



# The

# Safety

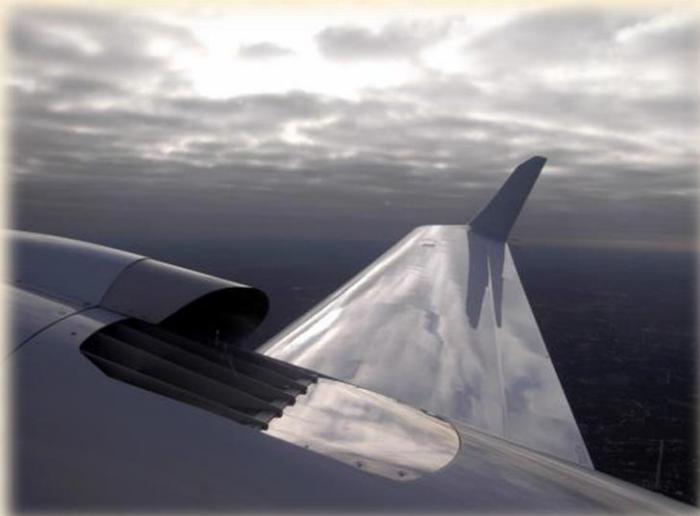
# Wire

**December 2013**

## ***“WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON?”***

This was a pretty common question around the office when I was at the Alachua County Sheriff's Office/Gainesville Police aviation unit. During my time there, nearly every

member of the unit was working on some initial or advanced pilot rating, TFO skill set, or project to increase or improve the unit's capabilities. Training didn't happen a couple of times a year; it was a constant part of daily operations in one form or another. The initial sign off as pilot or TFO was just a marker on the path to much higher aspirations. New ideas were always in the works to update, change or verify unit operations, capabilities, tactics, etc. When someone became a flight instructor or reached an advanced level of TFO capability, they were given the opportunity to teach other unit members. As any instructor knows, you can only really master a skill through the act of figuring out how to teach it. Chief Pilot Richard Bray brought me into the world of instructing for ALEA and shared flying opportunities with me outside of work as well.



Instead of jealously keeping their respective piles of aviation gold under wraps, experienced members of the unit served as mentors to the rest of us. They shared their experience, knowledge, opportunities and, when ready, the chance to teach and mentor as well.

I first joined ALEA in 1994 as a college student trying to figure out how to get into this business. The knowledge and mentoring I've received from our members throughout the years helped me

get my foot in the door and then guide me safely through a career in an industry that is second-to-none in my book.

This is my message for the holidays. The common theme for this time of year is ‘giving’ to others. We all have at least one person who played a major role in getting us into this industry, and surviving in it as long as we have. There is at least one mentor, instructor, coworker, or author who has made a critical and positive difference in our career. Without the support of many people, especially those mentioned above, I would not be where I am today no matter how hard I had worked or studied. Now is the time for all of us to do the same for someone else. I ask every member to think of at least one way you can give back to our community. It could be sharing an important ‘lesson learned,’ teaching a course, participating in online discussions and meetings, or helping a fellow pilot, TFO or maintenance technician reach the next level in their career...the choices are many.



I hope you all enjoy the holidays. Fly safe and stay extra vigilant...I don't want to write about any unfortunate reindeer strike accidents in the next newsletter.

...even though it's changing every second, the sky is always a perfect sky...and the sea is always a perfect sea, and it's always changing. If perfection is stagnation, then heaven is a swamp...

In order to live free and happily, you must sacrifice boredom. It is not always an easy sacrifice.

**--Richard Bach  
Aviation author**

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## **SAFETY MEETING REVIEW**

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, the ALEA Safety Officer Mutual Aid Group had another great online meeting. Some of the issues discussed were:

- Format and practice of an Emergency Response Plan



- Flight Risk Assessment Tools
- Recent law enforcement accident information
- Hazard Reporting – difficulties in the process and role of Just Culture

The group continues to grow and produce some very useful discussions. Please feel free to call or email if you'd like to join in on the email group and online meetings. The next online meeting will be February 10<sup>th</sup> at 2000hrs UTC (Zulu).

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## SAFETY RESOURCES



### NASA Callback

NASA's Aviation Safety Reporting System is a fantastic place to spend time digging up useful safety information. It is also one of the most successful examples of how Just Culture can benefit safety. They put out a free newsletter that you can sign up for on the website. Here is a link to the latest one:

[http://asrs.arc.nasa.gov/publications/callback/cb\\_406.html](http://asrs.arc.nasa.gov/publications/callback/cb_406.html)

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## SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

In the latest issue of *Air Beat*, I said that the December installment of this newsletter would contain a sample Flight Risk Assessment Tool (FRAT) for all of you looking to implement one at your unit. I sat in my office working on the project (a bit too slowly) when there was a knock at my door. It was my three year old son who looked through the partially opened doorway with the big doe eyes that little kids use to make soft hearted



parents bend to their will. “Will you play with me daddy?”

For those of us who are very passionate about safety, one of the most difficult things we do is keep everything ‘reasonable’. I’m not talking about what the safety professional thinks is reasonable; I’m referring to what everybody else thinks is reasonable. The two standards of what is reasonable (safety manager vs. everyone else) are, unfortunately, often two different things simply because others do not have the same passion, information or training (or mental illness) that the ‘safety guy/gal’ has. Even when we are right, if the people we are serving do not think we are being reasonable, we will have little success in improving anything. Sometimes the best thing we can do to help our safety program is to take a step back and regain the perspective of those around us.

Everything I do right with the ALEA Safety Program is, in part, thanks to the support and backing of my wife and two kids. They tolerate me sequestering myself in the office, picking up the phone at the worst time to talk to some pilot on the other side of the country or being away from home to attend an event. The guys I work with have similar complaints about me. It’s Christmas and I need to take a step back for a moment to keep things reasonable in the home office. I hope that each of you will remember to take a moment to push away from the desk a little bit more often this time of year and reflect on why we do what we do. It will help tremendously when you belly back up to the keyboard. Right now, the FRAT will have to wait; two superheroes have informed me my services are desperately required elsewhere...



Grown-ups never understand anything by themselves, and it is tiresome for children to be always and forever explaining things to them.

--Antoine de Saint-Exupéry  
*Aviation author*



## REALITY CHECK...

This month, all of our minds are likely on one accident...the tragic loss of the Police Scotland crew and seven civilians on November 29th. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families and friends of David Traill, Kirsty Nelis and Tony Collins.



It is difficult in times like these to balance the desire to know what caused the crash (especially for those of you flying the same type of aircraft) and acceptance of the time requirements for a proper investigation. The initial information from the Air Accidents Investigation Branch was published rather quickly, as far as major aircraft accident preliminary reports go. Unfortunately, the report does not give many clues as to the cause. Since then, there have been other press releases concerning precautionary measures that are being implemented within specific EC135 fleets. I have included links to the AAIB report and those news stories below. Included is the press release from Bond Air Services on the fuel system indicator issues since identified in their fleet (though no official correlation was made between the indicator issue and the accident).

What we do know is that two officers and their pilot were lost. An ALEA member recently sent me a link to a memorial for Kirsty Nelis. The piece was written by Chaplain Tamia Dow of the International Association of Women Police ([www.iawp.org](http://www.iawp.org)). With their permission, I have included a link to it below. The memorial not only includes background on this dedicated officer, but also some more information on the mission they were flying that night.

[http://iawp.wildapricot.org/Resources/Documents/announce/InMemoriam\\_KirstyNelis.pdf](http://iawp.wildapricot.org/Resources/Documents/announce/InMemoriam_KirstyNelis.pdf)

[http://www.aaib.gov.uk/cms\\_resources.cfm?file=/S9-2013%20G-SPAO%20v2.pdf](http://www.aaib.gov.uk/cms_resources.cfm?file=/S9-2013%20G-SPAO%20v2.pdf)

[http://www.technologynewsroom.com/press\\_releases/files/4318/BAS%20Statement%20EC135s%20131213.pdf](http://www.technologynewsroom.com/press_releases/files/4318/BAS%20Statement%20EC135s%20131213.pdf)

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/10513858/Emergency-helicopter-model-involved-in-Clutha-pub-crash-grounded-after-defect-found.html>

<http://www.eveningtimes.co.uk/news/grounded-copters-back-in-service-145391n.22948519>

Alert Service Bulletins issued by Eurocopter on December 19, 2013:

[http://www.eurocopter.com/site/docs\\_wsw/RUB\\_1330/ASB\\_EC135-EC635-28-018-Rev0-EN.pdf](http://www.eurocopter.com/site/docs_wsw/RUB_1330/ASB_EC135-EC635-28-018-Rev0-EN.pdf)

[http://www.eurocopter.com/site/docs\\_wsw/RUB\\_1330/ASB\\_EC135-EC635-28-019-REV0-EN.pdf](http://www.eurocopter.com/site/docs_wsw/RUB_1330/ASB_EC135-EC635-28-019-REV0-EN.pdf)

*As always...*

If you would like to be a part of this process, please contact me.

If you have a story to tell or a lesson to pass on, send it to me.

If you like what you see happening with the program, I would like to hear from you.

If you want to see something different, or additional... I NEED to hear from you!

Until the next flight,

*Bryan 'MaGu' Smith*

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