



Interagency Aviation Accident Prevention Bulletin



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Subject: AS 350 Throttle Quadrant

Area of Concern: Flight Safety

Distribution: All Aviation Activities

Discussion: The Alaska Aviation Safety Foundation recently published two Safety Briefings on the Airbus AS 350 to highlight a safety issue. The following information is from the safety briefing.

The control quadrant found on the Airbus AS 350 series (AS 350 B, AS 350 BA, AS 350 B1, AS 350 B2, and some AS 350 B3 models) include the main rotor brake lever and the emergency fuel shutoff lever. The fuel flow control lever (FFCL) has been removed and a twist-grip throttle is now mounted on the collective. The control quadrant is mounted to the floor and the levers are susceptible to interference from passengers and objects. This can result in inadvertent movement of the controls and cause a loss of engine power.

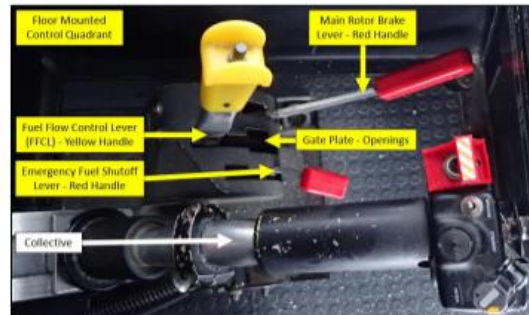
Methods to prevent this interference are described in the passenger briefing supplement shown here. Operators and pilots should consider printing and laminating the supplement and carrying it with the passenger briefing cards in the helicopter and have each passenger review the supplement before each flight.

Pilots should ensure passengers are adequately briefed on the potential to inadvertently move the various control quadrant levers and should use extreme caution when loading and unloading passengers. All objects should be safely secured in the helicopter. All seat belt assemblies for the front passenger seat should always be secured when not in use and not left dangling loose.

Passengers should be aware of the potential to inadvertently move the various control quadrant levers. They need to understand that all body parts and objects must always be kept away from this critical safety area, and ensure all objects are properly secured prior to flight. If an object is dropped anywhere

Airbus AS 350 Series Passenger Briefing Supplement: Floor Mounted Control Quadrant

Certain models of the Airbus AS 350 series (known as the "Astar" or "Squirrel") have a floor mounted control quadrant that the pilot utilizes. This control quadrant consists of the main rotor brake lever, the fuel flow control lever (FFCL), and the emergency fuel shutoff lever. Additionally, some AS 350 models have the main rotor brake lever and the emergency fuel shutoff lever mounted on the floor with the FFCL removed and a twist-grip throttle mounted on the collective instead.



It is crucial that passengers understand that interference with any of these levers, either intentional or unintentional, can result in catastrophic consequences.

Passengers should understand that all body parts and objects must always be kept away from this critical safety area. Ensure all objects are properly secured prior to flight. Always be cognizant of the objects you have onboard the helicopter. Examples of objects that could interfere with these levers include camera straps, backpacks, purses, clothing articles, electronics cords, tools, ski/snowboard equipment, mountaineering equipment, tactical equipment, etc.

Ensure all seat belt assemblies for the front passenger seat are always secured when not in use and not dangling loose to prevent interference.

If a passenger accidentally drops an object anywhere in and around the control quadrant (such as a cellular phone, pen, tool, camera lens, etc.), do not reach for the item. Immediately alert the pilot that an object was dropped in that area. Objects dropped inside the gate plate have the potential of causing jamming with the levers.

Always treat this area as a critical safety area and always follow the instructions from the pilot and the ground crew.

in and around the control quadrant (such as a cellular phone, pen, tool, camera lens, etc.), the passenger should not reach for the item but should immediately alert the pilot about the dropped item. Objects dropped inside the control quadrant gate plate have the potential of jamming the levers.

Numerous events have occurred worldwide that can be attributed to control quadrant interference. If an interference event occurs, and you feel this was due to the inference susceptibility of the control quadrant design, report the event to the FAA via a Service Difficulty Report (<https://av-info.faa.gov/sdrx/>). FAA Advisory Circular (AC) 20-109A “Service Difficulty Program” states that, “any report can be very constructive in evaluating design or maintenance reliability.”

The Alaska Aviation Safety Foundation Safety Briefings can be found at:

Five Page Discussion: <https://www.aasfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/Safety-Briefing-Airbus-AS-350-Floor-Mounted-Control-Quadrant.pdf>

Single Page Supplement: <https://www.aasfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/Safety-Briefing-Airbus-AS-350-Floor-Mounted-Control-Quadrant-Supplement.pdf>

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