



Interagency Aviation Lessons Learned



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Subject: Haste Makes Waste

Area of Concern: All Aviation Operations

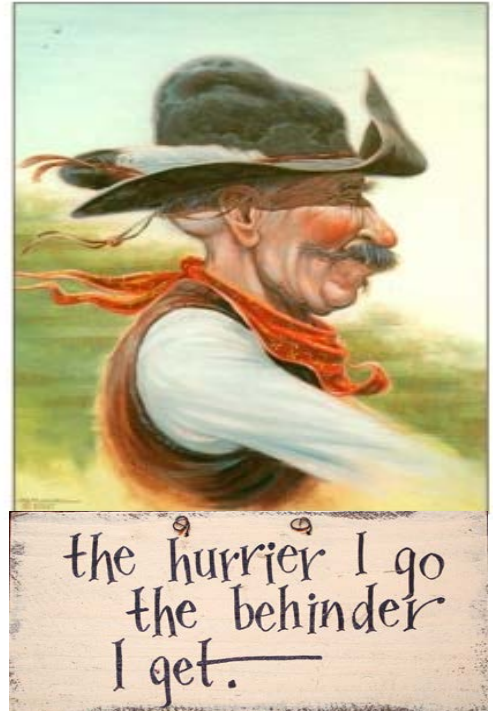
Distribution: All Aviation Personnel

Discussion: Last year, a pilot in a floatplane was attempting to takeoff from a lake with a 12-15 knot tailwind. The mission was to pick up four passengers and their equipment at a field location and transport them back to their home base.

The day started with an unexpected lengthy delay in the morning which affected the schedule for the rest of the day. In an effort to make up that lost time, the pilot elected to takeoff with a tailwind instead of taking a few extra minutes to position himself for taking off in to the wind.

Taking off in a floatplane with a tailwind can be challenging, especially with a strong tailwind. As such, when the aircraft started to veer left, the pilot reduced the power to idle, applied full right rudder and full left aileron in an attempt to regain control. Fortunately, the pilot was able regain control of the aircraft, repositioned, and took off into the wind (a great use of the learning curve).

All would have been fine except that the right wingtip and aileron impacted the water during the first takeoff attempt. After the pilot landed to pick up the passengers, he looked over the aircraft but was unable to see the damaged wingtip or aileron due to his inability to walk out beyond the floats. When he got back to his home base, he was notified that someone else observed his aborted takeoff and indicated that the wingtip contacted the water. A more thorough post flight of the aircraft revealed the damage.



Lessons Learned: When you find yourself in a hurry, take time to stop and re-evaluate the situation. Time pressures (either perceived or real) often impairs our ability to exercise sound judgment or fully understand the situation.

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