



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
Air Traffic Organization Policy

ORDER
JO 7200.21A

Effective Date:
June 1, 2020

SUBJ: Partnership for Safety Program

Safety Programs in the Air Traffic Organization (ATO) remain key components of the ATO Safety Management System.

The mission of the Partnership for Safety (PFS) Program is to facilitate the identification and mitigation of hazards at the local level. This is accomplished through support of collaborative Local Safety Councils (LSCs) comprising local bargaining unit representatives and management at all Federal Aviation Administration Air Traffic Control facilities in the National Airspace System (NAS). These councils encourage facilities to mitigate hazards and participate in a lessons-learned method to share ATO safety information.

To ensure this program's success, each of us must familiarize ourselves with the contents of this order and understand our role in the program. The PFS program requires collaboration between the bargaining unit and management.

We encourage all employees to become safety champions and increase our collective awareness and understanding of hazards in day-to-day operations. LSCs, as established in this order, provide employees an option to address operational safety problems to reduce risk. To ensure the success of this effort, we must become more vigilant and recognize that all employees play a vital role in reducing risk in the NAS.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glen A. Martin".

Glen A. Martin
Vice President, Safety and Technical Training
Air Traffic Organization

- 1. Purpose of this Order.** This revised order defines the policy and procedures for the Air Traffic Organization (ATO) Partnership for Safety (PFS) Program. It identifies the responsibilities of individuals and organizations, including the requirements, expectations, and policy under which the program operates.
- 2. Audience.** This order applies to all ATO air traffic control operational personnel (except Federal Contract Tower personnel) directly engaged in and/or supporting air traffic services.
- 3. Where Can I Find This Order?** This order is available on the MyFAA employee website at https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices/ and on the public website at http://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/.
- 4. Cancellation.** This revision cancels Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Order JO 7200.21 and all associated changes.
- 5. Explanation of Policy Changes.** This revision incorporates Changes 1 and 2 and replaces the basic order, updates the definition of Safety Awareness for Excellence (SAFE) discussion, provides clarifications to comply with the pertinent collective bargaining agreement, and makes general editorial corrections throughout the order.
- 6. Distribution.** This revision is distributed to the following ATO service units: Air Traffic Services (AJT), System Operations (AJR), Safety and Technical Training (AJI), and Mission Support Services (AJV), as well as the William J. Hughes Technical Center, the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center, the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA), and the interested aviation public.
- 7. Background.** The PFS initiative was launched by the ATO and NATCA on July 1, 2010, to address Air Traffic Control (ATC) operational safety problems in the National Airspace System (NAS). Front-line personnel were tasked with identifying local safety hazards. Identifying and mitigating risk is crucial to improving safety in the NAS. PFS does not replace mandatory reporting requirements or voluntary confidential safety reporting. PFS provides a framework for facilities to establish Local Safety Councils (LSCs) and encourage ATC operational employees to become proactively engaged in identifying hazards and developing safety solutions locally before an incident or accident occurs.
- 8. Definitions.**
 - a. ATCInfohub** — A web-based database used for the storing and sharing of safety information best practices and lessons learned. LSCs use this database to retrieve and upload information about the identification of and actions taken regarding local safety problems. Permission-based access is governed by the National PFS Program Office.
 - b. Local Safety Council (LSC)** — An LSC is a collaborative team that comprises at least one union representative and one management representative. By mutual agreement, the parties at the local level may designate additional representatives to participate on the LSC. All new LSC members will attend the training provided by the National PFS Program Office prior to gaining access to the PFS Tools. After coordinating with the National PFS Program Office, higher level LSCs (e.g., District, which are still considered local) may form within the FAA by

mutual agreement of the union and the agency.

c. Local Scoping Document — A collaboratively created and signed document that establishes an LSC and defines the mission, meeting frequency, number and type of members, type of work and responsibilities, facility commitment, and possible outcomes of work performed. A sample document is included as Appendix A.

d. PFS Safety Awareness for Excellence (SAFE) Discussion — A monthly, face-to-face discussion conducted by members of the LSC or other mutually agreed upon facility personnel. It comprises content obtained from the National PFS Program Office and augmented with local discussion items that the LSC may want to include. The discussions should range between 15 to 30 minutes in length and must be attended by all operational personnel. The intent of these discussions is to generate communication and raise awareness around identified safety issues. The safety issues addressed in the discussions will comprise Air Traffic Safety Action Program (ATSAP) SAFE Discussion Sheets and other nationally identified safety trends. PFS National Office assigns SAFE Discussions into Comprehensive Electronic Data Analysis Reporting (CEDAR). The facility must mark the assignment complete in CEDAR.

e. PFS Tools — These tools consist of the ATCInfohub and the Safety Data Portal to assist the LSCs with the mission of PFS. The PFS website, www.facilitysafety.org, is a non-restricted website containing information about the PFS program and the tools needed to become an LSC member.

f. Safety Data Portal — A web-based database that contains safety trend and facility-specific information. The data is gathered through various sources, including Mandatory Occurrence Reports (MORs), Electronic Occurrence Reports, the National Off-load Program, weather providers, and aggregated ATSAP data. Permission-based access is governed by the National PFS Program Office.

g. Safety Problem — An issue dealing with policies, procedures, equipment, automation, or publications used to provide air traffic control services at a local, regional, or national level. Safety problems are not normally related to individuals and may be determined to be systemic in nature.

9. Roles and Responsibilities.

a. AJI must:

(1) Support the ATO PFS program through the development and maintenance of policies, tools, processes, and documents.

(2) Support the PFS Website, Safety Data Portal, ATCInfohub, and Program Office.

(3) Promote the use of Voluntary Safety Reporting Programs (VSRPs) provided by AJI to identify and report NAS safety issues. Promote the use of the ATCInfohub and the Safety Data Portal.

b. The PFS Team Lead (AJI-11) must work collaboratively to:

- (1) Provide policy, guidance and support for the PFS program.
- (2) Plan and coordinate the PFS program.
- (3) Promote communications and data sharing to help identify safety risks.
- (4) Serve as the focal point for information and inquiries concerning the status of PFS initiatives.
- (5) Provide training to new LSC members.
- (6) Create and distribute content for PFS SAFE Discussions.
- (7) Conduct two Monthly Teleconferences to discuss the PFS SAFE Discussion talking points and other mutually agreed upon agenda items.

c. Air Traffic Managers (ATMs) must:

- (1) Establish an LSC in partnership with local union representatives to collaboratively develop local scoping document(s).
- (2) Work in collaboration with union representatives to identify and mitigate local safety problems.
- (3) Provide a place for the LSC to meet and access internet-enabled computers as needed. Ensure that the LSC meets as scheduled.
- (4) Meet with the Principal Facility Representative (or designee) to review and authorize facility LSC scoping documents and discuss issues presented by the LSC.
- (5) Mitigate identified issues using the collaborative workgroup process and, as appropriate, ensure compliance with the Safety Risk Management process, as outlined in the ATO Safety Management System Manual, for all changes to the NAS.
- (6) Provide the LSC, or other mutually agreed upon facility personnel, the appropriate time and resources to conduct Monthly PFS SAFE Discussions utilizing the content provided by the national office along with any local discussion items incorporated by the LSC.
- (7) Ensure someone represents the facility LSC on the PFS Monthly Teleconference.
- (8) Mark the SAFE Discussion assignment complete in CEDAR.

d. Local Safety Councils must:

- (1) Use the safety data portal to collaboratively identify and mitigate local safety hazards.
- (2) Review safety problems and perform a post-occurrence analysis to determine systemic causal factors and risk at the direction of the ATM and the Principal Facility Representative (or designee).

(3) Meet once per month or as mutually determined by the parties at the local level.

(4) If requested, assist the facility Quality Control (QC) office with performance and documentation of System Service Reviews, Traffic Management Reviews, Covered Event Reviews, Systemic Issue Reviews, Internal Compliance Verifications, and the analysis of QC Operational Skills Assessment data to monitor facility compliance with ATO directives, establishment of facility emphasis items, and QC Checks.

REFERENCE: FAA Order JO 7210.634, Air Traffic Organization Quality Control

(5) Collaborate with other LSCs as appropriate when a proposed change or mitigation will affect another facility.

(6) Document all identified safety issues, mitigations, lessons learned, and best practices. Provide as much detail as possible and attach all supporting documentation. Include the processes and products that have been generated to help mitigate or reduce risk and increase collaboration, participation, and reporting (e.g., training materials, briefing materials, reports).

NOTE: The LSCs will upload this data and documentation to the ATCInfohub.

(7) Promote the use of VSRP (provided by AJI) to identify and report NAS safety issues.

(8) In addition to National PFS SAFE Discussion content, add any local discussion items. Facilitate the monthly PFS SAFE Discussion unless other designated facility personnel are facilitating the discussion, and then ensure that the facilitators have the content for that discussion.

(9) Develop an LSC scoping document for review and authorization by the ATM and Principal Facility Representative (or designee) as addressed in paragraph 10.

e. ATO Employees will:

(1) Report safety occurrences and problems through established mandatory and voluntary reporting mechanisms (e.g., MORs or ATSAP). This information will be incorporated in the tools available to LSCs.

10. Scoping Document. Local scoping documents are required to assist facilities in documenting the structure and processes that the LSC will use to operate. A sample is included in Appendix A.

Appendix A. Sample Scoping Document for Local Safety Council

[Facility Name] Safety Council Scope

Mission: The [facility name] Local Safety Council (LSC) will serve as a collaborative workgroup that will identify safety concerns, hazards, and risk to the National Airspace System, as well as assist the Quality Control (QC) Office with compliance verifications and identification of compliance issues. The LSC will not act as a substitute for voluntary or mandatory reporting systems or requirements.

Local Safety Council Members:

[Facility name] Management Lead Name

[Facility name] NATCA Lead Name

(This is the minimum number required; other members as necessary or feasible.)

Subject Matter Experts (SMEs): *(As required)*

[One or two] Operations Supervisors per area of specialization and Traffic Management Unit (TMU)

[One or two] employees per area of specialization and TMU

[One or two] support specialists from staff offices

Scope: The LSC will utilize the safety data portal to identify and mitigate local safety hazards.

Development of ad hoc teams for identified safety issues is within the purview of the LSC after consultation with the Air Traffic Manager/Principal Facility Representative (or designees). If an additional scoping document is necessary, the LSC shall be responsible for its creation for review and approval by the Air Traffic Manager/Principal Facility Representative (or designee).

When changes to the current procedures are required, the LSC, after approval from the Air Traffic Manager/Principal Facility Representative (or designee), must forward the changes to the appropriate office for implementation. The LSC must develop a detailed implementation plan that includes Standard Operating Procedure and Letter of Agreement changes, briefings, and other items as necessary. The LSC must define a completion date for implementation and coordinate as required.

The LSCs must document all identified safety issues, mitigations, lessons learned, and best practices. The LSCs must provide as much detail as possible and attach all supporting documentation to include processes and products generated to help mitigate or reduce risk and increase collaboration, participation, and reporting (e.g., training materials, briefing materials, reports). The LSCs will ensure that this data and documentation is uploaded to the ATCInfohub.

The LSC must:

- Meet once per month or as jointly determined.
- Perform all work on duty time.
- Utilize consensus for all decisions. Consensus is defined as the voluntary agreement of all representatives of the workgroup for a particular outcome.
- Analyze safety data portal data, QC data (Operational Skills Assessments, System Service Reviews, Systemic Issue Reviews, etc.), and reported safety occurrence data (Mandatory Occurrence Reports, Electronic Occurrence Reports, Replays, etc.) to identify potential safety hazards.
- Conduct briefings to inform the workforce of any mission-critical items. Issue briefing items through the training department if necessary.
- Utilize Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) from the operation and staff offices to provide technical expertise or assist the group when needed. The use of SMEs in this regard shall be coordinated with the Air Traffic Manager and Principal Facility Representative (or designee).

Any bargaining unit employee or management member may report any safety-related problem or occurrence via voluntary or mandatory reporting processes. The LSC will not supersede existing requirements and obligations of the QC Office.

The LSC may coordinate activities that include inviting pilots, aviation group representatives, private industry representatives, or other FAA employees to participate in discussions or give briefings on their respective field. The workgroup may assist in the coordinating of local familiarization trips in accordance with the collective bargaining agreement and any pertinent orders or regulations.

Outcome: *(Recommended Outcome Options)*

Option 1 Non-binding: The LSC will ensure that all recommendations are written and signed by all members of the LSC. The LSC will be present for the joint sponsors consideration of the issues described. The joint sponsors will address all LSC recommendations within [agreed to number] days of receipt to ensure a timely response to facility safety issues.

Option 2 Binding: The LSC will ensure that all agreements and resolutions are written and signed by all members. This document will be presented to the joint sponsors for implementation and resolution of the issue described.

Facility Commitment: The undersigned authorize this LSC to operate within the scope to resolve safety concerns, hazards, and risks as described above. This agreement must remain in effect for the life of the collective bargaining agreement.

Air Traffic Manager

Principal Facility Representative

Date Signed