



The Safety Wire

June 2013

GATHERINGS are one of the greatest aspects of aviation. Legend has it that the first thing the Wright brothers did when they landed their machine was start planning for a BBQ fly-in. Next month, ALEA members from around the world will come together for the 43rd Annual Conference & Exposition in Orlando, FL. It is

something I look forward to all year long, like my kids and Christmas, and I could fill pages about how great of an event it is. However, I'd like to focus on the impact such gatherings have on safety.

When I worked for the Gainesville Police/Alachua County Joint Aviation Unit, we would meet with members of surrounding agencies in north Florida a couple times a year. The group would discuss recent safety issues, budgets, and mutual aid procedures, and a few people from the various agencies would give a presentation. Oh, and there was always food; lots of it.

This was the good, old-fashioned Safety Day, a.k.a. Safety Stand Down. All of us should take the time to step back from daily operations and get together to discuss safety within our operations. Richard Bookbinder, an ALEA member and law enforcement aviator, gives a great presentation on the importance of having a Safety Day.

Often, we get so wrapped up in the day-to-day business of operations at our own facility that we lose perspective. We're too close and 'can't see the forest for the trees.' It is beneficial to step back and look at everything from a distance provided by a pause in operations. Involving others from outside of our operation, such as other ALEA member agencies, widens that perspective. It also broadens the knowledge and experience you have to draw on during the event, as others may do business in a slightly different manner. Richard recommends using case studies of incidents in similar segments of the industry. He includes pictures of aircrew members killed in the accidents to cement the lessons learned into the reality of our daily professional lives. Topics that he suggests are IIMC procedures, interagency operations procedures (flying in the same piece of air as others during operations), ground operations safety (ingress, egress, offsite landings) and local flight hazards.



In late May, the Portland Police Air Support Unit hosted a Safety Stand Down and invited several other units. Here is a portion of an email from the unit supervisor, Sgt. Josh Goldschmidt:

"This past Tuesday was our unit's Spring Safety Stand Down. Traditionally, it has been just our unit, but this year I invited Washington County, Clackamas County, the FBI, Oregon State Police, Multnomah



County, PDX tower and TRACON. The line crew at Atlantic Aviation pulled out their huge BBQ and grilled for us. The ATC folks set up a dessert table to help raise money for one of their own who has a very sick newborn on experimental meds. It was a great training and a lot of great conversations came about during the BBQ.”

Authors note: By the way, go to:

<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/article/250326> to see an outstanding promotional video for the Portland Police Air Support Unit

Training days such as these can have a significant impact on safety. Please consider having one at

your agency. If you want some additional ideas on topics to cover, a presentation on Safety Day topics has been added to the website here:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/05a9ecaq6rddf0jc/Whay_have_a_safety_day%5B1%5D.pptx

For maximum effect, invite neighboring agencies and other aviation organizations in your area. Don't forget the BBQ.

“A FREE RIDE AND FREE FOOD ARE TWO OF THE THREE THINGS NO PILOT EVER TURNS DOWN”

~DICK RUTAN

GOING TO ORLANDO NEXT MONTH?

Please come by for the Safety Symposium on:

Thursday, July 18th at 3:00 p.m. Room 202 (A-B)

The focus of the symposium this year is Inadvertent IMC Survival. I will be joined by a panel of experts selected from the group of industry professionals who have worked with me in 2013 in developing IIMC specific training recommendations. They include:

Glenn Daley -	NYPD (ret.), IHST SMS Committee member
Richard Weber -	Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, HAI Safety Committee member
Randy Rowles -	Era Training Center
Eric King -	American Eurocopter
Randy Mains -	Oregon Aero, Author (Rotorcraft Pro)
Woody McClendon -	FlightSafety International



Take time to stop by...it will be worth your time!



A SUCCESSFUL GATHERING IN EUROPE!

On May 21st, public safety aviation organizations from around Europe came together for the 2013 PAvCon (Police Aviation Conference) in Austria. The event attracted law enforcement aviation professionals from all over Europe, as well as attendees from as far away as Israel, Nigeria, Macedonia and the USA. Over 17 aircraft were on static display, along with 25 exhibitors. It was an opportunity for law enforcement aviators to get together and share the kind of information that can keep their communities safe, see more criminals cleaned off the streets, and most importantly, make sure their own flight crews get home safely at the end of the day. Two of the new ALEA Safety Liaisons, Glenn Daley and Joseba Mendizabal, were in attendance. Glenn gave a presentation on a recent law enforcement crash and the safety lessons we all can learn from it. Other courses covered topics such as CRM and responding to in-flight emergencies. Great job to Bryn Elliot for another successful show. A full synopsis is available at:

<http://www.policeaviationnews.com/acrobat/PAvCon2013Report.pdf>



ONLINE GATHERINGS

Currently, there are two groups of ALEA members that come together online to discuss safety issues and solutions within our industry.

While the **Safety Officer Mutual Aid Group** is mainly composed of safety officers from various public safety aviation agencies, it is open to any ALEA member that is interested in safety. Participants must be current ALEA members in good standing. The next meeting is scheduled for July 9th at 1900z (1400 EST). You can participate for free via computer or phone.

The new **ALEA Safety Liaison** group started meeting this year and is steadily growing. Below is a list of liaisons currently in the program. They are helping to ensure the ALEA safety program keeps informed of 'local' issues and knowledge. If you have an issue or concern, you can contact the liaison for your area or me at any time. If you do not see a liaison for your

region of the world, please contact me to get involved or pass on a suggestion for someone you think would be interested.

Brazil/S. America	- Alex Barreto (Sao Paulo Police)	mena@pilotopolicial.com.br
Europe	- Joseba Mendizabal (Basque Police Dept., Spain)	heligolf.01@gmail.com
Northeast US	- Glenn Daley (NYPD ret.)	heloflight@optonline.net
Southeast US	- Lee Majors (Leon County Sheriff's Office)	majorsl@leoncountyfl.gov
Central US	- Mark Colborn (Dallas Police Dept)	kd5elf@tx.rr.com
Western US	- Jordan Van Meter (California Highway Patrol)	JOVanMeter@chp.ca.gov
Eastern (Midwest) US	- George Nestorovich (Lake County Police)	gnestorovich@lakecountysheriff.com
Canada	- Ted Smith (Ontario Provincial Police)	Ted.Smith@ontario.ca

As you can see, this list has some great people on it and I want to express my gratitude for their offer to help. You can also see we are missing representatives from several areas of the world. This list is not limited to the six ALEA membership regions. I would still like to have people involved from Asia, Australia, Africa, Central America and others. If you are interested in being the safety voice for ALEA members in your area, please email or call me.

AEROMEDICAL SAFETY

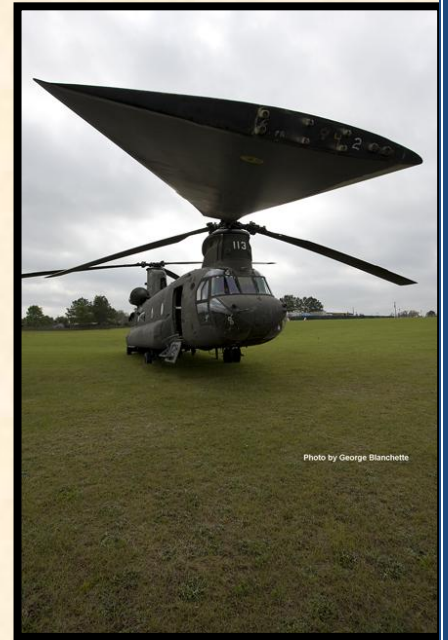
Dudley Crosson, PhD, ALEA Aeromedical Liaison

Why Not Self-Medicate?

Medications can impact safety of flight by two means. First, the desired effect can be so pronounced that it can hamper the individual's ability to carry out mission requirements. Secondly, all medications, including over-the-counter medications and dietary supplements, can have side effects. The consequences of these unintended effects can range from a minor nuisance, like in the case of a rash, to rapid incapacitation as can occur in serious allergic reactions. Furthermore, over-the-counter medications are often a compound of multiple medications, which require greater effort on the part of the user to ensure a certain harmful ingredient is not included in the formula.

Aside from medications, the condition itself for which one chooses to take a medication can impact safety of flight. Common symptoms such as pain or insomnia may occur as the initial indication of a serious condition or the symptom alone can impair one's ability to fly safely. Finally, interactions between various medications, or the simultaneous use with alcohol, can enhance the normal effects, worsen side effects or vastly increase or decrease the length of time a medication is in your system.

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EQUIPMENT CHECK

Last month's newsletter had a link to a document on helmet safety:

http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/av_safety/promotion/accident_prevention_bulletins/IA%20APB%2013-02%20Helmets.pdf

Within that document is another good document to check out. It is the US Department of the Interior's Flight Helmet Guide. The introduction makes a strong case for the use of flight helmets. Here are a couple examples:



Aircraft impacted inverted and seatbelt failed... No head injuries to the survivor.



After impact the airplane rotated 180°... No head injuries.

Check out the entire document for more examples and the rest of the manual:

https://www.iat.gov/docs/ALSE_FHUG_2008.pdf

REALITY CHECK...

Over the last several weeks, there have been three fatal EMS helicopter crashes in North America. One of them involved a Canadian Pilot named Don Filliter who was well known and respected in the Canadian law enforcement aviation community. The loss of Don, along with two FBI agents in a recent helicopter incident and a German pilot following a crash in March, reminds us that accidents do not just happen to unskilled or unprofessional aviators...they can happen to anyone. Next time I tell myself that I am safe from an accident because I am on top of my game, I will remember these guys and the fact that they were on top of theirs as well. That is a Reality Check I hope will keep me and my crew aware of the need for constant vigilance no matter how long we've been in the business.

<http://cnews.canoe.ca/CNEWS/Canada/2013/06/01/20865756.html>

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/07/kentucky-helicopter-crash-3-dead_n_3403259.html

<http://kfor.com/2013/06/11/eaglemed-crash-kills-one-injures-others-in-latimer-county/>

Aircraft: BELL 206B
Injuries: 3 Fatal
NTSB Identification: **ERA12MA122**

The pilot, who was SK Jets' president, owner, and director of operations, received a call from one of his company schedulers about 0335, notifying him about a trip for his largest customer to transport a doctor and a medical technician from Mayo Clinic Heliport, Jacksonville, Florida, to Shands Cair Heliport, Gainesville, Florida, to procure an organ for transplant. To prepare for this flight, the pilot reviewed aviation routine weather reports (METARs) and terminal area forecasts (TAFs) on the Internet; however, he did not obtain a standard weather briefing from a Federal Aviation Administration-approved source. At the time of his review of the METARs and TAFs, weather conditions near the departure heliport were visual meteorological conditions (VMC), with visibility of 10 miles and a broken cloud ceiling at 7,000 feet. Weather conditions were also VMC near Shands Cair Heliport, with visibility of 6 miles and a broken cloud ceiling at 1,600 feet. A TAF included a temporary condition during the estimated time of arrival near Shands Cair Heliport of instrument meteorological conditions (IMC) with visibility of 4 miles in mist and an overcast cloud ceiling at 400 feet.

About 0537, the helicopter picked up the doctor and medical technician at Mayo Clinic Heliport, departed, and proceeded southwest, flying a track slightly south and east of a direct course to Shands Cair Heliport. The pilot likely selected this route of flight so that he could navigate by landmarks and fly low in order to stay out of clouds. The pilot contacted an air traffic controller 4 minutes before the accident to ask about the status of restricted airspace, which he learned was inactive at the time. The transmissions were routine, and there was no evidence that the pilot or helicopter were experiencing any problems. During the en route portion of the 17 minute accident flight, the helicopter's altitude varied between about 450 and 950 feet agl. The helicopter's airspeed was about 100 to 110 knots. The last three radar returns were consistent with a right turn of about 45 degrees and a 300-foot descent, which placed the helicopter on a near-direct west course to Shands Cair Heliport at an altitude about 450 feet agl. The accident site was located about 1/2 mile south of the last radar return, with a southerly debris path, consistent with a significant change in course and left turn with a continued descent.

The 320-foot-long straight debris field, with descending cuts into trees, was indicative of substantial forward speed at the time of impact. Examination of the wreckage revealed no evidence of any pre-impact failures or malfunctions of the engine, drive train, main rotor, tail rotor, or structure of the helicopter. Additionally, there was no indication of an in-flight fire.

The accident helicopter was not certified for instrument flight rules (IFR) flight and did not have an autopilot or radar altimeter. The operator's general operating manual (GOM) noted that unless otherwise approved by the director of operations or chief pilot, the weather minimums for visual flight rules (VFR) flight in a helicopter at night were a 1,000 foot cloud ceiling and 3-mile visibility.

The pilot's financial pressure as the owner of the company likely influenced his decision to continue flight into deteriorating weather conditions. The operator's business had declined several years before the accident as a result of economic recession. The accident helicopter had been leased days before the accident. The pilot was also aware that his largest customer had begun identifying other aviation companies that might better fulfill its needs. Thus, the pilot

would have been highly motivated to complete trips as requested so that he could demonstrate the reliability of his service.

The National Transportation Safety Board determines the probable cause(s) of this accident to be:

The pilot's improper decision to continue visual flight into night instrument meteorological conditions, which resulted in controlled flight into terrain. Contributing to the pilot's improper decision was his self-induced pressure to complete the trip.

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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