CFIT Checklist Worksheet Origin

The August *Aviation Safety World* included an article about the work that Gerald Pilj and I did on the digital FSF *CFIT Checklist*. I thought I would add a little background as to how that happened.

I have been involved with the CFIT issue since 1986, when I was assigned the project as lead test pilot for Gulfstream Aerospace for the certification of the digital GPWS into the Gulfstream III. I am currently the chairman of the Government Air Safety Investigators Working Group for the International Society of Air Safety Investigators, and I am assigned to the Memphis Flight Standards District Office (FedEx Express certificate) as the assistant aircrew program manager for the Airbus A300/310 and as the aircrew program manager for the Airbus A380.

I have used the laminated FSF *CFIT Checklist* for years, and it was only lately that I thought how much easier it would be to use it on computers.

FedEx actually uses a version of your CFIT checklist to determine the CFIT threat for every flight. Gerald and I were attending a training course in Oklahoma City when I began to develop the computerized version that now has been completed. Gerald noticed that I was having difficulty in the programming and volunteered his assistance. In very short order, Gerald had solved the problems, and I passed contact numbers on to him so he could directly work with Flight Safety Foundation to finalize the digital version now on the FSF Web site. Gerald's hard work made it possible.

Thanks for accepting my idea and a new way of presenting it to the world of aviation safety.

William L. (Bill) McNease
Memphis Flight Standards District Office
U.S. Federal Aviation Administration

Touching Thoughts About Ice

Back from holiday, I picked up the new *Aviation Safety World,* glanced through it and concluded: This is great, a vast improvement over the multitude of different publications in the past.

While I like the photograph caption on page 10 [July 2006] calling for pilots to use touch to detect small ice particles, I have great difficulty accepting the procedure of performing "tactile inspection" only after a certain aircraft type has suffered a ground ice accident. A simple instruction to do "a tactile check" on the wings of those aircraft is not enough.

There is a definite need for better defenses against what seems like "cosmic cycles" of certain types of accidents. Please remember that after the Dryden (F28, 1989), La Guardia (F28, 1992) and Skopje (F100, 1993) ground ice accidents, there were no more for eight or nine years. Recently, there has been a new string of ground ice accidents — a Bombardier CRJ-200 in China, two Bombardier Challengers (one in Birmingham, England, and one in Montrose, Colorado, U.S., as mentioned in the article), and two or three Cessna Caravans in the United States. This means that the lessons learned from those days have gone away.

A deeper study is required about why certain lessons learned apparently fade away. Finally, the authorities need to investigate if current regulations are indeed adequate.

Once again, your new magazine is great!

Rudi den Hertog
Chief Engineer
Fokker Services BV

Editor's note: The U.S. National Transportation Safety Board recommended that the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration "develop visual and tactile training aids to accurately depict small amounts of upper wing surface contamination" and "require all commercial airplane operators" to use incorporate them in initial and recurrent training.

Aviation Safety World encourages comments from readers, and will assume that letters and e-mails are meant for publication unless otherwise stated. Correspondence is subject to editing for length and clarity.

Write to J.A. Donoghue, director of publications, Flight Safety Foundation, 601 Madison St., Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314-1756 USA, or e-mail <donoghue@flightsafety.org>.