

KWJF Saturday Morning FLY SAFE Meeting - Unrecoverable CLIFFS in Aviation

Event Details

Sometimes things go wrong in flight that are gradual and the pilot has time to react. But there are other situations that we call “CLIFFS” in aviation that are caused entirely by faulty pilot decision-making, often pre-flight, that create immediate catastrophic situations that may not be recoverable. Donna Knighton, a CFII and aircraft performance and flying qualities engineer, looks at 3 areas to avoid falling off such a CLIFF:

1) AIRCRAFT LOADING. Review of Longitudinal Stability, aircraft CG and moments, and how loading the aircraft outside the approved CG range (fwd or aft) and weight range affects the aircraft. How an improper CG can create a non-flyable aircraft.

Sat, Aug 8, 2026 at 10:00 PDT

William J Fox (KWJF) Airport

4725 W Ave G

Terminal Building

Lancaster, CA



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2) PERFORMANCE CHARTS – how they were made, and why “flying on the edge” of your charts is not a good idea. A review of the effects of Density Altitude, humidity, gusty winds, aircraft age, and pilot technique. What do you do when your DA is off the scale? Is the aircraft “linear”?

3) RUNNING OUT OF GAS – it still happens too often to experienced pilots.

From Hwy 14 in Lancaster, turn West on Ave G. Turn right at the Fox airport sign. Turn left onto one-way circular road in front of terminal building.

Seminar Length is 1.5 hours, with an extra 0.5 hours as needed for discussion and meeting other pilots.

A message from the National FAASTeam Manager

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