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**NTSB Part 135 Roundtable
September 6 in Anchorage**

Finding the right words for 2019

I don't know what the right word to use to begin this quarter's comments. So I am asking you to help me.

- Maybe it is **discouragement** because half way through June we have had five fatal accidents. The 5-year average through May is 1.4. We've had 13 fatalities where the five year average through May was 1.8. Seven times as many. Have we really made any impact on our attitudes about flying safety?
- Is it **frustration** because initial indications for these accidents are what we have always heard: pilot error is responsible for 80% of our accidents? Or is it because we have said all new accidents are nothing more than a repeat of an accident that has already happened? Only the names and tail numbers change. Have we learned anything?
- Is it simply **futility** because for all of our efforts talking about midair collision potential we lose 6 people in an area known for higher risk. And because the AK Aviation Safety Foundation has emphasized the importance of these risks (even holding our first "Hangar Talk" on the subject last winter.)
- Are we, the AASF, or any other aviation advocacy or safety-based group, making a difference or are we kidding ourselves? We can brag about what great and wonderful things we do: safety seminars, quarterly newsletters, TV shows. Are we really making a difference? Are we saving lives and preventing bent metal? The recent statistics don't indicate that we have made much, if any, progress.
- Where do we go from here? Keep doing what we have been doing? Do we try something new? Or give up and let fate run its course?
- But wait. Maybe we are being too critical. Maybe the accident rate would be even worse if we did not make an effort to prevent future mishaps.
- Maybe the word I am looking for is **encouragement**. Maybe there is just one person out there reading this newsletter; or one person who attended one of our fall safety or seaplane safety seminars; or one person who watched "Hangar Flying"; or one person who took heed of advice from a CFI or experienced aviator. If there are people out there who benefitted from one of these encounters, I would like to know about it. If just one person remembered to retract his wheels to land their amphib on the water; or one person practiced an effective visual scanning technique and avoided a midair collision; or one person established their personal weather minimums and never violated them. Or followed any number of the pieces of advice that have been emphasized..
- Maybe these pilots exist and we just never hear of them because they never have that incident or accident. Maybe they are just good pilots continually learning and practicing and becoming safer and more proficient.
- Maybe the word I am looking for is **optimism**. Optimism that we not give up our advocacy efforts. We can be optimistic we have had our last fatal accident and our last dead pilot or passenger. Maybe **Someday!**
- If you have a story to share, a bit of advice, or ideas how we can continue to advocate for safety, please contact us at 907-243-7237 or aasfonline@gmail.com. We are optimistic for that someday to happen, and we know we can all do better.

Please Fly Safe! - Harry

Density Altitude? I fly in Alaska, I don't need to understand no stinking Density Altitude!

Some float pilots are convinced they can get airborne on good intentions and hope. Fact is, it is all about aerodynamics (and maybe a little hydrodynamics).

Let me tell you a little story that happened to me. A short while ago I was up at my cabin in the Talkeetna Mountains. Beautiful warm (hot) summer day. Not a breath of wind. Not a ripple on the lake. Gorgeous. I was by myself with 32 gallons of gas. Not much of a load. Should be a piece of cake, I thought to myself.

Hope and good intentions should be all I needed to get off the water. Right? I had done it hundreds of time before. Wrong.

Let's talk about some rules of thumb and math I **should have** considered.

- It was 85 degrees. Remember **that** summer when it reached 90 in Anchorage?
- The elevation of the lake at my cabin is 2500 ft.
- So the density altitude correction factor should be about 70%. If the takeoff at International Standard Atmosphere and sea level to clear a fifty foot obstacle is 1740' add 1218' for 2950' total takeoff run, according to the operating handbook for my aircraft.
- I almost always have a 10k headwind which would have reduced my takeoff distance 30%. On that day I had no wind, plus the lake was flat calm.
- What saved me was I knew where the abort point was on my takeoff run.
- When in doubt abort! Try it with a lighter load; when the temps are cooler (morning or evening); or when a breeze is there.
- But think about these factors. We may not have a lot of high elevation airports or lakes like the Lower 48 but the rules still apply.

Too many float pilots have ended up on the far shore after that takeoff run because hope and good intentions really won't get you airborne. Aerodynamics and flying airspeed will. Whether you can reach that flying airspeed under the circumstances you encounter is up to your judgment. But don't be the next accident statistic to say: I don't know what happened, it just wouldn't get off the water. Might have been density altitude, winds, or water conditions. It might have been all of them.

Starting off the Season Right – With the 34th Annual Spring Seaplane Safety Seminar

Saturday, April 27th was a sunny, beautiful day in Anchorage – casting doubt among organizers that anyone would rather be at a seminar instead of flying or working on airplanes. Much to our surprise and delight though, we had a packed auditorium!

We started off the day by recognizing three aviators with fifty years or more of safe flying. George Walters, Col. George Fushour (Ret.), and Col. Harry Kieling (Ret.) were all presented with Master Pilot awards and each provided a brief summary of their careers and passion for flying. A big thanks to Mike Yorke and Kyle Weinzil for getting the nomination paperwork through the proper channels at the FAA to ensuring recognition for these pilots. Their presentation got the day off to a positive start, and hopefully getting all pilots in the audience excited about being similarly recognized when they get their time in! If you have fifty years of safe aviating and would like more information on the Master Pilot award requirements, paperwork, or process, please contact Mike at 907-271-5908 or Kyle at 907-271-7019.

David McKay gave a great presentation on aircraft insurance and many of the myths surrounding insurance coverage. Harry Shannon from the Seaplane Pilots Association presented information on critical maintenance issues, and Steve Apling with CAC Plastics discussed repairs for composites and fiberglass components. The seminar ended with some safety tips and advice from Clint Blaszak for flying in and out of Lake Hood's busy airspace.

Our door prizes did not disappoint, thanks to our generous donors. A big thanks to Aero Cosmetics, Avemco, David Clark, Garmin, Northern Lights Avionics, and Stoddards for supplying the great prizes that keep people

attending, being on time for presentations, and sitting on the edge of their seats! The seminar was supported by the Seaplane Pilots Association, the FAA, the University of Alaska-Anchorage, the State of Alaska Department of Transportation, our sponsor Avemco, who also provided coffee and snacks for the morning, and of course, the Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation.

In response to feedback from previous seminar attendees, this seminar was a shortened version, skipping a lunch break and ending at 1:30 pm. A shorter seminar allows us to refresh people on safety topics without them missing an entire day of spring flying. If you have feedback on the seminar, suggestions for a presenter, or ideas for a future seminar, please give us a call at 907- 243-7237 or email at aasfonline@gmail.com.



George Frushour (left) provides a synopsis of his fifty years of flying safely, while Andy McClure of Flight Service (middle) and Kyle Weinzil with the FFAST Team (right) look on.

Upcoming NTSB Roundtable on Part 135 Operations to be held in Anchorage

In its ongoing efforts to improve Part 135 flight operations, the NTSB will be holding a special roundtable meeting in Anchorage on Part 135 with a panel of experts and moderated by NTSB Board Chairman Robert Sumwalt. The meeting is set for Friday, September 6, from 8:30AM - 4:00PM in the Wendy Williamson Auditorium at the University of Alaska Anchorage.

Since July 1, 2018 there have been nine serious injury and/or fatality accidents involving Part 135 operators in Alaska. Operators involved include K2 Aviation, Regal Air, Guardian Flight, Sound Aviation, Taquan Aviation, Mountain Air Service and Rust's Flying Service.

For more information on the roundtable, see the NTSB Press Release: <https://www.nts.gov/news/events/Pages/2019-MWL-RT-AK-part135.aspx>

Check out the NTSB's Aviation Safety Blog

Many of us read aviation accident reports from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) to learn from the mistakes of others, to exercise our sleuthing skills in aircraft accidents, or do some armchair quarterbacking of accident scenarios. The accident investigators at the NTSB now have a forum to share information about their work with the public. Investigators can share their stories and information from the investigation scenes through a blog, which the NTSB has provided as a forum for these conversations. The first in a new series of posts about the NTSB's investigation process in general aviation accidents was posted in 2017. The series explores how medical, mechanical, and safety issues are assessed during an investigation, and are written by NTSB accident investigators and staff. They provide great insight into the "behind the scenes" activities, unique cases, and answers to questions you may have been pondering.

If you have ever wondered how investigators get the information off electronic devices, how one clue might make a big difference in an investigation, or what one piece of advice an investigator might give to pilots, you need to check out this blog. There are even posts from investigators in Alaska, with examples of two accidents in Alaska that were investigated, one many years after the accident occurred. The purpose of the blog posts is to provide a better understanding of the NTSB, their investigative process, and the dedicated professionals who do this work. Check it out at: <https://safetycompass.wordpress.com/category/series-aviation/>

Final Flights

Charles “Eric” Benson died on May 27, 2019 in an aircraft accident in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. He was born to Charles and Edna Benson in 1962 in Grand Forks, North Dakota, and raised in East Grand Forks, Minnesota. He was the youngest of 10 siblings. He served in the Air Force from 1982-1986, and later graduated from University of North Dakota to become a commissioned officer. He then began his Army career in 1992. Eric was a decorated war veteran and a UH-60 helicopter pilot, serving in the armed forces for 25 years. Eric worked for the National Park Service as the Regional Safety Manager for the last 11 years, making the workplace safer for all. He was an avid outdoorsman who took every opportunity to share his passion for the outdoors with friends and family. He spent all the time he could hunting, fishing, attending sporting events and sitting around a campfire. Eric married his wife Winona in 1994 in Anchorage, Alaska. They were married for 25 years and had two beautiful daughters, Brittany and Kirsten.

Sincere condolences go out to Eric’s family and friends.

Jeffrey Brian Babcock died on May 27, 2019 in an aircraft accident in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory. Jeff was well known and respected in the aviation and law enforcement communities. He began his career in law enforcement as a Kodiak Police Officer, followed by a 20-year career with the Alaska State Troopers. He retired as a captain with the Alaska Wildlife Troopers in 2004, and started his next career flying sightseeing tours around Denali. Jeff joined the National Park Service as a Regional Aviation Manager in 2015. He was an avid outdoorsman who loved fishing, hunting, boating, photography, and most of all, flying.

Deepest sympathy as family, friends, and loved ones remember Jeff.

Michael “Scott” Christy died on June 28, 2019 in an aircraft accident near Moose Pass, Alaska. Scott grew up in St. Joseph, Michigan and graduated from Central Michigan University with a degree in biology. He graduated from the University of Missouri with a master’s degree in geology and followed that with a Ph.D. in geo-morphology from the University of Maryland. After graduation he moved to Alaska and worked on the trans-Alaska pipeline, and then with the State of Alaska. He retired in 2007, but kept busy volunteering with the Alaska Conservation Foundation, teaching at the University of Alaska, flying, and advocating for aviation, representing and leading the Lake Hood Pilot’s Association. His beloved wife Jean Tam passed away in the same aircraft accident.

Scott was a tireless advocate for aviation, and his presence will be greatly missed.

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