

CHAPTER 6 – FS FEEDBACK TO THE CHAIN OF COMMAND

GENERAL

1. It is the responsibility of FS personnel at all levels to advise their comd when they have concerns with respect to FS issues. This advice can take many forms (formal / informal briefings, briefing notes, safety committee meetings, informal discussions), but it is essential that all FS professionals, as advisors, make their concerns known to the chain of command.

INTENT OF FEEDBACK

2. The intent of feedback is to provide an assessment to the applicable comd, in as objective a manner as possible, of the degree of safety of flight-related activities with the aim of making this information useful and relevant to the comd. Ideally, feedback should highlight the areas upon which comds must focus in order to improve the safety of flying operations. Flight safety indicators that highlight to the chain of command the degree of safety of flying activities or the level of risk at which operations are being conducted is what the FSO is trying to measure.

ASSESSMENT OF FS INDICATORS

3. The assessment of the FS indicators in a unit should be done by looking at the following components:
- a. documentation of unit FS Program;
 - b. FS implementation or culture within the unit; and
 - c. resources dedicated to the unit FS Program and the status of the various FS tasks at the unit.

FS DEDICATED RESOURCES AND TASKS

4. In order to run an effective flight safety program, established FS positions must be filled by appropriate personnel. In establishing the number of FS positions, some key elements that must be considered are:
- a. the existence of a succession plan to ensure continuity in unit FS positions;
 - b. whether the incumbents have the proper qualifications, the appropriate background, the opportunity to build and effectively use FS experience, and any additional secondary duties are assigned in accordance with this order;
 - c. infrastructure and equipment (offices, equipment storage and, when appropriate classrooms, IT/IM hardware and software, crash kits);

- d. basic transportation (when required) and communication equipment (including IT resources);
 - e. business plan incorporating FS priorities and objectives with a suitable budget to deliver or the commitment of the Comd to support these initiatives; and
 - f. budget allocation matching the business plan intent.
5. The number of established FS positions should be revised annually to adjust to the mission and tempo of the organization based on the degree to which FS tasks are being completed, with an assessment of:
- a. the status of occurrence investigations and reports;
 - b. regularity of Safety Council meetings and the publishing of meeting minutes;
 - c. degree of completion of safety measures recommended from FS investigations, surveys and follow-up actions from FS meetings;
 - d. frequency and conduct of informal flight safety surveys and tours of facilities
 - e. frequency of review of unit and fleet FS occurrences
 - f. currency and relevance of promotional material posted on FS bulletin boards and made available to personnel via different media; and
 - g. frequency of submission of nominations of suitable candidates for FS awards and suitable public and private recognition of deserving individuals.

STRESS POINTS

6. Another indicator of the relative safety of a flying operation is the presence or absence of stress points. The presence of stress points that, in the opinion of the FSO, have significant impact on the safety of the unit's flying operation, must be quantified as accurately as possible and reported when observed. Care must be taken to ensure that the stress points reported actually do affect FS.

FEEDBACK METHODOLOGY

7. In order to act on FS issues, the chain of command must be made aware of the concerns of their FS professionals. It is the duty of the FSO to question, to warn and to suggest alternatives. As champions of FS, the FSO cannot shrink away from making subjective assessments, but we must recognize the need to more clearly quantify our assessments wherever possible.

8. Reporting to a comd may be done verbally or in writing. The latter is preferred in that it is more formal and provides the comd with documented examples that can be acted upon. This also allows the comd to acknowledge the report and indicate his/her intentions, if any, to address problematic issues.

9. Performance measurement of the flight safety program could be reported through som

form of balanced scorecard system or a matrix using a “traffic light” system (RED, YELLOW, GREEN) to indicate performance on the criteria assessed. As a minimum, a brief factual justification for factors rated unsatisfactory or RED must be included in order to fully explain the situation leading to the RED assessment. Such a matrix shows at a glance where the FS staff believes there are concerns and where attention should be focused. The matrix should include objective criteria where possible, but given the nature of some of the issues within the matrix (culture, stress points), a subjective assessment is also required. Wherever possible, subjective assessments should be backed up with facts (statistics, trend analysis, statements from personnel) in order to lend more credence to the assessment. However, it is acknowledged that sometimes the best professional judgement of the FS staff and their “gut feel” will be all that is available. A suggested example of the report matrix format is shown in Annex A. The DFS Intranet website contains a quantitative description of the factors listed above under the tab Resources\Administration. It can be used as a guide for the production of the report.

FEEDBACK CONSIDERATION

10. A careful balance must be achieved between the requirement to inform the chain of command and unnecessarily overstating the level of concern. By continually stating that there will be dire consequences if a particular measure is not taken, there is a risk that leadership will become inured to these warnings. Similarly, operations must be periodically reviewed to ensure that more risk has not gradually been assumed over time due to the absence of occurrences. Judicious use of warnings and regular assessment of risk levels are in order to prevent the gradual increase of risk.

11. The FSO will, at times, be in the position of advising non-Air Force COs. In these instances, it must be remembered that the comd may not be aware of the requirements of this manual or of his / her responsibilities under the Aeronautics Act. A tactful explanation of these requirements will be necessary in such situations. By raising the comd’s awareness of the basic principles of FS, these situations should be overcome. However, as these are valid, legal, regulatory requirements, the FSO must ensure that the comd is made aware of his / her responsibilities and, if required, must enlist the assistance of other FS personnel to ensure that these requirements are not violated.

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Annex A
 Chapter 6
 A-GA-135-001/AA-001

ANNEX A – EXAMPLE FS FEEDBACK MATRIX

FACTOR ¹	DESCRIPTION ³	REMARKS
MANNING	ALL POSITIONS FULLY MANNED AND TRAINED	
PROGRAM	AIR WEAPONS SAFETY PROGRAM NOT FULLY DOCUMENTED IN FS PROGRAM	
FS RESOURCES	FS STAFF AND OFFICES FULLY RESOURCED INCLUDING FUNDING FOR PD COURSES / SEMINARS	
CULTURE	CLEAR EVIDENCE OF A FAIR AND FLEXIBLE REPORTING AND LEARNING CULTURE IN THE UNIT	
TASKS	PREVENTIVE MEASURES NOT BEING TRACKED UNTIL COMPLETION	
STRESS POINTS ²	SOME STRESS POINTS ARE PRESENT.	
OVERALL ASSESSMENT	SUBJECTIVE COMBINED ASSESSMENT ON HOW SAFE THE UNIT IS OPERATING	

¹ Assessments factors may be added as required by the FSO, but they must include an explanation as to their intent.

² Any individual or overall factors assessed as RED must be accompanied by a suitable explanation and supporting documentation.

³ The DFS Intranet website contains a quantitative description of the factors listed above under the tab Resources\Administration. These can be used as a guide for the production of the FS feedback report.

⁴ Colour code

 Satisfactory

 Cautious, should be resolved to return to a satisfactory state

 Unsatisfactory, should be risk mitigated and resolved as soon as possible