

Plane Crash!

Robin Miller's partner, Harold Dicks was a pioneering aviator and a flying doctor. Robin accompanied him on many flights.

In 1942, a crash at a Port Hedland aerodrome was viewed with dismay by the local and outback community. The pilot was Harold Dicks. Although safe, the flying doctor was temporarily without his wings!

Flying Doctor Loses Wings

(By a Special Correspondent)

PORT HEDLAND, Sat—
Port Hedland's Flying Doctor—Dr. Harold Dicks—is temporarily without wings.

His plane out of commission following a crash on the local aerodrome, he is forced to depend upon other means of transport, not always as reliable and certainly lacking the speed and flexibility of the normal service.

News of his ill-luck evoked widespread sympathy for the popular doctor, and also caused some dismay. It is only when one visits the North-West that one gets a true appreciation of the vital importance of the Flying Doctor service.

On its errand of mercy and healing, Dr. Dicks takes his machine to the remotest parts of his territory, which embraces the Marble Bar, Hedland and Roebourne districts.

IN ACUTE DEMAND

Unfortunately the 'plane was damaged so severely that Dr Dicks is likely to be without it for a considerable time. The crash could not have occurred at a more inopportune moment. Conditions for land transport are returning to normal with the onset of dry weather, but the motor car, wending its way along rutted tracks, through creek beds and up and down stony hills is tortoise-like compared with the 'plane.

The doctor's services were in acute demand with cases requiring prompt attention in various parts of the territory.

Two pending confinements and a critical operation, all at Marble Bar, necessitated an immediate visit to that centre.

Dr Dicks decided to make the journey by the railway "Groper," a kalamazoo outfit. They had a breakdown en route and the 110 miles occupied them at least 15 hours.

Residents of the North-West become

1 *The Daily News (Perth WA: 1882-1950, Saturday 18 April 1942*

Residents of the North-West become
ured to the disabilities of isolation
if there is no service they value
ore highly than that bestowed by
e Flying Doctor.
For that reason they hope there
ll not be a moment's delay on the
rt of the authorities in seeing that
Dicks gets back his "wings."



3 1. Harold Dicks' favourite RFDS aeroplane - Fox Moth biplane VH-USJ, flying near Meekatharra WA in 1959. This photo was taken by another RFDS pilot from the shiny new Cessna that replaced the old Fox Moth. With special thanks to Geoffrey Goodall.

2 Article Identifier

<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article78272808>

Robin Miller flew alone across the outback for many thousands of hours without major incident. Storms, hazardous runways, mechanical problems, difficult patients were all part of the challenge.

Extensive training, preparation, experience and quick thinking were the keys to survival.

Are you ready for a challenge?

Do you think you could solve the following problems? Team up with a partner or two if you like.

1. Your little plane has developed mechanical problems and you have been forced to land thousands of kilometres from civilization. Luckily, your Cessna is equipped with an emergency locator transmitter, ELT. It may or may not have commenced transmitting your location. You have a Cessna Manual. How will you activate the location transmitter if you need to?
2. A cyclone is brewing in the north-west. You have been forced to put your plane down at an abandoned cattle station some distance from the expected path of the cyclone. Gale force winds are forecast.

There are numerous sheds and building as well as the old homestead. There is a broken down old truck.

You need to secure the aircraft, or it might take off or flip over. You have parts of the Cessna Manual with tie down procedures for your aircraft and a booklet entitled "Secure Your Aircraft", published by the New Zealand Civil Aviation Authority.

Create a guide showing the steps for tying down your plane.

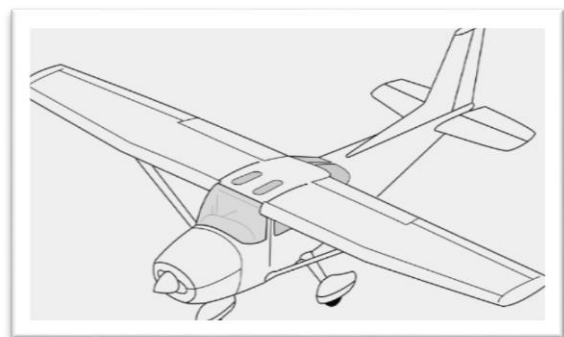
- In the above situation, where might be a safe spot to park the plane?
- Where are the points on the plane for tying down?
- What sort of knots should you use?
- What could you tie the plane to? You might find it helpful to draw a diagram.

READ ME

In the 'glove compartment' of the plane there is:

- A Cessna 182 Manual
- Brochure 'Secure Your Aircraft'
- Maps
- Compass
- Extra torch

Look for the file called 'The Glove Compartment' 😊



3. Use the internet to search for solutions to the following tricky situation.



You have been called out to a remote homestead. You have realized that you won't make it before dark. The runway has no lights. You will not be able to see the homestead or the runway. You decide to radio ahead. What could you ask the people on the ground to do to assist?

