

Passengers

The following account was contributed by a reader.

"I was doing spray work in a Bell 47. My crew and I arrived and were ready to do the job. There was one field in which I was to cover only certain sections. I flew out to the field but it was not obvious what I should and should not spray. To be sure, I decided to talk with the farmer. I flew back, landed and shut down on a slope that was acceptable, but barely so. The farmer tried to describe the work, but it was still not clear to me. I invited him to join me for an over flight so he could point out exactly what he wanted to have done. Without much of a pre-flight discussion we got in, started up, and took off. I should point out that I had both lap belt and shoulder straps; the passenger seat had only a lap belt.

This was not to be a long flight; but it didn't take very long for me to notice that he was nervous. Before we could resolve what I should spray he said that he was feeling bad and wanted to get back. I didn't waste any time and headed straight back. This time I decided to land on top of our feeder truck. I called the ground crew, told them what was happening, and asked for someone to meet us on the truck. I wanted someone to help the farmer out of the helo and off of the truck without

harm. Two ground crewmen were poised on the side of the feeder truck, ready to help my passenger get out.

Normally we land laterally across the wooden pad on top of the truck. These pads are only about 8 feet wide. When the 47 is positioned properly for shutdown and reloading the tips of the skids, the pedals, and your feet are all past the forward edge of the landing pad. For most landings it is not unusual to keep it light on the skids and to slide it a bit to get it in the right position.

As we were touching down and light on the skids, I was sliding it forward to get the tips of the skids far enough forward. The nauseous and apparently frightened farmer must have thought we were about to slide off the top of the truck. He compensated for what he thought was an accident-about-to-happen by bracing himself. He did so by putting his feet on the right pedal and using it to push his body backwards. Of course we immediately began a right yaw as I was unable to overcome

all of his input. I was concerned that the spray booms were about to hit the waiting ground crewmen, so I added some power to get some clearance. Now with us in a slightly climbing yaw the farmer lunged over towards me and grabbed me in a tight bear hug. Now I was struggling to maintain control. With him all over me, attitude went into pitch and roll excursions. I had a hard time making the right control inputs. I pushed the farmer off me but he leaned forward to grab the center console. His weight shift forward aggravated the forward pitch down angle and forward cg. I made an abrupt aft cyclic input and the main rotor struck the tail rotor driveshaft. Now, with the tail rotor driveshaft severed, we began a rapid right yaw. This was a nasty situation. I wanted to get away from the feeder truck and ground crewmen to put this thing down. I managed to make it go away from the truck but there was not a lot of alternatives of where to go. We made a hard landing, spreading the skids, and bending/breaking all sorts of structure,



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and coming to a stop leaning right just far enough for the rotor blades to barely hit the weeds on the ground. Neither one of us was injured from the impact and rough stop.

The engine stopped as a result of a ruptured fuel line, but only a small amount of fuel leaked out and caught fire. That was enough to panic the farmer. He released his buckle and began to scramble out his door. The main rotor blades were still turning. I reached after him and was able to restrain him by grabbing his shirt collar. In so doing I inflicted his only injury – a scratch on his neck. I couldn't hold him for long and he amazingly got out of the helo and exited between the now slowly rotating rotor blades!

I learned some lessons. Shoulder straps would have helped. A better preflight passenger briefing would have helped. Either might have prevented this incident."

This is one of the unfortunate pilots who was unable to escape the clutches of a passenger.

Many helicopter pilots share a common problem – handling passengers in and around the aircraft. This may seem like a minor problem. After all, airlines board and disembark many thousands of passengers every day without a big fuss. What's so special about helicopter passengers?

Well, helicopter passengers have caused many problems big and small. And the problem can be significantly greater for a single pilot than a crew of two

Passengers have done minor things. They have failed to close baggage compartment doors, opened cabin doors in flight, left lap belts dangling out closed doors, reeked with body odor, chased their

rotorwash-blown hat back toward the tail rotor, interfered with radio communications, argued, moved around in the cabin, dropped things with a bang on the cabin floor, lied about their weight and the weight of their baggage, smoked when asked not to, complained, asked for special flight maneuvers and fly-bys, spilled drinks, vomited in the cabin, and have left articles behind.

Each of these do not seem terribly dangerous, but many of them have the potential for something more serious. If nothing else these minor problems can provide the distraction that requires the pilot's attention to be diverted from the matters of flying, minding, or preflighting the aircraft.

Passengers have also done some serious things. They have lifted their skis up into the rotor disk, pulled the collective up when exiting the copilot's seat of a running aircraft, stepped on the pedals when simply shifting to get more comfortable, stood erect on the door step and waved their hand overhead, ignored instructions by opening a door to get out to go back to the baggage compartment immediately after landing, walked under the tailboom, walked into the tail rotor, leaned on the cyclic during flight, brought hazardous materials on board, threatened the pilot, and walked into the main rotor blades.

Some of these actions have cost them their lives, jeopardized the lives of other aboard, and/or scared the wits out of pilots.

Various operators have developed their own procedures to inform and control passengers. If your company has set procedures, follow them. A passenger briefing may be repetitive and insignificant to you; but to a first-time passenger it is not.

Unless you are absolutely certain your passenger is knowledgeable, it is prudent to assume he knows

nothing. Passengers may be reluctant to show their ignorance, and simply lie about their experience. Take a conservative approach. It is far better to refresh something they once learned, than to omit something they never knew.

If you do not have a standard passenger briefing, develop one. As a rule, it is far better to invest a little extra time on the ground to conduct a thorough preflight briefing, than it is to wrestle with problems in flight.

Your briefing should include everything you expect to happen in a normal situation for your flight, as well as the appropriate abnormal procedures.

Passengers should be informed on procedures such as the use of the seat belts, opening/closing of doors, use of ICS, normal external radio communications, when/how to disembark, and avoidance of rotors.

Think about some other things too.

Recognize that some people may simply be afraid of flying in any kind of machine. Their fear may be competing with their commitment to fly. They may be reluctant, and like a sheep, be led onto the aircraft. But once onboard and up in the air fear takes over, and anything may happen.

Try to determine their level of anxiety and brief them appropriately to set their minds at ease. You may simply describe what the takeoff will be like, the direction/route of travel, how fast and high you will fly, estimated time enroute, the aircraft noise and vibration, and how they might help you spot other traffic.

Try to visualize what the passenger expects to do on this flight. Will he be doing his work as you fly – counting bird nests, photographing some property, or making a report on a natural disaster? Imagine what he might want to do. Will he be in a

hurry to disembark after you land? If you take some interest in his motives for the flight you may be able to anticipate his actions.

Preflight briefings are great, but many operations must be conducted when there is the noise and rotor-wash of engines/rotors turning on the ground. This can be a hazardous situation with passengers approaching or disembarking. The dynamics can frighten them or diminish their situational awareness; and your ability to communicate with them orally or visually may be non-existent.

There is no one easy answer to solve this.

You must first be aware that passengers can and do take actions that can be harmful. Use ground guides whenever possible. Take advantage of any time that you have to orally brief passengers. If your only means of communication is to use arm-and-hand signals then do it.

You may have to be assertive with your passengers to provide for their safety. Some of your customers may not be accustomed to being told what to do. If you don't tell them, they may not have the knowledge to do it for themselves.

Handling passengers is a serious matter.

They are in your hands.

Treat them the way you would your mother. If that does not appeal to you, remember that they are instrumental in paying your salary.



The Epidemic of Obesity

By Glenn R. Stout, Jr., MD, Senior FAA AME

The epidemic of obesity is now a crisis. It is one of the major problems in the country. About 300,000 deaths yearly are a result of complications of obesity; second only to smoking, which causes about 420,000 deaths yearly.

Medical problems associated with obesity include heart attack, stroke, gout, diabetes, gallbladder disease, arthritis of weight-bearing joints, depression, fatigue, breast and uterine cancer, hypertension, and increased risk of falls and accidents. Add to this decreased self-esteem, less success in the workplace, and even public scorn and ridicule for gross obesity. Pilots may not be able to fit into the cockpit. No FAA regulation about obesity...yet.

Many articles use the Body Mass Index (BMI) to identify obesity. But, you do not need the BMI to find out if you are fat – just take off your clothes and look in a mirror, see how your clothes fit, or see how much fat you can hold between your fingers. The only accurate way to define obesity is to measure actual body fat content by immersing the entire body in a tank of water and then making some mathematical calculations. This is scientifically correct, but certainly not practical. A BMI over 27 indicates that you are overweight; if it is over 30 you are probably obese; a BMI of 25 is about right. Under 18 is abnormal. One problem with the BMI is that muscular people (muscle weighs much more than fat) might have a falsely high BMI. All lean muscular contestants in a physique contest would have an abnormally high BMI.

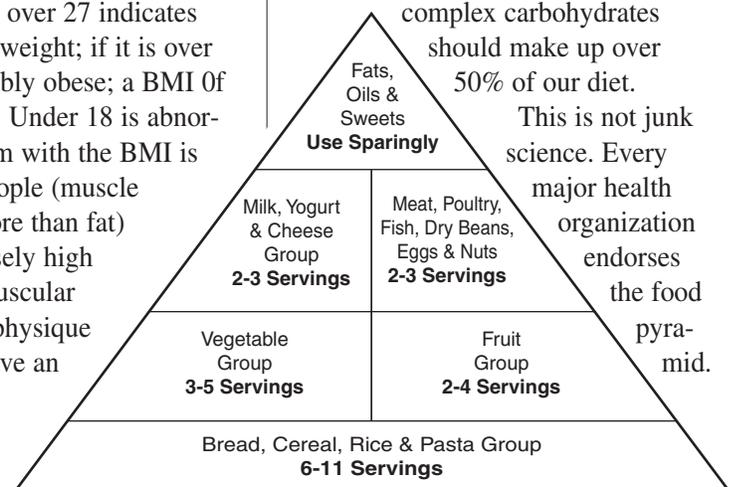
The real value of the

BMI is to compare population weights over the years. Records of our weights and heights from past decades are readily available from insurance companies and hundreds of other sources. In 1960, 10 percent of our population was considered overweight; that figure has now reached over 32 percent. We are the fattest nation in the world. Forty percent of obesity is genetic (but still responds to diet and exercise). But we are fat – and getting fatter – not from a sudden appearance of a "fat gene," but because we eat huge portions, eat calorie-laden fast foods, snack constantly, get junk food from vending machines and just about every store we enter. We drive cars instead of walking or biking. We are couch potatoes.

Bookstores are filled with best-selling books on weight reduction. Some are "junk science" moneymakers; others have a gimmick that is blown up to about 300 pages and \$25.

The food pyramid (below) by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, may be the most valuable one source of nutritional information ever devised. It contains most of the information you will ever need to know about your diet. It emphasizes food from five food groups. Note that – contrary to what

we were taught years ago – complex carbohydrates should make up over 50% of our diet. This is not junk science. Every major health organization endorses the food pyramid.



THE FOOD PYRAMID

Obesity... pg. 3 cont'd.

Our basic diet should be about 15 percent protein, 20-30 percent fat (mostly unsaturated), and 55-60 percent carbohydrates (mostly complex carbohydrates). The popular diet books merely juggle the food percentages instead of just lowering calories by shrinking the pyramid and keeping the proportions the same. Some of the books recommend dangerously high proportions of fat and high protein. Anyone will lose weight on these diets, or on just about any diet followed long enough. Even if you eat a half a stick of butter and two hamburger patties for each meal you will lose weight. But you will have way too much fat in your diet and go into a state of ketosis – also dangerous for your body. No one argues that refined sugar (the topic of a best seller) is bad for you. No one ever got into poor health by a lack of sugar. The bottom line is to use the proportions recommended by the food pyramid and forget all the hype. And exercise, exercise, exercise. Even walking 30 minutes every day will do wonders.

Here are the five food groups, with choices for World Cup Champion in each category:

- 1. Bread, Cereal, Rice, and Pasta** (the mainstay of your diet): Bread (especially whole-grain breads), oats, rice, (brown rice is best), macaroni, spaghetti. Try unsweetened whole-grain breakfast cereals and add a little artificial sweetener.
- 2. Vegetables:** The winners are Irish potato, sweet potato, broccoli, spinach, carrots, squash, cauliflower, and green peas.
- 3. Fruits:** Apples, oranges, grapefruit, bananas, watermelon, apricot, prunes. (Consider vegetables and fruits in the same category nutritionally.)
- 4. Milk, Yogurt, Cheese:** Best are skim milk, no-fat yogurt, and low or no-fat cottage cheese.

5. Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry beans, Eggs, and Nuts: Lean meat, about the size of a credit card about as thick as your finger, once a day; turkey is a good choice. Beans: lima, kidney, Navy, black, pinto, or back-eyed peas. Three or four eggs a week. Most nuts if they are unsalted. Salmon, cod, halibut, and tuna are excellent fish choices.

6. Fats, Oils and Sweets: Bad news. Use sparingly. (Salt, sugar, and fats are the worst thing you can eat.) The best oils are olive oil and peanut oil, followed by corn, safflower, soybean, and sunflower. Skip any saturated fats and oils

Thousands of articles and books have been written about obesity and diets. The truth is that weight control is a simple (?) matter of mathematics. There must be a balance between energy expended (metabolism and exercise) and energy consumed in the diet. Any remaining calories (energy) is stored as fat. The laws of thermodynamics cannot be changed.

Yours for good health and safe flying.

Dr. Stoutt is a partner in the Springs Pediatrics and Aviation Medicine Clinic, Louisville, Ky., and he has been an active AME since 1960. No longer an active pilot, he once held a commercial pilot's license with instrument, multi-engine and CFI ratings

Some Basics of Nutrition and Weight Control

- You need 15 calories per pound per day to maintain your weight with normal activity; you will lose weight on 10 calories per pound. Most women will safely lose weight on 1200 calories a day, men on 1500. Consult your physician or nutritionist to find out which diet best suits your needs. For instance, the amounts of salt or fat may have to be altered if you have high blood pressure.

- Aim to lose fat, not weight. Rapid weight loss is mostly water. In crash diets or prolonged low-calorie diets (500-800 calories a day) fat is lost, but so is muscle and other valuable tissue. Remember that your heart is a muscle. Don't try to lose in one month what you have gained over years.
- Your body must burn 3500 calories to lose one pound of fat. The optimum weight loss is about 1 pound a week. Sounds discouraging at first, but this amounts to 12-24 pounds a year of fat that has an excellent chance of staying off.
- There is no known food that "melts fat."
- Start think about an eating plan instead of a diet. There are no loopholes to losing weight. The only way to lose body fat is to create a calorie deficit – either by eating fewer calories or exercising more.
- For each year over 30, your body burns 1% fewer calories, probably because of less muscle mass. So, at age 50 you burn 20% fewer calories than you did 20 years before. No wonder we put on pounds as we get older. Also, as we get older most of us are less active and need dietary adjustments and a regular exercise program.
- Modern Man has exactly the same genetic makeup as Early Man (about 35,000 years ago). Forget the books and articles that say the reason we are fat is because Early Man did not eat cereals and sugar and so on. Early Man did not have Chevrolets, Burger Kings, or TV, and spent about four hours a day roving about – walking to forage for food and running to keep from being eaten. Our obesity problem has become an epidemic only in the past 50 years.

Note: The views and recommendations made in this article are those of the author and not necessarily those of the FAA or Bell Helicopter Textron.

There I Was...

Here are some accounts sent to us by readers.

206B.

"It was a dark and stormy day. Actually the weather was cold, snowy, windy, and gray. The kind of day that deserved some consideration of the weather before going flying. The B Model had just completed some maintenance work, and needed a ground run and leak check. I was asked to do the ground run. I was a reasonably experienced pilot (5,000+ hours), and I had long since learned that it was a good idea to give your aircraft a good preflight after any maintenance had been done to it. Since the weather was nasty I did a thorough preflight in the hangar.

Preflight completed, the helo was dragged outside. I got in and started it up. It didn't take too long for the mechanic to signal me to shut down because we had an oil leak. OK. Shut it down. Climbed out and went back to the coffee pot.

A little while later the mechanic came in and told me it was ready to run up again. This time I saw no need for another preflight so I dashed out to the aircraft - without the kind of warm clothes I would wear if I was going on a flight - climbed in, did the prestart wipeout, and pressed the starter button. No

rotation at 25% Ng so I aborted the start. Much to my horror I discovered the lack of rotation was due to the fact that the main rotor blades had been tied down!!!

Apparently in that short time between my first run and the second attempt the mechanic had tied down the rotor blades. During the second attempt we were both so focused on the cold weather and the desire to do the leak check that we both missed removing the tie-downs.

I guess I learned that when you walk away from an aircraft it may not be the same when you return even if it is only for a few minutes."

206B.

"I fly for a Law Enforcement Unit. I had another policeman with me. He was a regular line officer - not a pilot. Line officers can transfer for short 3 day assignments to other departments to observe/participate/learn what they do. This officer was to be my observer as well as he could under the limited time in which to teach him what to do and how to do it.

We went out on a day flight and he seemed to be OK. He operated the radios and did some of the things we briefed about. He gave no indication that he had any apprehension about flying.

We routinely fly with the doors off in the summer, because at times we are prepared to deliver a trained observer directly into the water from a hover. Of course, having the doors off makes such a delivery much easier, and a side benefit is the cooler more comfortable cockpit.

We launched on a night call. It was very close to where we departed. Only a couple of minutes to the

scene. The scene was next to several tall antennas. I began a left orbit of the scene so the observer could get a good look, and do the things that are required. It was a fairly tight orbit and we were constantly in a left bank - towards the observer's side.

It was quickly apparent that this officer was uncomfortable. He would not respond to my comments, even though he was on Hot Mike, and all he had to do was talk. He had a firm grip on the door frame with his left hand, and his knee-board with his right hand. Between flying the aircraft, trying to get this officer to do his job, and me having to do his job, I almost ran into one of the antennas.

We go through extra efforts to brief officers and the other passengers that we are to carry, but this one caught me by surprise."

UH-1

"I was assigned to an aviation company in Germany. I was flying solo, and was placed in a VFR holding pattern for some time. I could see the clouds building up below me. It was amazing how fast they built up. Oops. Suddenly I was in the clouds. I hadn't planned on this. I got a bit anxious. Vibrations. Oh my god, I'm indicating 0 knots, and might even be backing down. Pitched the nose forward to get some airspeed. Flew straight ahead for a minute then climbed up to get up and over the clouds again. Now what? Here is a hole. Descended down through it to get contact again. OK now. I was glad that I had a reasonable capability to fly instruments. I was embarrassed however that I allowed myself to get into the clouds when I certainly didn't want to be there, and then to almost lose it by not watching what my airspeed was doing. Until now I've only told one other person about this."



YOUR ANSWERS.

In the last issue we asked "Tell us about a situation where hot weather affected you, your crew, or your helicopter's performance."



Here are some of your answers: **Human AD.**

"Ragged out. It was a normal two-day weekend. On Saturday I cut the grass and did some other stuff outdoors that my wife wanted done. I spent the whole day in the sun doing the kind of physical labor that kept me dripping sweat. It was hot – low 90's, and humid. Much of this work was in preparation for the pool party that we were to host the next afternoon. I had my share of drinks in the hot sun on Sunday, and was a bit under the weather when I got up on Monday. Whenever you're not feeling all that well and hoping that the work load will be light it never is. It was another hot humid day. I didn't fly all that much – just about 4 hours, but at the end of the day I was ragged. I had no ambition to do anything, and what I did do was not as good as usual, but certainly OK for the situation. I don't know if it was heat stress, but I felt terrible."



"212 Fires. This was the summer of 1998. I think it was August when I was involved in the big fires in Southeast Oklahoma. I'd work two days on – fighting fires from dawn to dark. It was hot. The temperatures were over 100. Fighting fires is like being in a war. It really gets your adrenaline running and you are pumped up to fight these monsters, and this was a monster. I think it burned somewhere around 3,000 acres. When you're pumped up like that you can somehow handle a day of continuous operations. I would fly about 8 hours a day, and felt that I was reasonably alert and aware throughout the day. When you were finished however you were worn out.

On this particular day I became involved with another 212 in an effort to save several houses from the fire. There was smoke all around us and we had to continuously communicate so we wouldn't run into each other. One particular house was right next to a pond. Both of us dipped out of this pond, made the start of a takeoff, turned and immediately dropped our loads. It was essentially a hover taxi operation that we stayed with for some time. We felt great that we were ultimately able to save this house – but we were not so lucky with others. During these quick turns over the house/pond I noticed that the combining gearbox oil temperature increased up to the red line, and the warning light came on. I advised the other 212. He said that his temp was high too, and that I should find a place to land. Easier said than done with fire and smoke all over the place. I was definitely concerned. Apparently working in this high temp atmosphere in a hover did not allow for enough airflow to help keep the oil temp down. Instead of these quick, short hover

patterns, I extended my takeoff to make it and the leg back to the house up at a higher speed. That worked. The temp came back down. This was a challenge to me as well as the aircraft. The fire affected both of us."

"MD530. There we were flying an MD530 on a very hot summer day (110 degrees F). We had done numerous takeoffs at very high gross weight. Although it was a very hot day there was a nice breeze of 10-15 knots. After a dinner break we went back to fly an additional couple of lifts. Since it was now just after sunset the temps had cooled off about 10 degrees and the thought of making more high gross weight takeoffs seemed easy compared to the earlier flight. Little did we realize the tremendous help we were getting from the wind. The first takeoff seemed to take an eternity and despite the cooler conditions the aircraft worked even harder to get through translational flight. Although we made the flight and did not damage anything it was a good learning experience. Effects of the atmospheric conditions on aircraft are very complicated and the obvious solution of waiting for the cooler part of the day may not be the best one.

Don't out your aircraft into a situation that your mind hasn't already been through."

We didn't get many responses, but these are sufficient to make the point that hot weather can seriously affect your performance as well as that of every helicopter.

You can cope with hot weather. It does require however that you recognize the impact of hot weather, and make the appropriate plans and preparations to operate within your limits as well as the helicopter's.

Density Altitude

When it comes to good old-fashioned hangar flying, one subject that almost never seems to be discussed is density altitude. The reason being, too many pilots do not know enough about the subject. Yet, because of the inescapable influence density altitude has on aircraft and engine performance, it is important for every pilot to understand its effects. Hot, high, and humid weather conditions can change a routine takeoff or landing into an accident in less time than it takes to tell about it. There are three important factors that affect density altitude.

- 1. Altitude.** The higher the altitude the less dense the air.
- 2. Temperature.** The warmer the air, the less dense it is.
- 3. Humidity.** Humidity is not generally considered a major factor in density altitude computations because the effect of humidity is related to engine power than aerodynamic efficiency.

However, if high humidity does exist, it would be wise to add 10% to your computed takeoff distance and anticipate a reduced rate of climb.

The Pilot's Operating Handbooks prepared by the Airframe Manufacturers provide good information regarding the aircraft performance under standard conditions (sea level at 59 degrees F). However, if a pilot becomes complacent regarding aircraft performance or is careless in using the charts, the density altitude effects may provide an unexpected element of suspense during takeoff and climb.

Density altitude effects are not confined to mountain areas. They also apply at elevations near sea level when temperatures go above standard 59 degrees F or 15 degrees

C. It's just that the effects are increasingly dramatic at the higher elevations.

Takeoff distance, power available, and climb rate are all adversely affected, and while the indicated airspeed remains the same, the true airspeed increases. Too often, a pilot who is flying in high density altitude conditions for the first time in an aircraft with a normally aspirated engine becomes painfully aware of the retarded effect on the aircraft performance.

Density altitude is not to be confused with pressure altitude, indicated altitude, true altitude or absolute altitude, and is not to be used as a height reference, but will be used as determining criteria for the performance capabilities of the aircraft. The published performance criteria in the Pilots Operations Handbook is generally based on standard atmospheric conditions at sea level, 59 degrees F, and 29.92 inches of mercury.

When the temperature rises above the standard temperature for the locality, the density of the air in that locality is reduced and the density altitude increases. This affects the aircraft aerodynamic performance, and decreases the horsepower output of the engine. Pilots should make a practice of checking their aircraft performance charts during preflight preparation. This is important when temperatures are above normal regardless of airport elevation.

This Table shows the significant affects of temperature on density

altitude. It shows standard temperatures at sea level, 4000 feet, and 8000 feet elevation. When the temperature rises to 90 degrees F the density altitude at sea level increases to 1900 feet, and at 8000 feet elevation it increases to 11,700 feet.

From the pilot's point of view, an increase in density altitude results in:

- 1. Increased takeoff distance.**
- 2. Reduced rate of climb.**
- 3. Increased true airspeed on approach and landing at the same indicated airspeed.**
- 4. Decreased max gross hover weights.**

At airports of higher elevations, such as those in the Western United States, high temperatures sometimes have such an effect on density altitude that safe operations are impossible. In such conditions, operations between morning and mid afternoon can become extremely hazardous. Even at lower altitudes, aircraft performance can become marginal and it may be necessary to reduce aircraft gross weight for safe operations. Therefore, it is advisable, when performance is in question to schedule operations during the cool hours of the day, early morning or late afternoon when forecast temperatures are sometimes more ideal for both departure and arrival.

A pilot's first reference for aircraft performance should be the operational data section of the Rotorcraft Flight Manual developed by the manufacturer.

Excerpted from FAA -P-8740-2

Std.Temp	Elevation	80°F	90°F
59°F	Sea Level	1,200 ft	1,900 ft
45°F	4,000 ft	6,300 ft	6,900 ft
31°F	8,000 ft	11,100 ft	11,700 ft

WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER ?

QUESTION:

"Tell us about an incident that you had with passengers in and around your helicopter."



Mail your
ANSWERS to:

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Fort Worth, Texas 76101

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The primary objective of the **HELIPROPS** program and the **HUMAN AD** is to help reduce human error related accidents. This newsletter stresses professionalism, safety and good aeronautical decision-making.

Letters with constructive comments and suggestions are invited. Correspondents should provide name, address and telephone number to:

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