



# Sacramento County Sheriff's Air Squadron Newsletter

SERVING THE SACRAMENTO COUNTY SHERIFF SINCE 1941

THIS MONTH'S MEETING

## 79<sup>th</sup> Change of Command:

### Chief Deputy Donelli swears in new officers and member

Aviators Restaurant was the scene for last month's Change of Command dinner. New 2025-26 Squadron officers were sworn in and our latest new member, Kyriakos Tsakopoulos (KT) was officially added to our roster.

banquet which benefited Flights to Freedom.

Chief Deputy Dan Donelli updated our group on SSO 2025 goals and recent purchase of a replacement fixed wing aircraft.



Ken Lux, John Mitchell and Lisa Keenly added their signatures to an 80<sup>th</sup> Squadron Anniversary poster which will be presented to Sheriff Cooper. The graphic celebrates December 2024's



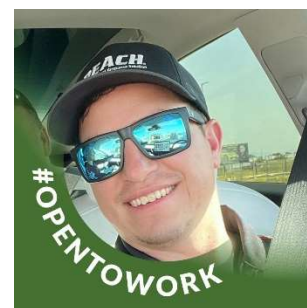
2025 Board members include: Dale Terry, Commander; Andrew Bates, Vice Commander; Ron Lamb, Secretary; Kevin Phillips, Treasurer; Shawn Britton, Past Commander; and Ken Lux, At Large Member and Flights to Freedom Liaison.

### Air Ambulance Services Market Trends

Hunter Jefferson, CFII

KSAC Squadron Headquarters

February 19<sup>th</sup> 5:30 pm



What's it like to be an air ambulance pilot? Hunter Jefferson knows the answer first hand after years as a helicopter pilot with Reach Air Medical Services.

Technological advancements and product innovations are changing the world of air ambulance work.

Global air ambulance services market was \$7 billion in 2024 – and growing.

# Commander's Column:



## 2025 Launches in high gear

Our 2025 schedule of activities and meetings looks terrific.

We kick off this month with a timely presentation by **Hunter Jefferson**. Air ambulance services are changing – developing technologies such as synthetic vision, satellite communications and self-learning AI algorithms all can reduce pilot workload. Hunter sees all this happening NOW at his company. And look out – eVTOL platforms are also on the way. It should be a great talk by Hunter.

In March we will join up with **Tom Dwelle**, Flyers Energy business founder, Air Force fighter pilot, Reno Air Race pilot and promoter of aviation at Auburn Airport. Tom recently sold Flyers for \$1 billion. In his Air Force days his aircraft, at times, carried nuclear weapons. Tom has some thrilling tales to tell.

We are working on a behind-the-scenes tour at the Sacramento County Courthouse to better understand the role of SSO in protecting the public, courtroom participants and judges. We will also take a tour of Sacramento's new courthouse scheduled to open later this year.

We have scheduled an open-cockpit-day at Castle Air Museum. This fly-out offers a peak into the past of advanced aerospace technologies. We will see a VC-9 Presidential Aircraft along with an outstanding collection of military aircraft.

A visit to the CHP Academy and a briefing on CSI work at Folsom PD are also coming up this year.

There will be activities for everyone!

## A great leadership team

I am looking forward to working with **Andrew Bates**, Vice Commander. Andrew will be heading up our Technology Committee which has already begun work on a new Squadron website incorporating electronic membership directory, electronic newsletters and galleries for member photos.

**Kevin Phillips**, our Treasurer, carefully manages our funds and coordinates our scholarship investments.

**Ron Lamb**, our Secretary, keeps our non-profit status with the State of California current. He updates our bylaws as needed and manages our elections.



**Shawn Britton** heads up our Scholarship program and is working on the debut of the program at California Capital Airshow, Mather Airport happening in March.



Looking forward to 2025.

**Dale Terry, Commander**

P.S. Thanks to Tim Pickney for photos at our Change of Command dinner.



## More Change of Command Photos



## Safety brief:

# The sterile cockpit



By Hunter Jefferson, CFII

I remember as a CFI there were plenty of ways to distract students.

Simply dropping your pencil or averting their attention outside to pull a circuit breaker to simulate a warning light was an easy way to distract them in practicing emergency procedures.

Often it would take students multiple minutes or longer to see a warning light on the dashboard.

Distractions come in all forms, and no one is completely immune to them. In fact, according to the General Aviation Joint Steering Committee, general aviation pilots are one of the most at risks groups because they do not have additional flight crew members to assist them.

I think most pilots have heard about the infamous December 1972 Eastern Airlines L- 1011 crash when the crew members became so preoccupied with the landing gear light malfunction that they failed to notice that someone disconnected the autopilot, resulting in the plane contacting the ground, killing all onboard.



So, what are some ways to reduce the risk?

- ✓ Know that you have control over some risks, but not all.
- ✓ When performing checklists, do this during periods of minimal disruption.
- ✓ Use the FAA's "sterile cockpit" rule and make sure passengers are aware of this lingo.
- ✓ Keep communications Clear, Bold, and Concise.

A few steps to follow when noticing an abnormal distraction:

- ✓ Recognize and identify the risk
- ✓ Re-establish situational awareness by identifying what you were doing and where you were in the process when you were distracted

✓ Determine the action you need to take to get back on track. If all else fails, remember: Aviate, Navigate, Communicate.

Distractions can come from a variety of sources, ranging from passengers talking loudly to trying to figure out how to use your favorite electronic flight bag app.

"Sterile cockpit" is a term used most by airline pilots and refers to a rule that prohibits non-pertinent conversation below 10,000 ft.

In the world of GA, a good rule of thumb is to maintain sterile cockpit at 2,000 ft. AGL for local flight and 5,000 ft. AGL for flight outside the vicinity of your local airport.

You can set your own sterile cockpit minimums at the level you feel comfortable with – the key here is to inform your passengers of your sterile cockpit rule during passenger briefing.

It takes hours to carefully plan a cross-country flight. We hope everything goes according to plan. But be prepared to handle abnormal conditions. Don't let your focus drift away from flying the airplane.



# The Sterile Cockpit