



HELICOPTER SAFETY NEWS

July 13, 2020

A Reduction in Helicopter Operations Leads to a Reduction in Accidents *U.S. Helicopter Safety Team Also Adds New Safety Experts to its Steering Committee*

WASHINGTON D.C. – The first six months of 2020 have been challenging for the helicopter community and for the entire aviation industry, but one positive from the circumstances has been a decrease in accidents.

From January through June 2020, the U.S. helicopter industry experienced 42 total accidents with nine of them being fatal accidents. For the same period in 2019, there were 69 total accidents and 15 of them were accidents involving fatalities.

According to the U.S. Helicopter Safety Team (www.USHST.org), some of this decrease stems from a decrease in flights during the COVID-19 outbreak. It is estimated that total flights were down from 10 to 30 percent during any given period this Spring. The fatal accident rate per 100,000 flight hours was 0.63 for Jan.-Jun 2020. For full year 2019, the rate was 0.80 according to preliminary data.

This year, the USHST also welcomed new safety experts to serve on its expanded Steering Committee:

- Mike Newell, Director of Aviation Safety at Airbus Helicopters, replaces Emanuele “Manny” Figlia, who recently retired from Airbus.
- Chris Hill, Director of Safety for the Helicopter Association International, joined the Steering Committee.
- Scott Tyrrell, FAA Rotorcraft Safety & Accident Investigator, also joined the Committee.

Here is the entire USHST Steering Committee:

Nick Mayhew – L3Harris (co-chair)
Dawn Groh – ERAU
Lauren Haertlein – GAMA
Chris Hill – HAI
Christopher Lowenstein – Sikorsky
Raj Helwig – Air Methods (Emeritus)

Wayne Fry – FAA (co-chair)
Mike Newell – Airbus
Tony Randall – Bell
Tim Tucker – Robinson
Scott Tyrrell - FAA

Each year, the U.S. helicopter industry safely flies more than 3.2 million flight hours. Working together, we can build on that safe record and eliminate the small number of accidents that do occur.

