

VT-31



The saying, "If something doesn't look right, it probably isn't," applies in most situations, including training command aircraft in the pattern. While watching the airfield at Cabaniss Outlying Field, ACAA Nolan Rhodes saw something unusual. Reacting quickly, he informed his supervisor and the pilot and averted a potential disaster.

Lt. Brian Anderson and his student were doing touch-and-goes in their T-44A aircraft when ACAA Rhodes saw one of the two main-landing-gear tires leave the aircraft at liftoff. This problem would have gone unnoticed by the aircrew until they tried to land.

Lt. Anderson had enough fuel to orbit the airfield while he reviewed the T-44 NATOPS manual and consulted other instructors and maintenance personnel. He then made a gear-up landing, with no injuries to the crew.

ACAA Rhodes' attention to detail broke a chain of events that could have led to the loss of aircrew and aircraft. For his professionalism and personal initiative, ACAA Rhodes received the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal.

BRAVO Zulu

Sumo 17 departed Andersen AFB, Guam, en route to the Northwest Drop Zone. The KC-130 aircrew, assigned to VMGR-152, were to conduct static-line personnel drops with the Army's 1st Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne). The aircrew made one identification pass and set up for the first drop. They began the AD pass and completed the execution checklists. The aircraft slowed to 130 knots as the ramp and door were opened. Shortly after the one-minute warning, the overheat-warning light for the No. 4 turbine illuminated. The overheat-warning light and the No. 4 fire light for the No. 4 nacelle came on moments later. The loadmaster and flight mech were in the cargo compartment and visually confirmed smoke and flames from the No. 4 engine.

Only one minute until drop time, the aircraft was low and slow. The aircrew on the flight deck was focused completely on the drop zone and was navigating to the drop point. The jumpers were standing in the cargo compartment, preparing their

gear for the jump, and the aircrew in the cargo compartment was making their final preparations.

The aircraft commander called a "no drop," secured the No. 4 engine, and began a shallow left turn to maneuver over water. The loadmasters and the flight mech secured the jumpers in the cargo compartment and closed the ramp and door.

Although the engine was shut down, the fire light remained on. As the engine continued to smoke, one of the crewmembers discharged a fire bottle. Sumo 17 made a three-engine approach and landing, without incident, at Andersen AFB. The aircrew carried out an emergency ground egress.

The turbine had disintegrated. The blades had penetrated the turbine casing and had exited through the engine-nacelle panels. None of the broken blades made it to the cargo compartment. Outstanding crew coordination allowed this aircrew to handle a complicated emergency.



VMGR-152

Left to right: SSgt. Danny Day (LM), LCpl. Donald Bertsch (nav), Capt. Jon Petersen (CP), SSgt. Jeremy Nash (FE), Sgt. Michael Logan (FM), Capt. Lee Weiner (CP), Capt. Ralph Fleming (AC), Sgt. Michael Merit (LM). Cpl. Jeremy Caldwell (nav) is not pictured.