PROFILE OF A MIDAIR COLLISION

During a three-year study of midair collisions involving civilian aircraft, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) determined that:

1) The occupants of most midair collisions were on a pleasure flight with no flight plan filed.

2) Nearly all midair collisions occurred in VFR conditions during weekend daylight hours.

3) The majority of midairs were the result of a faster aircraft overtaking and hitting a slower aircraft.

4) No pilot is immune. Experience levels in the study ranged from initial solo to the 15,000 hour veteran.

5) The vast majority of midairs occurred at uncontrolled airports below 3,000'.

6) En route midairs occurred below 8,000' and within 25 miles of the airport.

7) Flight instructors were onboard one of the aircraft in 37 percent of the midairs.

MIDAIR COLLISION AVOIDANCE AND YOU

Have you ever landed and got out of your plane with your hands sweaty and body shaking because someone nearly took your wing off? If so, you're not alone. As aviation activity increases throughout America, the possibility of being party to a near midair or an actual collision increases. The FAA has instituted several policies to alleviate the midair collision potential, but the ultimate responsibility lies with you -- the pilot. Here are seven simple rules you can follow to make flying safer, and hopefully reduce your chances of being the victim of a midair collision.

1) PLAN AHEAD - Thoroughly review your intended route of flight before walking out to your airplane. Plan to avoid alert areas, restricted areas, Military Training Routes (MTRs), and Military Operations Areas (MOAs), if possible. Check NOTAMs and identify possible conflict areas.

(2) SEE AND AVOID - Scan the airspace ahead of you and to the side using proper scan techniques. Periodically check behind you since the majority of midair's occur with one aircraft overtaking another.

(3) CLEAR - Before executing a climb, turn, or descent, or any other maneuver, ensure the area is clear using the appropriate clearing procedures.

(4) COMMUNICATE - When flying into or out of uncontrolled airports, broadcast your

position and intentions. Request and use available RADAR services. Remember, you are ultimately responsible for seeing and avoiding other traffic and should not relax your visual scan even in a RADAR environment.

(5) SQUAWK - If your aircraft is transponder equipped, turn it on and adjust to reply on both Mode 3/A and C.

(6) BE SEEN - In order to enhance the see and avoid concept, you are encouraged to turn on your anti-collision lights or other appropriate lights whenever your engines are running. You are further encouraged to turn on your landing lights when operating below 10,000' MSL, day or night, especially within 10 miles of an airport, or in areas of reduced visibility. While use of landing lights is greatly appreciated, please observe the aircraft manufacturer's recommendations for landing light operations.