

POSITION REPORT



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Chairman's Letter, June 2023

Greetings,

The summer flying season is well underway and by now you've probably had the chance to slip the surly bonds of earth, exercise your pilot skills and identify a few things you want fixed, improved or replaced in your airplanes. If you find you're having more trouble with your basic piloting skills, don't hesitate to take a flight or two with a CFI familiar with your airplane make and model. Maybe you anticipate flying to a destination you haven't been to before. If so, do your homework ahead of time and pick the brain of someone who's been there and done that. Take no unnecessary risks as you pursue your summer flying adventures.



You know the old saying "the more things change, the more they remain the same." Often, I find this is the case when going through publications that pertain to flight training. However, the current version of the FAA 8083-3C Airplane Flying Handbook added a whole new [Chapter 4](#) titled Energy Management. Chapter 4

presents a series of equations, graphs and explanations of energy management concepts that are well suited to a first course in aerodynamics for an engineering major – but may be overkill and overcomplication for somebody learning how to fly. Having said that, if you enjoy technical detail, it's a very thoughtfully constructed chapter. I recommend everyone download and peruse the current versions of the [Airplane Flying Handbook](#) and the [Handbook of Aeronautical Knowledge](#) .

If you couldn't attend our 2023 Seaplane Safety Seminar, the presentations are available on our website. Follow this link [AASF Videos – Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation \(aasfonline.org\)](#) to find presentations on Weather and Satellite Imagery, Getting and Keeping Your Aviation Medical Certificate, the FAA Compliance Program, and How Not to Buy or Maintain a Floatplane. The presenters did a great job putting together their material and answering questions from the audience. Many thanks to Marshall Severson for recording and editing the video.

As always, AASF encourages membership participation. We want to know what topics or speakers you would like for future seminars. We welcome your assistance in organizing and executing our seminars. Maybe you would like to write an article for one of our Safety Spots. Contact us at aasfonline@gmail.com or just go to our website [Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation – Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation \(aasfonline.org\)](#) and fill out the “Contact Us” form. I look forward to seeing you all at our Fall Safety Seminar. Until then...

Fly Safe,
Rocky Capozzi

Spring Seaplane Safety Seminar – Hello Spring!

After three cancelled Spring Seaplane Safety Seminars due to the COVID-19 pandemic safety precautions, the Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation and the Seaplane Pilots Association held a seminar on April 15, 2023. Excitement at seeing old friends, learning new information, or because their tax forms were completed, the attendees' energy was palpable. The day started with presentations by the National Weather Service's Graham Weston on New Web-based Tools for Aviation Weather and Dr. Gary Hufford on Aviation Weather Dissemination and Using Satellite and Radar Images to Make Go/No Go Decisions. Gary's presentation is available for viewing [here](#).

As proof that “it is always something”, our planned speaker, Chip Wisner from the Juneau FSDO was not able to attend due to flight cancellations as ash from Shiveluch Volcano in Russia had drifted into Alaska. This was an opportunity to pivot and show our flexibility after a safety decision; David Karalunas, the Policy Lead with the FAA’s Safety & Compliance Team (SACT) graciously agreed to step in and provide some updates on the success of the FAA’s Compliance Philosophy. David was also generous in sharing the story of his (mis)adventures with a recently purchased floatplane and the maintenance ordeal that it has become. While the squawk sheet, required repairs, and cost of parts and labor would deter a more faint-hearted pilot, David’s sense of humor and undeterred optimism provided a great learning opportunity for the audience. If you missed the seminar, you can view his presentations [here](#). We look forward to hearing more about his maintenance trials and travails in the future, and wish him luck in crafting an airworthy aircraft. And we promised Chip a spot on the agenda for next year’s Spring Seaplane Safety Seminar!

Dr. Petra Illig provided a review of her observations in her practice as an aviation medical examiner, with a focus on issues seen with the aging pilot population and preventive measures pilots could take to maintain their health and keep their medical certificates. Also covered were the processes for temporary special issuance authorization or medical waivers, and participation in the human intervention motivation study (HIMS) program. Her presentation is available for viewing [here](#).

John Pratt shared a new video from the Seaplane Pilots Association on safe amphibious gear operations with an emphasis on avoidance of gear-down water landings. You can watch the training video and take a brief test [here](#). We appreciate the collaborative efforts through the years in putting on the Spring Seaplane Safety Seminars, the focus on seaplane safety by John and the Seaplane Pilots Association, and of course, the yearly Spring Seaplane Safety Seminar patches.



We look forward to hosting a fall safety seminar this year, so please let us know if you have ideas or requests for speakers or topics!

AASF Works Behind the Scenes at the Great Alaska Aviation Gathering

The Great Alaska Aviation Gathering is held the first weekend in May every year, hosted by the Alaska Airmen's Association to celebrate aviation. Through a partnership with the Alaska Airmen's Association, the Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation has been organizing seminars for pilots, potential pilots, and aviation enthusiasts. Last year the Safety Foundation organized two days of seminars held in Hoskins Hall, many seminars had a seaplane focus, and WINGS credits were available for attendees. Building on the success of last year's seminars, the Safety Foundation enthusiastically agreed to organize two days of seminars in two locations, Hoskins Hall and the Colony Church, on the Alaska State Fairgrounds in Palmer in 2023. These 21 seminars covered a range of topics, from engine failure after takeoff, public use cabins in Alaska, aviation insurance, aircraft recovery after an accident, and updates on aviation hot topics.



Photo: Banner acknowledging AASF's effort in seminar planning and organizing Safety Foundation members and board members facilitated the seminars and ensured attendees signed up for WINGS credit if desired. The Safety Foundation appreciates the Airmen's Association and our partnership in keeping safety a priority for aviators in Alaska and providing the Gathering as a place to receive aviation safety tips and advice. We also appreciate our members whose support allows us to maintain a focus on safety. If you would like to support the Safety Foundation and assist in planning, organizing, or moderating next year's seminars, please contact us at aasfonline@gmail.com, or if you'd like to show your support by joining or renewing your membership, please click [here](#).

Alaska Public Media Ceasing to Broadcast "Alaska Weather" TV Program

by Marshall Severson

The National Weather Service (NWS) has issued a Service Change Notice announcing major changes in public availability of the "Alaska Weather" television program. Effective July 1, the traditionally accessed broadcast via Alaska Public Media (AKPM) will cease to be aired, and a modified web-based version will be produced by NWS for viewing on AKPM youtube and NWS websites. The NWS is soliciting input for ways to understand needs and improve services to rural and

Native Alaskan communities. They are requesting comments by July 30, 2023. For details, please check the link below. AASF encourages members to participate in the dialogue and forward the request to any party who might be interested and possibly commenting.

https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/pdf_2023_24/scn23-59_alaska_weather_changes.pdf

All Aircraft Hold Position!

By Marshall Severson

After the horrific actions of September 11, 2001, most of us became familiar with the term ‘ground stop’, defined as a process that requires aircraft that meet a specific criterion to remain on the ground. The criteria may be airport specific, airspace specific, or equipment specific, and normally occurs with little or no warning. Similar to this command is an order to ‘hold position’.

When something unfortunate happens at a controlled airport where you are operating, you may hear this from Ground Control: “All Aircraft Hold Position!” What’s that mean? It means stop where you are. It is obviously not intended for all aircraft aloft, on approach, or in the pattern, but it may include closure of runways or an entire airport to landing traffic! Such was the case recently at a local airport. But why, then? Well, the primary and most common reason is when all aircraft are held in place, Crash/Fire/Rescue activity can take place with priority and without movement area conflict between emergency vehicles and routinely



operating aircraft. Emergencies are high stakes, intensely focused events and the various responders such as police, fire, medical professionals and recovery vehicles need immediate clear and safe access, possibly via multiple entry points to the incident site. They may not be as intimately knowledgeable about the airport environment or movement procedures as pilots who commonly operate at the airport because their priority is emergency response.

Aircraft at Merrill Field resulting in a hold position call from MRI Ground Control.

Listen to the audio at about 12:35 into the recording:



Like everything else associated with General Aviation, the old adage “Time to spare, go by air” applies. Think these hold position events are rare and won’t affect you? Merrill Field has had at least six of them since October 2022. If you plan everything about your flight and endurance limits to getting very timely clearances, you may ultimately experience an emergency delay beyond your control. There is a certain amount of fog to be expected concerning information and status during an emergency. Consider it takes a while for the emergency to be resolved, the runways searched for foreign object debris, the ATIS to be updated, while the radio may be loaded with more unsuspecting calls for clearance only to be told “unable” by ground control. The pilot holding position may not be able to see anything amiss, either.

When you hear the instruction to hold position, come to a normal stop as soon as practical. It may be slick and there might be an aircraft taxiing behind you that needs room to stop as well. Taxiing for the tiedown and a quick trip to the restroom? Better plan to hold it! Short on fuel for a quick flight? Think about shutting down or better yet, think about taxiing back and refueling before departure!

In the case mentioned here, after closing the airport due to a disabled aircraft, one runway remained closed and aircraft in ground holding positions were cleared to taxi to another runway opened for take-offs and landings in a sequential, orderly manner.

Clear communications and understanding instructions are critical during all emergency response activities, even a training exercise on an airport can be deadly: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-63698202>

Take aways:

1. Stop and hold in a normal manner, avoid getting rear-ended! Allow the first responders full access to get their job done safely.
2. Be patient and keep the frequency clear, you will get updated instructions when appropriate.
3. Be flexible in your departure plans, you may be assigned a different runway than you were planning on or prepared for.
4. Know your options if you have time critical mission requirements, you may need to cancel or reschedule.

Deletion of Canadian Data from Hi/Low Alaska IFR Charts

by Marshall Severson

FAA has issued a Charting Notice that could impact Alaskan pilots who may plan to operate in or near Canadian airspace: "Beginning with the June 15th charting cycle, limited foreign information will be charted on all appropriate Enroute U.S., Alaska and Pacific High/Low IFR aeronautical charts to provide situational awareness and transition planning...This change will make clear that the intent of U.S. Charts for navigation within domestic airspace and that charts of other countries should be used within their respective airspace."

For comparison, attached are screen shots from an April 2023 AK Low IFR chart along the route to Whitehorse and one from the June 15, 2023, chart. The difference is dramatic in what has been eliminated.

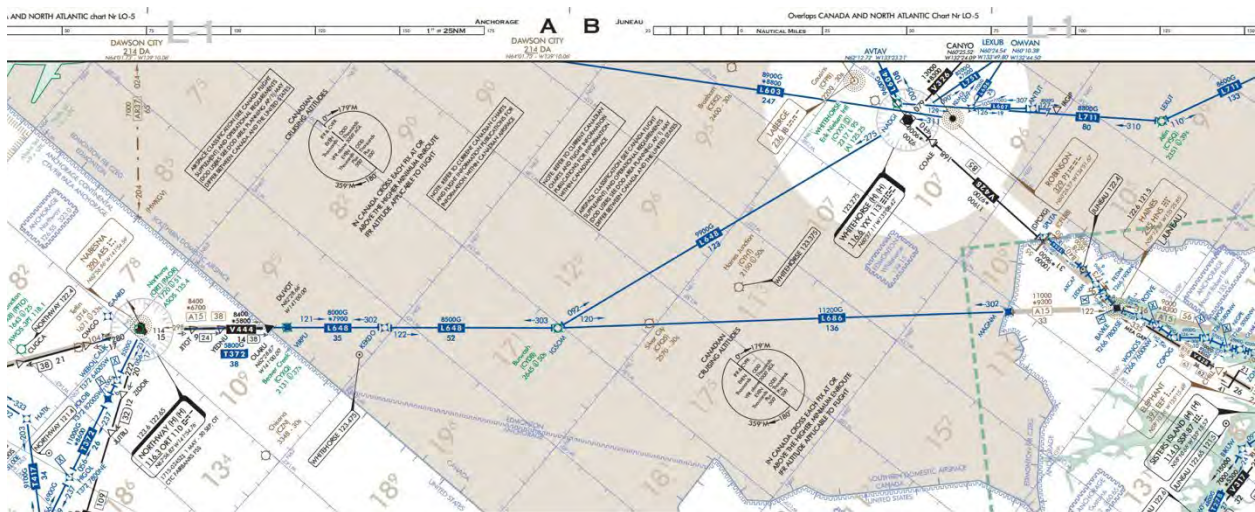


Chart 1. April 2023 Chart. The greyed out Canadian area still has some significant information.

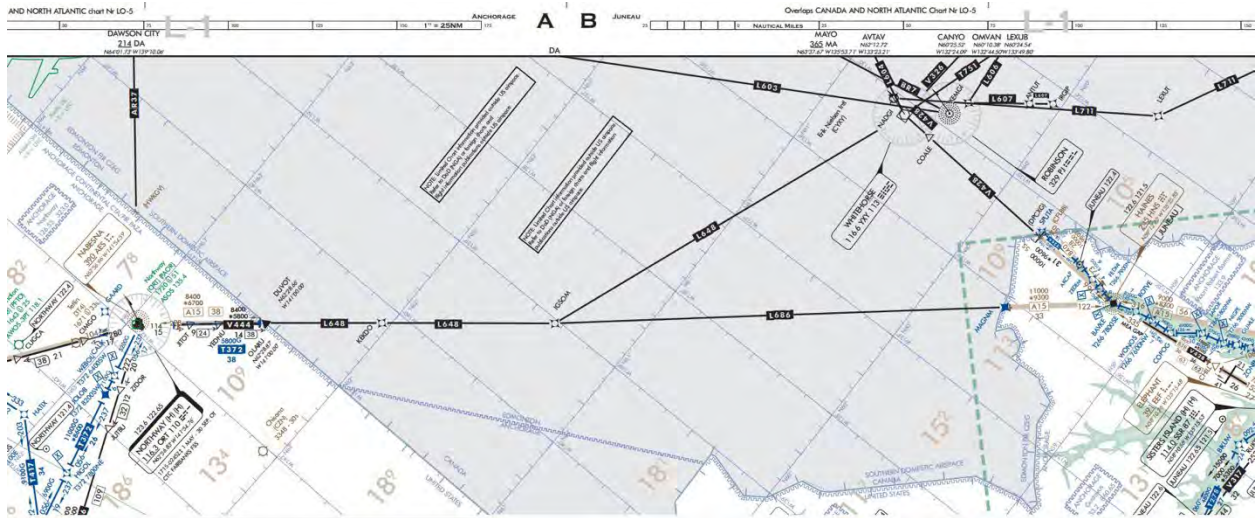


Chart 2. June 2023 Chart. That's one way to deal with chart clutter! Slim pickings in greyed out Canadian area.

FAA has made their position on charting foreign airspace unambiguous. The data to be provided beyond Alaskan airspace is very limited, even adjacent com frequencies appear to be gone.

Pilots should not assume their electronic flight bags will have the foreign data they may require, nor may some of the popular flight planning websites. Please check your electronic source well in advance of any planned foreign flight to ensure you have adequate navigational chart information at hand. Same goes for obtaining paper charts.

FAA provides its charts electronically at no charge and well in advance of the publication dates, which is something we can all be grateful for:

https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/flight_info/aeronav/Digital_Products/ifr/

For detailed information on the change, check the Charting Notice:

https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/flight_info/aeronav/safety_alerts/media/ENR_23-01_CN_Foreign_Data_IFR_Charts_Revised.pdf

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Peter Blackmon Honored with Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award



*Peter Blackmon,
Master Pilot
Awardee with AASF
Board Secretary
Mary O'Connor*

An Anchorage pilot was presented with the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award in February this year in recognition of more than 50 years of safe flying. In those years Peter Blackmon logged over 30,000 hours; worked as a chief pilot, check airman, director of operations; owned his own Part 135 operation and collected great adventures and stories.

Peter knew he wanted to be a commercial pilot as a child but didn't start flight training until he returned from three tours in Vietnam and used the GI bill for flight training. After soloing in July of 1969, at Glynco Naval Air Station in Georgia, he quickly completed ratings and started work as a CFII, then advanced to working for air taxis flying B-80s, PA-32s, Beech 99s, and C-45Hs. Moving into jobs with international airlines allowed Peter to travel around the world and fly DC-8s, DC-9s, and 747s. After retiring from the airlines, he went back to his true aviation passion – flying small airplanes. He worked for several Part 91 and 135 operators and flew Beavers on floats, C-206s on skis, DC-4s on fuel runs, and flies a C-180 for fun. Peter says “I always counted my blessings for having been allowed to fly for a vocation. It kept me from having to find a job and actually work for a living.”

The Alaskan Aviation Safety Foundation recognizes Peter's safety record and salutes his accomplishments. Congratulations Peter!

The Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award is named in honor of Orville and Wilbur Wright who were American aviation pioneers credited with inventing, building, and flying the world's first successful motor-operated airplane. The Wright Brothers made the first controlled, sustained flight of a powered, heavier-than-air aircraft with the Wright Flyer on December 17, 1903, at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

To be eligible for the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award, nominees must hold a U.S. Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) or Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) pilot certificate; have 50 or more years of civil and military piloting experience or 50 or more years combined experience in both piloting and aircraft operations; be a U.S. citizen; and have NOT had any airman certificate revoked. For more information, see [Pilots - Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award - FAA - FAASTeam - FAASafety.gov](#)