



AIRWARD NEWS

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

July 2001

Teamwork Takes Transmission Troubles from Treacherous Terrain to Tangible Yet Tacky Touchdown



Scott Woodbury
(picture unavailable)

On Saturday, June 23, while working initial attack on a small lightning fire in the mutual protection area less than a mile over the international border of Canada, the crew of Tanker 747, an Erickson type one helitanker, experienced indications of severe transmission problems. Pressure dropped to zero and temperatures were rapidly climbing toward the limits. With the decision that this aircraft had to be put down right away, pilot Scott Woodbury contacted the orbiting air attack and requested immediate directions to the nearest suitable landing spot. With nothing but lake and forest in the area, Tar Lesmeister quickly selected the only possible site, a boggy area along the lakeshore, and gave precise direction to get the crippled aircraft to the area. When Scott tried to set the aircraft down, he found the footing to be unstable and had to continue to move forward toward more rising vegetation.

Finally, as smoke was becoming noticeable from the transmission area, Scott put the aircraft down so it remained level. That's where things got tacky. The bog allowed the aircraft to settle about 4 feet deep until it rested on the retardant tank. During the settling and touchdown, the rotor blades contacted the tops of some of the surrounding brush creating only minor damage. Four days later the aircraft was airlifted out of the bog and returned to the tanker base, where the transmission and a rotor blade tip cap were repaired. Way to go team!

[USFS SafeCom 01-243](mailto:USFS_SafeCom_01-243)



Tar Lesmeister (left) and John Shearer (right)

The “A” Team



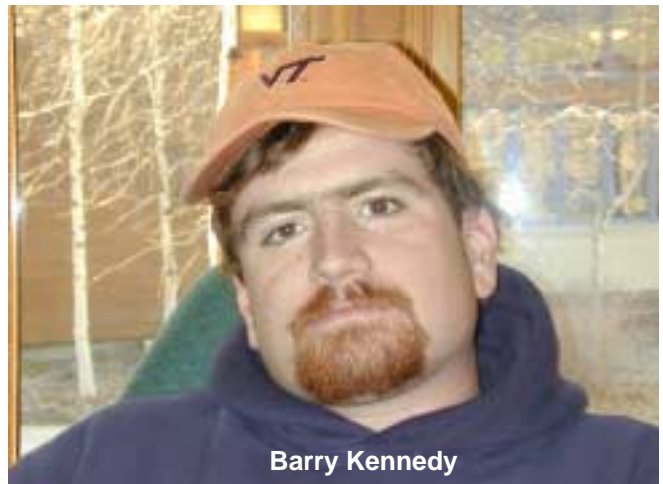
Rick Willis, Contracting Specialist, USDA-Forest Service, Sam Stivison, Chief, Division of Acquisition Management, Office of Aircraft Services, and JP Johnston, Helicopter Management Specialist, USDA-Forest Service, combined efforts in the interest of aviation safety. Rick and Sam awarded contracts only to firms that exhibit the ability to perform safely and effectively. Effective research proves to be beneficial when dealing with aircraft contracts. Nice work, gentlemen!

No SafeCom submitted

An Eye for Detail

Barry Kennedy, from Chena Lakes Helibase, Alaska, had a feeling that something was wrong while observing a recent pilot qualification flight conducting water bucket operations. Barry checked the bucket and found it was unserviceable. The bucket didn't have a model number or capacity markings nor did it have "cinch rings, markings or loops in the bucket" needed to adjust its capacity. Being concerned for the crew's safety, Barry approached the pilot with this information. The pilot confirmed the problem and the bucket was removed from service. Great job, Barry!

[OAS SafeCom 01-90](#)



Barry Kennedy

When the Going Gets Tough, the Tough Get...



Tammy Westover

Tammy Westover, a helicopter manager employed by the State of Alaska, observed several serious errors made by one of our helicopter operators, during interagency fire activities. Tammy quickly analyzed the situation and made the difficult, but correct decision to terminate flight operations with the operator. Fire behavior was extreme and helicopters and pilots were in high demand making the decision to ground the operator all the more difficult. Our special thanks to Tammy, her unwillingness to compromise safety, and for making that tough call.

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