

Sofema Aviation Academy Discusses Competence-Based Training as It Approaches 250,000 Enrollments

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- [Sofema Aviation Academy Discusses Competence-Based Aviation Training as It Approaches 250,000 Enrollments](#)

As Sofema Aviation Academy progresses toward 250,000 enrollments, the organization continues to emphasize the development of operational competence alongside regulatory compliance.

In a recent interview, Sofema Aviation Services CEO Steve Bentley discussed the company's training philosophy, the evolution of aviation learning delivery, and the role of competence-based development in supporting safety, regulatory adaptation, and organizational performance across the aviation industry.

Beyond Compliance: Focusing on Competence Development

According to Bentley, aviation regulations establish minimum acceptable standards, but organizations achieve greater operational effectiveness when training extends beyond basic compliance requirements.

He noted that some training programs become focused primarily on satisfying audit requirements, where the emphasis is placed on obtaining certificates rather than developing practical workplace capability.

Bentley explained that Sofema's training approach seeks to connect regulatory requirements with real-world operational application. The objective is to help aviation professionals



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Steve Bentley >



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understand both the intent and practical implementation of regulatory obligations.

He described a "beyond compliance" culture as one where personnel understand the purpose behind procedures and actively contribute to risk mitigation and operational improvement. In maintenance environments, this can involve identifying broader operational risks beyond the immediate task, while in continuing airworthiness environments it may involve strengthening monitoring processes and data-driven decision-making.

The company states that its course development process is led by experienced aviation practitioners, including former Quality Managers, Certifying Staff, and auditors. Training materials are designed to explain how regulatory requirements apply in operational settings rather than focusing solely on the legal text.

From Classroom Training to Digital Learning

Reflecting on Sofema's development since 2008, Bentley identified operational efficiency as a key factor behind the transition from classroom-based delivery to online learning.

He noted that traditional training often required organizations to incur travel expenses while simultaneously removing key personnel from operational duties for several days.

According to Bentley, digital delivery enabled broader access to aviation training while reducing logistical challenges associated with instructor travel and employee absence from the workplace.

Addressing concerns that online learning can lack depth, Bentley said Sofema sought to ensure its digital courses maintained the same technical content and examination standards as classroom programs. The company also focused on ensuring that its online training records and processes could withstand regulatory oversight and audit scrutiny.

Responding to Regulatory Change

Bentley highlighted the pace of regulatory development within aviation, referencing areas such as Information Security (Part-IS), Continuing Airworthiness Management (Part-CAMO), and Safety Management Systems (SMS).

He explained that Sofema maintains regulatory monitoring processes that review Notices of Proposed Amendment (NPAs), Opinions, and EASA Decisions as they are released. This enables the organization to update course content as regulatory requirements evolve.

From an operational perspective, Bentley noted that digital learning can help aviation organizations implement large-scale regulatory training programs without significantly disrupting maintenance or operational schedules.

He stated that online training allows employees to complete learning activities within available operational windows while enabling organizations to maintain workforce availability.

Supporting Long-Term Professional Development

Bentley said Sofema's transition from individual courses to structured diploma programs and job-role training pathways has changed the nature of its relationship with aviation professionals.

Rather than focusing solely on immediate compliance requirements, the company has developed training pathways intended to support long-term professional development and career progression across areas such as continuing airworthiness, safety management, and quality assurance.

He added that Sofema's Corporate Freedom Program was developed to simplify training administration for airlines, maintenance organizations, and other aviation businesses.

According to Bentley, the program reduces administrative workload associated with individual training purchases by providing scalable access to a broad training catalogue, enabling training departments to focus on workforce development initiatives.

Looking Ahead

As Sofema approaches the 250,000 enrollment milestone, Bentley observed that aviation professionals increasingly expect training to be accessible, flexible, and available through digital platforms.

He also noted a growing demand for training that explains the operational context behind regulatory requirements rather than simply presenting regulatory text.

Looking forward, Bentley identified organizational competence management as a key area of future development. He said the company aims to support the integration of training outcomes with wider Safety Management System (SMS) and Quality Assurance processes, allowing organizations to make greater use of training data within their safety and compliance frameworks.

Bentley stated that the long-term objective is to move beyond isolated training records and support a more integrated approach to competence development across aviation organizations.

About Sofema Aviation Academy

Sofema Aviation Academy supports aviation professionals and organizations through regulatory training and vocational development programs. The organization provides access to [525+ aviation courses](#) covering airworthiness, safety, quality assurance, operations, leadership, and compliance disciplines.

For additional information, visit the Sofema Aviation Academy website or contact the organization at team@sassofia.com.

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