

# Flight Test *Safety* Fact



Published for the Flight Test Safety Committee

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## FTSC unveils Houle’s Collection of Aircraft Accidents

The Flight Test Safety Committee has rolled out a web page with links to an 8 volume collection of papers detailing aircraft accidents and the accompanying lessons learned since the 1920s. The collection includes a summary and an index together with 8 pdfs that include notes and clippings about flight test accidents. Each volume has almost 418 pages, for a total of almost 3000 pages. Some of the notes are hand written, and some are electronic reproductions of historical documents dating back to 1929 and forward to 2011. Many have links to active websites, and the entire collection may be searched using optical character recognition technology.

According to Pete Donath, who recounted a personal anecdote from the “early days” of this collection, Dave Houle\* would often bring a tall stack of file folders and drop it on the desk. The timing of these visits coincided with company plans for an upcoming flight test campaign. As he walked away, he would mention an incident or accident and recommend that his colleague review what went wrong, what went right, what could have been done better, safer. His words reverberate down through ages, “Please make this step part of your preparation for flight tests.”

\*The late Dave Houle was one of the founding members of the Flight Test Safety Committee in 1994. Pete Donath, who edited the collection, provided the following instructions for best use of the documents, hosted on the FTSC website: <http://www.flighttestsafety.org/web-links>.

Dave Houle Flight Test Accident Archive: <b>New Addition to the Website!</b>	
<a href="#">Summary of Accidents</a>	<a href="#">Flight Test Accident Index</a>
<a href="#">Flight Test Accidents Part 1</a>	<a href="#">Flight Test Accidents Part 2</a>
<a href="#">Flight Test Accidents Part 3</a>	<a href="#">Flight Test Accidents Part 4</a>
<a href="#">Flight Test Accidents Part 5</a>	<a href="#">Flight Test Accidents Part 6</a>
<a href="#">Flight Test Accidents Part 7</a>	<a href="#">Flight Test Accidents Part 8</a>

Figure 1 – Hyperlinks to Specified Volume

## Directions

Dave Houle collected historical documentation from many notable aircraft mishaps. The documentation in this archive ranges from 1929-2011. Some are anecdotal articles, and others are full accident investigation reports. We have scanned these into searchable pdf files, available for download. There is also a rudimentary index of the contents of each file with a brief description of each article.

1. Review [the index](#) to find the incident of interest.
2. Locate the FT Accident file number (1-8) and page number in the row of the selected incident to identify which volume contains the summary. (See arrow in figure.)
3. Select the hyperlink of the specified volume (Figure 1), and go to the page number of interest for further details.

In the spirit of sharing lessons learned, if you have similar documentation that you feel will help other test crews, please contact us at [ftsc@flighttestsafety.org](mailto:ftsc@flighttestsafety.org).

F.T. Accidents File 1 Index						
File 1	Page	Title	Type	Aircraft Category	A/C Class	Sub
1	2	Beliner-Joyce XP-13 Viper	Article	Fixed Wing	SEL	Figh
	4	Lockheed XP-24	Article	Fixed Wing	SEL	Figh
	7	Martin Bombers	Article	Fixed Wing	MEL	Borr
	9	Boeing 247	Summary	Fixed Wing	MEL	Tran
	11	Consolidated A-11 (P-30)	Article	Fixed Wing	SEL	Figh
	12	Consolidated Y1P-25	Article	Fixed Wing	SEL	F/A
	14	Boeing 299 (B-17 Prototype)	Article	Fixed Wing	MEL	Borr
	19	Boeing 299 (B-17 Prototype)	Accident Report	Fixed Wing	MEL	Borr
	83	Y1B-17 & XB-17	Article	Fixed Wing	MEL	Borr
	86	Consolidated PB-2A	Article	Fixed Wing	SEL	Figh
	88	Douglas A-20 Havoc	Article	Fixed Wing	MEL	Borr
	93	XP-38 Lightning	Article	Fixed Wing	MEL	Figh
	101	Boeing 307 Stratoliner	Summary	Fixed Wing	MEL	Tran
	108	North American NA-40 (B-25 Prototype)	Article	Fixed Wing	MEL	Borr
	110	YP-37	Article	Fixed Wing	SEL	Figh
	113	XP-39B Aircobra	Article	Fixed Wing	SEL	Figh
	116	P-48 Vultee Vanguard	Article	Fixed Wing	SEL	Figh
	119	F4U-1 Corsair	Article	Fixed Wing	SEL	Figh
	121	XP-51	Article	Fixed Wing	SEL	Figh
	124	XP-47B	Article	Fixed Wing	SEL	Figh

Figure 2 - Example from Accident Index

## Epilogue

This collection represents a lifetime of selfless service, and those of us who knew Dave know well the heart behind it. To complement the archive, the FTSC published a biography of Dave Houle here:

[http://flighttestsafety.org/images/Dave\\_Houle\\_Bio\\_In\\_Memorium\\_2020\\_06\\_23-1.pdf](http://flighttestsafety.org/images/Dave_Houle_Bio_In_Memorium_2020_06_23-1.pdf).

I chuckled as I read Pete's closing comments. "I thought about adding a sentence, 'Please contribute to help us build Part 9,' but I didn't want to encourage accidents...and the reference to *Plan 9 from Outer Space* set my teeth on edge."

**Mark Jones Jr.**

## **Turbo Talk – Chairman’s Corner**    *Art “Turbo” Tomassetti*

It is my honor and privilege to take over as the Flight Test Safety Committee Chairman. Many thanks to Tom Huff who has led the committee for over two years. His dedication, drive and vision has benefited not only the Committee but also the flight test profession at large.

I begin my tenure with a look at the mission—from our charter, the purpose of the FTSC is to: “Sustain a flight test related safety organization to promote flight test safety, flight test risk management and continually improve the profession's communication and sharing of information related to flight test safety.”

I believe that tasking is clear and that we are continually working towards achieving and furthering that purpose. In addition to our annual workshops, we began this newsletter and a podcast as additional ways to “...improve the profession's communication and sharing of information related to flight test safety.” However, communication is something where we *all* play a part. I ask for your help in supporting our communication efforts by doing 3 things:

1. Know the information and resources available (website, podcast, newsletter, workshops, etc.).
2. Help spread the word—let others know about those resources.
3. Provide feedback: Lessons learned, best practices, challenges that you need help with, ideas for newsletter or podcast, and more. And by the way, just reading this newsletter is piece of that support, so I thank you.

This year has presented challenges that few, if any, were prepared for. People and organizations have had to adapt, innovate, and overcome. While we all look forward to getting to the point of fewer restrictions and resuming activities we have had to put on hold, make some notes. We all have lessons we can learn from recent events. Our profession of flight test understands the importance of not just capturing those lessons but turning them into something we can practically apply and put in place to mitigate risk and/or improve future performance.

Please do what you can to enjoy the remaining weeks of summer, take care of your families and teams, and stay safe.

Turbo

*Art Tomassetti*



## FTSF announces new publication schedule

We asked, and you answered. The *Flight Test Safety Fact* will transition to a scheduled publication every other month. This will give you more time to absorb and respond to each issue and not overwhelm you. Thank you for sending your input in response to the editorial inquiry. Keep sending your thoughts, ideas, and feedback.

## Subscribe to our Podcast

Turbo, our podcast host and Chairman, and I discussed the change in publication frequency, and he's delighted that this will give him more time to produce the podcast, which may go to a longer, bi-monthly format in alternating months: The newsletter would go out in month X, and the podcast would drop in month X+1. If you have suggestions, please email them to [podcast@flighttestsafety.org](mailto:podcast@flighttestsafety.org). Please subscribe to the Flight Test Safety Podcast on the [Apple](#) or [Google podcast app](#). You can also navigate directly to the recording in [a web browser](#). You can also leave comments on these

platforms. Last, but not least, please tell a friend.



In an upcoming podcast, Turbo plans to highlight the mishap pictured here, the crash of the XB-17 at Wright Field—you can read about this in the *Houle Collection* described above and illustrated in Figure 2.

*The XB-17 (Model 299) crashed during its test flight at Wright Field on Oct. 30, 1935. (U.S. Air Force photo)*



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Connect with us by joining the LinkedIn Group: “Flight Test Safety Committee”