



GUIDANCE FOR THE USE OF SMS EVALUATION CHECKLIST

Background and Purpose

The Checklist, CL SP-SMS 001 has been developed to be used for assessing a Service Provider's SMS by the Authority's inspectors. It can be used for initial assessment or ongoing surveillance and oversight. The Checklist is based on a series of indicators that should help the inspectors assess the effectiveness of an organisation's SMS. It requires an interaction with the organisation including face to face discussions and interviews with a cross section of people as part of the assessment. It recognises the difference in oversight methodologies from traditional compliance-based oversight to performance-based oversight that assesses not only compliance but also the effectiveness of the SMS.

It has been designed to indicate the expected standard of an organisation's SMS in terms of compliance with the Nig. CARs Part 20 requirements on Safety Management and its performance to effectively manage safety risk.

It has been developed to also harmonise an approach to SMS globally establishing an equivalent standard of SMS oversight based on ICAO Annex 19 requirements and therefore Nigeria will strive to ensure that its aviation service providers achieve the same standard of effectiveness as with other entities implementing SMS in other ICAO contracting States as implementation by other States could form the basis of mutual acceptance under bilateral agreements.

Initial assessment

The Authority will use the checklist as part of an initial assessment and define the expectations on the individual indicators before a certificate or approval is issued.

The initial assessment will constitute a desk top review of the documentation that focuses on assessing whether the 'indicators for compliance and performance' are present and suitable. Once the desk top review has been completed and found satisfactory, an on-site visit will be scheduled and accomplished to assess whether the indicators are operating and overall effectiveness is achieved.

The on-site visit will be conducted by a team constituted by the SSP Implementation Team, including a team leader with an appropriate level of competence in SMS and technical specialists to assist in the assessment. The assessment will be structured such that it allows interaction with a number of people at different levels of the organisation to determine how effective aspects are throughout the organisation. For example, to determine the extent that the safety policy has been promulgated and understood by staff throughout the organisation will require interaction with a cross-section of staff.

For small organisations, a full team may not necessarily be constituted, but it may be more practical to have a single assessor appropriately trained in SMS and with the technical competencies to assess the organisation.

Alternatively, the service provider will be required to partially complete the checklist as a self-assessment, including the 'how it is achieved' box, and submit to the Authority. The Authority would thereafter decide whether it was sufficiently progressed to warrant an on-site visit and then verify and validate the organisations self-assessment.

Ongoing surveillance

For ongoing surveillance, the Authority will define expectations for individual indicators. However it is recommended that all individual 'indicators of compliance and performance' should be at least operating and that effectiveness is achieved in all of the elements.

Competencies

The checklist should be used by the Authority's inspectors with training and competency in:

- Safety Management Systems based on the ICAO SMS Framework;
- Understanding of Quality Management Systems, compliance and auditing;
- Interview techniques;
- Understanding of risk management;
- Appreciation of the difference between compliance and performance; and
- Report writing techniques to allow narrative to be used to summarise the assessment.

It is recommended that as well as being trained to use the checklist in the classroom environment, inspectors will be provided additional on-the-job training (OJT) to familiarise themselves with the checklist and its practical use.

Using the Checklist (instructions)

This checklist evaluates the compliance and effectiveness of the SMS through a series of indicators. It is set out using the 12 elements of the Nig. CARs Part 20/ICAO SMS Framework with the Framework definition followed by an effectiveness statement for that element. For each element, a series of 'indicators for compliance and performance' is listed followed by a series of 'indicators of best practice'. Each indicator should be reviewed to determine whether the indicator is present, suitable and operating and effective, using the definitions and guidance set out below, so that the overall effectiveness of the element can be justified and supported.

The checklist would normally be used by the Authority to record and document the assessment. Alternatively it can be partially completed by the service provider to assess itself ("How it is achieved" column) and by the Authority to verify and validate the service provider's assessment ("Verification" column and "Summary comments" box).

Applicability

The evaluation checklist can be used to assess any of the service provider detailed in Nig. CARs Part 20. However, due consideration should be given to the size, nature and complexity of an organisation in carrying out the assessment and that for smaller organisations a reduced number of indicators may be used as defined by the regulator.

DEFINITIONS USED IN THE CHECKLIST

Present (P)

There is evidence that the 'indicator' is clearly visible and is documented within the organisation's SMS Documentation.

Suitable (S)

The indicator is suitable based on the size, nature, complexity of the organisation and the inherent risk in the activity, including consideration of the industry sector.

Operating (O)

There is evidence that the indicator is in use and an output is being produced.

Effective (E)

There is evidence that the indicator is effective and achieving the desired outcome.

Evidence

Evidence includes documentation, reports, records of interviews and discussions and is likely to vary for different levels of indicator assessment. For example, for an indicator to be present the evidence is likely to be documented only, whereas for assessing whether it is operating it may involve assessing records as well as face to face discussions with personnel within an organisation. 'How it is achieved' should include summary statements and any references to documentation and records.

Verification

The Verification column should be for the Authority to record any observations, conversations, records and documents sampled.

Summary comments

Once all indicators have been assessed by the Authority personnel, a conclusion can be made on whether the overall effectiveness of the Nig. CARs/ICAO element has been achieved; this should be noted in the summary comments box.

The SMS Journey

For most organisations SMS will take time to implement and several years to mature to a level where it is effective. There are different levels of SMS maturity as an organisation implements and develops its SMS and the same checklist can be used to assess the indicators against the service provider's SMS maturity. The evaluation checklist can be used in stages looking initially for whether the key elements of an SMS are present and suitable. At a later stage the SMS can be assessed for how well it is operating and effective but it also recognises best practice. Service Providers can always strive towards excellence as part of their continuous improvement programs and the checklist allows that best practice to be assessed.