



# AIRWARD NEWS

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

## The Right Response

On January 11, 2012, Captain Pierre Haure was the Pilot In Command of an AS-350 B2 helicopter on a Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) mission. While transiting between Abbeville and Lafayette Louisiana, a low pressure hydraulic aural warning horn intermittently sounded twice. Captain Haure maintained control of the aircraft and quickly cross-checked his instrument panel and found no corresponding warning/caution lights. His keen insight and vast experience beckoned him to further diagnose the situation by assessing the flight controls and methodically determine if there were any other associated malfunctions. He adeptly assessed the situation and decided to continue the flight and closely monitor the hydraulic system while proactively reviewing the hydraulic failure emergency procedure in the event such a condition fully manifested.

When the aural warning horn sounded for the third time Captain Haure was well prepared as he observed the hydraulic caution light flicker momentarily then illuminated steady. Captain Haure quickly executed the appropriate emergency procedure by turning off the hydraulics, adjusting his airspeed, and landed as soon as possible. Given his location and the terrain over which he was flying, Captain Haure immediately diverted and returned to his original point of departure at Abbeville.

Once the aircraft emergency was under control Captain Haure notified his passengers and Era operations that he was experiencing an in-flight emergency and that he was returning to Abbeville. At Abbeville Captain Haure expertly executed the appropriate method for landing a helicopter with a disabled hydraulics system without further incident.

Captain Pierre Haure is hereby recognized for his outstanding airmanship and maintaining a calm and professional response during an in-flight emergency. [SAFECOM 12-0074](#)



Captain Pierre Haure (center) accepting Airward from Mr. Watson and Mr. Van de Vuurst

## Training Excellence in Action

Conan Donnelly, Eastern Montana-Dakotas Helicopter Crew Supervisor has been going above and beyond basic aviation safety training for years. During the spring of 2010 Conan initiated a fire extinguisher/crash rescue training day with the Billings Logan International Airport Fire Department. The training has grown in scope and participation.

This particular training includes classroom and field exercises. Classroom training includes fire extinguisher videos explaining types, capabilities and safety procedures while operating fire extinguishers. Schematic diagrams of a multitude of aircraft are used to illustrate fuel tank locations and extraction points on different aircraft. After completing classroom instruction, the airport crash/rescue department engages training participants in live fire exercises. All participants have the chance to use fire extinguishers to extinguish a fuel spill and a propane fire in a controlled environment.



Conan Donnelly (left) accepting Airward from Kirk Rothwell

Additionally, aircraft have been available to provide hands-on experience utilizing crash rescue tools to gain entry. These trainings are exceptional and in most instances are the only times our employees are able to use and demonstrate their skills on aircraft crash-rescue procedures. Employees from across the Montana-Dakotas fire and aviation programs look forward to this annual training.

This training program demonstrates the forward thinking and initiative that is encouraged amongst Bureau of Land Management employees and demonstrates a great working relationship amongst cooperating agencies. If other programs can use the example that Conan has established as an avenue to work with their local airport crash/rescue experts, all agency aviators will be better prepared for a day when they may need to use these skills.

## Helicopter Managers Work Through Contract Problems to Solve Issues

Certificates of Merits were presented to Angie Ruble and Will McCubbrey for their technical competency and ability to manage a difficult aviation contract. When problems with the contract arose they promptly notified the Regional Helicopter Inspector Pilot and worked with him to solve human factors problems. Maintenance problems were identified and the managers worked with regional aviation maintenance inspectors and a national maintenance quality assurance team to remedy the situation. Their actions demonstrate an expert understanding of helicopter operations and contract provisions.

Great Job! [SAFECOM 11-0917](#)



Pat Marlow (left), Angie Ruble (center) and Will McCubbrey (right)

## Smokejumper Speaks Up For Safety

Mike Waldron noticed that all smokejumpers were on board the aircraft and the pilots were at their stations preparing to perform the before start checklist. Mike took the initiative to come up to the pilot window and inform them the prop-ties had not been removed. At the same time the co-pilot noticed it during the checklist items and they were removed. [SAFECOM 11-0707](#)



## Check Spotters Close Attention To Detail Prevents Improper Acceptance Of Aircraft.



During pre-use inspection at the R-6 rappel academy Kevin Brown found that the ring and stud fittings used for the Spotter Tether Attachment were incorrect. He consulted with the aircraft inspector and it was determined they did not meet the requirements of the Supplemental Type Certificate (STC). The maintenance inspector disseminated the information to all the maintenance inspectors on future inspection procedures to prevent further occurrences and will be incorporating it into the Pre-Use Inspection Checklist when carding aircraft. Also recommending the STC holder add inspection procedures to the STC. The Tether is the Spotter's life

-line to the aircraft, so this could have ended very badly if not for the manager's attention to detail and questioning what didn't look right to him. [SAFECOM 11-0417](#)

## ATGS Attention To Detail Prevents Major Problems

During refueling of a Cessna 337 on an air attack mission Al Carriere looked into the cowling at the front of the aircraft and noticed a broken metal line on the right side of the front engine. After removing the engine cowling the pilot determined it was the fuel primer line. Great catch by the ATGS demonstrates the effectiveness of crew members paying attention, identifying problems, asking questions, and communicating with the rest of the flight crew. [SAFECOM 11-0849](#)



## Critical Response at its Finest

On June 3, 2012, Tanker 11 crashed while working on the White Rock Fire near the Nevada/Utah border. A highly skilled team stepped up and responded to this aviation mishap with great on-the-ground and aerial leadership, professionalism and attention to detail and safety. Aircraft dispatchers at the Color Country Interagency Fire Center took immediate response after receiving the tragic news. Matt Huse, acting as the unit aviation manager and air center manager, was first notified at the tanker base and immediately took charge of the situation by providing excellent direction and guidance, keeping everyone informed and maintaining smooth operations. Tina Greenhalgh obtained command of the aircraft desk and began delivering all notifications in a timely manner as well as running the dispatch center efficiently until all aircraft were safely recovered to the Cedar City Air Center. Caitlin Robinson stayed on task while recording high quality key communication documents, which were later used by the NTSB during the mishap investigation. Chelsea Pollock communicated with the air attack on-scene and made appropriate notifications to ensure all aircraft returned safely. Mary Schmidt engaged within the staff to provide notifications and follow-up while performing all other duties required. This exceptionally qualified staff was able to react and respond diligently while remaining professional and composed during this highly stressful situation.

The air attack platform assigned to the BLM Color Country District also responded to this incident within an incident. Isaac Shinkle, air tactical supervisor, established a central point of contact for communications, accounted for all resources on the incident and quickly decided which aircraft would continue operations and which needed to depart safely to the base. Dan Cranney, air attack pilot, worked with Isaac to keep everyone calm and focused on their actions as well as offering emotional support to personnel in need after returning to the base. These men provided critical aerial leadership, rapid search and rescue efforts and remained focused on their roles and responsibilities during this crucial time.

Every team needs a hero, every hero needs a team. This team is full of heroes. Way to go, team!



Pictured left to right:  
Caitlin Robinson, Mary Schmidt, Matt Huse and Tina Greenhalgh.  
Not pictured: Chelsea Pollock, Isaac Shinkle and Dan Cranney

## Maintaining Good Situational Awareness Led to Good Decision Making which Protected Lives

On September 19, 2012, pilot Alex Keller was flying a reconnaissance mission on the Table Mountain Fire in Washington with three passengers. The recon was conducted near the head of the fire over tall timber with few openings. After departing from the Cle Elum Helibase the helicopter was in the air for approximately one hour when Alex noticed a red light flicker on the caution warning panel. Because the light only flickered he was unable to initially determine whether it was the "Fire Light" or the "ENG P" light. Alex quickly noted the oil pressure gauge was in the normal range but made the decision to head in the direction of the only open field he had spotted in case a landing would be needed.

Approximately 10-15 seconds after turning back towards the opening Alex again noticed a flicker of a red light on the caution warning panel and was able to identify it this time as the "ENG P" light at which point he cross checked the engine oil pressure gauge noting it was below the minimums and falling. Simultaneously while noting the falling oil pressure gauge, the "ENG P" light fully illuminated. Alex informed the passengers on board that they had to land immediately and then made a left descending turn towards the only open field in the area.



Alex Keller (left) and Justin Jager (right)

Once safely on the ground Alex maintained positive communication with air attack informing him of the unscheduled landing, requested an immediate pick up due to the location of the landing zone being in front of the oncoming fire and shut the engine down. Once the rotor blades were stopped Alex asked the passengers to exit the aircraft into the clearing and await further instructions from him. It was later discovered that a faulty O-ring between Module 4 and 5 installed by a Turbomeca approved level 3 service center was the cause of the oil leak.

Thanks to Alex's situational awareness of the aircraft as well as the environment in which he was flying, in conjunction with his quick thinking and decision making, Alex was able to safely land the helicopter in an opening and ensure everyone walked away. The Department is proud to recognize Alex Keller with an Airward. His actions serve as an example of excellent airmanship. [SAFECOM 12-1104](#)



**Aviation Safety Offices**

[http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/av\\_safety/](http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/av_safety/) - <http://amd.nbc.gov/safety/>