# CFIT CHECKLIST Goes Digital

**A free Microsoft Excel worksheet reveals risk factors and solutions without manual calculations.**

BY WAYNE ROSENKRANS

Appealing to pilots who would rather make selections from a computer display than perform manual calculations, the creators of a new Microsoft Excel worksheet seized an opportunity to rekindle interest in a highly regarded educational tool for reducing the risk of controlled flight into terrain (CFIT). Called the Flight Safety Foundation (FSF) *CFIT Checklist* worksheet, this user-friendly software can be downloaded free from the FSF Web site <www.flightsafety.org> for use on computers equipped with Microsoft Windows operating systems. The worksheet primarily helps flight crews and others assess CFIT risks for specific flights, identify factors that reduce those risks and enhance pilot awareness of CFIT risk.

Although FSF staff have received proposals for similar concepts, this FSF *CFIT Checklist* worksheet was designed from the outset to be equivalent to the printed FSF *CFIT Checklist*. That means wording, calculations and CFIT risk scores correspond between the two formats, except for minor changes required to take advantage of Microsoft Excel functions.

Despite its name, and unlike a conventional computer spreadsheet, the FSF *CFIT Checklist* worksheet does not display columns or rows for data entry. Instead, users select factors applicable to a proposed flight from a series of lists. The worksheet is divided into three tabbed parts where numerical values have been assigned to factors that the pilot/operator simply selects as applicable to each flight. After selecting risk-assessment factors on the first tab and selecting risk-reduction factors on the second tab, the worksheet automatically calculates and displays intermediate scores and their meaning, and displays a CFIT risk score on the third tab.

A negative CFIT risk score indicates "significant CFIT threat" per the consensus of international specialists convened for the FSF CFIT Task Force and later, the FSF Approach-and-Landing Accident Reduction (ALAR) Task Force and various civil aviation authorities. If the CFIT risk score is negative, users should reconsider the second part of the checklist to determine what changes can be made to reduce the risk. All selections can be reset in one step if desired. A companion document called "Troubleshooting.txt" answers basic questions and offers suggestions for first-time users.

The FSF *CFIT Checklist* worksheet was developed as a collaborative effort by staff from the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the Foundation. William L. McNease, an FAA flight standards inspector, and Gerald H. Pilj,



The worksheet's third tab displays a CFIT risk score.

an FAA aircraft certification engineer, initiated the project. Pilj programmed the worksheet's interface and automated functions. FAA is not responsible for the accuracy of this educational tool and does not require its use by U.S. aircraft owners and operators.

Laminated copies of the FSF *CFIT Checklist* produced by the International Civil Aviation Organization in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish still can be ordered from the Foundation. Also, PDF format versions of these checklists are among the elements of the FSF *ALAR Tool Kit* CD and can be downloaded at no charge from <www.flightsafety.org/pdf/cfit_check.pdf>. Versions in other languages are available from other sources such as TAM Brazilian Airlines (Portuguese) and Malév Hungarian Airlines (Hungarian).●