

THE COMBAT EDGE

NOVEMBER 1995

The Combat Edge November 1995



The Combat Edge

AIR COMBAT COMMAND
SAFETY MAGAZINE

Gen Joseph W. Ralston
Commander

Col Zak Tomczak
Chief of Safety

Lt Col "Nellie" Beard
Editor

Ron Smith
Art Director

Barbara Taylor
Awards Administrator

Sgt Mark S. Bailey
Staff Artist

The Combat Edge (ISSN 1063-8970) is published monthly by the Air Combat Command, HQ ACC/SE, 130 Andrews St Ste 301, Langley AFB VA 23665-2786. Second-class postage paid at Hampton VA and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The Combat Edge*, HQ ACC/SEP, 130 Andrews St Ste 301, Langley AFB VA 23665-2786.

DISTRIBUTION: F(X). OPR: HQ ACC/SEP. Distribution is controlled through the PDO based on a ratio of one copy per ten persons assigned. Air Force units should contact their servicing PDO to establish or change requirements. Other DOD units have no fixed ratio and should submit their requests to the OPR. **ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Available to non- DOD readers for \$21 (\$26.25 outside the U.S.) from the Superintendent of Documents, PO Box 371954, Pittsburgh PA 15250-7954. All subscription service correspondence should be directed to the Superintendent, not HQ ACC/SEP.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Articles, comments, and criticisms are welcome. Write:

Editor, *The Combat Edge*
HQ ACC/SEP
130 Andrews St Ste 301
Langley AFB VA 23665-2786

Telephone: (804) 764-3658
DSN 574-3658
FAX: (804) 764-6362
E-Mail: beardn@hqaccse.langley.af.mil

The editors reserve the right to edit all manuscripts for readability and good taste.

DISCLAIMER: Viewpoints expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the policy of DOD, DAF, ACC or the author's organization. Information contained in any article may not be construed as incriminating under Article 31, UCMJ.

CONTENTS

NOVEMBER 1995

ACC SP 127-1 VOLUME 4 ISSUE 6

FEATURES

4 SAFETY RESTS WITH AIR FORCE PEOPLE

"Your own personal limits should be what you can safely accomplish, make a mistake, and still recover." Still, Brig Gen Orin Godsey said, some people push their personal limits in catastrophic ways.

14 LIGHTS ON FOR LIFE

"Lights on for Life" is a one-day nationwide headlight observance in remembrance of persons killed or injured in alcohol-related crashes. The event also serves as a reminder that law enforcement throughout the nation will especially target impaired drivers during the holiday season.

24 DEPRESSION AND SAFETY

Certain seasons or holidays, visits from old friends or family members, or events (both expected and unexpected) in our rapidly changing military life can trigger a state of depression. The purpose of this article is to point out the impact of depression, especially un confronted depression, on the mission and safety.

DEPARTMENTS

GROUND SAFETY

8 22 24

WEAPONS SAFETY

26

AWARDS

11 18

FLEAGLE

7

ACCOLADES

27

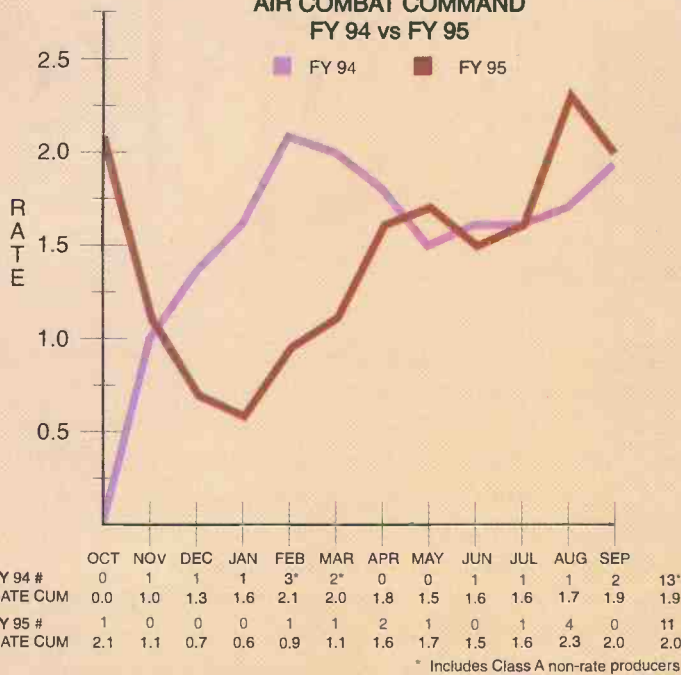
ABOUT THE COVER

Major Daniel D. Maloney is a New York Air National Guard (ANG) pilot with the 107th Air Refueling Group, Niagara Falls, NY. Maj Maloney has flown F-4Ds, F-16ADFs, and KC-135Rs with the ANG. For further information about the cover and center art, contact the artist, Maj Dan Maloney, at (716) 689-2488.



Accent on Safety

**CLASS A FLIGHT MISHAPS
AIR COMBAT COMMAND
FY 94 vs FY 95**



It's that time of year again when we tally up our mishaps and attempt to show some comparison with previous years. This is good because we try to compare like periods of time to measure improvement. The bad part is, we tend to think that we are "done" every first of October.

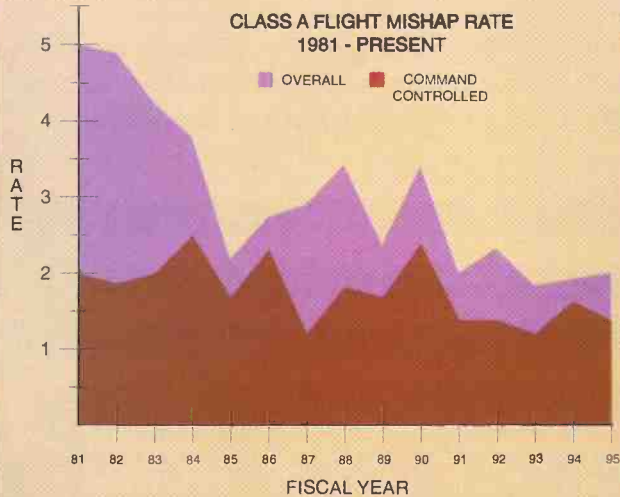
We have been running at a pretty fast tempo. It was a challenging past twelve months and the vast majority of units did not have a Class A mishap. As a Command, we had eleven which is two less than last year. We are also fortunate to have four very valuable combat assets back on the ramp due to the post-mishap skills of some very sharp aircrews.

Looking at ground safety, we had four fewer Class A mishaps but we doubled those that occurred on motorcycles. The good news is that we reduced alcohol related mishaps from nine to two.

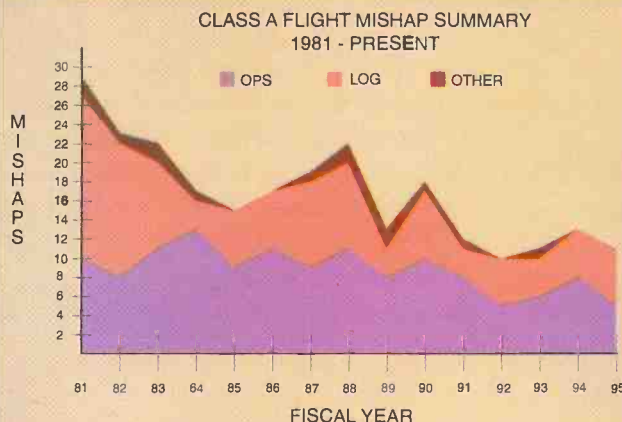
Throughout this issue we've included charts on mishap rates; but remember, we did not start over in October — we continued where we left off. The rates are not important if a member of your squadron was killed on a motorcycle or did not come home from a mission. We always talk about the Air Force as a family so any loss, on a motorcycle, in a POV, or in a combat aircraft is still a loss to each and every one of us.

Colonel Zak Tomczak
Chief of Safety

**CLASS A FLIGHT MISHAP RATE
1981 - PRESENT**



**CLASS A FLIGHT MISHAP SUMMARY
1981 - PRESENT**



Safety Rests with Air Force People

*TSgt David P. Masko
Air Force News Service*

When an aircraft mishap occurs, no matter how benignly, people want answers, said Brig Gen Orin Godsey in explaining safety's mission in the Air Force scheme of things.

While it's safety's job to improve the quality and scope of the mishap prevention and investigation processes, Godsey says the responsibility ultimately rests with Air Force people.

"People need to make the safety culture a central and essential part of everything we do," said Godsey, who became Air Force chief of safety in August 1994. "It's up to the pi-

cus should be on personal limits."

Unlike the World War I or World War II pilot who became legend through daredevil feats, Godsey said people taking unnecessary risks flies right in the face of what the Air Force safety program is all about.

"Your own personal limits should be what you can safely accomplish, make a mistake, and still recover." Still, he said, some people push their personal limits in catastrophic ways.

The sudden loss of life in an aircraft accident often raises fundamental questions about the reliability of the plane, or

Safety Rests With Air Force People

lots, aircrews, to make sure they know the ins and outs of their business. They must know the airplane better than anyone else."

The former wing commander also believes a back to the basics approach is needed, even as Air Force aircraft become safer to use. "Although knowing the system and emergency procedures will always be important, the fo-

even the reliability of the pilot or aircrews. He said the potential consequences of an aircraft failure cause considerable care to be taken in the maintenance, operation and safety checks of an aircraft in the first place. However, there is nothing to precisely stop any failure from occurring.

Godsey says the best the Air Force can do

is make sure all people operating an aircraft are properly trained. But he's quick to point out that "this is not a one mistake Air Force, and mishaps do happen and sometimes people are to blame."

When an accident does occur, safety officials take actions to ensure there are more thorough and timely inspections done in the future. They also promote effective quality control procedures to eliminate the likelihood of a repeat mishap.

"Most of the time a mishap is tied to human error, or in some cases the cause has been extremely difficult to determine," Godsey said.

Air Force safety officials check history records in their investigations. And with tens of thousands of aircraft mishaps to review, they often find clues to see what was left undetected.

Even before it became an autonomous Air Force in 1947, aircraft safety people were looking for ways to prevent quick death in the

air and on the ground. However, it was not an easy job, given a technology that was still in its infancy.

"The golden age of aviation had its share of safety problems," said Godsey in pointing to criticism about large numbers of military airplanes crashing. He explained how the focus on safety all started with the Wright Brothers airplane at Fort Myer, Virginia, in September 1908.

Army Signal Corps records state that the Wright airplane was making turns at a height of 150 feet when a propeller snagged a rudder brace wire. Out of control, the machine plunged earthward. The crash hurled Orville Wright clear, but Lt Thomas Selfridge was pinned beneath the wreckage. Several hours later the young officer died, the first air fatality in U.S. military history.

The state of affairs of the nation's air arm after that didn't get much better. In fact, by the spring of 1911, the Army's one airplane had become too dilapidated to permit further safe flight.

Godsey said increased flying in these primitive machines made safety problems inevitable. For instance, many airplanes prior to the 1920s had no cockpits, exposing the pilots to the slipstream.

But safety problems didn't end when airplanes outgrew the pro-

PELLER. In general, Air Force safety records state that thousands of safety mishaps occurred right through the 1940s, '50s, '60s, and '70s because of aircraft maintenance, design or construction problems rather than simple human error.

Surprisingly, airmen are sometimes at their "safest" when in battle, Godsey said.



“Although the strain and anxiety of long missions are always a safety concern, it’s a greater concern for the commander after the battle... here’s when we find a safety let down.”

Overall, Godsey said, the Air Force flying is at its safest in almost 75 years.

The services measure their safety record by calculating a mishap rate, defined by the number of mishaps per 100,000 flying hours. In 1921, for example, there were 361 air mishaps in 77,351 hours of flying, yielding a mishap rate of 466.7. At the height of World War II, the Air Force experienced 20,389 mishaps in 32,064,789 flying hours. This yielded

a mishap rate of 63.59.

However, in the 1960s, ’70s, and ’80s, with technological improvements and safety innovations, Godsey said the Air Force saw its mishap rate decline from 6.34 to 1.67 mishaps per 100,000 flying hours. In 1994, the mishap rate was 1.51.

While safety people continue to look for clues from history, Godsey said he’s still not comfortable accepting the odds for likely mishaps or even believing that the Air Force can steer its aircraft out of harm’s way on all occasions.

Nevertheless, he says, safety’s philosophy will remain that one mishap is one too many.

THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN SAFE OPERATIONS

Extracted from CSAF ALMAJCOM-FOA message 111600Z Aug 95.

Since August of 1990, the Air Force has been maintaining an extraordinary level of activity. It started with Desert Shield and Storm, then continued with Desert Calm, Southern Watch, Provide Comfort, Deny Flight, Restore Hope, and a host of other major contingency operations. At the same time, we were engaged in a massive downsizing and restructure of the force which resulted in unit moves and the requirement to bring up new or modified facilities.

The troops have performed in a magnificent manner, answering every challenge with professionalism and skill. Of course, all of our successes have come at a high cost. We’re working much of the force harder than we have in a long time. Personnel cutbacks have reduced our numbers, the inventory has shrunk, and spares are sometimes hard to come by. I know that sometimes the pace of operations seems to be too fast, or just too relentless, for you to stop and catch your breath.

The leadership of the major commands, numbered air forces, or wings not be in every work center, cockpit, or vehicle in the Air Force. All of us rely on group, squadron, and flight commanders to be our eyes and ears, to see the faces behind the numbers. The commanders in the field, at the lowest echelons, are the ones with the truest picture of the state of the Air Force. You see things in a way the metrics can’t always reach.

While the turbulence associated with downsizing is coming to an end, don’t expect any breaks in the action for the foreseeable future. Because of the inherent capabilities of our Air Force, I predict a long-term, continuing need for our forces on virtually every continent. This means that every one of you has to be continuously aware of the state of your organization, and to act on that knowledge as necessary. If you perceive that your unit’s operational tempo is creating unsafe conditions, either for your people or your equipment, I expect you to stick up your hand and say so.

The toughest call in the world is “knock it off,” but if you need to make it, don’t shrink from it. You can count on my support. I give you my personal guarantee that, if your professional judgment leads you to ask for relief from a tasking, you’ll get it. I’d rather spend a busy night shuffling priorities and taskings than grieving the loss of a member of the team.

There are tools to use out there to help you predict trouble, but ultimately it’s your knowledge of your people, your weapon systems, and the pressures on them that help us prevent it. Listen to your safety staffs, work with your health professionals and chaplains, but remember: You have the authority and responsibility to make the “knock it off” call.



Gen Ronald R. Fogleman

Fleagle



HARDISON



KNUCK!



I GUESS FLEAGLE FERGOT THAT I WUZ GONNA BURN THAT OLD STUMP ALONG WITH MY LEAVES.

IT APPEARS SO.



CRAZY

Don't Drive Yourself

*Reprinted with permission from TODAY'S SUPERVISOR,
published by the National Safety Council, 1121 Spring Lake Drive, Itasca IL 60143-3201*

Shane Tritsch

You're in heavy traffic, late for an appointment, when a tailgater rubs you the wrong way. He's way too close, you think as your pulse quickens. Then a lane hopper swerves in front of you — without signaling, of course — and nearly runs you off the road. You strangle the steering wheel in a desperate attempt to maintain composure. But now you're stuck behind a slowpoke who putters along without a care in

the world. That's when you finally blow your stack.

At that moment, anger seizes the wheel. Reason gets bound, gagged and stuffed in the trunk. You mutter obscenities, though no one can hear. You honk your horn and maneuver 3,000 pounds of screaming metal as if you're Mario Andretti.

Anger may be the emotion drivers experience most often at the wheel. But it's hardly the only feeling that turns good drivers into bad.

In short, you exhibit the classic characteristics of someone driving with anger unchecked: You take other drivers' behavior personally; try to use your car to retaliate or to teach a lesson; "punish" offending motorists with your horn; follow too closely; and cut in front. Maybe you won't receive a ticket or get into a crash this time. But you'll still arrive at your destination a twitching, seething mess, defeated again by primitive emotion.

Anger may be the emotion drivers experience most often at the wheel. But it's hardly the only feeling that turns good drivers into bad. Virtually any emotion — fear, frustration, sadness, elation, anxiety, even the gooey feeling you get when you muse about that special someone — can impair driving if it becomes so overwhelming that it distracts concentration, erodes judgment or inspires risky behavior.

"Police stop people all the time who drive under the influence of their emotions," says Charles Schwarting, a 28-year veteran of the Illinois State Police. While traffic tickets are a royal annoyance, they're hardly the worst of all consequences. Experts agree and most drivers will admit: Distraction wrought by heightened emotions contributes heavily to driver error. Driver error causes 78 percent of motor-vehicle collisions in the United States, according to Jay Kucers, traffic school advisor for the Safety Council of Nebraska.

"Any state of mind in which you're not concentrating on your driving is dangerous because something else is controlling your driving," says Julie Hinton, managing director of the Safety Council of the Ozarks.

"You're not paying attention to things such as traffic, roadway hazards, speed or the driver in front of you."

Beware of your emotions

Even a good day at work can have dangerous consequences on the road. Joe, a Chicago sales representative for a pharmaceutical company, says his sales success dictates his driving speed. "If I had a good presentation or if I feel pretty satisfied about my day at work, I tend to lay a bit heavier on the gas pedal. It's just a natural thing."

Recognizing that your emotions govern driving behavior is easy. Governing those emotions while behind the wheel is not. But awareness is the crucial first step. "Monitor how you feel before you drive," advises John McCarthy, safety director for the city of Santa Fe, N.M. "Just realizing that you're upset can have a calming effect. If you don't feel up to par, don't drive."

Before you put the key in the ignition, train your internal radar to detect the full range of emotions that might undermine your driving. If you're stressed out after a crummy day at work, take a few deep breaths before you start the car. If you're pumped with adrenaline, stop for a soft drink before you hit the road. If you're grieving over the death of a loved one, get someone else to drive. If you've just fought with your spouse and you feel like going for a drive, take a walk instead.

Since stress often ignites smoldering emotions, minimize anything that might increase your stress level. Make sure your car is in good mechanical condition and has plenty of gas. You have enough to worry about without fretting over ailing brakes or dwindling fuel.

Just as crucial is to allow more than enough time to get where you're going. Running late builds unnecessary tension. "That problem starts before you get in your car. It's a matter of planning, scheduling and time management," says Hinton. "Cut out a phone

call and leave 5 minutes earlier so that you don't have that time crunch."

If you are late, realize that driving fast and aggressively won't save you much time. "All you do is expend more fuel, expend yourself emotionally and stress out a lot of other people," says Florida traffic-safety expert Joseph Abal. "People have this notion that there's someone at the head of the line in traffic. There is no head of the line. And there may be other consequences of trying to make up time."

Be your own boss

Inevitably there will be things — often the

which is a stress reducer, and your driving will feel better.

* Listen to soothing music (unless such music annoys you).

* Rationalize. Try to figure out why other drivers do what they do. Maybe a driver is elderly or new to the area.

* Strive for perspective. "In the greater scheme of things, what have you gained by beating somebody at a light?" asks Santa Fe's John McCarthy.

* If any emotion overwhelms you, pull over. Get out of the car and walk around. Stretch or stop for a snack. Don't get back on the road until you calm down.

Find whatever works to put you at ease

If you're at a light and a guy wants to cut in front of you, let him. By letting him, you're controlling the situation. You come out ahead from a safety standpoint and from a mental-health standpoint.

actions of other drivers — that upset you while you drive. Safety experts emphasize that while you can't control someone else's behavior, you do control your own. How can you make sure that reason rather than emotion wins out? A number of tricks and strategies can defuse tensions and pull drivers back from the emotional edge:

* Give yourself a moment to regain composure. Breathe deeply, count to 10, chew gum or think serene thoughts — any activity that distances you from whatever has upset you.

* Consider potential consequences — a ticket, a collision, higher insurance premiums, an ulcer — and remind yourself that none are worth the risk of driving dangerously.

* Try to be the most courteous driver on the road. People will still cut in front of you, but you'll maintain dignity by staying calm, and you'll arrive at your destination a model of tranquillity. It feels good to let people in,

and in control. The idea is always to act rather than react. "By reacting, you let someone else control you, and you put yourself in a dangerous position," McCarthy says. "If you're at a light and a guy wants to cut in front of you, let him. By letting him, you're controlling the situation. You come out ahead from a safety standpoint and from a mental-health standpoint. If he races ahead, he's taking the risks. Who's in control? You are."

So the next time you're late for an important meeting and the tailgaters crowd you, ignore them or let them pass. When the lane-hoppers cut in front of you, let them in, then let them go. There's nothing you can do to stop them, so why try? And when you get caught behind the slowpokes who haven't a care in the world, realize that with better planning you too could be as unruffled as they. ■

PILOT SAFETY AWARD OF DISTINCTION



Lt Col Homer Smith, 20 OSS, 20 FW, Shaw AFB SC

During a low-level navigation sortie, a very large bird went down the intake of the F-16C Lt Col Homer Smith was flying. The engine began to vibrate and he called "Knock-It-Off" on the radio and began a zoom to gain altitude. He left the throttle at 93%, hoping to avoid further engine damage. He turned toward the nearest field which was 55 NM away and continued to climb. The cockpit then began to fill with smoke and the "Engine Lube Low" oil warning light illuminated. Lt Col Smith selected 100% oxygen and continued to run the checklists with his wingman. He vented most of the smoke by selecting "RAM" on the ECS control panel which allowed him to see the engine instruments again. He landed from a straight-in simulated flameout approach at Glynco Airport and did not touch the throttle until he had the landing made.

The bird experts estimated the black vulture he hit weighed 5 or 6 pounds. The engine experts estimate the engine would have run only a few more minutes. The unlucky bird had skipped off the inside of the intake and impacted the nose cone of the engine, destroying it and penetrating the number one bearing seal. This allowed the oil to be drawn from the oil system into the engine and burned. The smoke from the burning oil entered the cockpit through the ECS system. In addition, a large piece of the nose cone was resting on the first stage fan blades during the whole incident. If this piece of aluminum had been ingested during flight, the engine would have been destroyed, probably requiring Lt Col Smith to eject.

AIRCREW SAFETY AWARD OF DISTINCTION

**PHOTO
NOT AVAILABLE**

*Capt James L. D'Amour, Capt Patrick M. King, Capt Michael J. Kosco,
Capt Curtis D. McGiffin, Amn Richard N. Horton,
7 ACCS, 55 WG, Offutt AFB NE*

The crew of Look 84 (an EC-135) was in the middle of an uneventful aerial refueling when their mission took a decided turn for the worse. As Look 84 was unloading fuel, the copilot noticed large, erratic fluctuations on the number one engine oil pressure gauge. In addition, the engine low oil pressure light came on and remained on. With imminent engine seizure a distinct possibility, the instructor pilot signaled for a disconnect, but neither the tanker nor the receiver could trigger a normal disconnect. Now, locked onto the tanker's boom with an impending engine seizure, the situation was rapidly getting more serious. The copilot quickly realized that if the primary air refueling systems weren't working, he had to switch the signal amplifier to the manual mode. After doing this he was able to initiate a manual disconnect from the tanker. The crew then descended to the bottom of the refueling block to assure safe separation from the tanker and concentrate on the engine malfunction. In accordance with Dash One and checklist procedures, the crew confirmed that the number one engine needed to be shut down. With the three remaining engines operating normally, the crew adjusted their gross weight and recovered into Offutt AFB for an uneventful three engine landing. Once on the ground, maintenance personnel discovered that engine oil had sprayed throughout the entire engine compartment due to the failure of an engine bearing scavenge pump line.

CREW CHIEF EXCELLENCE AWARD

SSgt Carson E. Smith, 38 RS, 55 WG, Offutt AFB NE



Sergeant Smith averted a near catastrophic disaster while deployed to RAF Mildenhall, United Kingdom, in support of Operations BURNING WIND and PROVIDE COMFORT. While Sergeant Smith was making preparations to refuel his aircraft on Hardstand 35, the refueling truck arrived and parked outside the restricted area. The refueling truck operator exited his vehicle and proceeded to obtain permission to enter the restricted area from the security guard. For an unexplained reason, the refueling truck began to roll directly towards the aircraft. Sergeant Smith saw the driverless vehicle rolling toward his aircraft and realized that, unless he did something, the fully loaded fuel truck was going to ram his aircraft. Sergeant Smith ran toward the truck, jumped on the running board of the truck and desperately turned the steering wheel in order to get the truck turned so it would not run into the aircraft. Once assured the truck would not strike the aircraft, he climbed into the cab and stopped the truck. Because of the quick actions of Sergeant Smith, a serious mishap was avoided which could have easily resulted in a major aircraft accident. Sergeant Smith managed to stop the refueling truck only 10 feet from a national asset saving not only the aircraft but also the lives of all the maintenance personnel working on the aircraft. Prior to this incident, all operations on the flightline were normal and all safety precautions had been adhered to.

FLIGHTLINE SAFETY AWARD OF DISTINCTION

TSgt Roy W. Peterson, 388 MS, 388 FW, Hill AFB UT



While performing a routine inspection an F110-100 engine Low Pressure Turbine (LPT) just received from supply, Sergeant Peterson noticed the LPT rotating air seal (LPTRAS) was a population two air seal, supposedly purged out from the F110 engine supply system. The population two LPTRAS were a known cause of several F-16 Class A mishaps. He immediately informed his supervisor and together they performed a records check on a recently assembled engine. The records check confirmed this engine had an incorrect population two LPTRAS installed. Sergeant Peterson immediately realized there was a serious problem and potential for a catastrophic aircraft incident. Researching engines' records, Sergeant Peterson found a total of 37 engines with a high probability of incorrect LPTRAS populations installed. Working closely with engine records personnel, he performed a thorough inspection of these 37 engine records, faxing the necessary serial number data to the engine depot. The depot confirmed that 6 of the 37 engines had incorrect air seals installed. Not stopping here, Sergeant Peterson had command and depot authorities promptly notified. Command authorities issued a one-time inspection of all F110-100 engine records Air Force-wide to ensure the correct LPTRASs were installed. Depot officials issued an interim operational T.O. supplement incorporating a procedure to prevent future intermixing of the High Pressure Turbine aft shaft and the LPTRAS. Final results showed a total of 23 engines world-wide had intermixed components.

WEAPONS SAFETY AWARD OF DISTINCTION

TSgt Johnny L. Collett, 388 LG, 388 FW, Hill AFB UT

Sergeant Collett's contributions to the Weapons Safety Program include a Technical Order improvement that increased the torque value to be applied when installing LAU-129 Missile Launchers, thus alleviating loose missile launchers on aircraft. Another problem concerning dropped objects occurring in flight was with gun doors being ripped off in the airstream. He initiated a remedy to this problem with the recommendation of a beefed-up latch assembly that incorporated a stainless steel striker plate. In both instances, Sergeant Collett personally received calls from other F-16 units in the Air Force, requesting information from him on possible fixes to similar situations. While performing general flightline observations and evaluating the overall operation for safety and Tech Data compliance, he prevented an aircraft from launching that definitely had an unsafe gun system. What Sergeant Collett noticed was that the M61A1 gun's muzzle clamp had been incorrectly installed and was not retaining the gun barrels as required. He immediately stopped the launch of the aircraft and brought the discrepancy to the attention of the pilot. While performing a weapons postload inspection, he once again circumvented a potential catastrophic failure of a F-16's gun system. In this instance, an aircraft panel fastener had somehow been misplaced during a maintenance operation and migrating, came to rest between the gun transfer unit's feed gear and a live 20mm round loaded into the gun system. Had this discrepancy not been discovered and the gun fired, untold damage would have occurred to the aircraft gun system and the surrounding airframe. Sergeant Collett's direct contributions to the weapons safety program have resulted in fewer mishaps and a safer, more reliable F-16 C/D Aircraft Weapons System, not only for the 388th Fighter Wing but Air Force wide.



*Courtesy of the National Highway Safety Administration/National
3D Prevention Month Coalition*

In the last decade, encouraging progress has been made in reducing injury and death in motor vehicle crashes involving drivers and pedestrians impaired by alcohol and other drugs. However, alcohol-related crashes still claimed 16,600 lives in 1994, about a third of them under 25 years of age, and remain a leading cause of death for teenagers and young adults. These alcohol related crashes, injuries and fatalities cost society at least \$46 billion in lost productivity, medical costs, property damage and other direct expenditures. Over \$5 billion of these costs was for health care.

To help reduce these senseless tragedies, the Nation 3D Prevention Month Coalition made up of public and private sector organizations has declared December as National Drunk and Drugged Driving (3D) Prevention Month. The coalition is encouraging community groups, government agencies, law enforcement and businesses throughout the nation to conduct 3D Month promotions to get the word out to their communities about the dangers of impaired driving. Groups are asked to tie their efforts into this year's campaign theme, "Take a stand against impaired driving."

WHAT IS 3D MONTH?

December 15 For Lights On

On December 15 let us **REFLECT** on the many deaths caused
by impaired drivers and **REMEMBER** by turning on our headlights.
On this day let us **REDEDICATE** ourselves to the cause
of keeping impaired drivers off our roads.



US Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**

Produced in cooperation with the National 3D Prevention Month Coalition



WHAT IS "LIGHTS ON FOR LIFE"?

"Lights on for Life" is a one-day nationwide headlight observance in remembrance of persons killed or injured in alcohol-related crashes. The event also serves as a reminder that law enforcement throughout the nation will especially target impaired drivers during the holiday season.

The event is intended to send a positive message to the community and remind the public that alcohol-related crashes are preventable when people come together to urge fellow citizens to take responsibility for their actions. Senior administration officials, national law enforcement leaders and highway safety advocates will kick off this national impaired driving prevention and enforcement initiative in a Washington, D.C. ceremony on Thursday, December 14. This is a nationwide effort to inform the public and the media of the dangers of impaired driving and to encourage increased enforcement of impaired driving laws.

Local communities around the country are encouraged to host their own media events and remind motorists to keep their vehicle headlights on during the day on Friday, December 15, 1995.

"Lights on for Life" is the prelude to "National Holiday Lifesaver Weekend," a national enforcement operation sponsored by state law enforcement administrators to bring attention to impaired driving laws, increased enforcement and hazardous traffic violations. "National Holiday Lifesaver Weekend" will be conducted from December 15-17, 1995.

Law enforcement needs your support to combat the impaired driver. 3D (National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention) Month is an opportunity to provide such support and to encourage your local law enforcement agency to participate in "Lights on for Life" (sponsored by the National 3D Prevention Month Coalition) and "National Holiday Lifesaver Weekend." ■



Artwork courtesy of
Dan Maloney

FUELING
Air National Guard F-16's to



THE STORM

off prior to heading North to Iraq



Ground Safety Award of the Quarter



*SrA Fred N. McGehee
727 ACS(T), 505 CCEG
Hurlburt Field FL*

As the Electronic Switching Center Primary Safety monitor, Airman McGehee established a comprehensive safety program which has contributed directly to his unit receiving an "Outstanding" rating during the annual safety inspection. Identified as one of the best-seen-to-date, his safety program has resulted in zero mishaps, both on and off duty, for his duty section during the past two years. He manages his program through in-depth monthly work area spot inspections and weekly safety briefings tailored to the work center's needs (i.e., hazardous climate conditions and mission effectiveness problems, past and present.) Shortly after taking over the shop's safety program, he totally revamped all reference books to ensure work center personnel were well trained. He rebuilt the safety board for his work center which is now the model board throughout the squadron. The neatness and readiness of his safety board were identified as a benchmark item during the unit's activity inspection. Airman McGehee's overall attention to detail and ceaseless efforts to stress sound safety and maintenance practices are underscored by the results of inspections and zero personnel mishap rate!

Ground Safety Award of the Quarter



Mr. Heuwagen spearheads an aggressive ground safety program designed to achieve the 28 BW strategic goal: "Enhance safety in every aspect of what we do." In the past year, he conducted 43 percent of the annual occupational safety and health inspections—the lion's share of 403 facilities—on Ellsworth AFB, including civil engineering, maintenance, munitions, supply, and services squadrons. Mr. Heuwagen's investigative expertise in safety and knowledge of related fields led to his appointment as investigating officer for 63 percent of all mishap investigations. The Congressionally-mandated B-1B Operational Readiness Assessment, Dakota Challenge, brought an unprecedented operations tempo to Ellsworth AFB and a tremendous influx of temporary personnel. His expanded surveillance of flightline activities cut short the expected rise in ground mishaps and contributed to the successful conclusion of the test with a mission capable rate of an incredible 84.6 percent. Mr. Heuwagen's adaptability to the demands of new situations enabled him to quickly implement new procedures from the Consumer Product Safety Commission to assess the potential hazards of playground equipment in base family housing and base recreation facilities. He assembled a joint inspection team with representation from civil engineering, housing, and services to assess the equipment on 34 playgrounds scattered throughout the base. His inspections highlighted the potential hazards and averted any mishaps this year. His vast experience as an inspector is reflected in the "Commander's Guide to annual Safety Inspections," developed to explain the safety inspection process step-by-step. Mr. Heuwagen's vision of empowering unit safety representatives to perform basic mishap investigations on their own came to fruition with the development of the Unit Safety Representative Mishap Reporting Kit. Since its inception, the kit has increased reporting accuracy by over 50 percent. Risk assessments facilitate unit functional managers in planning expedient hazard abatement on a "worst first" basis. Mr. Heuwagen's conscientious application of safety and health standards directly contributed to Ellsworth AFB surpassing the ACC mishap reduction goal for the third consecutive year.





Flight Safety Award of the Quarter



Capt David Davies
55 WG
Offutt AFB NE

Capt David Davies is the benchmark for wing flight safety officers. Since his assignment as Chief of Flight Safety, he has developed a flight safety program that is second to none. Capt Davies has completely revamped the wing safety awards program. Besides implementing the 55th's new flight safety awards program to provide recognition on a local level, he has been instrumental in Offutt AFB receiving six ACC safety awards in only six months. While Offutt has enjoyed an enviable safety record, he realizes that if a mishap occurs, the wing needs to be ready. His answer was a completely revised mishap response plan which he has personally benchmarked and distributed to all ACC units. Capt Davies also realizes that safety offices throughout the command can benefit from the hard work of others and is willing to share his effort with not only 12 AF but all of ACC. He has developed our first trends analysis program entitled "Safety Spotlight," instantly a "hit" here at Offutt. The cornerstone for this trends analysis program is Offutt's Incident Worksheet which he authored and which allows the flight safety office to record and track all inflight incidents which were previously undocumented. A program initiated by Capt Davies which promises to greatly increase the overall level of safety in the wing is the Flight Safety Spot Inspection Program. This program has the SAFSOs in each flying organization performing spot inspections of all flight-related organizations and activities. The extra eyes looking at the different flight-related processes will certainly help uncover areas that need improving. Another area where Capt Davies makes a direct impact upon flight safety is his enthusiastically received wing safety meetings. He has organized two wing safety meetings and both of this year's ACC Safety Days, bringing in recognized experts to address the safety concerns of Offutt's aircrews. Capt Davies' efforts since being assigned as Chief of Flight Safety have been superlative and have aided immeasurably in managing the mishap prevention and hazard abatement programs on this base.

Weapons Safety Award of the Quarter

As Weapons Safety Superintendent, MSgt Knowles manages an aggressive explosives safety programs for all Ellsworth AFB units. Under his leadership, 28 BW Weapons Safety has "taken the ball" and is running with the B-1B conventional weapons program. MSgt Knowles supervised weapons site plans to accommodate a wide variety of sophisticated munitions, including guided bomb units (GBU) for the B-52. B-1B Operational Readiness Assessment (ORA). The last phase of the assessment involved deployment of nine B-1Bs and 613 support personnel to Roswell NM from 15 Oct 94 to 23 Nov 94. The task: fly 109 sorties and maintain a mission capable rate of 75 percent. When the dust settled, 110 sorties were flown with an astounding 84.27 mission capable and 126 MK 82s and 126 BDU-50s had been dropped on target. In preparation for the deployment, MSgt Knowles evaluated and selected all the explosive routes from the munitions area to the flight line. He painstakingly measured aircraft parking spots to determine exactly where B-1Bs could be loaded with MK 82 general purpose bombs. This work directly contributed to a "zero-mishap" deployment! His sense for safety is keen, and the reason since FY 94 our munitions squadron received, stored, and shipped over 1,100 tons of munitions without incident. A visionary, MSgt Knowles has prepared the flight line and munitions storage area now for employment of CBU-87s, CBU-89s, and the future JDAM weapon system. Four of five exhaustive explosives safety site plans submitted for review to the Department of Defense Explosives Safety Board (DDESB) for loading of MK 82s, M117s and CBU 87/89s have been approved and implemented. His updated Master Aircraft Parking Plan created the addition of an incredible 20 combat aircraft parking spots, all of which are prepared for the future B-1 weapons complement. His revised expendable countermeasure load policy increased annual chaff load capability by 60 percent. Since Feb 94 the 28 BW has undergone ten phase I and II exercises used to evaluate and test the deployment capability of the wing. During these exercises the wing built, delivered, loaded, and dropped over 1,050 tons of MK 82s and BDU-50s without mishap. MSgt Knowles' work continues to ensure Ellsworth AFB weapons safety programs are poised for the future. The results of all his efforts is one of which the 28 BW is justly proud: not a single dollar expended on explosives mishaps since FY 93.



*MSgt Russell E. Knowles
28 BW
Ellsworth AFB SD*

Home Fire safety Checklist

"Reprinted from *USAA Magazine*,
August 1995, USAA, San Antonio, TX 1995."

Fire warning systems:

- * Is there at least one smoke detector on each floor and one near each bedroom area?
- * Do you have at least one ionization and one photoelectric smoke detector to alert your family to smoky fires and flaming fires that produce little smoke?
- * Do you replace smoke alarm batteries twice a year with long-lasting, 9-volt lithium batteries?
- * Do you have a carbon monoxide detector to detect deadly gas produced by fuel-fired furnaces, space heaters, wood stoves and fireplaces?

Preventing fires:

- * Do you have your heating systems and chimneys inspected and cleaned regularly?
- * Do you have non-flammable chimney screens or mesh spark arrestors that are 1/2 inch in diameter or smaller?
- * Are trash and other items placed far from furnaces, space heaters, hot water heaters, fireplaces and other sources of heat?
- * Do you turn off portable heaters when no one is in the room and at bedtime?
- * Do portable heaters have adequate ventilation?
- * Do you have protective shutters or fire-resistant draperies on your windows?
- * Do you avoid overloading electrical circuits?
- * Are electrical cords kept out from under rugs or furniture?
- * Have you replaced frayed cords?
- * Do you unplug small kitchen appliances when they're not in use?

- * Does everyone in the home know how to put out a small kitchen grease fire safely?
- * Do you enforce a strict "no smoking in bed" policy?
- * Do you empty ashtrays or fireplace embers into metal containers when they are cold?
- * Do you keep matches and lighters out of children's reach?
- * Do you store gasoline and other flammable liquids in the proper metal or non-flammable containers? Do you keep these containers away from heat sources?
- * Have you removed barbecue grills from wooden decks?

Fire safety plan:

- * Have you discussed a fire safety plan with your family?
- * Do you store working flashlights in every bedroom?
- * Does everyone know where to meet after escaping a fire?
- * Have you had a home fire drill?
- * Do you have an escape route from a second floor (i.e., a foldable ladder)?
- * Do you keep all stairways, doors and other exits clear of furniture or other obstructions?
- * Do you tell babysitters what to do in case of a fire?
- * Is there at least one "ABC" type fire extinguisher available in an easy-to-reach location where there is a potential for fire (kitchen, basement and garage)?
- * Have you recorded your home and possessions with photos or video tape? Do you have a copy stored in a safe-deposit box?

Wildfires:

- * Is your house number and/or name clearly posted at the driveway entrance or mailbox, sign or curb?
- * Are your fire tools, ladder and extinguisher readily available for emergencies?
- * Are decks, porches and other raised extensions (such as eave vents) protected with fire-resistant materials, or screened to keep

out sparks?

- * Does your driveway allow easy access for emergency vehicles (i.e., curves are not too sharp for fire trucks)? Is there adequate width (18 to 20 feet) and height (15 feet) clearance?
- * Does your driveway have an exit or a turn-around large enough — say 50-feet in diameter — for emergency vehicles?
- * Has vegetation been cleared within 3 feet of fire hydrants?
- * If you don't have a fire hydrant nearby, is there a water storage tank with a fire hose adapter available for fire fighters' use?
- * Is there a swimming pool on the premises, do you have a gas-powered pump for wetting your roof and vegetation? If you evacuated, would you leave the pump gassed and set up at the poolside for fire fighters?
- * Is your roof made of fire-resistant, non-combustible materials such as asphalt, tile, slate, asbestos or concrete shingles, or metal?
- * Are exterior walls brick, stone or other fire-resistant materials?
- * Is electrical wiring installed underground, or are trees trimmed to avoid overhead wires?
- * Have you cleared at least 30 feet of space (100 feet on sloping lots) around your home? Is it free of dry grass, underbrush and dead wood?
- * Have you removed trees growing through porches, decks or roofs?
- * Are there fire-resistant plants around your home?
- * Are the lower branches of trees taller than 18 feet pruned within 6 feet of the ground?
- * Have the trees around your house been further pruned to avoid limbs hanging over the roof or chimney outlet?
- * Do you keep gutters and roofs free of dead leaves, pine needles and other debris?
- * Do you store firewood at least 50 feet from your house?
- * Have you met with local officials to ensure that load limits on bridges are at least 40,000 pounds to accommodate fire-fighting equipment? ■

Motorcycles in November

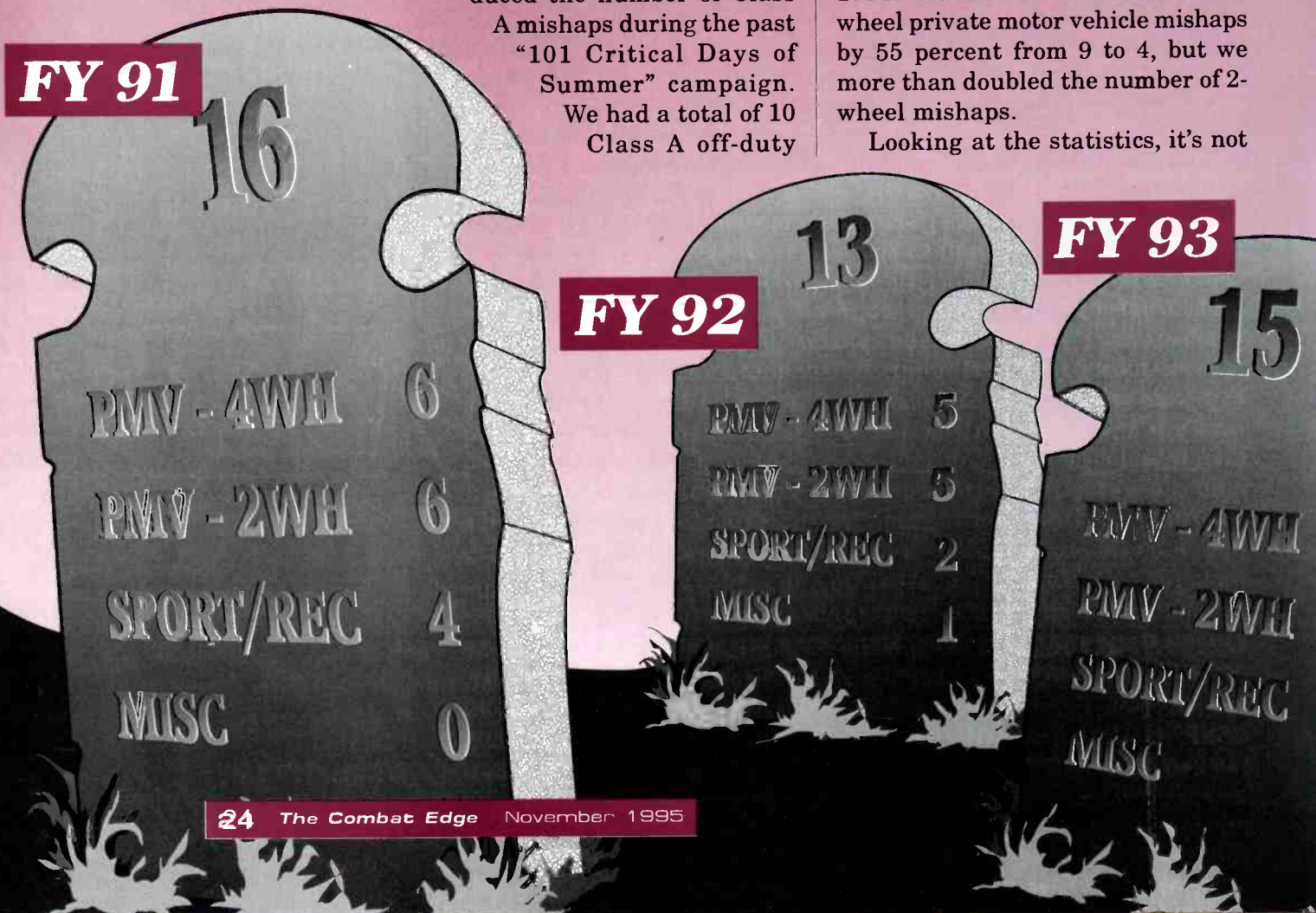
*Mr. Mike Mehalko
HQ ACC/SEG
Langley AFB VA*

Before you jam the phone lines to Langley questioning my mental stability, let me explain why we're talking about motorcycles in November. During the 1995 "101 Critical Days of Summer" (Memorial Day to Labor Day), Air Combat Command had 5 PMV 2-wheel (i.e., motorcycle) Class A off-duty mishaps. This represents a 150 percent increase over 1994 when we had 2 motorcycle mishaps. In fact, we haven't had this many motorcycle mishaps since 1992. Obviously, we're concerned — you should be too.

Now, for some good news. We successfully reduced the number of Class A mishaps during the past "101 Critical Days of Summer" campaign. We had a total of 10 Class A off-duty

mishaps as compared to 12 in 1994 and 15 in 1993. Your leadership, focus, and attention have reduced our Class A mishaps by 33 percent in comparison to 1993 and 17 percent from 1994. When we look back over the last 5 years, we see a trend of improvement. Despite some ups and downs, we are getting better at protecting our people during the high risk summer season. This year we had 1 Sports and Recreation mishap (drowning), the same as we had in 1994. We reduced the number of 4-wheel private motor vehicle mishaps by 55 percent from 9 to 4, but we more than doubled the number of 2-wheel mishaps.

Looking at the statistics, it's not



too hard to determine where we need to focus our mishap prevention efforts. Of the 22 mishaps during the 1994 and 1995 "101 Critical Days of Summer," 20 involved private motor vehicle operation — 91 percent of the total mishaps! Looking at the last 5 years, we see that 78 percent of our total mishaps were private motor vehicle mishaps (45 percent were 4-wheel and 33 percent were 2-wheel).

A closer look at the 1995 statistics reveals some interesting facts. Five (50 percent) of the mishaps occurred in the last 20 days of the campaign. Is it possible we let our early successes affect our attention and focus? Did we let complacency overcome our awareness? If so, the results were predictable. In 6 of the mishaps, the Air Force person was on the receiving end of someone who failed to yield the right of way, made an illegal turn, or crossed the centerline. This was particularly devastating in the 2-wheel (motorcycle) category. Four of the 5 motorcycle mishaps were caused by someone turning left into or in front of the motorcycle operator. What does this tell us? Our folks may be the safest drivers on the road, but there's still the other person. We

must always drive defensively — looking out for the other driver. If you expect the unexpected, you won't be surprised when it happens. As we've seen, surprises can be killers! Just because you "legally" have the right of way, doesn't necessarily mean that the other driver is going to give it to you. You can be "legally" right — and "legally" dead!

The upcoming winter holiday season (Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's) presents us with both a challenge and an opportunity. We can better serve our command and protect our people by meeting the challenge of zero Class A mishaps during the winter holiday season. Use the information from the "101 Critical Days" to focus your attention and efforts for mishap prevention during the holidays. Despite the challenges during these holidays, such as shorter days, cold weather, snow, slippery roadways and for some, more travel to visit families and friends, we can eliminate the alarming number of private vehicle caused deaths and serious injuries. However, to be successful, we need to start planning our strategies now. By working together, we can prevent the tragedy of death and/or disability from marring what should be a joyous time of celebration. One life lost or impaired is one too many. Your efforts during the "101 Critical Days" made the difference and will again during the winter holidays. ■



HOW STUPID CAN YOU BE?

*SMSgt Brian D. Prucey
2 BW/SEW
Barksdale AFB LA*

"Don't sweat it, son. You're not a real weapons troop unless you drop at least one bomb in your career."

Those well-meaning words from my master sergeant flight chief did little to ease the "pucker factor" I was experiencing as I stared, dazed and confused, at the MK-82 "Snakeye" laying on the ground with a broken M904 nose fuze.

It was the fall of 1980 at RAF Upper Heyford UK. I was a young 21-year-old staff sergeant weapons load team chief, newly married, and ready to take on the world. The integrated combat turnaround (ICT) on the F-111E was going along without a hitch — until now.

ICTs provide ample opportunity for all types of mishaps. The hurried environment, the large number of people competing for a piece of the jet, the desire to beat the other guy's time, and the desire to shine as the best loader in the shop can all cause young troops to disregard training and common sense. Who would have thought that not using the bomb tie-down strap would get such high-level attention. When you're trying to be the best, a little short-cut seems harmless.

We were in the groove — "slam'n and jam'n." All I needed to do was get the bombs off the trailer and onto the jet. Simple. The jammer driver positioned the jammer table right under the bomb and brought the lift arms up raising the bomb off of the chocks.

I grabbed the fin assembly and gave the jammer driver a thumbs-up indication to raise the bomb higher, then I motioned for him to back away from the trailer and proceed to the aircraft. But, silly me! I forgot to check that the bomb's center of gravity was positioned between the table rollers and I forgot to use the bomb tie-down strap. As the jammer driver pulled away from the trailer and swung around to line up with the bomb rack, 500 pounds of sprung steel and high explosive filler departed the table.

The fuel truck driver saw it all. As the bomb's nose drove into the concrete floor of the hardened aircraft shelter, he closed his eyes and plugged his ears with his fingers. Luckily for the 10 or so of us on the ICT team, there was only an embarrassing thud and not a BOOOOOOM!

Why the reminiscing after 15 years? Well, young people haven't changed much. Unfortunately, we all seem destined to be really stupid at least once in our lives. Hopefully, it won't cost any lives. We, who are seasoned supervisors and veterans of stupidity, need to impress upon our young troops that it only takes one moment of cavalier carelessness to create a disaster. It might be on the job, in the home, or traveling across country. Disregarding safety standards, technical directives, and common sense is just plain stupid.

Think about it. How smart is it to drive 20 hours straight without sleep? How smart is it to not report that lost tool just so you can have an on-time takeoff? How smart is it to go boating without a life vest? How smart is it to drive after having "just a few" drinks? Like Forest Gump says, "stupid is as stupid does." ■

ACCOLADES

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS
CONCERNING DATA ON THIS
PAGE SHOULD BE
ADDRESSED TO HQ ACC/SEF,
DSN: 574-7031

	TOTAL			ACC			ANG			AFR		
	SEP	THRU SEP		SEP	THRU SEP		SEP	THRU SEP		SEP	THRU SEP	
		FY95	FY94		FY95	FY94		FY95	FY94		FY95	FY94
CLASS A MISHAPS	0	16	23	0	11	13	0	4	9	0	1	1
AIRCREW FATALITIES	0	10	9	0	3	7	0	1	2	0	6	0
* IN THE ENVELOPE EJECTIONS	0/0	12/0	16/1	0/0	9/0	5/0	0/0	3/0	11/1	0/0	0/0	0/0
* OUT OF ENVELOPE EJECTIONS	0/0	0/1	0/2	0/0	0/1	0/2	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0

* (SUCCESSFUL/UNSUCCESSFUL)

CLASS A MISHAP COMPARISON RATE

(CUMULATIVE RATE BASED ON ACCIDENTS PER 100,000 HOURS FLYING)

	FY 94	0	1.1	1.5	1.8	2.4	2.4	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.9
	FY 95	2.1	1.1	0.7	0.6	0.9	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.6	2.3	2.0
8 AF	FY 94	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	FY 95	0	0	0	0	1.8	1.5	1.3	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.6	1.5
9 AF	FY 94	0	0	0	2.1	3.3	4.0	3.2	2.8	2.2	2.1	1.9	1.6
	FY 95	0	0	0	0	0	1.2	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.9	1.8
12 AF	FY 94	0	0	2.0	1.6	1.3	1.1	.9	.8	1.4	2.0	2.4	3.1
	FY 95	6.5	3.3	2.3	1.7	1.4	1.2	2.0	2.6	2.4	2.1	2.6	2.4
DRU	FY 94	0	14.9	8.6	6.7	11.2	9.5	7.9	7.0	6.3	5.7	5.3	4.6
	FY 95	0	0	0	0	0	5.3	3.7	3.5	3.3	5.6	5.6	4.9
ANG	FY 94	0	1.9	2.6	2.2	2.7	3.7	3.2	3.4	3.5	4.0	3.6	3.3
	FY 95	0	0	0	0	0.8	0.7	0.6	1.0	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.4
AFR	FY 94	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.4	1.3	1.3
	FY 95	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.0	0.9
TOTAL	FY 94	0	1.2	1.7	1.8	2.3	2.7	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.3
	FY 95	1.3	0.7	0.4	0.3	0.8	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.9	1.8
MONTH	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	

(BASED ON PROGRAMED HOURS FLOWN)

DEPRE

Many people in the Air Force are depressed and don't even realize it. They think it is just part of life, or perhaps a passing phase. I'm sure you know someone right now who has experienced a loss or setback in their life. You've seen the toll it has taken on your friendship and on that person's energy and ability to perform his or her duties. Many hide their hurt because they fear it would ruin their career if they sought help — this only serves to worsen their situation.

Certain seasons or holidays, visits from old friends or family members, or events (both expected and unexpected) in our rapidly changing military life can trigger a state of depression. The purpose of this article is to point

*Maj Thomas P. Azar
35 FW/HC
APO AP 96319*

out the impact of depression, especially unfronted depression, on the mission and safety.

The following generic case study will highlight key causes and symptoms of depression and what one can do if a friend or family member is showing signs of depression.

Sam and Pam are both on active duty and have been married for 5 years. Pam has just received orders for a 90-day rotation to Southwest Asia. She is worried about her aunt who has recently been diagnosed with breast cancer and who Pam is very close to. She is half-way through the college semester and has also been studying hard for her next stripe. However, the major immediate problem in their marriage is they desperately want to have children, but have been unable to. Pam has a medical condition that continues to worsen her physical and

emotional state.

Sam always put Pam first in his life; but in the past year, with all the time and expense for pregnancy evaluations and travel — all of which have resulted in no children — he has begun to avoid the bad news and Pam by burying himself in his work and school. He takes a heavy course load and spends extra time at the library and work. They used to go out regularly, but now it is limited to just required squadron functions. When he has time off from school, Sam does a lot of fishing and hunting with his friends.

Pam has tried to create a pleasant mood around the house, but her physical condition is beyond her control. She tried talking with Sam about his excessive spending on sport and hobby equipment; but he told her, "There's no sense saving for the kids that will never come."

MISSION and Safety

Pam and Sam are both depressed and experiencing some very serious problems. Rather than realizing his wife's need for love and support, especially in light of her upcoming deployment, ill aunt, and school work, Sam has been insensitive and insincere about his true feelings.

Pam is supposed to depart in 3 weeks. She has mixed feelings about leaving her home, school, and work environment for a deployment. She is also sad that she will not be able to celebrate their wedding anniversary. She has been worrying about their separation and doesn't know how to feel good about herself or Sam. Pam decided to give the chaplain a call because she was feeling very down. In her hopelessness, she thought a letter from the chaplain to her commander could delay her deployment.

Pam and Sam were both

depressed and didn't even realize it. They avoided facing the deep causes of their feelings; and instead of being each other's "helpmate," have hampered any mutual support, thus prolonging their depression. Pam's mental attitude and physical behavior raised serious concern with her supervisor. She was more withdrawn, insecure, and irritable. Her energy level was slowly decreasing. She was having a tough time fulfilling the physical requirements of her demanding job. She started overeating, especially junk food, and gaining weight. Her usually kind and sensitive nature disappeared as she became more inconsiderate of others. She preferred to work alone on the flightline and was often seen sitting behind her truck staring up into the vacant sky. Pam the optimist had become Pam the pessimist.

She didn't joke with her

peers any more, but rather seemed to be constantly facing down on herself. She wasn't sleeping well; in fact, she woke up every night around 3 o'clock and walked around the house worrying. When she woke up in the morning, she was exhausted. She went to Family Practice and complained about her insomnia and pain. The physical problems, her inner hopelessness, and lack of spousal support, served only to feed her sadness and hopelessness. She started thinking negatively about herself, her marriage, job, parents, and future goals.

Sam dealt with his depression by denying it — something many individuals do on a daily basis. He felt trapped and unclear about their problems. He avoided confronting the issue directly with Pam or through a professional counselor. Rather, he displaced his anxiety by over-involving himself in

extracurricular activities that pulled him away from Pam and the problem at hand. He also had difficulty sharing his deeper feelings.

Sam's work performance started to suffer. He had difficulty making sharp, objective decisions. Those he supervises have noticed that he is unclear in giving direction, and those he is responsible to have questioned him on several important suspenses. His appetite decreased, his personal appearance turned sloppy, and he had a very hard time sleeping at night, unless he numbed himself with alcohol.

The main cause of Pam's continued depression was her guilty feelings and self-pity about being unable to have children, compounded by Sam's distancing and withholding affection. She felt she let him and their parents down. Her whole life, anything she wanted, she was able to focus on and work for. For the first time in her life she was confronted by her own limitations. In the first 2 hour counseling session we studied about Pam's condition, and I asked them to draw a genogram — a family tree. We discovered in their collective lineages, 7 of their 12 married great aunts and uncles were without children. The powerful impact of realizing the biological cause of their infertility served to lift a great load off both their shoulders. Recognizing the cause to be genetic termi-

nated the blaming syndrome between Pam and Sam. Getting to the physical source of the depression freed us to focus on more immediate issues involving their marriage, communication, feelings, and relationships, especially in light of Pam's deployment.

If Pam's depression was not dealt with, it would have continued to disrupt her friends, co-workers, and relatives. Her emotional downswing would have directly impacted her safety and those she worked with. If she deployed without resolving her depression, it is most likely she would not have performed well and probably created an unsafe environment on the flightline. Having the "blues" over the holidays and anniversary, compounded by separation from one's marriage partner and issues that remain unresolved, can inflame mental, emotional, and physical symptoms. Helplessness becomes hopelessness.

Sam, on the other hand, hid his depression by focusing on Pam as the problem. His disappointment over not having children, withdrawal from closer commitment to Pam, and feelings of loneliness and ambivalence unconsciously led him to protect himself by displacing his anxiety and depression onto the person closest to him. If they had not come to the chapel for counseling, Sam would probably have developed more negative feelings to-

ward Pam and himself, and friends and family members, while experiencing increased mood swings. Untreated, depression can only fester and grow — resulting in greater personal, marital, and professional complications.

Individuals should seek professional help! Unfortunately, depressed individuals get so down they can't even pick themselves up to get in contact with a helping professional. Trying to meet the depressed individual at their point of need or level of frustration is the beginning of healing.

When you start feeling the "blues" are deeper and longer than usual, start pushing yourself or ask someone else to push you to stay involved in on- and off-duty activities. Friends and co-workers play a key role in helping individuals avoid prolonged depression. Try to be available and open to those who are sad. Encourage them to share whatever they feel comfortable with. Sometimes just asking, "Is there anything going on that I can help with? I'd really like to help." can do wonders for a depressed person. Don't try to be a loud mouth, good old boy by saying it's just the weather or the boss. Glib remarks are counter-productive. Be sincere and honest. Acknowledge their pain. Even if you cannot professionally solve it; you can point the way to available resources.

Try to keep a journal by

week or month that highlights times, places, and people that helped or hindered one's depression. Give yourself breaks during the day and mini-vacations during the week. This change of scenery will provide the opportunity to breathe some fresh air and be more objective. Most depression can be resolved with minor adjustments.

Find a support group at the chapel or family support center where you feel comfortable as individuals or a couple to share your thoughts and feelings, and to receive feedback from other couples and helping professionals on the intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics that surface.

Observe what a depressed person needs and pitch in. Just trying to get through the daily chores and responsibilities of work and home can overburden a depressed person. Repairs, laundry, shopping, or cooking take more than the average amount of energy. Demonstrate care; words

are cheap, but depressed people are looking for substantial concern. ■

SEEKING HELP NOT SIGN OF WEAKNESS

*MSgt Gary Pomeroy
Air Force News Service*

The stigma applied to people who seek mental health treatment is from another era; and those who seek treatment should not be considered weak, according to the Air Force Chief of Staff.

"We've come a long way in understanding the underlying causes of mental illness and stress...so we need to move forward and take advantage of that knowledge," Gen Ronald R. Fogleman told Air Force News Service recently.

Fogleman was addressing the widespread perception within the military that turning to mental health is a career-ender. He said people shouldn't have such apprehensions....

"I believe very clearly that leadership has a responsibility to get their people the resources to do the job," Fogleman said. "Resources come in many forms. I look at (mental health) as another tool that's available. So we should not make tools available for people to use and then punish them when they use them, or put some stigma on them," he said.

Fogleman said seeking help does not mean that someone is unfit for promotion or for a leadership position. In fact, he said, the opposite approach would be more appropriate.

Without help, "You're going to have trouble being fit for promotion, you're going to have trouble doing your job. You're going to have trouble performing in the fashion that we expect you to perform if you have some form of mental illness or stress or strain that's at work on you. So I would encourage people to go seek out the help that they need to get well.... Seeking help can allow you to maintain performance despite problems you're having. Seeking help is not a sign of weakness, it is a sign of strength."

During the recent interview, Fogleman said the troops are holding up "very, very well" under the stress of the Air Force's level of operations tempo, but the climate is right for "the kinds of stresses that start to undermine morale."

"Family separations in and of themselves are just the beginning of the problems," he said. "You end up with financial problems, you end up with disciplinary problems with children, and the things that manifest themselves when you have separation."

Fogleman said there are several avenues for people to work out problems before turning to mental health.

The unit level is the best place to "personalize what's occurring," he said. "Fellow airmen" at unit level are viewed as individuals "not as some number or some unidentified part of the team."

"So my advice is for us to build these reinforcing mechanisms at the unit level. We start there."

That includes building the right family support mechanisms so when people deploy they are not "relying on the system" to take care of families.

"There's a real unit there that you can identify with, there are people in it that you know," he said.

"Hopefully, if we've gone about this thing right, we'll have the integrity and the trust and the loyalty built so that when you leave, when you walk out that door with your mobility bag, you have a high degree of confidence that if your family needs support of some kind, they're going to get it. And it's got to start at that unit."

