10 things you should know about Fatigue Risk Management Systems (FRMS)

1. What is a Fatigue Risk Management System (FRMS)?
   - A data-driven means of continuously monitoring and managing fatigue-related safety risks, based upon scientific principles and knowledge as well as operational experience that aims to ensure relevant personnel are performing at adequate levels of alertness.

2. What is the aim of a FRMS?
   - An FRMS aims to ensure that crew are sufficiently alert so they can operate to a satisfactory level of performance by reducing fatigue to As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP).

3. What are the key processes of a FRMS?
   - FRMS policy and documentation
   - FRMS processes
     - Identification of hazards
     - Risk assessment
     - Risk mitigation
   - FRMS safety assurance processes
     - FRMS performance monitoring
     - Management of operational and organisational change
     - Continuous FRMS improvement
   - FRMS promotion processes
     - Training programs
     - FRMS communication plan

4. What are the roles and responsibilities within the FRMS?
   - The accountable executive is responsible for establishing the FRMS and declaring management commitment to the allocation of adequate resources for the FRMS;
   - Management is responsible for the overall management of the fatigue risk; and
   - Flight crew are responsible for minimizing their own fatigue levels and reporting them whenever they determine fatigue levels are unacceptable.

5. How will FRMS benefit an organization?
   - Employs multi-layered defensive strategies to better manage fatigue-related risks;
   - Quantitative fatigue data provides for more informed decision-making in managing fatigue;
   - Reduces the overall fatigue risk using the ALARP principle;
   - Provides for more flexible rostering resulting in increased efficiencies and reduced costs;
   - Demonstrates corporate commitment and responsibility in managing fatigue thus strengthening corporate culture.
6. What key qualities are evident in an organization with an effective FRMS?

- A top-down commitment from management and a personal commitment from all employees to reduce the overall fatigue risk;
- A clear picture of what the FRMS is, what it is supposed to accomplish and how it is supposed to achieve its aims;
- An ‘effective safety reporting culture’ where personnel have been trained and are encouraged to report safety-related hazards openly in an environment that is transparent
  - To encourage the reporting of fatigue hazards by all personnel an operator must clearly distinguish between unintentional human errors which are accepted as a normal part of human behaviour and are recognized and managed within the FRMS, and deliberate violations of rules and established procedures.
- An organizational culture that continuously strives to improve.

7. What FRMS is not:

- A substitute for prescriptive flight and duty time limitations;
- Self-regulation and/or de-regulation;
- A means of micro managing the flight and duty times of individual rosters;
- A computer software program that analyses rosters to determine fatigue levels; and
- A “magic bullet” for completely eliminating fatigue in the workplace.

8. What does FRMS do for an organisation?

- Builds on existing processes with specific emphasis on fatigue-related hazards;
- Integrates with other safety management systems (SMS) by paralleling existing risk management processes; and
- Demonstrates a commitment to flight safety through a collaborative approach with all stakeholders.

9. What else does an FRMS need?

- An identification process for fatigue-related hazards that is predictive, proactive or reactive;
- A promotion process that includes a communication plan and education/training programs;
- A confidential fatigue reporting process is still essential to encourage fatigue reporting especially in an organization where open reporting may be difficult.

10. What are the advantages of FRMS over prescriptive regulations?

- FRMS is a tailored approach specifically designed to reduce the fatigue risk aspects of the operation.
- FRMS is flexible and adaptable compared to prescriptive regulations which are a ‘one size fits all’ that is not easily modifiable;
- FRMS uses scientific principles and knowledge to form solutions to fatigue-related hazards compared to most prescriptive regulations, which do not.

Additional Information
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Click here for the IFALPA Briefing Leaflet FRMS Checklist
Click here for the FRMS Forum website