

# Study for when there is no flying

## Fatal Traps for helicopter pilots

Greg White

Reed Publishing (NZ) Ltd, 395 pages, RRP \$65.00

Following his earlier title "So, You want To Be A Helicopter Pilot", Greg Whyte has put his keen interest in rotary aviation to good use. The humble beginnings of student pilot pursuing his licence goals at a managed cost and with diversity of experience has produced this useful collection of anecdotes and accident reports, tips and tricks, diagrams and decisions.

Despite the relative ease of accessing accident reports and other safety information from around the world, the time spent in researching appropriate information to illustrate the wide variety of aerodynamic and other phenomena must have been immense. At the very least, Greg himself has amassed more than enough information to recognise and avoid the "Fatal Traps". In acknowledging the contributions to his book, Greg has accessed an international group of extremely knowledgeable aviators, engineers and managers, including one of New Zealand's own acknowledged experts - Bernie Lewis.

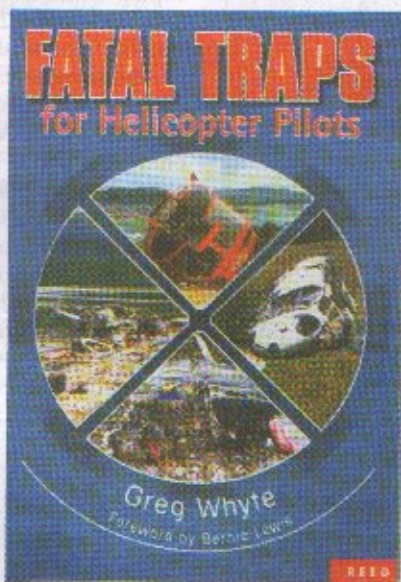
"Fatal Traps" is however, no lazy afternoon read. The depth and diversity of information makes parts of the book more of a dry study text than an entertaining volume for both practicing and ab initio pilots. The

wealth of pictures and diagrams should earn the book a place in any self-respecting instructor's library and be used to illustrate and reinforce the consequences of overstepping the boundaries.

Just as much as there is useful information, there are some glaring omissions, or subjects that have received only cursory coverage. This was Greg's opportunity to reinforce the principals of accident avoidance, including the "Reason" model. Instead, some recognised areas of helicopter operations that have repeatedly lead to the completion of the accident chain, have been given tacit approval or left open to the readers interpretation.

Many readers (including the reviewer) will recognise the "there but for the grace of god, went I" situations. With a bit of luck we learnt, and have been able to share our experiences for the benefit of others. Greg has managed to bring most of our learning curves into this book. While there are very few new accidents, there are some interesting ways of repeating some old ones. With "Fatal Traps for Helicopter Pilots" on the bookshelf, pilots both old and new should find something useful in this publication.

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The New Zealand country side has taken a very high toll of helicopters since they have been first operated. Many of the accidents could have been prevented through wider knowledge of the traps helicopter pilots can easily succumb to.