



## **SMS: How to Get Started for the Small Operator**

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With all the information about Safety Management System (SMS) available today, getting started for a small operation can be overwhelming. It doesn't have to be, and in fact, you are probably well along at establishing a formal SMS. In most operations the following key elements already exist:

- Operations Manual
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)
- Operational Control of Aircraft Policies
- Training Objectives
- Aircraft Maintenance Procedures
- Risk Management

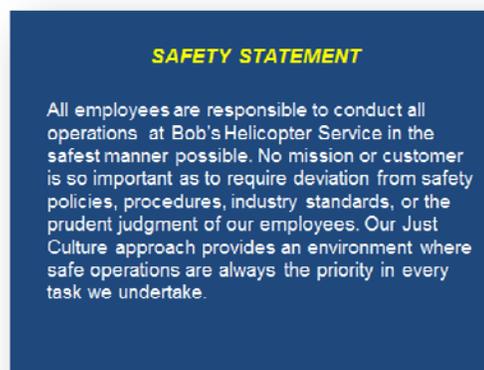
Additionally, you are aware of personal safety in the workplace, environmental concerns, the dangers of carrying hazardous materials, and security concerns both domestic and abroad. Through your training and your professional experience you are well prepared to recognize situations that would elevate risk on the job, e.g. fatigue, lousy weather, pressure from others. All of this is included in an SMS and you have it covered.

An SMS allows you to build a formal process around what you are already doing. Start with just two vitally important components of an SMS and then build from there. Each of these components can be accomplished very simply.

### **Step 1: Management Commitment**

Draft a letter stating what your organization is committed to doing to ensure the safety of the operation. This can be a one-page document, and should be signed by an accountable executive, such as the owner or CEO.

The statement should include the following four elements and may begin like this:



Key Elements of a Safety Statement:

1. What are you committed to?
2. How will you fulfill the commitment?
3. Who's responsible?
4. Non-punitive reporting culture

What are you committed to?

This could include statements such as "provide a safe and healthy workplace by preventing injuries and property damage" or "meet or exceed all flight, maintenance, occupational safety and health standards and regulations."

How will you fulfill the commitment?

Include statements such as:

- "Management to commit the necessary resources"
- "Create and maintain an environment of trust and unrestricted communication"
- "Implement a SMS"
- "Review company risk levels on a regular basis"

