



## **IS-BAO Standards Board Meets**

The IS-BAO Standards Board met recently to consider the annual revisions to the IS-BAO program standards. The proposed changes are developed and collected throughout the year by the IS-BAO staff and presented to the Board with recommendations. Resulting changes will be promulgated in early 2012 as part of a complete revision to all IS-BAO documents and guidance material.

The major change to the 2012 standard will be the inclusion of helicopter terms and standards. These changes will permit helicopter operators to better identify with and conform to the basic IS-BAO standards. Over the next year the helicopter community will develop a series of mission-specific standards for special operations such as emergency medical transport, offshore and heli-logging; these will supplement the basic IS-BAO registration and be controlled by the helicopter community.

Special qualifications will be required for auditors performing audits of operations involving mostly helicopter assets. The requirements for this designation will be listed in the revised Audit Procedures Manual.

## **The Numbers**

As of 1 October 2011 there were 548 IS-BAO registrants of which 51 were stage 3 and 101 stage 2.

Interesting statistics:

- Total IS-BAO registrants increased 80% in 2011 compared to 2010 totals.
- Non-US registrants comprise 18% of total.
- 28% of registrants are in either Stage 2 or 3.
- Registrants are from 34 States.
- 91 individual auditors performed the 293 audits reported in the past 12 months.
- Approximately 155 registrants hold an aircraft operating certificate.

## **When Will States Require an SMS?**

Currently, only Bermuda and the Cayman Islands require an SMS for large or turbojet powered aircraft. Other States are at various stages of implementation of the ICAO standards that require an SMS, operations manual, fatigue management system, training and maintenance programs, and required aircraft equipment. EASA is scheduled to have their new operations requirements in place in 2012 but the draft rules which are in the final stage of development still have to be processed through the European Commission. Singapore has



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published rules that reflect the ICAO requirements and we expect that most other States will do so in the not too distant future. On the other hand the FAA has indicated that they will not be in a position to publish such rules in the foreseeable future and have issued InFo 11010 which addresses the issue and is posted at:

[http://www.faa.gov/other\\_visit/aviation\\_industry/airline\\_operators/airline\\_safety/info/all\\_infos/](http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/info/all_infos/). For those who wish to do additional research on the subject, ICAO provides links to national civil aviation authorities at: [http://www.icao.int/icao/en/m\\_links.html](http://www.icao.int/icao/en/m_links.html).

If you haven't started the IS-BAO process the best reason to incorporate these items into your company's operations is safety, more specifically avoidance of risk and the ability to measure it. Now would be a good time to start.

## New Zealand Operator Registered

Feldham Enterprises of Auckland, NZ is the first operator to be registered in that country. This is very active single-aircraft operator conducting predominately international flights. There are now operators based in 34 countries that are IS-BAO registered.

## Why Three Stages of Registration for IS-BAO?

The IS-BAO requirements include: "The organization shall develop and maintain a formal process that:

- ensures hazards in operations are identified
- ensures analysis, assessment and control of the safety risks of the operation
- develops and maintains the safety performance of the organization and to validate the effectiveness of the safety risk controls
- [identifies] changes within the organization which may affect established processes and services....
- [identifies] the causes of substandard performance of the SMS ... and eliminate or mitigate such causes."

These citations paraphrased from IS-BAO standard 3.2 provide for expected *ongoing* SMS activities required of the IS-BAO program. Just because an operator successfully completes a stage 1 audit of the program does not mean that their SMS activities are completed. Stage 1 indicates that the "SMS is documented, resourced and *being implemented*," emphasis added. Therefore stage 1 is just the foundation, the starting point for achieving the program and the *operator's* goals.

The stage 2 audit will determine whether the program is functioning and that results are being measured. This is a *performance* audit, not one to determine



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whether stage 1 standards are still being met. The auditor will check the 13 SMS elements listed in audit protocol 8.1 for effectiveness; this means, is the program really working or is it not being utilized?

Similarly, the stage 3 audit will determine whether the SMS effort is sustained and supported by an ongoing improvement process. This audit will ensure that SMS activities are fully integrated into the operator's business and that a positive safety culture is being sustained.

SMS is all about progress and improvement. If you can't say these important elements are present then you are falling behind. More importantly, you are not making good on the promise you made to yourself and the other members of the organization when you began the process that you would become a better, more risk-averse operation. The stages are the mileposts verifying that progress is being made.

It is noteworthy that the three stages of maturity refer to the operator's SMS only, the other IS-BAO requirements do not change.

### **Schedule the Audit in Advance of the Registration Expiration**

We find that a number of operators wait until the last minute to schedule a stage 2 or 3 audit to renew their registration. Changes in their organization, an increased tempo of operations or a long list of audit findings may delay their registration renewal. You may have an audit up to 90 days in advance of your expiration date and still maintain the original expiration month for the new audit. Don't risk the possibility of letting your registration expire just because you waited until the last minute.

**Have you exercised your compliance system lately?**

(Standard 3.3.1)

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