Preparing for Unexpected Aircraft Incidents

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Experiencing a plane crash or emergency landing is probably every air traveler's worst nightmare. But after the traveler's are whisked away to the relative safety and comfort of an airport lounge, airport firefighters must continue to deal with the physical dangers of the incident.

Most emergency and crash landings you learn about on the news usually occur at or near airports because pilots are trained to divert to the nearest airport when problems occur. However, the location of such an event is unpredictable, so while airport firefighters have a higher probability of dealing with aircraft fires and forced landings, there's always a chance for firefighters outside of that specialty to encounter them as well. While the odds are small that a rural fire brigade will ever get called out to fight a fire from a downed plane in the woods (for example), it never hurts to receive some training for any eventuality. Having to deal with an aircraft fire might be easier if you have an understanding of cabin layout, fuel volatility, and the best procedures to follow at such an incident. As the saying goes, "It's better to have it and not need it, than need it and not have it."

* As a special note: Grace Wilson, the Curriculum Development Specialist is currently recruiting members for the ARFF ad hoc committee. The application can be found in the "Additional Resources" section of this newsletter and more information can be found on the home page of the agency’s website.

Training Videos

A.I.R. - AVIATION INCIDENT RE-SPONSIBILITY: CRASH RESCUE MANAGEMENT AV06-2413 Date Acquired: 6/1/2010 Length: 50:10 Format: DVD Author: AMERICAN HEAT via FETN In this course, we highlight two departments who discovered the realities of crash rescue management (CRM). Exactly one month after September 11, 2001, New York City was hit with another aircraft tragedy. A passenger jet crashed into a Queens neighborhood, destroying homes and taking lives. This course presents firsthand accounts from FDNY firefighters about the operational and emotional challenges they faced throughout this incident. We also visit the Charlotte (NC) Fire Department and learn from their experience in responding to the plane crash incident at the Charlotte-Douglas Airport on January 7, 2003. (c2008)

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY FOR FIRE SUPPRESSION IN AIRCRAFT: THE FIRM REPORT AV08-2239 Date Acquired: 3/18/2008 Length: 4:00:00 Format: CD Author: NIST This two CD set on fire suppression in aircraft is published by NIST. The first CD contains the Final Report. Topics covered include: history of fire suppression in aircraft, flame suppression chemistry, search for new fire suppressant chemicals, fluid dispensing and dispersion, and life cycle costing of fire suppression systems. The second CD contains an extensive bibliography of fire suppression technology publications that link to full text articles. Topics covered are: new flame suppression chemistry, suppressant screening tests, new and improved aerosol suppressants, improved suppressant delivery, viability of new suppression technologies, and improved fuel tank inertion. (June 2007)

EMERGENCY AIRCRAFT EVACUATION AV04-1633 Date Acquired: 3/2/2004 Length: 30:00 Format: VHS Author: FETN One of the primary definitions of rescue operations for airport firefighters is to maintain ahabitable environment around the fuselage and to assist with aircraft evacuation by stabilizing slide chutes and controlling the evacuees. ARFF personnel shall become familiar with the requirements of section 7 on emergency aircraft evacuation, in the F.A.A.'s requirements for certificated ports, Part 139.319.

AIRCRAFT RESCUE AND FIRE FIGHTING INC. Copy 2, Copy 3 AV12-2586 Date Acquired: 3/6/2012 Length: 1:34:39 Format: DVD Author: FAA The FAA Office of Airport Safety and Standards has developed a new training DVD entitled “Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting - Aircraft Forcible Entry: Fire Fighting with the HRET, Cargo Aircraft Fire Fighting” to supplement your initial and recurrent ARFF curriculum. It covers the following topics: Aircraft forcible entry; Fire fighting with the HRET; Cargo aircraft fire fighting. (c2010) copy 1

AIRCRAFT RESCUE AND FIRE FIGHTING, INC. Copy 2, Copy 3 AV12-2583 Date Acquired: 3/6/2012 Length: 1:42:21 Format: DVD Author: FAA This new training DVD has been designed to be incorporated into your initial and annual recurrent ARFF training program and to supplement your site specific training. It covers the following topics: Airport familiarization; Aircraft familiarization; Rescue and firefighting personnel safety; Airport emergency communications systems; Firefighting equipment; Fire extinguishing agents; Emergency aircraft evacuation assistance; Fire fighting operations; and Using the DOT emergency response guide. (c2010)