, documented and paperwork compiled for a report to be issued. This report would not identify how the results were achieved, but just documented if paper-trail were in compliance or not. This type of a report is therefore nothing else but a report of results and not a reflection of operational safety, or of operational safety system control.

**THE OPERATOR MAKES DECISIONS**

With this traditional method in place, it was the aviation operator who had final control over how they operate, run and manage their operation. These operational processes were not documented or assessed to level of regulatory compliance. The flying public may have assumed, but had no assurance of knowing if the airline had processes in place to address safety concerns or operational control to conform to regulatory compliance.

With SMS in place enterprises are accountable to operate with processes conforming to regulatory compliance, which often demands an operator to go above and beyond regulatory requirements, or in other words apply continuous improvement.

During the previous era of oversight, if hazards were not documented or identified, it was accepted that it had not happen, or that hazards didn't exist. Under the new system of SMS, if hazards are not documented or identified this is lack of an operational system and non-conforming to regulatory requirements.

**NEXTGEN AVIATION SAFETY**

With both the old method of traditional inspections and with the new system of SMS oversight there is no difference in who makes decisions. Operator who previously made decisions still makes decisions of operating systems and processes. However, one key factor that is different is to assess documented processes, and compare to interviews for evaluation of activeness and level of regulatory compliance. This key point of difference is what makes flying safer with SMS.

**THIS MONTH IN HISTORY**

Continental Airlines Flight 11, registration N70775, exploded in the vicinity of Centerville, Iowa, while en route from O'Hare Airport, Chicago, Illinois, to Kansas City, Missouri, on May 22, 1962. The aircraft crashed in a clover field near Unionville, in Putnam County, Missouri. The NTSB investigation determined the cause of the crash was a bomb.

Flight 11 departed O'Hare at 8:35 p.m. In the vicinity of Centerville, Iowa, the radar image of the aircraft disappeared from the scope of the Waverly, Iowa, Flight Following Service. At approximately 9:17 p.m. an explosion occurred in the right rear lavatory, resulting in separation of the tail section from the fuselage. Of the 45 individuals on board, one passenger, 27-year-old Takehiko Nakano of Evanston, Illinois, was alive when rescuers found him in the wreckage.



*A view from the fence might give a better oversight of the processes and what's happening.*