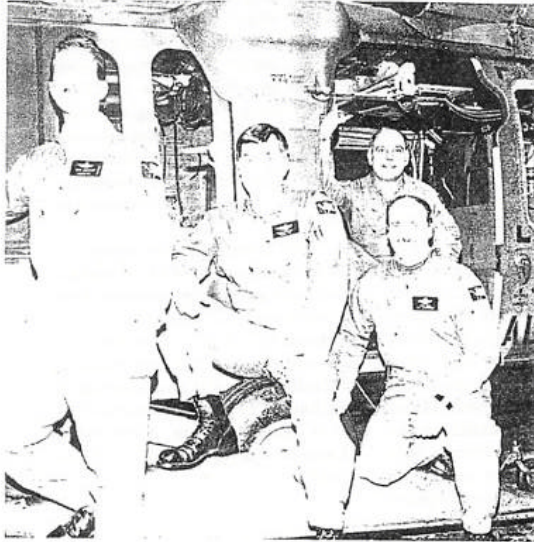


# Excellence in Airmanship



Left to Right: Maj Hoffman, Maj Sharp, CMSgt Couture, and TSgt Filo (kneeling).

Major David G. Hoffman and Crew, 176th Composite Group, Kulis Air National Guard Base, Alaska, experienced a potentially catastrophic maintenance failure on 17 July 1991 aboard an MH-60G. Instructor pilot, Major Hoffman; student pilot, Major David C. Sharp; flight engineer, Technical Sergeant John S. Filo; and examiner engineer, Chief Master Sergeant Gregory A. Couture, briefed for Major Sharp's first H-60 flight and a checkride for Sergeant Filo. Preflight and run-up procedures were uneventful. Shortly after takeoff, the crew felt a slight oscillation of one cycle per second which initially caused a 1-to-3 degree pitch change. During the oscillations, the pilot's controls did not move, nor were there any caution or warning lights. The crew discussed the situation and turned off the flight path stabilization system, but porpoising continued, becoming more severe. The aircraft was being heaved into unusual attitudes and the crew forced violently against their restraining harnesses. The crew rapidly accomplished

appropriate checklist emergency procedures by disengaging the stabilization augmentation systems (SAS), one at a time. The aircraft became completely uncontrollable with the rotor flailing within inches of the fuselage. Displaying incredible presence of mind and superior systems knowledge, the flight crew recovered some control of the aircraft by reengaging SAS 1 and disengaging SAS 2. This procedure is not addressed by any checklist. Oscillations subsided and Major Hoffman made an emergency running landing. Maintenance inspection later uncovered a metal shaving about 3/4" long by 1/16" wide, which was shorting out a cannon plug in the roll/yaw gyro package, affecting SAS 2 inputs to the flight controls. Contrary to cockpit indications and Dash One guidance, SAS 1 was actually the working channel, so when it was turned off SAS 2 put the aircraft out of control. The skill, ingenuity, and proficiency of Major Hoffman and crew prevented the possible loss of lives and aircraft. They deserve the AMC Excellence in Airmanship Award. Congratulations from *The Mobility Forum*.

