

INSIDE QMS

A publication of XCELAR Quality Management Systems



Xcelar Launches Quality Management Systems Division

Welcome to the first issue of our Quality Management Newsletter. XCELAR launched its Quality Management Division in 2009 to address the growing need for expertise in the airline training arena. Current trends in training and training management programs such as Advanced Quality Programs have brought sweeping changes to our industry. At XCELAR we believe that carefully placed experts in these fields can bring the needed focus, efficiencies, and greater success to new and existing programs for every airline.

In order to better serve our customers, XCELAR has assembled a great team of AQP and SMS experts from inside the airline and aviation industries. Look for more information about our product manager, Jill Toney, inside this newsletter. Future issues will highlight other XCELAR team members, as well as our

partners from the airlines, aviation associations, and the FAA.

We hope to bring you valuable information regarding recent trends in Quality training programs, tips on building your AQP or SMS, and insider scoops on areas of greatest challenge within the program. We look forward to your questions regarding our articles, questions we can answer for you in future issues, or areas that need a more in depth solution. We are always available to talk to you directly, and can be reached at the contact numbers and locations listed on the back of this newsletter. Thanks you for joining us in our new adventure. We look forward to a continuing relationship with all of you.

Cheri L Haynes,
Director of Quality Management Systems, XCELAR

Jill Toney named Xcelar's Product Manager for QMS



Jill Toney
QMS Product
Manager

Jill Toney comes to Xcelar with over 15 years of training experience, including 10 years directly with Advanced Qualification Programs. She has managed and designed successful programs for B737-200, B737-300/500, B747 aircraft types, as well as an Instructor/Evaluator AQP program, and a CRM AQP. Most recently, Jill held the position of Manager of Flight Operations Training Standards for United Airlines, where she oversaw all of United's training programs, record-keeping, quality control, and regulatory compliance. Jill is currently developing AQP programs tailored to the emerging needs of US regional carriers, as well as the application of AQP processes to cabin crews and ground functions including ATC, Maintenance, Dispatch, Airport Opera-

tions, and Security. Recent accomplishments of note include:

- Developed a Quality Control program designed to calibrate evaluators through rater-reliability training and standardize training programs.
- Implemented a Data Management Plan to critically analyze pilot performance based on qualification standards for increased safety and improved training.
- Developed plan to integrate AQP, FSAP, and FOQA data into a successful overall Safety Management System (SMS).
- Implemented standardized policies related to the qualification, currency, and records of safety personnel.

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Upcoming Regulatory Changes: What They Mean

New legislation was recently passed by the House of Representatives (H.R. 3371: Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act). To best prepare for these changes, it is important to understand exactly what will be required. Some highlights of the Bill include:

- Requires airline pilots to hold an Airline Transport Pilot license (1,500 minimum flight hours required).
- Establishes pre-employment screening including an assessment of a pilot's skills, aptitudes, airmanship and suitability for functioning in the airline's operational environment.
- Requires airlines to: establish pilot mentoring programs whereby highly experienced pilots will mentor junior pilots; create Pilot Professional Development Committees; modify training programs to accommodate new-hire pilots with different levels and types of flight experience; and provide leadership and command training to pilots in command.
- Studies the best methods and optimal time needed in training programs for pilots to master necessary aircraft systems, maneuvers, and procedures; the length of time between training events including recurrent training; and the best methods to reliably evaluate mastery of systems, maneuvers and procedures.
- Creates a Pilot Records Database, to provide airlines with fast, electronic access to a pilot's comprehensive record.
- Information included in the database will include pilot's licenses, aircraft ratings, check rides, Notices of Disapproval and other flight proficiency tests.
- Flight and Duty Time Rule: Directs the FAA to update and implement a

new pilot flight and duty time rule and fatigue risk management plans within one year to more adequately track scientific research in the field of fatigue.

- Fatigue Risk Management Systems: Requires air carriers to create fatigue risk management systems approved by FAA to proactively mitigate pilot fatigue.
- Commuting Study: Studies the impact of pilot commuting on fatigue and provides preliminary results to the FAA to be considered as part of the flight and duty time rulemaking.
- Directs the FAA to develop and implement a plan to facilitate the establishment of an Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP) Flight Operational Quality Assurance (FOQA) program, and Advanced Qualification Programs (AQP) by all commercial airlines and their unions.

"H.R. 3371 builds on industry best practices and mandates professional development programs at all airlines."

Captain John Prater, ALPA President, in a letter to the House of Representatives

In Our Next Issue:

How HR 3371 impacts *your* airline's training programs.

To read the entire text of H.R. 3371: Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act, go to: www.opencongress.org/bill/111-h3371/text


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Your Questions... Answered

Since launching the QSM division of Xcelar, we have received many questions regarding specific aspects of AQP development. In each newsletter, we will share some of these questions, along with answers from our experts. You can send your questions to us by emailing qualitymanagement@xcelar.com.

We are currently working on developing our grading strategy. What grade scale should we choose? Is there an industry standard?

While there is no documented industry standard, most AQP carriers use either a 4-point or a 5-point grade scale. The decision to choose an effective grade scale should focus on 'odd' versus 'even', rather than 4-point versus 5-point. A 5-point Likert scale gives evaluators neutral ground to answer neither positive nor negative. Some neutral answers are truly middle; some are non-committal. A 4-point Likert scale forces evaluators to agree or disagree. There's no neutral or middle ground. It's a forced choice that demands much more from evaluators. A forced choice scale also tends to lessen central tendency bias. However, 4-point scales tend to be a too narrow to capture adequate variability and detail. If choosing a 4-point scale, detailed reason codes should be employed to offset the possible lack of variability. Reason codes represent categories of common behavior (e.g. procedural knowledge, use of automation) that enable analysts to determine why the behavior occurred.

Whichever grade scale you choose, a strong rater-reliability program is crucial. Without calibrated evaluators, data derived using any grade scale is invalid.

A Quality Control Program is a required part of and AQP program, but there is very little guidance on this. What types of things should be included in this program?

A strong Quality Control program should address both instructor performance and the overall quality of the training program and environment. Instructor performance can be addressed through routine observations of your instructor force by qualified observers. Designing a comprehensive performance grading methodology will allow you to address individual instructor issues, as well as issues that are common among the whole group. Analyzing the data that you collect from instructor observation grade sheets allows you to continually improve the quality of the materials and training supplied to your instructors. While employing quality instructors is a big part of a quality training program, there are other factors to consider: the organization of the course, accuracy of the course ma-

terial, the way the material is delivered, to name a few. One way to determine the overall quality of your training program is to design a standard critique mechanism. Online survey tools are effective ways to receive feedback, while giving the author anonymity and time flexibility to point out flaws and suggest improvements to your program. Using a standard format and grade scale when designing the paper form or online survey allows you to analyze the data for trends and prioritize tasks for continuous improvement of your program.

For more information about rater-reliability, grading methodology, overall data management, or quality control programs, contact us at qualitymanagement@xcelar.com.

A strong rater-reliability program is crucial. Without well calibrated evaluators, your data is invalid.

Xcelar in the Field:

- *WATS: April 27-29, 2010*
- *RAA (Forum Speaker): May 24-27, 2010*
- *Aviation Safety, AQP (Panelist): June 1-3, 2010*
- *OshKosh: July 26-31, 2010*



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**XCELAR AQP Programs
Lift Safety Up, Keep
Costs Down**

XCELAR QM Services

Need help with your Phase II development? Does data management scare you? What is your rater reliability? XCELAR's team of experts includes AQP program managers and trainers from major carriers, database specialists, airline and aviation industry executive management, and technology experts in flight training, aircraft systems, and airline operations. We can review your AQP and recommend next step procedures, fixes, and areas of particular concern. We provide complete packages for any phase of your program or hourly consulting. From Phase I through completion and implementation, for flight operations, inflight, dispatch and maintenance, we can bring clarity and success to your program. We specialize in a customized approach to training that incorporates proven technologies and methods with your individual needs and demographics. And we guarantee that the results will be successful and meet FAA standards and approval. Send us an email, call, or visit our website for more information.

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www.xcelar.com