



SECURITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (SeMS) FACT SHEET

IATA is a strong proponent of Security Management Systems (SeMS). SeMS is a structured and standardized approach to implementing Security processes that provides more uniform standards throughout the aviation industry. It is performance-based and sets out security results that are measurable and auditable. SeMS is not a document, but rather a way of conducting daily business.

Essentially, a Security Management System is an element of corporate management responsibility that sets out a company's Security policy and its intent to integrate Security into its overall business and make Security one of the company's core values by developing a Security culture.

SeMS is a business-like approach to Security. As with any business plan, goals are set, levels of authority are established, evaluation criteria developed, etc. This makes SeMS very similar to Safety Management Systems (SMS), a proven approach that is reflected in ICAO Annex 6.

SeMS builds on ICAO Annex 17 Standards and the IATA Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) Security Standards. SeMS processes must also comply with all regulatory requirements as established by States. In fact, meeting the National Security Program requirements of the carrier's State of registry is the baseline for SeMS implementation because without this, a carrier will lose its certificate to operate.

Risk management is also at the heart of SeMS as a core process that requires continuous and systematic assessments of security threats, risks and vulnerabilities.

Because of the complex nature of airline operations, each airline must implement the system that works best in their specific situation – there is no “one-size-fits-all” system. Also, when establishing a SeMS, companies should build on existing procedures and practices rather than start all over.

In summary, a company implementing a Security Management System will have a single cohesive management system that integrates all its security-related business activities. SeMS provides a framework through which organizations are not only aware of their responsibilities, but are also able to properly discharge them.

Did you know?

- All 230 IATA member airlines have the “core elements” of SeMS in place. This is a requirement of the IATA Operational Safety Audit (IOSA) certification, which is a condition of IATA membership.
- IATA conducts frequent training on SeMS at its headquarters in Montreal and Geneva, and also in other regions. Training sessions are tailored not only to airlines, but also to government employees and other aviation stakeholders.