Human factors continues to be the leading cause of mishaps and injuries to TAC personnel and equipment. Too often we want to ascribe such a mishap to “Murphy’s Law.” Although Murphy may be alive and well, he should not be the scapegoat for occupational injuries and mishaps. When a mishap occurs because of an inappropriate action or decision, we must ask, “WHY did we do that?”

In spite of our best intentions, we continue to occasionally make disastrous and sometimes even fatal decisions. Mishap investigation boards spend days in an attempt to understand why those mishaps occur. That understanding is essential to an effective safety investigation. The boards probe to the “bottom level” in a search to find out WHY and provide us with valuable lessons to be used for future mishap prevention.

As supervisors and workers, we too have a part in mishap prevention. Not only in the decisions we make, but in the way we view our daily duties. We need to ask ourselves and others WHY in more depth, and more often, to find lessons we can use rather than just facts to brief.

For example:
* Is the level of supervision adequate for the skill level involved and the task to be accomplished?
* Are our people following the Tech Order/OI or are they short cutting around the regs?
* Are we as supervisors providing the proper level of training and the right equipment to do the job?
* Are we using the proper people for the job?
* Is something “legal by the regs,” but not really the prudent thing to do?

Lately, we have seen a disturbing flight mishap trend -- equating experience with currency. Believe me, the two are not synonymous. Several recent mishaps have highlighted highly experienced aviators who may not have been current in the tasks they were attempting. Despite having 2,000, 3,000, or even 4,000 hours in the jet, when was the last time you went lost wingman, route aborted a low level, or flew the briefed events? Experience and currency are different. Experience means you may have done “it” sometime, while current implies proficiency existing at the present time. Why do we confuse experience and currency? Do we sometimes let our egos get in the way? Do we become lax and complacent because of our outstanding reputation based on experience? In our business, when we become complacent, it’s just a matter of time until something or someone rocks us out of that complacency. Unfortunately, we have had some cases where the complacency was disrupted by a mishap. Fortunately, commanders and supervisors don’t have to wait for a mishap. The best thing to break the complacency routine is our commanders’ involvement.

Don’t miss next month’s issue — the final issue of TAC Attack.

Bodie R. Bodenheim, Colonel, USAF
Chief of Safety
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Contributions are encouraged, as are comments and criticism. We reserve the right to edit all manuscripts for readability and good taste. Write the Editor, TAC Attack, HQ TAC/SET, Langley AFB, VA 23665-5563, or call DSN 574-3658.

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TAC SP 127-1 VOLUME 32 ISSUE 4 APRIL 1992
My recent PCS move from the great Southeast to the great Northwest and back into the safety career field has been an awesome experience. Mt Rainier is beautiful; but I’ve got to be honest, I haven’t seen much of it yet—the view during the winter months is mostly IFR. With the move came the inevitable house full of boxes for me and my better half to unpack and put away. Quite by accident, I got stuck putting away a box of books which included one by Robert Fulghum entitled All I Really Need to Know, I Learned in Kindergarten.

Although I do not believe I have a philosophical bone in my body, the book and its flight safety implications seemed to explode in front of me as I sat there in my PCS move mess. For those of you who didn’t read Mr. Fulghum’s book, when it came out a few years ago, it contains simplistic, down-to-earth statements of principles (read ROE) about “How to Live,” “What to Do,” and “How to Be.” Mr Fulghum says he learned these rules not in graduate school, but in Kindergarten. He further goes on to suggest any Bozo can take these items and extrapolate (read change) them into adult terms and apply them to his/her work and world.

Although I am at a loss as to applying principles like “Flush” and “Wash your hands before you eat” to the flying game, here is an attempt at converting a few of the principles in Mr Fulghum’s credo...
need to know flying safety, in Kindergarten!

into something we crew dogs can use on a day-to-day basis. Hopefully by putting each in context with some recent 1991 mishap low-points, we can see their application to safe flying and possibly have another record setting year in 1992.

His first principle is to "Share everything." For our purposes, we'll discuss the "sharing" of knowledge and "There I was" and "Been there, Done that" experiences. That is what safety is all about. For example, learning NOT to repeat the "Other Joe's" screw-ups. The amount of "sharing" going on just in safety magazines alone fills several publications each month. Adding to this "sharing" are the reams of mishap reports your local message center spews out daily. The average aviator can quickly become disinterested and disenchanted with safety and its "sharing." It can quite easily become a chore you don't feel you have the time for and can afford to sluff off.

It is imperative that we somehow get beyond this displeasure and, at the same time, remember "sharing" can also refer to something as simplistic as a good thorough flight briefing. The "volume" of what we "share," in most cases, is not as important as the "completeness" of what we "share." EXAMPLE: Remember the recent four-ship that had an encounter with a guide wire while flying a low level. The #2 man, who was upgrading to 100 feet, ground aborted out of the formation at the last minute. The remaining three flew the low level in a vic formation. The back element upon entering the training route dropped down immediately to 100 feet assuming the briefed altitude of 500 feet for the first leg only applied to the formation because of the upgrading pilot. Bad assumption--dented airplane.

I probably hate briefings as much as the next guy; but if we're
leaving vital details out for the sake of brevity or simply taking briefings for granted by not listening, we are screwing up big time. If we in the safety career field are not making the “Lessons Learned” out there available and presenting them in a polished acceptable forum, we are screwing up even more. As your friendly cop is so fond of saying when he stops you, “Ignorance of the law is no excuse”—for aviators, ignorance can quickly get you killed.

Another couple of principles that we can lump together are “Warm cookies and milk are good for you” and “Take a nap every afternoon.” Simply stated, crew dogs who aren’t well fed and well rested don’t perform at their best. This remains a proven fact, but one we all occasionally ignore. EXAMPLE: Remember the recent mishap involving a pilot flying his first tactical sortie following an extensive upgrade course to a new aircraft in his civilian job. Mission results were tragic—a lost airplane and a fatality. It’s tough to maintain adequate rest when we’re burning the candle from both ends. I know we all want to be “macho” and never say “uncle,” but wouldn’t it be better to say “uncle” rather than leave behind a nephew that can no longer enjoy our company and call us uncle because we didn’t?

Finally, three more of Mr Fulghum’s principles we can combine. They are “Don’t hit people,” “Play fair,” and “When you go into the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.” For us, the first statement should definitely be expanded to include good old Mother Earth as something we should strive NOT to have an encounter with.

Not so amazingly, another recent mishap illustrates how these principles make for good air sense and, if violated, can be costly. EXAMPLE: We recently had an aircraft and its crew become dirt morts because they did not maintain briefed terrain clearance with bandits in the vicinity. Low altitude flying is an extremely critical phase of flight. Time available to accomplish other cockpit tasks is minimal; avoiding the terrain becomes your highest priority task and takes the majority of your time. Aircrews must not allow themselves to become “channelized” on other external factors such as bandits. They must also be aware of insidious gradually rising terrain, rocks hidden in shadows and the classic visual illusion we have all seen frequently on the “How Low Can You Go” tape.

Mr Fulghum’s bottom line says it all: “No matter how old you are, when you go out into the world (read flying), it is best to hold hands (take care of each other) and stick together.” Fly smart, guys and let’s try to take better care of each other in 1992. Our track record during the last few years has been fantastic, and there is no reason not to keep it up. Memorial services are not the time to be saying: “Gee, if I had only....”
On 2 Nov 91, the USAF Air Demonstration Squadron, Thunderbirds, performed at Columbus AFB MS. Capt Dave Coffman, Thunderbird #6 Solo, was executing his opening maneuver, an afterburner climb takeoff with a transition to a split-S that exits the show line to the right of the crowd. Capt Coffman was clearing the show line when the afterburner cowling, augmentor, and turkey feathers exploded in a fireball and departed the aircraft. Capt Coffman felt a thump, similar to a compressor stall, and snap canceled afterburner while zooming the aircraft and turning to clear behind the crowd line. Capt Coffman called “solas terminate” and instructed Thunderbird #5 to join it up for a look. All indications in the cockpit, including the nozzle indicator, were normal. After slowing to 350 KIAS, Capt Coffman realized that he could not maintain normal thrust even with the throttle in mil. Concurrently, #5 informed #6 that the aft portion of his jet was missing! Capt Coffman turned immediately towards the runway while setting up a low/base key simulated flameout (SFO). As the approach progressed, Capt Coffman realized that the aircraft would barely maintain 200 KIAS in a slight descent with the throttle at mil. He quickly confirmed his intentions to land with the Logistic/Safety officer on the ground who ensured there was no debris on the runway that would prevent a safe recovery. Capt Coffman lowered the gear and landed safely from his SFO pattern. Capt Coffman’s quick assessment of the problem and calm approach proved critical in saving the aircraft. He flew the crippled jet away from the crowd and made timely decisions as to the feasibility of recovering the jet or ejecting. Capt Coffman’s precise flying and superb execution of emergency procedures prevented loss of life, saved a valuable combat aircraft, and earned him the TAC Aircrew of Distinction Award.

Capt Dave Coffman
USAF ADS (Thunderbirds)
Nellis AFB NV
Our unit had been in the desert for about two months. One night at approximately 2300 hours while on alert duty, I was walking around inside a bunker our crew had recently built behind our tents. It was one of those times when I was feeling homesick and thinking about my wife and family. The bunker was built around a manhole to give us an easy escape route if necessary.

I'm sure you're starting to get the picture of what happened. It was late at night and very dark inside the bunker. Now this is where paying attention to detail comes into play. Apparently someone had uncovered the manhole and left it open. I was walking around inside the bunker when I kicked a board. I
picked it up and saw nails in it. My first thought was that someone could step or sit on it, injuring themselves. I put it on some nearby sandbags and had just started to turn away when I found myself hanging by my elbows inside of the manhole. When I came to my senses, I climbed out of the hole. I was disoriented, lightheaded, and had extensive cuts to my legs as well as bruises on my arms and sides.

The next day we went back to the manhole and looked in it. There was a steel ladder down the side and rows of metal spikes sticking out from all sides. If I hadn't caught myself as I did, I could have been much more seriously injured. What's really bad is that no one would have found me for quite some time. Then it could have been too late.

I know it's funny at first; but if you think about it, it was a lack of attention on everyone's part. THINK ABOUT SAFETY, SOMEONE'S LIFE COULD DEPEND ON IT! Others may be affected by your mistakes.

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

TSgt Larry Stulz
906 TFG/SEG
Wright-Patterson AFB OH

Several weeks ago, a television show replayed scenes from the old Ed Sullivan show. One of the more memorable acts was that of a lion tamer and six lions in a cage, on stage.

Before the show, the lion tamer told Mr. Sullivan that the stage crew had not made the cage large enough to safely perform his act. Mr. Sullivan replied, "The show must go on!"

Within ten seconds of the start of the act, the lion tamer found himself cornered holding a chair and a whip against a lion, standing on his hind legs, clawing towards him. Since this was happening on live television, and Mr. Sullivan sensed that disaster was in the making, Ed took the attention of the TV cameras into the audience and began introducing celebrity guests in attendance that night.

In the background, the roar of the lions could be heard intermixed with gun fire. After the last shot, the roaring stopped and Mr. Sullivan turned towards the stage, swept his hand through the air and said, "And let's give a big hand for Mr. Beatty and his lions!"

Unfortunately, the reaction of the lion tamer was not recorded for posterity. However, this is a classic situation where one's experience and knowledge were compromised by the demands of someone else who had no knowledge of the task at hand.

How many times have you felt external pressure to do something in a way that you knew was incorrect or unsafe? It can be your supervisor, spouse, or anyone applying the pressure; or it can be your own thoughts of time and money. It all boils down to the fact that safety is life. That lion tamer had something on his mind that convinced him to go against his better judgment. He almost paid for that decision with his life.

COMPANY GRADE
GULF WAR VETERANS
NEEDED

Air University and Squadron Officer School are compiling a book filled with the autobiographical experiences of company grade officers who participated in Desert Shield/Storm. This book will expand the historical record of the war and inspire other officers. Would you like to see your story in this book? Please write your experiences in less than 2500 words (approximately 10 double-spaced pages). Add any pictures or art work which illustrate your message. DO NOT INCLUDE ANY CLASSIFIED MATERIAL. Include a short biography and an official photo so we can identify you. Add a self-addressed envelope for anything you want returned. Please include your telephone number so we can ask you questions. Send this to Captain Michael Vriesenga, SOS/EDCD, Maxwell AFB AL 36112-5582. Hurry! We will begin editing and compiling in June 1992. If you have any questions, please call Capt Vriesenga at DSN 493-2730 or Commercial (205) 953-2730.
DOWN TO EARTH

ITEMS THAT CAN AFFECT YOU AND YOUR FAMILY HERE ON THE GROUND

Skin of Our Teeth
The spring of 1991 found the military and civilian personnel at Tyndall AFB feverishly preparing for the upcoming HQ TAC Unit Effectiveness Inspection (UEI). Our shop was no exception. Sixteen-hour days and 6-day weeks, this was the norm for Randy, my assistant, and me.

In addition to our shop on the main base, we had the responsibility of maintaining the water survival school. The school is located 10 miles east of the main base, and several trips are required each week to accomplish some tasks. These 20-minute trips, each way, were rapidly becoming very monotonous. It was on one of the return trips that several tense moments befell us.

The afternoon was beautiful and unseasonably warm for March. We were almost one-third of the way back from the school when our progress was interrupted by a security policeman who was blocking the road. I stopped the jeep, turned off the motor, got out and lit a cigarette. Randy did likewise.

We had been there about 2 minutes when a man from the vehicle behind us came walking up to my side of the jeep.

“What’s going on?” he asked.

“It’s just a drone launch. A drone is a remotely controlled aircraft used as an aerial target. The cops stop traffic until it gets off because it flies over the highway. There’s an explosive package on board used to blow up the drone if they ever lose control,” I explained.

The man then asked, “How long is this gonna take?”

“We’ll be rollin’ ‘fore you can finish your cigarette,” I told him.

“Thanks,” he replied and turned to walk back to his car.

Five minutes later, the drone flew over the highway and the security policeman motioned us on. I put out my cigarette, got in the jeep and started it. We were on our way again. I had just hit second gear when I noticed Randy sniffing the air and gazing at the roadside. Suddenly, I too smelled the aroma of burning leaves.

“Smells like the woods are on fire,” Randy said, as I shifted into high gear. “Reckon what’s burning?” he asked.

I was curious also because the odor was extremely strong. Looking into the rearview mirror, I spied a large smoke cloud immediately behind us.

In my most calm voice, I said, “Looks like we are.”

Randy’s head jerked around, like it was on a rubber band. The smoke at this time was so thick it appeared as if we were fogging for mosquitoes. I then observed through the water drain holes in the floorboard the source of our smoke: Trapped between the steel plate that protects the muffler, transmission, and 4-wheel drive converter box was a considerable amount of dry grass which was rapidly becoming charred matter.

I began to increase our speed in hopes of blowing out the fire; but the flames started leaping up through the holes, licking the sides of Randy’s boots, and slowly melting the shiny black polish.

In a maneuver that would have made a professional contortionist proud, Randy snatched his feet off the floorboard, tried to unfasten his seat belt, and reached for the fire extinguisher that was mounted in the back seat, all the while screaming, “Stop the #!@#$@! jeep!”

I slowed down enough to get the jeep to the shoulder of the road. Once stopped, Randy sprang from the jeep, the fire extinguisher firmly in his grasp. He started spraying the dry powder down through the holes in the floorboard. I noted that this was not putting out the fire quickly enough, so I took the fire extinguisher from him and crawled underneath the vehicle directing the nozzle between the steel plate and the bottom of the floorboard. Randy assisted my efforts by peering through the floorboard holes from above and giving me directions on where to spray.
"Looks like you got it!" Randy exclaimed.
"I hope so, 'cause the extinguisher just ran out of juice," I responded.
I was crawling from under the jeep when a security policeman arrived. He exited his car, fire extinguisher in hand, and asked, "Ya'll need any help?"
"Naw, reckon we got it," I replied.
He then started telling us about a security policeman who had something similar happen to him. He said, "Yeah, our guy drove out here and pulled off in the grass. The grass was a little higher then," motioning to where we were standing. "Got out to stop traffic for a drone launch. Couple of minutes went by and he smelled smoke. Looked around and saw his car going up in flames. Said, 'the catalytic converter must have set the grass on fire.' Don't know.
Anyway, burned that '91 car slap up, and we'd just had it about 2 months."
We thanked the policeman for stopping and then got into our respective vehicles to head back to the main base. En route, Randy remarked, "Coope, if you could have seen the look on your face when you said, 'looks like we are,' it was almost like, oh well, it's no big thing."
I told him, "Reckon these long days have just kind of numbed my brain."
Upon arrival at the base, we drove to the motor pool to wash out the debris still trapped in the steel plate. Routing the garden hose underneath the jeep and flooding the plate with water, we extricated a wash tub full of charred and unignited grass, leaves, and seeds. We also discovered that in addition to the mechanical parts protected by the plate, the rear brake lines and the gas line from the fuel tank were also protected.
Later that evening, over a beer, we discussed this event. Did we tempt fate? Did our quick thinking avert a possible disaster? What if the fire extinguisher had been empty? Would we have had to walk back? Could we have prevented the incident?
These questions, and possibly many others, would have to go unanswered because we still had the UEI looming over us. So, that day's event is now history and just another "war story."

BUCKLE UP, THINK SMART, AND BE SAFE

Sgt Kevin W. Byrom
347 CS/CCT
Moody AFB GA

We are constantly reminded of the dangers involved in driving a motor vehicle and of the necessity for wearing safety belts. It seems that every time we turn around the safety NCO in the unit is giving us another one of those safety briefings. These sessions are supposed to provide us with enough incentive to buckle up before we head down the winding road and put our lives in the hands of the "Speed Demons" and lane hoppers who think that they own the road. We are also reminded to pay attention to our surroundings and to think smartly when adverse weather conditions threaten to ruin what would otherwise be a wonderful day. Thanks to the lessons that I learned through the safety program, I was able to avoid a treacherous situation and one costly accident.

It was Sunday afternoon when we headed up Interstate 65 toward Montgomery, Alabama, towing a disabled car in the right hand lane at 45 mph. The sky began to grow considerably darker as menacing storm clouds approached from the northwest. As I scanned the dash board gauges to ensure that I was maintaining a reasonably safe towing speed, I glanced at the rearview mirror and noticed a line of cars approaching rather quickly in the passing lane. I backed off the accelerator just a little to allow the "wolf pack" to pass me by as soon as possible. We were headed up a small hill, the "wolf pack" about 200 feet in front, when the storm clouds spewed forth their fury. I immediately took my foot off of the accelerator and slowed to 35 mph as the "wolf pack" disappeared over the crest of the hill.
Just as we reached the top of the hill and began our descent, it stopped raining as abruptly as it had begun. I immediately signaled to pull over to the emergency lane and stopped. Just before a bridge, at the bottom of the hill, in the right hand lane were two cars, motionless, with debris scattered across the road. Three-quarters of the way across the bridge in the left hand lane were two cars hugging the bridge railing, two more cars about 10 feet further in the emergency lane with crunched metal and broken glass, and another car was down a 30-foot embankment resting against the trees.

My passengers and I left our vehicle and ran to provide assistance. In one car, a man and his wife had both been thrown into their windshield from the impact of their crash. They did not have their seat belts on. Fortunately, neither of them appeared to be seriously injured. They were coherent and showed no outward signs of injury. Nobody in the car they hit was injured; they had their seat belts on. Two individuals from the other cars involved in the accident were complaining of chest pains, so we made them as comfortable as possible and had someone watch over them until the ambulances arrived. They also had their seat belts on. Nobody else was injured in the accident.

While we were helping the crash victims, traffic coming up the highway began to pass through the crash scene. Some of the vehicles passing through were traveling at what we felt were rather excessive speeds for the situation. We decided the only approach to slow down these idiots was to find two locations from which to direct the traffic. We finally chose one point before the first set of wrecked cars and one point just after them. This allowed us to direct traffic into the proper lanes while slowing it down at the same time. Our method worked and prevented another accident from occurring.

What vital lessons can be learned from an experience like this? First, buckle up and think smart: the Air Force safety program is an important aspect of all our lives. Second, driving according to the road and weather conditions and using some common sense will more than likely keep you out of harm's way. So, the next time you’re out on the road BUCKLE UP, THINK SMART and, above all else, BE SAFE.
Unfortunately, fuel management incidents like these will continue to happen unless we have our heads in the cockpit occasionally, and in the checklist and dash one as well.

Lt Col Scott P. Wales
ANG/AFRES Advisor to Chief of Safety

At the bar one night a while back (you do remember when people used to go to the bar, don’t you?), one of our squadron pilots was regaling the troops with one of his tales of derring-do. He was in the process of recounting how he had survived another hydraulic failure episode with an approach end barrier engagement on a snow-covered runway. One of our not-so-intrepid aviators was also on hand, listening with great interest to this hair-raising tale, and said to our hero with envy: “Geez, you get all the good emergencies!”

Years have passed since that episode, and I’ve never been able to figure out to this day exactly what a good emergency is; but I think I know now what the worst emergency is, assuming for the moment we don’t include fatal mishaps. There are a number of different ways to kill yourself in our high tech jets and in our low tech aircraft as well. The worst emergency, to my mind, is a fuel emergency which causes you to lose an aircraft through your own negligence. There are seldom any valid excuses for such mishaps, and there’s almost never a way to convince your superiors that you were not at fault. It’s almost worse than being a fatality, because you will have to endure the abuse that others will inevitably heap on you for being such a bonehead.

It’s been a while since we had one of these, but major aircraft accidents seem to run in cycles. People move on and the lessons of the past are forgotten, and then we end up with a mishap which is essentially very similar to one several years back. I’d like to take this opportunity to review a couple of the more egregious fuel emergencies from our recent past. Some of the principals were remarkably creative in their ability to ignore some very basic fuel management concepts and some rather obvious warning signs.

1. An aircraft on a trip back to its home base was scheduled to stop at Mid-Continent AFB. The flight crew (instructors) gave little regard to fuel consumption, which was higher than planned. They finally declared emergency fuel somewhat short of their destination. A last minute decision to divert resulted in a hot and long landing at a short civilian field, followed by a runway departure. The crew egressed safely, but the aircraft sustained major damage.
planning experience and had overflown several suitable divert bases en route to their final destination.

2. The pilot of one of our newer jets had some fuel left over at the end of an uneventful intercept/escort mission. After an excursion through the area north of the field in "burner and boards" and a lengthy guns tracking exercise, he was being vectored for landing by approach control. The pilot had not managed his fuel carefully and trapped a significant amount in the external tanks. He did not notice the fuel low and master caution warning lights. The engine flamed out and he was unable to restart it—he ejected successfully and the aircraft was destroyed.

3. The pilot was on a test and evaluation training mission. After refueling from a tanker, he forgot to close the refueling door. This prevented 2200 pounds of fuel from being transferred. When the fuel low light illuminated, the mishap pilot mistakenly diagnosed the situation and did not take appropriate corrective action. During the precautionary landing pattern, the aircraft crashed on short final, due to fuel starvation; the pilot ejected successfully and the aircraft was destroyed.

In each of these mishaps, ignorance of established procedures and violations of good common sense also played a large part. The proper fuel status was available in the cockpit in each case. In the second mishap, a new configuration may have played a part. Switchology and/or complacency prevented each crew from making a timely assessment of the true and critical nature of his situation and taking measures to prevent impending disaster. The pilot in the last mishap performed a zoom maneuver, then made an early descent, thinking that part of his problem was tank icing. This action increased his fuel consumption rate. Each of the crews survived, fortunately, but none rose in his peer's estimation for the way they handled their jets that day.

Here at TAC, we're usually telling folks in the field to keep their heads up and their eyes outside to avoid mishaps. Unfortunately, fuel management incidents like these will continue to happen unless we keep our heads in the cockpit occasionally, and in the checklist and dash one as well. **FLY SMART!**
PRIORITIES?

Major Mark S. Giglio
HQ TAC/SEF

Fighter pilots are a complex breed. In general, they are intelligent, highly competitive, extremely aggressive and tend to be intolerant of mistakes. These traits are basic to the psyche of a good fighter pilot; they perform useful functions, such as, improving performance and engendering a spirit of excellence and self-reliance which are positive assets. Qualifying for pilot training, earning a fighter, and surviving the challenges of LIFT, FTU, and MQT are all part of the “honing process” that builds on those traits and makes them what they are.

We continue to carry these traits into every facet of our lives. We compete for the best range scores, the best gunshot, the most kills, best formation position, best landing, and anything else we can think of. We are aggressive in just about all aspects of our lives, flying or not; and we often push right to the limit. We are intolerant of mistakes, especially our own, and pride ourselves on doing it right every time, no slack allowed. We have a deep-seated aversion to losing or being perceived as “weak,” sometimes to a fault. (How many times have you “challenged” during a game of Chance and lost?)

The boundary between healthy and unhealthy for these traits is often the priority placed on them by the individual. Although “common sense” can’t be legislated, training rules were instituted to keep our flying operations within certain guidelines. This is no different than the rules of football or other sports. The difference is that in our business, the penalty won’t be “15 yards and take the down over.” The rules don’t cover all situations; THEY CAN’T! We have to apply some judgment as to what the proper priorities are.

Here are some examples where the priorities were obviously misplaced.

The mishap pilot (MP) was an FTU IP, experienced in the F-15A/C, who had recently transitioned to the F-15E. During his previous assignments, he had developed a method of “pirouetting” the jet in which he used large amounts of rudder to yaw the nose around. Often when doing this, he heard the yaw departure tone and relaxed his inputs to prevent a spin. He believed this was an indication that he was at the limit of maximum performance instead of
an indication that his maneuver was improper. During a syllabus mission, against an upgrading pilot practicing offensive maneuvering, the MP executed an aggressive series of maneuvers to force an overshoot. Then, with low airspeed, he executed this “pirouette”; the aircraft subsequently departed and continued into a nonrecoverable spin and the MP and his backseater ejected. Here, the MP’s priority was pursuit of a perceived tactical advantage with little regard to aircraft limits.

A second mishap involved a pilot, again an experienced IP, who was number three on a 4-ship SAT mission flying at 300’ AGL and practicing visual lookout with 2 Baron aircraft. The MP received a RWR spike aft of the wing line and departed the formation, contrary to briefed flight tactics, to bring his radar on the bogeys. After radar painting the Barons, the MP attempted to rejoin with his wingman while giving radar information on the bogeys. As his element entered the visual merge, the MP attempted to offensively engage the bandits. He failed to follow established training rules. While looking for the bandits, he impacted a small ridgeline. The MP was a fatality.

The third mishap involved a pilot who was leading a 4-ship back to initial. The MP lined up for the wrong runway, recognized it 5 miles out and realigned on the proper ground track with a 270 degree turn to keep the formation echelon intact. No problem, except the MP allowed that mistake to cloud his awareness and better judgement. He took his aggression out on the aircraft, flew a shorter-than-normal downwind and made an abrupt roll in for the base turn that caused a checklist to end up on the floor by his left foot. He retrieved the checklist, taking his attention away from flying the base turn, which allowed the aircraft to get slow and forced a square corner to roll out on final. He finally realized that he was in trouble and initiated a go-around, but was unable to prevent touching down short of the overrun. Impact with the overrun lip damaged the landing gear, and he could not get a proper landing configuration. The MP performed a controlled bailout.

So, what does this mean to us? Obviously, each of these pilots allowed their priorities to become skewed, for whatever reason. How do we manage our instincts? First, we have to remember what the purpose of our training is - preparing for war - and what it isn’t - a life or death struggle to prove who is best. Being able to do each part of the mission well, i.e., putting bombs on the target, defending your assigned area, or landing safely is what’s important. Should we be called in for that next conflict, that’s where we’ll prove who’s “king of the hill.” Until then we have to remember that the mission isn’t going out of control to get the position advantage, or ignoring the training rules when the fangs come out, or allowing a mistake to distract us from doing even the most ordinary task correctly.

Second, recognize where problems might occur and set the proper tone. Start with the objectives: Analyze them, know them, brief to them, and debrief to them. Make sure that emphasis is placed on the proper perspective. Don’t allow competition to turn the mission into a “take-no-prisoners, we-can’t-afford-to-lose” blood match. Brief those areas where the scenario may conflict with the training rules and set the priorities. When you’re busy in the middle of a demanding scenario, no one can sit on your shoulder and tell you “call timeout.” Keep your emotions in check, and emphasize the real threats - the rocks, GLOC, midair potential, deconfliction, etc.

Third, as they say in the beer commercial, “Know when to say when.” Knock it off when things are going contrary to the objectives. Starting from 9,000’ and 450 knots and ending up in a slow speed scissors after one circle then continuing to the floor of the area isn’t accomplishing any real training. The bottom line is: It’s better to say, “Let’s try this again and do it better next time,” than to end up walking back home or, worse still, in a smoking hole.

Keep the priorities straight and FLY SMART!
THE GREAT WHITE LIE

MSgt Norman D. Goswick
Field Training Det 201
Langley AFB VA

My father (John Thomas Goswick) was a pilot during World War II. Actually, he was an instructor pilot (not something he really wanted to do during the war); and like most pilots, he had his “war stories.” I’d like to share one of the stories that has stuck with me for all these years.

In February and March of 1943, my Father was an aviation cadet stationed at Maxwell Field, Alabama. As many of you are aware, there were numerous rules that cadets had to follow. One very strict rule during this time was the altitude at which an aviation cadet flew. They were not allowed to fly below a set floor for any reason other than takeoff and landing. If you flew below the floor, it was grounds for being washed out of the pilot training program, and you were instantly shuffled off to bomber school to be a waist gunner (something many cadet fighter pilots worried about). The life expectancy of a waist gunner was not very high as bombers were dropping like flies in Europe.

On a bright and sunny day, Dad took off to log a few final solo hours to complete his training. He was looking forward to his next assignment. He completed all of his preflight paperwork, headed out to the flight line and climbed into his assigned BT 13—the main trainer for the Army Air Corps at the time. Within a few minutes he was airborne, doing what he did best. He practiced climbs, loops, rolls and other basic flying techniques which he had been taught. He was paying close attention to engine speed, throttle position, fuel mixture and many other things. He was paying attention to everything but the most important, his altimeter. Without realizing it, he went below the minimum flight level. When he realized his error, it was too late. As he rolled out to level flight, there was his commander on his right wing. His commander pointed forward, indicating to return to base. Dad nodded and proceeded back to base. The commander, having a faster airplane, accelerated ahead of him. He would be in his office before Dad even touched down.

All the way back to Maxwell Field, he was thinking one horrible thought. Being a waist gunner on a bomber. He thought of what he would tell his commander. He thought long and he thought hard.
After landing, his crew chief told him that the “Old Man” wanted to see him. He headed directly to the commander’s office. Upon entering he reported, “Cadet Goswick reporting as ordered, Sir.” The commander looked up from his desk. In the middle of his desk was a folder containing Father’s records. He said, “Goswick, you know the rule about minimum altitude, don’t you?” An obvious “Yes, Sir” was the reply. The commander said, “I have been looking over your records. Your instructors have some very high praise for your unique flying ability. It’s because of your records that I will give you this chance to explain your actions.” Dad’s explanation was VERY thorough. “Sir, you know about all the flooding we have had in the local area recently? Well, as I was performing some of my maneuvers, I saw something that looked like someone waving a red cloth in the air trying to get my attention. I could easily see that the area was completely surrounded with water. I decided to go down low enough so I could get a bearing and report back for help for the person who was stranded. When I got down to where I could recognize some of the area, I noticed there was no one stranded. It was merely a scarecrow in a field, surrounded with water, with a rag in its hand being blown by the wind. When I rolled out to climb, there you were, Sir.” The commander stared at him for what seemed an eternity. He finally spoke, “That is either the BIGGEST lie I have ever heard or the absolute truth! Because of your record I will believe it to be the truth. Now get out of my office Cadet.” Dad saluted, did an about face, and marched out of the commander’s office. No sooner had the door closed behind him than he was down on his knees saying a thankful prayer. A moment of inattention and misplaced priorities had almost cost him the thing he loved most—flying! The speed and complexity of today’s aircraft and missions demand ever more attention and appropriately aligned priorities. Inattention and misaligned priorities could deprive you of more than flying; they could cost you your life!

Dad went on to become an instructor pilot. He taught a lot of cadets how to fly the P-51D Mustang. I like to believe that his teachings helped save many lives during the war. My father died December 25, 1989. One of the things he loved most in life was flying. Of course, those of you who fly know how much fun it really is.
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Lt Col Powell
HQ AFIA/MIL
Norton AFB CA

What does the environment have to do with readiness or with mission accomplishment? As stated by General Merrill A. McPeak, CSAF, in his 17 April 1991 letter to all MAJCOM Commanders, "Proper attention to the environment today will ensure that we can perform our mission in the future." He went on to state, "I expect the Air Force to lead DOD in environmental protection and compliance." Emphasis in munitions operations has always been directed towards
preparing for contingencies or war with little consideration to environmental impacts. Unit, MAJCOM, and Air Force reviews ensure we are preparing for contingencies and/or war effectively and efficiently. However, the ordnance community hasn’t had to address environmental issues to the same extent as other disciplines like aircraft maintenance or civil engineering. That is now changing. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) is fast becoming as much a factor in munitions operations as it has been in other operations involving hazardous materials, such as chemicals, solvents, cleaners, and petroleum waste.

Although munitions have been viewed as hazardous material, and in some cases may be viewed as hazardous waste, control procedures outlined in AFR 127-100, Explosives Safety Standards, were considered adequate. But no more: RCRA definitions have added another set of rules and administrative controls to deal with those hazards and wastes. Even more significantly, states may soon be empowered to impose fines on federal activities for violating their state environmental standards.

Because of RCRA, it is increasingly important that munitions managers at all levels become aware of the rules covering condition codes (TO 11A-1-10) and their state’s definitions for hazardous materials. Why? Consider this example: Condition Code “H” means an article is unserviceable. Does that mean it is also hazardous waste or only hazardous material?

Some federal and state inspectors have tried to define excess or unserviceable munitions as “hazardous waste.” This not so subtle redefinition has significant implications on how the munitions will be controlled. Traditionally, the DOD logistics community hasn’t defined munitions as “hazardous” unless they posed an unusual danger or DOD was unable to determine their safe condition. Recently several states, using their RCRA rules, have held that munitions become “hazardous waste” as soon as they are declared excess or unserviceable. This interpretation is consistent with a literal definition of “hazardous waste” under environmental rules. The result is a potential disconnect between traditional munitions terminology and RCRA/legal definitions.

Contributing to this confusion is the fact that each state, and to a certain extent, each inspector, can make an interpretation as to what constitutes “hazardous waste.” DOD and the separate services are attempting to resolve many potentials for subjective evaluations by proposing a common standard or set of definitions which would be applied to DOD CONUS-wide. We’re not there yet.

Until uniform guidance is provided, there are a few things you can do to minimize disruption of your operations.

- First, don’t ignore the problem. Talk to your MAJCOM and base environmental engineering staff. Determine what are the state environmental protection rules.
- Next talk to your MAJCOM munitions staff and find out how they interpret terms such as “hazardous material” and “hazardous waste” when applied to munitions.
- Third, become an active member of the base Environmental Protection Committee and talk to your Weapons Safety, Transportation, and Civil Engineering staffs to see how they recommend you store, transport, or treat (dispose of) unserviceable munitions.
- Fourth, develop a control plan and educate your people on its contents.
- Fifth, coordinate your control plan with base-level and MAJCOM OPRs and OCRs.
- Finally, ensure you comply with the approved...
procedures.

RCRA may be a new dimension in munitions operations, but it's one which can be dealt with by addressing the requirements and responding to them positively. If you haven't thought about how to conduct munitions operations in an environmentally friendly manner, now's a good time to start. A good working relationship with safety and environmental staffs is a step in the right direction.

NOT JUST ANOTHER BAG DRAG

Capt David D. Adolf
PACAF/SEW

So you are deploying. Your thoughts turn to the sun, fun, shopping and predeployment explosives safety planning. Yes, explosives safety planning. Planning and coordination between the deploying force and the host unit is necessary to ensure a safe deployment and employment occurs.

It is the deploying unit's responsibility to develop the procedures and site plans relevant to their mobility OPlan/EXplan taskings. Fulfilling this responsibility includes the following: First, to ensure a safe beddown and employment of combat forces, the deploying Weapons Safety Officer (WSO) must participate in any predeployment site surveys. The host WSO must work directly with their deploying counterpart and provide procedural information concerning operations at the deployed location. Secondly, as a minimum, host WSOs should provide the following at the predeployment site survey:

1) A current and future base explosive safety Q-D map (D-8 and D-8.1).
2) A copy of all applicable exemptions, waivers, and deviations.
3) A list of available joint-use and sole-use facilities, with Net Explosive Weight limits and any other special provisions.
4) A copy of all applicable local regulations, operating instructions, and policy letters that may impact their mission accomplishment.
5) A description of the climatic conditions for the time interval of the deployment.

Additionally, if you are deploying to PACAF, you will be required to post bilingual signs for personnel and visitor limits for each operation. This requirement remains the same for identification of the explosive limits, whether it is a building, magazine, or an operating location. Also, PACAF has prohibited smoking in any vehicle carrying explosives. This includes all vehicles in the munitions storage area or on the flight line, which may be transporting explosives.

During deployments, the host base weapons safety staff is responsible for the overall safety environment. The deploying unit weapons safety officer is responsible for the deploying unit's weapons safety program and reports significant problems/incidents to both the deployed commander and the host safety office. Any unresolved safety problem will be elevated to the NAF and HQ/SEW for resolution.

The bottom line: We need to provide a “mission ready” deployment and beddown of our forces while ensuring explosives requirements are met.

THE GOOD LIFE—DROPPING BOMBS

MSgt Gary R. Reniker
442 TFW (AFRES)
Richards-Gebaur AFB MO

The good life — everyone wants to live long and enjoy it. Many people worry about their weight, cholesterol levels, high blood pressure and even gum disease. No one wants to get fat, lose teeth, or have a heart attack. That's not part of the good life.

April 1992
Neither are the explosive incidents which involve the dropping of live, and often fused, bombs from handling equipment.

If you've ever watched a bomb drop, you should have had your life flash in front of you and re-lived all of your sins; because when the bomb reaches that sudden stop at the bottom, you don't know whether you'll ever have another chance to be more careful the next time or not. It's an unnerving experience; and if it isn't, you don't have the proper respect for explosives.

Most of these mishaps involve, one way or another, tie down devices (those straps and chains used as a safety measure to protect against dropping bombs). The tie downs are often worn, torn, abused and misused. They are thrown, dragged, twisted, stepped on, and left out in the weather. But when a bomb slips off a jammer or a trailer and the tie down doesn't prevent the fall, it's invariably "materiel failure" that's assigned the culprit. Sure the "materiel" often fails, but it's usually because it has been neglected, used beyond its serviceable life or used improperly.

Explosive troops need to make it a ritual, like morning coffee, to check those tie downs at the start of each work shift. Look for worn, scuffed, or damaged webbing, stitching, links or hardware. When you are satisfied they are dependable and serviceable, use them right. A loose, improperly or inadequately secured tie down could be worse than no tie down at all because it promotes a false sense of confidence. If you're going to gamble, do it with money, not bombs and lives. Secure your tomorrow with secure bombs today.

BLANK AMMO IS DANGEROUS

MSgt Gary R. Reniker
442 TFW (AFRES)
Richards-Gebaur AFB MO

About a year ago, a famous movie actor placed a pistol to his head. Thinking that the gun held blank ammunition that couldn't harm him, he pulled the trigger. Tragically, he was dead wrong. The wadding from the blank penetrated his skull and killed him instantly.

This tragic thought came to me while I was conducting a safety briefing to some security police personnel. They were actually reluctant to believe this story until I related to them an informal test conducted by a major metropolitan police department with blank ammunition on a slab of beef fat.

Police officers conducted this test with a 20-pound slab of beef fat dressed in a white T-shirt to simulate a human torso. First, two .38 special blanks were fired into the beef fat at a distance of 2 inches. The wadding from the 2 blanks actually penetrated the beef fat approximately 1-½ inches, the equivalent of a very serious wound.

Inasmuch as .22-caliber starter blanks are used for many athletic occasions, this cartridge was also tested. When the muzzle of the revolver was placed in contact with the beef fat and fired, it created a depression in the fat approximately ¼-inch deep, certainly the equivalent of a painful wound.

Last, a 12-gauge shotgun blank was tried. When fired against the beef fat, many pieces of beef fat flew in all directions. One piece of fat about 4 inches in diameter was blown approximately 15 feet, and smaller pieces were blown as far as 12 yards. When fired from a distance of 6 feet, the 12-gauge shotgun blank penetrated the beef fat approximately 1-½ inches, thereby giving about the same penetration as the .38 special blank when fired from a distance of 2 inches.

Conclusion: None of the police officers present predicted the penetration of 2 rapid fire .38 special blanks or the destructive force of the 12-gauge shotgun blanks. Knowing that the blank cartridge contains no bullet, it is possible that many firearms personnel greatly underestimate the harmful effects of burning gases and wadding from blank cartridges.

The death of one actor from blanks proves the danger of blank ammunition. Bottom line — don't play around with firearms!!
Airmen First Class Michael D. Penland, 58th Equipment Maintenance Squadron, 58th Fighter Wing, Luke AFB AZ, demonstrated a totally professional and conscientious attitude toward safety during three unrelated incidents over an 8-day period in Aug 91. His high level of concern for safety and mission accomplishment is truly outstanding for someone so new to the Air Force. On 1 Aug 91, Amn Penland discovered a chafed fire indicator loop during inspection of a lower ventral attachment point. Even though this inspection was outside his normal duties, he obtained the necessary technical data and used a micrometer to perform a measurement test of the chafed area. He then consulted a metals technology technician who confirmed the unserviceable condition of the fire detection system. This heads-up discovery and follow-on action not only corrected a safety-related discrepancy on the aircraft, but also saved numerous man-hours. Finding this problem while the engine was removed prevented a future engine removal to correct the problem later. On 6 Aug 91, Amn Penland discovered and corrected a potentially hazardous situation when he discovered that locally manufactured F-16 A/B/C/D aircraft tail support stands used to support the F-16 C/G aircraft did not sufficiently support this new aircraft due to a change in the location of the jacking points. Amn Penland took immediate action to notify his shop chief, and all stands were removed from use on the F-16 C/G aircraft until they could be processed through supply for modification. He then used F-16 C/D support stand technical data to research the problem and suggested a method to modify the stands which was readily adopted by quality assurance and metals technology. His actions identified a hazardous situation with the potential of injury to personnel and damage to over 50 F-16 C/G aircraft. Finally, on 8 Aug 91, Amn Penland discovered several pieces of metal deep within the power drive unit bay. A truly notable find due to the fact that inspection of this area requires the use of two hand-held mirrors. Each piece was large enough to jeopardize the integrity of the flight control system and had the potential to cause a catastrophic mishap. Amn Penland earns a Fleagle Salute for his consistent quality performance, safety awareness, and dedication.

On 29 July 1991, Captain Brian S. Smith, 21 TASS, Shaw AFB SC, was flying an OV-10A aircraft on a functional check flight (FCF) from MacDill AFB, Florida. Approximately 15 miles southwest of the base, at 5500 feet altitude, he shut down the right engine IAW with checklist procedures. The engine propeller feathered normally. Capt Smith then
attempted to restart the engine. During the restart, engine RPM hung up at a low RPM (25-30%) setting and the exhaust gas temperature rapidly increased beyond limits. He quickly aborted the air-start and shut down the engine, but the propeller would not feather properly. Instead, the blades remained in a high drag position which created an almost uncontrollable asymmetrical flight condition. Almost full rudder deflection was required to counter the yaw and maintain control of the aircraft. More importantly, level flight could not be maintained, due to the loss of the right engine and the excessive drag. Faced with an engine out emergency and unable to maintain level flight, Capt Smith declared an in-flight emergency. Realizing that he did not have sufficient altitude to return to MacDill AFB, he quickly decided to land at Sarasota-Brandenton Regional Airport, 5 miles away. Flying an optimum descent profile, Capt Smith maintained minimum safe single-engine airspeed. During the descent, he again attempted to restart the engine without success. Attempts to feather the propeller were also unsuccessful. Despite the difficulties of flying the aircraft with loss of an engine, compounded by the asymmetrical flight condition, Capt Smith flew the aircraft to a flawless approach and landing. Maintenance investigation revealed the engine had sustained catastrophic internal failure. His quick reaction and skillful handling of a critical in-flight emergency prevented the loss of a valuable Air Force aircraft. The superb airmanship and judgment demonstrated by Capt Smith earned him a Fleagle Salute.

On 5 Sep 91, an F-16 aircraft battery arced upon installation in a Block 42 aircraft and would have caused severe damage if flight line technicians had not reacted quickly to disconnect the battery. Sergeant Mark K. Nutall, 363d Component Repair Squadron, 363d Fighter Wing, Shaw AFB SC, immediately identified the electrical harness as one of six that had recently been repaired. He reviewed the technical data, found it was wired incorrectly, and expeditiously notified his supervisor, maintenance operations, each aircraft maintenance unit, and the Quality Assurance Division. The improperly-wired harnesses would have no effect in Block 25 aircraft due to the single bus type battery system; however, if these harnesses were installed in Block 42 aircraft with the double bus type system, the results could have been catastrophic. Due to his quick diagnosis, battery installations were ceased and a 100 percent inspection of all small block batteries in the fleet was initiated within a few hours of the incident. Through Sgt Nutall's display of integrity and quick actions, all faulty harnesses were located, a training deficiency within his shop was corrected and technical supervisory review procedures were improved. More importantly, a potential for damage to aircraft and loss of life was eliminated. Sgt Nutall's attention to detail earned him a Fleagle Salute.
QUALITY PERFORMERS IN ACTION

The following individuals and units have earned special recognition for outstanding contributions towards a safe, quality culture. Their actions portray a pride in performance and teamwork which fosters a climate of excellence and results in greater mission accomplishment. Congratulations, and thanks for making TAC a safer, more effective environment.

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Ahhh! Th' sweet smell of spring.

This is th' year I planned to have that big garden.

And this is th' baby what's gonna make th' job a breeze.

Don't need this. Any fool knows how to operate one of these things.

Baaaroom!!

What th...

Fleagle, I don't believe I'd plant my turnips and snap beans that deep. Heh! Heh! Heh!
Mr Frederick Gillard, Motor Vehicle Operator, 347th Supply Squadron, 347th Logistics Group, Moody AFB GA, is a quality contributor and enthusiastic supporter of the squadron ground safety program. He is genuinely concerned for the safety of others and does not hesitate to address or highlight unsafe conditions or acts. His safety knowledge coupled with his innate ability to present ideas, topics, and conclusions in a lively, candid, and down-to-earth fashion make him the central figure in weekly safety briefings. His inspiring presence and presentations are extremely effective in generating the enthusiasm necessary within his branch to foster a positive safety awareness in the working environment.

His achievements in vehicle operations include an accident-free driver’s safety record. Truly an impressive accomplishment, especially when you consider that this occurred over a 12-year period while he accumulated over 61,500 miles operating in some of the most congested and hazardous areas on base. The qualification training sessions he conducted for operators of special and general purpose vehicles are top-notch covering all aspects of vehicle operation. Mr Gillard’s safety involvement also extends into the vehicle management area. His superb assistance in maintaining supply’s vehicle fleet not only generated several wing “Top Wheels” awards, but provided our operators with some of the most reliable and safest vehicles on base. Mr Gillard’s enormous contribution to the squadron ground safety program earned him the TAC Outstanding Individual Safety Achievement Award.
### Class A Mishap Comparison Rate

**Cumulative Rate Based on Accidents Per 100,000 Hours Flying**

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**Month**
- Oct
- Nov
- Dec
- Jan
- Feb
- Mar
- Apr
- May
- Jun
- Jul
- Aug
- Sep

### TAC's Top 5 Thru February 1992

**1st AF**
- Command-Controlled Class A Mishap-Free Months:
  - 73
  - 33

**9th AF**
- Command-Controlled Class A Mishap-Free Months:
  - 56

**12th AF**
- Command-Controlled Class A Mishap-Free Months:
  - 50

**ANG**
- Command-Controlled Class A Mishap-Free Months:
  - 469

**AFRES**
- Command-Controlled Class A Mishap-Free Months:
  - 186

**DRUs**
- Command-Controlled Class A Mishap-Free Months:
  - 185

FRIENDS JUST DON'T LET FRIENDS DRIVE DRUNK