

SAFETY BULLETIN



**Safety Bulletin No. 010
20 February 2018**

**Contact: Gabe Durand
Phone: (703) 372-3931**

Complacency in Aviation is Everyone's Challenge

Helicopter Safety Advisory Conference (HSAC) statistics document 26 helicopter events involving 13 fatalities related to offshore oil and gas operations in the Gulf of Mexico from 1999-2016. Recently, a number of "near misses" have been reported which remind us that everyone must remain diligent with our focus on aviation safety. Three of the near-misses are described below.

PASSENGER PROVIDED WRONG DESTINATION INFORMATION TO PILOT

The pilot received a customer flight plan to AC 875 and entered the coordinates into the GPS. About 10 miles from the destination the pilot had no visual contact with the intended platform. The pilot then confirmed with the passenger that the correct location should have been AC 857. The error resulted in an 18 minute delay, which could have resulted in a low fuel situation.

TAKEOFF ATTEMPTED WITH TIE DOWN STRAP ON

Upon landing to pick up his passengers and after refueling, the pilot secured the aircraft with a single tie down strap to the only available tie down point located under the center of the aircraft. Before takeoff the pilot conducted a walk around the aircraft but failed to notice the tie down strap under the aircraft. After lifting off slowly, the aircraft was restrained at a low hover by the tie down strap and the pilot set the aircraft back on the helideck. There was no damage and the aircraft returned to base after the tie down strap was removed.

OCS EMPLOYEE WALKS BY THE TAIL ROTOR OF RUNNING HELICOPTER

While an inspector was disembarking from a running helicopter on an offshore helideck, a facility employee walked past the tail rotor unobserved by the crew. The pilot had landed into the wind which placed the tail rotor close to the helideck's primary stairwell. The facility employee came up the primary stairwell and walked forward towards the front of the aircraft, past the running tail rotor. The inspector counselled the employee on the dangers of walking behind a running aircraft.

BSEE RECOMMENDS:

Situational Awareness - Remain alert at all times when in or near an aircraft.

- Always verify the destination coordinates, especially if you have not been to a particular destination and/or it is a moving facility. Double-check all trip details prior to departure.
- When approaching the aircraft, watch the pilot for signals to approach, and look at the aircraft for anything out of the ordinary (tie downs, cowlings, oil leaks, etc.).
- When in the aircraft – during takeoff, landing and flight – watch for hazards (air traffic, towers, birds) and listen for radio traffic and to what the pilot is saying.
- Refrain from non-essential communications/activities during critical phases of flight (taxi, takeoff, landing) and secure loose items to prevent a safety problem.

Risk Tolerance - It is easy to become desensitized to the risks in one's environment, especially as a person becomes more experienced and the tasks become routine.

It is critical that everyone (pilots, passengers, mechanics, and offshore personnel) stay attentive to their surroundings and the tasks being done. Avoid just "checking the box" when conducting a Job Safety Analysis (JSA) or morning safety meeting. Instead, hold a discussion about potential hazards of any expected aircraft-related activities and how to perform the daily tasks safely.

NOTE - BSEE commends the individuals reporting these events. Without their effort, these hazards would have gone unnoticed and uncorrected.

A **Safety Bulletin** is a tool used by BSEE to share lessons learned from an incident or near miss. It also contains recommendations that should help prevent the recurrence of such an incident or near miss on the Outer Continental Shelf.