



# **FLIGHT LEADER**

## Program Manual

Version 3.6

This version supersedes and replaces all previous versions.

**Effective Date: March 3, 2026**

**Applicable Date: March 3, 2026**



## Purpose

At WYVERN, we believe that to achieve the highest levels of performance, an organization should pursue excellence like an athlete does, with continual monitoring, coaching, and learning. In keeping with the spirit and essence of the *Wingman* concept in formation flight operations, where precision and discipline are essential to ensure safety and mission success, the *Flight Leader Program* enables an operator to advance within their virtual formation of peers to achieve a leadership role that inspires others to attain higher levels of performance.

Investigations and studies conducted by global aviation safety experts identify human error as contributing or causal in 70-80% of serious incidents and accidents. Human error is often a symptom of organizational factors, which are influenced by the organization's culture. The Flight Leader Program addresses these issues by requiring the operator to establish and manage the following programs and systems: 1) Human factors program, 2) An organizational cultural analysis program, and 3) an SMS aligned with ICAO and/or NAA Program.

Being a global leader in safety risk management requires a passionate pursuit of excellence every day. I approve this manual in the spirit of our mission, vision, and values. The use of the word "shall" in this manual indicates a company requirement and is therefore considered policy. The use of the word "should" in this manual indicates company guidance, and while it establishes expectations for professional behavior, it is not considered policy. Any deviation from the policies established in this manual shall be processed and approved via WYVERN's Policy Waiver Process via QSMS.

Your Wingman,

DocuSigned by:  
  
7B18958891FD416...  
Sonnie Bates, CEO  
WYVERN Ltd  
Date: Mar-03-2026





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## Record of Revisions

Rev #	Date	Remarks
1.0	08/06/2018	Initial Issue
1.1	08/29/2018	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SMS Level 4 Insight changed to the SMS Certification Audit.</li> <li>2. Revised the Flight Leader Level 4 SMS Logo (Figure 4)</li> </ol>
1.2	01/22/2019	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Aligned SMS prerequisites with SMS Performance requirements, i.e., the operator's SMS shall be validated at Level 2 minimum within 12 months of entering the program.</li> <li>2. Updated the address on the cover to show the new home office.</li> </ol>
1.3	04/10/2019	Removed reference to FleetGAARD for a flight data analysis program option.
1.4	07/30/2019	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revised with new logos for the program.</li> <li>2. Clarified how ICAO Annex 6 requirements are approached after SMS Level 3 performance is achieved.</li> <li>3. Clarified Flight Leader Certification. Until the operator is certified as a flight leader, they are a Wingman in the Flight Leader Program.</li> <li>4. Revised wording as needed in various areas to improve clarity.</li> </ol>
1.5	10/11/2019	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Removed the requirement for FDAP to enter the program and made it a requirement to have an FDAP effectively integrated into the SMS to achieve Level 4 Flight Leader Certification.</li> <li>2. Added the requirement for the operator to utilize SMS software that allows WYVERN to continuously monitor the operator.</li> </ol>
1.6	02/14/2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Added numbering sections and sub-sections to facilitate referencing.</li> <li>2. Changed "shall" wording to "shall" to align with international standards design.</li> <li>3. Section 1.1.5. The organization shall send a safety representative to the SLTC, but this does not have to occur within 12 months of entering the program. Also, revised to clarify Contract Staff in the first sentence.</li> <li>4. Section 3.1. Removed the requirement for the assessments to be "two-day".</li> <li>5. Deleted Figure 1 in Section 3.2. Changed Figure 2 to Figure 1.</li> <li>6. Deleted the definition of SMS Levels and instead refers the reader to the WYVERN SMS Certification Program Manual.</li> <li>7. Revised the flow chart slightly in Section 4.1 to improve formatting.</li> <li>8. Revised Section 7.1 for improved formatting.</li> <li>9. Revised Section 7.2.a. to provide flexibility in remedial training and cost.</li> <li>10. Section 12.1, changed "accomplished" to "achieved".</li> <li>11. Section 12.1.d added "organizational factors"</li> <li>12. Appendix A, Figure 5, changed PSOE, to DRFE.</li> <li>13. Revised Section 7.0 to better describe procedures for removal and re-entry into the program, as well as a reversion to the legacy audit program.</li> </ol>
1.7	07/15/2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revised preamble</li> <li>2. Moved the program under the Senior Director, Risk Management Systems</li> <li>3. 1.1 indicates new entry requirements are NA to current FLP operators</li> <li>4. Revised 1.1.2 SMS validation, i.e., by SDRM via SMICG / NAA protocols</li> <li>5. Revised 1.1.3 to state applicable international standards vs just ICAO</li> <li>6. Revised 1.1.4 to require operator's use of software to enhance their SMS</li> <li>7. Revised 1.1.5 to ensure the DOS or SM attends SLTC</li> <li>8. Added 1.1.6 to require FDAP for entry into the FLP</li> <li>9. Deleted Section 3.0 describing SMS Certification Audit as it is NA</li> <li>10. Revised Section 3.0 to provide more guidance for FLCs and clients</li> <li>11. Deleted Section 4.0 process flow for entering as this was redundant info</li> </ol>



		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Added 4.3 and defined SMS Levels to be more generic</li> <li>13. Revised Section 5 to Section 3 with slight revisions to FLC requirements</li> <li>14. Removed Appendix A, FLC will document evaluation in the FLP portal</li> </ol>
2.0	10/16/2020	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revised Preamble by removing the FDAP requirement.</li> <li>2. Added an Introduction Section to clarify Flight Leader Certification pathway to include SMS performance level certification and Wingman certification along the way.</li> <li>3. Deleted 1.1.3 which required the operator to be aligned with applicable international standards before entering the program. This will be validated along the journey after they enter the program.</li> <li>4. Deleted 1.1.4, which required the operator to implement SMS software to facilitate their safety risk analysis and safety assurance processes.</li> <li>5. Deleted 1.1.6, which required the operator to implement an FDAP before entering the program. This is now a recommended practice.</li> <li>6. More information is provided in Section 4 related to SMS performance level certification and how the operator achieves Wingman certification.</li> <li>7. Revised the definition for Level 3 SMS.</li> <li>8. Provided clarity on the Wingman certification steps and expiry dates for the certification.</li> <li>9. Allow State SMS programs to be utilized in lieu of the typical Wingman SMS audit protocols.</li> <li>10. Allow the ISBAO to be utilized as an acceptable means of conformity in lieu of ICAO Annex 6 protocols typically used for a Wingman audit.</li> </ol>
3.0	03/12/2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Remove SMS levels to reduce complexity of the program.</li> <li>2. Revised 1.1.2, to require a viable SMS and removed the requirement for the SDRM to conduct an assessment on the SMS for entry requirements.</li> <li>3. Revised 3.1, Flight Leader Coach entry requirements.</li> <li>4. Revised 4.2.1 to provide flexibility for the use of recognized industry protocols.</li> <li>5. Revised 4.2.3 to display the traditional Wingman logo, removing the concept of Level 2, 3, 4 Wingman to simplify the program.</li> <li>6. Revised 5.5 (b) to provide flexibility for re-instatement.</li> <li>7. Revised 9.1, Threat and Error Management, to “should” versus “shall”</li> <li>8. Updated links to guidance material throughout</li> <li>9. Added note in 8.1 to for stabilized approach information in the Wingman Standard</li> <li>10. Ensured “Wingman” added to Certified Flight Leader throughout the document</li> </ol>
3.1	12/16/2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Changed Certified Flight Leader Wingman references to Wingman PRO.</li> <li>2. Changed certification expiry from 12 months to 24 months.</li> <li>3. Added an auto-renew statement for performing operators.</li> </ol>
3.2	02/08/2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Added Section 3.5 “WYVERN Flight Leader Coach Appointment”. Added protocols for vetting and onboarding of FLCs.</li> <li>2. Updated image of SMS Certificate.</li> <li>3. Updated org titles nomenclature where necessary.</li> <li>4. Revised Section 6 to reflect needed flexibility in the HF/OF areas.</li> <li>5. Revised Section 10, removed reference to IEP in demonstration of compliance with international standards.</li> </ol>
3.3	01/31/2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Changed SMS certification expiry from 12 to 24 months.</li> </ol>
3.4	03/28/2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revised Section 4.2.1 to include Flight Leader Program Entry Audit for those operators new to the Program who wish to become Wingman certified at the commencement of FLP activities.</li> </ol>
3.5	04/12/2025	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Revised titles in Section 3.5 to remove AVPRMS.</li> <li>2. Renamed Preamble with Purpose.</li> <li>3. Corrected lower case org name to all-caps.</li> </ol>
3.6	03/03/2026	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Added Section 4.2.3 to outline Wingman FBO and Wingman MRO eligibility in conjunction with an operator in the Flight Leader Program.</li> </ol>



## 0.0 Introduction

The Flight Leader Program (FLP) offers a progressive approach for an operator to attain and maintain an effective SMS. During the journey, the operator will complete world-class safety leadership training, meet quarterly with their flight leader coach, align with international standards, and become a certified WYVERN Wingman Operator. Once the Flight Leader Coach validates that the Wingman Operator is skillfully managing Human Factors (HF) and Organizational Factors (OF), and maintains a safety culture, the operator will achieve the highest certification at the pinnacle of this program, *WYVERN Wingman PRO*.

The diagram below provides a visual of the pathway along the journey to this highest certification, while each milestone achieved is recognized via an official WYVERN certificate.



Figure 1. Journey to Wingman PRO



## 1.0 Flight Leader Program Prerequisites

1.1 The following requirements shall be satisfied for an operator to enter the Flight Leader Program (FLP).

1.1.1 The operator shall endorse the *Flight Leader Code of Professionalism*

1.1.2 The operator shall have a viable safety management system.

1.1.3 The person appointed by the organization's accountable executive as responsible for the daily management of the SMS shall complete WYVERN's *Safety Leader Training Course* (SLTC). The SLTC locations and dates may be found on the WYVERN website at <http://www.wyvernltcd.com>.

## 2.0 Flight Leader Code of Professionalism

2.1 Any operator desiring to enter the Flight Leader Program shall endorse the Flight Leader Code of Professionalism. The code is as follows:

Professionalism is the pursuit of excellence through integrity, just culture, informed culture, and disciplined debriefing.

- **Integrity** – Doing what your organization says it does, every day. A steadfast commitment to your organization's values, as well as those of your industry.
- **Just Culture** – Analyzing events to understand the organizational factors involved and seeking fair accountability of the organization.
- **Informed Culture** – Nurturing an environment where everyone shares knowledge and feels safe to communicate their doubts, concerns, or problems.
- **Debrief Discipline** – Performing daily debriefs in all areas to continually improve.



### 3.0 Flight Leader Coach

3.1 WYVERN Flight Leader Coaches (FLCs) are appointed by the CEO and are top professionals in the field of aviation safety risk management. They shall have expert knowledge related to the following core competencies:

- a. Leadership and Management,
- b. Safety Management Systems,
- c. Organizational Safety Culture
- d. Organizational Factors,
- e. Human Factors, and
- f. International Standards.

3.2 To be appointed as a WYVERN FLC, the individual shall:

- a. Have the requisite experience, education, and qualifications to provide expert coaching,
- b. Display cultural and emotional intelligence to handle diverse situations effectively, and
- c. Complete the Safety Leader Training Course.

3.3 To provide coaching services to WYVERN clients, the FLC shall be current and qualified. The appointment as a WYVERN FLC is valid for two years. To remain current, the FLC shall attend annual training acceptable to WYVERN related to at least one of the above-listed core competencies. The FLC shall provide proof of this training to WYVERN to be maintained in their records.

3.4 FLC's shall utilize the process and instructions in the FLP Portal for continuous monitoring, not to exceed quarterly. As a minimum, this will include: 1) Reviewing input and analysis of submitted safety reports, 2) Providing feedback and guidance on the client's SMS program, 3) Evaluating the degree to which the operator effectively manages organizational factors, human factors, and alignment with applicable international standards. Like a coach for a professional athlete, the FLC challenges the operator to stretch and achieve new levels of performance. Likewise, the coach must also continually self-improve, extend, and achieve better capabilities as a teacher, mentor, evaluator.

3.5 WYVERN Flight Leader Coach Appointment Process

WYVERN Flight Leader Coaches are onboarded by way of the following process.



- a) The COO or designee will solicit and acquire a current CV from identified viable candidate.
- b) The COO will interview the candidate to ascertain the candidate's suitability for the position and assure that the candidate meets the knowledge and experience criteria put forth in sections 3.1 and 3.2 of this manual.
- c) If the candidate is deemed suitable, CV and interviewers' comments will be sent by email to the CEO for approval.
- d) When return email from CEO indicating approval of the candidate is received, the COO will forward the candidate's contact info to the VPA for onboarding paperwork.
- e) When onboarding paperwork is completed, the COO will forward the Assignment Letter to the VPA for DocuSign treatment and signature by CEO.
- f) The COO will coordinate onboarding training, including:
  1. Safety Leader Training.
  2. Initial indoctrination and interview session training with a qualified FLC.

## 4.0 SMS and Wingman Certification

### 4.1 SMS Certification

An operator may gain SMS certification when the Flight Leader Coach validates the effectiveness of the operator's SMS components utilizing the most recent version of the Safety Management International Collaboration Group (SMICG) SMS Evaluation Tool or the applicable State program, such as 14 CFR Part 5 in the U.S.

The SMICG SMS Eval Tool can be downloaded at [this link](#).

The operator's SMS level achievement will be recognized by an official WYVERN certificate (See Figure 2) which will remain valid for 24 months.



Figure 2. SMS Certification

## 4.2 Wingman Certification

4.2.1 An operator may gain Wingman certification via the FLP after the FLC validates that they have implemented the requirements of The Wingman Standard. The following acceptable means of conformity are allowed under this program:

- a) A Flight Leader Program Entry Audit may be conducted for operators new to the FLP, who wish to gain Wingman certification at the commencement of FLP activities. FLP Entry Audit will be an on-site audit and will take place prior to FLP activities commencing. Any findings discovered during the audit will be worked to an acceptable corrective action within the FLP workflow.
- b) SMS Protocols: State programs, such as the SMSVP or FAR Part 5 in the U.S., or other reasonable industry protocols may be utilized to validate implementation of the SMS.



- c) ICAO Annex 6 Protocols: The IS-BAO may be utilized in lieu of the ICAO Annex 6 protocols normally used for Wingman audits.

NOTE: In addition to the SMS and international standards requirements, the operator must conform to all WYVERN specific Wingman standards to be certified as a Wingman.

4.2.2 The operator shall receive an official Wingman certificate valid for 24 months from the date the FLC formally communicates to the COO that the operator has satisfied all the requirements to be recognized as a Wingman under this program. During the following 24 months, it is expected that the FLC monitor the operator's internal audit program to ensure continual alignment with all applicable standards. During each quarterly coaching session, the operator should demonstrate how they maintain alignment with applicable standards, primarily by management of change when applicable standards change or when the operator changes policies, processes, or procedures related to Wingman requirements. The FLC shall document this continual monitoring and assessment via the WYVERN FLP portal.

4.2.3 An operator participating in the Flight Leader Program that holds Wingman or Wingman PRO certification and also operates a Fixed Base Operation (FBO) or Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) facility may request designation of such FBO or MRO as a Wingman FBO or Wingman MRO, as applicable. Eligibility for such designation requires that the enterprise maintain a common Safety Management System (SMS) and a common Director of Safety, both of which must be validated by WYVERN.

To maintain Wingman FBO or Wingman MRO designation, the operator shall be subject to evaluation of selected technical elements conducted in conjunction with standard Sorties, and shall remit an additional monthly fee in accordance with the current WYVERN fee schedule.

NOTE – Wingman or Wingman PRO certification renews automatically unless an excessive gap is reported by the Flight Leader Coach.

## 5.0 Removal from and Reinstatement to the Program

5.1 An operator may request a reversion to the legacy Wingman audit program at any time via an email to WYVERN. Upon receipt of this email, the following guidelines shall apply.

- a. The operator's Wingman certification will enter a grace period of up to 30 days past the date of the email requesting removal from the Flight Leader Program.



- b. During this grace period, the operator shall:
  - i. Remain on The Wingman Report (TWR).
  - ii. Sign a WYVERN Wingman Audit Sales Agreement; and
  - iii. Submit payment to WYVERN for the Wingman Certification audit services.

5.2 If the 30-day grace period expires and steps (ii) and (iii) above have not been completed, WYVERN shall remove the operator from The Wingman Report (TWR).

5.3 If the operator completes requirements during the 30-day grace period, their Wingman certification will remain in effect for an additional 60-day grace period to allow time for the audit to be conducted for Wingman renewal certification.

5.4 The WYVERN CEO reserves the right to dis-enroll any operator from the Flight Leader Program and immediately remove the operator's Wingman certification if evidence indicates the operator is not aligned with the Flight Leader Program and/or WYVERN principles.

5.5 If the operator wishes to voluntarily withdraw from the Flight Leader Program and no transition to the legacy Wingman has been planned as outlined in 5.1, the operator's Wingman status will be suspended upon the date of withdrawal from Flight Leader Program.

5.6 If an operator is removed from the Flight Leader Program for sub-standard performance, they may re-enter the program by accomplishing the following:

- a. The operator's designated safety leader shall complete remedial training with a WYVERN FLC. This training will be custom designed to address the identified weaknesses of the operator's SMS. This will be a one-day virtual training event, as a minimum. The operator will be invoiced to cover this additional support.
- b. After the safety leader completes the training above, WYVERN will determine if an on-site assessment is required. If the onsite visit is required, the operator will be invoiced to cover this additional validation effort.

## 6.0 Human Factors

The FLC shall ensure the client's training program includes human and organizational factors including just culture and non-technical skills with the intent of reducing human error. Human

Factors should be integrated into the SMS and the operations of the organization. This should be evident throughout the organization from senior management to front line staff.

Specific HF/OF elements will be presented within the QSMS web-tools, as the coach deems appropriate, and will be monitored by the COO for appropriateness.

## 7.0 Organizational Factors and Safety Culture

7.1 The FLC shall ensure that the operator effectively manages organizational factors to ensure a positive safety culture. Organizational culture can be affected by factors such as:

- a. business policies and procedures.
- b. supervisory behavior and practices.
- c. safety goals.
- d. management’s attitude toward quality or safety issues.
- e. employee training and motivation.
- f. the relationship with the regulatory authorities; and
- g. policies on work/life balance.

7.2 The goal is to manage these and other factors to achieve a positive safety culture, which is defined as having the components identified in Figure 4.



Figure 4. Six Characteristics of a Safety Culture (SMICG, 2019)

Reference Guide: [SMICG Safety Culture Evaluation Tool](#)



## 8.0 Flight Data Analysis Program and SMS Integration

8.1 The operator should implement a flight data analysis program and integrate this program into the SMS to enhance hazard identification, validate the effectiveness of safety risk controls, and provide evidence of a safety culture.

## 9.0 Threat and Error Management

9.1 The operator should identify daily threats and human errors, while also developing countermeasures to 1) prevent undesired states or 2) recover from undesired states should they occur. The organization shall employ countermeasures to keep threats, errors, and undesired states from reducing margins of safety in operations. Some countermeasures are already in place in the system before personnel report for duty and are therefore considered as systemic-based countermeasures. Examples of these would include training, standardized briefings, checklists, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Airborne Collision Avoidance System (ACAS), and Ground Proximity Warning System (GPWS).

9.2 Other countermeasures are more directly related to human behavior. These are personal strategies and tactics that can be developed by human performance training, such as Crew Resource Management (CRM) training. There are three categories of individual and team countermeasures:

- a. **Planning countermeasures:** essential for managing anticipated and unexpected threats
- b. **Execution countermeasures:** essential for error detection and error response
- c. **Review countermeasures:** essential for managing the changing conditions

Reference Guide: [Threat and Error Management Guidebook](#)

## 10.0 Wingman PRO Certification

10.1 An operator who participates in the Flight Leader Program achieves Wingman PRO Certification when they have achieved all the following:

- a. Effectiveness for all SMS components.
- b. Effective management of human factors and organizational factors.
- c. Validated an ongoing positive safety culture; and
- d. Demonstration of continuous conformity to applicable international standards.

WYVERN awards all Wingman PRO Certified operators with an official letter and a certificate to formally recognize their accomplishment, with a validity period the same as the Wingman certificate. Furthermore, the operator is entitled to display the Wingman PRO logo (Figure 6) on their website and other promotional materials.



Figure 6. Wingman PRO Logo