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MEMORANDUM

TO: Fiscal and Management Control Board (FMCB)

FROM: Matthew DeDonato
Deputy Director of Safety Oversight and Planning

DATE: May 24, 2021

SUBJECT: SMS Implementation & Training

Overview

Safety is a core value at the MBTA and in MBTA Safety, one of our major long-term goals is implementing Safety Management Systems (SMS) across the authority. Developing a mature SMS program with buy in across the Authority is an extensive undertaking that will take multiple years. To aid in this implementation, MBTA Safety has developed a three phased SMS implantation plan. Approval of the Transit Safety Plan in July of last year marked the completion of Phase 1, and we've now moved onto Phase 2. Phase 2 focuses on the continued development and refinement of Safety Risk Management policies, as well as workforce-wide outreach, education, and training. Central to that education effort is the SMS Fundamentals Training course.

SMS Fundamentals Training

The SMS Fundamentals Training is an hour long online training that is administered through the MassDOT LearningHub and serves as the baseline SMS training for the entire workforce. The focus of the training is to ensure that all employees understand what SMS is and their roles and responsibilities within it. The training discusses the components of SMS including Safety Management Policy, Safety Risk Management, Safety Assurance, and Safety Promotion. Also central to the training is instructing employees on how to identify hazards in the workplace and how to report those hazards through the Employee Safety Reporting Program.

Rollout of the SMS Fundamentals Training began in November 2020 with the Safety Department and was then expanded out to senior leadership, followed by management and supervisory staff in January 2021. In April 2021, after the leadership group had the opportunity to become familiar with the training, it was assigned out to the entire MBTA workforce. Going forward, the training will also be assigned to all new hires as they are brought onboard, to ensure consistent SMS messaging throughout their employment at the MBTA.

Since this training is administered through an online learning platform we are able to continuously track completion. Thus far, nearly 20% of the workforce and two-thirds of supervisory staff have completed the initial SMS Fundamentals course.

[Additional SMS Training](#)

In addition to the SMS Fundamentals course, MBTA Safety is also developing several additional specialized SMS courses, to further employee education and engagement. These courses include:

- **Safety Risk Management (SRM) at the MBTA** – This course focuses on educating employees on how SRM fits into the MBTA’s overall SMS, when to initiate the SRM process, their role in the SRM process, and how to complete risk ratings. The training is for employees that will be actively participating in SRM activities.
- **SRM Facilitation** – This course focuses on facilitating SRM Workshops, building consensus amongst participants, and documenting the resulting outputs. The training is for Safety Department personnel.
- **SMS Leadership Responsibilities** – This course focuses on Management responsibilities for safety under the Transit Safety Plan and how MBTA’s organizational structure supports SMS. The training is for Executive Management and Safety Department personnel.
- **Safety Culture** – This course focuses on how safety culture impacts an organization and the elements of a positive safety culture. The training is for Executive Management and Safety Department personnel.
- **Safety Performance and Oversight** – This course focuses on setting safety targets, evaluating performance, and then using that information to make continuous improvements. The training is for Agency Leadership, Safety Department personnel, and Safety Committee members.

[SMS Symposium](#)

In addition to the online training, MBTA Safety has also been developing other promotional events to keep employees engaged in SMS. On April 13th, the Safety Department hosted an online SMS Symposium to educate, promote, and celebrate the MBTA’s SMS implementation progress. The 90-minute live presentation included opening remarks by the General Manager and Chief Safety Officer and a keynote speech by Patrick Holyfield from Republic Airways. During his speech Mr. Holyfield discussed his experiences implemented and maintaining SMS programs, as well as the importance of creating an effective partnership between management and the workforce to drive SMS forward. MBTA Safety staff also presented on topics including Performance Targets, the Employee Safety Reporting Program, the Safety Risk Management Process, and Improving Safety Culture. With over 300 attendees, the symposium was a great success and has been recorded and made available on the MBTA TSTOP employee webpage.