

# ***Elmendorf Aero Club***

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## **PIF 09 - 04**

### **Crew Resource Management CRM & Handling Emergencies**

**12 Mar 2009**

This Safety Gram talks about Captain Chesley B. “Sully” Sullenberger III. All pilots need to be ready to place themselves into the right state of mind when being confronted with emergency situations.

Captain Sullenbergers A320 Airbus experienced the loss of both engines as a result of bird strike almost immediately after takeoff. He could have done a number of things that could have resulted in catastrophe. What he did do was to stay calm, evaluate the aircraft and its flight capability, and choose a site to land. In this case the landing site was not the most favorable place to put a large aircraft down. It was however the best place to land and the safest to assure no collision with obstacles. Surrounded by city the plane touched down as if it was making a normal landing and all 150+ people on board survived this crash.

As aviators in the Alaska Theater, we need to be aware and understand that this event could happen to us. We have a very busy airspace in the area of Elmendorf not only with other airports and aircraft in close proximity, but also a large amount of bird migration during certain times of the year, as well as large land animals that could cross our paths.

Be ready, avoid if possible, remain calm, evaluate, and land safely as soon as practical.

Flight Safety

“Make It First, , , Make It Last”

**This PIF is to be in effect until 30 March 2010 or until  
contained dated material has expired**



## ***SAFETYGRAM***

### **FEB 09**

When I first saw Chesley B. “Sully” Sullenberger, III on TV I knew I recognized him. It was about 3 years ago when he sat next to me in the FAA/AOPA sponsored safety class entitled, “How to land the A320 in the Hudson River after flying through a flock of geese and losing both engines two minutes after takeoff.”

Okay, you all know there was no class, but that’s my point. Any of the simulated emergencies, the hangar flying discussions, or safety briefings, we take part in can truly prepare us for every particular situation. But, the more accident reports we study, the more likely we are to survive, or more importantly prevent, an accident. Sully himself has 19,000 hours, over 35 years of aviation training, and is an industry expert in piloting procedures, CRM, and emergency management (according to his resume). I’m not saying a minimum-hour, brand-new US Airways captain wouldn’t wind up in the same situation, but who would you rather have at the controls the moment the birds hit if you were a passenger?

Also, try to relate any accident report to your own situation. Sure it’s easy to say, “I just fly the T-41, I’ll never be over the Hudson with an A320 and 150 passengers.” But look closely and you can easily find actions that directly relate. I’ll name a few. First off, where did that aircraft touchdown in relation to the runway? If you notice, it was mostly straight ahead from where he hit the birds. He didn’t attempt to make the 180 degree turn back to the runway...a fatal decision listed in numerous safety reports. Secondly, he appeared to have landed the aircraft in a ‘normal’ touchdown attitude. Do you think the results would have been the same if he tried to ‘hold off’ the landing as long as possible causing a stall? How about a pre-mission and/or pre-departure safety brief? I have no doubt that he reviewed at least some basic expectations with his first officer and crew well before takeoff. Again, you may not have a crew when you fly, but if you’re solo, know what to do immediately following takeoff, and if you have passengers you should at least brief them on some basic expectations and actions should the need arise.

This also reminds of a phrase we pilots relate to airline flying....it’s hours and hours of boredom interrupted by moments of sheer terror.

**Fly Safe!**



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