

**No. 99-02**

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**Subject:**

Aircraft Seatbelt Usage

**Distribution:**

All DOI Aviation Activities

**Discussion:** A recent Interior aircraft accident investigation revealed that the pilot was not wearing his shoulder harness during the crash sequence and as a result received serious head injuries. The passenger was using a lap belt and shoulder harness and was uninjured. The pilot reportedly removed his shoulder harness intending to refasten it later in the flight. Unfortunately, he forgot about it when the emergency developed.

**Recommendations:** Passengers and pilots are reminded that the Aviation Life Support Equipment Handbook (351 DM 1) requires that lap and shoulder harnesses “shall be worn during all phases of flight unless there is a valid operational or safety requirement, which would cause the pilot to direct otherwise.” Studies have shown that a person wearing a lap belt can withstand longitudinal (lengthwise) impact forces of up to 15 G's and vertical forces of up to 4 G's; the addition of a shoulder harness can increase these tolerances to 45 G's and 25 G's respectively. If you are fortunate enough to have shoulder harnesses installed in your aircraft -- wear them!

If you have any questions regarding this subject please contact your OAS Area/Regional office:

Alaska Regional Office (Anchorage)	907-271-3700
East Area Office (Atlanta)	770-458-7474
West Area Office (Boise)	208-334-9310
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