Personal Safety Management System (SMS)

V1.0 – March 19th, 2024
Stu Phillips

This is tailored to a personal SMS, has a framework adapted from the FAA SMS framework used for part 121 and 135 operators, but simplified for an individual and not an organization. I refer to this as the "flight department of one – that be me".

What is a Safety Management System?

In its base form, the SMS has 4 key components:

- A **personal commitment to Safety** and a Safety Improvement System.
- How you will conduct YOUR flight operations (**simplified operating practices - SOP**).
- **The use of Flight Data Monitoring and a personal journal** to note what works, what can be improved.
- A **continuous improvement process**, preferably with peer review (CFI, a designated Friendly Pilot - DFP), to drive improvement in personal safety and flight operations.

How to…

A personal SMS can be as straightforward or as complex as you want to make it. One size does NOT fit all.

To get started with TBM-PPP, we've chosen to focus the SOP on the Stabilized Flight Criteria defined by Daher in FIL 2015.1. This covers the choice of approach (instrument approach, visual approach, and traffic pattern operations) from initiating the approach to landing or go-around.

The personal commitment to safety should be written in your own words – you commit to own the process of improving your compliance with the stabilized approach criteria. The key is to write it down and hold yourself accountable… It has no regulatory teeth and just like personal minimums, it's between you and yourself.

Use flysto, Me & My TBM or the TBM Report to evaluate your compliance with the different criteria. It doesn't matter which you use – the scoring is different; we're working to get them all the same, but perfection is the enemy of good enough.

Commit to making a personal review after EVERY approach to landing.

From personal experience, I will say the following:

- For a while, I was obsessed with perfection -100% compliance. I made it and kept it for over 30 flights…
- Then I had an epiphany during a gusty approach to KDVT – at 200 feet, I was assured of a safe landing but knew I had not met the minimum torque requirement or kept the descent rate < 1000 fpm over the first part of the 500' and below segment.
- I have executed a go-around in these circumstances before meeting perfection but this time I opted to continue to land (long runway, plenty wide). Perfection doesn't mean maximum safety.

So don't pick 100%… start with something better than you are currently scoring and work to meet it. When you do, move the goal – as you get closer to 90+%, accept smaller incremental goals and note my confession above.

There are some excellent documents available:

- FAA Risk Management Handbook
- Understanding the FOQA Program

Keep a personal written journal (NOT in your logbook) that records your thoughts after the flight on what went well and where you noted opportunities for improvement. Write this down while it's still fresh in your mind – at least the same day as the flight even if right after checking engine oil (you DO check this after EVERY flight within 15 minutes – of course) doesn't work due to passengers, time commitments etc.

Periodically, review your performance and progress against the goals – note which areas of the SAC challenge you and think about why. At least do this with yourself – if you can, find a CFII or a DFP and coopt them into this process.

Do you need a DFP? TBM-PPP will help – we're working on a list of folks, and you can always post a personal request.

Like Las Vegas, what happens in TBM-PPP stays in TBM-PPP.
We have each other's backs.