

# SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS ASSESSMENT (SMSA)



## QualaTech Aero Consulting Ltd.

**An international aviation consultancy group, providing services in:**

**Safety Management Systems (SMS), Management, Training, Change Management, Fatigue Management, Hazard Ident. & Risk Assessment, Safety Case, Harbour and Water Airport/Aerodrome Procedures, Emergency Response Procedures, Airports, Flight Operations, Compliance & Safety, Audits, Aircraft Maintenance Organisations (AMO), Human Factors, Manufacturing, Quality Assurance (implementation, design and audit), Training (QA, SMS, HF, ERP/AEP, Haz. & Risk Assessment).**

The services offered by QualaTech-Aero Consulting Ltd. are focused on the aviation industry. However, the principles of Human Factors, Safety, and Quality, apply equally to any industry by reducing human error leading to personal injury and loss.

*Safety Management is Business Management!*

**QualaTech Aero Consulting Ltd.**  
**Email: [k.green@qualatech.ca](mailto:k.green@qualatech.ca)**  
**[www.qualatech.ca](http://www.qualatech.ca)**

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Safety Management System (SMS) philosophy is proven and well tried; SMS is not a fad and it is not going to go away. Furthermore, SMS is 'not a cost' when designed and implemented correctly within the Organisation under which it must serve. A SMS is an effective and proven business mechanism that enhances and augments a Company's 'bottom line' - a Key Performance Indicator (KPI). However, when commitment is less than total - lacking belief and purpose, the effectiveness of a SMS is naturally compromised. Determining the effectiveness of a SMS is difficult to achieve '**objectively**' from within the Organisation. A 3rd. Party proactive approach to a SMS Assessment (SMSA) will significantly help reduce error and loss, which may include: incidents, liability, injury, accidents, death and loss of profit. As the old adage goes: *'If you think Safety is expensive, try having an accident'!*

### **SMS Assessment Tool:**

A SMS can only be Audited for Compliance and compliance is not a guarantee of Safety. Furthermore, an SMS Assessment (SMSA) is not an Audit but a process that determines the effectiveness of the SMS and if it is working as intended. If there has been no recognisable improvement to the 'bottom line' then the chances are the SMS is not effective! In essence, the SMSA is an evaluation and analysis tool that provides a comprehensive 'Benchmark' of the SMS. By this means, improvement or retardation of the SMS can be tracked, documented, compared and if required, corrected.

The SMSA process is a 'proactive assurance and measurement methodology', based on a series of defined indicators which are designed to determine the effectiveness and health of a SMS. Therefore, SMSA is not a Gap Analysis or an Audit; the process comprises of a series of formal interviews, interactive discussions and verification processes with a selection of employees and key personnel. The Assessment process recognises the difference in oversight methodologies from traditional '**compliance-based**' requirements to '**performance-based**' systems. This comparative process verifies and validates applicable compliance requirements, while ascertaining the effectiveness of the SMS Programme. In other words, the SMSA identifies and compares the 'expectations' of an Organisation's SMS (including industry best practices) in terms of Regulation and/or applicable Standards, under prescriptive regulation, while assessing the program performance to effectively manage Safety Risk.

The SMSA process was developed to harmonise with State SMS requirements in consideration with global SMS framework and ICAO Annex 19 & Doc 9859 Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs). Via this methodology, a nationally recognised system can be maintained, allowing an Organisation to document improved degrees of effectiveness.

The SMSA process comprises of three primary stages:

**Stage One.** Encompasses a 'desk-top' review of applicable SMS documentation. The process focuses on assessing whether the 'indicators for 'compliance' and 'performance' are present and suitable.

**Stage Two.** An on-site assessment is conducted to determine whether all principal 'indicators' are present and operating and if the overall effectiveness of the SMS is being achieved system wide. On-site activities are accomplished by two highly experienced and competent Assessors; their interaction and acceptance (at all levels of operation) is essential in determining the overall effectiveness of each SMS component.

**Stage Three.** Correlates the accomplished SMSA results, formally detailing the data and providing a formative conclusion in qualitative and quantitative terms as appropriate. The completion of the formal SMS Assessment Report with Analysis is the final deliverable product.

The SMSA is compatible with all organisational structures and complexity. It is performed without compromise or bias and is totally complementary to both complex and non-complex enterprises. The evaluation tool identifies whether key and fundamental SMS Elements are present, suitable and functional, while determining how well the SMS programme is operating (internal or external) to a prescribed criteria. Furthermore, the process measures recognised 'Best Practice' as a means but not the only means, of moving 'Beyond Minimum Compliance' (BMC) as an Organisation strives for 'continuous improvement' and 'safety excellence'.

Under a 3rd. Party SMSA, an Organisation will be able to objectively evaluate, compare and verify its SMS - inclusive of KPIs as a means of establishing the overall effectiveness each Element within the SMS programme. The process also takes into consideration 'internal' and 'external' applications: i.e. management of 'Safety Performance' as well as the assurance and management of 'Safety Promotion'. Both high priority and essential features that Clients demand of a proactive and safe operation/organisation.

QualaTech has implemented many aviation style SMS effectively, on time and to budget. We thoroughly understand the aviation business and appreciate that your business "is unique". It is this uniqueness or 'personality' that determines your SMS requirements and methods of operation. Equally important, QualaTech recognises what your Client and Customer needs are, along with their concerns and challenges - ultimately affecting your SMS and Customer Service.

Irrespective of mandatory compliance governing SMS, without a robust and functional SMS in coordination with a Quality Management System (QMS), an Organisation's ability to acquire additional business, reduce loss and error and diminish unnecessary liability is substantially curtailed. An impartial proactive 3rd. Party SMS Assessment is the recognised proven method to appraise and test a SMS. The exercise improves the overall Safety Management capability while assuring Clients and Customers (internal & external) that the SMS is both functional and effective.