IEP CHECKLIST

A SAFETY ASSURANCE COMPONENT OF YOUR SMS

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December 2024

Operations 1.

Flight Operations Management (PART 135)

Standard for Aviation Operations Management: Operations management recognizes safety as a critical priority for the company and consistently exhibit traits characteristic of effective leadership to promote a positive safety culture. Operations supervisor(s) ensure, despite scheduling pressure, peer pressure, fiscal pressure, or other factors, that every flight is adequately planned, prepared, and properly executed. Uncalculated risk must never be assumed to satisfy passenger convenience or financial demands. Communication and information are utilized effectively to increase operational efficiency. Management is constantly engaged and aware. Personnel with proper aviation credentials and experience fill key management positions. The impact of sound fiscal policy is evident throughout the company's flight operations.

PART 135

SCALE OF 1-5

1 – Unsatisfactory
2 – Poor
3 – Meets Minimum Standards
4 – Excellent
5 – Best Practice

If your answer is not a 3 or better, you must record a
finding that requires corrective action.

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1. **Are ops management responsibilities adequately aligned with the requirements of the flight operation?**

   (FAR 119.69, FAR 119.71; IS-BAO 7.1; ARGUS Platinum 4.1.1; NBAA Management Guide 1.3)

   (Policy) An adequate organizational structure contains clearly defined management duties, authorities, and accountability. At a minimum, there is an individual formally assigned overall responsibility and primary operational control for the flight operation. This person shall meet the qualifications necessary for the position. If there are multiple operating bases, ensure the viability of organizational structure and responsibilities at all operating base locations.

1	2	3	4	5

2. **Are ops management's duties and responsibilities clearly and thoroughly defined in a company General Operating Manual, or equivalent manual, to include all necessary interaction with and utilization of safety and quality management processes and procedures?**

   (FAR 135.23[a]; IS-BAO 7.2; ARGUS Platinum 4.1.5; NBAA Management Guide 1.3)

   (Policy) Responsibilities for all management positions must be clearly outlined in a formal company manual (GOM). Do the duties and responsibilities described in the GOM match the real day-to-day actions required of the operations manager(s)? For multiple operating bases, ensure company manual(s) reflect dispersed responsibilities and communication requirements. Manuals should be periodically reviewed to ensure content is current and consistent between all company manuals.

1	2	3	4	5

3. **Is the published organizational chart correct and complete? If the operation has more than one operating base, does the management structure and responsibilities match the organizational chart?**

   (FAR 119.69, 135.23; IS-BAO 7.1, 7.2.1[c]; ARGUS Platinum 4.1.5; NBAA Management Guide 1.3)

   (Policy) The organizational chart must be current, to include any chart depicted in manuals, and accurately reflect the actual reporting structure of the flight operation. This helps define authority and responsibility and prevents ambiguity. If the operation has managed aircraft at various locations ensure the management and accountability structure is clearly depicted.

1	2	3	4	5

4. **Are ops management duties and responsibilities reviewed on a periodic basis to ensure they are appropriate for the size and scope of the operation?**

   (IS-BAO 6.2.1[c] & 7.2; ARGUS Platinum 1.5.1.c & 3.1.3; NBAA Management Guide 1.3)

   (Programs/Procedures) As flight operations change, duties and responsibilities for management must remain appropriate for the profile of the flight operation. Accountable executive sponsored review of flight operations management is a necessary action to validate existing methods or initiate change to adapt.

1	2	3	4	5

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5. Is there a documented succession plan for circumstances when operations managers are absent from duty for extended periods of time?

(ARGUS Platinum 4.1.4)

(Programs/Procedures) In any operation circumstances may occur when a manager is unexpectedly absent for a period that leaves a void in key areas of decision-making process requirements. There should be a documented process to designate individuals who will assume the responsibilities of key personnel in the event of their extended absence from duty to ensure continuity of operations. All applicable personnel must have access and a working knowledge of the process involving the plan's details. The succession plan must be reviewed periodically to ensure accuracy.

1	2	3	4	5

6. Evaluate operation management's consistent and proactive commitment to safety and risk management, regardless of influencing factors.

(IS-BAO 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.2; ARGUS Platinum 1.2, 1.6, 4.1.5[a]; NBAA Management Guide 1.1.4)

(Management) Formal, established process-based risk management should be evidenced across all facets of operations planning. Safety and quality should be included in the duties and responsibilities for all management personnel. Specific flight planning requirements designed to mitigate risk should be an integrated component of operations planning. This commitment to risk management helps to create a strong safety culture, which begins with leaders. This also indicates the safety culture is proactive and uses a risk management philosophy. It may be necessary to privately interview personnel, and review hazard reports that might contain germane information.

1	2	3	4	5

7. Evaluate management's effectiveness handling day to day operational issues. Are problems proactively identified and tracked for resolution and trending?

(IS-BAO 3.2; ARGUS Platinum 1.6; NBAA Management Guide 1.1.4.2)

(Management) A consistently reactive posture can lead to snap decision making that does not apply necessary risk management. Tracking procedures for resolutions to operational issues must also be established for trending and to ensure corrective actions are effective and continuous improvement is possible. Effective root cause analysis must be used consistently to determine the source of a determined problem. (Common sense applies; not every problem requires detailed analysis.)

1	2	3	4	5

8. How well do ops managers communicate throughout the organization? Are suggestions from employees solicited and reviewed?

(IS-BAO 3.4.2; ARGUS Platinum 1.8.4; NBAA Management Guide 1.1.4)

(Management) Managers must be approachable. Communication should be effective enough to ensure information flows across the organization, through all levels. The relationship between employees and management should be an open line of communication without fear of reprisal. There should be evidence of actions in response to employee suggestions/questions.

1	2	3	4	5

IEP CHECKLIST   Completed By: _____   Date: _____   Revised: 12/2024

6021 South Syracuse Way
Suite 301
Greenwood Village, CO 80111

+1 513.852.5110
+1 800.361.2216

argus.sales@argus.aero

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9. Are deficiencies identified by inspections, audits and internal evaluations reviewed by managers and corrected with their involvement and/or oversight? Are these corrective actions documented and subsequently evaluated for effectiveness?

(IS-BAO 3.2.2, 3.3; ARGUS Platinum 1.7; NBAA Management Guide 1.1.4)

(Management) Operations Management must be an active participant in the internal evaluation program by responding to identified findings in a timely manner with effective solutions. Improvements depend upon using this information to continuously improve their areas of responsibility. Root cause analysis is used to determine proper corrective action. All of these items must be documented and utilized for tracking/trending. Look for evidence of continuous improvement based on internal evaluation results; strengths should be accentuated, and weaknesses eradicated.

1	2	3	4	5

10. Are operations managers overburdened, even on occasion, with additional duties and not able to perform their assigned tasks effectively?

(IS-BAO 7.1; ARGUS Platinum 4.1.1)

(Management) Managers cannot be overly preoccupied with abundant ancillary duties. In small operations, managers will have an assortment of duties and responsibilities that may not directly relate to aircraft operations. When necessary, management should be provided support to reduce additional administrative requirements; this will allow for the proper level of oversight and improve company operations.

1	2	3	4	5

11. Do all managers understand and abide by the company safety policy statement signed by the CEO/President/Senior Management without exception?

(IS-BAO 3.1; ARGUS Platinum 1.2.1; NBAA Management Guide 1.1.4)

(Management) In practice does the operations activity function according to the company's safety policy. This serves as tangible evidence of risk management commitment to the employees of the company, providing reassurance that safety-conscious decisions are supported, and errors are reported.

1	2	3	4	5

12. Is ops management provided the necessary fiscal resources and allocation authority for flight operations?

(FAR 135.23(a); IS-BAO 3.1.2, 7.3; ARGUS Platinum 1.3; NBAA Management Guide 1.3.2.1)

(Management) Operations management must possess appropriate authority to target resources where and when needed. The company's policies should be flexible enough to allow for dynamic response.

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13. Do operations managers understand risk management and use the defined processes described in the SMS procedures?

(IS-BAO 3.2; ARGUS Platinum 1.6; NBAA Management Guide 1.1.4)

(Management) The risk management processes described in the company SMS must be used consistently by operations managers. The risks facing each operation should be evaluated via a process specifically designed for your flight department. The results of these activities must be properly documented, with evidence of the information used for risk trending and evaluation.

1	2	3	4	5

14. Do operations managers understand change management and use the defined process as described in the SMS procedures?

(IS-BAO 3.3.2; ARGUS Platinum 1.7.2; NBAA Management Guide 1.1.4)

(Management) Change management should be an integral part of operations planning. Prior to undertaking entirely new operations, undergo key employee changes or other significant changes, does the operations manager(s) employ the company's defined change management process to ensure adequate preparation and risk management? An example could be charter to new destination country, a new aircraft type, or new aircraft brought under management on an operating certificate. There should be tangible, documented evidence of a change management process performed because of significant operational change.

1	2	3	4	5

15. Interview several flight crews and determine how comfortable they are regarding approaching managers to address perceived safety concerns.

(IS-BAO 3.1.1.1; ARGUS Platinum 1.1.1, 1.2.1, 1.6.6; NBAA Management Guide 1.1.4)

(Flight Crew) Flight crew members must feel secure enough to discuss and make safety of flight related decisions. They should not feel pressure from management to undertake or complete a flight if it is perceived that excessive risk is present. These responses will likely correlate with the current state of the safety culture. Additionally, each employee should feel comfortable reporting a safety concern related to these circumstances.

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