



ALASKAN AVIATION SAFETY FOUNDATION



Newsletter

FALL SAFETY SEMINAR

Meeting the mission, the AAASF will be presenting the fall safety seminar on Saturday October 1, 2011 at the UAA Aviation Technology Center on Merrill Field.

The Aviation Community

- Mike Crudden, FAA

Weather Tools for Pilot Decision Making

- Gary Hufford, NWS

Survival and Survivability

- Brian Horner, LTR

Winter Operations

- Bart Stone , DOI/AMD

Your Engine in Winter

Chairman's Corner

Fellow Safety Foundation members,

This is the second newsletter in a reinvigorated effort to provide your with another source of aviation safety information. Special thanks to George Frushour for volunteering to be the Newsletter Editor, to John Hallinan for organizing the Fall Safety Seminar and to Mary O'Connor for contributing the article for this edition. Please provide George and I any feedback on the newsletter and any specific articles you might like to see.

A quick mention of the departure of Leonard Kirk. Some significant family events required him to leave Alaska. He has been a long time advocate of flying safety and a valuable contributor to AASF. He will continue to assist with issues and programs as able. Thank you Leonard!

One Board goal is to carry the AASF safety program to Southeast Alaska. If you are interested in development of this program and or may be available to "carry the message" in 2012, please contact George Frushour at aksupercub@yahoo.com.

Harry Kieling, Chairman, Board of Directors, AASF



Michael Dixon

The foundation has only one mission:

TO PROMOTE AVIATION SAFETY THROUGH PUBLIC EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Occupational Aviation Safety in Alaska - Lessons for Us All

Mary O'Connor

Did you know that aircraft crashes are the second leading cause of occupational deaths in Alaska?

Aviation safety has improved tremendously in Alaska in the past 20 years, but there is a lot of work that still needs to be done.

A study published in July 2011 showed that 54 aircraft crashes involving fatalities occurred in Alaska during 2000–2010, resulting in 90 occupational deaths. An occupational aircraft fatality is one where a victim is at work in an aircraft that is flying, or traveling in an aircraft as part of their job, such as a pilot, a biologist that is counting animals as part of an aerial survey, or a health care provider traveling from a hub city to a clinic in a small village. The mean age of the victims in this study was 44 years (range: 20–73 years), and 79 (88%) of the victims were male. Of those persons who died, 53 (59%) earned their living as pilots. Mean total flight hours (when available) for pilots in command was 7,798 hours. Most (65%) crashes occurred during May–September; 48% of crashes occurred during the hours of 12:01 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Among these crashes, 21 (39%) were associated with intended takeoffs or landings at landing sites not registered with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Fifteen crashes (28%) were associated with weather, including poor visibility, wind, and turbulence. In addition, 11 crashes (20%) resulted from pilots' loss of aircraft control, nine (17%) from pilots' failure to maintain clearance from terrain, water, or objects, and seven (13%) from engine, structure, or component failure.

So, what does this all mean for a general aviation pilot in Alaska? Many of these fatalities occurred during flights conducted under Part 91, the same general aviation regulations that govern the flying that most of us do. Landing sites that are not registered with the FAA can include gravel bars, lakes, glaciers and snow fields. While these landing sites may not be inherently dangerous, they are often located in remote areas that have limited weather information, no radar coverage and minimal or no emergency equipment. Pilots flying into such places should be prepared to divert or postpone flights in cases of poor weather, have an appropriate satellite-based location device such as a 406 MHz emergency locator transmitter, appropriate clothing (for passengers too!) and adequate survival gear.

Crashes resulting from loss of aircraft control, failure to maintain clearance from terrain and objects, failure of aircraft structure and components, failure to follow published procedures, and improper use of landing gear might be associated with pilot proficiency and decision making abilities. If professional pilots with thousands of flight hours can make fatal mistakes, we should take heed and ensure we have good accident prevention techniques in our own flying. Pilots need to be professional in their attitudes, decisions and skills even if they don't fly for a living. We should strive to be as proficient as possible and practice good decision making skills. It is okay to say "I don't feel comfortable going into that short strip" or "I'd rather wait until the weather improves a bit." Patience can be a virtue as well as a life saver. Regardless of experience, ratings or flight hours, being proficient, prepared and making prudent aeronautical decisions can help improve safety whether we work or play in aviation.

Mary O'Connor is the manager of the Aviation Safety Research Program at the Alaska Pacific Regional Office of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) in Anchorage. She is a new board member with the Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation and enjoys flying for fun.



Departure of a Friend

Many of you are on distribution for the Weather Camera Program and received a note on 08/01/2011 about a new installation at Port Heiden. A previous note was dated 07/26 for Chignik Lake, but there was a subtle change. Nancy Schommer's name was missing. It turns out, Nancy plans to quietly leave FAA around mid-September.

Experimental weather cameras found their way into our Alaskan environment around 1995 as a UAF initiative in collaboration with AASF - the concept proved useful and the cameras were well received. Earmarked funding came a few years later to enable the FAA to take charge of this embryonic and very Alaskan Safety System. But, as cameras were not part of a national program, FAA struggled until around 2006, when Nancy, an innovative and very capable Program Manager, took the helm. Nancy turned Weather Cameras from an Alaskan anomaly to a robust and recognized FAA Program, working not just to grow coverage; but, more importantly, also sustainability

So, at a time when not many things happen as advertised, cameras have been installed quietly around Alaska, at a rate of two a month. Nancy's style is no drama, no fanfare. But, she carried the ball too far to be allowed to depart without mention. It goes without saying that she will be missed.

Thank You Nancy



TIPS ON WINTER FLYING (FAA-P-8740-24/AFS-800 0879)

Reading through the above publication can cause one to chuckle at the obvious, but also jogs the memory as the new season approaches. Some of the points are:

- Preflights are, perhaps, more important. Don't hurry or slight because of the cold. The cold adds more concerns and issues.
- Braking on skis? Clear your taxi path before you start.
- Sharp turns on skis—avoid, as places excessive stress on gear
- Snow ridges by landing area could hide ice ridge, don't taxi through (important for wheel flying on normally "smooth" surfaces)
- Skis or wheels on ice? Down wind operations and maneuvering with no traction—be careful
- Takeoff - love the power, but don't over boost
- Carb Ice - prime time of the year for happening, Use carb heat as required
- Impact at 15 to 32°F usually with visible moisture present
- Fuel at 40 to 80°F Humidity above 50 percent
- Throttle at 32 to 37°F
- Carbon Monoxide poisoning from heating system. Use detectors and know your symptoms
- Know the weather in all phases of operations
- Review your survival kit and update for winter ops.



Upcoming Events

- 1 October Fall Safety Seminar
 - UAA Aviation Technology Complex, Merrill Field
- Dec 2011 News Letter Publication
- March 2012 Annual Board Meeting
 - (Location TBD)
- March 2012 News Letter Publication
- (Date TBD) Spring (Float) Safety Seminar
 - (Location TBD)
- July 2012 News Letter Publication



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To: