



2005-March : Newsletter

BYLINE RICHARD BRAY - Safety Committee Chairman

We have received many favorable comments about the Safety First Program. Many members have told us that this program is a great way to gather support for their units from their department's management. Keith has begun meeting with unit OIC's and Commanding Officers at the Regional Safety Seminars to discuss the Safety First Program and answer questions. Safety First is a work in progress and input from the membership is always appreciated. You can email Keith or myself via the links on our website. And, please participate in our safety surveys and the Safety Section Discussion Area. This is a way to help us help you.

Richard Bray

UNIT MANAGER COURSE

There are only 27 positions left where Unit Managers can attend the Unit Manger's Course where the tuition and conference registration will be waived. This is a \$420 value and represents ALEA's commitment to training for Unit Managers. You can get on the list by sending an email to Sherry Hadley. Don't miss this offer if you have not attended this course. Even experienced Unit Managers will reap major benefits.

ANNUAL SAFETY SURVEY

Safety Officers – I am in the process of developing the 2005 Safety Survey. If you have a topic that you would like included in the survey, please email your request to safety@alea.org prior to the end of March. This is an opportunity to query our membership for topics of interest throughout the law enforcement aviation community.

SAFETY SYMPOSIUM

Planning is underway for the 2005 Safety Symposium at the Annual Conference in Reno. If you would like to place a topic on the agenda, send an email to safety@alea.org.

ACCIDENT REPORTS UPDATE

We did a little better in 2004, with 13 accidents. This is still 13 too many. In reviewing the trends from 1999-2004, there are still some clear issues that warrant everyone's attention. There have been 101 total accidents, resulting in 26 fatalities, 72 non-fatal injuries, and tens of millions of dollars in equipment and property damage. Every unit could use more money in their budget. One of the quickest ways to save money and improve our image with your department, the public, the FAA, the NTSB is to eliminate accidents.

Fifty-nine percent of these accidents were due to loss of control and 30% due to mechanical failure. We pilots need to improve our airmanship. Better flight planning, focus on flying the aircraft, and not allowing the mission to become a distraction are a means of preventing mishaps. There is no "Easy Button" when it comes to preventing mishaps. You must do the right thing, for the right reasons at the right time, every time. No shortcuts. Known procedures produce known results. Research shows that once you start deviating from the rules (standards) you are almost twice as likely to commit an error with serious consequences.

It's also noteworthy that 20% of the loss of control accidents occurred during emergency procedures training. In my view, in-house emergency procedure flight training using a low-time CFI needs careful consideration. Being able to demonstrate proficiency in performing these maneuvers to an examiner is not the same as having to regain control of the aircraft after the student has exceeded his/her ability to perform a maneuver. Find an experienced, qualified CFI from the factory or local operator and save yourself lots of grief, and money. Most aircraft factory operators pay for any damage to your aircraft when their CFI is providing training.

Everyone should take note of the fact that the EMS operators have had an inordinately high number of accidents. This was a big issue at HAI this year. The EMS industry is receiving some intense scrutiny from the FAA that may well restrict how they operate. Our accident history is not much better in many cases, so lets fix this before the government gives us similar attention.

Members can search for law enforcement specific accident reports via the ALEA website.

SHARING MISHAP INFORMATION

Sharing experiences may help somebody else from having the same experience. If you have had a noteworthy incident and would like to share it with the membership, please post a note in the safety discussion area. Or, you can send me an email and I will include it in the next newsletter. Always confidential if that's your preference. So let's hear from you.

SAFETY POSTER

Your second Safety First Safety Poster will be mailed soon. If you don't get yours, let me know at: safety@alea.org.

SAFETY OPT-IN EMAIL LIST

From time to time, ALEA sends "safety specific" email notices to anyone who chooses to receive them. If you would like to receive our safety emails, please submit your email address.

SAFETY ONLINE

ALEA members can click here for online safety resources.

ALEA members who need a username and password for our website should click here.

Not an ALEA member? Click here to join ALEA.

That's it for this month. Remember – Safety First, and you will be there to get the job done.

Remember – Safety First!

Keith Johnson

Safety Program Manager