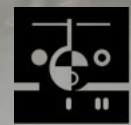




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DUNCAN
AVIATION

THE JOURNEY TO IS-BAH STAGE 3

Duncan Aviation is a successful, family-owned aviation company well known for its maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) services. It has dozens of repair facilities throughout the United States and four fixed-based operations (FBO) locations.

In 2022, all four Duncan Aviation FBOs received Stage 3 International Business Aircraft Ground Handling (IS-BAH) registration after completing independent audits conducted by accredited IS-BAH auditors. The journey was filled with challenges, discoveries, and countless rewards that encompass Duncan Aviation's commitment to safety for their team members, customers, and the protection of the entire company.

Launched in 2014, the IS-BAH is designed to enhance the safety and efficiency of business and general aviation Ground Handling Service Providers (GHSP) on a global level. As a voluntary programme, IS-BAH is the first industry standard to bring the Safety Management System (SMS) concept to ground handling and will enable handlers to meet ICAO SMS requirements.

Getting Started

Troy Hyberger, FBO Services Manager, shares how the IS-BAH process began. "We work in a high-risk business, and it is easy to get caught up in daily

activities and become numb or complacent about our everyday risks, like maneuvering a fuel truck or a tug on a full ramp. We already had good safety practices in place, but we were looking for more. IS-BAH was developed for FBOs and ground handlers, so our main question was, could we also make this work with our MRO side of the business? We do the same activities as every other FBO in the country but the majority of our day is spent supporting the MRO business through a large volume of aircraft movements that must be performed safely and efficiently."

Much of Duncan Aviation's business was international

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Troy Hyberger, FBO Services Manager

at that time, and still is today. They knew ICAO and EASA recognized IS-BAH and this would make it easier for international operators to use Duncan Aviation for MRO services in the US, an additional benefit the team noted.

The Duncan Aviation SMS team was fortunate that the flight operations crew were already IS-BAO Stage 2 when they considered IS-BAH implementation and leaned on them for insight. They wanted to understand how IS-BAH would help their side of the operation and determine what benefits IS-BAH could bring to their family of FBOs. Additionally, Duncan Aviation's MRO was also developing an SMS in preparation for the anticipated FAA rule for Repair Stations. This allowed for several items to be developed at the enterprise level for the company, including our safety policy, voluntary reporting program, and management of change processes.

Mike Brown, Duncan Aviation's SMS Manager, said, "Integrating the individual systems for Flight Operations, FBO, and MRO into a single enterprise-wide SMS presented some challenges due to the differing nature of each system, but it presented unique opportunities as well. Because each of the



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systems is a stakeholder for the other two we are able to assess hazards and implement mitigation strategies from a broader perspective. Involving representatives from the FBO to help assess hazards that might arise from the construction of a new maintenance hangar, or involving the MRO in the decision to purchase a new aircraft for Flight Operations allows us to identify potential hazards early on in a project when it's much easier to make changes."

"Once we locked into the IS-BAH journey, we were able to consult with the Flight Operations team as we started the process. We didn't think we needed to bring in an IS-BAH accredited program support affiliate (PSA) to help us. Still, we knew that searching the internet to see how to start wouldn't be an option, and we really appreciated the advice we received from Flight Ops," Troy added.

Stage 1 – Gaining Trust and Buy-in

After a deep dive into the IS-BAH document and creating a gap analysis, one of the hurdles was documenting what the Duncan Aviation ground team was already doing. There was some pushback initially because this task seemed overwhelming. Troy explained, "I had conversations with the team to explain this was just documenting processes and procedures that they are already doing for the most part. I asked them to read through all the procedures and tell me if there are any they aren't already doing. They agreed that these procedures are what they do every day, and they began to understand why we had to start here to move forward."

Duncan Aviation started with 5 or 6 procedures, and now has more than 100 that they are not only following but can measure and see specific trends regarding them over time. "We are already identifying trends but later down the road, as we get years of data points, the trends will really tell a story and help

identify areas in our company where we are doing well and where there is room for improvement," said Sean Jensen, FBO Safety Officer/QA Trainer at Duncan Aviation.

Sean added, "Getting through Stage 1 seemed to take longer than our team expected, but it helped us align with the best safety practices in the industry. The goal was to build our system instead of somebody else telling us how to do it. We knew what we were doing was working, but we wanted more continuity and knew there was room for improvement, so it was vital that we broke it down for the team and got their buy-in early on."

Stage 2

The Duncan Aviation team became familiar with the processes and reporting tools that allowed them to build trust in the system, which led to a quicker road to Stage 2 IS-BAH.

Sean said they felt the momentum of getting everyone on board with the same goals was like a snowball that kept getting bigger and bigger, in a good way!

Reporting of near misses or incidents became more regular. With less hesitation, the Duncan Aviation team was motivated to report something so they could share it with each other. Then, the report data started to provide trends, allowing them to identify events that may happen 3 or 4 times a year and make mitigation plans.

Duncan Aviation implemented a digitized risk assessment tool that ramp Team Leaders complete in 15-20 seconds at every shift change. For example, if there's severe weather or they are short on labor, they can quickly be aware that the risk level in the department is higher today based on the color the tool displays (red, yellow, green). Troy explains, "When

they walk in for their shift, their operations dashboard screen might be yellow today. The person coming on sees the yellow indicator and asks why we are yellow today. It immediately gets their awareness level up. Something's different today, so maybe we need to slow down, take extra precautions, and communicate more."

Stage 3

As Troy and Sean put it, Stage 3 was the icing on the cake. "We felt it was our goal all along, and now that all four of our FBO locations have the same system and accreditation, the safety culture runs through us, making us very proud. We hear from people that stay at Stage 2, which is fine, but it seems to us once the business is through the second stage, then Stage 3 is so close, they should try and go for it."

Stage 3 is more about the safety culture and seeing where continuous improvement can benefit the business. Duncan Aviation learned more about the SMS by taking the IS-BAH journey and now has years of data that can help them continue to make a difference for their team and their customers. Sean shared how rewarding it was to see how their efforts touched many other departments within each location. Other team leaders now ask them for help with safety elements, like determining a specific risk mitigation tactic.

Going above and beyond, the Duncan Aviation team also likes to take the time to share their IS-BAH and SMS practices with others, including customers, and even with competing FBOs on the same airport to increase awareness and share their safety culture story. Troy also talks with other organizations about IS-BAH and provides insight into the journey.

Takeaways of Duncan Aviation's IS-BAH Journey

- **Company-wide Teamwork:** All four of Duncan Aviation's FBO locations achieved Stage 3 IS-BAH accreditation, the flight operations are IS-BAO Stage 3, the MRO is approved in the FAA voluntary SMS programme demonstrating leadership and a commitment to safety across the organization.
- **Improved Change Management:** The IS-BAH process fostered a culture of safety where employees embrace change and readily implement new procedures.
- **Data-driven Improvements:** Duncan Aviation uses reported incidents, near misses to identify trends and continuously improve safety, not just measure incidents.
- **Enhanced Customer Confidence:** IS-BAH accreditation assures Duncan Aviation's customers of the industry-leading ground handling safety practices that protect them and their aircraft.
- **Recognition:** Achieving IS-BAH brings additional benefits, such as international industry recognition from other safety auditing entities and civil aviation authorities that acknowledge and align with these industry best practices.

Overall, Duncan Aviation's IS-BAH case study showcases this programme's positive impact on business aviation safety and customer confidence. Their achievement inspires and helps their team meet and exceed company goals of enhanced safety for their team members and their customers, including their customers' property.



As a non-profit, international trade association, IBAC proudly represents the interests of business aviation – for the industry, by the industry – through its global advocacy, official observer status at the ICAO, and by raising the standard for safety with IS-BAO® and IS-BAH® Programmes.