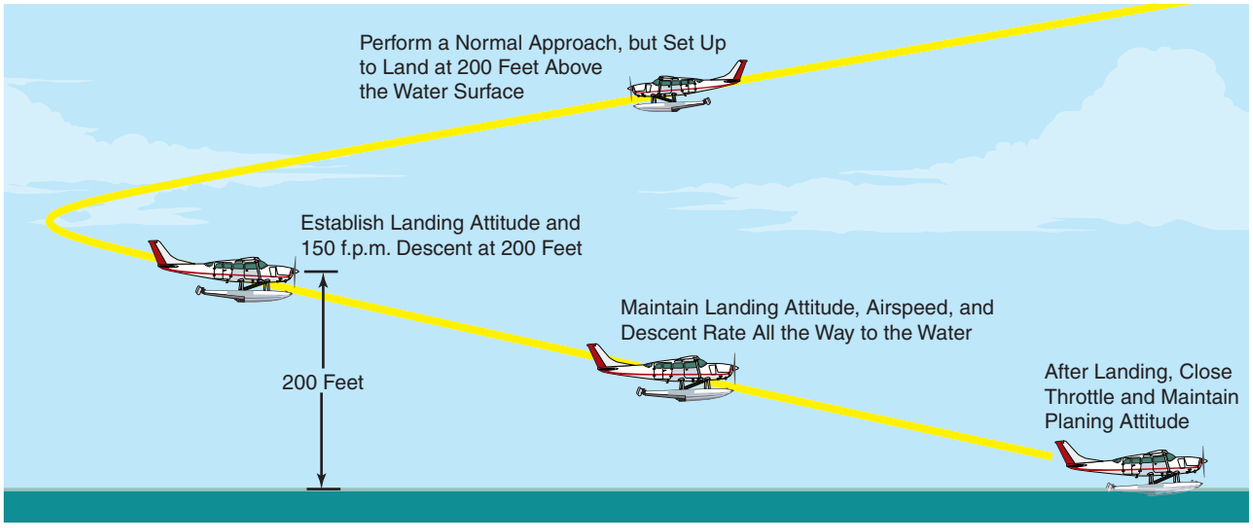

Figure 6-7. Hold the landing attitude, airspeed, and 150 f.p.m. rate of descent all the way to the surface.

indicate that the seaplane is staying on the water before closing the throttle. After the seaplane settles into a displacement taxi, complete the after-landing checklist and lower the water rudders.

An accurately set altimeter may allow the pilot to set up for the touchdown at an altitude somewhat closer to the surface. If the pilot can be certain that the landing configuration and 150 f.p.m. descent will be established well above the water's surface, starting the final glide nearer the surface shortens the descent time and overall landing length.

This technique usually produces a safe, comfortable landing, but the long, shallow glide consumes considerable landing distance. Be certain there is sufficient room for the glide, touchdown, and water run.

ROUGH WATER LANDING

Rough is a very subjective and relative term. Water conditions that cause no difficulty for small boats can be too rough for a seaplane. Likewise, water that poses no challenge to a large seaplane or an experienced pilot may be very dangerous for a smaller seaplane or a less experienced pilot.

Describing a typical or ideal rough water landing procedure is impractical because of the many variables that affect the water's surface. Wind direction and speed must be weighed along with the surface conditions of the water. In most instances, though, make the approach the same as for any other water landing. It may be better, however, to level off just above the water surface and increase the power sufficiently to maintain a rather flat attitude until conditions appear more acceptable, and then reduce the power to touch down. If severe bounces occur, add power and lift off to search for a smoother landing spot.

In general, make the touchdown at a somewhat flatter pitch attitude than usual. This prevents the seaplane from being tossed back into the air at a dangerously low airspeed, and helps the floats to slice through the tops of the waves rather than slamming hard against them. Reduce power as the seaplane settles into the water, and apply back pressure as it comes off the step to keep the float bows from digging into a wave face. If a particularly large wave throws the seaplane into the air before coming off the step, be ready to apply full power to go around.

Avoid downwind landings on rough water or in strong winds. Rough water is usually an indication of strong winds, and vice versa. Although the airspeed for landing is the same, wind velocity added to the seaplane's normal landing speed can result in a much higher groundspeed, imposing excessive stress on the floats, increasing the nose-down tendency at touchdown, and prolonging the water run, since more kinetic energy must be dissipated. As the seaplane slows, the tendency to weathervane may combine with the motion created by the rough surface to create an unstable situation. In strong winds, an upwind landing means a much lower touchdown speed, a shorter water run, and subsequently much less pounding of the floats and airframe.

Likewise, crosswind landings on rough water or in strong winds can leave the seaplane vulnerable to capsizing. The pitching and rolling produced by the water motion increases the likelihood of the wind lifting a wing and flipping the seaplane.

There is additional information on rough water landings in Chapter 8, Emergency Open Sea Operations.

CONFINED AREA LANDING

One of the first concerns when considering a landing in a confined area is whether it is possible to get out