

# U.S. AIR RESCUE REPORT



**Charley Shimanski; U.S. Delegate**  
October 18-20, 2017 – Chamonix, France

Photo: Jacob Straube





U.S. Air Rescue Commission - ICAR  
Mountain Rescue Coordinator; *Flight For Life*  
Alpine Rescue Team – 30 years



# 2018 USA AIR RESCUE REPORT



## PART 1

Accidents - USA

## PART 2

Accidents - other

## PART 3

The "Concern  
Network"

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## Accident Report

# Likely a Collision with Geese

## Pafford "Air One"

November 19, 2017 – Rural Arkansas





Pafford Air

The Bell 407 HEMS helicopter took off from Pine Bluff headed towards a Regional Medical Center.



Pafford Air

A witness reported hearing geese get loud right before the helicopter flew over a reservoir.



“Several bird carcasses were located in the wreckage of the helicopter.”

National Transportation Safety Board



<http://metroforensics.blogspot.com/>





Pafford Air

Pilot Michael "Mike" Bollen  
Flight nurse Jim Lawson Spruiell  
Flight paramedic Trey Auld

## Non-HEMS Accident

# 3 killed in Grand Canyon Crash Tourist Flight

February 10, 2018 – Grand Canyon National Park





- The EC130 B4 was destroyed when it crashed on an approach to land.
- Three passengers died.
- The pilot and three passengers sustained serious injuries.

*The wreckage  
was engulfed  
in a post-crash  
fire.*



News Video the next day





The helicopter was not equipped with a *crash-resistant fuel system* required by a 1994 FAA regulation.

A loophole exempts newly manufactured helicopter with certificates approved before 1994.

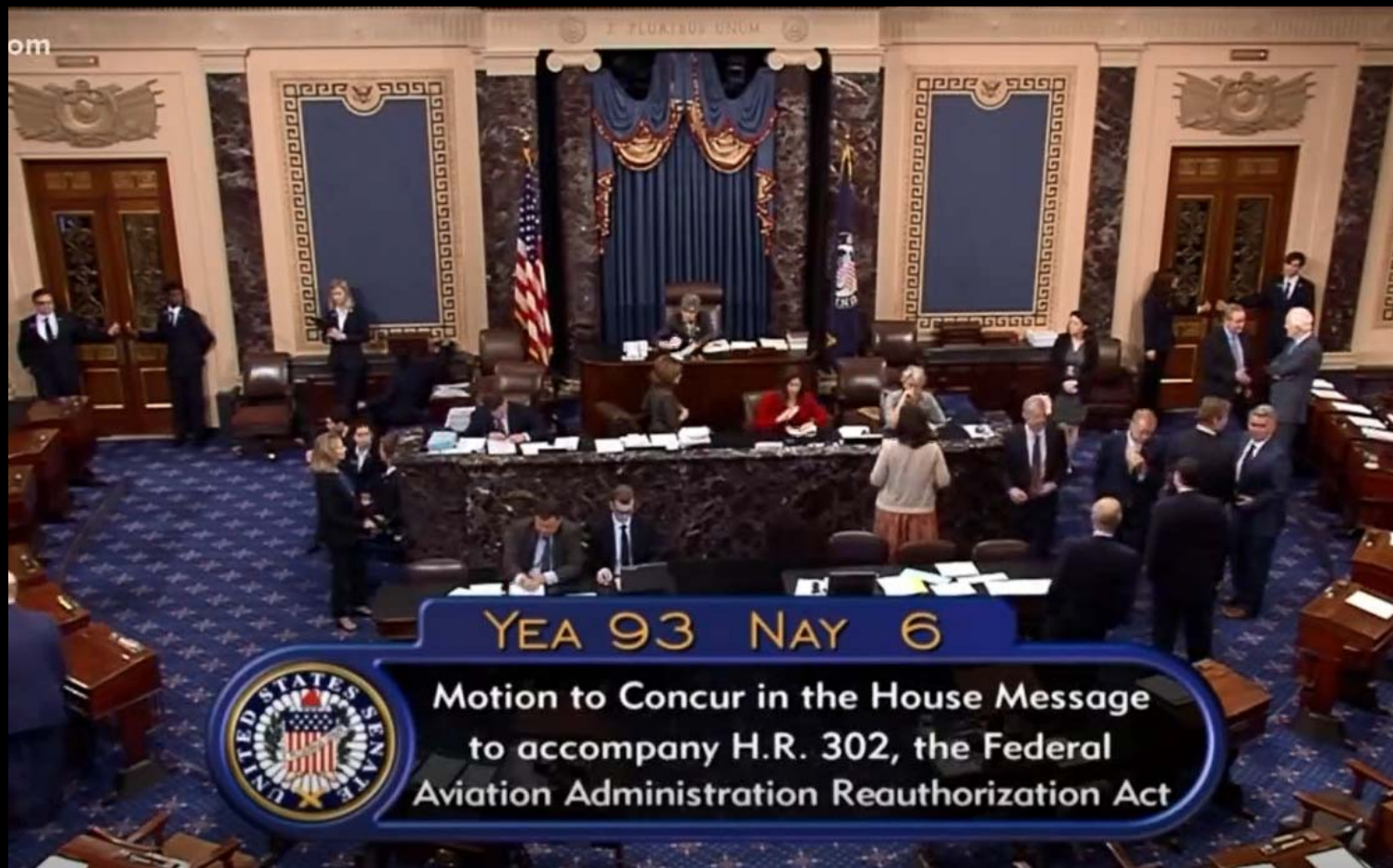


- “Papillon will retrofit our tour fleet with crash resistant fuel systems”

– *Papillon owner and Executive Vice President Lon Halvorson - 17 Days later*



2 weeks ago the US Congress passed a law requiring crash resistant fuel systems.



## Accident Report

# Tourist Helicopter into East River

All 5 passengers die, pilot survives

March 11, 2018 – New York City, NY





# 5 passengers on a “doors open” photography flight

Each passenger was  
restrained in the  
helicopter with:

1. Helicopter  
manufacturer's 4-point  
seatbelt, and
2. An aftermarket harness  
tethered to hard points.



© New York Times



The front passenger and two rear outer passengers *sat sideways facing outside*

The 2 inboard passengers sat tethered on the floor with their feet on the skids.

# MAYDAY Call



Video From NY POST





# *What happened?*

The front left passenger turned outside to take a photo.

At that point, the pilot heard a "low rotor rpm" alert.

*Engine pressure and fuel pressure  
warning lights illuminated.*

The pilot:

- *lowered the collective* and made a distress call
- *yelled to the passengers* to get back in their seats.
- *reduced rotor rpm* "to glide better."



## The pilot:

- attempted to restart the engine (failed)
- tried the starter again (failed)
- checked the fuel control lever (normal)
- activated the floats (2 failed)
- *reached down for the emergency fuel shutoff lever, it was in the off position*



*The front seat passenger's tether  
was underneath  
the emergency fuel shutoff lever.*





## The pilot:

- Turned fuel shutoff lever to "on"
- Restarted the engine
- Realized that the engine "wasn't spooling up fast enough,"
- Realized it was too late to avoid a crash,
- Positioned the fuel shutoff lever back to "off"

After impact, the pilot:

- Kept his restraint on and reached down for the front seat passenger's carabiner
- Tried to release front seat passenger
  - the helicopter was listing to 45°
- Egressed the helicopter, stood on the belly, and waved for help

Pilots had earlier raised concerns about the tethers that secured the passengers.



They noted it was difficult for passengers to disconnect the carabiners that connected the tethers to the harnesses.

## Accident Report

# Three Killed in Night Crash Ascension Spirit Air

April 26, 2018 – Hazelhurst, Wisconsin



WSAW-TV



- The AS350 B2 had transported a patient to Madison – 305 km away
- The crash happened on return, 20 km from the helicopter's destination.



Ascension Spirit Air

News Video the next day

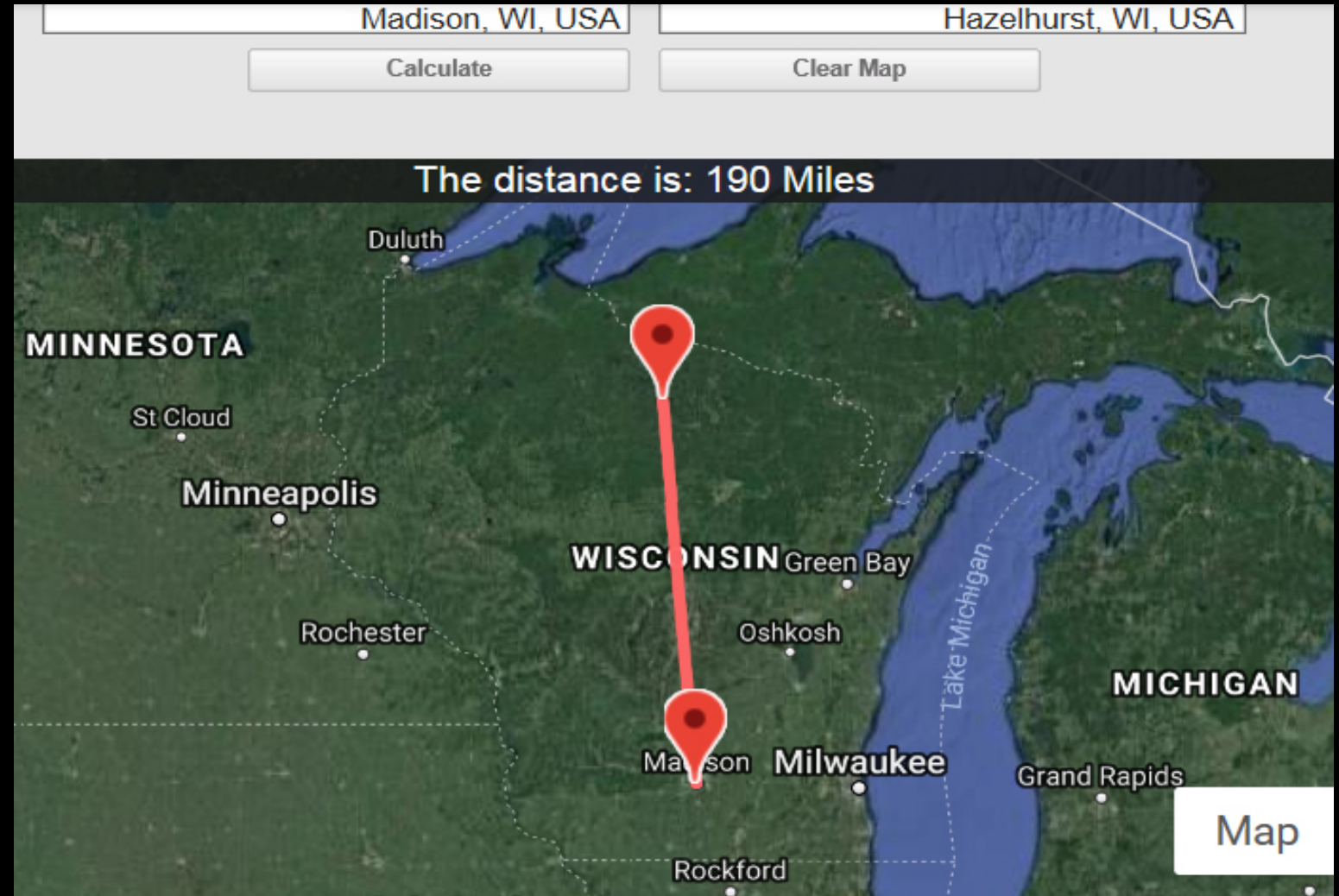
Video Credit USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin  
WSAW-TV







# The return flight was 305 km



*Civil twilight was 2031 hrs*  
at the crash site  
2 hours before the accident



Unrelated photo from [Framepool.com](http://Framepool.com)



At the time of the accident the weather was

- Wind: calm
- Visibility: 10 statute miles
- Sky: clear



The helicopter's cabin was crushed, its rotors were sheered off and there was a debris trail for 80 metres.



Pilot Rico Caruso

Nurse Klint Mitchell

Paramedic Greg  
Rosenthal



Ascension Spirit Air

# Accident Report

## Both Engines Failed

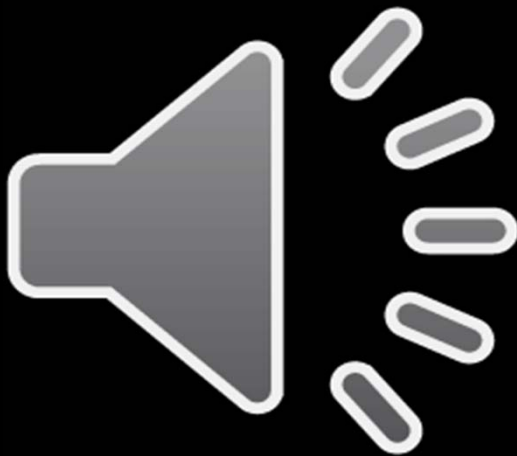
"AIR MED 1"

July 7, 2018 – Chicago, Illinois



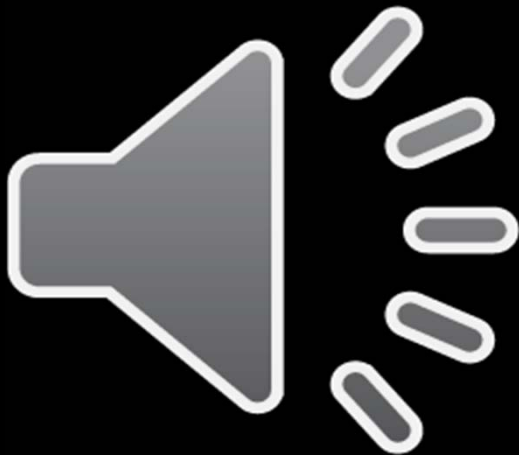


- 15 km from hospital, the pilot requested to divert to a local airport.
- One minute later, the pilot declared a "mayday."





- 15 km from hospital, the pilot requested to divert to a local airport.
- One minute later, the pilot declared a "mayday."





# Playback of flight / N312SA

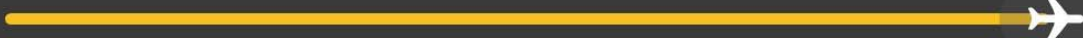
- GREAT CIRCLE DISTANCE
- 
- AVERAGE FLIGHT TIME
- 
- ACTUAL FLIGHT TIME
- 
- AVERAGE ARRIVAL DELAY
- 



FROM  
**N/A**



TO  
**N/A**



TIME  
**02:23** UTC

CALIBRATED ALTITUDE  
**875** FT  
GPS ALTITUDE  
**N/A**

GROUND SPEED  
**69** KTS  
TRUE AIRSPEED  
**N/A**

VERTICAL SPEED  
**N/A**  
INDICATED AIRSPEED  
**N/A**

TRACK  
**51°**  
SQUAWK  
**N/A**



© 2018 | Flightradar24

AIRCRAFT  
**Eurocopter EC135 P1**  
REGISTRATION  
**N312SA**

SERIAL NUMBER (MSN)  
-





Map from Eric Tendian/Twitter



The EC135 P1 impacted terrain  
at 2115 hrs during an  
autorotation following a dual  
engine failure







Surveillance  
video from a  
train platform  
showed a fire  
near the right  
engine in  
flight.

NTSB



**AIRMED 1**  
SUPERIOR AMBULANCE

Superior AirMed

The pilot and paramedic sustained minor injuries, the flight nurse sustained serious injuries, and the patient was not injured.



The helicopter sustained substantial damage to the fuselage, tail boom, and main rotor blades. <sup>NTSB</sup>



## 2018 Accident

# Police Helicopter Accident

Mechanic on a Safety Check

August 16, 2018 – Little Rock, Arkansas

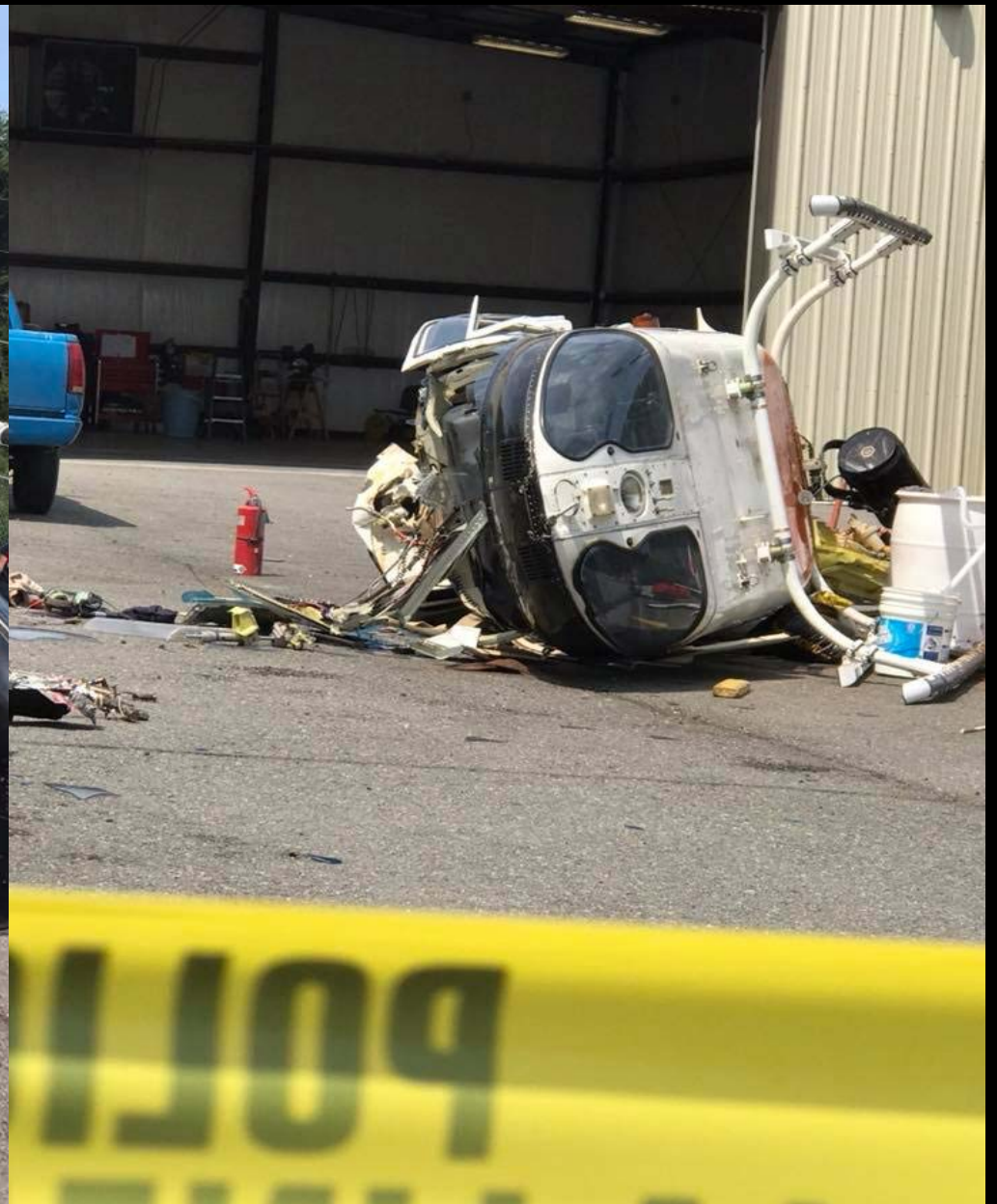


Little Rock Police Department Facebook Page



Video of this incident





Little Rock Police Department Facebook Page



## 2018 Incident

# Tail rotor drive shaft disengaged

Survival Flight – Michigan Medicine  
September 26, 2018 – Ann Arbor, Michigan



Survival Flight – Michigan Medicine/ and The Michigan Daily web site



After a ground run, one of the Survival Flight Airbus EC-155's tail rotor drive shaft disengaged from the main gearbox output, leaving the tail rotor drive decoupled from the main gear box.

The 3 aircraft were immediately grounded pending further inspection.



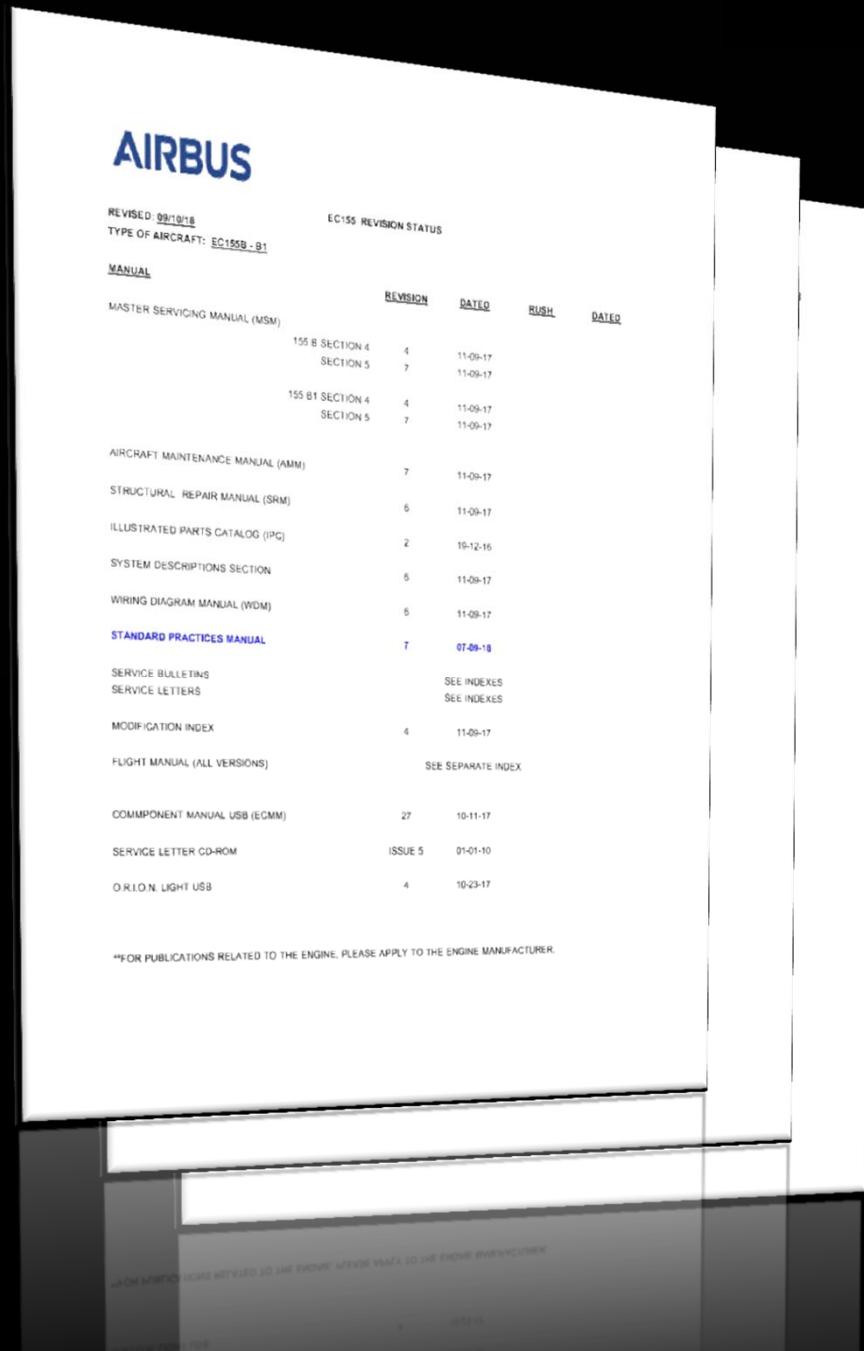
Source: The Concern Network (USA)  
Photos: Survival Flight

# Airbus Safety Bulletin ASB

## EC155 63A013

Compliance with this ASB prevents this problem in the event of failure of the shurlock nut.

Per Airbus, this incident occurs only on the ground.



## 2018 Accident

# Med-Evac Hard Landing

Trans Aero MedEvac

September 29, 2018 – Ski Apache, New Mexico



Facebook; Amy Minor Rutherford



The AS350-B2 was responding  
to a mountain HEMS call  
to pick up a patient

Altitude was roughly 2,100 metres  
(7,000 feet)



Video of the incident





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## Accident Report

# Helicopter crash survivor killed in rescue effort

April 22, 2018 – Cauca, Colombia





Serranía del  
Pinche mountains

Serranía del  
Pinche mountains

by Grundkarte Shadowxfox

A *Helifly* pilot and mechanic crashed installing electrical equipment.

They were stranded for 5 days before rescue arrived.



# Video of the Accident









Iván Andrés  
López Londoño,  
the head of  
Helifly's  
maintenance  
was killed.

Other personnel at  
the crash site were  
unharmmed

## Incident Report

# Climber Rescued at 6200 metres

## 5th Army High Altitude Squadron

July 31, 2018 – North Ridge of Latok I, Pakistan



Russian Climber Alexander Gukov, 42, was stranded nearly 7 days at 6300 metres after his partner fell to his death while rappelling with most of the gear.

North Ridge of  
Latok I (7145m)  
Pakistan



© Sergey Glazunov and [www.Mountain.RU](http://www.Mountain.RU)



# Latok I in Pakistan

COURTESY: NASA

## **THE LATOK PEAKS...**

AMONG THE MOST CHALLENGING FOR CLIMBERS



*The Squadron attempted a sling operation using two AS-350 B3 helicopters.*

*The pilots decided to first identify the exact location.*

*The fixed line was connected to the B3s (but kept inside the aircraft)*



Report by Pakistani climber ShamyI Sharafat Ali

*The plan was to locate Alex, then fly to basecamp and return for the extraction with the right fuel load.*



Alex Gukov  
25.07.2018 08:54 LT  
+/- 6380m

— Sergey Glazunov  
estimated place  
inside of inner corner  
25.07.2018 08:54LT  
+/-6340m

*However, once Alex was spotted, the B3s had only enough fuel to attempt one sling operation.*

*The pilots decided to go for it.*



*One helicopter threw the sling while hovering close to the ridge.*

*The other B3 was hovering behind, giving adjustment instructions.*



*After trying for 15 minutes, Alex was able to grab the sling and connect the D ring to his harness.*

*The B3 flying behind confirmed the safe engagement and instructed the lead heli to pull off with Alex attached. T*

*he fuel level was getting critically low by then.*

*However, Alex forgot to  
remove his anchor to the  
mountain.*



*Alex was connected to the B3 on one end and Latok on the other.*

*The pilots were extremely lucky as Alex's Latok anchor finally gave away releasing him.*

# Accident Report

## Six perish, one survives Altitude Air

September 8, 2018 –Nuwakot District, Nepal



© Sukman Tamang; Kathmandu Post

The helicopter was airlifting a patient along with other passengers.

The helicopter was scheduled to land at 8.18 a.m. but lost radio contact 8:10 a.m.

6 of the 7 people on board died and one survived.

- The pilot radio he was coming down from 9,500 feet to 5,500 feet.



© Xinhua News Agency

TIA officials believe the crash happened due to bad weather. *"The weather was so bad that even rescue work was affected."*



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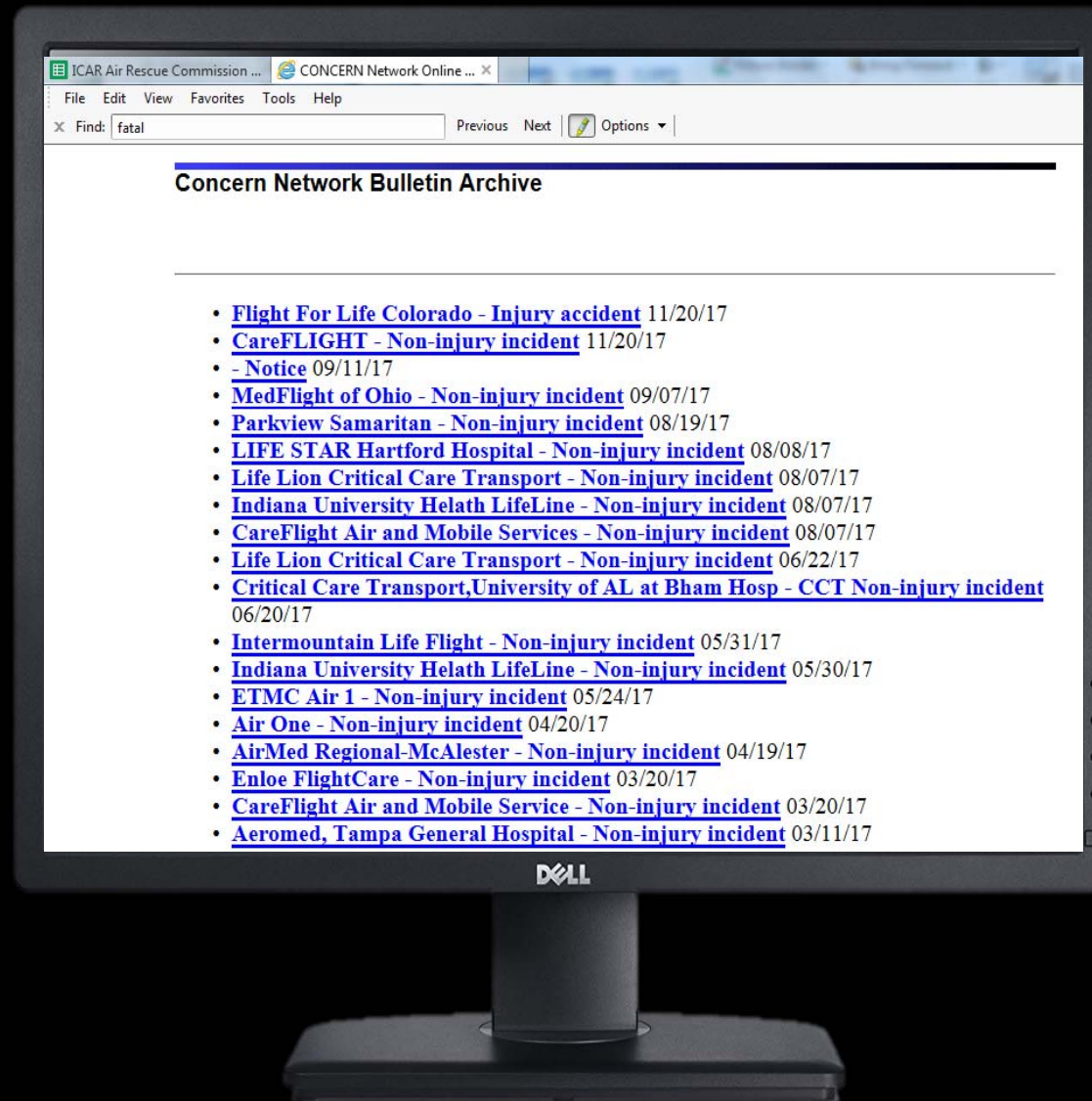
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**Accidents - other**

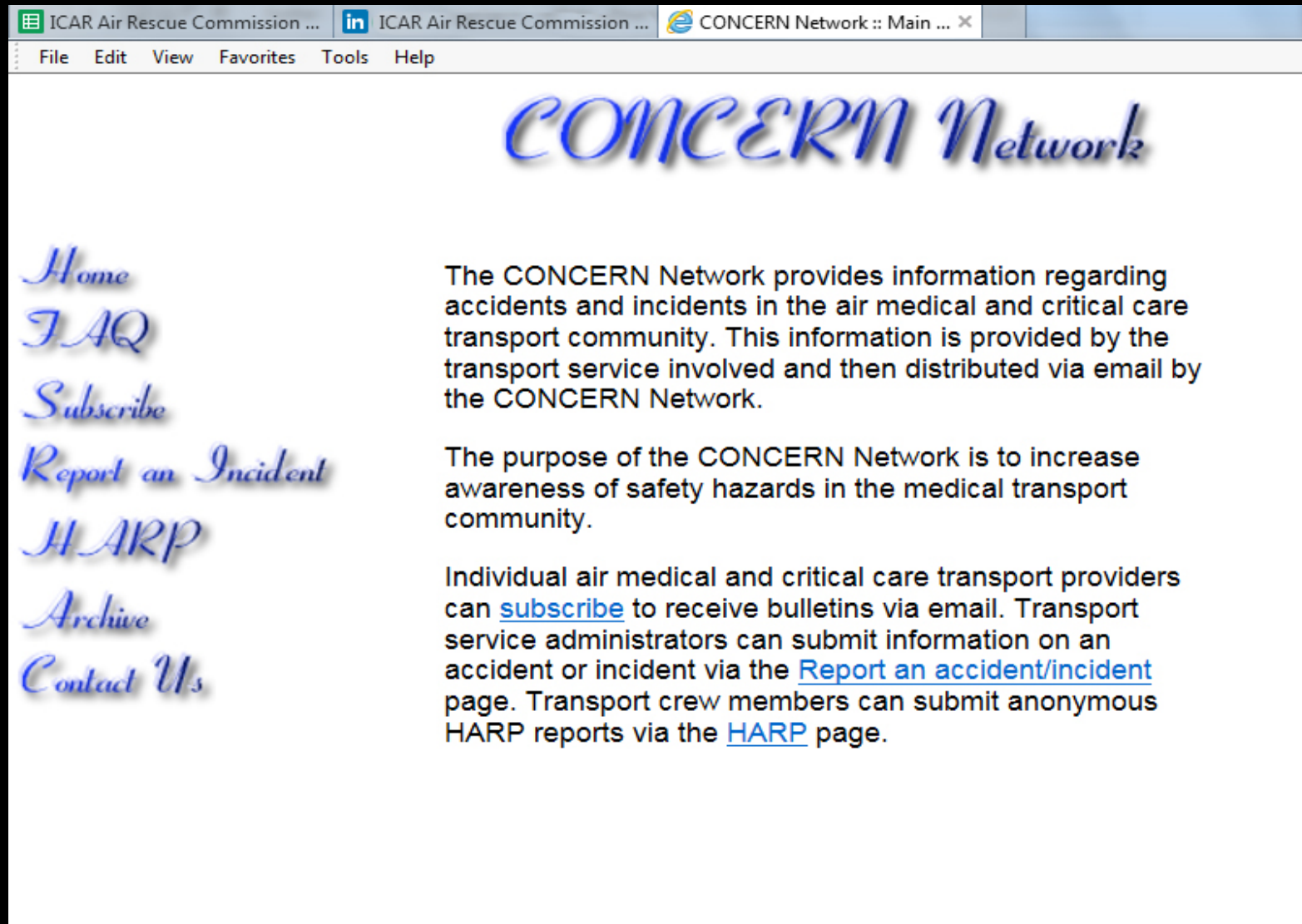
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The "Concern  
Network"

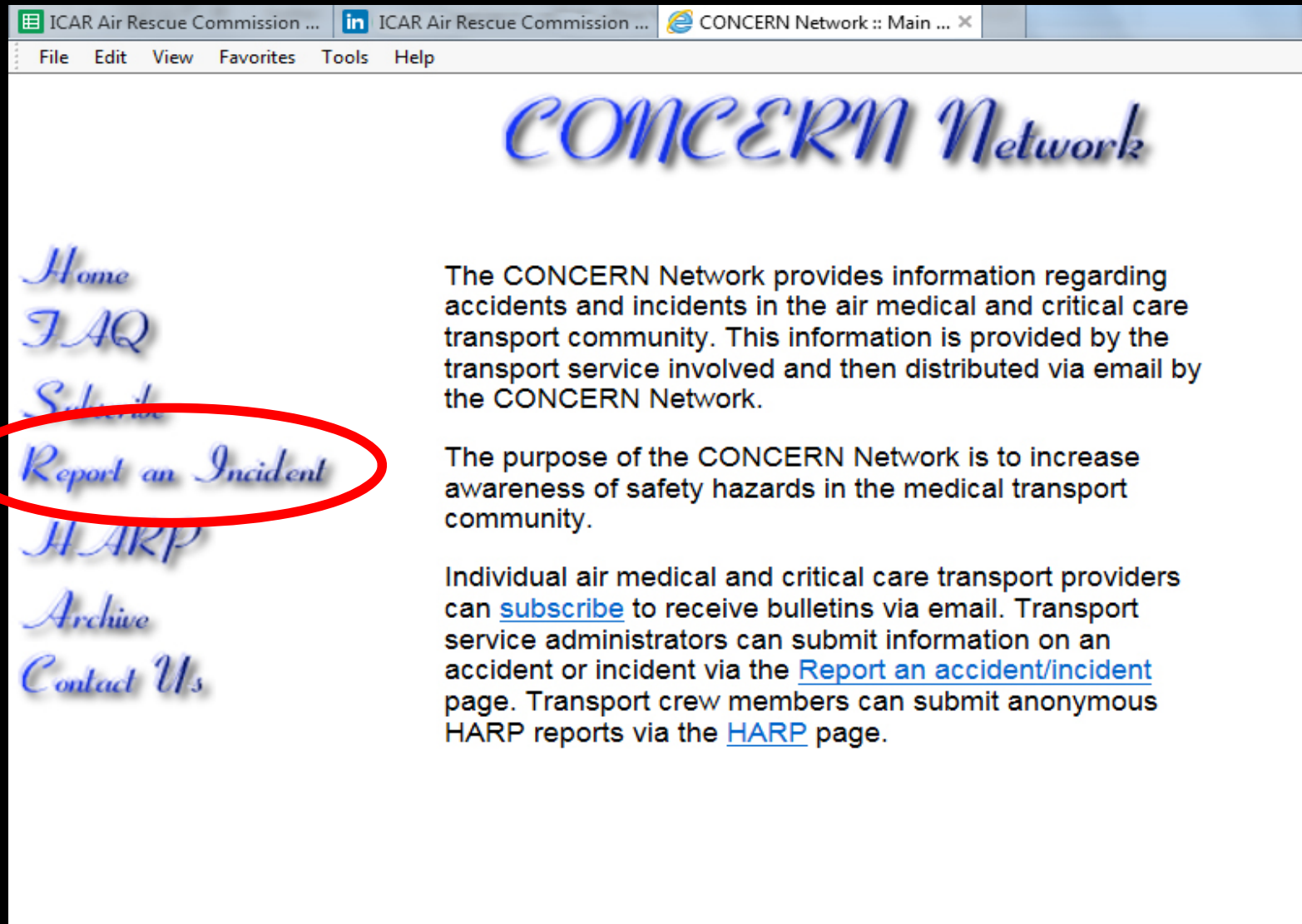
# The “Concern Network”



# The “Concern Network”



# The “Concern Network”





# The “Concern Network”

ICAR Air Rescue Commission ... CONCERN Network Online

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

X Find: fatal Previous Next Options

**CONCERN Network Bulletin**  
**Injury accident**

Before starting, please verify that the bulletin type above is correct. If not, go back and choose another type.

Items in red are required fields. Any other fields left empty will not be included in the bulletin.

---

**Incident Date**

Date:

Time:

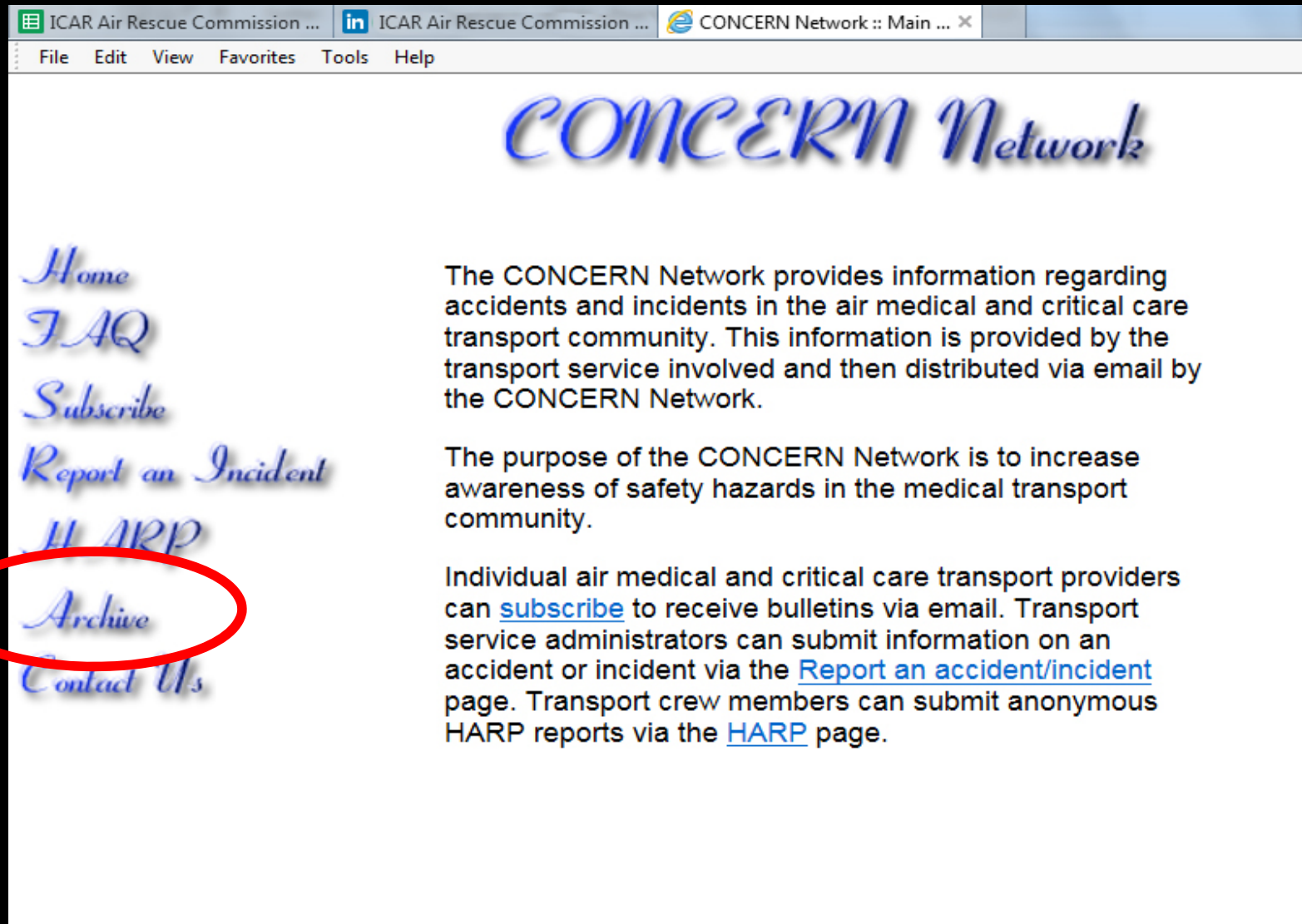
Time-zone:

---

**Program Info**

Program Name:

# The "Concern Network"





Thank  
You!

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