ALASKAN AVIATION SAFETY FOUNDATION

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The Fall Safety Seminar is December 14!

Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation's

Fall Safety Seminar

Alaska General Aviation and Air Taxi Operators: Working Together to Reduce Aviation Accidents

Featured Speaker: Ms. Dana Schulze, Director
Office of Aviation Safety,
National Transportation Safety Board

Saturday, December 14, 2019

UAA Aviation Technology Building
2811 Merrill Field Drive
Anchorage, Alaska

Chairman's Letter: *Safety Seminar Agenda Has Much to Look Forward To*

Our Fall Safety Seminar will be held at UAA's Aviation Technology building on December 14, 2019, with onsite registration beginning at 8:00 am. We will continue our precedent to end the seminar by early afternoon so you can have your Saturday afternoon free. The title of our annual fall seminar is:

Alaska General Aviation and Air Taxi Operators: Working Together to Reduce Aviation Accidents

Our theme will continue the discussion started at the NTSB's September Roundtable at which I represented our Safety Foundation. September's Roundtable had a focus on air taxi and commuter operations, but for our December seminar we will include general aviation in the conversation. Our 2019 Fall Safety Seminar is dedicated to discussion of how air taxi (Part 135) and general aviation (Part 91) operators can work together to reduce the unacceptable number of fatal accidents that have occurred this year.

Our keynote speaker will be Dana Schulze, Director, Office of Aviation Safety, National Transportation Safety Board. Also contributing to the seminar will be infrastructure experts, local air taxi and commuter operators, and local general aviation pilots. We will update the audience on safety focused efforts currently being undertaken, and will discuss the challenges, obstacles, and potential solutions to reducing aviation accidents and fatalities across the spectrum of operations.

After the NTSB Roundtable in September the question kept coming up in my mind: how can general aviation in Alaska do their part in reducing accidents, and to pursue the same answers with the same challenges as posed to the Part 135 operators? Both operations take place in the same environment, under the same conditions, using the same infrastructure, and in the same types of aircraft. There are some differences, of course. But we certainly can learn from each other.

Also on the agenda, Tom George, the AOPA State Director will talk about some intriguing and promising weather products under development:

- the Cloud Vertical Cross-section Product which uses satellite data to show cloud/icing information along discrete routes, and
- the Alaska Aviation Guidance Product, which provides a short (6 hour) forecast —with limitations—for 60 airports with AWOS/ASOS stations;
- he will also provide an update on the ADS-B ground station status, and the industry's request for additional stations.

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We will also bring back our popular training scenario where we put the audience behind the stick and get the aircraft into some potentially hazardous situations to help the audience determine their level of risk acceptance. Audience members can vote on their decisions and compare notes on their aeronautical decision-making skills as we discuss the pros and cons and potential outcomes of these decisions.

During the seminar we will also review this year's accidents, with an overview of the causes and potential prevention strategies for Part 135 and Part 91 operations discussed. Most of the challenges and solutions outlined in the discussions during the NTSB Roundtable for improving safety for Part 135 also apply to Part 91 operations as well. There may be adjustments required or efforts may need to be appropriately scaled, and that is where we want your input. By working together to address problems that affect us all, we may find solutions to make aviation in Alaska safer for everyone. As aviators and passengers, we share the sky with others, we need to be aware of what everyone is doing to improve safety, applaud their efforts, acknowledge their success, and willingly share information. As the saying goes "A rising tide lifts all boats" — we may similarly find that improvements in safety for one aviation operation may help another. When we work together, everyone wins. See you on the 14th.

Please Fly Safe!

Harry

Membership Renewal Reminder

AASF is a membership driven non-profit organization; we rely on your support to continue to advocate for aviation safety and to provide safety seminars, scholarships, Hangar Flying sessions, and these newsletters.

You can renew your membership online or find the membership form at https://www.aasfonline.org/membership/.

We thank you in advance for your support and partnership in efforts to improve aviation safety in Alaska.

Our Friends Trust Us With Their Lives, and Sometimes Pay With Them as Well

By Pete Brown

More than a few times a year I take friends and visitors for a sightseeing flight. For most of them it's their first flight in a small plane in Alaska and for many it's the first flight ever. Thirty minutes from Anchorage they can see glaciers, animals, and wilderness that they have only dreamed about before. I am sure most of our members have similar experiences.

I rarely get asked if it's dangerous. Sometimes people ask if it's safe to which I usually reply that it is as safe or as risky as I make it but that in no circumstances do I want to risk wrecking my sterling 170B. I will always have more house guests but great 170s don't come along as often.

They are usually satisfied with that answer but the fact is that as non-flying passengers, they have no true way to evaluate me, my airplane, its maintenance, the weather, or our route. They go because they trust me as your passengers trust you. Maybe it's my gray hair or apparent confidence, but we go and most of them tell me it's the high point of their trip. We locals may take it for granted but the scenery, the animals, and the experience is like nothing they have ever seen or done before. That's why we go.

We have a special obligation to these passengers. Most have no real idea what's safe and what's not yet they trust us with their lives. They may not think of it in those stark terms but we should, and we should face that responsibility with the gravity it's due. It means we must exercise the strictest of our own operating limits. They signed on for a flight not a life threatening experience.

I think this special obligation got violated, tragically, a couple of times this year.

Does this apply to other flights we make? Not necessarily. I think all of us have landed in some places that may be a little on the short side or mud that's a bit soft, etc. Fortunately, the sort of accidents in these cases are usually expensive and embarrassing but they are less frequently fatal and may be well within the risk zone you and a knowledgeable hunting partner might accept to get a moose. That's fine. We are big boys and girls and that's life in Alaska. We know the risks and decide together to accept them or not. Sometimes we may regret it and we get home chastened and bruised but not really much worse for wear except for having to explain to our spouses what we did and how much it will cost.

But many of our passengers have no clue. We have to understand that and act accordingly.

The following was written by Edward Whymper in his book, **Scrambles Amongst the Alps**. In 1865, he was first man to climb the Matterhorn on an expedition in which four of eight men died. He wrote about climbing. We should read this about flying.

"Still the last sad memory hovers round and sometimes drifts across like a floating mist, cutting off the sunshine, and chilling the remembrances of happier times. There have been joys too great to be described in words and there have been griefs upon which I have not dared to dwell.

And with these in mind I say, climb if you will but remember that courage and strength is nought without prudence and that a momentary negligence may destroy the happiness of a lifetime. Do nothing in haste, look well to each step, and from the beginning think what may be the end."

Edward Whymper, **Scrambles Amongst the Alps**, 1871

Pete Brown soloed at Merrill Field in 1973 and has been flying T-crafts, Citabrias and a variety of Cubs and Cessnas ever since. He has owned a C-170B since 1995. He is also an active glider instructor with the CAP and the Alaska Mountain Soaring Association.

Crosswinds and More: Avoiding Complacency

by John Mahany

This year there has been a rash of accidents in Alaska, for a variety of reasons. Admittedly, some kinds of flying (low-level maneuvering) pose a higher level of risk and are more dangerous. How many accidents might be the result of complacency? Or poor decision-making, ADM? Even for high risk flights (aerial firefighting, anyone?) there is a calculated go/no-go decision-making process.

How many pilots might have reached a 'plateau' after flying for years and believe they have learned all there is? Incredibly, some really think this! Perhaps their flying has been uneventful, they have not had any mishaps and are lulled into a sense of complacency. Accidents always happen, after all, to 'the other guy'.

So, they drop their guard and perhaps start taking some 'time-saving' short-cuts. Especially if they fly the same airplane to the same destinations regularly, they might be tempted to gloss over a preflight or a checklist, not check weather, and skip important items that make a difference. It happens. Then, when you least expect it, Murphy shows up and ruins your day. Literally.

For example, do you fly an airplane that has an autopilot and electric trim? If yes, do you know the memory item(s) for a runaway trim and are you ready for a 'runaway trim' on your next takeoff? So, do you check the auto pilot and the electric trim as called for in the checklist before every flight?

A runaway trim malfunction has resulted in fatal accidents, because the pilot(s) did not know or remember the 'memory items' for a runaway trim malfunction, as simple as they are. The pilot(s) lost control (panicked?) and crashed. And everyone died. Tragic.

Thomas Turner writes about this topic in his newsletter, Mastery Flying. Turner's article is mentioned In the Flight Safety Australia Newsletter, October 2, 2017 issue, titled, "Complacency is the hunter."

As he explains, most pilots go through three phases in the course of their flying career. Briefly, first is the learning phase, appropriately enough. Everything is new and pilots eagerly soak it up. But they don't always know good from bad and might pick up bad habits or practices (short-cuts) from a pilot who is lax in their flying.

Next is the complacency phase, where some pilots foolishly think they have learned quite a bit or even everything and relax in their approach to flying. Some get stuck in a rut with this kind of thinking and stay there for years. And they don't challenge themselves by flying with a demanding pilot or CFI but instead seek out 'easy' signoffs.

Finally, many move up to the 'professional' level or mindset. This is about more than a paycheck, it's about their approach to flying. These pilots eagerly seek out new information, take additional training and classes when offered to fill gaps in their knowledge, and are always seeking to improve their proficiency and skills.

Summing it up, as pointed out in the article, many general aviation pilots do not move out of the complacency phase. They become stuck there. They are in their 'comfort zone'. It might take something

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significant, like when a fellow aviator is killed in a crash, to jar them out of this and seek to improve their skills.

Some pilots also foolishly think that high-time pilots do not have accidents. Really? They might think that because they have accumulated "XXX" 100 or 1,000 hours they are somehow immune to this. Wrong again. Typically, high-time, professional pilots have developed many good habits and keep a professional, 'always learning' mindset, that separates them from other pilots who remain stuck in their 'comfort zone'.

This is very much an individual thing. It takes one's personal and professional integrity to step up to this level and keep the professional 'edge', doing whatever it takes. Putting in the additional (study) time and the effort necessary to stay on top. But with this level of preparation, one is ready for whatever comes along. So, with this said, what phase of flying are you in? Student, complacency, or professional? Are you where you want to be with your flying? If not, what are you doing about it? There is always room for improvement!

Fly safely!

John

John Mahany is an ATP/CE-500, as well as a Master CFI and has been flying for 40-years this summer. He has 'transitioned' into many different aircraft in 40 years of flying. He is currently a Citation Instructor at a Part 142 school in Southern California. He flies a 1953 Cessna 180 for fun!

Final Flight Announcement

David Osborn died on August 4, 2019 in a plane crash in Girdwood, Alaska. He was 60 years old, and a retired colonel in the Alaska National Guard. He leaves behind a loving family and devoted friends. Our gratitude, thoughts, and condolences go out to them.

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Southeast Alaska Aviation Overview

Southeast Alaska has some unique flying conditions that pilots should become acquainted with before arriving in the region. Like much of the state, most communities here are not connected by roads. Combined with a relatively low frequency of service from the Alaska Marine Highway ferry system, this makes air travel a primary means of transportation. The terrain in this region consists largely of fjords, flanked by higher terrain, which channels low altitude flight along constricted routes. Marine weather conditions often add to the challenge of flight safety in this environment, with low ceilings, fog and poor visibility common, and at other times turbulence from high winds burbling over the terrain from high pressure systems inland.

A seasonal tourism industry also creates high volume of traffic sharing this airspace, with a combination of air taxi flights, flight seeing operations with a mix of wheeled planes, seaplanes, and helicopters. Add airliners arriving and departing using IFR procedures, all are sharing the same airspace. From experience gained by the aviation industry over the years, special routes, flight altitudes, and conventions have been developed to reduce the risk of mid-air collisions. Visitors are strongly encouraged to become familiar with the operational details from the overview provided here, and the links to route- specific information contained in Letter Of Agreements (LOA) developed in conjunction with the FAA.

CTAF Areas:

In Alaska, Common Traffic Advisory Frequencies (CTAFs) may be assigned to an area, as opposed to a specific airport or landing area. The adjacent figure shows CTAFs for providing position reports when flying in these areas. In addition to visual scanning, reporting positions, altitude, and direction periodically on the appropriate CTAF frequency helps pilots maintain situational awareness with other aircraft in the vicinity.

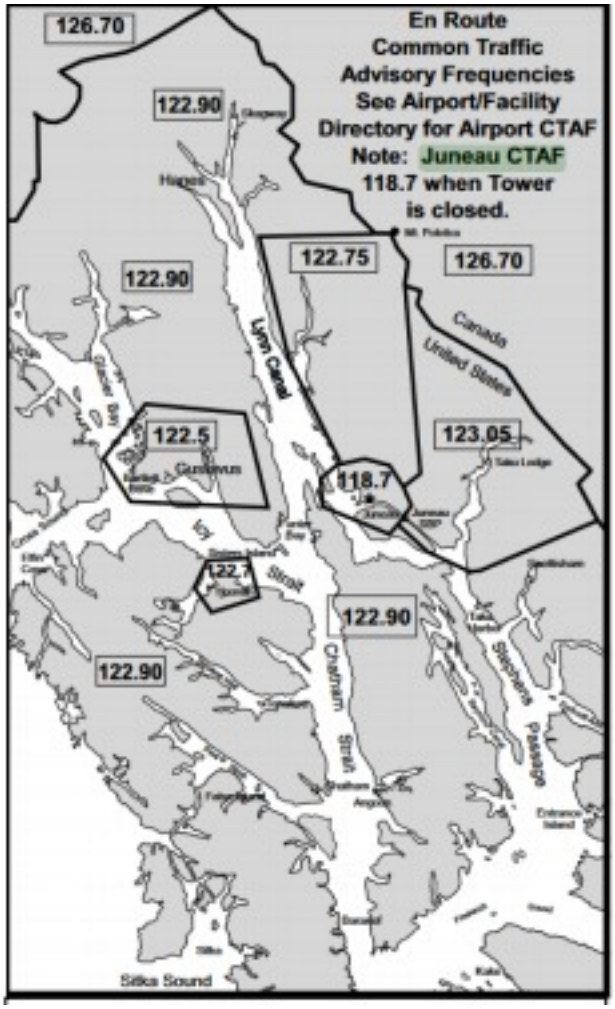


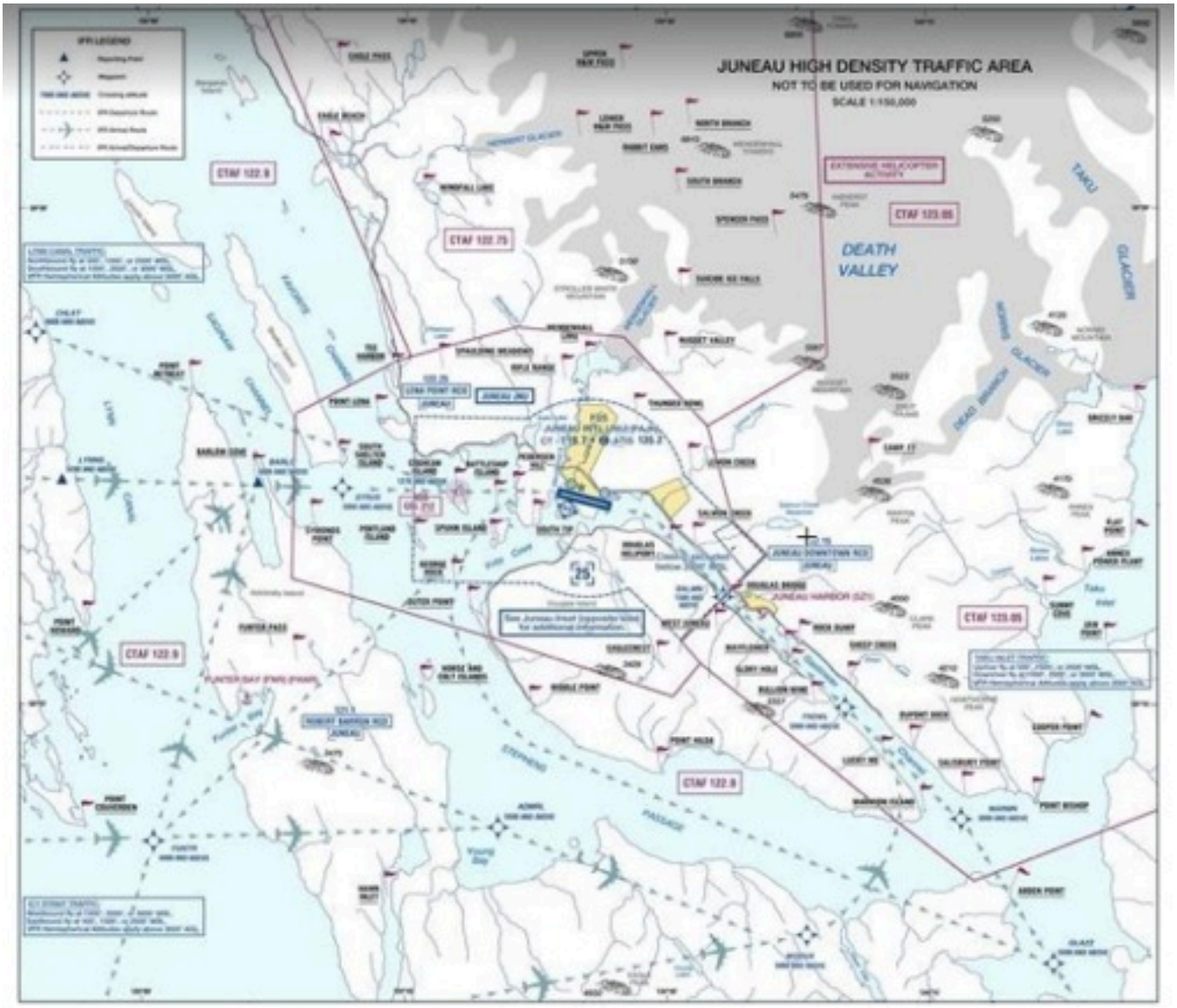
Figure 1. Enroute CTAFs for northern half of southeast Alaska. This figure may be found in the Alaska Chart Supplement Notices Section.

Flight Service Stations:

The FAA operates the Flight Service Program in Alaska. Juneau is the location of a Flight Service Station operated 24 hours a day. Other part time facilities are located at Sitka and Ketchikan. Flight Service can provide visiting pilots with additional information on routes, weather reporting systems, and details to help plan flights in this region.

Juneau High Density Traffic Area:

The FAA has created an insert on the Juneau Supplement which shows (a) CTAF areas in the immediate Juneau area, (b) a network of VFR reporting points to help pilots maintain situational awareness and © IFR departure and arrival routes, along with key IFR fixes. Due to the airspace confined by terrain, airliners flying GPS approaches are sharing airspace with commuter and general GA traffic.



Flight Routes:

Based on agreements with individual operators defined in the LOA, there are special altitudes and designated routes covering this area. Details may be found in the LOA, which is available online at an industry maintained website: https://sites.google.com/site/juneauloa/. Similar conventions apply to Ketchikan and surrounding areas. Special air traffic rules and Part 93 airspace are in effect when the Ketchikan Flight Service Station is open, requiring pilots to contact FSS prior to entering the Class E Surface airspace. For information on conventions and CTAF frequencies in this area see https://www.tapa.pro/.