

The Night the World Turned Upside Down - Battling Spatial Disorientation

Spatial disorientation is causal in 8% of general aviation accidents, with 90% of those accidents resulting in a fatality. Flying poses unique challenges for the human body. Our sensory systems were designed for movement on the ground, not in a three-dimensional environment where visual cues can disappear in seconds. When the visual horizon is removed, the vestibular system and proprioceptive cues can create powerful—but false—sensations of pitch, bank, or rotation.

Fatigue, dehydration, poor nutrition, and stress further degrade cognitive processing and instrument scan discipline, increasing vulnerability to these illusions. Through continued education, targeted training, and deliberate techniques to recognize high-risk conditions early, pilots can significantly reduce the likelihood of spatial disorientation and respond effectively when it occurs.

Presentation will be in the Shoals Flight Center conference room.

Event Details

Tue, Mar 3, 2026 at 18:30 CST

Shoals Flight Center

1729 T Ed Campbell Drive
Conference Room

Muscle Shoals, AL



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A message from the National FAASafety Team Manager

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