

# Implementing an SMS in Small to Mid-sized Aviation Operations

Moderated by NTSB Member  
**Michael Graham**

Thursday, May 11, 2023  
1:00PM – 3:30PM ET



## Biographies

### MODERATOR



**Honorable Michael Graham**  
Vice Chairman  
National Transportation Safety Board

Michael Graham is the 45th Member of the National Transportation Safety Board. Before joining the NTSB, Member Graham worked for Textron Aviation where he served as the Director of Flight Operations Safety, Security, and Standardization.

He began his career as a Naval Aviator flying A-7's and F/A-18's. He earned his B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of New Mexico. He is also a certified Airline Transport Pilot with over 10,000 flight hours.

### PANELISTS



**Capt. Ben Berman**  
Director of Safety and Chief Pilot  
OpenAir

Capt. Ben Berman has been involved with OpenAir since its startup in 2005 and was its founding Director of Operations. He recently retired as a Captain at United Airlines, with 20 years operating the Boeing 737 and 777 in worldwide service. While flying the line, he also spent several years researching aviation human factors at NASA's Flight Cognition Laboratory. Earlier, Berman was an accident investigator at the National Transportation Safety Board, completing his career there as Chief of the Major Investigations Division.

He is co-author of *The Limits of Expertise: Rethinking Pilot Error and the Causes of Airline Accidents*. Currently, in addition to his work at Open Air, he is analyzing safety data at The LOSA Collaborative and staying flight-qualified as a jet charter pilot and check airman.



**William ("Bill") Bramble, Ph.D.**  
National Resource Specialist,  
Human Performance and Survival Factors  
Division, Office of Aviation Safety  
National Transportation Safety Board

Bill Bramble has participated in more than 50 major aircraft accident investigations in the United States and abroad with the NTSB, and has assisted with the development of numerous accident reports and safety recommendations.

He earned a Ph.D. in human factors at the University of Central Florida in 1999 and is a licensed private pilot. Bramble is the outgoing chair of the Human Factors Working Group for the International Society of Air Safety Investigators.



**Capt. Paul Hadfield**  
Director of Safety  
Aero-Tech Services, Inc.

Capt. Paul Hadfield, a PC12 captain, began his aviation career in his mid- to late-30s when he left his 12-year public school teaching position as an Industrial Arts teacher in Southeast Pennsylvania. His family moved to Spokane, Washington, where he enrolled in school and obtained his A&P license and commercial SEL certificates. After training, Hadfield spent 10 years serving as a missionary and part-time Part 135 pilot in Alaska, where he flew different airframes all over the state. He also used his A&P license extensively and added Inspection Authorization.

Upon his return to Pennsylvania, he worked as an airworthiness inspector for a Cirrus Service Center before obtaining his current position with Aero-Tech Services, Inc. His ratings are as follows: ATP, CFI, CFII, MEI, A&P, with IA.

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**NTSB MOST WANTED LIST ROUNDTABLE  
IMPLEMENTING AN SMS IN SMALL TO  
MIDSIZED AVIATION OPERATIONS  
BIOGRAPHIES** (continued)

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**Eric Hamp**  
**Director of Operations**  
**Blue Hawaiian Helicopters**

Eric Hamp's aviation career began after he joined the US infantry and graduated Army flight school in 2003. He flew the CH-47 Chinook, completing two combat tours—one in Iraq and one in Afghanistan. He joined Blue Hawaiian Helicopters in 2010 to fly tours in Hawaii. After becoming Blue Hawaiian's Director of Safety in 2015, he helped to guide the company to an accepted SMS under the FAA's voluntary program. Born in Southern California, he attended high school and college in Northeast Pennsylvania.



**Maria Kelly**  
**Vice President of Safety, DER**  
**Jet Access Aviation**

Maria Kelly is an accomplished aviation safety professional with a background in Part 91, 135, and 121 Cargo Flight Operations. In her role at Jet Access, she leads the company's Safety Management System (SMS) activities, including internal and external evaluation programs, FAA-accepted programs such as ASAP/MSAP (Aviation Safety Action Program/Maintenance Safety Action Program), Emergency Response Planning, EH&S (Environmental Health and Safety), and OSHA compliance.

She helped Jet Access achieve SMS Part 5 active conformance status from the FAA and has served as a presenter at the Aviation Safety Infoshare conferences, as a facilitator at the first Business Aviation Safety Roundtable event, and moderator on SMS at the BASS (Business Aviation Safety Summit).

She holds a bachelor's degree from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and has completed further education courses at Cranfield University in England, as well as training in accident investigation at the NTSB Training Center in Ashburn, Virginia.



**Rick Kenin, MPA, ATP**  
**Chief Operating Officer – Transport**  
**Boston MedFlight**

Rick Kenin assumed his current position in July 2014 following a distinguished career in the US Coast Guard. As COO, he is responsible for the management oversight of the largest and only independent Part 135 helicopter air ambulance and ground critical care ambulance provider in New England, transporting nearly 5,000 critically ill patients throughout the region each year. During his career as a Coast Guard officer, he served as a fixed and rotary-wing aviator accumulating over 5,000 combined flight hours and commanding two Coast Guard Air Stations, including Coast Guard Air Station Miami, Florida, dubbed "The Busiest Air-Sea Rescue Unit in the World."

He holds degrees from the US Coast Guard Academy, Harvard University, and the National Defense University. He serves on the Board of the Helicopter Association International, Aero Club of New England, and New England Helicopter Council. He is an avid general aviation pilot with nearly two dozen different aircraft models in his logbook.



**Sean Mulholland**  
**Director of Safety**  
**SevenBar Aviation (Subsidiary of Global  
Medial Response-GMR)**

Sean Mulholland, Director of Safety for SevenBar Aviation, also serves as the National Director of Flight Operations Quality Assurance (FOQA), supporting several operating certificates within the GMR family of operators. His previous roles include Director of Safety for Air Evac Lifeteam, Manager of Safety Programs with Texas Aero Engine Services Limited, various operations and employee safety positions with American Airlines, Airfield Manager with the Massachusetts Air National Guard, and a Flight Instructor/Charter Pilot. He is also the Vice President and Treasurer of the International Society of Air Safety Investigators—Dallas/Ft Worth chapter—and the industry co-chair for the Aviation Safety InfoShare-Rotorcraft industry session.

He holds a bachelor's degree in Aviation Science from Bridgewater State University and a master's degree in Aeronautical Science (Safety Specialization) from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University.



**Mark Onorato**  
**Director of Aviation Operations**  
**Boston Medflight**

Mark Onorato's aviation career started in 1986, when he attended the US Army Initial Entry Rotary Wing training at Fort Rucker, Alabama. His aviation career assignments include both fixed and rotor wing positions. He served as an aircraft flight instructor and instrument flight examiner in his military assignments, and as a CFI/CFII in his civilian assignments. Onorato has held positions as a safety officer, aviation safety manager, and accident investigator. Regularly attending safety and accident investigator courses at the University of Southern California and at the Transportation Safety Institute, he makes it a point to keep abreast of current issues to better serve the aviation industry.



**Dale Whitmore**  
**SMS Program Office Manager, Flight  
Standards Safety Analysis & Promotion Office**  
**Federal Aviation Administration**

Dale Whitmore began his aviation career in 1981 flying charter and corporate managed aircraft. After 15 years of flight, maintenance, and management experience in the aviation private sector, he joined the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in 1996. As an FAA inspector, he is dual qualified as both a US General Aviation and Air Carrier Operations Inspector. His SMS Program Office is primarily responsible for the preparation of the Flight Standards' inspector workforce in the applications and validation of Safety Management Systems. Prior to March 2018, his Office supported the deployment of 14 CFR part 121 SMS (part 5 SMS) and currently oversees external SMS implementation to US certificated operators through the FAA's SMS Voluntary Program and, most recently, expanded part 5 FAA rulemaking.

He holds a master's degree from Central Michigan University in Education Administration, is a certified public-school teacher in the State of Michigan, holds FAA ATP and A&P Certifications, and has 15 years' experience as a contract Lead Auditor working for an ISO 9001 QMS (quality management systems) Registrar located in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He also held lead auditor credentials from IRCA (International Registrar of Certified Auditors) for eight years.