



# Safety Day Handbook

A Guide to Planning and  
Executing an Educational and  
Informational Program



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# INTRODUCTION

Vision Zero is an Association of Air Medical Services (AAMS) initiative created to achieve zero errors of consequence through Education, Awareness and Vigilance. The Vision Zero initiative addresses the essential components of building a community culture of safety.

AAMS, Vision Zero and the contributors to this handbook recognize the need to help educate individuals and programs about the planning, financing and implementation of a safety education day. All of the contributors to this guide have helped plan and execute “Safety Day” programs.

Safety education days are not new. They have been taking place for decades across our industry. This, at times, satisfies regulatory expectations. They are likely to be a significant part of your program’s Safety Management System.

## Why a Regional Safety Day?

*Safety Days were started in order to facilitate discussion and educate the industry.*

Regional safety days provide an opportunity to develop and/or expand an organization's and individual's collaborative mindset on the broader concept of safety culture. Collaboration involves attempts to find solutions where all participants agree on a common goal.

Hosting a Safety Day helps to:

- Educate, build culture, raise awareness, and break down walls while building relationships. The desired end result is increased personal and collective vigilance.
- Recognize the consequences of errors, which affect us all.
- Make the phrase "Safety is not proprietary" an action.
- Promote safety discussions between multiple programs and across a variety of fields (i.e. aviation, medical, maintenance, business, and administration).
- Improve processes and develop better procedures/practices by learning from the experiences of others.
- Create an open forum for discussions outside your individual or organizational "silos."
- Develop action groups for continued safety initiatives throughout the year.

## Purpose and Scope of Safety Day Handbook

Have you ever wanted to host a safety education day in your area? Does it sound intimidating? What do you need to do to make it successful? How do you get funding? How far in advance do you need to be planning? Where do you find speakers?

This handbook is designed to help answer those common questions. The information is provided by programs and individuals who have successfully planned and hosted safety education days. It is not intended to be comprehensive or cover all aspects of the planning needed, but is meant as a guide for the major elements. Updated adjuncts and additions will be available online at [aamsvisionzero.org](http://aamsvisionzero.org).

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*Students of social sciences and economics are familiar with and have had lengthy discussions about the game theory known as the “prisoner’s dilemma.” The theory behind this game reveals why two people may not cooperate even if it is in the best interest of both parties, to do so.*

*The majority of HEMS providers are living in a modern version of the “prisoner’s dilemma.” Many agree that working collaboratively with neighboring HEMS programs will mitigate overall risk and increase safety for those programs. Still, many do not or cannot collaborate together.*

*The overriding goal of all HEMS providers is to deliver exceptional clinical care in the safest environment possible; however, significant disparities still exist between neighboring programs. The reasons are well known: various operating models, clinical configuration, aviation or clinical capability, simple indifference and a silo mentality. The net result of these variations can lead to an increase in risk profiles for all programs.*

*Instead of focusing on the differences, the HEMS industry needs to focus on channeling those differences into productive collaborations which will produce new approaches to challenges that impact our industry both locally and nationally.*

—Todd Denison, *Boston Medflight*  
AMJ Volume 31, Issue 4 , Pages 174-176, July 2012

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# PLANNING

## Audience, size, scope and content

Determine the right type of symposium/conference to fit your program's or region's needs.

First, define your audience. This may be as small as a single base or as large as a region with multiple modes of transport and several operators. Once the type, make-up, and size of the audience is determined, the requirements for resources, timing, available staff, and venue for executing the planned safety day will need to be determined.

Our community is interdependent when it comes to public perception of the safety of medical transport programs. One program's accident affects the industry as a whole. The specific name, color or size of an aircraft or ambulance rarely leaves an impression. The end result is a general impression of our community.

By including all modes of transport and opening the attendance to those outside of a single program, we can help one another by taking a community approach in the areas of safety education and safety awareness. By opening your safety education day to neighboring programs and services, a common language, standards and lines of communication can be developed.

### Intended Audience

Include components of rotary, fixed wing and ground. Who do you want your audience to be?

- Host program
- Neighboring programs
- Local EMS community
- Private ambulance companies
- Referring hospital staff

Programs can choose 1, 2 or 3 full-day programs, but it is even more important to be innovative to make the event interesting and thought provoking. Look outside the industry for other high risk/high stress industries that could convey relevant safety points which also creates a learning opportunity about another industry. It is more likely to hold the attention of seasoned audience members.

## Potential Industries

- Commercial aviation
- Space Industry
- Sports such as the NFL and NASCAR
- Public service agencies such as police SWAT or Fire Confined Space Rescue team
- Military

Once your audience's make-up and size are determined, then you can determine the desired scope and content of the event.

## Scope and Content

Most safety days will have some common content, such as Safety Management System (SMS) education and Air Medical Resource Management (AMRM). The scope of your content will largely depend on the audience you have chosen. It may be exclusive to rotary wing transport or it may expand to rotary wing, fixed wing, and ground transport and even a component for Emergency Medical Service (EMS) providers (i.e. scene, landing zone, helipad safety). Don't forget patient safety...it is not just about operational topics!

In addition to planned topics, solicit suggestions for "Hot Topics." Your safety committee will likely have great suggestions.

Be sure that your topics are consistent with your objectives, but find creative ways to hold the audience's attention. Two popular mediums:

- **AAMS Survivor's Network:** Have a person who has been in a crash, speak from experience. They are helpful in keeping an audience engaged through lessons learned in real life. There are many throughout the country that are willing to share their experience.
- **Digital Safety Stories:** Short 3-4 minute videos available online at no cost. They are specific to the medical transport community. (see resources)

From the list that you create of your proposed topics, you will need to seek speakers for those topics. This needs to be done at the **earliest possible date** if you plan on bringing in speakers from outside your program. Create an event that your staff looks forward to. It is okay to have some fun as long as the safety messages are clear and understood.

## Presentation Ideas

- “Cracker barrel discussions”
- A breakout session that is an open forum.

Example:

- Have 8–10 participants at a table with a moderator or facilitator who is knowledgeable on a particular topic.
- Prepare a topic with general questions to create conversation.
- Facilitator acts as the scribe.
- At the end of the session, the topic and opinions are presented back to the larger group by one member with the facilitator.

End result is the beginning of discussions that cross into other programs in the region.

## Broaden your Audience; Take Advantage of Technology:

- Tweet Chat during your safety event allowing anyone to follow the safety points made
- Use Facebook to promote the safety messages and recognize all the participating programs
- Set-up Teleconferencing in order to expand the audience (great for on-shift crews)

## Sample Safety Day Schedule

*Tailor the topics to your specific needs*

Time	Event	Location	Topic	Speaker/ Presenter
0800–0845	Continental Breakfast	Lobby	Welcome	Host program CEO
0900–1145	Guest speaker 1	Auditorium	Communications	
0900–1015	Breakout Session A		Personal Safety	
1030–1145	Breakout Session B		Ground CRM	
1200–1245	Lunch/Guest Speaker 2	Ballroom A	FAA Operational Control	FAA representative
1300–1545	Guest speaker 3	Auditorium	NTSB Recommendations	

1300–1415	Breakout Session C		NVGs	
1430–1545	Breakout Session D		Fatigue Issues	
1600–1700	Guest speaker 4		Disaster Preparedness	
1700–1900	Break			
1900–2100	Meet & Greet		CRM Humor?	

*Note: A 3-day template sample is available in the online Vision Zero Toolbox, powered by American Eurocopter.*

## Sample Presentation & Lesson Plan

<b>TOPIC: Night Vision Goggles</b>	
Training Objectives	
Student will be able to describe the history, development, and technology of Night Vision Devices.	
Student will be familiar with the regulatory and training requirements for flight operations with NVGs.	
Lesson Plan	
History of the development of Night Vision Devices and the different generations.	(10 min)
How they work. Basic function.	(15 min)
FAA regulations and operations requirements, training requirements, and specifications.	(20 min)
Hands on demonstrations	(15 min)

*Note: This should be requested from each speaker when they submit to speak.*

### Things to Remember

- Include meal breaks and allow time for networking.
- End on a positive note. If the morning is a sad story, make the afternoon a lighter (maybe with appropriate humor) topic.
- Patient stories are very inspiring and can end the day reminding everyone why they do what they do.
- Consider allowing families to attend if the topics are appropriate.
- This is a great opportunity to take your annual team photo. This adds to the feeling that the day had a positive outcome.

## FUNDING

A baseline budget for a safety day can be about \$5,000. That may increase, however, due to expenses for individual speakers fees and/or a venue. Below are some cost saving tips and funding suggestions.

- Look for ways to make it apply to other organizations that may be willing to help fund it in return. For example, invite your vehicle vendor to co-sponsor the event and open the event to all of their personnel. That may make sponsorship more attractive to them because they won't need to plan their own event.
- Look for medical device sponsors who may have a safety angle. This may be an outright donation, or you can choose to have a vendor display area.
- Ask speakers to speak for free.
- Get in-kind donations, such as hotel rooms for speakers, thank you gifts, or food for attendees in exchange for advertising at the event.
- Partner with your local community college—most offer free auditorium and AV use and may even have accommodations/dorms.
- Some programs charge a nominal fee for attendees who are coming from outside the program, which helps decrease “no shows” and helps offset costs).

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### Baseline

1. Food for attendees (can be done by staff)
2. Speaker travel (outside of airfare, have staff assigned for transportation)
3. Printing material (do in-house)
4. Signage in common areas (do in-house or use existing signs)
5. One day events are less costly but need to remain within reasonable driving distance. Consider travel time for attendees (drivable and easily accessible locations).

## Sample Budget

Approximately 50 attendees

Income	Actual	Budget	Difference
Vendor Donations/Fee		\$1,000	\$1,000
Sponsorships		\$500	\$500
Attendee Registration Fee	N/A	N/A	N/A
* Aircraft Operator—donation		\$2,500	\$2,500
Total Income	\$0	\$1,500	\$4,000
Expenses	Actual	Budget	Difference
Speaker Fee		\$1,000	\$1,000
Travel for speakers		\$1,500	\$1,500
Event Location Fee		\$800	\$800
Meal Expenses		\$800	\$800
Printing Fees		\$200	\$200
Signs Expense		\$200	\$200
Appreciation Gifts		\$500	\$500
Total Expenses	\$0	\$5,000	\$5,000
<b>Net Expense</b>	<b>\$0</b>		<b>\$1,000</b>

\* Your program's operator may be your best financial partner for a Safety Day. The air transport industry has long found value in bringing their staff together for quality programs that keep the safety mindset and corporate focus towards quality operations very high. It is good for their people, their brand, and to prevent accidents and injury.

Make sure and involve them early in the budget planning process. The operator (part 135 or ground vendor) may bridge the gap if there is a financial shortfall or they may choose to finance the entire day from the very beginning in exchange for high visibility in marketing to potential attendees.

Bring a solid detailed plan to them and be prepared to answer questions. Do not be afraid to ask for funding.

## TIMELINE

A 10–12 month timeline is the general consensus for the amount of time needed to plan a Safety Day once the “type” has been chosen.

- Securing speakers is the most time consuming task and needs to be pursued at the earliest possible opportunity. This will also include determining if speaker fees will be required.
- Create a small committee with assignments for completion during the timeline.
- Following up and staying on the timeline is crucial.

### Sample Timeline

#### 10–12 Months Prior to Event

Assign teams to help prepare for the Safety Day—they should consist of one leader that keeps everyone on track and several team members that are given assignments with strict deadlines. Also include team members from other organizations, if they are invited, to promote buy-in to the event.

Set the date and time for the event.

Decide on the target audience.

Estimate the maximum number of attendees desired.

Find a location that meets all the needs, to include desired number of attendee’s, parking capacity, audio and video requirements, ability to provide meal and vendor area.

Narrow down speaker list and begin to make calls to book the speakers.

#### 8–10 Months Prior to Event

Book speakers and obtain signed contracts if applicable.

Book event location and obtain signed contract if required.

Develop sponsor form—this should include sponsorship levels and explanations for each level.

Locate and acquire vendors/sponsors for the event.

Locate hotel close to event location—obtain discounted room rate for block of rooms.

Locate caterer for meals during event and have contract signed.

### 6–8 Months Prior to Event

Prepare brochure to include registration for attendance.

Begin preparation for items to be given away (raffle).

### 4–6 Months Prior to Event

Send out brochure to include registration for attendance.

Begin using social media to advertise the event.

Assign team member to coordinate arrival of registration forms. Keep a running tally of each attendee for official registration on the day of the event.

Prepare directional signs to be used on the day of the event. These signs will help attendees locate vendor, lecture and registration area, etc.

Obtain items to be given away in raffle from vendors if applicable.

Complete travel arrangements for each speaker.

### 2–3 Months Prior to Event

Prepare a formal agenda for the day of the event that will be given to each attendee and print the appropriate number of copies.

Prepare evaluations that will be completed by each attendee at the end of the event.

Send email reminders to each vendor and speaker to remind them of the event.

Check in with them to see if they need any information. Send them travel information as needed.

Prepare introductions for each speaker and assign personnel to present these on the day of the event.

Prepare procedure for raffle and any supplies needed for distribution.

Assign crewmembers to be ushers on the day of the event. These individuals will be standing at each entrance to help assist attendees as needed.

Assign staff to register attendees on the day of the event.

### 1 Month Prior to Event

Obtain gifts/thank you notes for vendors/speakers/team members.

Prepare team assignments for those that will be cleaning up post event.

### 1 Week Prior to Event

Call each speaker/vendor to ensure nothing is needed prior to their travel.

Follow up with event location to ensure everything is set for the event.

Follow up with the meal preparers to ensure readiness for event.

### 1–2 Weeks Post Event

Combine evaluation results and provide these results to the speakers if requested.

## POTENTIAL SPEAKERS LIST

**John J Nance**, ABC air consultant and author of many books including *Why Hospitals Should Fly*, john@johnjnance.com

**Scott Griffith**, COO of Outcome Engineering, founder of the ASAP program and co-founder of Just Culture, SGriffith@Outcome-eng.com

**Al Haynes**, retired United Airlines pilot, pilot of flight 232 Sioux City Iowa crash, contact through the Aviation Speakers Bureau at 1-800-247-1215

**Daniel Bursch**, NASA astronaut, dwbursch@nps.edu

**Dr. Ira Blumen**, UCAN and HEMS OSI, stats, ira.bluman@uchospitals.edu

**Mark Rosekind**, Fatigue and NTSB issues, mark.rosekind@ntsb.gov, (202)314-6035

**Greg Poirier**, Lead Pilot FRDCO/Field Safety Rep, AirLife Denver, (303)485-6358

**Kevin High**, Clinical Associate/Vanderbilt LifeFlight, (615)936-5291, kevin.high@vanderbilt.edu

**Denise Landis and Chad Hall**, PAIP, University of Michigan Survival Flight, (734)936-6035

**Brian Smith**, International Jet Aviation “Lessons Learned,” (303)790-0414

**Gordon Graham**, Risk Management, Graham Research Consultants, Long Beach, CA, (714)374-9326

**Paul Lhote**, Safety Promotion, plhote@statmedevac.com

**Tony Kern** Ed.D, Safety Culture and Empowered Accountability, tony@convergentperformance .com

**Dr. Ben Bushman**, Aviation Psychology, Benbushman@hotmail.com, (520)861-9300

### AAMS Survivors Network

**Jonathan Godfrey**, visionzero@rocketmail.com

**Krista Haugen**, haugenkm@aol.com

**Megan Hamilton**, code3rn@yahoo.com

**Teresa Pearson**, flynursetk@hotmail.com

## RESOURCES

Digital Safety Stories (free online): Nearly 20 short videos which are perfect for intermissions, discussion topics or your own creative use. Digital Safety Stories can be found on the MedEvac Foundation International website at:

[www.medevacfoundation.org/MedEvac/Outreach/Digital\\_Safety\\_Stories.aspx](http://www.medevacfoundation.org/MedEvac/Outreach/Digital_Safety_Stories.aspx)

Agenda templates from similar events can be found in the Vision Zero Toolbox, powered by American Eurocopter, at:

[www.aamsvisionzero.org/toolbox.html](http://www.aamsvisionzero.org/toolbox.html)

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*Safety is not proprietary*

*We know that your highest priority is the safety of your patient and crew. Safety is not proprietary; rather it is something to be promoted and shared among all coordinating agencies for improved service, support and outcomes for all.*

*—Jana Williams, AirLife Denver*

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