



## FIELD SAFETY FIRST

As members of Tokay Radio Control Modelers, our thoughts and actions regarding safety should be paramount during our modeling activities. Safety should be in the forefront of our conscientiousness when indulging in our hobby. One of the creeds that define the Tokay RC Modelers is safety. I have witnessed our members displaying this safety driven culture on many occasions. I have seen safe acts practiced at the field during normal flight OPS, during yearly flying events, and I have heard safety issues discussed in “hangar flying” groups. Kudos to all of you as this is how a robust safe culture should look. For reasons that should be obvious, we should not become complacent in our safety attitudes. I have long held the belief that complacency is the spice of accidents.

Accidents do and will happen. This is a fact during the pursuit of our hobby. No matter what mitigation processes or methods we exact, the fact remains, zero accidents and zero incidents is hard to obtain and maintain. One of the ways we can raise the level of safety to achieve “zero/zero” is to learn from the root cause of accidents and incidents before or after they happen.

During the next 12 months I will have the honor of serving you as your safety champion. I will be focusing on identifying gaps in our club’s safety processes, assisting in addressing them, and assisting with their eventual closure. The fact is, the best way to mitigate incidents and accidents is having a safety culture that exceeds expectations at all levels. Another way of saying it, our main objective as a viable club should be maintaining an enhanced safety program.

At the January 2016 club meeting, I will be focusing on the duties and the importance of the spotter. In conjunction with a friend in the in Spokane RC club, here is a list we compiled outlying what we see as spotter duties. I am pleased to share them with you.

### SPOTTER DUTIES

1. Keep your pilot aware of wind direction, so he can make any necessary adjustments in deciding which way to take off and land his plane, or to make wind allowances in his maneuvers.
2. Keep constantly aware of what other model pilots and crew members are doing, such as retrieving a plane from the middle of the strip, or crossing the strip, or starting a plane in a nearby pilot station. Alert other pilots and spotters as to your pilot’s intentions, e.g. **“TAKING OFF TO THE RIGHT”** or **“LANDING FROM THE LEFT!”**
3. Watch for any models that seem to be out of control, in ground handling, on take-offs, landings, or in the pattern. Prepare to protect your pilot if the out-of-control plane is approaching, by moving him calmly out of its path.
4. Keep track of any area or height violations of your pilot’s plane, and let him know immediately of the infractions.

5. Assist the pilot in starting his plane, moving it to the flight line, checking all flight control functions (rudder, elevator, ailerons and throttle) before releasing the model for take-off, and retrieving the plane after the landing.

6. REMEMBER, you are not there to admire the flight – ***YOU ARE NOT A SPECTATOR!*** – You are a crew member with definite and important responsibilities!!!

***The value of a spotter can be realized in the following video. Copy and paste the link in your browser. Be sure to turn up the volume for maximum effect.***

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qao\\_W-CM45o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qao_W-CM45o)

***“A SAFE OUTCOME SHOULD NEVER BE IN DOUBT”***

John Lett

TRCM Safety Officer