T-Craft Aero Club

January 2013

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"OUT OF THE INVERSION" - A REVIEW OF KMAN AIRSPACE RULES

Safety - Membership Director

As I write this on January 27th, it is the first day since January 15th (or possibly earlier) since we have had **VMC** weather at KMAN, and the valley. Looking back through the history log for the KMAN ASOS on NOAA (it reports every 15 minutes), it's been mostly **LIMC**, **IMC**, with a few hours of **MVMC** interspersed. During this period, I've been asked by a few members on what the regulations are for VFR operations considering fog and the inversion. This discussion can also apply when we get into periods of smoke, like we saw last summer. Here are my thoughts on the subject. In the following discussions, I'm not advocating skirting on the boundaries of the regulations. I'm discussing some of the questions I've been asked and attempting to clarify some of the regulations.

Definitions: As published in AC-00-45G – Aviation Circular on Aviation Services published by NOAA and the FAA, these definitions are used by various weather products to depict (usually by color coding) weather conditions at airports with reporting stations. These are not to be confused with Air Space regulations for Basic VFR minimums for visibility and cloud clearance.

LIMC - Low Instrument Meteorological Conditions. Visibility less than 1 mile and/or ceilings less than 500'

IMC - Instrument Meteorological Conditions. Visibility less than 3 miles and/or ceilings less than 1,000'

MVMC - Marginal VMC. Visibility between 3 and 5 miles and/or Ceilings between 1,000' and 3,000'

VMC - Visual Meteorological Conditions. Visibility greater than 5 miles and/or ceilings greater than 3.000'.

What are the basic VFR regulations for KMAN?

...Continued

Nampa / Caldwell and surrounding area lies under Class E controlled airspace where the floor of Class E is 700' above the surface.(inside the wide magenta lines on the sectional chart). Below that 700' floor is Class G.

A quick review of FAR 91.155 tells us, you can fly with 1 SM visibility and clear of the clouds in Class G., daytime below 1,200'.

At 700' AGL you are in class E airspace where the rules are 3 miles visibility, 500' below, 1,000' above, 2000' horizontal from the clouds.

Not only do we have to worry about visibility and cloud clearances, we are also responsible for our own separation between other aircraft, obstacles and 1,000' minimum safe altitudes over a congested area of city, town or settlements.

So, for all practical purposes, except in a few isolated cases, the class G airspace does not help us if we want to stay VFR. You should be at or above 1,000' AGL for pattern work, or traveling anywhere away from the airport to meet the safe minimum altitude regulation. At 1,000' AGL, we're in class E airspace with a minimum visibility of 3 SM and ceiling minimum at 1,500' (1,000' +500 below clouds) for pattern work, or higher ceilings if we want to climb to go anywhere.

With the new ASOS at Nampa, it's no longer the PIC's judgment of surface visibility and ceilings; we have an instrument reporting and recording these conditions. However, you may have experienced at times the reported visibility and ceilings don't seem correct, and can be erroneous due to the localized sensing area of the ASOS instrument. It may be reporting a 300' ceiling, when one can clearly see there may be a fog bank over the instrument and clear sky's all around. In most cases however, the readings are accurate. Once we're in the air, it is our judgment as to cloud clearance and visibility. This is difficult to judge in marginal conditions.

There have been periods in the past several days where ASOS is reporting visibility below 3mi, but clear sky. Can one launch in class G greater than 1 mile visibility in the fog/haze and then get through the crud with the hope that the visibility improves to at least 3 SM before entering class E at 700'? It may be possible and within regulations in some circumstances, but why push it to the limit. Flying around with 1 mile visibility, even when you can see the ground is not very comfortable or wise.

If you're able to get off in MVFR, take into consideration the changing conditions. You might not be able to get back down. In reviewing the ASOS reports, the conditions have gone from MVFR to IFR and flip flopped back and fourth several times in a few hours' period, and in many cases going to LIFR. I think only instrument rated pilots should be messing around in these conditions. Why instrument rated? Because the 3 to 5 miles in fog, can, with a small temperature or wind shift, become something way less than a mile, and without an instrument rating you are going to have to declare an emergency, and try to get down the best you can, if you can!

What about Special VFR? SVFR will allow an aircraft to depart or arrive at an airport that is technically IFR (below 1000' and 3), down to 1 mile visibility, clear of clouds in the day time. Can we use SVFR to get out of or into KMAN when ASOS is reporting below VFR minimums?

NO. In our area this is only available in the BOI class C surface area and the class E extensions that adjoin the C surface area of BOI. One must request SVFR from ATC. SVFR may be an option if you're returning and the weather shuts down at KMAN, you could get into BOI providing they are above SVFR minimums.

Aside from the rules and regulations, you need to ask yourself what you're comfortable with. Do you really feel safe with 3 mi visibility? Maybe you can see the ground if you're in smoke or fog/haze, but what about other aircraft and obstacles. If in doubt, error on the conservative side.

Bill McGlynn reminded me of this old axiom - I would much rather be sitting down here wishing I could be up there, than sitting up there wishing I could be down here.

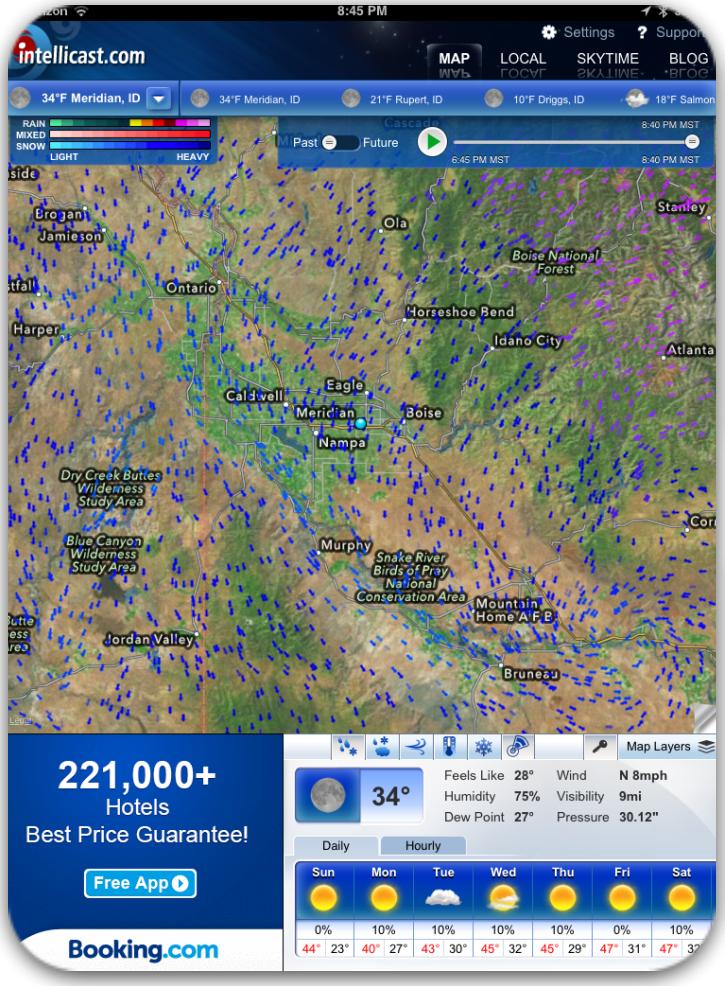
Fly Smart, Fly Safe, Have Fun,
AND Don't do anything Stupid
Jim Hudson

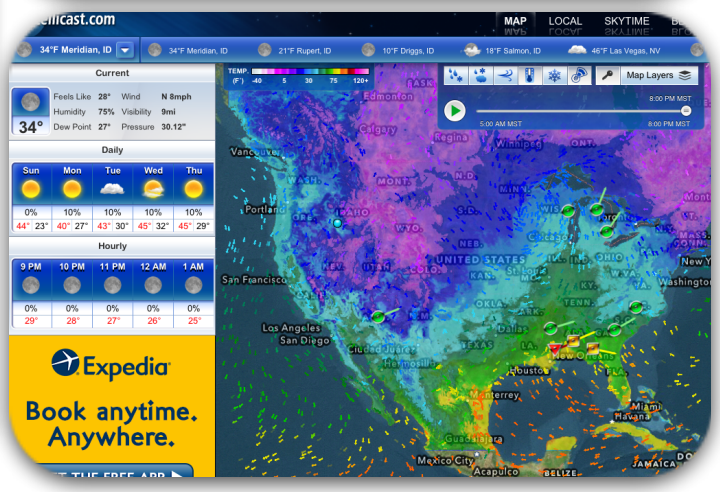
Check out this related accident case study from AOPA http://www.aopa.org/asf/acs/acs_intoodeep/.

Membership

Our Membership count is currently at 70

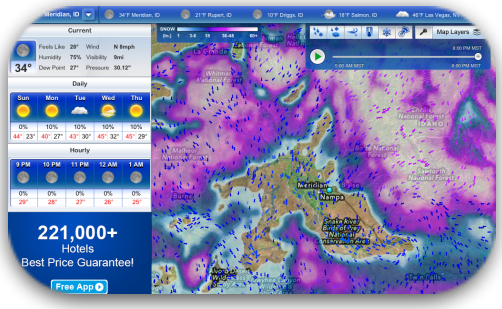
- Sponsor a new member and receive 1 hour of flight credit (C152)

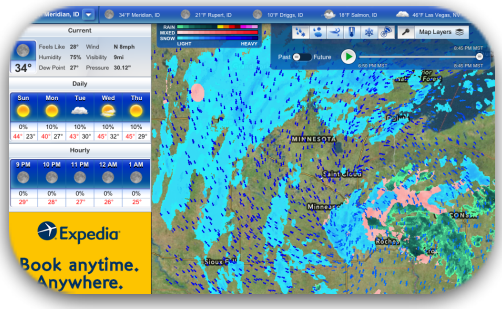


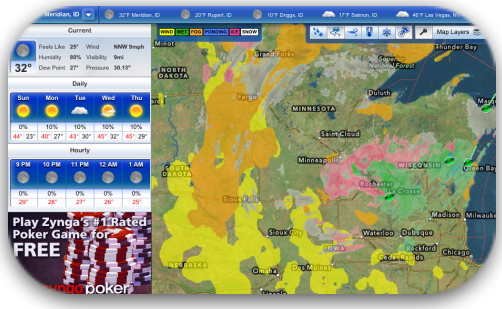


Some screen shots of Intellicast HD showing surface wind animation

This is a great app for viewing general weather patterns. The settings allow overlays of Radar, Clouds, Temps, Snow Cover, etc.

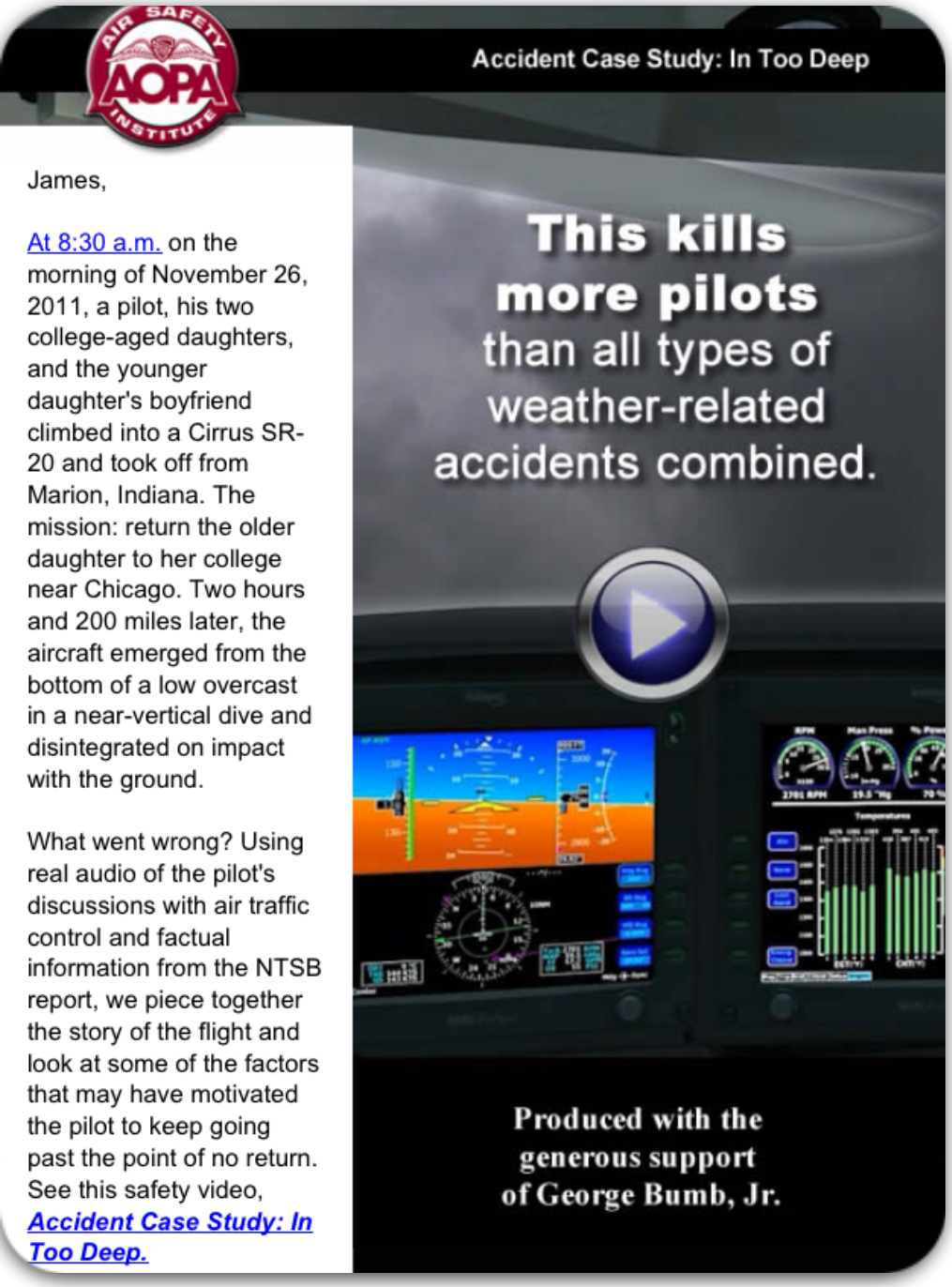






The airplane has unveiled for us the true face of the earth.

– Antoine de Saint-Exupe'ry, 'Wind, Sand, and Stars,' 1939



James,

At 8:30 a.m. on the morning of November 26, 2011, a pilot, his two college-aged daughters, and the younger daughter's boyfriend climbed into a Cirrus SR-20 and took off from Marion, Indiana. The mission: return the older daughter to her college near Chicago. Two hours and 200 miles later, the aircraft emerged from the bottom of a low overcast in a near-vertical dive and disintegrated on impact with the ground.

What went wrong? Using real audio of the pilot's discussions with air traffic control and factual information from the NTSB report, we piece together the story of the flight and look at some of the factors that may have motivated the pilot to keep going past the point of no return. See this safety video, ***Accident Case Study: In Too Deep.***

See this link for the above article http://www.aopa.org/asf/acs/acs_intoodeep/

Club Meetings

- **Board Meeting**
  - February 12, 2013 7:00 PM
  - @ the T-Craft Hangar
- **Safety Meeting - Winter Survival**
  - February 21, 2013 7:00 PM
  - @ the T-Craft Hangar
- **General Membership Meeting**
  - February 26, 2013 7:00 PM
  - @ the EAA/CAP Facility

The Annual Membership meeting was held on January 29, 2013.

It was decided to hold the Monthly dues at the current rate of $70 per month. Hourly flying rates have gone down as much as $5 per hour on the 172s. See the new rates on the following page.

Elections were also held. The positions that were up for election were President, Secretary and Safety/Membership director. As the incumbents had no challengers there was a motion by Bert Osborn and seconded by Gordon Hall to have a voice vote to keep the current officers. The Vote was unanimous by those in attendance. As such the newly elected Board Member Remain as Follows:

President - Ben Brandt
Secretary - Dean Bake
Safety Direct. - Jim Hudson

Checkout the T-Craft Promotional Video at the link below.
http://youtu.be/fuXveuIRDck

Squawks/Status

Always check current squawks on Schedule Master and hangar wall

New Lower Rates!!!

N67375 - $57 per hour
From Feb 4 to March 29, 2013
Plane Grounded for New Engine Install

N13686 - $81 per hour
Ready To Fly

N4464R - $79 per hour
Ready To Fly

N1891X - $117 per hour
Lifters the cause of the Metal particles in oil filter. Repairs have been made & back on line.

N7593S - $121 per hour
Aircraft currently certified for VFR flight Only
HSI Squawked as not working.

ALL BIRDS

Floor Heaters are to be used continuously this winter. Please reinstall after your flight and verify operation along with putting the blanket over the Cowling. If OAT is below 30 F you could plug in oil pan heater while doing preflight.

HOWEVER - DO NOT LEAVE OIL PAN HEATER PLUGGED INTO AIRCRAFT AFTER YOUR FLIGHT

Brent & Laura Ross Headed to the MAACO Bowl in 93S Good Job Broncos!!!, Sorry Brent maybe next Season the Huskies will do better.

Fuel Reimbursement
$4.87

News Letter Contributions

Please send photos and your Flying Stories to db5477@gmail.com for inclusion on future issues.
Thanks