

Missionary Aviation Repair Center

The Flight Plan

A Newsletter from Missionary Aviation Repair Center

Nov, Dec, 2008/Jan 2009

Pilot Report: Imagine an area 500 miles across covered with mountains, with broad river valleys and arctic plains in between them, and surrounded by the bearing sea and Pacific ocean. There are no roads in this area, and in the month of October this year it has been snow covered with temperatures right around zero degrees.

Even the names of the villages are witness to a different world and culture. Names like Kasigluk, Akia-chak, Kongiganak, Kwethluk, Quinhagak, Manakotak, and Kwigillingok. For those not familiar with the names, pronouncing them is enough to make you yell, "EEK!", which also happens to be one of the village names.

It is to these villages that aircraft maintained and operated by MARC have flown to the last two weeks, flying into and out of snow and ice covered gravel runways as short as 1649 feet long and 40 feet wide (the aircraft wings are 50 feet wide).

The flying was for the Alaskan Moravian Church to Manakotak for a spiritual revival meeting, and to Bethel for the Moravian pastor/leadership conference. As we boarded the aircraft to fly home, a Native Alaskan pastor, Dr. William Nichol森, said to one of the pilots, "thank you brother, this weekend was a wonderful blessing and many people came to know the Lord." Others expressed thanks for the opportunity to attend these events, expressing gratitude for being able to attend an event that they otherwise could not have attended if the ministry of MARC was not available for them to use. I heard an Alaskan pastor say once during an event that MARC flew for, "This flight was made possible because people you don't even know made it possible because they love you and want you to come to know the Lord."

That statement is for those of you reading this note who have supported the ministry of MARC over the years. Thank you for your love for the people of Alaska, even though they don't know you, some of them will be eternally grateful for all that you have done.

Bob Widman, Chief Pilot

Maintenance: The maintenance department has performed major work on 7 planes over the last 3 months. Much time and expense was spent on two of our own airplanes.

During one of our Navajo's annual inspections the pilot's windshield was found cracked and delaminated. A new windshield was purchased for over \$14,000. After delays with shipping and some manufacturing discrepancies, the windshield was installed and the aircraft returned to service.

The heating element in the King Air windshield also quit working and had to be replaced. Our supplier shipped the wrong windshield and we had to swap for the correct one. During this same time it was discovered that two fuel tanks and 4 fuel drains were leaking. The tank supplier warranted the tanks for which we give God the glory; however, all of the protective tape that covers the rivets and sharp edges had to be removed and replaced. This tedious process combined with the installation of the tanks and valves took over 120 man-hours to accomplish. The total cost of the repairs to the King Air was over \$20,000. While these costs cannot be predicted, they are normal, and the repairs are necessary to continue serving the missions and churches in Alaska.

The work continues as we are now in the middle of our normal winter operations, working on general public and missionaries airplanes, as well as finishing the repairs on another of our Navajo's, 65MR. With only two full time mechanics on staff we have had to get other staff members, and volunteers to aid in the repairs. God has been marvelous in allowing us to do so much in such a short amount of time. Currently we are trying to get the needed parts, one of which is an engine, to finish 65MR.

The maintenance we are performing now is being hindered by our lack of current manuals. New manuals are to be obtained to keep proper maintenance on the airplanes as they are revised. With the new digital age our normal means of staying current, microfiche, is being discontinued. We will have to purchase a new digital library at the beginning of the year to stay current. The biggest obstacle with this is the \$13,000 that is required to start the library. After it has been obtained it will cost less to keep up. These manuals are required to perform maintenance on our airplanes and others that we work on.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support.

Travis McCullough, Maintenance Manager

PRE FLIGHT PRAYER . . .

- Praise God for safe flying during the past three months
- Praise God for the in floor heating tubes where installed and the concrete floor was pored in the new addition
- Praise God for the use of Samaritans Purse airplanes to fulfill all the flight requests
- Praise God for being able to keep up with the maintenance on our airplanes
- Praise God for all of those who faithfully support the staff in prayer and financially
- Pray for the pilots as they deal with winter flight conditions
- Pray for our flying schedule in the next three months
- Pray for good health for the staff during the winter time

From the Director's Desk:

Thank you for your support in prayer and giving. These past few months have been a challenge to keep up with fuel costs especially out in western Alaska. We have experienced more flying hours than the previous year and in some areas our expenses have increased significantly.

Many work groups have been traveling out to work on pastors' housing. Also several flights have been made just hauling freight for the projects. Food also can be a problem, especially trying to take ice-cream 500 miles and keeping it from melting.

I praise God for seeing the addition progressing so well. In the near future we will be able to store the freight there rather than with our airplanes. Praise God for He is good and has met our needs just when needed.

Len Wikstrom



Missionary Aviation Repair Center

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