



# NOAA Aviation Safety

November 22, 2005

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Aviation.Safety@noaa.gov

## Purpose of Newsletter

This newsletter was developed by the NOAA Aviation Safety Program to disseminate information to NOAA personnel who fly on aircraft owned or operated by NOAA, managers who authorize personnel to participate in flights on behalf of NOAA, and NOAA safety managers. The Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere issued a safety stand-down regarding use of non-NOAA aircraft in November 2004, which resulted in the development of aviation safety policy and a new Aviation Safety Program that affects NOAA personnel participating in nearly all aircraft operations. Newsletters will be issued periodically to alert aircraft users when major components of the Aviation Safety Program are implemented, and to disseminate aviation safety information.

## Draft Aviation Safety Policy

The Draft Aviation Safety Policy is posted on the NOAA Aviation Safety Web site at <http://www.aviationsafety.noaa.gov>. NOAA personnel who fly on aircraft owned or operated by NOAA or other agencies, and managers responsible for authorizing NOAA and non-NOAA personnel to fly on these aircraft should become familiar with the draft Aviation Safety Policy. The target date for full implementation is October 1, 2006.

## Medical Screening

NMAO is developing an on-line "NOAA Health Services Aviation Questionnaire." It will be used for medical screening of all personnel (NOAA and non-NOAA) categorized as qualified non-crewmembers who need to fly mission operations on aircraft owned or operated by NOAA in accordance with the draft Aviation Safety Policy. This on-line database is expected to be available for use in early March 2006. To learn more, please visit the Aviation Safety Web site at <http://www.aviationsafety.noaa.gov>.

## Aviation Life Support Equipment (ALSE)

The Aviation Safety Program is pleased to announce the addition of an Aviation Life Support Equipment Technician to our staff (Mr. Jon Dixon). Jon has been tasked with contacting all NOAA field units to determine ALSE needs and to develop plans for a comprehensive ALSE program modeled after the NOAA Dive Program Standardized Equipment Program. If your office will require ALSE under the new Aviation Safety Policy and you have not yet communicated your needs to Jon Dixon, please contact him at (813) 681-6878, or by email [Jon.F.Dixon@noaa.gov](mailto:Jon.F.Dixon@noaa.gov)

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## Aviation Safety Training

When the NOAA Aviation Safety Policy is fully implemented, NOAA and non-NOAA personnel who fly mission operations on behalf of NOAA will be required to have completed aviation safety training appropriate for the flight environment they will be operating in (over water, cold weather <32F, and/or high altitude >10,000 ft).

Mission operations are defined as all operations other than transportation. Mission operations include but are not limited to: aerial surveys, airborne data collection, forecaster training, and aerial photography. Mission operations include transportation of personnel where an aircraft departs from or lands at a location other than an airport. Accordingly, transportation of personnel on aircraft that either depart from or land on a ship, oil rig, open field, beach, ice, or open water is considered mission operations.

NOAA Line and Staff Offices should plan to provide aviation safety training for their flying personnel prior to October 1, 2006, in preparation for compliance with the new Aviation Safety Policy. A list of recommended aviation safety training vendors will be posted on the Aviation Safety web site as soon as the Aviation Safety Board is established and approves a list of training vendors.

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## Aviation Safety Board

NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations (NMAO) is working with the NOAA Safety Committee to identify Line Office representatives to the NOAA Aviation Safety Board. This Board reports to the NOAA Safety Council and will be responsible for 1) approving aviation safety training and ALSE requirements; 2) minimum aviation safety standards to be included in contracts for aviation and data services; and 3) aviation risk assessment tools developed by the Aviation Safety Program, among other things identified in the draft Aviation Safety Policy.

Preferred qualifications for Aviation Safety Board Line Office representatives include:

- operational aviation experience (pilot or crewmember);
- knowledge about all aviation activities in which the Line Office participates using both NOAA and non-NOAA aircraft;
- accessibility to the Line Office Deputy Director and/or Line Office Safety Council representative; and
- being physically located in the Silver Spring, MD complex for ease of attending meetings.

Each Line Office will have a single representative on the Aviation Safety Board. Line Offices may develop internal subcommittees to provide regional input to the single Line Office representative to the Aviation Safety Board.