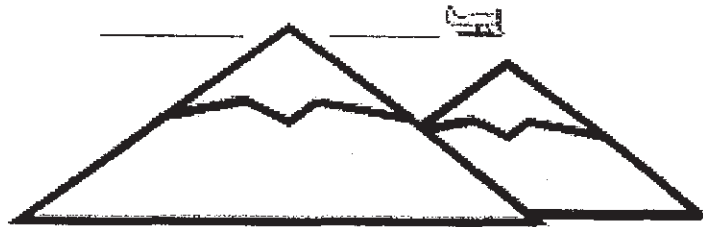
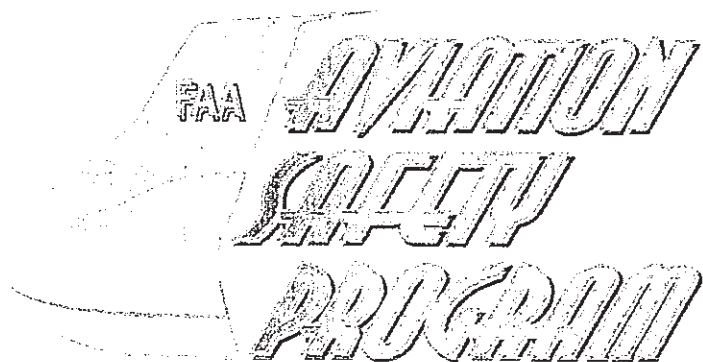


FAA-P-8740-60
AFS-803 (1999)



TIPS on MOUNTAIN FLYING



initial climb will be at the best rate of climb IAS until reaching at least 1,000 feet AGL, then a smooth transition to cruise climb.

There are some conditions, such as climbing out of airports in deep mountain valleys, when you may need to use the best rate of climb airspeed until reaching cruise altitude, but those conditions are relatively rare. Monitor pitch attitude, airspeed, and climb rate during the climb to make sure you are getting the best performance from the airplane.

An engine failure right after takeoff is a serious situation any time. In almost every case, with less than 500 feet of altitude, you should not attempt to return to the airport. Make an off airport landing straight ahead, maintaining control of the airplane until landing.

Ridge and Pass Crossing

On most mountain flights, you will need to cross at least one ridge or pass. Experienced pilots recommend crossing a ridge or pass at the ridge elevation plus at least 1,000 feet. If the winds at mountain top level are above 20 knots, increase that to 2,000 feet. Plan to be at that altitude at least three miles before reaching the ridge and stay at that altitude until at least three miles past it. This clearance zone will give you a reasonable safety zone to avoid the most severe turbulence and down drafts in windy conditions.

If conditions or airplane performance dictate, you may need to fly along the windward side of a ridge to find updrafts for gaining altitude before crossing a ridge. You may also need to circle before reaching the ridge if climbing out of a valley airport.

When you actually cross a ridge, you should do so at a 45° angle to the ridge. This allows you to turn away from the ridge quicker if you encounter a severe downdraft or turbulence. Once you have crossed the ridge, turn directly away from it at a 90° angle to get away from the most likely area of turbulence quickly. Plan your crossing to give yourself the ability to turn toward lower terrain quickly if necessary.

Enroute Considerations

As you fly your mountain trip, continually visualize what the weather and winds are doing so you can take best advantage of them. For example, if flying in a valley, it is usually best to fly on the side of the valley that will have the updrafts, the side the wind