



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

SAFO

Safety Alert for Operators

SAFO 06017
DATE: 11/8/06

Flight Standards Service
Washington, DC

http://www.faa.gov/other_visit/aviation_industry/airline_operators/airline_safety/safo

A SAFO contains important safety information and may include recommended action. SAFO content should be especially valuable to air carriers in meeting their statutory duty to provide service with the highest possible degree of safety in the public interest.

SUBJECT: Equipment Training and Checking for Helicopter Operators on the SPZ-7000 or SPZ-7600 Dual Digital Automatic Flight Control Systems.

PURPOSE: This SAFO emphasizes the importance of operators ensuring they have procedures and training for performing the required checks and using the onboard digital automatic flight control system.

BACKGROUND: All 14 CFR part 135 operators are required in their aircraft training programs to have, instructions on the authorized methods of checking and operating the equipment installed in aircraft they operate. A recent helicopter crash investigation revealed that the required checks for the onboard digital automatic flight control system were not being accomplished in accordance with the Aircraft Flight Manual (AFM).

DISCUSSION: When training flight crews in the use of digital automatic flight control systems, operators should emphasize mode awareness; mode function and limitations; incompatible modes; coupling requirements; and normal, abnormal, and emergency procedures.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The FAA recommends that the Director of Operations, Chief Pilot, and pilots review their training programs and operation manuals that have the SPZ-7000 and SPZ-7600 equipment to ensure that these programs include information on:

- Preflight checks and the use of the flight director and coupling status annunciations;
- Command cue presentations, when only the pitch or roll mode is engaged; and
- The differences between SPZ-7000 and the SPZ-7600, if applicable.

Questions concerning this SAFO should be directed to the Commuter, On Demand, and Training Center Branch, AFS-250, at 202-267-8166.

Approved by: AFS-200