
Group 3 Safety Newsletter

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In light of the recent number of CAP related accidents, this month's article will focus on aviation. Below are the statistics from the National Board meeting. After 7 ½ months, CAP has almost double the number of accidents from last year. In addition, there have been 5 CAP (and 1 non-CAP) fatalities to date. CAP had been fatality free for two years. While it is far too early to know the causes of these recent incidents, there are some simple common sense steps pilots and aircrews can take to minimize their likelihood of occurring:

- 1) Perform proper preflight planning including weather, weight & balance, useable fuel, and estimated time in the air.
- 2) Perform proper preflight inspections including useable fuel on board, aircraft condition, and crew condition. Follow a checklist!
- 3) Utilize sound risk management procedures
- 4) Utilize a sterile cockpit during takeoffs, landings, and other times when the plane is close to the ground (i.e. mission flying)
- 5) Remain diligent while taxiing or flying ... in other words, pay attention!
- 6) Remember, the flight hasn't stopped until you've landed, tied down, and called the Flight Release Officer

The above suggestions are in addition to FAA regulations. CAP pilots and/or crewmembers must also know all of CAP regulation 60-1. These exist for a reason to aid us in being safe during our operations. Violation of any of the regulations will not be tolerated.

Safety Statistics presented during the 2002 National Board meeting:

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
A/C Accidents	5	6	3	1	4	7
Rate/100,000 hrs	4.16	4.76	2.34	0.94	3.57	--
A/C Flt Incidents	27	19	12	16	17	22
A/C Grnd Mishaps	8	3	6	8	8	6
Fatalities	2	3	2	0	0	5
Vehicle	12	7	9	15	15	7
Bodily Injury	14	13	28	15	13	10
Serious Injury	7	5	9	3	3	3

(Current as of 10 Aug 02)

Three Aircraft Accidents In One Month: Last month, we experienced three aircraft accidents within 13 days! I'm also sad to report that we lost two members and a law enforcement officer in the first one. We had been fatality-free for over three years prior to this sad event. Let me review what we know so far:

On 17 July, a North Carolina operated C-172S crashed near Edenton, NC while flying a Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) sponsored mission. Visual Meteorological conditions prevailed and no flight plan was filed. The aircraft was destroyed and a private-rated pilot, a commercially rated copilot and a non-CAP officer with the Chowan County Sheriff's Department received fatal injuries. Witnesses observed the aircraft maneuvering in different areas throughout the county during the morning and afternoon, at approximately 300 – 500 feet above the ground, with occasional maneuvering at lower altitudes. On the pass, on which the aircraft crashed, witnesses stated the aircraft was in a large clockwise orbit and had descended lower than previously observed. One witness heard a sputtering noise and another stated there was no engine sound at all just before she observed the aircraft depart normal upright flight. She saw the aircraft simultaneously nose over vertically from an altitude of about 120 – 150 feet above the ground and commence a right half roll into the terrain.

On 21 July, a Colorado operated C-182R was involved in a landing accident at Centennial Airport, Englewood, CO, that resulted in substantial damage. The certified flight instructor, second pilot and a passenger received no injuries. Day visual meteorological conditions prevailed, and no flight plan had been filed for the cross-country flight from Canon City, CO to Englewood, CO. According to the flight instructor, who was acting as a safety pilot, the second pilot was making a simulated ILS approach to runway 35R (10,001 feet x 100 feet, dry, asphalt) at Centennial Airport. He removed his hood at 300 feet AGL and reported the runway in sight. Airspeed, altitude and pitch angle were said to be "good." The airplane touched down, bounced, became airborne and drifted off to the left side of the runway. He added power and asked the instructor to take control. The instructor took control and flew the airplane back towards the runway. When she landed, the nose and left main landing gear collapsed and the airplane veered off the left side of the runway and came to rest in the grass.

On 29 July, a Texas operated C-182Q was preflight inspected and found to have the left wing tank full and the right tank fuel within touch of his index finger. The pilot flew 1.7 hours from Waco, TX to San Antonio, TX where he was to pick up a three-person, Air Force Accident Investigation Team and transport them to Starr County Airport. The pilot and his passengers then flew 2.5 hours to their destination, which offered no aircraft services. After the passengers deplaned, the pilot opted to fly approximately 30 minutes to McAllen, TX, where he could refuel. Flying at 2000 feet MSL, he made contact with McAllen Tower and experienced a sudden engine failure. An engine restart was unsuccessful, so the pilot attempted to land in a plowed field. The aircraft struck a telephone utility box, flipped over on it's back and was substantially damaged. The pilot bruised his knee, scratched his elbow and experienced a sore chest from the seatbelt. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is investigating all three of these accidents.

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The Group 3 Safety Newsletter is a publication of the Group 3 Safety Section.

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