

Captain Michael Gitt Papers - Mrs. Cornelia K. Gitt - Wives Safety Petition, 1952

Extracted on Mar-29-2024 01:09:34

The Smithsonian Institution thanks all digital volunteers that transcribed and reviewed this material. Your work enriches Smithsonian collections, making them available to anyone with an interest in using them.

The Smithsonian Institution (the "Smithsonian") provides the content on this website (transcription.si.edu), other Smithsonian websites, and third-party sites on which it maintains a presence ("SI Websites") in support of its mission for the "increase and diffusion of knowledge." The Smithsonian invites visitors to use its online content for personal, educational and other non-commercial purposes. By using this website, you accept and agree to abide by the following terms.

- If sharing the material in personal and educational contexts, please cite the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives as source of the content and the project title as provided at the top of the document. Include the accession number or collection name; when possible, link to the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives website.
- If you wish to use this material in a for-profit publication, exhibition, or online project, please contact Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives or transcribe@si.edu

For more information on this project and related material, contact the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives. See this project and other collections in the Smithsonian Transcription Center.

general insecurity and pressure of that period.

The third period, 1946-50, is that of the introduction of postwar equipment, notably the wide use of four engine planes for both domestic and international travel. This period is marked by a decrease in both rates, particularly the fatal one, followed by a definite level-off. Preliminary figures for 1951 confirm this stabilization, showing even a slight increase in both rates, particularly the fatal one.

One point of great significance to the pilots and one not generally appreciated is this. At the 1949-51 rate of accidents and present airplane speeds, the chances are 3 out of 4 that an airline pilot will be involved in an accident during his career*. Likewise, the chances of his being involved in a fatal accident are about 1 in 9. Looking at this, we feel that, although great strides have been made in the past, improvement is necessary and due. We feel that the past improvement was made from an extremely high rate, and that the industry should not be satisfied with the present status quo.

In any analysis of accidents, it is customary to place the blame for from 45% to 50% of the accidents on the pilot. We feel that while, of course, many errors of omission and commission are made by pilots, being only human, there are other underlying factors, and in the remainder of this paper

5

an attempt is made to point out ares in which some of these factors can be eliminated.

In support of this contention, a situation that developed at the Naval Air Station, Honolulu, during the war is of interest. The main seaplane operating runways were to the northeast and east, crossing at a point approximately one thousand feet from their origins. Lighting was furnished by permanent lights on poles some six to ten feet above water level. About two months after the commencement of operations, during a night take-off, a Navy pilot tore the bottom out of a PBM on the coral reef beyond the intersection of the two runways. The verdict was "pilot error", a finding concurred in tacitly at least by the majority of pilots flying in and out of the area. About a month later a commercial airline pilot did the same thing with a PB2Y. The plane rested on the reef most of that day and was removed just before sunset. Before sunrise there was another PB2Y on the reef within 50 yards of where the first had been.

Now, each of those accidents, by itself, could be attributed to "pilot error". However, with an accident pattern established it seemed likely that there was a contributing factor. Investigation showed that the errors of runway alignment were due to the confusion of the runway lights, on their poles at a considerable height, with the lights of Honolulu,

6

general innersylty and pressure of that period.

The third period, 1960-00, is that of the Satroduction of postwor evalument, actably the wide use of four engine places for both downship and telegraphical Leatel, This period is marked by a decrease in both rates, parkindarly the fatal cas, followed by a definite lavel-off. Preliminary floures for 1951 confirm this stabilization, showing even a slight iscrease in both rates, particularly the fatal one.

tes point of great eignificance to the pilots and one not generally appreciated is this, At the 1969-51 rate of espidents and present simpleme speeds, the chances are) out of 4 that an airline pilet will be involved in an accident during his neveral likewise, the chance of his being involved — concurred in teatily at least by the emissive of pilots to a retal accident are stout 1 in 9, Looking at this, we feel that, although great strikes have been made in the past, improvement is necessary and due, we feel that the past improvement was made from an extremely high rate, and that the industry should not be satisfied with the present status on the roof within 50 parks of where the first had been.

In any applyels of accidents, it is customery to place the blane for from 496 to 506 of the scuttents on the pilot. We feel that while, of course, many errors of municipa and commission are note by plicts, being only busen, there are stacy unterlying factors, and in the remainder of this paper

an attauyt is made to point out eress in which some of these fortors on be siminated.

is support of this contention, a situation that developed at the Navat Air Station, Brackella, Carlog the war is or interest. The main sessions operating rareays were to the northeest and east, orossing at a point approximately one thousand feet from their spigion. Lighting was furnished by permanent lights on poles some six to ten foot above water level. About two months after the communication eperations, during a might telescoff, a Many pilot fore the bottom out of a FRM on the coral reef beyond the intersection or the two runways. The worklot was "pilot error", a rising riying in and cot of the area. About a month leter a comereinl alribe pilot did the some thing with a PROY. The plane rooted on the rear most of that dow sed was removed. just before supert. Sefore searches there was another Thirt

new, each of those sestments, by itself, could be stipliwhen he "gillet error". However, with an assident pattern established it nesset likely that there was a contributing fartor, Investigation showed that the espers of renway alignment were due to the confusion of the runway lights, on their poles of a establishment beight, with the lights of Brookele,

Captain Michael Gitt Papers - Mrs. Cornelia K. Gitt - Wives Safety Petition, Transcribed and Reviewed by Digital Volunteers Extracted Mar-29-2024 01:09:34



Smithsonian Institution

Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives

The mission of the Smithsonian is the increase and diffusion of knowledge - shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world. Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian is the world's largest museum and research complex, consisting of 19 museums and galleries, the National Zoological Park, and nine research facilities. Become an active part of our mission through the Transcription Center. Together, we are discovering secrets hidden deep inside our collections that illuminate our history and our world.

Join us!

The Transcription Center: https://transcription.si.edu
On Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/SmithsonianTranscriptionCenter

On Twitter: @TranscribeSI

Connect with the Smithsonian Smithsonian Institution: www.si.edu

On Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Smithsonian

On Twitter: @smithsonian