The pilot was deceased. There was no fire. The coroner's office said it is not known why the pilot elected to fly up the Alnus Creek valley. No indications were found of power or control loss prior to impact. Physical evidence was consistent with high power setting upon contact with terrain. High altitude and high air temperatures resulted in high density altitude, factors known to degrade aircraft performance. This accident is consistent with other accidents the TSB has investigated where pilots have intentionally flown into rising terrain, and degraded aircraft performance resulted in the aircraft being unable to stay above the terrain. *TSB File A13P0154.* △

The C182T was equipped with amphibious floats, a Garmin 1000 integrated flight instrument system, a SPOT tracker and a 406 MHz ELT. (Photo: Roger Cross)

Debrief

Know the Tin You're In

The following article was originally published in Issue 3/2002 of Aviation Safety Vortex *and is republished for its enduring value as a safety promotion tool. It should also be pointed out that its message applies to aircraft of all persuasions, not exclusively helicopters.*

We often hear about the dangers of complacency and over the years it's been the subject of countless articles and accident profiles. Usually, the focus of these discussions is on a lack of diligence stemming from familiarity with a task—like flying the same aircraft everyday on the same job. There are other facets to our business, however, which also demand careful attention to detail.

Often, helicopter pilots fly more than one helicopter, and are expected to stay current on several types or models. These skills develop as we gain experience, but the differences between aircraft, even within the same type, can bite you if you're unaware.

Helicopters, like most machines, are in a constant state of change as manufacturers or operators learn from experience, upgrade, or modify to suit operational needs. This can run the gamut from the simple placement of switches to fitting engines from different manufacturers.

Some examples:

- Manual cargo releases may be cyclic or collective mounted, T-handles, or floor pedals. Even within the same type, like the AS350 series, the release may change depending on which hook is installed.
- Power instruments—we have percent torque, PSI torque, pitch angle, differential Ng, first limit indicators, etc.
- Rotor tachs—percent Nr vs. actual RPM.
- Fuel gauges—pounds vs. percent vs. Gallons vs. Litres.
- Many operators change cyclic heads, or the location of Force Trim Release, NAV Standby or Cargo Release buttons.
- Some IFR platforms like the Sikorsky 76 series has almost as many avionics configurations as there are helicopters.
- Emergency floats can be activated by buttons on the collective, triggers, or handles, depending on the installation.

You get the picture. When new to a machine, or when a variety of different aircraft are flown, it is very important to familiarize oneself with each ship. Failure to do so often results in forgotten fuel valves, generators, cross feeds, rotor brakes, or dropped sling loads during normal operations, and can cause critical delays and mistakes when confronted with an emergency. That extra few minutes you take to get acquainted could be the start of a lasting friendship. △