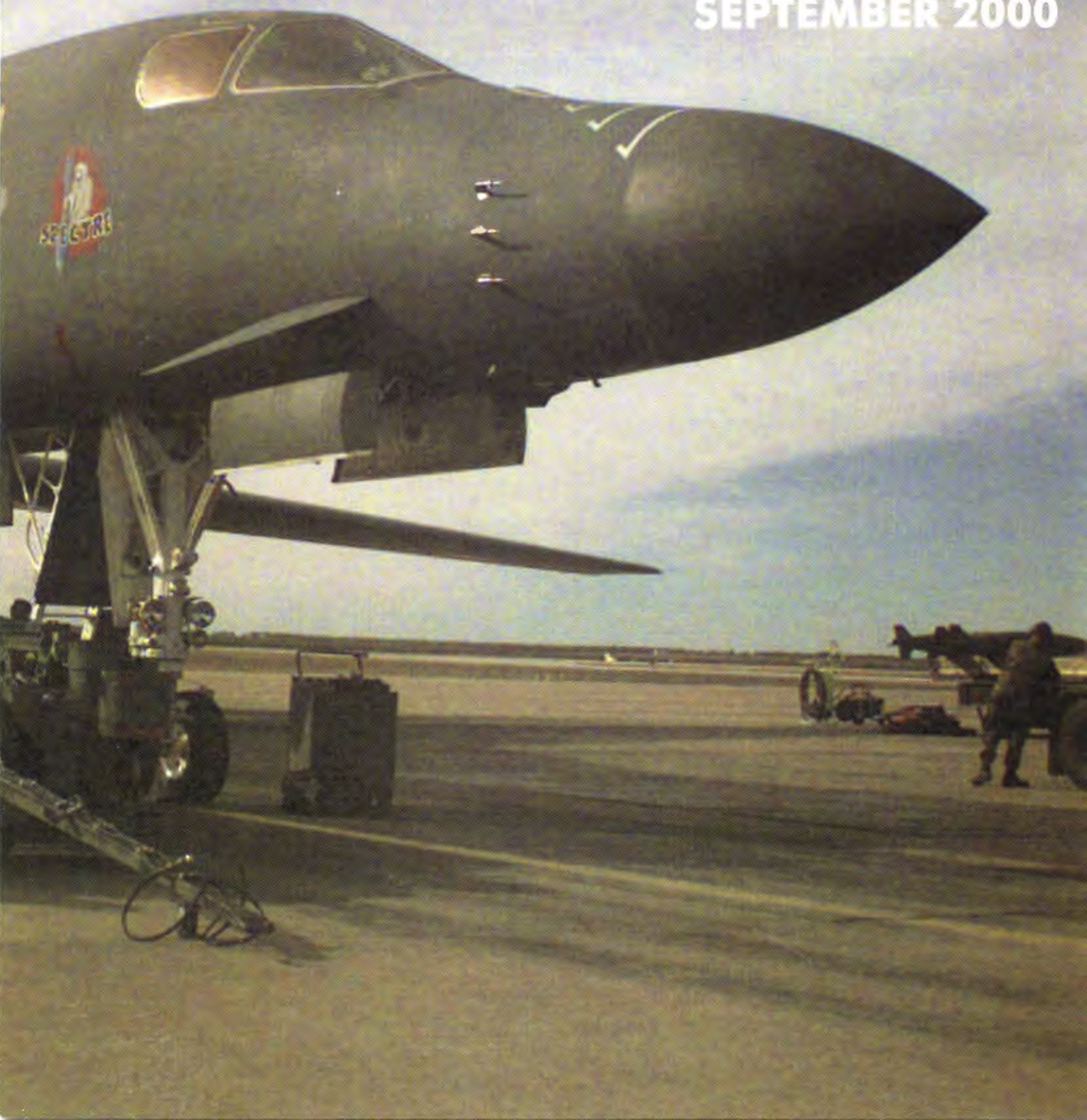


# The Combat EDGE

SEPTEMBER 2000





# The Combat EDGE

Volume 9 Issue 4

September 2000

ACC SP 91-1

Air Combat Command's Mishap Prevention Magazine

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GENERAL JOHN P. JUMPER, *COMMANDER*

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COL. GREGORY A. ALSTON, *CHIEF OF SAFETY*

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 Denotes images digitally manipulated.

# ACCent on Safety

## 11TH INNING STRETCH

It's been a long, grueling 11 months, and now we're entering the last inning of Fiscal Year 2000. September is always a tough month for safety — one in which we historically lose a life in a ground mishap and experience two or three flight Class A mishaps. It's not a time to relax, but to dig in and find the extra energy to carry the fight against complacency, fatigue, inattention to detail, and the myriad other mishap-causing human factors.

There's no hard data on why September is a historically bad month for safety, but a few possible reasons come to the forefront. As the end of the fiscal year approaches, many people try to "squeeze" in their last few days of leave rather than lose them. These are often hurried plans that make people scramble, and cause them to focus more intensely on their travel arrangements and associated activities versus particular tasks at hand. Also, with summer being a high personnel turnover time, new people are on the job and, although still inexperienced in their new environment, are accepting increased responsibility during the month of September. Adverse weather is additionally associated with September, as evidenced by two hurricanes and numerous tornadoes one year ago.

No matter what historical statistics point out, we don't need to crash even one aircraft. Last year COMACC launched a media blitz for the units to use extra caution in September, warning maintainers and aircrew of the increased possibility of mishaps during that time. The result was no flight Class A's in September 1999. We can certainly do it again—there's no rule that says we can't score "zero" Class A mishaps in September two years in a row. Commanders, supervisors, peers, and individuals must all maintain awareness, and remind one another of risks and hazards. We can "repeat last year's record" by working as a safety team.

We have the chance to log an outstanding year in ACC safety—a tribute to everyone in the command. This year may indeed end up as the best ever for safety rates in almost every category. No one person can achieve such success alone; it's a unified effort from general to airman to make it happen. It takes a team. But we haven't won yet; we must first beat September. The game is not over — keep your eye on the ball during this 11th inning stretch. Playing together, we can win as a team!

*Col. Greg "Vader" Alston*  
ACC Chief of Safety





# Safety Down Days

*By Maj. Craig King  
ACC Flight Safety, Langley AFB, Va.*

**I**t's September – time to finish the annual flying program, burn that leave that's been piling up, and start scrounging up subject matter for the Safety Day you've come to expect in early fall. Late last summer, when I was the new guy in ACC's Flight Safety shop, we got several calls from the Numbered Air Forces (NAFs) and wings with some reasonable questions: "When are we expected to hold our wing Safety Day? What topics are required? What are the hot items at headquarters?" This year we're "lead-turning" your questions – answering them as best we can before you have to ask.

**When to hold Safety Day:** Since the timing of a Safety Day is always of high interest, we asked General Jumper for some early guidance to pass on to you. He accepted our request for a generous "window of opportunity" and has determined that each ACC wing can schedule its fall Safety Down Day between 1 October and 30 November 2000. That should give everyone the flexibility to pick a date that offers maximum participation with minimum impact.

**What's required:** Other than the occasional directive message, I haven't seen any Air Force- or ACC-level guidance stating

minimum requirements for conducting Wing Safety/Down Days. ACC has traditionally left Safety Day specifics to the discretion of our NAFs and wings – you shouldn't expect this year to be any different. However, I'd like to offer some insight on what currently engages the minds of our command's Safety leadership. The ideas I've compiled in this article are neither comprehensive nor mandatory briefing items – they're just ideas.

**Suggested Goals:** Your Safety Day program should, as a minimum, have the following goals:

- \* Educate in a creative and entertaining way – never let it become painful.
- \* Call attention to the hazards and associated risks inherent in your units' operations.
- \* Make each person think about his/her personal stake in mitigating risk on and off duty.
- \* Give your commanders and Safety office a chance to communicate their views of potential new hazards (i.e. deployments, night vision goggle ops, new tactics, etc...).
- \* Offer all of your people (not just flyers and supervisors) the chance to share their concerns and ideas.



**Our philosophy in ACC/SE:** We see our job more along the lines of “expanding the bounds of what can be done safely” as opposed to “cranking out restrictions that hinder operations.” Although we would all like to have totally mishap-free Air Force operations, the current necessity to stretch the lives of some workhorse aircraft systems beyond 50 years does not really promote achieving a zero mishap rate, and at least one system is projected to exceed 100 years of service. Fiscal and mission realities dictate that we have to accept (and do what we can to mitigate) the risk of flying older jets if we intend to fulfill the Air Force charter. Even with our newest systems and equipment, safe operations come primarily from remembering to apply “the basics” in an increasingly complicated environment, both on the ground and in the air.

Obviously, we strive to continually reduce mishap rates. Using flight safety as an example, during *any* two calendar years between 1947 and 1958, the Air Force saw more aircraft destroyed than ACC currently owns. We’ve cut flying mishap *fatalities* approximately in half with each passing decade, but over the last 10-15 years we’ve had a difficult time keeping Class A mishap *rates* on a consistently downward path. We rely on events like your Safety Day programs to focus the troops’ minds on managing risk, in hopes of experiencing the fewest possible mishaps in all three Safety discipline – flight, weapons and ground (on and off duty).

### Safety Day Ideas

**Include everyone:** Please go out of your way to include *everyone* equally in Safety Day festivities – families too, especially for off-duty topics. Clearly, not every wing has the facilities to put its entire organization under one roof for safety discussions (if so, make sure your public announcement system is up to the task), so “including everyone” is easier said than done, and will require advance coordination with supervisors. There is sometimes a temptation for maintainers or other support functions to give junior troops a quick whiz-bang briefing or two and send them on their way to fix jets

or accomplish other duties during the remainder of the Safety Down Day. You have to salute their devotion to mission, but if you look at the percentage of young enlisted troops in your wing and notice who has the most ground mishaps, you’ll quickly figure out where a few hours of safety awareness will help the Air Force most.

HQ ACC is struggling with getting individuals to exercise more personal risk management (PRM) during off-duty hours. Motor vehicle mishaps have accounted for 10 of ACC’s 13 FY 00 ground fatalities as of this writing. Hot topics: seat belt usage (look at the Ground Class A mishaps during the “101 Critical Days” if you want justification to talk seat belts); motorcycle safety; driving too fast or while intoxicated; and known off-duty high-risk activities such as parachuting, bull-riding, and extreme sports, to name a few. Each area of the country has its own adventures, seasonal challenges and dangers – make sure to highlight those particular to your region during Safety Day, and ensure that the right level of supervision is made aware of troops’ participation in especially high-risk endeavors.

**Get outside:** When I think of Safety Day programs I’ve attended in the past, I remember... auditorium, auditorium, auditorium. Get your folks outside to the airplanes, weapons, vehicles, and equipment they use every day. Rig jets and inert weapons with discrepancies for weapons troops, maintainers and aircrew to find – turn it into a competition, or at the very least an outdoor briefing, highlighting the basics of tech order compliance and attention to detail. While you’re out there, have your maintenance and weapons troops show your aircrew what’s been falling off the jets (structural damage and dropped objects are getting a lot of attention these days). Teach the aircrew and crew chiefs where to focus a couple extra seconds of knuckle-thumping or eye-balling during their walk-arounds. And by all means, if you’ve got aircrews who have experienced sporty structural damage emergencies, have them point out what systems were affected and what problems resulted. Wing pylons/fuel tanks, leading edge flaps,

and landing gear have been leading culprits in a FY 00 Class B flight mishap rate that more than doubles last year's.

**War stories:** As you know, the Air Force Safety community doesn't get directly involved in investigating combat or combat-related mishaps. However, if someone in your outfit has a story about how he/she was focused on killing MiGs, hitting a target, or supporting combat operations when suddenly they had a ... *whatever* (double generator failure over Baghdad, emergency diversion to a no-kidding combat divert base, spin at night while dodging SAMs...), then he/she should by all means tell it. Since



*During any two calendar years between 1947 and 1958, the Air Force destroyed more airplanes than ACC currently owns.*

many of these events went undocumented by Safety, it follows that there are lots of great stories and lessons learned that haven't yet made the rounds. If you can get one or two people to stand up and share their stories, you've got guaranteed undivided attention from the audience.

**Guest help:** With a little forethought and imagination, getting expertise from outside the wing can keep the same old

Ground Safety topics from being boring. To encourage safe driving, your local or state police may be able to make a stronger impression than those five-year-old Powerpoint slides. Cops (or firemen) can give hands-on demonstrations; some bases even schedule safety demos at their BX or Commissary. The US Coast Guard, Park Services and other agencies will also be glad to find someone to brief on local topics of interest. For Flight Safety, your bird aircraft strike hazard (BASH) reps are another source, either for briefing bird avoidance issues (bird strikes seem to be on the rise recently) or for their pre-existing relationships with potential briefers from outside organizations. Flight docs will usually bring topics of their own, but don't hesitate to ask them about potential areas of concern ("Atkins diet" comes to mind).

**Praise in public:** Safety Day is a great opportunity to recognize award-winners, and you don't have to limit presentations to safety awards. Your leadership is always looking for occasions to recognize Top Gun winners, NCOs and Airmen of the Quarter, etc., so don't let a perfect opportunity slip by. You might also take the time to recognize squadrons and their Safety staffs for overall exceptional safety performance during the last fiscal year, which will give you a chance to put the spotlight on things that they've done right to prevent mishaps.

**Safety privileged information:** We encourage you to take a close look at the mishap reports your wing has written or received, *Blue Four News*, and any Safety-generated material, such as annual and spot inspections, that might provide focus areas for your Safety Day. A word of caution, though: you must ensure that Safety-privileged information is used judiciously and according to Air Force guidance (only to authorized audiences and only for the purpose of mishap prevention). Clearly state the requirements for safeguarding privileged information at the beginning and end of its use in your presentations.

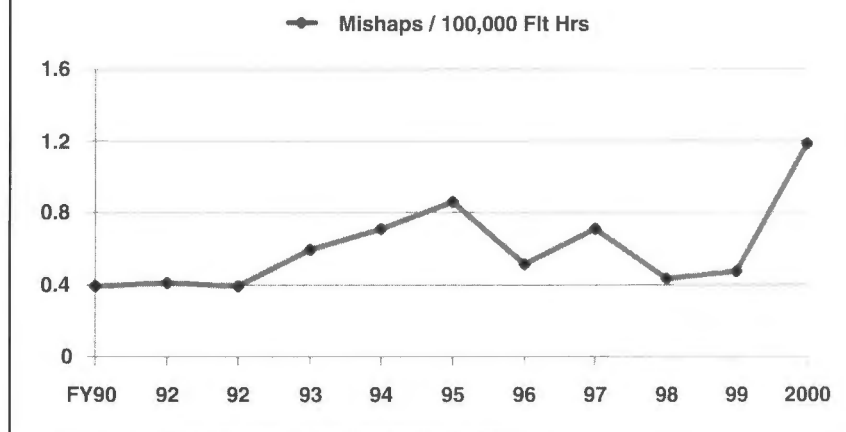
**Online help:** There are a number of well-



established Web sites that can help you get some supporting info. Most have separate sections for Flight, Ground and Weapons Safety. I'll only list a few here, but through those you'll find hotlinks to others. You can start off with the ACC Safety page ([wwwmil.acc.af.mil/se](http://wwwmil.acc.af.mil/se)), where you can get current monthly ACC and Air Force safety mishap rates (normally updated mid-month), as well as annual summaries from the last couple of fiscal years. If you haven't kept your old copies of this magazine, you'll find them available at the same site. The Air Force Safety Center, or AFSC, Web site ([www-afsc.saia.af.mil](http://www-afsc.saia.af.mil)) is much larger and has similar non-privileged mishap information that goes all the way back to post-WW II days. Additionally, some AFSC information is updated daily, they have info available on individual weapons systems, and their monthly periodicals *Flying Safety* and *Road & Rec* are online as well. From the AFSC site, you'll learn that you can access various civil and government aviation-related sites. Many have operational risk management (ORM) sections, but the AFSC site is the most robust with its AF Risk Management Information System; embedded there are some pages that give good examples of how units have used ORM in the real world. And if you're just looking for a place to go for ideas, [www.smilinjack.com](http://www.smilinjack.com) is a links page that'll get you to more aviation-related Web sites than you knew existed.

Unfortunately, you shouldn't expect to find many ready-made presentations online (yet). I haven't stumbled across anything that lets you pick and choose from presentations ready to insert into Safety Day programs. This is where I could use your help - we'd like to have such a section available on

## USAF CLASS B FLIGHT MISHAPS (as of 1 Aug 00)



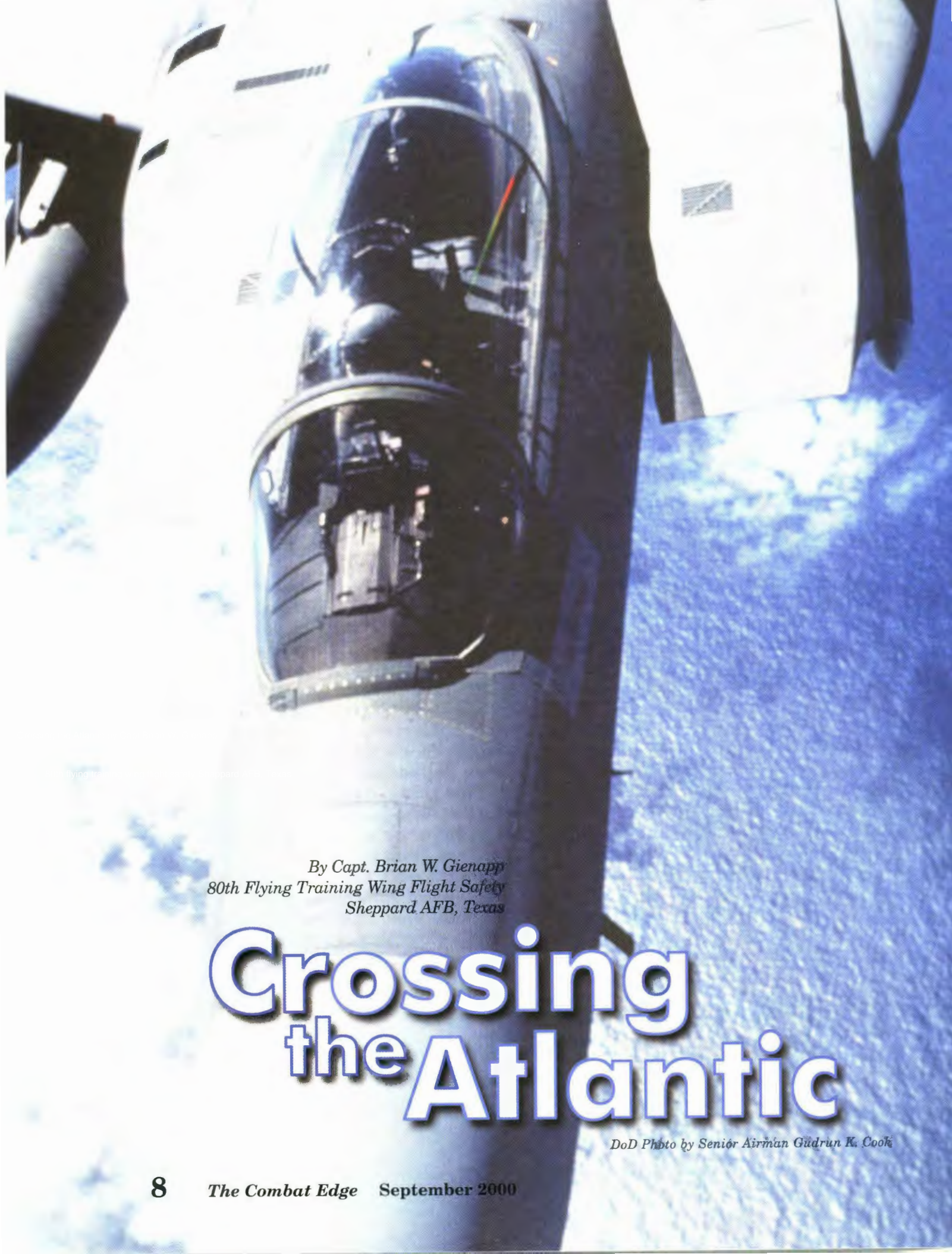
*Although we've lowered overall fatalities by about 50% each decade, some problems persist. Air Force Class B rates are shown.*

the ACC pages. The 5th and 509th Bomb Wings have already sent us some good stuff, as has the 366th Wing, but we need a lot more. If you have a Safety Day agenda, a briefing, or just a good idea that you think ACC should make available to everyone, please send it to us and we'll post it - however, please remember to keep your NAF Safety Office in the loop. My phone number and e-mail address are listed below.

**Last thing:** If you've read all the way to the bottom of this article, you're probably someone who's anticipating actually running some portion of a Safety Day. Do yourself a favor and go the extra mile this time - avoid showing the troops the same old stuff. Take a little professional risk and do something cool with this fall's program. There's still plenty of time to make it happen, and it'll be worth your effort.

Fly safe!

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*By Capt. Brian W. Gienapp  
80th Flying Training Wing Flight Safety  
Sheppard AFB, Texas*

# Crossing the Atlantic

*DoD Photo by Senior Airman Gudrun K. Cook*



**T**here I was . . .

Although less than halfway into my first F-15 ocean crossing, my body politely reminded me that “Lazy Boy” had no part in designing my ejection seat. Our clearance took my flight lead and me right through the only cloud deck in the entire Atlantic, as our tanker’s vertical stabilizer protruded above the tops of the clouds like a shark. As the sun began to burn through the haze, I welcomed the chance to maneuver out to a more comfortable tactical formation on the tanker and break out my lunch of low-residue junk food and watermelon Gatorade.

Suddenly, an unsettling noise radiated from just behind the cockpit. The noise subsided, only to be replaced by a steady flow of hot air streaming from the forward air conditioning vent. The temperature inside the cockpit, aided by the recent unhindered sun, immediately increased 10 degrees, and I started to resent the heat-retaining anti-exposure suit I had on. After an unsuccessful attempt to manually adjust my environmental control system (ECS), I coordinated to fly a pre-contact position on the tanker to escape the sun while I devised a new game plan.

We decided to divert to Iceland (it sounded cool), and wasted no time vectoring north as our tanker coordinated our clearance and fell in trail just in case we needed help. By this time, I was going through Gatorade faster than Michael Jordan (and getting paid much less) and was concerned with heat exhaustion, so I decided to depressurize and command ambient air to the cockpit. Instead of cool North Atlantic air entering the cockpit, I was rudely greeted by a blast of even hotter air that stung when it hit my face. Any skin that was not protected by my mask or visor received instant sunburn and the plastic ear cups in my helmet melted to the sides of my face. By now I felt like I was burning up from the inside and tried to pour some Gatorade down the back of my neck to dissipate some heat. Unfortunately, even the Gatorade was too warm to do any good, as I refocused my effort to simply endure for the 20 minutes of flight time left. Winning the mental battle from here seemed like an impossible task, as efforts to convince myself that it wasn’t so bad were interrupted by

poignant reminders to the contrary (such as touching anything metal). My mind began to play incredible tricks on me, after which I decided to finish off the precious remaining Gatorade I had left. Eventually, the moon-like soil of southern Iceland appeared on the horizon as my flight lead assured me it was for real.

After an uneventful approach and landing, I thanked God as I opened my canopy to the refreshing Icelandic breeze. I stumbled down the ladder and was met by a curious welcoming party who rushed me to the hospital after one of them almost burned his hand on some metal in my cockpit. I knew my name but couldn’t tell them who the president of the United States was, so they rushed me right to the emergency room (ER). In the ER, they tore off my anti-exposure suit to discover my flight suit was so drenched that the sweat was dripping on the floor (even the dollars in my wallet were ruined). Almost an hour after landing, my temperature registered 104 degrees F as they gave me three intravenous bags of fluids and several glasses of glucose mixture. My failed presidential quiz earned me an all-expenses paid trip to the hyperbaric chamber for a total of 13 hours (accompanied the whole time by a communist doctor from Cuba... go figure!), while maintenance personnel worked on my jet. While troubleshooting, they could only stand to be in the cockpit for five minutes at a time because of the heat, but eventually discovered the main ECS valve had failed full hot. I spent the next three days recovering in a Reykjavik hospital. To this day I love Iceland (and watermelon Gatorade).

Here is what I took from my first ocean crossing: **Respect your environment.** When you’re halfway across the ocean, any failure mode can get ugly. I never imagined I could get that dehydrated on an ocean crossing. Even with eight bottles of Gatorade, I was dying for more. When you do need it, don’t ration it out, but instead use as much as you need to keep a clear mind. Although dehydrated, the doctors were amazed at how high my electrolyte level was and thought it helped keep me going. ■



# Nuclear Sure

**S**ince rumor has it that our base of nuclear expertise is rapidly decreasing, I would like to provide some insight into the nuclear arena. This is written for those of you who may not understand what a nuclear surety inspection (NSI) is or why it is such a critical inspection. The safety, security and reliability of our nuclear weapons should be the number-one priority to all units responsible for any or all parts of this process.

Since the end of the Cold War, Air Force units that used to perform a solely nuclear mission have now become conventional as well. These new missions now compete for the units' attention, and resources that used to be solely dedicated to the nuclear commitment. Comments made by Major General Keys, former commander of the Air Force Doctrine Center, make it easy to understand the importance of nuclear weapons to the United States' political and military objectives, and why they must remain the priority for those units tasked with a nuclear mis-

sion. "The task of protecting America's national security is different, and in many ways more complex, than it was during the Cold War. Although the United States no longer faces the same threats, there are new dangers emerging from regional instability. While the risk of global conflict is greatly reduced, as long as nuclear weapons exist, the possibility of their use remains. These risks are aggravated as likely aggressor nations continue to work to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, the United States retains a reduced, but highly effective, nuclear force as a deterrent. The goals of nuclear operations are mutually supportive: Deter the use of weapons of mass destruction by an enemy, effectively employ force if deterrence should fail, and support US national policy initiatives."

No other weapon has the impact on national policy that a nuclear weapon does. Our ability to safely, securely and reliably maintain these weapons is just as important as our ability to employ them. The political

0046

*By Senior Master Sgt. Ray Fletcher  
HQ ACC Inspector General's Office  
Langley AFB, Va.*

*DoD Photo by Senior Airman Orly N. Tyrell*



# ty Inspections

ramifications of loss, theft, seizure, destruction, or uncommanded use would be extremely detrimental to the policies of the United States. An NSI is a snapshot inspection to determine if a unit charged with this responsibility is meeting this demanding standard.

Technical Order 11N-25-1, Department of Defense Nuclear Weapons Technical Inspection System, is the manual that covers the conduct of these inspections. As you can see from the title, the requirement for an NSI comes from the DoD, not the Air Force.

Our NSI is considered a nuclear weapons technical inspection by the DoD, and is defined in 11N-25-1 as, "A service or Defense Threat Reduction Agency (formerly Defense Nuclear Agency) inspection of a nuclear capable unit conducted to examine nuclear weapons' technical assembly, maintenance, storage functions, logistic movement, handling, and safety and security directly associated with these functions."

As a service we are directed by the manual to, "Ensure all certified nuclear-capable units are inspected on a regular programmed frequency, as designated by the service, not to exceed 18 months between inspections."

The areas that are inspected during an NSI are covered in section two of the T.O. Section three discusses the rating system used for an NSI, section four is scheduling, section five is administrative procedures, and section six covers the reporting process. Although the T.O. is only 33 pages long, it is huge in scope. AFI 90-201, chapter three, and ACCI 90-201, part three, are also valuable to the NSI evaluator.

You can see that this technical order has a lot of good information that needs to be reviewed by anyone who participates in the NSI process. By keeping nuclear surety at the forefront of thought and action in your daily Air Force duties, you will find it much easier to weather an intense nuclear surety inspection. ■





# HURRICANE!

## Part 3

*Produced by the National Disaster Education Coalition, Washington, D.C.*

### WHAT TO DO IF EVACUATION IS NECESSARY

- Leave as soon as possible (if possible, in daylight).
- Secure your home by unplugging appliances and turning off electricity and the main water valve.
- Tell someone outside of the storm area where you are going.
- If time permits, and you live in an identified surge zone or area prone to flooding, move furniture to a higher floor.
- Bring pre-assembled emergency supplies and warm protective clothing. Bring these items with you to a shelter:
  - First aid kit, first aid manual, and prescription medications
  - Baby food and diapers
  - Cards, games, books
  - Toiletries
  - Battery-powered radio and extra batteries
  - Flashlight (one per person) and extra batteries
  - Blankets or sleeping bags
  - Identification
  - Valuable papers (copies of insurance papers, passports, and other essential documents)
- Lock up your home and leave

### WHAT TO DO AFTER A HURRICANE

Continue listening to local radio or television stations or a NOAA Weather Radio for information and instructions. Access may be limited to some parts of the community, or

roads may be blocked.

If you evacuated, return home when local officials tell you it is safe. Local officials on the scene are your best source of information on accessible areas and passable roads.

Stay alert for extended rainfall and subsequent flooding, even after the hurricane or tropical storm has weakened. Hurricanes may stall or change direction when they make landfall, or they may bring a lot of rain upriver, causing additional flood hazards for hours or days after the storm.

Stay away from floodwaters. Drive only if absolutely necessary and avoid flooded roads and washed-out bridges. Continue to follow all flood safety messages. Floodwaters may last for days following a hurricane. If you come upon a flooded road and waters are rising rapidly around you, if you can safely get out of the car, do so immediately and climb to higher ground. Never try to walk, swim, or drive through such swift water. People attempting to drive through water or playing in high water cause most flood fatalities. As little as six inches of water can sweep you off your feet, and two feet can carry away most automobiles.

If you come upon a barricade, follow detour signs or turn around and go another way. To protect people from unsafe roads, local officials put up barricades, and driving around them can be a serious risk.

Stay on firm ground. Standing water may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.

Help injured or trapped persons. Give first aid where appropriate. Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate



danger of further injury. Call for help.

Help a neighbor who may require special assistance—infants, elderly people and people with disabilities. Elderly people and people with disabilities may require additional assistance. People who care for them or who have large families may need additional assistance in emergency situations.

Avoid disaster areas. Your presence might hamper rescue and other emergency operations and put you at further risk from the residual effects of floods, such as contaminated waters, crumbled roads, landslides, mudflows, and other hazards.

Avoid loose or dangling power lines; immediately report them to the Power Company, police, or fire department. Reporting potential hazards will get the utilities turned off as quickly as possible, preventing further hazard and injury.

Electrical equipment should be checked and dried before being returned to service. Call an electrician for advice before using electrical items, which may have received water damage.

Stay out of the building if water remains around the building. Floodwaters often undermine foundations, causing buildings to sink, floors to crack, or walls to collapse.

When entering buildings, use extreme caution. Hurricane-driven floodwaters may have damaged buildings where you least expect it. Carefully watch every step you take.

- Wear sturdy shoes. The most common injury following a disaster is cut feet.

- Use battery-powered lanterns or flashlights when examining buildings. Battery-powered lighting is the safest and easiest, preventing fire hazard for the user, occupants, and building.

- Examine walls, floors, doors, staircases, and windows to make sure that the building is not in danger of collapsing. Watch for loose plaster, drywall, and ceilings that could fall.

- Inspect foundations for cracks or other damage. Cracks and damage to a foundation can render a building uninhabitable.

- Look for fire hazards. There may be broken or leaking gas lines, flooded electrical circuits, or submerged furnaces or electrical appliances. Flammable or explosive materials may come from upstream. Fire is the most frequent hazard following floods.

- Check for gas leaks. If you smell gas or

hear a blowing or hissing noise, open a window and quickly leave the building. Turn off the gas, using the outside main valve if you can, and call the Gas Company from a neighbor's home. If you turn off the gas for any reason, it must be turned back on by a professional.

- Look for electrical system damage. If you see sparks or broken or frayed wires or if you smell burning insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. If you have to step in water to get to the fuse box or circuit breaker, call an electrician first for advice. Electrical equipment should be checked and dried before being returned to service.

- Check for sewage and water line damage. If you suspect sewage lines are damaged, avoid using the toilets and call a plumber. If water pipes are damaged, contact the Water Company, and avoid using water from the tap. You can obtain safe water from undamaged water heaters or by melting ice cubes.

- Watch out for animals, especially poisonous snakes that may have come into buildings with floodwaters. Use a stick to poke through debris. Floodwaters flush many animals and snakes out of their homes.

- Take pictures of the damage, both of the building and its contents, for insurance claims.

Open windows and doors to ventilate and dry your home.

Check refrigerated food for spoilage. If power was lost, some foods may be spoiled.

Avoid drinking or preparing food with tap water until you are certain it is not contaminated. Hurricane-driven floodwaters may have contaminated public water supplies or wells. Local officials should advise you on the safety of the drinking water. Undamaged water heaters or melted ice cubes can provide good sources of fresh drinking water.

Pump out flooded basements gradually (about one-third of the water per day) to avoid structural damage. If the water is pumped out completely in a short period time, pressure from water on the outside could cause basement walls to collapse.

Service damaged septic tanks, cesspools, pits, and leaching systems as soon as possible. Damaged sewage systems are health hazards.

Use the telephone only for emergency calls. Telephone lines are frequently overwhelmed in disaster situations. They need to be clear for emergency calls to go through. ■



# "Check 6" When Stopping

*By Master Sgt. Terry Haskew  
31st Maintenance Squadron Production Superintendent  
Aviano Air Base, Italy*

**I**t's easy to get tunnel vision when driving – staring straight ahead in a daze – but we should always try to be aware of our whole environment, especially when coming to a red light, stop sign or stalled traffic. It is just as important to know what is happening behind you as what's in front. We know where we are going to stop, but do we know where that car, truck or bus behind us plans to execute its brakes? You won't unless you "check 6" or look in your mirrors. Two recent near misses emphasize this point dramatically.

The first incident took place on a cloverleaf off-ramp during a man's commute to work. The rider saw a traffic jam ahead and stopped in the left one-third of the lane, 8 to 10 feet behind the last car (as he remembered to do from his motorcycle safety class). Why so far back? Escape routes are important to motorcyclists, since they can be lost in the traffic environment. This particular rider credited his motorcycle safety training with saving his life.

Seconds after coming to a stop, he heard a loud screeching sound behind him. He looked in his rearview mirror and saw smoke coming from a dump truck's tires as it skidded towards him, unable to stop. Instinctively, he checked to ensure his escape route was clear and accelerated around the car ahead of him, just as the truck came to a stop only two feet behind it. Do the math. Motorcycles are unsafe, right? In this case, had he been in a car or not known to leave an escape route, he would probably be another USAFE statistic.

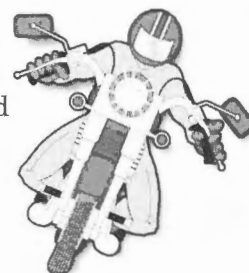
The next day another two-wheeler, also coming to work, was following a dump truck (hmmm, sounds familiar), with a delivery van behind him. The truck signaled a right-hand turn as it approached a red light intersection. Just as the light became visible to the motorcyclist, he noticed that the arrow indicating his

direction had turned red and the left-hand turn signal was green, but the cars had not started moving.

Remembering the van behind him, he looked in his mirror before applying the brakes, only to see the van looming ever closer as the driver was busily chatting on his cell phone and looking for something on the passenger side. The rider suddenly realized that he was going through that intersection either alone or as a hood ornament, and quickly looked for left-turning traffic ahead. They still were not moving. He accelerated through the intersection, followed closely by the van.

Now I'm not advocating running red lights here, but think of the consequences. I remember what I was told in a "local conditions" course upon arriving in Italy: "When the light turns green, count three cars going through in front of you and then look both ways before proceeding." Guess the other driver with the green light to turn left remembered that too, luckily.

Situational awareness was key to the avoidance of these two potentially life-threatening situations. Aggressively scanning for hazards allows you to identify them, predict what might happen, decide the best course of action, and execute that action. Remember, the typical motorcycle accident allows the rider only **two seconds** to **complete all** collision-avoidance actions. Motorcyclists can't depend on other drivers' responsibility and attentiveness. If you're not paying close attention, you're most likely going to end up in an accident. These survivors had three things in common: they both completed a Motorcycle Safety Foundation course, they used what they learned, and they both lived to ride another day. ■









# A-7D CORSAIR II

The A-7D was a single-seat, tactical close-air support aircraft. Although designed primarily as a ground attack aircraft, it also had limited air-to-air combat capability. It was derived from the basic A-7 originally developed by Link-Temco Vought (LTV) for the U.S. Navy. Initial delivery of production models began in December of 1968 and TAC received its first in August of 1969. By the time A-7D production ended in 1976, 454 had been built. The Corsair II demonstrated an outstanding capability to attack ground targets, and achieved its excellent accuracy with the aid of an automatic electronic navigation and weapon delivery system.

## **SPECIFICATIONS**

Span: 38 feet 8 inches

Length: 46 feet 1 inch

Weight: 39,325 pounds loaded

Maximum speed: 663 mph

Cruising speed: 545 mph

Range: 3,044 miles

Service ceiling: 37,200 feet

## **ARMAMENT**

One M61A1 20mm Vulcan cannon and up to 15,000 pounds of mixed ordnance and/or fuel tanks on eight external stations.









# Jack's Story

*By Gary L. Johnson  
319th Air Refueling Wing Safety  
Grand Forks AFB, N.D.*

I was 15 when I first witnessed the destruction of a young life. It was the last day of school and the beginning of summer vacation, 1961. Three friends, Jack (who was 16 and owned the car), Dennis (who was 15), another 15-year-old (whose name I can no longer remember), and I decided to “hit the road” and celebrate. We headed down to the town of Palo Verde, at the Colorado River, on the border between California and Arizona. Of course we didn’t inform our parents, since to ask permission would have brought an instantaneous “You’re too young to go that far!”

After enduring the long, hot drive, we arrived in Palo Verde in the early afternoon. We decided to do some exploring and drove the dirt roads looking for a place to access the river. Along one of these back roads, where the dust was six inches deep and the consistency of talcum powder, the car punctured a tire. Imagine for a moment what it’s like to change a tire in ankle deep dust at 105 degrees. Needless to say that when we were through, we made a mad dash for the river. The road we were on eventually ended at the riverbank and the four of us jumped out and headed for the water. Dennis, the other 15-year-old, and I waded into the water with our clothes on, eager to cool off and wash the dust off. Jack, on the other hand, decided not to get his jeans wet and started to take off his pants. That was when he discovered his wallet was missing.

Jack immediately started hounding us to get out of the water and go with him back to where we had changed the tire. We were young and really enjoying the water, so we told him to forget it for now and that we’d look for it on the way out. Jack’s impatience and frustration got the better of him and off he drove to search for his billfold while the three of us stayed in the water. He returned within a half an hour, even more agitated and overheated, and without the wallet. After a few choice (but unprintable) words aimed in our direction, he ran to the river and dove in the muddy water. We looked around but didn’t see him. About a minute and a half later, Jack floated to the surface, face down, his head covered in mud. We just laughed and left him there!

I must digress for a moment to explain the situation. It’s not that we didn’t care, because we did. But this was “Jack,” the class clown, the guy who was always cracking jokes and pulling stunts designed to “get your goat.” At the time we thought this was just another stunt to get attention. After approximately a minute I went over to Jack and lifted his head out of the water. He gasped for breath and said that he couldn’t move. As I held his limp body I expected him to jump up at any minute and say “Gotcha!” Still not sure that anything had really happened, I finally called to the others and we half dragged, half carried him to the car where we unceremoniously put him in the



back seat. This was no easy feat since this was a two-door vehicle and Jack was not light.

I asked Jack what to do and he said that I should drive him home, 200 miles away. Now Jack's car was a '53 Mercury with a Thunderbird engine, and the envy of us all. I also knew the only reason he had chosen me to drive was that I was a closer friend than the others, and he was aware that I knew how to drive. I have to say that at this point I was still convinced that once we got off the dirt and reached the main road Jack would bolt upright and spring his trap. When we reached the highway and Jack said, "hurry," it finally sunk in my thick skull that something was terribly wrong. I floored the gas pedal and sped towards Los Angeles with the speedometer resting on 95 mph. Shortly after we hit the pavement the sun went down and we roared on into the darkness, getting more scared with each passing mile.

Ten miles short of Indio, California, and almost 90 miles from our starting point, red lights started flashing behind the vehicle and I pulled over. The California Highway Patrolman (CHP) approached the car and asked for my driver's license. I told him that I didn't have one and that our friend was in the back seat and couldn't move. The officer had us exit the vehicle while he talked to Jack then took his keys and scraped them across the bottom of Jack's bare foot. He turned to us and said, "follow me!" With his lights flashing the CHP officer led us on an 85-mph race to the hospital in Indio. While the rest of us waited outside, the emergency room crew took Jack inside.

It must have been after midnight when Dennis' parents (with my mother) arrived at the hospital in Indio. Jack's mom and dad arrived shortly after our folks. The doctors had informed the three of us kids earlier that Jack had broken his neck, was paralyzed, and they weren't sure he'd be able to walk again. Just before our parents took us home we were allowed to go in and visit Jack. I'll never forget the sight that greeted us. There

was our muscular little friend, lying on a frame with his ankles tethered and a traction device screwed into his skull in four places.

The ride home wasn't a pleasant experience, although I must say that we did not get lectured for the entire trip. Perhaps our parents decided we'd learned a lesson, or perhaps they were as much in shock as we were. Later, when Jack was referred to specialists in Los Angeles, we learned that he had not actually "broken" his neck. What had happened was that, even though Jack had made a somewhat shallow dive, his head had hit the mud and bent his neck forward. When his neck bent, two vertebrae separated and then pinched his spinal cord when they came back together, causing irreparable damage.

I'd like to be able to tell you that this story has a happy ending, but it doesn't. Jack spent a year in hospitals specializing in spinal injuries, but didn't regain the ability to walk or completely use his hands. I took care of him the first summer he was allowed to come home and, although he maintained hope for a while, eventually the reality of what had happened overwhelmed him. A year and a half later I joined the Air Force and saw him only occasionally when I was home on leave. Lacking the support groups now available, or maybe unwilling to make the best of what he had left, he spiraled downhill, choosing alcohol to deaden his spiritual pain. Years later I learned from a friend that Jack had died of natural causes in his mid 30s.

I'm telling this painful story for the first time in the hopes that some of you may stop and think about my friend. Maybe you'll stop just long enough to prevent this type of misfortune from happening to you or someone close to you. Diving into unknown waters or making snap, and often foolish, decisions when you are angry can have disastrous results, even in a place as benign as a muddy riverbank on the first day of summer vacation. ■



*By Master Sgt. Danny Smith  
Airframe Power Plant General Section Chief  
USAF Thunderbirds  
Nellis AFB, Nev.*



# "Towing" the Line

*DoD Photo by Technical Sgt. James Green*

I've been very fortunate throughout my Air Force career to never be seriously injured while maintaining the F-16 aircraft. Sure, I've gotten the occasional "Falcon Bite" from the aircraft's sharp edges, and even whacked myself in the head a few times while using a speed handle. Who hasn't? I say fortunate, or better yet lucky, because I'm sure I didn't always stop to think about safety hazards associated with many of my taskings. Probably at the top of this list are those jobs we perform on a routine basis, such as ground handling of aircraft. This task is one we all take seriously. After all, getting the aircraft from point "A" to point "B" without causing damage to it is definitely in the best interest of all those involved. Unfortunately, we tend to let our guard down when we do something so many times and never experience any problems. This may have been a contributing factor in an incident that left a co-worker with a serious injury to the upper portion of one of his legs.

Our unit had recently deployed to a location in Southwest Asia in support of Operation DESERT SHIELD. If I remember correctly, the war had not begun, but our pilots were flying sorties to familiarize themselves with the area and to maintain proficiency. Pretty much business as usual for the maintainers... just performing all the associated tasks that go along with aircraft maintenance. In this particular case, the individual and several others were preparing to tow an aircraft. Nothing cosmic... the recommended amount of personnel doing each of their small parts to ensure the task was completed, one of which is connecting the tow bar to the aircraft and tow vehicle. Typically, the tow vehicle driver will approach the aircraft with the tow bar connected to the vehicle and back into place, just short of the nose landing gear. Another person will disconnect the tow bar from the vehicle's pintle hook, wheel it back to the aircraft, and hold on to it while another



person connects the opposite end to the nose landing gear. As this is happening, the tow vehicle driver is awaiting his opportunity to back towards the aircraft and connect to the tow bar. This is where a "routine" task became everything but routine.

Somehow the driver's foot slipped off the brake and his tow vehicle rammed into the individual holding the tow bar, trapping his leg between the tow bar and tow vehicle. I don't know the full extent of his injury, but I recall that, because of the amount of blood loss and the risks associated with the individual going into shock, it was potentially life threatening. There just happened to be another individual on hand that was a certified emergency medical technician. My understanding is that the actions he took may have saved the individual's life. Shortly after the incident, he was transported out of the region to a facility where doctors could better treat his injuries. Unfortunately, a full recovery was out of the question. I met him several years later after a permanent change of station move, and he still had a noticeable limp. Furthermore, he was limited in his ability to perform his job and was anticipating a medical discharge. I don't think it's feasible or even necessary to assess blame in this case... it was just a very unfortunate accident. It's not like the individuals violated any steps listed in the technical order for aircraft towing.

But it goes without question, given the opportunity to do it all over again, they would probably do things differently. Like what? Most obvious in this case would have been to keep a greater distance between the tow bar and tow vehicle while the individuals were connecting the tow bar to the aircraft. This would have given the driver more time to stop the vehicle when his foot slipped off the brake. Perhaps even the individual who was injured would now choose to instruct the driver to pull farther away until he was ready for the vehicle to come back. Obviously we can "what if" this situation forever and it will not change the outcome. But, although they can't go back in time, all of us can take measures to ensure a similar inci-

dent doesn't happen in the future. Yes, I know this happened a long time ago, but I would venture to say that the opportunity still exists for a similar incident. How many of you have witnessed someone backing a vehicle and tow bar towards an aircraft and leaving very little room when they stop? I don't believe people want to do the wrong thing. Maybe they see it as a challenge to get the tow bar aligned perfectly with the nose tire, thereby demonstrating their advanced driving skills. Maybe they think it will save time, or maybe they see others do it and it has just become an accepted way of performing this task.

We could look even further into this and not only factor in the potential for personal injury, but also the risk of damaging an aircraft. How many of you have ever heard the story about the individual who was backing a vehicle and tow bar towards an aircraft and his foot slipped off the brake, causing him to slam into the nose landing gear? Aside from the personal embarrassment of doing this, the individual caused extensive damage to an Air Force asset, which necessitated many hours and dollars to fix. Because of these types of incidents, some units have implemented local guidance to help prevent future occurrences. For example, I was once assigned to a squadron that instructed personnel to stop 15 to 25 feet away from the aircraft prior to disconnecting the tow bar from the vehicle. After the tow bar was connected to the aircraft, the vehicle driver could then proceed back towards the tow bar. This isn't to say that every Air Force unit needs to implement additional safety measures to their towing procedures, but some units without these extra policies may want to consider them.

The examples I give in this article are truly isolated incidents and are far more likely not to happen than to happen. But, just like many of the "freak accidents" we hear about, or our safety monitors forward to us on e-mail, they may enable us to recognize an additional potential for a mishap and allow us to take measures to prevent it. ■





*DoD Photo by Master Sgt. Keith Reed*

# Time, Safety and the "If Only" Refrain

*By Lt. Col. Christopher F. Burne  
20th Fighter Wing Staff Judge Advocate, Shaw AFB, S.C.*

**S**afety is more than checklists, spotters and seat belts. Safety is a way of life. It is not enough to immerse oneself in safety slogans, posters and briefings. These things are useful, but are external. Watching an exercise show is useful, but doing the exercises is what improves your health. To adopt the operational risk management (ORM) mindset is to internalize a lifestyle that continually

calculates risks and prudently acts to minimize those risks. Such a lifestyle sharply reduces the chances of accidental injury.

How often have you heard an accident victim bemoan the circumstances of his or her mishap by stating, "If only..." "If only I had been more observant before crossing the railroad tracks. If only I had asked a friend to drive me home from the party. If



only I had the checklist opened while performing the assigned task.” As the staff judge advocate of the world’s largest operational F-16 fighter wing, I review countless safety reports, line of duty determinations, reports of survey, and disciplinary actions. The one common denominator in nearly all these actions is the “if only” refrain.

Most mishaps are preventable, but until mishap prevention is adopted as a lifestyle, injuries and property damage will continue. Often, the costs in terms of health care and lost productivity are significant, as is the cost to career. Let’s take driving under the influence of alcohol (DUI) as an example. Some folks don’t view DUI in the ORM category. I do. The proof is in the “if onlys.” If only the individual had acted more responsibly. If only he or she had made arrangements for a ride home. If

only the host of the party had kept an eye on the departing guests. If only the other guests had been looking out for one another. The “if only” refrain goes on and on. This office recently placed an article in the base newspaper showing the “costs” of that last drink.

Apart from the risks of personal injury to oneself and innocent bystanders, a DUI often ends up costing the member around \$5,000 in legal proceedings, forfeitures, fines, and lost stripes. The simplest of ORM calculations will indicate it was not worth the risk. The same can be applied to alcohol-related accidents involving swimming, boating, or other recreational activities. A quick ORM check and plan could mean the difference between fun and painful recuperation in a sunless hospital room.

My family and I recently made a house-hunting trip in anticipation of an upcoming Pentagon assignment. Upon arriving in northern Virginia after a nearly 9-hour trip, we spent one hour finding neighborhoods that we would be visiting the next day while viewing available homes. Sud-

denly, my wife thought our van “felt funny” when braking. I thought I heard a low grinding noise. The next morning we faced a serious problem. Do we “waste” the 18-hour round trip and possibly lose out on a choice property by canceling our house-hunting appointments and getting the van serviced, or do we hope for the best and press ahead with our schedule? We opted for getting the van checked out. Finding a good home was very important, but risking injury, especially to our children, was an unacceptable alternative. We found a dealership and convinced them to accept our van for service without an appointment. The mechanic discovered the brakes had worn down to the point of needing immediate replacement. Prior to this time, no mechanic who serviced our vehicle had even mentioned the poor condition of the brakes. The work took the

better part of the day, which impacted our house hunting, but as we pulled safely into our driveway that evening after a long ride home, my wife and I knew we did the right thing.

Make safety a part of your routine. At the flight line shop, open the checklist, place it in front of you, and follow the guidance.

When driving home, use your seat belt and drive defensively. Never mix alcohol with driving, boating, water skiing, or other activities requiring sober reasoning and unimpaired coordination. Internalize the ORM mindset and the odds of your name crossing my desk in a line of duty, report of survey, Article 15 punishment, or – worst case – mortuary affairs review will be slim to none. Take time for safety, or risk losing the very thing you thought you were saving – time. Don’t trade time for recreation, time for college, time with family and friends, for time in a hospital room, time performing extra duties, or time in a jail cell. Don’t join the chorus of accident victims singing the “if only” refrain. ■

Most mishaps are preventable, but until mishap prevention is adopted as a lifestyle, injuries and property damage will continue.



# MONTHLY AWARDS

## PILOT SAFETY AWARD OF DISTINCTION

*Capt. David P. Blazek  
99th Reconnaissance Squadron, 9th Reconnaissance Wing  
Beale AFB, Calif.*



While flying an operational mission in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH, Capt. Blazek showed extraordinary airmanship in managing one of the U-2's most serious emergencies. On climb out (passing FL 600) from his deployed base, he noticed his hydraulic pressure fluctuating to near zero. Capt. Blazek quickly acted to configure the aircraft for landing by lowering the gear and attempting to trim nose up. The landing gear extended, but he was unable to set the desired trim for descent and landing. Capt. Blazek turned his aircraft and started his descent using bank angles and his autopilot to relieve the heavy trim forces while staying within the required descent profile for structural integrity of the airframe and sensor package. Poor weather conditions at his deployed base further complicated his emergency return. Crosswinds were gusting to the aircraft limit, and blowing dust meant the field had only intermittent visual flight rules (VFR) conditions. Operations personnel calculated the no-flap landing distance under ideal conditions to be 8,000 feet, assuming the emergency brake system worked. The deployed base's runway is 13,000 feet long, but due to raised centerline lighting (hazardous for the tail gear), only the center 8,000 is usable for a U-2.

Capt. Blazek dumped fuel and requested vectors to a runway 17 TACAN approach. He acquired the field between dust storms and flew a flawless no-flap, 1.5-degree glidepath approach within two knots of stall speed. Capt. Blazek landed "spot on" 1,000 feet from the beginning of his landing zone.

Capt. Blazek maintained directional control in the extremely gusty crosswinds by full rudder and aileron inputs. He waited patiently to begin braking until weight was firmly on his main gear strut (ensuring he did not bleed any left over fluid from his brakes). With the end of the center 8,000 feet of runway quickly approaching, Capt. Blazek applied his brakes and discovered them to be completely ineffective. He quickly shut his throttle off and cautiously lowered his left wing tip to the ground. As he left the center "U-2 friendly" 8,000 feet of runway, he offset his aircraft to avoid contact with the raised centerline lighting. The friction from his wing tip skid dragging along the runway, as well as the extra wind resistance from shutting down his engine, allowed the aircraft to eventually decelerate and stop with approximately 1,000 feet left of the 13,000 foot runway.

Capt. Blazek egressed uneventfully. The aircraft was towed from the runway, and suffered only minor damage. Capt. Blazek should be commended for his exemplary airmanship in landing the U-2 out of its most difficult configuration during extreme weather conditions. His quick, smart actions were directly responsible for the safe recovery of a national asset.



## AIRCREW SAFETY AWARD OF DISTINCTION

*Lt. Col. Jeffry F. Smith, Capt. Todd M. Valentine,  
Capt. Brian S. Ogawa, Capt. Kenneth R. Boillot  
37th Bomb Squadron, 28th Bomb Wing, Ellsworth AFB, S.D.*



While leading a routine two-ship night training mission en route to the Utah Test and Training Range at 25,000 feet, Tiger 01 entered an uncommanded right-hand turn. Capt. Valentine disconnected the autopilot and attempted to turn the aircraft to the left. He instantly recognized that his control stick was frozen in position and immediately transferred aircraft control to Col. Smith. Finding that his control stick was likewise locked in place, with no associated loss of hydraulic or electrical systems, Col. Smith directed Capt. Valentine to perform

emergency BOLDFACE procedures to disconnect the sticks, thereby separating the two control sticks to operate independently. With the sticks disconnected, Col. Smith's control stick moved freely again, but only with very marginal effect on the aircraft's flight controls. During the transfer of aircraft control and the subsequent disconnect of the control sticks, Tiger 01 lost approximately 800 feet of altitude before aircraft control was regained. Col. Smith declared an in-flight emergency with the air route traffic control center (ARTCC) and continued a slow descent to regain more control over the aircraft. In the descent, Capt. Ogawa noted that there was a choice between recovering to Hill AFB, about 150 miles away, or to Ellsworth AFB, nearly 300 miles away. The emergency procedure checklist directed the crew to land as soon as possible. However, given the heavy fuel load and the need to reduce weight to regain more control authority, the crew elected to return to Ellsworth while dumping fuel.

Approaching 10,000 feet, Capt. Valentine led the crew through preparatory steps of the controlled ejection checklist. Capt. Boillot referenced the expanded technical order for each procedure accomplished throughout the emergency, ensuring the crew complied with all notes, warnings, and cautions. He also coordinated with the Ellsworth AFB supervisor of flying (SOF) to ensure ground emergency support was in place. Col. Smith continued to fly the aircraft from the right seat with the only stick available for control of flight. Flight with control sticks disconnected had been attempted only once before during initial B-1B flight tests by qualified test pilots, and has never been attempted since. During the flight test, the test pilots quickly concluded that the aircraft was so difficult to control that they reconnected the sticks and formally recommended no further testing take place with the control sticks disconnected. During the controllability check, Col. Smith prepared to execute the first-ever landing of a B-1B with sticks disconnected. After a successful check, Col. Smith accomplished one practice approach, then landed the aircraft flawlessly from a subsequent approach. The superior airmanship, professionalism, and crew coordination exhibited throughout this never-before-seen emergency in the B-1B directly resulted in safely recovering a rare and irreplaceable \$280 million flying asset and the lives of four crewmembers.



## FLIGHT LINE SAFETY AWARD OF DISTINCTION

*Airman 1st Class Dawn Bachman  
49th Operations Support Squadron, 49th Fighter Wing  
Holloman AFB, N.M.*



During the late afternoon on 13 April, Amn. Bachman was working as the local controller in the Holloman AFB tower. At 1721L, Amn. Bachman cleared "Bandit 11," a single F-117A "on to hold RW 25." Thirty seconds later, Amn. Bachman cleared "Legman 3," a single F-117A, to land on RW 16. As Legman 3 touched down, Bandit 11 initiated his takeoff roll on RW 25 without clearance. A deadly situation was rapidly developing as RW 16 and RW 25 intersect near the midpoint of each runway. Wind and performance criteria were such that the F-117A taking off without clearance could not possibly be airborne prior to the 16-25 intersection, and the landing F-117A would have had great difficulty stopping prior to crossing RW 25.

Amn. Bachman directed "Legman 3 go-around." In a tower pattern that is among the busiest in the world, Amn. Bachman had total situational awareness and the presence

of mind to use the correct call sign even though the aircraft had just touched down and she was controlling other airborne aircraft.

Using the wrong call sign or calling the aircraft based on runway position would have created confusion and an intolerable delay in the go-around. The timing of Amn. Bachman's call was absolutely critical as the landing F-117A was in a three-point attitude and an instant away from drag chute deployment. Had the landing aircraft deployed its drag chute, options to avoid a catastrophic collision at the intersection would likely have been too complex to execute as time rapidly compressed. Fortunately, Amn. Bachman's radio call alerted "Bandit 11" to abort his unauthorized takeoff roll.

An objective analysis of relevant data indicates that if Amn. Bachman had not directed the landing F-117A to go-around, the likelihood is high that two F-117As would have collided at the 16-25 intersection. Amn. Bachman made the perfect decision in a split second, then perfectly executed that decision, thus preventing the destruction of two national treasures and two fighter pilots.



## GROUND SAFETY AWARD OF DISTINCTION

*Tech. Sgt. John A. Saber, Staff Sgt. Ryan S. Larsen, Senior Airman Ryan J. Barleben  
27th Component Repair Squadron, 27th Fighter Wing  
Cannon AFB, N.M.*



The quick action of these three individuals prevented the loss of a multi-million dollar General Electric F110-GE-100 engine and the A/F37T-9 sound suppressor test facility. While performing an augmentor functional check on engine 509388, Sgt. Saber had just advanced the throttle from 93 degrees power level angle (PLA) minimum augmentor to 110 degrees PLA. As soon as the power setting reached 110, Sgt. Larsen, who was monitoring the camera, noticed sparks coming from the right side of the exhaust duct. Sgt. Saber recognized the sparks to be caused by an augmentor burn-through and immediately chopped the throttle to idle. Amn. Barleben entered the facility to ensure that there was no fire or leakage caused by the burn-through and assessed the extent of the damage. This action ensured that the engine hot section could be cooled at idle rather than shut down completely, reducing thermal shock. One of the holes caused by the burn-through missed the exhaust nozzle oil lines by less than one-half of an inch. If there had been a delay of even a few seconds in retarding the throttle, the lines would have burned through and there would have been an oil feed fire, which would have resulted in untold damage to the engine and the A/F37T-9 sound suppressor. Had these three individuals not reacted in such an expedient manner, the damage would have been catastrophic.



## **CREW CHIEF SAFETY AWARD OF DISTINCTION**

*Staff Sgt. Richard E. Harris  
336th Fighter Squadron, 4th Fighter Wing  
Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.*



During a preflight inspection on an F-15E Strike Eagle, Sgt. Harris identified what appeared to be a corroded jet fuel starter (JFS) accumulator line. Upon closer inspection, he discovered it was actually a screwdriver (18-inches long) lodged vertically between two lines and the bulkhead, with the handle above the upper JFS accumulator bottle. He immediately notified the line expeditor and production supervisor and proceeded to lower the JFS accumulator panel. During removal of the panel, Sgt. Harris noted that the panel screws still had an unbroken coat of paint on them and had not been removed since the aircraft returned from programmed depot maintenance (PDM) in early February 2000. A review of the jacket files confirmed that no maintenance had been done

under the panel since the aircraft's return from PDM. Removal of the panel is not part of the PDM acceptance inspection. During removal of the screwdriver, a washer, cotter pin, piece of safety wire, and two screws were also discovered. Sgt. Harris determined from the location and position of the screwdriver that it might have initially been located in the upper part of the aircraft and migrated down between the lines. Had the screwdriver backed out and migrated to the outboard side, it could have become lodged in the JFS manifold or the emergency landing gear cable, resulting in possible damage to the components and aircraft, and could have contributed to an aircraft mishap. Sgt. Harris' attention to detail prevented possible damage to a valuable combat asset.







# Ground Safety Stats

## ACC Losses for FY 00

(1 Oct 99 - 30 Jun 00)

*Practice the  
principles of  
Risk  
Management  
both on and  
off duty.*

### Ground Mishap Fatalities

<b>8 AF</b>	
<b>9 AF</b>	
<b>12 AF</b>	
<b>DRU</b>	

### Number of Ground Mishap/Dollar Losses


	<b>Class A</b>	<b>Class B</b>	<b>Class C</b>
<b>8 AF</b>	1 / \$185,700	0 / 0	105 / \$365,009
<b>9 AF</b>	2 / \$250,000	1 / \$250,000	120 / \$603,523
<b>12 AF</b>	7 / \$1,744,640	0 / 0	143 / \$590,672
<b>DRU</b>	2 / \$250,000	1 / \$164,660	41 / \$219,207
<b>FY 00 Totals</b>	12 / \$2,430,340	2 / \$414,660	404 / \$1,778,951
<b>FY 99 Totals</b> (same period)	12 / \$3,626,367	1 / \$894,548	302 / \$2,728,486

Class A - Fatality; Permanent Total Disability; Property Damage \$1,000,000 or more

Class B - Permanent Partial Disability; Property Damage between \$200,000 and \$1,000,000

Class C - Lost Workday; Property Damage between \$10,000 and \$200,000





...during a recent 1-year period,  
32 children (ages 14 and under)  
were killed while an estimated  
7,000 more were injured in school  
bus-related incidents.

# Let's Start School... With Safety!

**I**t's about that time of year again. New teachers, new faces, new students, new places... Soon over 23 million children will be going back to school. Every year during this time, parents spend a lot of time and money preparing their young people for the upcoming school year. They buy new clothes, paper, pens, pencils, crayons, notebooks, and numerous other supplies; but how many parents incorporate "safety" as part of their school preparation?

Unfortunately, during a recent 1-year period, 32 children (ages 14 and under) were killed while an estimated 7,000 more were injured in school bus-related incidents. Parents, drivers, and students all play an important role in school safety. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, here are some traffic safety rules we can use to help make this school year accident free. Following these simple, common-sense practices will help your children get off to a "safe start" for the upcoming school year.

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## Parents:

- If your children will be riding a bicycle to school, ensure they learn and obey the following bicycle safety rules.
  - Check the bicycle(s) to make sure the brakes and tires are in good shape.
  - Always travel in the same direction as vehicular traffic.
  - Use proper hand signals when turning the bicycle.
  - Obey all traffic signals and signs.
  - Always wear a protective helmet when riding a bicycle.
  - Help your children choose the safest route of travel between school and home.
- If you are driving your children to school (or anywhere else for that matter), make sure everyone “buckles up.” Remember, seat belts save lives.

## Drivers:

- When backing out of a driveway or leaving a garage, watch out for children walking or bicycling to school.
- When driving in neighborhoods with school zones, watch out for young people who may be walking or riding their bicycle to school. They may not be thinking about their personal safety, but — as a driver — you sure should.
- Slow down. Watch for children playing or walking in the street ... especially if there are no sidewalks in the neighborhood.
- Watch for children playing or congregating near bus stops. Be on the alert for children arriving late for the bus; they may run out into the street without looking for traffic.
- Learn and obey the school bus laws in your state, and don't forget the meaning of the “flashing signal light” that school bus drivers use to alert motorists:
  - **YELLOW FLASHING LIGHTS** indicate the bus is preparing to stop in order to load or unload children. Motorists should slow down and prepare to stop their vehicles.
  - **RED FLASHING LIGHTS** and extended stop arms indicate the bus has stopped in order for children to get on or off the bus. Motorists must stop and wait until the red lights stop flashing, the extended stop is withdrawn, and the bus begins to move before they can start moving their vehicle again.
- Remember ... passing another vehicle is never allowed in a school zone.

## Students:

- Get to the bus stop at least five minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. When the bus approaches, stand at least three giant steps (i.e., six feet) away from the curb; and line up away from the street.
- Wait until the bus stops, the door opens, and the driver says it's okay to board the bus.
- If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk on the sidewalk (or along the side of the road) to a point at least five giant steps (i.e., 10 feet) ahead of the bus before you cross. Be sure that the bus driver can see you, and you can see the bus driver.
- Use handrails on the bus to avoid falling down.
- When exiting the bus, be careful that clothing with drawstrings and book bags with straps don't get caught in the handrails or doors.
- Never walk behind a bus.
- Walk at least three giant steps away from the side of the bus.
- If you drop something near the bus, always tell the bus driver. Never try to pick it up without telling the bus driver because he/she may not be able to see you.

So remember, as we enter a new school year, you can help assure the safety of our children by following these simple guidelines. Because of the large number of buses, students, and school activities each day, school-time safety tips should not be neglected. Saving the life of a precious child will make all of our efforts worthwhile.



