



AIRWARD NEWS

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

On Top of the Situation

During mobilization of an Airtanker from Missoula to Alamogordo for the Four Corners fire, Don Sutliff, the aircraft dispatcher at NICC noticed the aircraft icon turn red on Automated Flight Following (AFF). AFF is a system that automatically tracks the location and velocity of AFF equipped aircraft and provides near-real-time information to dispatchers, aviation managers, and other authorized users. The status of the aircraft is displayed by color and when the icon turns red, that indicates lost contact.

Without wasting any time Don began making calls in an effort to locate the aircraft. He notified Kenan Jaycox at the Southwest Interagency Coordination Center that the icon had turned red and Ken jumped right in and also began making calls in an efforts to locate the airtanker.

Don is commended for his attention to the flight following (AFF) of aircraft, specifically Tanker 42. Both Don and Kenans efforts went above and beyond the standard protocol. They made the extra effort to determine what was going on rather than waiting until the aircraft was expected to arrive. Had there been any survivors, the timely actions taken by Don and Kenan may have saved their lives.

Both Don and Kenan performed professionally and calmly in a stressful situation that progressed from the initial efforts to locate Tanker 42 through the confirmation of an accident with fatalities.

Nice job guys, Thanks for your great work.



Don Sutliff (right) receiving Airward from Ron Hanks, USFS Chief, Aviation Risk Management and Training Systems (left)



Kenan Jaycox (center) receiving Airward from Jami Anzalone, USFS Region 3 Aviation Safety Manager (left) and Marsha Kearney, USFS R-3 Director, Fire & Aviation Management (right)

A Great Listener

Jumper 73, a USFS Redmond Smokejumper Sherpa was holding short of the runway awaiting take off clearance from the tower for a practice jump mission, when they received a call on the Air to Ground frequency to return to the ramp.

Brian had heard an abnormal noise coming from the airplane as it was taxiing to the runway and contacted the jump base requesting the aircraft return to the ramp so he could investigate the source of the noise.



Brian Green (right) receiving Airward from Gary Sterling ,
USFS Region 6 Aviation Safety Manager (left)

As soon as the aircraft was parked on the ramp Brian pointed to the left engine and gave the shut down signal; followed by the pilots immediately shutting down both engines. Upon further inspection, Brian found that part of the secondary low blade angle stop sensor had broken off and was rattling around in the front part of the cowling causing the noise.

This noise was not apparent to the flight crew or jumpers aboard the airplane. The secondary low blade angle stop sensor had checked OK during the "first flight of the day run-up checks" while the aircraft was still on the smokejumper ramp. Brian only heard the noise as the aircraft was taxiing out from the ramp; suggesting that the part failed at the start of the taxi operation.

Brian is recognized for his high level of situational awareness and willingness to act when noticing something out of the normal. Aviation can provide situations that require sound judgment, quick thinking, and skill; and Brian demonstrated all these traits. His professionalism and quick action prevented Jumper 73 from becoming airborne with an unknown maintenance deficiency. [SAFECOM 09-0203](#)

Congratulations Brian and thank you for your emphases on Safety!

A Calming Influence

Under the pressure of virtually non-stop operations from the fires in Northern California in 2008 the folks in the cockpits, on the helibases, and in the ICPs worked hard to keep it all running smoothly and safely. One person who stands out for performing an exemplary job under difficult circumstances was Jordan Reeser, a National Park Service employee, who is normally stationed at Point Reyes National Seashore.



Jordan Reeser (center) receiving Airward from Clay Hillin, NPS Pacific West Regional Aviation Manager (left) and Cicely Muldoon, NPS Pacific West Deputy Regional Director.

Jordan was able to improve morale, safety and discipline at the helibase he was managing. In one case he had to intercede when an air attack and several military helicopters passed over the helibase enroute to a fire without properly establishing radio contact. He realized that there was significant potential for further conflict between those aircraft and the two helicopters from his helibase.

Jordan's first action was to instruct his radio operator to attempt to contact the intruders. When that was unsuccessful Jordan made the decision to recall his two helicopters until they were able to establish communication with the intruders. Fortunately, the helicopters returned without incident and Jordan followed-up by making phone calls to dispatch to clarify what had happened. Finally, he went over what had happened at the end-of-day debriefing with everyone at the helibase. No egos, just a safety-first learning environment!

That is just one example. While Jordan was in charge he made sure there were briefings every day and a debriefings every evening. Even though he was dealing with mass chaos and nearing the end of his assignment, he maintained his composure and never once lost his temper or compromised safety.

Well done Jordan, clearly you've earned the respect of your peers!!!



Aviation Safety Offices

http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/av_safety/ - <http://amd.nbc.gov/safety/>