

***Col. James H. Kasler Senior Squadron
GLR-IN-069***



**Safety Brief
September 2008**

SAFETY PLEDGE

AS A CIVIL AIR PATROL MEMBER I PLEDGE TO PROMOTE AN UNCOMPROMISING SAFETY ENVIRONMENT FOR MYSELF AND OTHERS, AND TO PREVENT THE LOSS OF, OR DAMAGE TO CIVIL AIR PATROL ASSETS ENTRUSTED TO ME. I WILL PERFORM ALL MY ACTIVITIES IN A PROFESSIONAL AND SAFE MANNER, AND WILL HOLD MYSELF ACCOUNTABLE FOR MY ACTIONS IN ALL OF OUR MISSIONS FOR AMERICA.

Our monthly squadron meeting was held on Saturday September 20 at Greenwood (HFY).

For those who were unable to attend the meeting:

For monthly attendance credit, please read the September Sentinel and this safety brief, and email this month's code phrase and your CAPID to wtdirks (at) sbcglobal.net **no later than 30 September 2008.**

Topics:

- **Common Pilot Errors (p. 2-3)**

Common Pilot Errors

The following is a brief discussion of some examples of common pilot errors, which have been concluded to be the cause in many accidents.

1. Poor judgment in bad weather conditions

The majority of accidents happen during flight in bad weather conditions. Always thoroughly study the weather during your preflight and receive weather briefings. Set personal weather minimums for yourself and stick to them. Make sure to check airport weather sources such as ASOS and ATIS before approach and landing. Be sure to have alternatives available when the weather deteriorates or when the weather at your destination is worse than expected. Sometimes a no-go decision is your safest choice.

One very tragic weather-related accident hit especially close to home for me, when in April of 2006 a Cessna U206 crashed near the Bloomington airport, killing the pilot and four passengers (all music students at IU). The accident took place while on an ILS approach into BMG during nighttime and IFR conditions. The reported visibility was 1 statute mile with mist and overcast at 100 feet. (Note that the published minimums for the approach call for a 200-foot ceiling).

2. Failure to think and plan ahead

Plan and prepare as much as possible during your preflight phase. Study the weather conditions, airport diagrams, approach charts, runway lengths, terrain en route, alternate airports, etc. Plan and calculate fuel supply, and weight and balance. Anticipate events to come and stay well ahead of the aircraft, as to avoid being overwhelmed by a growing workload or an unexpected ATC clearance.

Note, for example, that in the Bloomington accident no alternate airport was listed on the flight plan, even though there was an AIRMET issued for IFR conditions in the southern portion of Indiana and an IFR approach was to be expected.

3. Loss of situational awareness

Stay aware of where you are, where you are going, and what is going on around you. Take your own responsibility in maintaining situational awareness and do not just rely on ATC to know your position. Study charts and approaches, be aware of terrain and obstructions, as well as airspace, Military Operations Areas (MOAs), Restricted Areas, and Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs).

4. Forgetting to switch and identify radio frequencies

This simple concept can make a huge difference in safety. Make sure you are communicating on the right frequency, and that you have tuned to and identified the correct navigational frequency. Many accidents have happened because of pilots flying instrument approaches while tuned to the wrong navigational frequency.

5. Flying below the glide slope or off course on approach

This seems to be an often-recurring accident cause in IFR weather and was the leading cause of the Bloomington accident (the probable cause is listed as: the pilot's continued descent below decision height and not maintaining adequate altitude/clearance from the trees while on approach. Factors were the night lighting conditions, and the mist).

In some cases this might be due to pilot inexperience or lack of proficiency. In other cases the pilot might have deliberately (and very unwisely) dipped under the glide slope and busted minimums in order to spot the runway. Sometimes the pilot might at some point have been able to spot the ground, abandoned flying on instruments to continue visually, only to be surprised to encounter low-lying fog and poor visibility on descent.

Please also read the September Sentinel, which you can find at http://level2.cap.gov/documents/Sentinel_2008_09.pdf

Topics discussed in this month's Sentinel include the CAP Safety Down Day in October and Stalls Awareness.

This month's code phrase will be: "Fly safe."

Wiedke Dirks-Hunt, 1Lt, CAP
Safety Officer – Col. James H. Kasler Senior Squadron
812-320-1698
wtdirks (at) sbcglobal.net

Brett Striegel, Capt, CAP
Assistant Safety Officer – Col. James H. Kasler Senior Squadron
317-834-0023
bstriegel (at) absindy.com