

Strategic Consulting

Safety Management - Safety Leadership



SMS Effectiveness Review

- RAF Brize Norton - 5,600 personnel



RAF Flight Safety engaged Baines Simmons to conduct a Safety Management Diagnostic (SMD) at RAF Brize Norton in 2011 to evaluate the operating Safety Management System (SMS) and to identify development areas for the roll-out of their forthcoming Aviation Error Management System (AEMS).

Client Profile

RAF Brize Norton is the largest Station in the RAF, having absorbed units from RAF Lyneham. Employing some 5,000 service personnel and over 600 civilians, RAF Brize Norton represents the largest military airfield in Europe and hosts the RAF Hercules Fleet amongst its Tri-Star, VC10, C17 and Airbus A330 community.

The Challenge

The challenge was two-fold:

1. To test the effectiveness of the Safety Management Systems and processes adopted at RAF Brize Norton and evaluate their adoption as a model for wider RAF roll-out.
2. To offer an independent safety perspective around the issues occurring during extreme change as a result of the amalgamation of RAF Brize Norton and RAF Lyneham, with the overall strategic aim of providing recommendations for improvement to address and reduce organisational risk.

The Solution

The Safety Management Diagnostic reviewed 214 assessment points across six key categories:

- ▶ Organisational Engagement
- ▶ Administration
- ▶ Hazard and Risk Management
- ▶ SMS Promotion
- ▶ Analysis and Oversight
- ▶ Miscellaneous

The SMD used focus groups and individual interviews with key personnel across RAF Brize Norton along with desk top reviews of relevant manuals.

The programme also conducted a comprehensive Safety Culture Survey within Squadron Engineering and Logistics personnel to determine attitudes and behaviours with respect to aviation safety.

"In July 2011, Baines Simmons completed a Safety Diagnostic Survey at Royal Air Force Brize Norton. Through the use of questionnaires, computer surveys and individual interviews, Baines Simmons compiled a very detailed and accurate snap-shot of the cultures, attitudes and processes that were in place at the time.

"While our gap analysis had identified many of the same issues, the report enabled us to direct our resources more effectively and target those areas that most needed our attention. This process led to an overall increase in effectiveness of our Safety Management System as evidenced by a very positive recent audit by the MAA."

*- Group Captain D A Stamp, MA
RAF*

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The Outcome

Baines Simmons made 21 recommendations as relative risk levels were assessed and benchmarked by location.

The report findings were summarised under five key themes:

1. Hazard reporting and investigation
2. Policy disconnects
3. Knowledge and awareness issues
4. Risk-taking behaviour
5. Capability inhibitors

The SMD in summary enabled the client to:

- ▶ Focus efforts and prioritise financial resource in key risk areas
- ▶ Identify manpower gaps, particularly within the risk management team
- ▶ Integrate systems which were working but not realising their full benefits
- ▶ Build a more coherent structure in support of Safety Management
- ▶ Build an accurate risk picture organisationally rather than focusing effort within silos

Safety is cited as a key contributor to the ongoing success of RAF Brize Norton with recognition that in order to manage risk, the organisation must move from a reactive culture to a proactive and predictive model.

Summary of Baines Simmons services utilised

SMARRT®

Safety Management Diagnostic (SMD)

Safety Culture Survey

Consulting support

Executive Board level Safety Management Systems Advisory Service