"There is nothing more important to me personally and to the Department's mission than ensuring that your workplace is healthy and safe" - Secretary Dirk Kempthorne, May 22, 2007

FY08 U.S. Department of the Interior Aviation Safety Summary

Recommended Talking Points for Leadership

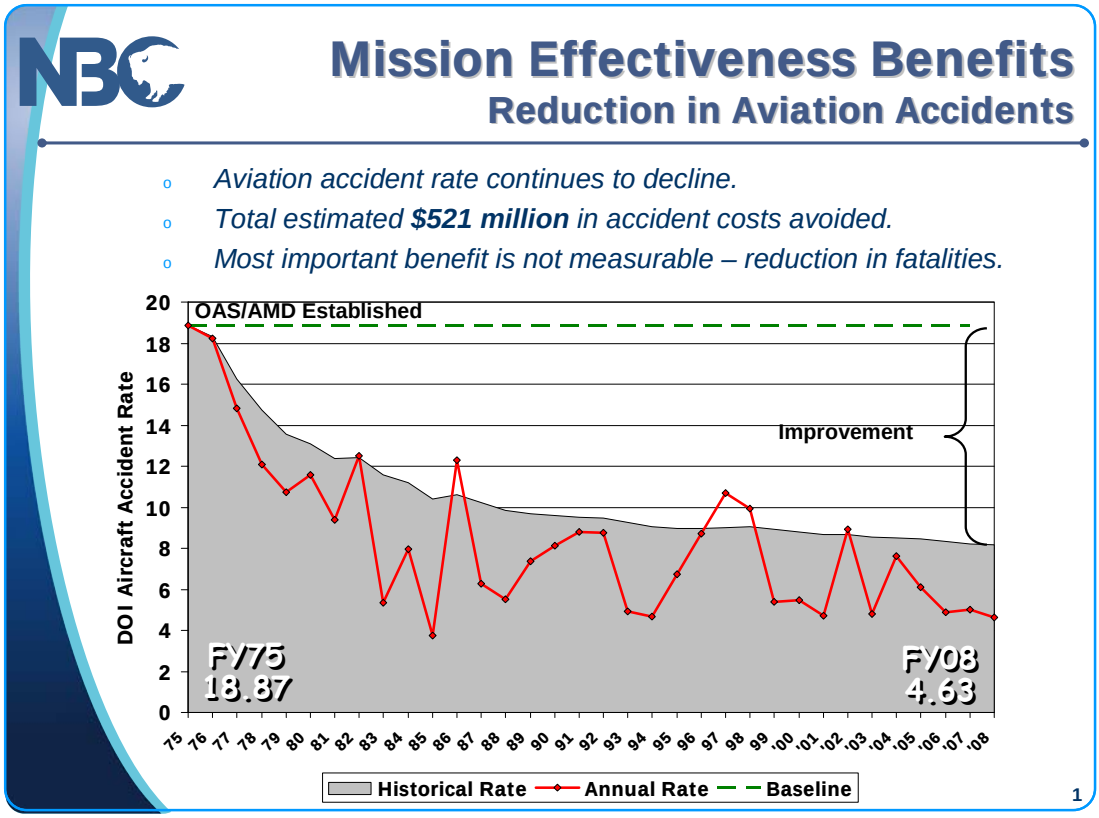
Overview: In FY 2008, U.S. Department of the Interior experienced **a 3rd consecutive year of overall improvement in aviation safety**.

DOI Aviation Safety Strategy:

- DOI's aviation safety and mishap prevention strategy is based on the philosophy that all aircraft mishaps can be prevented and that mishap prevention is an inherent function of management. **Zero aircraft mishaps is our attainable goal**.
- Improved aviation safety reduces cost, saves lives, and promotes effective accomplishment of critical natural resource missions.
- **Success in aviation safety is a partnership effort**. DOI's aviation safety success is the result of the coordinated efforts of the National Business Center (NBC) Aviation Management Directorate (AMD) team, bureau aviation personnel at every level, and the commercial aviation vendors who directly support 77% of all DOI aviation operations.
- In 2006, AMD instituted a comprehensive industry proven aviation safety and aircraft mishap reduction strategy. In each of the past three years, the Department has seen positive and measureable results as a result.

FY08 Aviation Safety High Points:

- **Lowest number of DOI aircraft accidents (3) in over 30 years.**
  - **25% decrease over FY07.**
- **Lowest DOI aircraft accident rate (4.63 per 100,000 flt. hrs) since 1985.**
  - **7.9% decrease over FY07.**
- **FY06, FY07, & FY08 represent the lowest three consecutive years for DOI aircraft accident rates in Department history** – *consistency, proof of current strategy.*
- No fatal aircraft accidents in FY07 or FY08.
- FY08 continued a 3 year trend of lowering the DOI historic aircraft accident rate (total historic DOI flight hours/total DOI historic accidents) by 1.0% each year since FY05 (3% total).
- During FY08, DOI experienced 10 consecutive months of accident free flying.
- FY08 accident costs (1.5M) were 11% less than FY07 and 73% less than FY06.
- Seven Incidents-With-Potential (IWPs) occurred in FY08 at a cost of $126.6K.
- Since 1975, DOI's aviation safety program has resulted in estimated savings of $521M to the Department and its supporting vendors in reduced losses.



FY08 Contributing Success Factors:

- AMD implemented a Quality Management System across all service offerings and successfully completed its ISO 9001 registration audit in September, 2008.
  - Resultant process improvements reduced investigative report writing cost, improved cycle time, increased productivity, freed up time and resources needed to increase development and implementation of additional preventative measures.
- Bureau partnering and collaboration with AMD to proactively address potential aviation safety issues increased.
  - *Notable mention*: NPS national aviation manager reached out AMD on **7** such initiatives.
- Aviation Board of Directors (ABOD) worked with Deputy Assistant Secretary, Business Management and Wildland Fire to develop more aggressive future aircraft accident rate reduction targets.
- AMD and bureaus increased focus on the investigation of Incidents-With-Potential (IWP's – often precursors to future accident trends) and the development and distribution of actionable lessons learned/corrective measures.
- AMD increased production of aircraft accident prevention products:
  - 9 - Interagency Aviation Safety Alerts
  - 5 - Interagency Aviation Lessons Learned
  - 1 - DOI Aviation Lessons Learned
  - 1 - DOI Aviation Safety Alert
- AMD development/distribution of aircraft mishap cost data to leadership.
- AMD increased the emphasis and application of Operational Risk Management (ORM), System Safety, and Human Factors by AMD, bureau, and vendor aviation managers and personnel.

Notable FY08 Bureau Aviation Safety Milestones:

1. MMS - **34** years of accident-free flying.
2. OSM - **22** years of accident-free flying.
3. BOR - **11** years of accident-free flying,
4. FWS - **3** years of accident-free flying.
5. USGS - **2** years of accident-free flying.
6. BIA - **1** year of accident-free flying.

FY08 Safety Awards Program Achievements:

Airward:

BLM – (4), NPS – (4), FWS – (1).

"Airwards" is an interagency aviation safety program that provides timely recognition to any individual who has demonstrated positive behavior or actions promoting Interior aviation safety; such as correcting a hazardous situation, submitting a good idea, or just making a difference. Anyone may submit a prospective *Airward* nomination.

In-Flight Award:

FWS - (4), NPS - (1), AMD - (1)

An "In-Flight" award is an interagency aviation safety program to provide recognition to an individual aircrew whose action has prevented injury or damage to people or aircraft.

Safe Flying Award:

FWS - (1)

A "Safe Flying" award is an interagency award to recognize accident-free flying milestones.

FY08 DOI Aviation Program Evaluation Notable Achievements:

- **The Aviation Program Evaluation Process**, NBCM-AMD-6700-016-.02, fulfilled registration requirements for certification to meet the ISO 9001:2000 Standard.
- **BIA Eastern** Aviation Program Evaluation – The evaluation team recognized the Seminole Agency for their current and thorough Helicopter Operating Plan. The plan provides detailed information on how helicopter operations will be conducted for the agency.
- **BIA Northwest** Aviation Program Evaluation – The BIA National Aviation Office has committed to a complete revision of their National Aviation Plan for 2008 in response to previous bureau aviation program evaluations conducted, which now identifies aviation roles and responsibilities, and expands aviation operations procedures.
- **BLM OR/WA** Aviation Program Evaluation – The BLM Oregon/Washington state and field offices received recognition for their continued commitment to fostering a healthy aviation safety culture. This has been a continuing effort that was also identified during the previous aviation evaluation conducted in 2001. Aviation plans are thorough and current at all field units the aviation evaluation team visited. There has been a steady increase in aviation use at the district level from law enforcement officers for marijuana

surveillance and eradication. The BLM State and field offices have maintained a continuing dialogue and have diligently worked with law enforcement to see that officers receive required aviation training and conduct law enforcement operations according to BLM aviation policy. Aviation flight helmet inspection and annual servicing procedures have been adopted at all field units. The Oregon BLM was commended for their extraordinary efforts. Aviation personnel at the Burns Unit expressed their appreciation to **Tina Young**, Contracting Officer, from Aviation Management, Acquisition Services for her conscientious hard work providing specialized helicopter contracting services in a timely manner.

- **BLM UT** Aviation Program Evaluation – **John Burke**, State Aviation Manager, was commended for his proactive effort communicating with the field offices and providing assistance when needed. In addition, Mr. Burke was recognized for his commitment in coordinating with the Salt Lake City media (TV news channels) to enhance communications and develop working relationships during the height of busy fire seasons. Aviation flight helmet inspection and annual servicing procedures have been adopted at most field units the evaluation team visited. The UT BLM was commended for their extraordinary efforts. During site visits the evaluation team noted that the aviation mishap prevention (SAFECOM) program is being utilized at all levels of the aviation organization. During site visits the BLM National Aviation Safety Manager provided an overview of the continued efforts in the development of the Interagency Aviation System Safety Assessment Program. The System Safety Assessment utilizes historical SAFECOM data to provide another tool for aviation users to identify hazards and mitigate risk for interagency aviation activities. The BLM's National Fire and Aviation Office was applauded for their continued commitment to the Departmental SAFECOM Program by maintaining a proactive aviation safety culture in the bureau. Contracting Officers from Aviation Management, Acquisition Services; **Toni Musgrove** and **Mike McFarlane**, were recognized for their exceptional efforts providing helicopter contracts in a timely and efficient manner when timelines were critical to meet resource management mission objectives.
- **BOR Great Plains Region** Aviation Program Evaluation –Recognition was provided to **Jackie Johns**, Regional Flight Scheduler, although new to the position, she has taken the initiative to find needed aviation resources as needed to enhance her job.
- **BOR Mid Pacific Region** Aviation Program Evaluation – The evaluation team provided recognition to **Larry Welch**, Regional Aviation Manager (RAM) and aviation support staff for their commitment and dedication to the regional aviation program. It should be noted that the RAM has developed an exceptional regional aviation management plan that identifies aviation requirements and provides operational guidance to the region. During interviews, regional staff expressed their appreciation for the responsiveness of **Mark Santee**, Bureau Aviation Safety Manager in fulfilling their aviation requests and needs. The BOR regional geologists and the Pacific Northwest Region drill crew should be commended for their thorough preparation in coordinating the development of project work plans to transport drill rigs and support equipment to worksites by helicopter for the Upper San Joaquin River Basin Storage Investigation.
- **FWS Region 3** Aviation Program Evaluation – **Brian Lubinski,** Regional Aviation Manager (RAM), and Regional Management were applauded for their commitment and support to aviation safety and efficiency in the region. The RAM was also commended for his commitment to presenting required interagency aviation training and maintaining currency in the region.

- **NPS Pacific West Region** Aviation Program Evaluation – **Clay Hillin**, Regional Aviation Manager was recognized for developing a regional intranet aviation website. This resource provides easy access for regional employees to reference Interagency, Departmental and NPS aviation policies by direct links to aviation resources and aviation tools for risk management. The Pacific West Region received recognition for their continued dedication to fostering a healthy aviation safety culture. This has been a continuing effort that was also identified from the previous aviation evaluation conducted in 2000. Again, this is most evident in the helicopter search and rescue mission where world-class mountain rescue operations are being provided to the park visitor. In admiration, it should be noted that a private donor has contributed, for training purposes, required funds to construct a state–of-the-art helicopter rappel tower at Yosemite NP. Aviation personnel at several parks expressed their appreciation to **Ryan Stailey**, Aviation Training Specialist and **Maria Mancano**, Aviation Safety Compliance Specialist from the AMD Western Regional Office, Phoenix for their dedication to aviation training and professional commitment to providing aviation services in a timely manner.
- **NPS Pacific West Region (HI)** Aviation Program Evaluation – Kalaupapa (KALA) National Historical Park has historically utilized helicopters to support resource management programs transporting personnel and external loads to remote locations, and aerial capture and eradication of animals. It should be noted that during this time the park has maintained an accident free safety record. The evaluation team recognized **Ron Nagata**, Haleakala (HALE) National Park Aviation Manager and Chief, Resource Management, for his dedication and never ending devotion to fostering a healthy aviation safety culture. He has continually provided aviation resources and support to other Parks and Bureaus throughout the state of Hawaii. Over many years, he has been an inspiration and a gracious host to many AMD employees who have participated and assisted in support of the NPS aviation program on the islands of Hawaii. In the spirit of interagency and inter-park cooperation, the evaluation team provided recognition to HALE employees, **Timmy Bailey** and **Perry Bednorz** for their commitment to the Interagency Aviation Training Program. They have selflessly provided basic aviation safety and technical training in aircraft survival and water ditching and aerial capture and eradication of animals. It was apparent during the evaluation closeout briefing at Hawaii Volcanoes (HAVO) National Park, that Park management is dedicated and committed to their aviation program.
- **OSM Appalachian Region** Aviation Program Evaluation – Recognition was provided to **Bill Bass**, Bureau Aviation Safety Manager for his professional dedication and commitment to the regional aviation safety program and to the region for an excellent safety record with no aviation accidents in the past 20 years. In addition, the evaluation team recognized the Beckley Area Office for their continued dedication to fostering a healthy aviation safety culture.

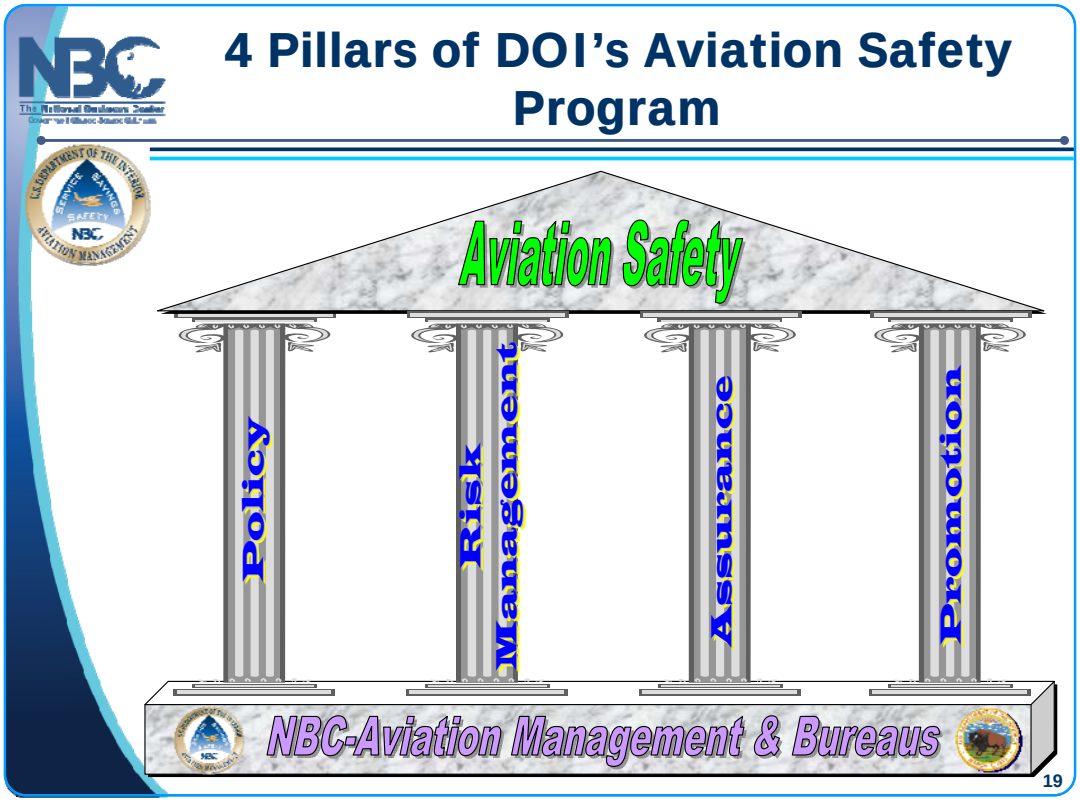
Continuing Initiatives and Future Outlook:

- AMD is continuing its effort to enhance and leverage partnerships with the bureaus, U.S. Forest Service, National Transportation Safety Board, and other Federal departments, and industry to further improve the Department's aviation safety record and reduce attendant material and personnel losses.
- Reduction in the percentage of Fire Support accidents from 75% in FY07 to 33% of the FY08 total. AMD and the Department's land agencies (BLM, NPS, BIA,

and FWS) remain concerned with the high percentage of DOI aircraft mishaps that occur in support of the fire mission.

- 33% of FY08 DOI aircraft accidents occurred on fire missions.
- 33% of FY08 DOI aircraft accidents involved S.E.A.T. aircraft.
- 10 DOI SEAT accidents in the last 11 years, (additional in USFS, States).

- Leveraging USFS & BLM's FY08 System Safety review of the SEAT mission and the recently completed AMD S.E.A.T. mission risk factor analysis, AMD, BLM, NPS, BIA, FWS, USFS, and the S.E.A.T. industry plan to collaboratively develop and implement additional S.E.A.T. safety measures.
- High level discussions between the AMD Associate Director and the Single Engine Air Tanker (S.E.A.T.) association safety council hold promise for further industry cooperation in the area of S.E.A.T. aviation safety.
- AMD and USFS completed development of the Interagency Aircraft Accident Database (IAAD). This will support accident trend analysis and the identification of human factors issues; contribute to approximately 80% of all aircraft mishaps.
- AMD, USFS, and NASA collaboration on the assessment of the Very Large Air Tanker (VLAT) new class of air tanker sets a new standard for interagency collaboration in considering potential new aircraft.

- Zero Aircraft Mishaps is an Attainable Goal -

Four Pillars of the Department's Aviation Safety Program: