

2011 BLM Airwards



AIRWARD CITATION

Billy Shirley

Guardian Helicopter, Inc.

Making a Difference

It's always important to recognize those who support us quietly via consistent daily professionalism, dedication, and vigilance which often results in getting the job done in a safe and effective manner. Recognizing significant moments when disaster is skillfully averted occurs often and effortlessly however, it's imperative to provide similar recognition to those who successfully prevent such thrilling moments by their consistent performance throughout their career. Billy Shirley has distinguished himself as a consummate professional whose consistent performance is unsurpassed.

In the past six years Billy has supported the Department of the Interior as a mechanic with Guardian Helicopter to which he has earned a reputation of performing above and beyond his job description in order to make flying safer. Several professionals have noted his thoroughness and attention to detail that provides an additional level of safety which improves the Department's ability to perform its missions more effectively. Examples of his natural aptitude for this type of work include detecting a crack on a rear-stabilizer during a routine waxing and noticing an abnormal engine sound of another aircraft while performing other duties. Even more impressive is Billy's willingness to take the required action that invokes safety by making difficult decisions to remove an aircraft from availability despite the financial repercussions it imposes on his company. Billy has consistently demonstrated his commitment to safety by taking the time to ensure aircraft are truly airworthy and safe to fly.

Billy Shirley is committed to excellence by going the extra mile and ensuring the right repair is completed the first time which ultimately enhances everyone's safety. His efforts have won the admiration and respect of his co-workers.

Congratulations Billy on this fine achievement of persistent excellence. The Department of the Interior is proud to present you with this Airward. Keep up the good work!



L-R, Tom Sherman UAO, Billy Shirley Mechanic



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Charlie Miller
Queen Bee Air Specialties

The Importance of Communication

On July 19th Charlie Miller was on return flight to Hill AFB for a load and return to the Goose Nest fire near Salt Lake when he lost all radio communications in his SEAT aircraft while in Class B airspace.

Charlie maintained control of the aircraft and rapidly diagnosed the emergency while in complex airspace. He exhibited outstanding decision making by discontinuing his course through Class B airspace without radio communication and landing at Brigham (BMC) airport, just north of Salt Lake. After safely landing the aircraft, Charlie made all of the required notifications to the appropriate agencies.

Charlie continued to troubleshoot the malfunction in order to return the aircraft to service as soon as possible while minimizing the time lost supporting the fire suppression efforts. During his investigation of the aircraft systems, he discovered that the master breaker had tripped. Charlie then reset the breaker, started the airplane, and performed various systems checks to determine if the malfunction would reappear. After running the aircraft for a significant amount of time, he was unable to recreate the malfunction. Charlie wisely contacted a certified aircraft mechanic in which they decided the prudent decision was to replace the breaker with a new one. After replacing the breaker, the mechanic load tested the system again without any negative results. All electrical equipment was inspected for damage and the aircraft was placed back in service.

Charlie took a very proactive approach towards mishap prevention by submitting a SAFECOM in a timely fashion and conducting an After Action Review (AAR) with all contractors and Cedar City Air Center personnel. His open and honest candor allowed him to successfully communicate his thoughts, concerns, decision processes, and follow up procedures with the entire audience. Charlie's efforts contributed to aviation safety by dedicating the time and energy to document the events and communicate the lessons learned so that others would benefit.

SAFECOM 11-0679



L-R, Kirk Rothwell, NAO Safety & Training Advisor,
Charlie Miller, Pilot

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**Don Bell
Scott Dewitz**

Crew Resource Management in Action

On May 28, 2011 Don Bell and Scott Dewitz were dispatched as an ASM (Aerial Supervision Module) from Redmond, OR to a wildfire in Arizona. While en route, the aircraft's right engine experienced low oil pressure and high oil temperature that required them to shut the engine down in order to prevent damage to the engine and the aircraft ([SafeCom 11-0321](#)).

Don quickly assessed the situation and initiated a precautionary engine shut down, while selecting an appropriate landing site that avoided the nearby rising terrain. Both exhibited outstanding Crew Resource Management (CRM) as Scott assisted with communications, checklists, navigational charts and maps as Don notified Air Traffic Control of their situation and began a descent towards the airfield.

If matters weren't challenging enough, conditions required a single-engine descent through the clouds where they encountered icing and moderate turbulence. Don's superb piloting skills and Scott's professionalism as an aircrewman were keys to their successful single-engine instrument approach in actual Instrument Meteorological Conditions to Winnemucca, Nevada.

Don and Scott's exceptional flight preparation and consummate professionalism afforded a successful outcome to a challenging situation where the end result was anything but certain. Their application of CRM principles throughout the event serves as a prime example of how well a professional and prepared aircrew can operate under stressful circumstances.

Don and Scott's ability to work as a team along with their composure, skill, and professionalism are what every aircrew should strive for. Congratulations to a truly dynamic duo!



L-R. Mary Verry, USFS R6 Light Fixed Wing Program Mgr, Scott Dewitz, Don Bell, Kurt Kleiner OR/WA SAM