

## Setting the Right Example

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### ***Do you fly safely....even when you think nobody is watching?***

You've heard it at almost every check ride – your pilot's license is merely a "license to learn". But learn what? Learn to be a better stick, a better decision-maker, a better crewmember, or to be a more professional pilot in all aviation activities, regardless of your rating as a private or commercial pilot? The answer is yes to all.

#### **Somebody is always watching....**

So just how does one become the best professional pilot and the best representative of the helicopter pilot community that you can be? By following the best practices of the experts in our industry! Remember that someone is always watching you fly. Part of being a professional is abiding by a code of conduct. A code of conduct is a set of standards of behaviors and practices; guidance for the expected professional behavior of an industry or organization.

#### **Code of Conduct...**

Did you know that we helicopter pilots have a code of conduct? In July 2013, the Helicopter Pilot's Model Code of Conduct was released as part of the aviator's code of conduct project, which began over 10 years ago. Take a look at [www.ushst.org/nbspnbspCodeofConduct.aspx](http://www.ushst.org/nbspnbspCodeofConduct.aspx).



Developed by a group of industry experts, the HMCC sets out recommendations intended to advance helicopter safety, airmanship and professionalism. It also encourages the aviation community to adopt it and to commit to the highest principles of aviation safety.

#### **Expectations....**

As pilots we are all responsible for consistently demonstrating a professional example while at the controls of an aircraft. This is the expectation of the public, our passengers and clients and most especially for each other.

The helicopter pilot community is a small community. As such, our actions can reflect upon the entire aviation community.



#### **Social Media....**

Social media plays a huge part in forming the public's perception of the professionalism of helicopter operations. By promoting unsafe flying and not following correct procedures, we risk setting an unsafe example and possibly unintentionally endangering lives. We also are harming the overall view of the helicopter industry – at a time when there is much scrutiny and concern over the number of helicopter accidents/fatalities.

## Joey Rotorhead....

Take a look at our fictional pilot, Joey Rotorhead. With over 10,000 hours, he's seen a lot of flight time. At his home base he's kind of a hero.

Every time he comes in to land there he flies in low and fast, with a spectacular quick stop thrown in at the end before he sets his helicopter down right next to the hangar door so his maintenance crew doesn't have to move the helicopter too far to bring it in for the night.

Other helicopter pilots around town want to be just like him and they start doing this same high-speed approach to landing.



## Joey Junior....

One day, a young pilot named Joey Junior is in the middle of his high speed quick stop landing, misjudges the wind and crashes into the hangar door. As he's carried off in the ambulance he's heard to say that there must have been something wrong with the helicopter because



Joey Rotorhead never had that problem so it couldn't be the flying technique that caused the crash. There was something wrong in this scenario but it wasn't the helicopter, it was pilot judgment: Joey Rotorhead's judgment for not

realizing the impact of his actions on other pilots, like Joey Junior.

The next time you consider flying "just a little lower" or showing off with a wild maneuver in your helicopter, stop and consider whether your conduct is that of a professional.

Actions and unforgiving words are often contradictory when uttered by certain personality types. If you ever hear a helicopter pilot say the words "**Hey, watch this**"....BRACE, or at least reject the offer by saying "**no thanks**". Stupid pilot tricks can rob passengers and crew members of fun and safety. During your next mission, or training event, be extremely conscious of what other pilots and instructors are saying or suggesting. Sometimes their words can yield unforgiving circumstances!



Every year, helicopter pilots with all levels of experience try to defy the laws of gravity by trying to impress others with crazy pilot stunts. Accidents can be avoided if the pilots remember to use some common sense. Unfortunately, what constitutes as common sense for some may not constitute so easily in others. From the beginning, flight instructors should set the right example. Treat the helicopter and passengers with the utmost respect; be cognizant of your student's own limits, and absolutely no showboating or death defying stunts!" Remember, silly tricks are for kids. Pilots already defy gravity....isn't that tricky enough?

If every helicopter pilot strictly adheres to the Helicopter Pilot's Model Code of Conduct the helicopter industry will realize an exponential reduction in accidents. And most importantly, lives will be saved.

*This document is a peer reviewed publication by an expert panel of the IHST Implementation Team. More information about the IHST, its reports, its safety tools, and presentations can be obtained at its web site: ([www.IHST.org](http://www.IHST.org)) or at ([www.USHST.org](http://www.USHST.org)). Or download the App from the Apple or Google Store.*

