

# Aviation Human Factors Industry News

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From the sands of Kitty Hawk, the tradition lives on.

Hello all,

To subscribe send an email to: [rhughes@humanfactorsedu.com](mailto:rhughes@humanfactorsedu.com)

In this weeks edition of *Aviation Human Factors Industry News* you will read the following stories:

★Dulles baggage handler who fell from lift dies

★Industry Viewpoint: The 5 Habits of Highly Effective Inspectors

★NUTS AND BOLTS - A NEW LETTER WRITTEN BY MECHANICS FOR MECHANICS

★PNG death crash pilot 'drunk with fatigue'

★Pilot 'quit flight deck' in UAE plane crash: probe

★Flight-Deck Basics is also Ramp Basics

★FAA proposes \$550,000 civil penalty against Executive Airlines

★FAA Mandates Controller Wake-Up Calls

★And Much More

## Dulles baggage handler who fell from lift dies

Never to go home to his family again.

Medical workers attend to Eduardo Tlatempa after his fall Friday.

The baggage handler died of his injuries Sunday.

A United Airlines baggage handler who [toppled from a lift](#) while unloading a plane at Dulles International Airport on Friday died of his injuries at a local hospital Sunday.

Eduardo Tlatempa, 48, was removing bags from the rear cargo hold of a United Boeing 777 Friday afternoon when [he missed his step onto a scissor lift](#) and fell 10 to 20 feet to the concrete, an airport spokesman said.

Another United employee, who asked not to be named for fear it might jeopardize her job, said Tlatempa landed face-first. She said some colleagues who saw him lying there mistook it for an April Fool's Day prank.

A United spokesman said the airline is conducting a review of the accident.

Tlatempa had been a cargo handler for 15 years with Continental Airlines at Newark Liberty International Airport before joining United at Dulles five years ago.

“On behalf of all of us at United and Continental Airlines, we express our deepest sympathies to Eduardo’s family and friends,” United spokesman Christen David said. “Eduardo was a longtime employee, and we are profoundly saddened by this loss. We are making every effort to provide assistance to Eduardo’s family and to support our co-workers during this difficult time.”



## Industry Viewpoint: The 5 Habits of Highly Effective Inspectors

From the pen of John Goglia

Good inspectors are made not born. It takes training, time, and experience. And the ability to observe and learn from those who have been doing inspections for a long time. Over the 40 years that I've been in aviation maintenance, I've done a lot of inspections and learned from some of the real pros in the business. But I'm not afraid to admit that I wasn't always good. It was not long after I took a job as a full-time inspector, that I learned a **valuable lesson** that I carry with me to this day. I was assigned to inspect an engine firewall after the engine was removed. As many of you know, this is the only opportunity to do a complete inspection of this area and since engines have become so reliable, it can be a long time between inspections. A thorough inspection is, therefore, critical.



After performing the inspection, I came in with my clipboard and non-routine items which numbered approximately six. My supervisor was clearly not impressed with the number of findings and went out to take a look himself. He came back with more than 20 non-routine items. I must admit that I was somewhat incredulous and went back to double check. Sure enough, I had **missed every single item he had found**. The upshot is, I started listening and observing the more experienced inspectors more closely until I eventually garnered their skills.

Over the years, I have collected a few pointers that I believe separate the really good inspectors from the just adequate ones. Being really good is critically important to the continued safety and airworthiness of the aircraft we maintain.

1. **Off with the rose-colored glasses**. Inspectors need to find problems and going in with the right attitude is imperative. If you think everything is going to be OK, you are more likely to miss small problems that can propagate and become

big problems. Good inspectors know that inspection is definitely not where you want to see the world as a perfect place. After all, we can't fix what we don't find.

2. **Prepare as if someone's life depends on it.** The truth is inspections can have life and death consequences. Good inspectors never forget that. Review appropriate manuals, history of problems, and remember to bring all the tools you expect to need – mirrors, flashlights, etc. Interrupting an inspection to get a tool disrupts your concentration and can lead to errors in finding problems.

3. **Turn it off and keep it off.** That means cell phones, smart phones, and iPods. The best inspectors know that they need to focus exclusively on the task at hand. Aside from external distractions, clear your head of other distractions as well. Yes, it's hard to put aside family matters or financial issues, but good inspectors know the importance of immersing themselves in the inspection before them.

4. **Small matters.** Even small imperfections – such as cracks – need to be noted. They may be within tolerances today, but fixing them today may be less expensive than when they grow. Or even if small cracks aren't repaired, noting them allows them to be monitored.

5. **Details, details, details.** A good inspector not only finds problems but s/he records them in sufficient detail for the problem to be understood and acted upon. Again, I know it's hard under the pressure of short-staffing to take the time to properly annotate findings, but there are inexpensive electronic aids today that can help record the problems and voice recognition software that can then type up the findings.

Hope these habits work for you.

## **NUTS AND BOLTS - A NEWSLETTER** **WRITTEN BY MECHANICS FOR MECHANICS**

### **Were Back**

**From Mike Jordan - Editor**

In case you didn't notice, it's been a while since we published this newsletter. We sincerely apologize to our readers, most of them have been squealing very loudly. It is however rewarding to find out that a lot of folks **really did miss the newsletter**. The problem has been time and participation. Not enough time and too little participation. The editor has been overwhelmed with other special assignments and has been working on a variety of national work groups that

hopefully will [enhance the efficiency of the FAAS Team](#). These other assignments have forced the newsletter onto the back burner. Additionally, there has been a large reduction in the amount of articles and suggestions for articles submitted by you folks. Those are my excuses and I'm sticking to them. But guess what? There is a golden nugget in the major budget cuts coming our way. The brass has been canceling a lot of our meetings, special projects, and any travel not directly related to safety and oversight. This of course means that if they don't fire me I will have more time to dedicate to the newsletter.



Not to mention my boss, who is great guy, is on my case to get the newsletter out. Did I say my boss is a great guy? All joking aside, we do apologize for any inconvenience and will do our best to be on time in the future. That means we need your help. [Please submit your articles or any suggestions for articles on issues or concerns you are having](#). Did I mention my boss is a great guy?

[https://www.faasafety.gov/files/notices/2011/Mar/Nuts\\_and\\_Bolts\\_2011-01.pdf](https://www.faasafety.gov/files/notices/2011/Mar/Nuts_and_Bolts_2011-01.pdf)

## **PNG death crash pilot 'drunk with fatigue'**

Six days of consecutive work for the co-pilot of a plane that crashed in the mountains of Kokoda would have resulted in fatigue ["akin to intoxication"](#) and may have significantly contributed to the death of the 13 people on board, an aviation expert says. The final report into the fatal crash in August 2009, in which nine Australians died, found that first officer Royden Sauka had worked six straight days and was flying on a rostered day off on the day the plane crashed into a mountainside in stormy weather.



The report by PNG's Accident Investigation Commission, released yesterday by the Australian Transport and Safety Bureau, also found Sauka, in addition to his [long working week, did not hold specific qualifications](#) related to instrument flying.

The 83-page report focused on weather conditions, the aircraft's equipment and the manner in which the pilot was flying.

But it did not explain why the accident happened, the mother of one of the victims said last night.

"It hasn't answered a lot of our questions," Sue Kinross, whose daughter Hannah, [22, was among the victims](#), told The Australian. "It's just opened up a lot of wounds.

"There are probably questions that can never be answered."

She said the report was "vague" on issues of pilot competence and airline safety practices.

The report found the Airlines PNG pilots were attempting to fly by sight in conditions "not conducive to visual flight" when the de Havilland Canada Twin Otter crashed about 11:13 am on the morning of August 11, 2009.

In the final radio transmissions between the doomed flight and another aircraft that was leaving Kokoda, at 11:11 am, the pilots were warned to "just be careful".

They replied in pidjin: "Thank you very much, morning long you".

At 11:15 am, a warning was issued that the weather in the area was not safe to fly in.

The commission said it was "unable to discount [the possible incapacitation](#) of the co-pilot as a factor in the accident".

Toxicological testing showed Sauka had a blood alcohol concentration of 0.05 when his body was found, although the toxicologist reported that "may in part be ascribed to the endogenous production of alcohol by the decomposition processes".

Investigators from the Australian Transport Safety Bureau, who aided the inquiry, looked at whether alcohol had been a factor, but according to a spokesman found "nothing relevant to the accident".

But Ron Bishop, head of aviation at Central Queensland University, said Sauka, who would have had a critical role in finding a way through heavy cloud cover,

could have been "overwhelmed" by working six straight days and said extreme fatigue could have a "similar effect to intoxication".

Airlines PNG yesterday confirmed it had implemented all of the report's recommendations.

## Pilot 'quit flight deck' in UAE plane crash: probe

The pilot of a US Boeing 747 cargo plane in flames was **starved of oxygen** and had to quit the flight deck in last September's deadly crash near Dubai airport, Emirate investigators said Monday.

"A fire ignited onboard the aircraft's main cargo deck after departure from Dubai," said the General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) of the United Arab Emirates in what it termed an updated preliminary report.

"Smoke and fumes in the flight deck... hindered the crew from managing the aircraft and the emergency situation," it said. "

Shortly after takeoff, the crew lost control of an attempted emergency landing because of their **"inability to view flight instruments,"** it said, leading to the crash in which the two crew members were killed.

"The captain experienced **problems with the supply of oxygen to the oxygen mask** which required the captain to leave his position on the flight deck," the report said.

"To date the investigation has identified several areas to pursue in relation to identifying the root cause, the associated causal factors and the probable cause of this accident," it said.

The United Parcel Service Boeing 747-400 caught fire shortly after takeoff from Dubai on September 3 and crashed.



US federal aviation authorities in September said lithium batteries carried on the aircraft may have played a role in the crash, while UAE investigators ruled out an onboard explosion that could be linked to a terror attack.

The GCAA has said "investigations carried out after recovery of all the information in the two black boxes showed that there was no evidence, either from conversations or data, of an explosion on board the airplane."

## **Flight-Deck Basics is also Ramp Basics**

The Do's of flight-deck safety:



1. Know your limits. **Fatigue** is deadly
2. Wear a **complete and proper** flight-deck uniform when working on the flight. This includes safety vests, appropriate footwear, gloves and ear protectors.
3. Be **FOD-free**
4. Always enter the flight deck from the island.
5. Keep your head on **a swivel**.
6. Watch out for your **shipmates**
7. Know the **location** of the nearest firefighting equipment.
8. Know how to **operate** firefighting equipment.
9. Know aircraft **danger areas**.
10. Stay **alert**.

## **FAA proposes \$550,000 civil penalty against Executive Airlines**

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration is proposing a \$550,000 civil penalty against Executive Airlines, Inc., of San Juan, P.R., for allegedly operating two ATR-72 twin turboprop planes when they **were not in compliance** with Federal Aviation Regulations.



The FAA alleges Executive Airlines, a subsidiary of AMR Corporation, [failed to complete required periodic, time-specific inspections](#) of the aileron control systems of two aircraft, as ordered by an FAA Airworthiness Directive. Compliance with those directives is mandatory. The FAA alleges that Executive Airlines operated the two aircraft when they were not in compliance with regulations on at least 35 revenue flights between June 13 and June 19, 2009, because the airline [exceeded the mandated](#) number of flight hours for a re-inspection.



Executive Airlines has 30 days from the receipt of the FAA's enforcement letter to respond to the agency.

## [FAA Mandates Controller Wake-Up Calls](#)

Reacting to the recent incident at Reagan National Airport when a sleeping controller supervisor failed to respond to radio calls from two airplane crews late at night, FAA Administrator Randy Babbitt has [announced](#) an "interim plan" that he says will ensure it won't happen again. The plan requires controllers at radar facilities to [contact towers where a single controller covers the overnight shift to confirm they are ready when an incoming flight is approaching](#). Babbitt also a nationwide review of the ATC system to ensure that appropriate backup procedures are being used. "I am determined to make sure we do not repeat this unacceptable event," Babbitt said.



Babbitt formerly said he was "personally outraged" by the controller's [failure to respond](#). The NTSB said the controller, who was a supervisor, admitted to having fallen asleep while working his fourth consecutive overnight shift (10 p.m. to 6 a.m.). Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood asked for a study of staffing levels at other airports around the country.

# CALLBACK

From NASA's Aviation Safety Reporting System



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## Sound Advice - Listen to the Little Voice

ASRS report narratives frequently contain references to a "little voice" that offers timely advice. The voice, of course, resides within the mind of the reporter and is usually the voice of experience or sometimes just the "vocalization" of a gut feeling. While it is possible to get through some situations despite what a little voice is telling us, the following reports show that the voice usually has something important to say.



### **"The Little Voice in the Back of My Head Started Getting Louder"**

An Air Traffic Controller missed a potentially critical altitude error, but was set straight by a little voice that grew loud enough to get some attention.

The pilot of aircraft X had requested direct to the ABCDE fix for the RNAV (GPS) RWY 31 approach with the intent of [making] two turns in the holding pattern then a touch-and-go and on to ZZZ. When I assumed the sector, the aircraft was already [proceeding] direct and descending to 8,000 feet. In the chart book for the low sector, the ILS 31 and the GPS 31 plates face each other and both use [a common fix] as part of the approach. On the ILS it is the IAF (Initial Approach Fix); on the GPS it is the point after the IAF. The MVA (Minimum Vectoring Altitude) in the sector as a whole is 3,000 feet, with some areas higher due to antennas. One such higher area is located southeast of the airport just beyond ABCDE, with an MVA of 3,600 feet. After a [quick glance at the chart](#) (where I might have viewed the ILS plan view [by mistake](#)), I cleared the flight to maintain 3,000 feet until ABCDE.

As the flight progressed toward the fix, the [little voice in the back of my head](#) started getting louder. Just how can the holding pattern at ABCDE (which is to the southeast) be at 3,000 feet when there is an antenna there? I picked up the approach plates and [immediately identified my error](#). The aircraft was climbed to 3,600 feet with an apology and an explanation. [The pilot admitted to missing the altitude error as well](#). The aircraft climbed in time to fly the pattern at the published altitude, but it was much closer than I would have liked.

The reporter went on to explain how [fatigue and scheduling factors may have influenced this incident](#). These are two concerns that have been the subject of continuing study by industry and the FAA. Staying alert to the little voice in the back of our heads is one step in offsetting the effects of fatigue and work overload while more comprehensive solutions are addressed.

## [Air Force Pilot Gives Up Wings After Flyover](#)

It was Nov. 20 at the University of Iowa and a pre-game flyover to remember, in part because it was flown at nearly [400 knots and cleared the football stadium's press box by about 16 feet](#), according to FAA radar records. The four T-38 Talon jets were led by Major Christopher Kopacek, previously of the 25th Flying Squadron. In exchange for his cooperation in a legal agreement with the Air Force, Kopacek bypassed a court-martial and received non-judicial punishment. He also submitted a request to give up his wings (an action still pending) and depart the Air Force -- a decision he apparently made prior to the flyover.



Kopacek was planning to leave the Air Force shortly after the flyover, the [Air Force Times](#) reported. The flyover actually delayed his departure and also cost him two months' pay. The military found that the Major's flight violated Articles 92 and 107B of the Uniform Code of Military justice. Basically, Kopacek was faulted for exceeding appropriate speeds, both when practicing the maneuver and during the flyover itself. He flew within 1,000 feet of the structure, did not report the flight deviations to a superior or provide a written account within 24 hours, and then [made a false statement to investigators](#), according to an official release from Vance Air Force Base. The findings were supported by radar records solicited from the FAA. Some action was taken against all members involved in the flight.