

M E M O R A N D U M

TO : All Pilots
FROM : AVPFO/DFD TPE
SUBJECT : AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

DATE: 25 April 1972

REF. NO. CF/L MEMO-72-089

It is with deep personal regret that I confirm the tragic loss of another AAM Pilot yesterday. The past few months have produced an appalling toll in lives and serious injuries. In light of these events I ask that each Flight Crewmember and each Supervisor reappraise all the factors which make flying in our operation a particularly unforgiving profession. We are called upon to perform under possibly the most difficult environmental conditions in the world considering the combination of remote, mountainous terrain, absence of modern navigation/communications and air traffic control facilities, active presence of hostile armed forces, absence of adequate means of reporting and forecasting the varied seasonal weather and winds, and marginal airfields and landing zones, to name a few examples. Additionally it must be recognized that performance of support functions such as Maintenance, Traffic, Flight Watch, etc. must be accomplished under equally trying, although different, circumstances. These activities, operating under pressure, have very real problem areas of their own, for which crewmembers must be on constant alert.

The key element which most often determines the difference between success or failure of each flight is the judgement of the individual crewmember. Your evaluation of the total situation including the condition of the aircraft and its equipment, your personal physical and mental state, and the relative urgency of the mission in addition to the factors cited above culminates in a decision as to whether or not the mission should be attempted under the circumstances. That responsibility is of utmost import, even though such decisions must be made many times each day and thousands of times in a lifetime of flying. The price for only one erroneous assessment of these ingredients all too often is fatal.

It is incumbent on each member of the flying division to exercise alertness to recognize when support, environmental, and personal factors have combined to produce a risky or hazardous situation requiring the maximum performance by the aircraft or its crew; to exercise sufficient self discipline and maturity to refuse missions which require such maximum performance except under life or death circumstances; and, to understand that continued acceptance of high risk operations, except under unusual circumstances, can only lead to further accidents and human tragedy, and, in the long run, failure to meet customer requirements. The recent accidents should make it indelibly clear in your mind, as it has mine, that violation of these concepts does have such results.

With great respect to the memories of the following crewmembers who have been

lost or missing since 1 January 1971, I ask each of you to give this matter your most serious consideration.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>A/C NO</u>	<u>TYPE OF A/C</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>CREW NAME</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
20 Jan 71	H78	UH-34D	F/M	E. M. Cruz	
17 Mar 71	N393R	PC-6C	PIC	K. A. Houp	
21 Mar 71	XW-PCB	PC-6C	PIC	B. A. Franklin	
29 Apr 71	N180K	PC-6C	PIC	H. E. Mullholland	
2 Jun 71	XW-PFL	C-46	PIC	H. W. Clark	
2 Jun 71	XW-PFL	C-46	F/O	T. Thuttanon	
27 Dec 71	57-6293	C-123K	PIC	G. L. Ritter	Missing
27 Dec 71	57-6293	C-123K	F/O	R. F. Townley	Missing
27 Dec 71	57-6293	C-123K	AFS	E. J. Weissenback	Missing
27 Dec 71	57-6293	C-123K	AFD	S. Khamphanh	Missing
4 Feb 72	61-2393	C-7A	AFS	Khamouth Sousadalay	
8 Apr 72	N152L	PC-6C	PIC	L. I. Wiehrdt	
24 Apr 72	N391R	PC-6C	PIC	L. K. Randell	

cc: AVPFO/DFD - TPE
VP, Laos - VTE
SOM - VTE
MTS - VTE
MFSD - VTE
MFOTD - VTE
PM - VTE
MSAFE - VTE
File

E. C. Kerckland
for Earl H. Richmond