Problem

1. What
- Problem(s): Fire at FAA facility, major flight disruptions, injury
- When
  - Date: September 26, 2014
  - Time: 5:40 a.m.
- Where: FAA facility in Aurora, IL
- Task being performed: Monitoring high altitude air traffic in Chicago region
- Different, unusual, unique: Yes
- Facility site: Not mentioned

2. When
- Date: September 26, 2014
- Time: 5:40 a.m.

3. Where
- Facility, site: FAA facility in Aurora, IL

Impact to the Goals

- Safety
  - One employee injured
  - Potential for more injuries
- Environmental
  - Significant damage to FAA facility
- Customer Service
  - Thousands of travelers' plans disrupted
  - Thousands of travelers' plans delayed
  - >1,750 canceled flights, many more delayed
  - Staff required additional hours
- Regulatory
  - Impact to the Goals
- Production/Schedule
  - >1,750 canceled flights, many more delayed
  - Significant damage to FAA facility
- Property/Equipment
  - Repair work required at FAA facility
- Labor/Time
  - Time required to manage flight disruptions
  - Repair work required at FAA facility

Analysis

- Effect
  - Safety Goal
    - One employee injured
    - Potential for more injuries
  - Property/Equipment Goal
    - Significant damage to FAA facility
  - Labor/Time Goal
    - Repair work required at FAA facility
- Cause

- Evidence: Statements by FAA. Repairs are not estimated to be completed until 10/16/2014.
- Evidence: Media reports and statements by FAA personnel.

- Solution:
  - Employees at facility monitored flights in Chicago region
  - Employees at FAA facility monitored flights in Chicago region
  - Arson

- AND
  - Contractor intentionally started fire

- Contractor bought materials into building to start fire

- Mental illness?

Solutions

The final step in the Cause Mapping process is to develop and implement solutions to reduce the risk of a similar problem. Law makers have called for an investigation into this issue to see if there is sufficient redundancy in the air traffic control system. In an ideal situation, a fire or other crisis at any single location would not cripple US air traffic to the extent that this issue did. The investigation is also looking into the fire and reviewing the security at the facility to see if there should be stricter restrictions put in place, such as ensuring that no employees work alone or searching workers as they enter the site.

This situation is also a strong reminder that organizations need to have a plan in place of what to do in case a failure occurs. There was a previous fire scare at this same location earlier in 2014 when a smoking ceiling fan resulted in an evacuation and flight delays that should have prompted some serious consideration of what the contingency plan should be if this facility was ever out of commission.

"Over the next 30 days, they will take a look at our plans to make sure we are prepared to both assure the safety of aircraft, but also the efficiency of the system... I want to make sure we have all the tools in place to get our airspace back up and running as quickly as possible."

- FAA Administrator Michael Huerta