MAKING THE FIND

Before talking about plane finds, let's review the protocol for Status 3 Finds:

For all finds, two people, the FTL and the MEDIC, should approach the scene to assertain the status of the subject. When I find a deceased subject the area is now a CRIME scene. I need to alert base of the find. First I will SECURE the net, then I will tell base “We have a STATUS 3” My next responsibility is to PROTECT the scene so that investigations can proceed and the CHAIN OF EVIDENCE is preserved. I may need to help protect the scene until a MEDICAL EXAMINER can come and pronounce the patient dead.

With an aircraft find, there are a few more considerations because crashed aircraft are really DANGEROUS. Hot WRECKAGE can be up in the trees and fall on my head. Also dangerous is the FUEL which could start fires or explode. And then of course the craft could be UNSTABLE and slide around and crush me. So I’m going to approach the aircraft from UPHILL and UPWIND so I’m not injured and avoid fumes.

Just like with any find I need to assess the CONDITION of the subject or subjects and then preserve the scene. That’s so the FAA/NTSB can come and conduct an investigation of the crash.

STATUS 3, CHAIN OF EVIDENCE, DANGEROUS, UPWIND, FAA/NTSB, MEDIC, CRIME, SECURE, CONDITION, PROTECT, FTL, WRECKAGE, FUEL, UNSTABLE, UPHILL, MEDICAL EXAMINER

Serious considerations with Status 3 finds.

When people die, many, many others are affected by the loss. Each of us as rescuers finds our own way of coping with death, ranging from not caring to hurting deeply and everything in between. All of us find our own way of making peace with death. And as we as rescuers enter this process, so will the family, the community, and the other professional resources be confronting the death. Responses will range from the deepest heartfelt gratitude for our work to outrage at being unable to save a life. There are no rules here, no bullet point answers, but maybe a few suggestions are in order.

Remember that these times demand the utmost in our professionalism. If we are not emotionally prepared to deal with the situation we must gracefully remove ourselves. If we are prepared then we must honor the dead and honor the living. We need to treat the scene and subject with the utmost respect, and, where appropriate, offer condolences to friends and family. Under most circumstances, our work will bring a finality to a sad situation and by humbly and graciously accepting a community’s gratitude we have provided the best possible care for subject and community.