

What Next



After you have flown your aircraft into the accident/crash site, and you and your passengers have evacuated the aircraft what next? S.T.O.P. Before we discuss S.T.O.P., note I said fly your aircraft into the crash site. If you are fortunate enough to have a flat surface that gives you the opportunity to practice a soft field landing, great. Anything other than a soft field, your desired action is to fly in a controlled fashion as far into the crash as possible-under control. In other words minimum speed- while keeping full control. Aim for the softest elements of the terrain. Remember, at this point, the insurance company owns the aircraft and your job is to get everyone out alive.

Once the aircraft comes to a complete stop, get everyone and yourself out. Remember to get your survival gear out as you exit the aircraft. If the survival kit becomes toast, it will not be of any value. So keep it in a location that you can retrieve in a moment of panic. Think this through ahead of time. Then: S.T.O.P.

S. Stop. You and your passengers are a safe distance from the aircraft. Your adrenaline is flowing. Not the time to make any decisions. Just stop and calm down.

T. Think. As you are calming down and assessing your initial situation, handle first things first. Any life threatening injuries to your or the passengers? Address this now. What issues need to be address and in what sequence. What resources do you now have for safety, first aid, signaling, shelter, and risks of your current location. Once the adrenaline rush has subsided, then take actions.

O. Observe. What resources are around to make a shelter, start a fire, signal for a rescue. What time of day and how much time until nighttime. Who in the party has disabilities and capabilities to attend to survival elements.

P. Plan. Energy is a valuable resource. Use your energy wisely. Don't waste it. From this point, everything you and your passengers do should be a calculated event with the

goal of survival and rescue. Plan for your shelter, signaling, food/water, fire, safety, and your survival attitude.

Although you have a survival kit and have learned some survival skills, the most important tool you have is having the will to live. Your will to survive will become the most valuable tool in your survival kit.