VIRGINIA FLIGHT SCHOOL SAFETY ARTICLE – NO 12/08

ACTIONS AT THE SCENE OF AN AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

The airticle hereunder pertains specifically to general aviation aircraft. It offers some useful tips and 1ST Aid hints.

We can use the pyramid of seven "GETS" as a guideline or checklist for our survival after an accident

1. ***Get Out.*** Get all occupants out of the aircraft as soon as possible – a fire could be imminent. Grab the first aid kit and signalling strips.

2. ***Get Safe.*** Gather all occupants at least 50 meters away from the aircraft. Stay together.

3. ***Get Treatment.*** Know the contents of the first aid kit and follow the instructions in the first aid booklet in the kit to treat injuries.

4. ***Get Shelter.*** After injuries have been assessed and treated protect yourself from the elements.

5. ***Get Water***. Limit movement and protect from to elements to prevent dehydration. Take in Fluids.

6. ***Get Seen.*** Know how to use signalling devices carried in the plane. Place signal strips in clearly visible open ground.

7. ***Get Home.*** No one survives an accident uninjured. Even if you have no physical injuries there will be emotional trauma. Be prepared for this and seek help in the time after the accident. Organisations have a direct responsibility in this regard.

ASSESSING AND TREATING INJURIES

TRIAGE

Triage is a French word meaning "screening" and is associated with the prioritising of medical care in the field. We should all know the basics of Triage so that whoever is most able can prioritise the medical care required by victims at an accident scene.

CATEGORISING CARE REQUIRED

There are three basic categories of care :

- Immediate – Life Threatening
- Later – Broken bones and lacerations
- Last – All other things

HOW DO YOU CATEGORISE?

The easiest tool to use for the layman is LOC – Level Of Consciousness:

1. Alert and orientated to time and place

2. Only responds to voice

3. Only responds to pain

4. No response

A person with no response requires attention first and the person who is alert to time and place will be "last" in line for attention. Bear in mind that this is only a guideline for the layman.

ASSESSING INJURIES

Begin with the basics :

1. A = Airway – closed or compromised
   B = Breathing – regular or laboured
   C = Circulation – heartbeat

2. Presume spinal injuries – keep the person as still as possible.

3. Bleeding – detect and stop.
4. When the above has been attended to sort fractures, lacerations, etc.

BASIC TECHNIQUES

- Keep head aligned with body midline.
- Start at top of head and work down body using both hands.
- Look for blood. If blood is found, expose the area where possible. Treat as per 1st aid book.
- Do not worry about fractures and minor lacerations at this stage.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

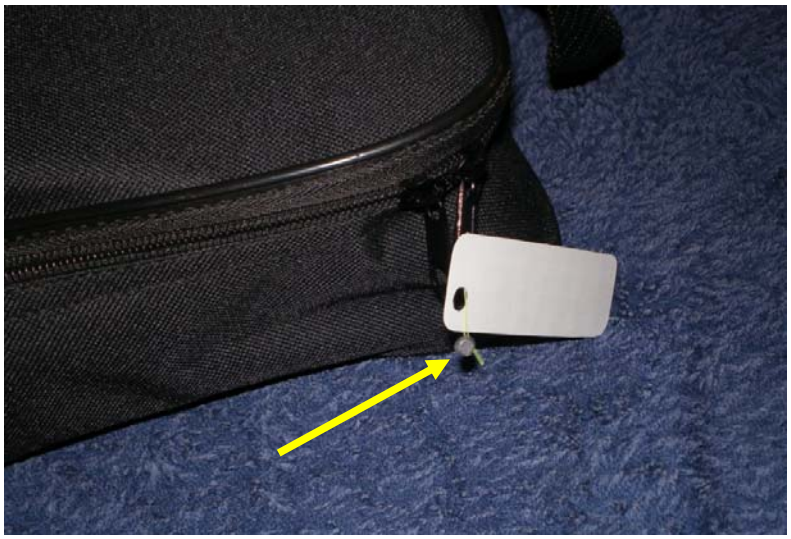
KNOWLEDGE

EQUIPMENT

1ST AI KIT

Check that the kit is in the aircraft and check the expiry date during the pre-flight.

Check that the seal is not broken.



Check expiry date.

1ST AID KIT CONTENTS

1. Medical Adhesive Tape
2. CPR Mouthpiece
3. Paracetamol Tabs
4. Nausea Tabs
5. Disposable Gloves
6. Safety Pins
7. Tweezers
8. Eye Pad
9. Ear Buds
10. Scissors
11. Cotton Swabs
12. Burn Dressing/Gel
13. Emergency Blanket
14. Swabs
15. Antiseptic Lotion
16. Bandages
17. Plaster Strips
18. Cleansing Wipes
19. Mercurochrome
20. 1ST Aid Book

GET SEEN – SIGNALLING STRIP CODE

GROUND/AIR VISUAL SIGNAL CODE

Nr	*Message*	*Code Symbol*	*Instructions for Use*
1	Require Assistance	V	a) Make signals as large as possible
2	Require Medical Assistance	X	b) Lay out signals exactly as shown
3	No or Negative	N	c) Provide as much colour contrast between signals and background
4	Yes or Affirmative	Y	
5	Proceeding in this Direction	➡, etc	d) Make every effort to attract attention by other means such as radio, smoke, reflected light, etc