



AIRWARD NEWS

In Recognition of Professional Performance during a Hazardous Aviation Event or Significant Contribution to Aviation Mishap Prevention

PARTIAL POWER SITUATION



Left to right: John Harris (Regional Helicopter Inspector Pilot), Cody Carlson and Willy Acton (Forest Aviation Officer)

Cody Carlson was on short final to the fire with his 3rd bucket when he had a sudden loss of power. After a quick check to make sure the area below was clear of personnel, he released the bucket and long line. Cody started to enter an autorotation when he realized he still had some engine power, so he turned toward a field that was about three miles away. He set himself up for a shallow approach and landed safely. Cody was in a partial power situation that could have been altered by going to manual throttle, but considering the close proximity to the ground and with an already slight adjustment was set up on a shallow approach to a field in a reasonable proximity to a house, for support. There was no reason to select emergency governor and disrupt the already stable approach to landing. After

shutting the aircraft down Cody removed the cowlings and noticed the eye bolt that goes in the end of the linear actuator had come out and given him what seemed like a low side governor failure.

Cody displayed great situational awareness, calm demeanor and problem solving ability which resulted in a safe and uneventful landing. [SAFECOM 17-0868](#)

PAYING ATTENTION TO DETAILS

When Alan Osborn (Air-attack), arrived at the airport around noon and caught up with the pilot he was informed that preflight was complete they were good to go. The plane had come on at 0900, but there wasn't a mission till about 1345. As he was walking to the plane, he looked over the aircraft and noticed something sticking out of the left side break caliper. Closer inspection showed that a bolt had come out of the lower break pad and it had pivoted on the upper bolt and was rubbing the inside of the tire. He pointed it out to the pilot and took the plane out of available status then contacted the local FAO, Dispatch, and Regional Maintenance Inspector. The pilot contacted his company and arranged for parts and mechanic to be flown in.

This act of See something – Say something may have had direct effect on avoiding an aviation accident. [SAFECOM 17-0613](#)



Left to right: Deborah Lampton (Forest Aviation Officer) Alan Osborn and Rob Roth (Regional Aviation Safety Manager)

SAFETY IS NO PEST



Crystal Tischler (Forest Health Protection Aviation Officer), Robert Akroyd Jr. (Pilot) and Jami Anzalone (Regional Aviation Safety Manager).

The Forest Health Protection staff nominated Robert Akroyd Jr., owner and operator of ASAP Aviation based in Raton, NM, for his outstanding performance and diligent attitude towards aviation safety. He has been flying aerial survey missions since 2006 for the Forest Health Protection group in the Southwest Region. Robert describes his personality type as A+ PLUS and it shows. His aircraft, a Cessna 182 has always been in top notch condition and he passes aircraft inspections every year with flying colors. Aerial survey missions can involve long hours of monotonous grid flying or ever continually turning mountain flying that takes a lot of concentration and stamina. He has assisted us with helping make the flights more efficient, reducing flight hours and thus lowering our exposure to risk and creating cost savings. He

has conducted pinch hitter sessions with the surveyors, and is always taking time while ferrying to work with the surveyors to stay sharp on the knowledge of GPS/navigation and communications instruments operation. He always keeps an eye on the weather, as any good pilot should, to ensure we can get out of the area with a significant margin of safety and return safely to the airport. During one situation, while working out of the Taos airport, we were flying down around Santa Fe and the weather rolled in quickly. Instead of trying to make a hazardous flight back to Taos, we landed safely in Santa Fe, hangered the plane, and rented a car to drive back to Taos. Surveyors are usually busy looking at trees and recording observations and can easily lose their situational awareness; by increasing surveyors' knowledge of weather and clouds, he improves their situational awareness. While contractors often want to please and accomplish the mission despite risks, Robert is exceptional at making safe decisions and providing alternatives or no-go decisions when the risks are too high. Robert truly embodies the ideal of a safe pilot and contractor. The Forest Health Protection staff would like to say thank you and recognize your efforts to keep us all safe over the 1,166 hours of flight time during our surveys to date. [SAFECOM 17-0722](#), but recognition is not based on just this one event.

DRONE INTRUSION SHUTS DOWN AVIATION OPERATIONS, OPERATOR APPREHENDED

On 06/28/2017 while providing aerial supervision on the Goodwin Fire, we had a drone incursion in our TFR. The pilot and ATGS estimated the drone to be 500 feet below the air attack plane which put it at 10,000msl. There were helicopters, a Bravo, and air tankers working in the immediate vicinity so all aviation operations were shut down temporarily. Several communities were at risk. An investigation by Deputy Sheriff Brent Giuliani, Lieutenant Daniel Raiss and Detective Deron Franklin lead to the arrest of the drone operator.

[**SAFECOM 17-0439**](#)



Names from left to right: Bradley Johnston (Planning Section Chief, SW IMT Type 1 Team #2), Jessie Berner (Prescott National Forest Acting Forest Supervisor), Pete Gordon (Prescott National Forest Fuels, Fire, and Aviation Staff Officer), Lieutenant Daniel Raiss, Detective Deron Franklin, Deputy Sheriff Brent Giuliani, Kris Damsgaard (Regional Aviation Officer)

Lieutenant Daniel Raiss and Detective Deron Franklin lead to the arrest of the drone operator.

HELP LOCATE LOOKOUT IN TROUBLE



Michael Dreier (right) accepting Airward from Don Campbell (left) Not pictured Mike Jones and Bryan Schroeder

On July 24th 2017 the flight crew on N947CH, Michael Dreier - PIC, Mike Jones - SIC and Bryan Schroeder - Third Crew a Type 1, CH47D were working the Preacher Fire in the Pine Nut Mountains near Minden, NV. They received a radio call from Air Attack requesting assistance in locating a “missing lookout” at the head of the fire. The 3 person crew responded and contacted the lookout on air-to-ground, who said he “lit two spot fires”. The 3rd crew member looking out the back of the aircraft spotted the lookout and his two spot fires which were growing rapidly in the high winds. The flight crew found a two track road in the vicinity of the lookout, landed and the lookout boarded the helicopter and was flown to the Minden-Tahoe helibase. [**SAFECOM 17-0633**](#)

STICKING TO POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Isaac Hall, his aircraft and crew showed up at a helispot to conduct a burnout operation on a fire which they were not assigned to. There was no PASP or Aerial Ignition Plan available at the helispot for Isaac to review. Isaac was also being pressured to hurry up, being told it was urgent to configure as quickly as possible because the burn window was very small. Approximately 5 minutes later he was asked how long it would be before he could burn, and asked if the crew would have to do the JHA, go-no-go and safety briefing or if they could just go burn. It was also reiterated to him that the burn window was very small and they were running out of time. Isaac informed the Operations Section Chief that they would not skip the required JHA, go-no-go and preflight briefing. Mid bench test Isaac was told he and his aircraft were being released, relocate to the local helibase, and the team would use the other type 3 at the helibase as they would be ready quicker, since the other aircraft had already been conducting burning operations for the team the day prior. Upon relocating to the helibase, Isaac called the AOB and expressed his concerns that he and his crew were being pressured to forgo the required safety procedures in order to expedite a mission and he was not comfortable with that.



Left to right: Dave Crumb (Helicopter Operations Specialist, John Harris (Helicopter Inspector Pilot) and Isaac Hall

Isaac showed great leadership attributes and resolve for our policies and procedures by not succumbing to the pressure from the Operations Section Chief or the small burn window. [SAFECOM 17-0952](#)

TENSION AT THE PRESCOTT AIRTANKER BASE

On Tuesday June 13th, 2017 the Prescott Airtanker Base and Prescott Dispatch Center were busy supporting aviation resources assigned to multiple fires in northern Arizona. Late in the day, three airtankers were in-bound and one had just landed at Prescott's airport from the Highline Fire (Tonto NF): 2 large air tankers and 2 SEATS. While under the operational control of the FAA tower at the airport and with one SEAT on the runway, the other three aircraft were in an approach pattern for landing. An Incident With Potential (IWP) occurred between two of the three aircraft in-bound for the airport.

Once the aircraft landed and safely parked at the Prescott Air Tanker Base, Cindy Matthews, Prescott Air Tanker Base Manager was faced with a situation of high tension among flight crews. Cindy displayed professionalism and leadership in creating an opportunity for learning while diffusing the tension that resulted from the IWP. Recognizing the emotional impacts of the events on the flight crews and Tanker Base staff as well as recognizing that all personnel will need to continue supporting aviation operations at an elevated level, she brought all parties together at the Tanker Base and conducted an After Action Review (AAR). Cindy's intuition lead her to the deliberate decision to bring all the parties together; diffuse the tension; and facilitate a productive discussion around the facts and perceptions of the event. All



Left to right: Jim Morrison, Barry Wallace, Cindy Matthews and Pete Gordon

parties, including those closely related to the incident reportedly left the AAR shaking hands and fully agreeing to the importance of working together productively and appreciating the value of immediate lessons learned as a part of the hazard mitigation process.

Before conducting the AAR, Cindy's experience and foresight lead her to contact the Regional Aviation Safety Manager (RASM) immediately. In relaying the event and situation, she requested that an Aviation Safety Assistance Team, already in-Region be diverted from their schedule and immediately come to Prescott. The ASAT was at the Prescott Air Tanker Base in less than 24 hours. Cindy was well prepared to brief the team on the events of the previous afternoon as well as provide statements, diagrams, and her assessment and perspective of the events.

Throughout this event and throughout the follow-up, Barry Wallace – Prescott Dispatch Center Manager was a key contributor. Barry immediately offered support and expertise to Cindy during the incident, the AAR, and the following day with the ASAT. His expertise in aircraft dispatching, inter-personal skills, and calm demeanor played a key role in helping Cindy facilitate the communication to the Prescott NF Fire Staff Officer and among the ASAT and the personnel involved in the event.

With no requirement to do so nor any management direction to do so, Cindy and Barry diffused a tense situation; drew lessons immediately from the events and perceptions of those involved; and provided the leadership to encourage all involved to move forward productively with a common mission. This occurred at a time of elevated aviation activity and heightened human emotions. It is highly likely that the AAR and deliberate mending of relationships contributed to future accident avoidance and effective risk analysis. In addition to the positive physical outcome of the events that occurred during the air tankers' approach to the Prescott Airport, the response and follow up to this event by Cindy and Barry is an additional positive outcome upholding the principles, desired learning, and risk awareness culture the Forest Service aspires to be. Cindy Matthews and Barry Wallace deserve recognition for this professionalism and leadership is deserving of recognition. [SAFECOM 17-0399](#)

GOOD PLANNING

Congratulations to Scott Headrick- Jeffco Air Tanker Base Assistant Manager, Tracey Kern-Fort Collins Dispatch Center Manager and Anne Baxter-Fort Collins Dispatch Aircraft Dispatcher. This award was given for their outstanding situational awareness, and timely communication with adjacent dispatch centers and each other in the recognition of multiple incoming aircraft and the facilitation of those aircraft without mishap. Their professionalism and teamwork reflect their commitment to excellence. No SAFECOM



Left to right are: Terry Baker (Deputy Forest Supervisor) Ann Baxter, Tracey Kern and Bryan Karchut (ARP fire Staff Officer)



Left to right: Bryan Karchut (ARP fire staff office), Scott Headrick, and Jim Lawson (R-2 Helicopter Operations Specialist)

PROMOTING AN AVIATION SAFETY CULTURE



Doug Ott, the USGS Idaho Water Science Center (IDWSC) Boise Field Office Chief, is recognized for leading aviation safety, planning, and coordination and for promoting a positive safety culture. Doug oversees personnel who fly into remote airstrips in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. Doug's experience and attention to detail has led to many successful and safe missions. He worked diligently to prepare the Center's Aviation Management Plan, Project Aviation Safety Plans, Mishap Response Plans, and emergency cooperative flight preparedness plans.

Doug serves as the unit aviation training administrator, aviation coordinator, and subject matter expert. During the spring floods of 2017, a period of increased workload, Doug organized and prepared management, administrative, and field staffs for a Department of Interior – Office of Aviation Services program evaluation. That evaluation resulted in the IDWSC receiving high marks for its aviation program. Doug leads by example and lives by the guiding principles of aviation safety. He inspires coworkers at all levels to excellence in safe working practices. No SAFECOM

PEG LEG FIRE MEDEVAC

A type III Helicopter was carrying out external load long line operations near Helispot 1 (H1) when a radio transmission came across alerting all crews that a firefighter was in need of medical assistance and a potential aerial medical extraction. After review from an EMT on the fireline it was confirmed that there was a need to evacuate the individual from the fireline to H2 which was an improved helispot located close to the fire. The plan was initially to transfer the patient from H2 to H1 for further transport from Lifeflight or ground ambulance.

The helicopter landed at H1, where the helitack crew removed the long line. Then the helicopter flew to H2 and shut down. The helicopter was reconfigured to accommodate the patient after hearing radio communications that the evacuee would not be able to sit and would be in a SKED. The reconfiguration involved removing the front co-pilot seat and folding 2 rear seats to the cabin firewall and relocating seat belts for the patient.

Shawn Borgen, Flathead IHC Superintendent flew to the helispot on the type III and took command of the incident within an incident IC. The Flathead IHC facilitated the extrication of patient from to the helispot. The Robert Mackenzie (pilot and licensed A&P) configured the aircraft for the patient and the crew prepared the patient for flight. At the point they were ready to lift off, the ordered life flight aircraft had not yet launched from Missoula so considering the condition of the patient and input from the EMT's on scene Shawn made the call to launch with the patient, Flathead IHC EMT, and himself as the HMGB and fly directly to the hospital in Missoula. Shawn acknowledged that it is out of the ordinary to transport directly to a medical facility with agency aircraft but for this particular event it seemed logical and prudent.

Air Attack provided coordinates of the hospital and frequencies to the helicopter pilot Robert Mackenzie and the patient's vitals were relayed inflight to the hospital. The control tower at Missoula helped expedite flight through controlled airspace to the rooftop helipad at St. Patrick's hospital where the patient was transferred to a stretcher and hospital care. A USFS liaison met with the USFS EMT and Hotshot Superintendent for a brief AAR. The helicopter was then refueled at Missoula and then flew back to the Peg Leg Fire. No SAFECOM.



Robert Mackenzie (right) receiving Airward from Bob Roth (left)



Shawn Borgen (center) receiving AIRWARD from Bob Roth, Flathead IHC in background

PAYING ATTENTION TO DETAIL AND BEING PERSISTENT PAYS OFF

On June 28, 2016 a State of Alaska Department of Forestry Air Attack ship assigned to the Tanana Zone of the Alaska Fire Service landed in Bettles, Alaska to refuel and standby for nearby fires. The pilot, Chuck Greer, was a State of Alaska DOF employee {26,000+ hour pilot} and the ATGS a BLM Alaska Fire Service employee.

Chuck called a local vendor to refuel the plane with 100 Low Lead {Av gas}. The truck came and fueled the plane with approximately 100 gallons. Chuck took the nozzle to finish fueling as he likes to top off the tanks himself. He immediately noticed something strange about the fuel; it was foamy and had a slight diesel smell. He stopped fueling and asked the fueller about the fuel. The fueller thought it was fine as it was blue in color.

Chuck had also noticed that a little fuel had spilled into the dirt and left an oily patch instead of evaporating. He asked to check the fuel in the tank that filled the truck.

The tank they had used was a back-up tank that had not been used since it was filled last winter, until that day. It was mostly empty but they put a stick in and smelled the residual fuel and did a finger test to see how slimy it was. They then got two clear jars and poured some fuel from the fuel truck into one and the fuel from another tank that was known to be clean into another jar.

The fuel from the truck that had filled the plane was a lighter shade of blue than the good sample of fuel, smelled like diesel, and was slimy to the touch. The good sample of fuel was a darker blue, had no diesel smell, and evaporated quickly all of which indicated good fuel. The vendor agreed that it was contaminated. It took Chuck's persistence to check the fuel and keep asking multiple times over objections to test the fuel.

This pilot is commended as the contaminated mixture could have allowed the aircraft to run for a while and even possibly during take-off. It might have taken off and then had both engines quit. His attention to detail and persistence was potentially a lifesaving act for his plane and others. This incident reinforces the necessity for every pilot to monitor the fueling of their aircraft and also check the fuel.



Chuck displayed excellent situational awareness to notice what was happening and point it out to others. His positive actions led to correcting the problem, thus avoiding a possible mishap with his aircraft and alerting other aircraft of the hazard. [SAFECOM: 16-0455](#)

TEAM REDUCES CONFLICTS WITH UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS (UAS)

Sarah Corning, Sabino Canyon Visitor Information Center Manager; Mark Sandburn, Law Enforcement Officer; Mindi Lehew, Natural Resource Specialist; and Ken Born, Santa Catalina District Ranger worked together to reduce conflicts between Agency aircraft and public operated unmanned aircraft (aka UAS or drones) on their forest. Sarah had heard issues with small UAS being flown in conflict with public visitors in the heavily used recreational area. Her approach was from both a visitor and aviator safety standpoint. There are a number of overflights that take place in and around Sabino Canyon by the Forest Service, cooperators in Pima County, DPS, and the military. Mark agreed with the issues being expressed and looked forward to preventing those on the horizon. He continually worked hand in hand with Ms. Corning in researching authorities and potential mitigations to reducing the risk. Mindi worked to develop cohesive language providing information to forest visitors and helping to set boundaries to reduce risk. Ken helped lead the group and collaborate between various entities and provided overall leadership and helped to strike a balance with Aviation safety as a front running theme.

Many thanks to these employees who put forth extra effort to ensure the safety of our aviators and forest visitors alike. NO SAFECOM.



Left to right: Mark Sandburn, Mindi Lehew, Sarah Corning, Kerwin Dewberry - Coronado Forest Supervisor, Ken Born, and Grady Wilson – acting Regional Aviation Safety Manager.

TEAMWORK SOLVES LITTLE KNOWN PROBLEM

Sue Gethen, Heather Matusiak, Neil Flagg, Jim Reed, Mike Laughlin worked as a team to discover why Spidertracks AFF program interface was not consistently recording data from spider track AFF units. The work between the vendor, dispatchers, maintenance people, program specialists and programmers discovered by crosschecking position reports on AFF.gov servers and the aircraft vendor's account at Spidertracks revealed the AFF.gov log files did not receive all of the position reports Spidertracks had stored on their servers. Spidertracks identified the problem as use of an incorrect time stamp in response to AFF data requests. A correction of server software provided viable data. The diligence of the team provided accurate aircraft position reports in AFF and a briefing paper for future use in troubleshooting problems in this area. [SAFECOM 16-0079](#)



David Barto- AK aviation Safety Liaison (Left) Heather Matusiak (Aviation Management Specialist)WO – West Aaron Schoolcraft R-6/R-10 Assistant Director Aviation and Gary Boyd R-6/R-10 RASM (Right) Present Heather Matusiak's Airward at RAO Meeting.



Gary Boyd R-6/R-10 RASM (Left) Mike Laughlin Regal Air, Chugach Forest Supervisor Terri Marceron, and Sue Gethen (Left) Chugach NF Center manager. Mike and Sue presented with Airward's at Alaska Meeting.

CREWMEMBERS ATTENTION TO DETAIL CONTRIBUTES TO MISSION CAPABLE AIRCRAFT

On July 28th 2017 Laura Trevellyan and Andrew Hastings crewmembers on the Siskiyou Rappel Crew were loading the aircraft to return to their home airport after initial attack/bucket support at a fire helibase. After loading the cargo and bucket, the crewmembers noticed that the bottom of the left cargo door was not connected to the aircraft (it could be pulled away from the body). They reported it to the pilot, and Matt Schutty the Helicopter Manager at the time. After further inspection and looking at the cargo door, it was determined that the bottom guide rail (made of rolled sheet metal) was missing the forward 8-9 inches of the inside lip, allowing the door bottom to be loose when the door was fully open. The Pilot determined that when the door was fully closed it was secure and not loose, but said he would not allow door open operations (rappel operations). The manager concurred and the crew loaded up, the pilot closed the doors himself, and returned home, where after consulting the mechanic the pilot grounded the aircraft until the situation was remedied.

Due to Laura's and Andrews's attention to detail future operations were not jeopardized and a valid safety concern was mitigated. Well Done to Laura, Andrew and the Siskiyou crew. [SAFECOM 17-0663](#)



Amanda Lucas Unit Aviation officer for the Rogue River-Siskiyou and Umpqua National Forests (Left) Presents Andrew Hastings (Right) his Airward at unit AAR.



Andrew Larrimore Siskiyou Rappel Crew (Left) Presents Laura Trevellyan (Right) with her Airward at unit event.

"BREAKING NEWS! DRONES AND FIREFIGHTING AIRCRAFT DON'T MIX"

Bob Martin knows excitement. As a pilot for Channel 13 KRQE in Albuquerque for more than 20 years, Bob has seen a lot of high risk action of all sorts. He is dedicated to reducing risk for all pilots throughout the state. Bob started with the idea to host a New Mexico helicopter safety day to bring helicopter operators from state, local and Federal agencies as well as commercial vendors together to stress safety and open dialogue on reducing risk. These sessions have been picked up by the FAA FFAST team and HAI and developed into an annual event with ever increasing attendance. Bob has been very active within the news media industry conducting training all across the United States on Part 107 regulations, unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and how to cover wildfires safely. This summer, Bob went out of his way to develop a PSA to raise public awareness about the risk



Photo of Bob Martin; Photo Credit: KRQE News

of public flying their UAS, or drones, over or near a wildfire. He leveraged his employment at KRQE to reach across New Mexico spreading the word about the risk to first responders, including wildland firefighters. Through the years, Bob has been an advocate for wildfire aviator safety. He has developed relationships with ATGS, ASM and Lead Plane resources and has made effort to understand the Fire Traffic Area (FTA) and communication protocols to ensure he does his job safely while they do theirs. Bob is instrumental in sharing his vast knowledge of aviation and aviation safety with others. Bob Martin was a true leader in aviation safety by walking the walk of Safety Management Systems; operating with safety as a core value and sharing his knowledge with others. Many thanks to Bob for all his efforts. No SAFECOM

DEMONSTRATED POSITIVE ACTIONS PROMOTING AVIATION SAFETY

Michael Barstad is an A & P mechanic working for Leading Edge Aviation, Inc. During the 2016 fire season he was assigned as the primary mechanic for an exclusive use helicopter contract with the Alaska Fire Service. During a daily preflight inspection of the Bell 206 L3/C30P he noticed paint cracking on one of the doublers on a main rotor blade and further inspection revealed debonding of an area of the blade. The maintenance manual states the debond area could be no more than 10% of the bond line and the affected area of the blade was within the parameter of the maintenance manual.

Michael Barstad sent pictures and communicated concerns to his Director of Maintenance (DM). The DM consulted Bell Helicopters and a blade repair shop, both told the DM that debonding was most likely greater than we could see or detect in the field with visual and tap testing. The decision was made to take the aircraft out of service and replace the blades.

The blades were replaced at the Fish and Wildlife Service hangar in Bettles, AK in a controlled environment. The Bureau of Land Management would like to commend Michael Barstad and Leading Edge Aviation, Inc. for their attention to detail and commitment to aviation safety. No picture available. [SAFECOM 16-779](#)

KIRBY CALHOUN

On February 23, 2017, BSEE Inspector Kirby Calhoun was a passenger on N820FT, an A 109 helicopter, in support of the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement's Lake Jackson District on a mission to an offshore oil and gas facility, Matagorda Island (MI) 657-B. The flight offshore, and the aerial reconnaissance of the platform's helideck, had been routine. The pilot, Captain Stephen McDaniel, had been given a "green deck" to land and was making his final approach when Inspector Calhoun, seated in the rear cabin area, warned him of flying debris coming from the production deck adjacent to the helideck. NOTE - The helideck on MI 657-B was designed so that the production deck and helideck were at the same height which made it easier for debris to contaminate the helideck.

Alerted by Inspector Calhoun, Captain McDaniel immediately terminated the approach and advised the platform to secure all loose material next to the heliport. After the debris was secured a second "green deck" was given and Captain McDaniel landed safely. Without Inspector Calhoun's alert observation from the back seat and his immediate warning to Captain McDaniel, the debris could easily have been sucked into the engine or rotor system, damaging the aircraft.



Left to right: Acting BSEE Director Margaret Schneider, Inspector Kirby Calhoun, Lake Jackson Production Operations Supervisor Stephen Martinez, GOM Deputy Regional Director Mike Prendergast

While Captain McDaniel was the first to publicly thank Inspector Calhoun when he wrote his SAFECOM, BSEE is proud to second that sentiment. Inspector Kirby Calhoun is hereby commended with the Department of the Interior Airward for his alertness, teamwork, and immediate notification of the pilot. Good Job!!

SAFECOM 17-0153

ANDY ADAMS & LOUIS FERNANDEZ

On February 23, 2017, BSEE Inspectors Louis Fernandez, Andrew “Andy” Adams, and Quintin Hansen were assigned to fly on N6HE, a Bell 407 helicopter, on a mission to support the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement’s (BSEE) Pacific Region.



Left to right: Acting BSEE Director M. Schneider, Pacific Region OFO Mike Mitchell, Inspector Louis Fernandez, Inspector Andy Adams, Pacific Region Aviation Manager Theresa Bell, GOM Deputy Regional Director M. Prendergast

The three inspectors arrived at the heliport and were preparing to go offshore, when a vendor mechanic walked by and Inspectors Fernandez and Adams smelled the odor of alcohol. The mechanic and Inspector Hansen went to the helicopter while Inspectors Fernandez and Adams confirmed their suspicions with each other and, subsequently, decided not to fly.

Inspectors Fernandez and Adams discussed their observations and their decision to not fly with the pilot, Mr. Jeff Henderson. After discussing their observation with Mr. Henderson, Inspector Adams went to the aircraft to get Inspector Hansen while Inspector Fernandez and Mr. Henderson notified the Helicopter Express’s lead pilot, Mr. Clayton Mitchell.

After notification of Helicopter Express, the inspectors returned to the BSEE office and informed their management of the situation.

Helicopter Express immediately implemented the procedures in their Safety Management System and Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program and elected to send the mechanic to a testing facility. Ultimately, Helicopter Express elected to replace the mechanic on this contract.

The next day, Helicopter Express had a replacement mechanic on site who conducted a thorough inspection of the aircraft before it was returned to service. The alertness and willingness to report a potential safety hazard to the pilot, despite the awkwardness of the situation, are important lessons to be learned by everyone involved in BSEE aviation and exemplify the safety culture that BSEE endorses.

BSEE Inspectors Louis Fernandez and Andy Adams are hereby recognized with the DOI Airward for their vigilance and for immediately communicating what could have been a serious safety issue to the pilot.

Kudos also goes to the management of Helicopter Express for taking immediate action to verify the allegation and correct the situation, and for quickly notifying BSEE aviation managers of the incident.

[SAFECOM 17-0152](#)

CLINTON CAMPO

On June 13, 2016 BSEE Inspector Clinton Campo was a passenger on N512LD, an A109 helicopter, providing support to the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE).

The aircraft departed Houma, LA and flew to an offshore oil and gas facility, South Timbalier 130, where Inspector Campo and a fellow passenger got out to conduct a routine inspection. While he was recovering his gear, Inspector Campo observed hydraulic fluid in the baggage compartment. Inspector Campo immediately notified the pilot who inspected the leak and contacted his company's Operations and Maintenance Departments.



From left to right: Acting BSEE Director Margaret Schneider, **Inspector Clinton Campo**, Acting Houma District Manager Amy Wilson, GOM Deputy Regional Director Mike Prendergast

The company dispatched a second helicopter with a mechanic. Due to the small size of the helideck, the second helicopter had to land on a neighboring facility and the inspectors had to take a boat to that facility in order to fly back to Houma on the second helicopter.

It was later learned that on the previous day, the tail rotor servo on this aircraft had been replaced and during the flight the servo had developed a small leak. Without Inspector Campo's observation and warning, it is very likely that the pilot would not have noticed the leak in the baggage compartment and the hydraulic system could have failed in flight.

Inspector Clinton Campo is commended with the Department of the Interior Airward for his alertness, teamwork, and immediate notification of the pilot. Good Job!! [**SAFECOM 16-1068**](#)

ANDRE MOUTON AND ESTEBAN ORTIZ-VENTURA

On June 14, 2016, BSEE Inspectors Andre Mouton and Esteban Ortiz-Ventura were assigned to fly on N178EH, an AS350 helicopter, on a mission to support the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE).

The aircraft had departed the vendor's base in Abbeville, LA and had flown to Lafayette, LA in order to pick up the inspectors. When Inspectors Mouton and Ortiz-Ventura approached the running helicopter, they opened the baggage compartment to stow their gear and noticed a fluid that they believed to be oil in the compartment that they hadn't seen before and immediately reported it to the pilot.

The pilot shut down the helicopter to investigate and confirmed that there was an oily substance on the floor, side, and wall of the baggage compartment. The pilot, also unable to recognize the fluid, reported it to maintenance.

A mechanic was quickly able to inspect the aircraft and determine that the fluid was an anti-corrosive spray and that there was not an oil leak. The aircraft was returned to service and inspectors were able to continue their mission.

The alertness and willingness to report a potential safety hazard to the pilot are important lessons to be learned by everyone involved in BSEE aviation and exemplify the safety culture that BSEE endorses.

Inspectors Andre Mouton and Esteban Ortiz-Ventura are recognized with the DOI Airward for their vigilance and for immediately communicating what could have been a serious safety issue to the pilot. [SAFECOM 16-1068](#)



Left to right: Acting BSEE Director Margaret Schneider, Inspector Andre Mouton, Inspector Esteban Ortiz-Ventura, Lafayette Dist Manager Elliott Smith, GOM Deputy Regional Director Mike Prendergast

CLAY VOSS



Left to right: Acting BSEE Director Margaret Schneider, Captain Clay Voss, Lake Jackson Production Operations Supervisor Stephen Martinez, GOM Deputy Regional Director Mike Prendergast

On July 11, 2016, Captain Clay Voss was the Pilot-in-Command of an A109 helicopter, N18EA, providing support to the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE).

As Captain Voss and his BSEE passengers departed the Texas Gulf Coast Regional Airport at Lake Jackson on a flight to an offshore oil and gas facility (HIA 595), he observed that the number 1 engine oil temperature was higher than the number 2 engine oil temperature (115°C and 105°C respectively). Not alarmed, but actively monitoring the situation, Captain Voss watched as the number 1 engine oil temperature climbed to 123°C. At this point, Captain Voss briefed the inspectors that they were going to return to base to have maintenance investigate the issue, even though no cautions or warnings had occurred and the aircraft was still performing within limitations.

While returning to Lake Jackson, the oil temperature maintained 123° C and occasionally bumped 124°C. Captain Voss referred to the checklist and verified that when the engine oil temperature reaches 125°C the warning light would illuminate, requiring the engine to be shut down and the flight to continue on one engine. The short flight back to Lake Jackson was uneventful where a safe landing was accomplished.

Kudos to Captain Clay Voss for his alertness and conservative decision-making. Good call! [SAFECOM 16-0536](#)

MICHAEL JARDELL

One key aspect to improving safety in any environment is to improve communications. In the aviation industry this idea is captured by the concepts and practice of Crew Resource Management. Inspector Michael Jardell, by actively looking for hazards and speaking up to warn the pilot when he noticed a faint wisp of smoke coming from the helicopter's engine cowling, demonstrated Crew Resource Management in action.

On October 19, 2015, an AS-350 with two BSEE inspectors on board made a scheduled intermediate stop at Cameron, Louisiana after returning from a mission to an offshore oil and gas facility. After the aircraft was shut down, the BSEE inspectors exited the aircraft and Inspector Jardell observed a faint wisp of smoke coming from the engine cowling. Due to his training and the open communications climate established by the pilot, Inspector Jardell immediately brought the issue to the pilot's attention rather than hoping that the smoke would linger until the pilot was able to see it for himself.

The pilot carefully inspected the engine area and found that the smoke was coming from a seep in the oil supply line that services the engine's rear turbine bearing. Understanding that a loss of lubrication to the rear turbine bearing could cause the engine to fail, the aviation service provider grounded the aircraft, and the BSEE personnel returned safely to Lake Charles in other aircraft.

Mr. Michael Jardell is recognized with the Department of the Interior Airward for his attention to detail, his attitude of taking nothing for granted, and his ability to communicate effectively with the pilot which serve as a great example of the role BSEE passengers can play in the safe accomplishment of our aviation missions....Good Job! No picture available. [SAFECOM 16-0024](#)

DERRICK WULF

On September 21, 2016, Captain Derrick Wulf was the Pilot-in-Command of N108TA, an AS-350B2 helicopter, providing support to the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE).

During an intermediate stop on an offshore oil and gas facility, East Cameron 373, Captain Wulf conducted a thorough inspection of the aircraft where he found a hydraulic leak and notified maintenance. Operations personnel assessed the situation and determined that it would not be possible to land a second helicopter on the helideck, nor to use the hoist on their Search and Rescue helicopter to deliver the mechanic.

BSEE inspectors on site, together with the facility operator, Petrobras, and a lead inspector in the Lake Charles District Office, identified a work boat that could transfer the inspectors to a nearby facility where a second helicopter could be safely landed. Simultaneously, Era Operations personnel coordinated the dispatch of the second aircraft with the mechanic to fly to the adjacent facility where the BSEE inspectors could be picked up and the mechanic dropped off. By the end of the day, all inspectors had been safely returned to Lake Charles.

Kudos to Captain Derrick Wulf for conscientiously conducting the preflight inspection and for identifying the hydraulic leak. [SAFECOM 16-1040](#)



Left to right: Acting BSEE Director Margaret Schneider, Captain Derrick Wulf, Lake Charles District Manager Mark Osterman, GOM Dep Reg Dir Mike Prendergast



http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/av_safety



<https://www.doi.gov/aviation/safety>

