



NTSB National Transportation Safety Board

Roadmap to Safety Culture

American Waterways Operators
Safety Costal Committee Summer
Meeting

Robert L. Sumwalt

- On a number of occasions, the NTSB has recognized the lack of an organizational culture of safety as a contributing factor in accidents.



Washington DC Subway (WMATA)

Contributing to the accident:



- WMATA's lack of a safety culture
- Ineffective safety oversight by the WMATA Board of Directors

Safety Culture

- Safety culture a set of established attitudes, values, beliefs, norms, and practices where safety is revered, promoted and treated as an overriding priority. It begins at the top of an organization and permeates throughout the organization.

Source: US Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Safety Culture

- Safety culture is the core values and behaviors resulting from a collective commitment by leaders and individuals to emphasize safety over competing goals to ensure protection of people and the environment.

Source: US Nuclear Regulatory Commission



Do you have a good safety culture?

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Do you have a Safety Culture?

- “... it is worth pointing out that if you are convinced that your organization has a good safety culture, you are almost certainly mistaken.”
- “... a safety culture is something that is striven for but rarely attained...”
- “...the process is more important than the product.”
 - James Reason, “Managing the Risks of Organizational Accidents.”



You know you're on the right road when...

- The organization manages and values safety, just as they manage and value other vital business functions.
 - Finance: CFO, General Accepted Accounting Practices (GAAP), procedures, controls, audits, accountability

Characteristics of Effective Safety Culture

- Senior Management Commitment
- Informed Culture
- Reporting Culture
- Learning Culture
- Just Culture

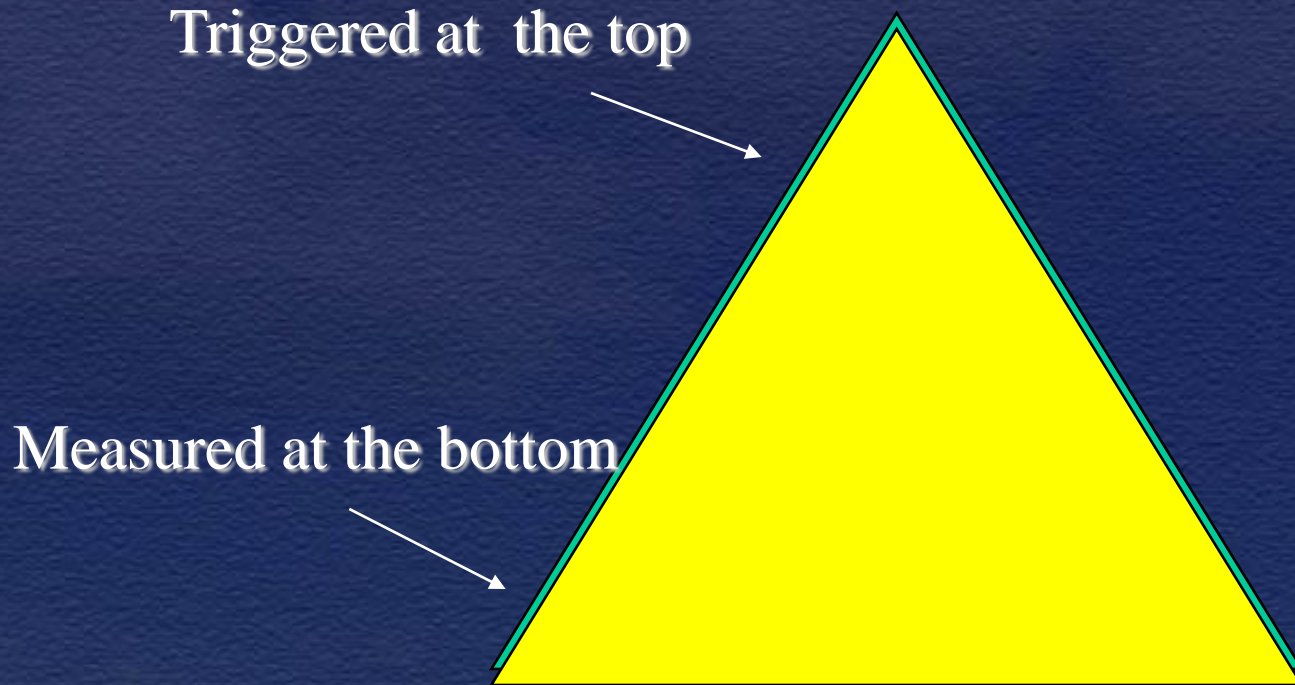
Adopted from James Reason, “Managing Risks of Organizational Accidents”



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Safety Culture is:



Safety culture starts at the top of the organization and permeates the entire organization.

Senior Management Commitment

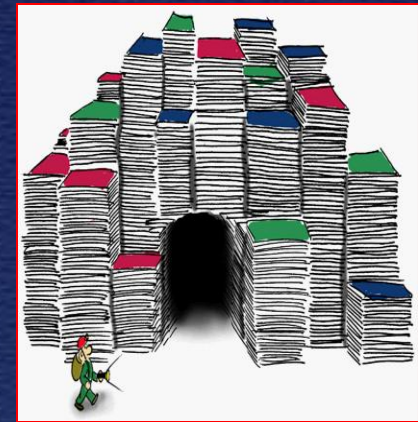
- Senior management demonstrates a commitment to safety and a concern for hazards that are shared by employees at all levels within the organization.

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Informed Culture

- Informed culture – the organization collects and analyses “the right kind of data” to keep it informed of the safety health of the organization
 - Creates a safety information system that collects, analyzes and disseminates information on incidents and near-misses, as well as proactive safety checks.



How do you stay informed?

- Internal safety audits
- External safety audits
- Confidential incident reporting systems
- Employee feedback
- Operational Quality Assurance programs

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Reporting Culture

- Employees are open and encouraged to report safety problems
 - Assurance that information will be acted upon
 - Confidentiality will be maintained or the data are de-identified
 - Assurance they will not be punished or ridiculed for reporting
 - Non-reprisal policy signed by CEO

Non Reprisal Policy
December 2005

SCANA Aviation Department is committed to the safest flight operation possible. Therefore, it is imperative that we have uninhibited good faith reporting of any hazard, occurrence or other information that in any way could enhance the safety and efficiency of our operations. It is each employee's responsibility to communicate any information that may affect the integrity of flight safety.

We will not use this reporting system to initiate disciplinary proceedings against an employee who discloses in good faith a hazard or occurrence involving safety which is the result of conduct which is inadvertent, unintentional or not deliberate.

We urge all employees to use this program to help this Department be a leader in providing our passengers and our employees with the highest level of flight safety.

William B. Timmerman
Chief Executive Officer

Robert L. Sunwalt, III
Manager – Aviation

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Reporting Culture

1. How do you keep your finger on the pulse of your operations?
2. Are you taking proactive measures?
3. Do you have multiple data sources?



Employees



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Learning Culture

- In short, the organization is able to learn and change from its prior mistakes

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“Just” Culture

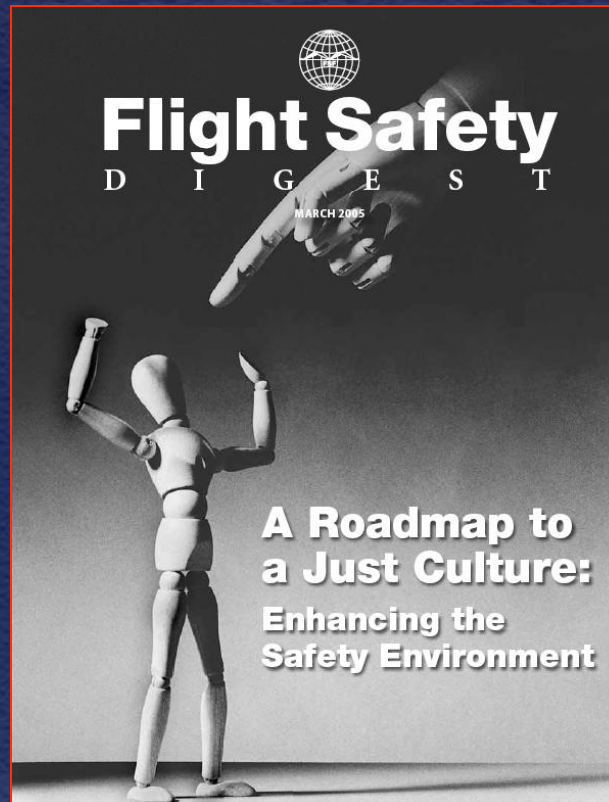
- Basically, this means that employees realize they will be treated fairly
 - Not all errors and unsafe acts will be punished (if the error was unintentional)
 - Those who act recklessly or take deliberate and unjustifiable risks will be punished

Just Culture

- “An atmosphere of trust in which people are encouraged (even rewarded) for providing safety-related information, but in which they are also clear about where the line must be drawn between acceptable and unacceptable behavior. “

About Just Culture

http://flightsafety.org/fsd/fsd_mar05.pdf



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