



AIRWARD NEWS

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

Above and Beyond the Call of Duty

As the flight crew of Tanker-45 watched the light fixed-wing take off from the Sierra Vista (AZ) Airport, they realized something was out of the ordinary. The plane had lifted about 400 feet when the airtanker folks heard a pop and saw the plane bank left and disappear. A loud cloud of dust puffed up from behind a ridge. Kevin Maheu, pilot, sprang into action. Fellow pilot, Paul Yedinak, called 911 and began the emergency response. Kevin ran to the airtanker base to let them know of the mishap, ran to the airplane to get fire extinguishers and jumped in the truck being driven by mechanic, Jesse Sparman. The two men raced to the crash site. They located the two pilots who had been onboard the aircraft. Kevin asked one pilot about power to the aircraft. He received a response that the power was off, but Kevin had concerns about the pilot's mental state. He called the aircraft company Director of Operations, who was able to talk him through turning off the power and securing the airplane. One pilot was pinned beneath the aircraft; Kevin stayed with him, comforting him, until emergency services arrived for extrication. Paul, Jesse and Kevin were instrumental in rendering aid to the pilots involved in the accident.

The accident site was just over a ridge from the airport and out of sight from the airtanker base. These men jumped to action to respond. Having watched the event unfold, they knew where to direct emergency response; brought equipment to suppress a post-crash fire and rendered aid in a tough situation above and beyond the call of duty. We thank Paul, Kevin and Jesse for their willingness to take action to help others and reduce severity of consequences. Their actions are exemplary in promoting safety in aviation operations and compassion in humankind.



Pictured left to right: Paul Yedinak, Pilot; Jesse Sparman, Mechanic; and Kevin Maheu, Pilot.

Search and Rescue Aviation Coordination

Johnny Lindsey served as the Air Operations Branch Director and Aviation Coordinator during the efforts to locate a missing Arkansas Forestry Commission (AFC) plane and pilot. These efforts involved multiple aviation assets including the AFC, the US Forest Service (USFS), State Police aircraft, Civil Air Patrol (CAP) and National Guard.

This coordination and management extended to the airport/aviation base for the numerous aircraft, both fixed-wing and rotary wing, with ramp control measures, re-fueling coordination, and overnight parking arrangements for SAR aircraft.

Johnny participated in daily briefings on control and management issues and coordinated the aviation activities while aircraft participated in the search. Working with the various entities and personnel, Johnny's leadership and expertise were a influencing factor in the smoothness of the aviation aspect of this endeavor.



Johnny Lindsey (left) receiving award from Frank Beum (right)

Johnny's experience and awareness of the hazards present and the risk involved made possible the perfect safety record during the 11 day SAR. Thanks Johnny!!!

Something Doesn't Sound Right

Mike Warner's day began as ordinary as the others this fire season. As part of his daily maintenance routine for Summit Helicopters, he wiggled the stinger on the Bell 205 helicopter and heard a noise that did not sound right. The noise could not be created with every wiggle of the tail boom, but he knew something was causing it. Originally, after a visual inspection and torque check of the attaching hardware, he could not locate anything wrong. The Director of Maintenance and Mike agreed it was probably an anomaly and since it passed the torque check it was probably okay.

The Helitack crew and the pilot were in the aircraft with it running as they prepared to disembark to their next location, when Mike stopped the show. He wanted to be sure things were okay. The next thought was to ferry the aircraft to a more suitable location with more equipment to perform another inspection



Left to Right: Pilot, Tom Angstadt; Regional Aviation Safety Manager, Jami Anzalone; Mechanic, Mike Warner; Aviation Maintenance Inspector, Rob Van Horn; Helitack Superintendent, Brian Knapp.

but Mike did not feel good about this either and knew something he had heard was not right. Mike continued to press deeper to figure out the cause of the noise. Upon further inspection using a bore-scope (a small camera fished thru a hole), Mike located a broken longeron; a primary structure supporting the tail boom. Mike Warner, through his continued effort to find what was causing the noise, went above and beyond to promote aviation safety and was fully supported by Summit Helicopters and the Agency. We commend him for his exceptional diligence, and efforts to prevent an aviation accident.

Crew Coordination and Communication Saves a Firefighters Life

A firefighter was seriously injured in a chainsaw related accident with only one hour of remaining daylight. Matt Lancaster, Helibase Manager; Stacy Stull, Helicopter Manager and Jeff Parrish, Helicopter Pilot coordinated the extraction and medical evacuation with incident personnel at the site of the accident the helispot, and many others in the incident management organization. Their actions, exceptional coordination and communication skills, risk management and the pilots superior airmanship were critical for the successful execution of a high risk mission under pressure during the last remaining hour of daylight.

The injured firefighter was ultimately extracted directly from the accident site using a Traverse Rescue Stretcher (TRS), and then moved to a better (established) helispot where he could be loaded internally for a flight to the helibase. From there he was transported via commercial air ambulance ship to a hospital. As a result, the injured firefighter was able to acquire definitive care in a proper trauma center within a couple hours of being injured which likely saved his life.

Thank you, Jeff, Stacy and Matt for your professional commitment to Safety and a job well done!
SAEFCOM 14-0799



Tracy Stull, Assistant Supervisor, Teton Interagency Helitack (left) and Andy Norman, Assistant FMO Bridger-Teton (right)



Left to right: Chip Collins, FMO Grand Teton NP, Jeff Parrish, Helicopter Express Pilot, Matt Lancaster, Lead Crewmember, Teton Interagency Helitack, and Andy Norman, Assistant FMO, Bridger-Teton NF

Attention to Detail Prevented Potential Mishap

On January 22, 2014, Captain Clay Voss was the Pilot in Command of an Agusta A-119 helicopter on a Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) mission. Shortly after departure from the Texas Gulf Coast Regional Airport enroute to an offshore oil and gas platform with two BSEE inspectors on board Captain Clay Voss observed a subtle reduction of hydraulic pressure. He analyzed the situation and made the right decision to immediately turn around and land back at Lake Jackson and have the situation checked by maintenance instead of continuing the mission and hoping for the best. The hydraulic pressure gauge is located at the bottom of the integrated display screen. Since the hydraulic pressure seldom varies pilots often do not monitor it as closely as they do other gauges. In this instance, Captain Voss's detailed instrument cross check caught the hydraulic pressure decreasing almost immediately thus giving him more time to react to the situation before it became a more serious emergency. Captain Voss exemplified the best in crew resource management by providing detailed information to the BSEE inspectors about the situation as it was unfolding and using the inspector in the front seat as a second set of eyes to verify what the hydraulic gauge was reading. Captain Voss made a normal approach and landing at Lake Jackson without incident. Following a normal approach and landing at Lake Jackson, maintenance personnel found the number 2 hydraulic pump was not providing adequate operational pressure and eventually failed. Captain Voss's alertness and professional approach flying allowed him to detect a small change in an instrument that is commonly overlooked and react before the situation became critical. Captain Clay Voss is hereby recognized for his vigilance, professional airmanship and conservative response to a subtle change that could have had major consequences.



Calm and Professional Sets the Tone

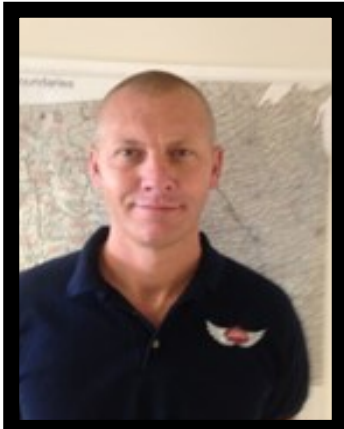
After a full shift as the outgoing Lead plane on the McCann Fire in Southern Idaho, Aaron Knobloch was asked to extend his time on station to help a rapidly deteriorating situation. Fire activity was increasing and without an Air Attack Group Supervisor assigned the numerous aerial resources were demanding attention. Through the smoke, a herd of cattle and several cowboys could be seen in front of the fire. The incoming ASM unit assumed the command and control duties of the ATGS, while Aaron directed retardant drops to facilitate a safe exit for the cowboys. He kept a calm demeanor in handling the situation and the other pilots responded. During a critical drop, he provided guidance to a SEAT pilot who had limited fire experience, by calmly explaining what was needed until the pilot was able to complete the drop. That drop proved to be crucial in getting the cowboys out of harm's way. During this incident, Aaron displayed exceptional skill and professionalism in very challenging circumstances.



Aaron's willingness to step up and help facilitate safe aviation operations when faced with a stressful situation is commended. He applied SMS in managing risk and greatly influenced the safety of the entire complex air show. Aaron demonstrates how a true aviation professional should operate. Thank you for the example, Aaron. [SAFECOM 13-0662](#)

Airbase Personnel to the Rescue

On July 4th 2014 at approximately 0927 hours a P-51 Mustang took off from Durango La Plata Co Airport. Shortly after takeoff from runway 03 and while in the process of making a left turn out, the aircraft impacted County Road 309A, just outside the Durango Airbase. Four individuals: Albert Linch, Wes Robinson, Jerran Flinders and Donald Kelly responded and secured the scene to preserve the dignity of the deceased, protect evidence, and mitigate exposure to hazardous materials that were present at the crash site. Their willingness to act and situational awareness exemplified the spirit of all fire and aviation employees.



Jerran Flinders



Albert Linch (left), Wes Robinson (right)



Donald Kelly

Outstanding Crew Coordination

The following employees at the Fresno Air Attack Base are commended for their outstanding efforts and safety conscious, positive work ethic during the accident which occurred at the Fresno Air Attack Base on the evening of June 15, 2014, involving Tanker 48, a P2V.

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We are honored to acknowledge Matthew Kirkpatrick, Ryan Stout, Jonathan Mills, Michael Capuchino, and George Covarrubio for their professionalism prior to, during and after the accident of Tanker 48. From Matthew handling communications and gathering information from the tanker crew, to Ryan, Jonathan, Michael and George taking notes, documenting, photographing, handling logistics and assisting the tanker crew afterward. All of these individuals worked together in an organized, professional manner representing the Forest Service and its mission of caring for the land and serving the people. Great job guys, THANKS!!!

[SAFECOM 14-0286](#)



From left to right: Ryan Stout, George Covarrubio and Jonathan Mills.
Not pictured: Matthew Kirkpatrick and Michael Capuchino.

Contribution to Aviation Safety



Left to Right: Clayton Mitchell, and BSEE Director Brian Salerno

Mr. Clayton C. Mitchell Jr., the primary Pilot in Command for the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement's (BSEE) Pacific Region has distinguished himself through his continuing support of the Region's aviation safety program. Mr. Mitchell has played a critical role during the transition from the Region's former aviation service provider to Helicopter Express. Clayton's daily contribution cannot be overstated, especially during the first weeks of the new contract which was made more demanding due to delays in the contracting process. Most recently Mr. Mitchell was a key player in an extensive project to develop a Regional wire strike prevention program. Due to BSEE's mission being focused offshore the Region had never had a wire strike prevention program. So, starting from scratch, Clayton flew numerous offshore and inland routes in the high-traffic airspace of Los Angeles, Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties to identify the hazards and to assess the

risk they posed to BSEE missions. Following the reconnaissance phase Clayton participated in developing maps for the Region's northern and southern sectors. These maps identify the routes and highlight the wires, towers, and other obstacles to low-level flight that BSEE would use in the event of adverse weather offshore.

Super Pilot

On September 15th at approximately 1400 hours there was a shelter deployment on the King fire. During this event it was requested that all available helicopters launch to the deployment site for water support. Gary Dahlen was the first on scene and quickly assessed the fire behavior and location of the crew. The crew and a dozer operator were fully deployed inside their shelters, Gary quickly made contact with the crew captain and requested that they leave their shelters because the site was not survivable, he estimated that the crew had 3 minutes to move down the 2 track road they were on before the flame front would hit them.

Gary scouted the 2 track road to a location where he could land, at this time he handed radio communications with the crew to a HLCO to lead them to the landing zone (LZ). He landed at the LZ and removed his bucket, in the mean time another medium helicopter landed at the same LZ and helped Gary load up the bucket and await the arrival of the Crew. Once the crew arrived at the LZ they loaded all 12 of them onto the 2 aircraft and returned to the heli-base in Placerville.

Given Gary's quick thinking, ability to assess the fire environment as it related to the crew location and take immediate action in a calm manner he was able to get the crew moved to a safe location. Gary was able to take command of the situation and save the lives of these 12 firefighters at a time that was extremely hectic given the radio traffic and urgency of the mission. THANKS Gary for your exemplary performance in aviation during this critical situation.



Gary Dahlen (center) with Crew Captain (right) and Dozer Operator (Left)

Superior Airmanship

Matt Goertz represents National Park Service Aviation as one of its finest contracted pilots. Matt's actions during a demanding shorthaul mission on August 17, 2014 were exemplary. He exhibited superior airmanship while performing a demanding shorthaul rescue operation in a terrain-restricted area. The insufficient area for the shorthauler to perform normal procedures required Matt to keep them both on a 250 foot line during the entire effort. Matt's decision to limit equipment and aircrew aboard the aircraft afforded the aircraft the required capability to perform this challenging mission. Matt's calm demeanor and detailed planning was pervasive throughout the 108 day contract. His recognition of the inherent dangers within shorthaul operations and ability to proactively manage risk provided the park with an essential service to the public while maintaining an acceptable level of safety for himself and his crew. Matt has been with the Yellowstone Helitack program for three seasons. In that time he's helped advance the NPS aviation program through his consummate professionalism and superior airmanship. Thanks Matt! SAFECOM: 14-0700



No actual photo available 😞

Quick, Professional Response Saves Pilot's Life

A Helicopter Pilot suffered a cardiac arrest while at the Scott Valley Helibase on the July Complex. The quick actions and decisions of the Helibase personnel resulted in saving the life of the pilot. When the Helibase received the initial call from the Helicopter crew (the vendor), Helibase personnel, including the H-502 Helitack crew, responded in a coordinated fashion, The Helicopter Manager for the vendor assumed the IC role to coordinate the overall response. The emergency response plan for the Helibase was enacted immediately, which included the call to 911 to request a life-flight helicopter, and assistance from local Ambulance services. The Vendor crew began CPR, while the Helitack (H-502 Crew) grabbed the Defibrillator and other medical equipment to respond. The Defibrillator was being actively applied to the patient when the ground ambulance arrived at the scene. The Fort Jones Fire Department also arrived on scene minutes after the Ambulance arrived. The AOB D contacted the Yreka Coordination Center inquiring about the ETA of the requested ALS (Advanced Life Support) medical helicopter and was informed that the ASL helicopter was not going to respond due to a "pulseless report". The fact that the ALS Helicopter would not respond, did not deter the emergency efforts and the Helibase personnel made the decision to utilize Helicopter 502 for transport to Fairchild Medical Center (FMC) for further life-saving efforts. The AOB D then contacted FMC and informed them that the patient was being transported to their facility via incident helicopter. The Vendor Crew, the Helicopter Manager, the H-502 Helicopter Crew, the AOB D and all other coordinated efforts of Helibase personnel were instrumental in getting the pilot to a nearby medical center, where he recovered from the event. Personnel awarded were: Mike Perez -Helicopter Manager HT-743 (IC of emergency), Raleigh Coppin -ABRO H-514, Chris Buckbee-HECM H-514, Roger Caballero- HEB2 (T), H-514 White Cloud Helitack, Jason Hofman -HEB2 (UAO) Grand Junction CO. BLM, Ariel Sosa- Deck Cal Fire San Diego Unit, Jason Bamhart- Intial Lead EMT (H-502), Michael Bramlett- Initial EMT (H-502), Chris Creamer-Pilot 502, Tyler Detrick Capt H-502, Jason Nava AOB D, Ken Torres - Co-pilot Erickson Aircrane (provided CPR until EMT's on scene) Kort Jones Crew Chief - Erickson Aircrane (provided CPR until EMT's on scene), and aircraft dispatchers Leanne Berggreen YICC (Cal Fire) and Barb Richards ANF ECC.

Pictured from the left: Jason Nava, Roger Caballero, Ariel Sosa, Tyler Detrick and Jason Hoffman



Pictured from the left: Chris Creamer, Michael Bramlett and Jason Bamhart



Not pictured: Mike Perez, Raleigh Coppin, Chris Buckabee, Ken Torres, Kort Jones, Leanne Berggreen and Barb Richards.



www.fs.fed.us/fire/av_safety/



oas.doi.gov/safety/