

Safety Management Systems

October 15th, 2009

SMS coming our way

I would like to share with you a bit of my recent activities as my role has expanded recently. The IBT was invited to WHQ last July for a presentation on SMS or Safety Management Systems. SMS has been embraced by the FAA as presented through AC 120-92 and is currently being promoted in Europe within the Intl Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) with half of the world's commercial airlines implementing this business model in some form or another. Everyone from the executive down to the employee under the wing will be identified within this structure. Also the FAA will someday soon mandate all U.S. commercial airline participation.

I was first introduced to this effort when it was known as SQMS or Safety Quality Management Systems under the former VP of Safety Bill Yantiss 2 years ago. This month the unions were invited to attend the GAP analysis training at WHQ where "gap" is used as a term for identifying via audits any missing data that the SMS structure dictates for successful completion of the project at United Airlines. Essentially they are auditing the design elements of the corporation as dictated by the SMS. An example of the audit questions would be:

- * "Does your organization have a non-punitive safety reporting program in place?" (We do have ASAP programs i.e. FSAP, MSAP etc.)
- * "Do you promote safety through briefings, posters and printed formats?"
- * "Who in your organization is responsible for tracking OSHA injury rates?"
- * "Does your organization have a program in place to promote, investigate and manage safety?"

There are 5 departmental managers doing the actual analysis during this implementation process with the major unions on the property involved as "subject matter experts".

UAL is aiming for full integration within our company by the end of 2011. The position I have been asked to hold as an IBT Safety Rep is strictly advisory in nature along with the AFA, IAM and ALPA who are supporting this effort without any reservations. If the manager who is auditing United Services for example, has any questions we might be contacted to clarify terminology, MM or MOP language so he can answer basic questions relating to his audit. I don't see any further involvement for me at this time but the IBT Airline division has created a committee to oversee and investigate where SMS might take us in the future.

Regards,

Vic

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