



2005-June : Newsletter

ALEA SAFETY SURVEY

The 2005 Annual Safety Survey was sent to all Unit OIC's and Safety Officers. It is also posted in the Safety Section on the ALEA website. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey. With the information from the survey, ALEA will be able to better serve your safety needs. Thank you in advance.

PRE-CONFERENCE COURSES STILL HAVE ROOM

There is still space available in the Aviation Accident Investigation and Aviation Safety Management Course. These are pre-conference courses.

Jim Di Giovanna, Education Program Manager, has developed great programs for both courses. Please join us.

NEEDS SOME OH-58 PARTS

The King County Sheriff's Office in Washington needs some TT straps. They have an aircraft on the ground. The part number is: 206-011-147-005. You can contact Lt. Sydney Jackson at, 206-296-2740, or email: sydney.jackson@metrokc.gov.

SAFETY LEADERSHIP – INTENTIONAL NON-COMPLIANCE

Intentional Non-Compliance, or breaking the rules, is an all too common occurrence, and is a factor in many aviation and industrial mishaps. Examples include not following organization policies and procedures, failing to comply with the FAR's or the aircraft Operators Manual, and standing on the top step of a stepladder to preflight. This should not be confused with inadvertent errors and honest mistakes.

Most cases of intentional rule breaking do not result in mishaps. But intentional rule breaking can be insidious, and always increases risk. These might include routinely flying with your sleeves rolled up or not wearing your gloves, not using your visor, not using a checklist or not buckling the chinstrap on your helmet. These occurrences may seem minor, because they generally have no immediate consequences until something happens, like having a large bird come through the windshield, or making a gear-up landing. Once you have an eye(s) full of Turkey Buzzard, or the gear up warning horn sounds, it's often too late.

One of the major tenets in aviation safety doctrine is never take unnecessary risks! Studies have shown that when you break a rule, you are more than twice as likely to make a serious error. But most of the time nothing happens.

We often think that because nothing has happened yet, it's all right to break the rules. Therein lies of the problem.

Experts tell us that if we obeyed all the rules, we could eliminate 70-80% of the accidents. Sounds simple, and it is. So what's the problem? It's all about ATTITUDE! Some of us think the rules are for other people. Does this sound familiar, "I've been doing it this way for 10,000 hours, and never had an accident." Don't confuse luck with doing it right. And people that have had an accident never thought they were going to have one until it happened. We all need to accept the fact that we can have an accident, and we increase the likelihood of having an accident when we break the rules. When an accident does occur, and we are wearing all of our personal protective equipment, injury is often prevented or minimized.

We know there are safety margins built into aircraft to help compensate for human error. "So what's the big deal if I exceed the torque limit of my aircraft by only 10%? I've done it before, and nothing ever happened." If every pilot went around exceeding the operating limitations, there would be accelerated wear and potential damage, and who would know when a component might fail, even when complying with the limitations. If you don't want to follow the rules for your sake, at least do it for the sake of others. We rely on each other to follow the rules. And if that slight over-torque occurs, report it. All of our lives, and those of our crewmembers and passengers, depend on it. And when you know you're going to be operating close to operating limitations, i.e. a maximum performance takeoff, use your TFO or co-pilot to monitor your takeoff limitations

Lastly, I wish to address the issue of accountability. This is a challenge that every supervisor must confront. Everyone in the organization must know they will be held accountable for their performance. It doesn't matter if you're the boss, a pilot, tactical flight officer or a ground attendant. Those of us in supervisory positions have an important role when we become aware of intentional non-compliance. It's never pleasant when you have to counsel or discipline someone. It's especially unpleasant when it's someone we like. But the rules are for everybody. Supervisors need to be courageous and hold people accountable. It often only requires a little discussion with the individual for minor violations. If we take care of the little things, it reduces the likelihood of something with more severe consequences from occurring. So let's all follow the rules, all the time, every time.

Remember – Safety First!

Keith Johnson

Safety Program Manager