

Business Airport

I N T E R N A T I O N A L

October 2014

SPECIAL ISSUE

NBAA 2014: October 21-23, Orlando, Florida

MEBA 2014: December 8-10, Dubai

Hangar space just got more expensive

A scarcity of land for development is pushing demand for hangar space in the USA - and rental fees are set to rise

Also in this issue

IS-BAH: How adopting a new aircraft handling standard can transform your business

BUSINESS AVIATION ACTIVITY IN THE USA & CANADA ♦ **CHARTER COMPARISON SITES**
LONDON FBO FOCUS ♦ MIDDLE EAST AIRSPACE CONGESTION

The launch of the International Standard for Business Aircraft Handling is bringing in better standards and business opportunities for the whole aviation community

Words | Hazel King

Stamp of approval

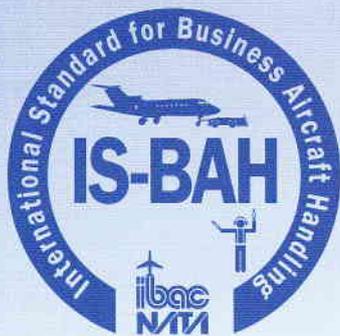




 A new era in the safe handling of business aircraft is being ushered in with the launch of the International Standard for Business Aircraft Handling (IS-BAH) on July 1 this year. Taking its inspiration from IS-BAO (the International Standard for Business Aircraft Operators), which was launched in 2002 to improve the operational safety of business aviators, IS-BAH will transform the safety and service provided by fixed base operators (FBOs) and business aircraft handling agencies (BAHA) to those operators.

IS-BAH is a set of global industry best practices that features at its core a safety management system (SMS). With the aim of standardizing procedures for handlers and operators, IS-BAH is a voluntary standard, although experts in the field strongly encourage handlers to participate.

"IS-BAH gives those who are compliant an edge over those who are not – it's like a 5-star hotel versus a 3-star hotel. The compliant FBO might be a bit more expensive, but it can guarantee a certain number of things that a non-compliant handler can't guarantee," explains Fabio Gamba, CEO of the European Business Aviation Association (EBAA).



The compliant FBO might be a bit more expensive, but it can guarantee a certain number of things that a non-compliant handler can't guarantee."

Fabio Gamba, CEO of the European Business Aviation Association (EBAA)

Keep a record

Under IS-BAO, flight departments are challenged to review their current systems, programs and procedures, recognize strengths and weaknesses in those procedures, and upgrade to a higher standard. As part of this, operators must conduct audits of their supply chain, including FBOs, which means large operators like NetJets have to audit hundreds of FBOs and BAHAs around the world, according to Gamba. "This is totally redundant because all of the operators, big and small, who comply to IS-BAO, are doing the same thing, so you will have 100 audits all saying the same thing," he says.

With the new handling standard, the International Business Aviation Council (IBAC) will publish a list of complying companies on their website, so the number of audits operators have to conduct will be greatly reduced.

"There are also benefits for the FBOs – they are currently seeing 150 or so audits a year, and have to have a single person dedicated to answering the auditor's questions. Audits can take up to two days, so that's 300 days of the year spent on auditing. With IS-BAH, they only have to do it once," continues Gamba.

The auditing process will be overseen by IBAC, which is running workshops for those interested in getting accredited, and audits will be conducted every two years. "Certified auditors of the program will be people who have at least

Audit accreditation

The IBAC qualification and experience standards that must be demonstrated by applicants for initial accreditation as IS-BAH auditors are as follows:

- Working knowledge of the aviation handling provisions of civil air regulations, and the International Civil Aviation Organization standards and recommended practices
- Working knowledge of aviation handling management
- A minimum of five years' experience in aviation handling
- Submission of a course completion certificate for an ISO, ASQ, or equivalent audit course; or provide proof of substantial experience in aviation safety auditing
- Completion of both Fundamentals of IS-BAH and IS-BAH Auditing Workshops within the previous two calendar years
- Provision of evidence of experience in safety management systems
- Demonstration of excellent written and oral communication skills



Business jet operators may be inclined to only use handlers who are compliant with IS-BAH to ensure they meet their SMS requirements



five years' experience in the handling industry and have demonstrated auditing background as well [see *Audit accreditation* on page 23]," explains Kurt Edwards, director general, IBAC. "They must attend both days of the workshop – Fundamentals of IS-BAH and IS-BAH Auditing – and they then submit a resumé to our audit manager, who reviews it and makes a decision.

"The applicant then becomes a certified auditor and they are put on the list on the IBAC website. Handlers who want to be audited go to that list and choose an auditor – we do of course watch for conflict of interest."

Business benefits

In addition to reducing the workload for operators and handlers, IS-BAH also offers a number of other business benefits. "Being compliant with IS-BAH will definitely have a positive effect on handlers' business proposition, and I like to think it will soon become not so much a badge of attraction, but a badge of necessity," comments Mark Wilson, president and chief operating officer of NetJets.

According to Wilson, operators will increasingly not wish to consider using handlers (in locations where they have a choice) that are not IS-BAH registered because they cannot guarantee the high level of safety and security that operators need. "If I am placing one of our aircraft that costs millions of dollars in the care of a handler, I want that handler to meet certain standards," he says.

IBAC's Edwards agrees: "Operators have said that if they have a choice between a handler who is IS-BAH registered and one who isn't, they're probably going to choose the registered handler. There may end up being an economic incentive – handlers may adopt IS-BAH to attract operators to their facilities. We have seen this a

"Certified auditors of the program will be people who have at least five years' experience in the handling industry and have demonstrated auditing background as well"

Kurt Edwards, director general, IBAC

little with IS-BAO, where operators have adopted the standards to attract clients, but I think it will be more apparent when it comes to the new handling standard."

According to Graham Stephenson, a senior aviation consultant and an IS-BAH accredited auditor, another benefit of adopting the handling standards is a reduction in insurance premiums for certified FBOs in the USA.

There are, however, some costs involved with adopting IS-BAH. Handlers must purchase the manual from IBAC, which includes a number of documents that will be updated every year (they will gain access to these documents); there is also a cost of doing the audit, which is negotiated directly with the auditor; and there may be some

costs associated with the implementation, such as staff training and constructing the SMS.

Moving forward

As with IS-BAO, IS-BAH will be a "living document", according to Gamba. "It will continue to evolve to ensure that the standard is adding value to the whole sector, not just a few. Otherwise it will create an elite, which is not the goal of the standard. We want to create the feeling that there is something out there that is being done by the industry, for the industry, and that is used in order to promote better safety and services," he adds.

To ensure that the standard is updated in the right way, there will be a Standards Board made up of industry stakeholders, nominated by the regional associations. "The Board will meet once a year in May (prior to EBACE) and will discuss improvements, revisions and the program's direction going forward," explains Terry Yeomans, director of IS-BAH.

As previously stated, IS-BAH is a voluntary program, so it is not regulated by any government body, which is the way the industry should keep it, according to Edwards. "A voluntary standard is an incentive in itself – people want to join it – but if it is made mandatory it becomes otherwise. It would be nice if IS-BAH was recognized in the same way that some authorities recognize and encourage IS-BAO, but keeping the program voluntary makes it more meaningful as the industry has control."

NetJet's Wilson agrees: "Making sure we have minimum levels of standards within the industry is very important – if we don't adopt them ourselves, we run the risk they will be adopted for us and what we have seen elsewhere is that those standards and regulations tend to be rather adapted from airline standards rather



Stages of maturity

There are three stages of maturity of the SMS program within IS-BAH:

- Stage 1 confirms the SMS infrastructure is established and that safety management activities are appropriately targeted. All supporting standards have been established;
- Stage 2 ensures that safety management activities are appropriately targeted and that safety risks are being effectively managed;
- Stage 3 verifies that safety management activities are fully integrated into the operators business and that a positive safety culture is being sustained.

than bespoke for business aviation. I would urge handlers to adopt IS-BAH while they can and while the standards are focused on business aviation needs."

However, Gamba is not so sure all handlers should become compliant: "If this is the case, then we will have been under-ambitious. I don't think the majority could adopt IS-BAH, but I think that if, in five years from now, around 50 FBOs in Europe meet the standards, then we could take this as being a very good success."

But, if IS-BAH is anything like IS-BAO, Gamba's prediction could be a little short of the more than 700 business aviation operators countries have become IS-BAO registered 2 years, illustrating the importance of dilution and improving standards to the business aviation supply chain. As Graham Wilson concludes, "We all have safety as our one objective and IS-BAH is a logical organized way of managing safety." <

Six tips for getting started

1. Purchase the *IS-BAH Manual*, which contains the standards (13 chapters) and the *IS-BAH Implementation Guide* from an IBAC regional or national affiliate
2. Conduct a gap analysis between your organization's standards and procedures, and those of the IS-BAH program
3. Send a representative from your organization to an IBAC-approved Fundamentals of IS-BAH workshop (listed on the IBAC website)
4. Develop procedures to identify hazards and eliminate the quantified risk or reduce it to acceptable levels using a broad range of guidance material provided with the standard
5. Integrate procedures into department systems, program-operating procedures and manuals – again using the materials provided
6. Complete an IS-BAH audit by selecting an accredited auditor from the IBAC website



"Making sure we have minimum levels of standards within the industry is very important – if we don't adopt them ourselves, we run the risk they will be adopted for us"

Mark Wilson, president and chief operating officer of NetJets