



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION  
Air Traffic Organization Policy

**ORDER**  
**JO 3400.20**

Effective  
January 30, 2012

**SUBJ:** Individual Performance Management (IPM) for Operational Personnel

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**1. Purpose of This Order.** This order provides systematic process designed to articulate operational performance expectations, manage employee operational performance, and assist employees in reaching their fullest performance potential while working in the operational environment. IPM is an on-going, comprehensive review of skills by operational personnel in the performance of their duties. Managing operational performance on a continuous basis creates important opportunities for managers and employees to have meaningful discussions about the appropriate methods and techniques employed in the delivery of air traffic services.

**2. Audience.** This order applies to Air Traffic Organization (ATO) front line managers, operations managers, and second-level managers, in the following ATO service units: En Route and Oceanic, Terminal, and System Operations. This order does not apply to Technical Operations Services or contract employees.

**3. Where Can I Find This Order?** This order is available on the MyFAA Employees Web site at [https://employees.faa.gov/tools\\_resources/orders\\_notices/](https://employees.faa.gov/tools_resources/orders_notices/) and the FAA Web site at [http://www.faa.gov/regulations\\_policies/orders\\_notices/](http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/orders_notices/).

**4. Cancellation.** This order replaces portions of FAA Order JO 7210.56, Air Traffic Quality Assurance, that relate to individual performance.

**5. Policy.**

**a. IPM Process.** Operational performance management should be conducted as an ongoing process. Operational managers are expected to know the strengths and weaknesses of their employees and develop and implement strategies that reinforce strengths and address gaps in skills. To ensure employees receive beneficial feedback, discussions associated with the IPM process should take place soon after the observed performance, but no later than 10 calendar days following the observed performance. Effective IPM consists of three components that may be employed, as needed, to create the desired outcome:

(1) **Observation:** Operational managers are expected to observe employee performance on a daily basis under general supervision. The administration of IPM is not based on a single snapshot, event, or reported occurrence, but is an on-going assessment of overall observed employee performance. Managers and employees are to have meaningful discussions about the methods and techniques used in the delivery of air traffic services. Discussions are based on observed performance, both exemplary and deficient. Through routine observation of employee performance, an employee's direct supervisor/manager should ensure that actions taken to improve employee performance are helping to achieve the desired performance outcome.

(2) **IPM Operational Skills Assessment (OSA):** OSAs are supplemental tools for IPM, used by the employee's direct supervisor to improve overall employee performance in those instances when an

on-going performance deficiency is identified and documented. OSAs may be conducted via direct or remote monitoring, live observation and via review of playback tools. Where such capabilities exist, a replay and/or voice recording of the session must be included with any discussion involved in an OSA. IPM OSAs are entered into the Comprehensive Electronic Data Analysis and Reporting (CEDAR) system and made available to the employee.

(3) **Training:** The determination to provide training is based on an ongoing assessment of performance and should not be based on a single snapshot, event or reported occurrence. When training is assigned, the specific performance deficiency should be identified, and be supported with documentation of previous discussions to correct the deficiency. Assigned training must be directly related to the identified deficiency, and include the expected outcomes resulting from successful training assignment completion.

**b. Documentation.** When warranted, operational managers must document the observed performance described in paragraph 5a in CEDAR, in order to assist in the performance management process. A copy of any documentation entered into CEDAR must be made available to the involved employee.

**c. Performance Actions.** In the event that the IPM process does not correct identified performance deficiencies, any further performance action must be conducted in accordance with the FAA’s Performance Management System and the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), if applicable.

**6. Distribution.** This order is distributed to the following ATO service units: Terminal, En Route and Oceanic, Technical Operations, Mission Support, and System Operations; ATO Safety; the Air Traffic Safety Oversight Service (AOV); the William J. Hughes Technical Center; the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center; National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA); Professional Airway Systems Specialists; National Association of Government Employees; and to interested aviation public.

**7. Background.** The ATO is responsible for ensuring the safe, expeditious flow of air traffic throughout the National Airspace System (NAS). Key to the ATO’s ability to successfully conduct this mission is ensuring that individual controller performance is maintained at the highest level.

Individual Performance Management (IPM) is a key component in reinforcing optimal performance practices and techniques, as well as identifying and correcting potential performance issues. Collectively, strong performance builds a level of operational discipline at each service delivery point (SDP) which contributes to a culture that maintains the highest professional standards achievable in our profession. Each member of our operational team has direct responsibility to work with their peers and supervisors to ensure we achieve this outcome.

Each of us must familiarize ourselves with the contents of this Order and understand our own important role in the IPM process. As ATO employees participate in IPM, they should know they are helping to improve their own performance, the performance of their coworkers, and the overall system performance of the NAS.



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Date Signed