

***Col. James H. Kasler Senior Squadron
GLR-IN-069***



**Safety Brief
February 2008**

SAFETY PLEDGE

AS A CIVIL AIR PATROL MEMBER I PLEDGE TO PROMOTE AN UNCOMPROMISING SAFETY ENVIRONMENT FOR MYSELF AND OTHERS, AND TO PREVENT THE LOSS OF, OR DAMAGE TO CIVIL AIR PATROL ASSETS ENTRUSTED TO ME. I WILL PERFORM ALL MY ACTIVITIES IN A PROFESSIONAL AND SAFE MANNER, AND WILL HOLD MYSELF ACCOUNTABLE FOR MY ACTIONS IN ALL OF OUR MISSIONS FOR AMERICA.

This month the Indiana Wing Winter SAREX, held on February 16-17 in Bloomington, replaced our regular squadron meeting.

For those who attended the SAREX:

You will be entered into WMU, but please be sure to read the February Sentinel, as well as this safety brief (which contains the code phrase for this month).

For those who were unable to attend the SAREX:

For monthly attendance credit, please read the February Sentinel and this safety brief, and email this month's code phrase and your CAPID to wtdirks (at) sbcglobal.net **no later than 29 Feb 2008.**

Topics:

- **February Sentinel Highlight: Patience is a (Safety) Virtue (p. 2)**
- **Securing Loose Items in Aircraft (p. 3)**

February Sentinel Highlight: Patience is a (Safety) Virtue

This topic has been covered many times in previous safety briefs, but its importance can never be emphasized too much: rushing through checklists (or skipping them all together) and cutting corners during flight preparations or procedures can have disastrous results.

Here is an example that took place in August 2007 at my home airport in Bloomington.

The young pilot involved in this accident (in spite of being very well-trained) did not take the time during his preflight to use a dipstick to check the amount of fuel. Instead, he estimated that he had 2 hours of fuel on board, based on calculations from a flight he made 10 days prior. The result



Shortly after takeoff he noticed that the fuel gauges indicated a low level of fuel. The subsequent attempt to return to the runway ended, upside down, in a cornfield about half a mile short of runway 35. The engine had quit due to fuel exhaustion.

An excerpt from the NTSB accident report reads as follows:

“The inspection of the airplane revealed that the left fuel tank was empty and had blue stains around the drain. The right fuel tank had only a cup of fuel. Wing tank placards indicated the unusable fuel in each wing tank was .5 gallons. The electric fuel pump contained some residual fuel, but it was not full. No fuel was in the line between the carburetor and the fuel pump. The out line of the fuel pump contained a small amount of fuel. The carburetor bowl contained about 5 to 10 drops of fuel.”

Fortunately, the pilot had only very minor injuries and was able to walk away from the accident.

However, we can all use this example to remind ourselves to *never* assume all is fine but *always* take the time to carefully go through all items on the airplane’s checklists. A lot can happen while a plane sits in the hangar (fuel leaking out of drains, your time-share pilot went flying without your knowledge, or maybe you just don’t remember the numbers and times on your previous flight as well as you thought), so make sure to inspect and check before each flight.

Getting somewhere a bit (or even a lot) later than expected is not the end of the world; lack of patience and putting your life and the lives of your passengers in danger can be.

Securing Loose Items in Aircraft

This is a concern stemming from some observations during the Bloomington SAREX on February 16, where I had the good fortune to be training for mission safety officer under 1st Lt Tony LaFata's guidance.

In 2 of the 4 aircraft that were in use during this SAREX we found unsecured items under the pilot's seat or on the floor in front of the pilot's seat. We inspected these planes shortly after arrival from their respective home bases: these items were loose on the floor during the inbound flights. (For the record: our own 99040 was **not** one of these planes and was in good safety condition).

In the first case a quart of oil was left loose under the pilot's seat. In the second case one of the brackets holding the fire extinguisher (located underneath the front side of the pilot's seat) was broken and the extinguisher could not be secured. By the time the plane had landed at BMG the extinguisher was rolling around on the floor near the rudder pedals.

As a reminder: it is important to **secure all loose items** before takeoff, as they could become dangerous projectiles during unforeseen events or even moderate turbulence. Also, **make especially sure that no items are left loose under the front seats or on the floor** where they could interfere with rudder pedals and other flight controls.

This month's code phrase will be: "stow it."

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