

Embracing CE-SOHMS: A cornerstone of our District Vision

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Hard hats are placed on shovels in anticipation of the groundbreaking for the 21st-century high school at Ramstein Air Base on 28 March 2018.

“A Team Making a Difference, Building Things That Matter.” This is how I define the true mission of the Europe District. Of paramount importance to the success of our mission is the incorporation of Safety Program Management, not only in our workplaces, but also into our Business Processes. When our team fails to accurately identify, prioritize, mitigate, and manage hazards we expose both our people and our mission execution to undue risk, and subsequently jeopardize our success. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Safety and Occupational Health Management System (CE-SOHMS) is our framework to ensure that safety is integrated into the Project Delivery Business Process from project initiation to final closeout.

By now, I am hoping you have heard about CE-SOHMS. If you haven't, you soon will as we integrate this system into our business process. It is important to understand that CE-SOHMS is not just a Europe District initiative. The development of CE-SOHMS was based on the collaborative effort of all Army Commands to develop a total Army Safety and Occupational Health Management System (ASOHMS). USACE used the ASOHMS as a model to develop a safety management system inclusive of all USACE missions and functions. It makes no difference what Army Command or USACE District you came from or where you may go after your NAU experience, ASOHMS/CESOHMS will be the management system used to integrate safety into the mission. This structured process will ensure that safety is considered on every project, that risks are identified in the earliest phase, and that our employees are empowered to take action.

CE-SOHMS is not a mindless rush to meet generic or over-simplistic standards ("no running with scissors", etc.). Rather than focusing on compliance programs, our focus is to move into a system of continuous programmatic improvement. This is a system that actively integrates safety throughout our mission, and utilizes the expertise of our local Safety Program Management Office more effectively.

Our District is already experiencing a high level of success, and our exceptional safety culture continues to be a catalyst for that success. As we build upon this foundation and strive toward becoming a World Class Organization it is imperative that we embrace this comprehensive business management system to ensure that safety becomes a part of the way our organization functions now and for years to come. For the Europe District to continuously evolve our level of safety, I am not only requesting that all employees be actively involved, I am relying on your active participation.

Step one is to begin with the awareness that we are all accountable for identifying and mitigating risks in our areas of responsibility both on and off the job. The goal of this safety system is to ensure that risks are managed at the earliest phase of the project where we can have the greatest impact without jeopardizing our ability to deliver quality projects on time and within budget. This commitment to safety begins with our leaders. What you do for the safety of your projects and personnel influences what your subordinates do – trust me, they are watching! As this system is implemented throughout Europe District you will have the unique opportunity to affect long-lasting change to ensure the success of current and future missions.

Implementation of this system requires effort from the entire roster on our team of teams to accomplish our mission. I am convinced that embracing this new Safety Management system will not only continue to improve the safety of our NAU team, it will also enhance our ability to deliver quality projects on time and within budget. I know that each of you will do your part to protect our workforce, to integrate safety through the Project Management Business Process, and to safely execute our mission.

BUILDING STRONG!