



# Interagency Aviation Safety Alert



No. IA 2007-04

July 28, 2007

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**Subject:** Aviation Safety Awareness

**Area of Concern:** All Fire Aviation Operations

**Distribution:** All Fire Aviation Personnel, Incident and Initial Attack Airbases

**Discussion:** On Tuesday July 31, 2007 all fire and aviation personnel are asked to conduct a “**Situational Awareness Briefing**“. The briefing will occur during the first hour of the duty day, and/or during each shift change as personnel come on duty that day.

**Background:** In the last 30 days the federal firefighting agencies have experienced 10 aircraft accidents while supporting wildland firefighting activities. In an effort to reinforce the System Safety accident prevention effort the agencies will provide this briefing period to increase awareness of the hazards we face, the nature of risks involved, and to assert our total commitment to bringing every firefighter and aviator home safely.

**Recommendation:** You are encouraged to brainstorm and develop additional fixes that work best in your geographic location/situation. These topics, at a minimum, provide a starting point for you to discuss and are taken from trends and program weaknesses identified by this year’s Accident Investigations.

- Flight Operations Hazards                      Aviation Situations that shout WATCH- OUT
- Human Factors                                      Pre and Post flight briefings
- Maintenance Concerns                          Organization; staffed and qualified
  
- A campaign to help pilots remember the basics of suppressant/retardant delivery is the mnemonic ASHE;

**Approach                      Speed                      Height                      Exit**

- Turning down an assignment is one possible outcome of managing risk. Safe alternatives must be considered, but the pilot is ultimately responsible for the safety of the aircraft and may decline any unsafe mission/assignment.

**Summary: Questions or concerns should be communicated with your Local/State/Region Aviation Manager.** Additional Risk Assessments can be accessed through the following web sites:

[http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/av\\_safety/index.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/av_safety/index.html)

<http://www.blm.gov/nifc/st/en/prog/fire/Aviation/safety.html>

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July 28, 2007

To: Geographic Area Coordination Group Chairs  
From: National Multi Agency Coordinating Group  
Subject: Aviation Safety Awareness

Based on the continuing high level of fire activity and aviation operations, NMAC is requesting that all fire and aviation personnel make Aviation Situational Awareness the subject of their safety and operational briefings on Tuesday, July 31, 2007. Please read and use the attached Interagency Aviation Safety Alert as the basis for conducting that briefing. As the fire season continues at a high tempo, it is important that we all review and remain aware of the risk management issues, flight operations hazards, and human factors that can have a negative impact on aviation operations, and aviator and firefighter safety. Thank you for your continued hard work and focus on safe aviation and firefighting operations.

/s/ Tom Boatner  
Chair, NMAC