Group 3 Safety Newsletter

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Inhalation Mishap:
While cleaning the barracks during a recent wing encampment, two cleaning chemicals were mixed and the resulting fumes caused 18 cadets and 1 senior member to become ill. All were taken to the military installation aid station for observation and then released.
Note: Mixing certain common household cleaners can result in toxic, potentially dangerous gases. Please make sure that our members use cleaning agents only in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and do not mix chemicals together.

Reminder that loaded 15-passenger vans are more prone to rollover:
Last year, (it was) publicized that The Department of Transportation (DOT) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) had issued a consumer advisory to users of 15-passenger vans because of an increased rollover risk under certain conditions. The CAP vehicle fleet includes 15-passenger vans that are included in this advisory. In addition, we have 12-passenger vans, which are built on the same chassis as the 15-passenger model; they're just missing one of the bench seats.
Analysis by NHTSA revealed that 15-passenger vans have a rollover risk that is quite similar to other light trucks and vans when carrying a few passengers. However, the risk of rollover increases dramatically as the number of occupants increases from fewer than five occupants to over ten passengers. In fact, in single vehicle crashes, 15-passenger vans with 10 or more occupants had a rollover rate nearly three times the rate of those that were lightly loaded. NHTSA's analysis revealed that loading the 15-passenger van causes the center of gravity to shift rearward and upward increasing the likelihood of rollover. The shift in the center of gravity also increases the potential for loss of control in panic maneuvers. A year ago last August, HQ CAP/LGT distributed warning placards to all wings for the 15 and 12-passenger vans in the CAP fleet. In an accompanying cover letter, (it was) asked that the placard be mounted on the dash of all affected vehicles. To compliment these warning placards, we need to continue to emphasize seat belt use, the danger of abrupt turns and the importance of adjusting speed for driving conditions. If you require any more of these placards, contact Duane Schultz, HQ CAP/LGT, 334-953-1601. Thanks for your help in mitigating this risk. Awareness will significantly help protect our members, as well as our vans.

Excerpt from September 2002 issue of "Sentinel"

Below is an excerpt from the keys to success as posted on the Philadelphia FSDO's website in the May edition of Safe Flyer.

Strive for self-improvement:
Accidents are tragic. Repeat accidents are dreadfully tragic. True aviation safety wisdom comes from understanding that there are no new types of accidents, only reincarnations of old ones. The circumstances may vary a bit, but the human errors responsible for accidents are and will forever be the same. The NTSB accident and NASA ASRS incident databases are freely accessible on the Internet. They can familiarize us with recurring pilot mistakes. Read each report to determine what happened and ask yourself, "what am I doing to ensure this never happens to me?" Additionally, keep a small notebook in your flight bag. Anytime you goof up during a flight, make short notes after the flight describing how your mistake occurred. Prior to each subsequent flight, review your list of "noteworthy blunders" (hopefully, this will only take a few minutes and not the entire afternoon) and you will slowly build up an immunity against those mistakes.

Practice risk management:
Risk management is a direct approach for reducing the unique hazards posed by each flight. If we attempted to avoid all the hazards associated with flight, we would just sit at home in front of the TV, wouldn't we? Operational Risk Management (ORM) is both a preflight and in-flight process. During preflight planning, assess the risks associated with the type of flight you have planned: surface winds, clouds, terrain, visibility, winds aloft, your state of mind aircraft condition, etc. Let's examine a sample flight, to demonstrate how to apply ORM. You recently got checked out in a light twin and are planning a flight to mountainous West Virginia. Weather is marginal VFR and you've just finished a long day at work, so it will be dark soon. You think you are confronted with a "go/no go" decision, but you actually have one more choice. You actually are facing a "go/change variables/no go decision." Perhaps you can safely undertake the flight by altering the risky variables. You may decide to take an airplane you are more comfortable with and delay your departure until the next day, when it'll be daylight and you will be freshly rested. The weather may still be marginal VFR and the hills will still be there, but you have shaved off three unfavorable variables. Consequently, your mishap susceptibility has just dropped significantly. Of course, not going is always your safest option, but so is staying in bed. My point being, if you are determined to fly, at least stack the deck in your favor! Try to reduce as many of the risks as you can, versus just treating it as a "yes-no" go/no go" decision. Once you become airborne, ORM must be fluid (weighing risk as the flight progresses). By being fluid, I mean that we must assess the rise in risk anytime a variable in your flight worsens. Here are some examples of worsening variables: it starts to rain (the runway is now wet), increasing winds, nightfall, temperature approaching the dew point, unexpected headwinds at cruise altitude, aircraft system malfunctions, running low on fuel and becoming tired. Whenever a variable degrades, reevaluate your flight safety. The best option may be to land, divert or change your game plan.

Excerpt from May 2002 issue of "Safe Flyer"

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