A nighttime photograph of the US Capitol building in the background, illuminated against a dark sky. In the foreground, a large, multi-story building has been severely damaged, with its structure exposed and debris piled up. The scene is lit by streetlights and emergency lights, creating a somber and dramatic atmosphere.

The Combat EDGE

October 2001

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The Combat EDGE

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Back Photo: PH2 Jim Watson

ACCent on Safety

SAFETY IN A CHANGED WORLD

As I write this, America is trying to come to grips with the tragic events of 11 September. Now more than ever American's are concerned about a safe and secure environment. As a result, America is again turning to our combat forces to defend and preserve our way of life.

This new challenge will certainly change operational tempos and increase the demands on our units and their personnel. Commanders and supervisors will need to keep in mind the long-term consequences of higher-tempo operations and ensure that their personnel adhere to long-standing safety practices and resist the tendency to take shortcuts in the name of the mission. We will need everyone in this war against terrorism.

Originally we planned for our October edition of *The Combat Edge* to focus on Fire Safety. So we are going one step further. We dedicate this edition to the Fire, Police, and Rescue personnel that so valiantly responded to World Trade Center and the Pentagon attacks.

Additionally, our hearts and prayers go out to the families and friends of those that lost their lives in these senseless terrorist attacks.



Colonel Kevin Smith
ACC Chief of Safety



TSgt. Nick Marchisello, an Air Force Reservist and New Jersey firefighter, awaits the order to enter the rubble of the North Tower of the World Trade Center. (Photo by Capt. Jim Fabio)

NEW YORK — The first thing that hit people was the intense acrid smell, and smoke still billowing from fires more than two days after the collapse of the World Trade Center. Among the thousands of rescue and recovery workers were more than 100 airmen, reservists and guardsmen wearing state and city police and fire fighting uniforms. “It’s horrible,” said TSgt. Nick Marchisello, a fireman with the 514th Civil Engineering Squadron at McGuire Air Force Base, N. J. “It’s like walking into hell.”

To the



An aerial photograph showing the massive pile of rubble and twisted metal left behind after the World Trade Center towers collapsed on September 11, 2001. The debris field is a dense, chaotic landscape of brown and grey wreckage. In the upper left corner, a portion of a standing skyscraper is visible, its facade showing a grid of windows. The sky is a pale, hazy blue.

An aerial view of what used to be the World Trade Center shows just how large the cleanup effort will be. The World Trade Center collapsed after two terrorist piloted airplanes flew into the buildings on September 11, 2001. (Photo by PHC Eric Tilford)

Rescue

by Capt. Lars Anderson, New York, NY

Marchisello, a 17-year veteran, was in New York with the Clifton Fire Department from New Jersey. His current job was to go and look for survivors.

Search and rescue dogs from the Bergen County Sheriff's Department went ahead of the firefighters in search of survivors. It was the job of Marchisello and his fellow team members to rescue them, should the dogs discover anyone. It was dangerous work with fires still burning, and the ground and debris very unstable.

SSgt. Anthony Latona, a member of the 105th Airlift Wing at Stewart International Airport in Newburgh, N.Y., was also a firefighter with Clifton. Latona relates what he saw to his time on active duty in the Air Force when he served in Africa.

"I served in Rwanda," he said. "You're expected to see it there. Going in there, you're expecting to see death and devastation, but to be here like this is just ...," Latona did not finish the sentence, staring in disbelief at the wreckage before him.

"I've looked at this skyline my whole life," Latona said, referring to the towering 110-story twin towers. "They were there and now they're gone."

His service in the Air Force helped him prepare for the overwhelming mission of rescue and recovery.

"Being in Rwanda totally changed my outlook on life," Latona said. "I've learned to appreciate what I've got and I've learned to be there to help people. Being in the military has made me a better fireman and prepared me to do what I have to do."

The Desire to Serve

By Lt. Col. Theresa C. Carter, Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

I developed the idea for this article while attending the Department of Defense fire conference a few weeks ago. The title, "The desire to serve, the ability to perform, the courage to act," is the motto of Air Force firefighters.

Before I could put the finishing touches on the article, the terrorist attacks in New York City and at the Pentagon forever changed the world as we know it. After watching the events of the last few days, it was clear to me that the motto has a much broader application.

Each of us wearing a military uniform decided to serve our country for a variety of reasons — perhaps it was patriotism, a desire to travel, or an opportunity to acquire new skills and an education. Regardless of the

reason, we all belong to an organization, and to a way of life, that's bigger than we are. We're not an army of one, but rather a team of more than a million dedicated soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines.

As the nation watched in horror the events of the past few days, nothing brought us closer to tears than the image of firefighters and police officers rushing to provide assistance while everyone else was fleeing the crumbling World Trade Center. Hundreds of emergency responders lost their lives as a result of their desire to serve and placing service before self.

One of the most basic responsibilities of supervisors and leaders is the need to ensure the people



New York City firemen walk past the American flag as they work their way toward the heart of the devastation that was once the World Trade Center in New York, September 14, 2001. (Photo by JOI Preston Keres)

entrusted to our care are ready to perform their duties when called upon. In the military, these duties are performed across the full spectrum of conflict — from daily peacetime activities to armed conflict against our nation's enemies. The training we do every day ensures we are prepared for any situation, 24/7.

In addition, each of us has a personal responsibility to ensure



Marchisello could not agree more.

"The (Air Force) fire program expects and encourages you to constantly upgrade and continue your education about the firefighting profession," Marchisello said. "People come to you because of the excellent training that you have received and are getting because you are in the military. What I learned (at the World Trade Center) I can use in my job with the Reserves and vice versa."

But, he said, nothing can fully prepare a firefighter for what is encountered during an actual disaster.

"Seeing this destruction is unbelievable," Marchisello said.

Other people with an Air Force tie also hoped that they too would bring people out alive. Sixty-three civilian rescuers from Sacramento, Calif.

arrived at McGuire with the help of a C-5 Galaxy from the 337th Airlift Squadron at Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass.

"We are here to do what we can and work together as a team," said Larry Savage, a member of the rescue team. "It takes everyone working together to make this happen."

A feeling of patriotism pervaded the entire atmosphere around the remains of the once glorious buildings in downtown Manhattan. American flags were everywhere — on hats, on taxis, on radio antennas, even on makeshift flagpoles in the destruction zone. Messages of encouragement are seen everywhere. "God Bless Us," "America Will Prevail," and most poignantly, "Rest In Peace to those who died...we will not forget." ►

we are physically and mentally prepared to answer the call. We achieve excellence in all we do through the collective efforts of individuals and supervisors. In the coming weeks, our military may be asked to respond to the barbaric act of terrorism inflicted on us. I'm confident in our ability to perform.

Courage involves not only physical courage but moral as well. Our military history is filled

with stories of incredible physical courage, from the first shots fired at Lexington and Concord to the beaches of Normandy and the sands of Iraq and Kuwait.

Those in the fire service, both military and civilian, demonstrate the courage to act every day, whether they are responding to a structural fire, an in-flight emergency on a military aircraft, or to the unspeakable horror that we've seen this week.

As the granddaughter, niece, and cousin of several Los Angeles firefighters and as the base fire marshal here at Davis-Monthan, I have a special appreciation for firefighters and their desire to serve, ability to perform, and courage to act. My thoughts and prayers are with the families of those who lost their lives in an attempt to save others in New

York, and to all of the victims and their families in this tragic and cowardly act of terrorism.

My faith, however, in our nation's resolve and in the ability of our military to successfully respond to these attacks remains unshakeable. May God bless the land of the free and the home of the brave.



Photo by JOI Preston Keres

WARNING:

Hotel Fires Can Be H

I have been a firefighter in Los Angeles, Calif., for over 10 years and have seen many people die needlessly in building fires. It is sad because most could have been saved.

Contrary to what you have seen on television or in the movies, fire is not likely to chase you down and burn you to death. It is normally the bi-products of fire that will kill you. Super heated fire gases (smoke) and panic will almost always be the cause of death long before the fire arrives. This is very important. You must know how to avoid smoke and panic to survive a hotel fire, since the fire may not reach your location.

Smoke and Panic

Where there is smoke, there is not necessarily fire. A smoldering mattress, for instance, will produce great amounts of smoke. Air conditioning and air exchange systems will sometimes pick up smoke from one room and carry it out to other rooms or floors. You should keep that in mind because smoking and matches cause 70 percent of hotel fires.

Smoke, being warmer, will start accumulating at the ceiling and work its way down. The first thing you will notice is **THERE ARE NO "EXIT" SIGNS** — when you have smoke, it is too late to start looking for "exit" signs. Smoke is also irritating on the eyes. The prob-

lem is your eyes will only take so much irritation, then they close. Try all you want. You will not be able to open them. It is one of your body's compensatory mechanisms. Lastly, the fresh air you want to breathe is at or near the floor. Get on your hands and knees (or stomach) and **STAY THERE** as you make your way out.

Panic is a sudden, overpowering terror often afflicting many people at once. It is the product of your imagination running wild and it will set in as soon as it dawns on you that you are lost, disoriented, or you do not know what to do. Panic is almost irreversible: once it sets in, it seems to grow. Panic will make you do things that can kill you. People in a state of panic are rarely able to save themselves. However, if you understand what's going on, what to do, where to go, and how to get there, panic will not set in.

Find and Use Your Exit

It is important that you find your exit as soon as you arrive at your room. You open the door and drop your luggage. **AT THAT VERY MOMENT**, turn around and go back into the hallway to check your exit. You may **NEVER** get another chance. If two of you are sharing a room, **BOTH** of you need to locate your exit. Talk it over as you walk towards it. Is it on the left or right ... do you have to turn a corner? Open the exit door ... what do you see ... stairs or



another door? (Sometimes there are two doors to go through, especially in newer hotels.) I would hate to see you crawl into a broom closet thinking it was the exit! Is there anything in the hallway that would be in your way ... an ice-machine maybe? As you arrive back

azardous to Your Health

By Capt. R.H. Kauffman, Los Angeles County Fire Department



Photo by SrA. Jerry Bateman

at your room, take a look once more. Get a good mental picture of what everything looks like. Do you think you could get to the exit with a “blindfold” on?

Close all doors behind you and take your room key. Closing doors is a very effective way to

keep out fire and also minimizes smoke damage to your belongings. Some doors take hours to burn through. They are excellent “fire stops.” If you find smoke in the exit stairwell, you can bet people are leaving the doors open as they enter.

Take your key with you. Get into the habit of putting the key in the same place every time you stay in a hotel. While it is important that you close your door as you leave, it is equally important that you do not lock yourself out. You may find conditions in the hallway untenable and want to return to your room.

If You Wake Up to Smoke in Your Room

Grab your key, roll off the bed, and head for the door on your hands and knees. Even if you could tolerate the smoke by standing, DO NOT. You will want to save your eyes and lungs for as long as possible. BEFORE you open the door, feel it with the palm of your hand. If the door or knob is quite hot, do not open it. The fire could be just outside. With the palm of your hand still on the door (in case you need to slam it shut), slowly open the door and peek into the hallway to “assess conditions.”

As you make your way to the exit, stay against the wall on the side where the exit is. It is very easy to get lost or disoriented in a smoky atmosphere. If you are on the wrong side of the hallway, you might crawl right on by the exit. If you are in the middle of the hall, people who are running will trip over you. Stay on the same side as the exit and count doors as you go.

When you reach the exit and begin to descend, it is very important that you WALK down and hang onto the handrail as you go. Other people will be running and might knock you down so that you are not able to get up. Just hang on and stay out of everyone's way.

Smoke will sometimes get into the exit stairway. If it is a tall building, this smoke may not rise very high before it cools and becomes heavy. This is called "stacking." If your room is on the 20th floor, for instance, you could enter the stairway and find it clear. As you descend you could encounter smoke that has "stacked." Do not try to "run through it" — people die that way. Turn around and walk up. Now you must really hang onto the handrail. The people running down will probably be glassy-eyed and in a panic and will run over anything in their way, including a fireman. Hang on and keep heading up towards the roof. When you reach the roof, prop the door open with something. This is the ONLY

time you will leave a door open. Any smoke in the stairwell may now vent itself to the atmosphere and you will not be locked out. Now find the windward side of the building (the wet finger method is quite reliable), have a seat, and wait until they find you. Roofs have proved to be a safe secondary exit and refuge area. Stay put. Firemen will always make a thorough search of the building looking for bodies. Live ones are nice to find.

Your Room May Save Your Life

Become familiar with your room. See if your bathroom has a vent; all do, but some have electric motors. Should you decide to remain in your room, turn it on to help remove the smoke. Take a good look at the window in your room. Does it open? Does it have a latch, a lock? Does it slide? Now open the window (if it works) and look outside. What do you see? A sign, ledges?

How high up are you? Get a good mental picture of what is outside, it may come in handy. It is important you know how to OPEN your window; you may have to close it again.

Should you wake up to smoke in your room and the door is too



Towering Inferno II

By Lt. Col. Sharon R. Ahrari, Bolling AFB, D.C.

I lived on the 15th floor of an 18-floor apartment building in Bethesda, Md., when a fire broke out on the 7th floor. An elderly resident had been smoking a cigarette, which she dropped onto some papers. Unable to control

the fire, she left her apartment to get help; unfortunately, she left the door to the hallway open.

The entire 7th floor was gutted; our resident manager died in the fire because he made the fatal mistake of taking the elevator to rescue residents one too many times; and approximately six firefighters were sent to the Washington Hospital Center Burn Unit.

When the fire alarms went off, I did not want to believe there was a

fire. I rationalized that it was just the alarm in the elevator and someone was stuck on the elevator. Then I heard the fire engines screaming up the hill. I got dressed, closed all my inner doors, and left my apartment.

There was smoke in the hall near the bank of elevators. I went in the opposite direction to the nearest exit and started down the stairs. The farther down I went, the thicker the smoke got. I decided the exit at the other end of the building may be a better choice.



Photo by Chris Jensen

hot to open or the hallway is completely charged with smoke, do not panic. Many people have defended themselves quite nicely in their room and so can you. One of the first things you will want to do is open the window to vent the smoke. Those who do not

know how to open their window will probably throw a chair through the window. The broken glass from the window will cut like a surgeon's scalpel. Besides, if you break out your window with a chair, you could hit a fireman on the street below.

If there is fresh air outside, leave the window open, but keep an eye on it. If there is smoke outside, close your window. At this point, most people would stay at the window, waving frantically, while their room continues to fill with smoke. This is not conducive to survival. You must be aggressive and fight back.

Flip on the bathroom vent. Fill the bath with water. (Do not get into it — it is for fighting the fire. You would be surprised how many people try to save themselves by getting into a tub of water — that's how you cook lobsters and crabs!) Wet some sheets or towels, and

stuff the cracks of your door to keep out the smoke. With your ice bucket, bail the water from the bath onto the door to keep it cool. Feel the walls — if they are hot, bail water onto them too. You can put your mattress up against the door and block it in place with the dresser. Keep it wet — keep everything wet. Who cares about the mess? A wet towel tied around your nose and mouth is an effective filter if you fold it in a triangle and put the corner in your mouth. If you swing a wet towel around the room, it will help clear the smoke. If



Photo by Lenny Fitch & Craig Belliding



When I opened the door at the far end of the hall, the smoke was much worse than the first exit, I turned around, and headed back to the first exit. I passed four residents coming out of their apartment. One of them was directing the others to the elevator. Since I had recently seen the movie "Towering Inferno," I knew taking the elevator was not smart. I remember yelling at them not to use the elevator, but to follow me down the first stairwell ... I had been there before and the smoke was not as thick.

The farther, down we went, the thicker the smoke got. When we reached the 7th floor (the fire floor), we could see thick black smoke pouring out from under the door. Once we past that floor, the air began to clear.

By the time we got down to the lobby, people were everywhere and the fire alarms continued to scream, which was very unnerving! After the fire was under control, the fire department allowed us into the garage level to remove our cars.

I suffered only minor smoke inhalation. When I returned to my

apartment the following day, I discovered only the edge of my carpet near the hall door was singed, but a thin layer of soot covered everything. I was very lucky. This experience has made me much more aware of my surroundings, the importance of paying attention to fire alarms, the dangers of using an elevator during a fire, the debilitating effects of smoke, and the importance of staying calm in a crisis. Learn what to do in a fire and make wise decisions — your safety and very life depend on it.



there is a fire outside the window, pull down the curtains, move everything combustible away from the window and bail water all around the window. The point is there should not be any reason to panic — keep fighting until reinforcements arrive. It will not be long.

Never Use Elevators

There isn't an elevator made that can be used as a "safe" exit. In all states, elevators by law, cannot be considered an "exit." If you get into an elevator, you are in trouble. Elevator shafts and machinery extend through all floors of a building, and besides, with the shaft filling with smoke, there are hundreds of other things that could go wrong and probably will. Everyone tries to get on the elevator in an emergency. Fights break

out and people get seriously injured. Smoke, heat, and fire do funny things to elevator call buttons, controls, and other complicated parts. Hand operated elevators are not exempt — some elevator operators have been beaten by people fighting over the controls. If you have any idea that there might be smoke or fire in your hotel, avoid the elevator like the plague.

Jumping Is Not a Good Choice

It is important I say something about jumping because so many people do it. Most are killed or injured in the process.

If you are on the 1st floor, you could just OPEN the window and climb out. From the second floor you could probably make it with a sprained ankle, but you must jump out far enough to clear the building. Many people hit windowsills and ledges on the way down, and they go into cartwheels. If they do not land on their head and kill themselves, they are seriously injured. If you are any higher than the 3rd floor, chances are you will not survive the fall. You would probably be

better off fighting the fire. Nearby buildings seem closer than they really are and many have died trying to jump to a building that looked 5 feet away, but was actually 15 feet away.

Call the Fire Department

Believe it or not, most hotels will not call the fire department until they verify whether or not there really is a fire and try to put it out themselves. Should you call the reception desk to report a fire, they will always send the bellhop, security guard, or anyone else that's not busy to investigate. Hotels are very reluctant to "disturb" their guests, and fire engines in the streets are quite embarrassing and tend to draw crowds.

In the New Orleans hotel fire, records show that the fire department received only one call, from a guest in one of the rooms. The desk had been notified of fire 20 minutes earlier and had sent a security guard to investigate. His body was later found on the 12th floor about 10 feet from the elevator.

Should you want to report a fire or smell of smoke, call the fire department and tell them your room number in case you need to be rescued. We would much rather come to a small fire or smoking electrical component that you smelled than be called 20 minutes later after six people have died. Do not let hotel "policy" intimidate you into doing otherwise.

As a Captain in the Los Angeles County Fire Department, it is my sincere hope that these tips will help you should you ever find yourself in a hotel fire. Only you can condition yourself to react in a hotel emergency by developing these habits — the bottom line is be prepared! ►

Photo by Mitzi Johnson



Here in Southwest Asia — hard work, patience, and persistence have paid off in a safer Instrument Landing System (ILS) at Al Jaber Air Base. The system had been non operational since an aircraft accident took it out in 1999.

Because of the precision required for the measurements, USAFE TERPS specified that only a certified geodetic survey team could take them.

“When we first got the request, I went out with a handheld global positioning system and took about 2 days getting the

The last check came when U.S. and Kuwaiti pilots used the new procedure for a flyability check. “They had to go up and physically fly the procedure to make sure even the most inexperienced pilot could safely fly (it),” Eibe said. The pilots’ comments were sent to the experts at

Pilots Have Safer Landings

at Al Jaber

By TSgt. Steve Elliott, 332nd Aerospace Expeditionary Group

“When that antenna was taken out, we lost precision approach for Runway 33 Left,” said 1Lt. Eric Eibe, airfield management officer for the 332nd Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron.

Without an approved ILS for the runway, air-traffic controllers had to literally talk pilots of every flight into Al Jaber down until they could see it. That’s “a very safe system, but very personnel-intensive, so we had to have additional people here,” Eibe said.

The base installed a new localizer to recreate the ILS, but that was just the beginning.

The next step was to put the procedure — how to fly that ILS — back into the flying publications. “You can’t just stick the old procedure back in,” Eibe said. “the USAFE TERPS (Terminal Instrument Procedures) office, who are responsible for reviewing the procedure, required a large amount of data related to the airfield, such as latitudes, longitudes, elevations, and distances for numerous points on the airfield.”

measurements,” the lieutenant said. “When I submitted them, I was told the measurements had to be far more precise than I had gathered.”

The problem was that the base surveyors didn’t have the equipment needed for the more accurate survey, so a private contractor would have to be hired. Luckily, Eibe found one who happened to be at Al Jaber working on a project for the Army Corps of Engineers.

“We told him what we needed, whipped up a contract, diverted him from what he was working on, and got the survey done in a few days,” Eibe said. “We provided his report to USAFE, (and) they were able to use it to review the approach procedure and come up with a final-approach procedure.”

USAFE, who made a few minor revisions and approved the new procedure.

The result is a safe, reliable, flyable precision-approach capability for Runway 33 Left, which the base hasn’t had since Dec. 10, 1999. “With the procedure now in place, we’ve got a safer base to fly in to, and better capability to support Operation Southern Watch,” Eibe said. ▶



Photo by TSgt. James Mossman



“Raptors Safely

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va.— Last July, a U.S. Agriculture Department wildlife biologist conducting a survey as part of Langley’s Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard monitoring program radioed the air-traffic control tower to warn about bird activity over the runway.

“I was watching an F-15. As it reached the midfield, I heard a tremendous crash and saw flames erupt from the right engine,” said Steve Kendrot, wildlife biologist.

The plane slowly climbed, circled around, and landed with no other problems. Kendrot

suspected the plane had hit a bird.

After an inspection, the extent of the damage became apparent. The engine smelled like charred meat. When a crew chief opened one of the engine panels, broken fan blades clattered to the ground and a broken fuel line leaked onto the pavement. A single talon from an osprey was found wedged behind a torn panel of sheet metal near the engine’s intake. Damage estimates have exceeded \$750,000.

Today, ospreys regularly forage in the nearby Back River, fly through the approach and depar-

ture zones of the runway, and frequently land on the airfield to consume their catch. As many as five ospreys have been spotted over the runway at once. At least eight pairs nest on buildings and utility poles on base and navigational aids in the Back River, which surrounds one end of Langley’s runway.

“It’s a challenging situation,” said Kendrot. “We want to protect the pilots and aircraft as well as the birds.”

The osprey is protected by federal and state migratory bird regulations. The Agriculture Department's Wildlife Services is contracted by the base to solve this and other wildlife-related problems.

Typically, ospreys show little reaction to standard bird-dispersal tools like noise and scarecrows, so wildlife officials are considering innovative non-lethal ways, such as remote-controlled model airplanes to chase soaring raptors.

Langley has acquired all the permits needed to implement an integrated osprey-management plan that combines experimental techniques with

Biologists hope to entice the birds away from high-threat areas around the base by removing nests and making traditional nesting sites unattractive while building platforms at Plum Tree National Wildlife Refuge, which is on the river 5 miles away.

According to officials from

Efforts to protect both osprey and aircraft from harm will require the same level of persistence demonstrated by the bird itself, Kendrot said. A successful resolution to the problem will require the combined efforts of many people and agencies, including raptor advocates, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the

"It's a challenging situation," said Kendrot. "We want to protect the pilots and aircraft as well as the birds."

the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, it's out of harm's way, but currently has few suitable osprey nest sites. The base hopes to change that.

The College of William and Mary is participating in an effort to expand osprey popula-

tion. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Agriculture Department's Wildlife Services, and the Air Force. It's the Air Force's goal that this program will allow this proud and protected raptor to safely share the skies with another "eagle," Langley's F-15s. ▶

ns"]

Share the Skies

nest and chick relocation, harassment with pyrotechnics, habitat alteration, and adjustment of Air Force flight patterns.

"We believe that protecting aviators from the potentially tragic outcome of an osprey strike while contributing to the conservation of the species is a win-win situation," said Lt. Col. Jerry Gandy, chief of safety for the 1st Fighter Wing.

tions which should help if ospreys do hatch young on base. People from the school capture 45-day-old chicks from nests and release them in suitable habitats in Pennsylvania and Ohio. The chicks return there to breed rather than their hatch sites.



Photo by TSgt. Jack Braden

Protect



A wounded USS Cole sailor departs a Yemeni hospital enroute to additional medical treatment in Germany following the October 12, 2000, terrorist bombing attack on his ship in the port of Aden, Yemen. (Photo by PH2 Jim Watson)

Yoursself

Personal Terrorism Protection Checklist

- Avoid packages and luggage that are left unattended.
- Be aware of suspicious packages (things to look for):
 - Is addressee familiar with name and address of sender?
 - Package/letter has no return address.
 - Is addressee expecting package/letter? If so, verify expected contents.
 - Improper or incorrect title, address, or spelling of name of addressee.
 - Title but no names.
 - Wrong title with name.
 - Handwritten or poorly typed addresses.
 - Misspellings of common words.
 - Return address and post mark are not from same area.
 - Stamps (sometimes excessive postage, unusual stamps) versus metered mail.
- Special handling instructions on package (i.e., special delivery, open by addressee only, foreign mail, air mail, etc.).
- Restrictive markings such as confidential, personal, etc.
- Over-wrapped, excessive securing material such as masking tape, string or wrappings.
- Oddly shaped or unevenly weighted packages.
- Lumpy or rigid envelopes (stiffer than normal, heavier than normal, etc.).
- Lopsided or uneven envelope.
- Protruding wires or tinfoil.
- Visual distractions (drawings, unusual statements, hand drawn postage, etc.).
- Report suspicious personnel to Law Enforcement personnel.
- Don't get trapped in traffic — leave enough space to navigate away from other vehicles.
- Lock the doors on your house and vehicles.
- Take the time to perform "walk-arounds" to look for suspicious indicators that your vehicle has been tampered with before driving away.
 - When approaching your vehicle, look for wires, electrical tape etc. Anything that looks out of order.
 - Be familiar enough with the undercarriage of your car to be able to spot "new" items.
- Vary your routes of travel to and from work, and frequent destinations.
- Attend events with someone — minimize the time you are traveling alone — let someone know where you are and when you will return.
- Pay attention to your surroundings.
- Be alert for personnel who may be observing you.
- Keep a low profile.
- Do not linger in public areas in uniform.
- Take off your military headgear while driving.

SR-71

Nickname: "Blackbird"

First flight: Dec. 22, 1964

Delivered: January 1966



The U.S. Air Force retired its fleet of SR-71s on Jan. 26, 1990. Throughout its nearly 24-year career, the SR-71 remained the world's fastest and highest-flying operational aircraft. From 80,000 feet it could survey 100,000 square miles of Earth's surface per hour. On July 28, 1976, an SR-71 set two world records for its class: an absolute speed record of 2,193.167 miles per hour and an absolute altitude record of 85,068.997 feet.





Don't Kill Your Chance of Survival

WASHINGTON — Despite the fact that the annual 101 Critical Days of Summer campaign is over for another year, Air Force officials are stressing a single message to airmen stationed around the world: Don't let your guard down — safety is a 24-hour-a-day, 365-day-a-year proposition.

That is the word at the Pentagon as the number of Air Force fatalities reached new levels this year. More Air Force people have lost their lives in 2001 — 53 airmen to date as of Aug. 20th — than in the previous 2 years. The majority of fatal accidents have occurred in off-duty vehicle accidents.

The Air Force is urging commanders to focus attention on protecting airmen and their families.

“Our troops are our most vital asset,” said Gen. Michael Ryan, former Air Force chief of staff. “You can have the most modern and reliable equipment, but without people, it is merely machinery. Motor vehicle operations and recreational activities are our top killers and leading causes of serious injuries. We need to focus our efforts to avoid dangerous driving and recreational risk environments.

The primary causes of death include drinking and driving, failure to wear seat belts, excessive speed for conditions, and violation of traffic laws.

“While we can't control the other guy, we can make sure we do the right thing,” Ryan said. “Follow basic common sense guidelines — wear your seat belt, drive defensively, and if you're going to drink, don't drive.”

Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Jim Finch said it is important to not only look out for one's own personal safety, but that of others as well.

“Our people make us the best Air Force in the world. It's important that we take care of them,” he said. “Watch over your buddies. Make sure they follow proper safety procedures and that they're OK.

“Accidents do happen and sometimes they're caused by humans,” Finch said. “If there is an accident, do your best to make sure the human error wasn't yours.”

A little caution now could save a life, maybe even your own, officials said.

Jet Fuel Study Prompts Call for Protective Gear Upgrade

By CMSgt. Gary Emery

SAN ANTONIO — Preliminary results of a health study of exposure to JP-8 jet fuel have led the Air Force Surgeon General to recommend the use of more effective protective equipment for workers who come in contact with the fuel.

People were coming forward with health complaints after being exposed to JP-8, so the Surgeon General started to investigate workers' concerns, said Lt. Col. (Dr.) Thomas Neal, chief consultant for occupational medicine at the Air Force Surgeon General's office.

Reported symptoms included dizziness, lightheadedness, skin irritation, and objectionable taste and odor, records show. The Department of Defense completed a 20-year phased changeover from gasoline-based JP-4 to the safer and more versatile kerosene-based JP-8 in 1996.

Information for the study, which compares health data from 169 fuel cell maintenance volunteers with 160 Air Force people who have no contact with JP-8, was gathered over an 18-month period at six stateside bases, Neal said.

Study results so far indicate no long-term health hazards from JP-8 exposure. But, Neal said, the study was specifically looking for acute, short-term health effects in a very narrowly defined group of workers — fuel cell maintainers.

Because short-term JP-8 exposure has unpleasant and uncomfortable side effects, the Air Force is ready to move ahead and investigate more effective protective clothing and reviewing procedures to ensure maximum personal protection for fuels workers, Neal said.

“For many years, people exposed to solvents — such as painters working in enclosed places — have experienced similar symptoms to those we're seeing in people who enter JP-8 fuel tanks to perform maintenance,” Neal said. “But that doesn't mean we're not concerned, we need to be proactive in protecting our people.

“That's not to say we haven't done so already. We have protective equipment and technical orders in place, but we're taking the initiative to explore recent advances in equipment that may provide greater protection,” he said.

“Our interest is our people,” Neal said. “We want to do everything possible to keep them healthy and safe.”



Ground Safety Award of the Quarter

TSgts. Francis Harrington, Christopher Jett, and Jennifer Pring, and SSgt. Bryan Smith performed superbly as Unit Safety Representatives (USRs) for the 20th Supply Squadron. Their dedication, teamwork, and tremendous initiative enabled this squadron to receive its fourth consecutive "Excellent" rating during the May 2001 Annual Wing Safety Assessment. To quote the 20th Fighter Wing Ground Safety Manager at the conclusion of the inspection, "the best squadron safety program out of 10 seen to date." They created two brilliant PowerPoint training programs. The first one is a workplace-specific HAZCOM Training Program on the chemical hazards peculiar to all operations conducted by the Fuels Management Flight. The program includes a written test to ensure trainee knowledge. The second program is a lockout/tagout presentation to provide in-depth training and familiarization with any and all aspects of lockout/tagout operations that fuels personnel might encounter in their day-to-day duties. These programs were benchmarked by Wing Safety and sent out to all squadrons for immediate implementation. They

choreographed all events during the May 2001 Safety Day. To target new members in the squadron and stress the importance of safety, they created a comprehensive checklist. This tool allowed USRs to provide thorough briefings on the squadron's safety reporting procedures, safety tips, and the commander's safety policies during New-comers' Orientation.



TSGT's Francis Harrington, Christopher Jett, Jennifer Pring, and SSgt. Bryan Smith, 20th Supply Squadron, 20th Fighter Wing, Shaw AFB, S.C.

ACC Safety is Proud of All Our Award Nominees

Capt. Peter A. Greenburg
Flight Lead
523 FS, 27 FW
Cannon AFB, N.M.

MSgt. Macy M. Jenkins
Production Superintendent
SSgt. Achim L. Prosser
Dedicated Crew Chief
94 FS, 1 FW
Langley AFB, Va.

Capt. Dan Orcutt
Pilot
335 FS, 4 FW
Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.

SSgt. Thomas Pittman
Propulsion Jet Engine Craftsman
57 AGS, 57 WG
Nellis AFB, Nev.

SrA. Gregory Bantilan
Electrical & Environmental
Systems Journeyman
5 RS, 9 RW
Beale AFB, Calif.

SSgt. Edward O. Prestley, Jr.
Electronic Warfare Systems
Craftsman
388 CRS, 388 FW
Hill AFB, Utah

A1C. Everette C. Altdoerffer
Maintenance Support Technician
33 CCS, 3 CCG
Tinker AFB, Okla.

SSgt. David M. Wilcoxson
HVAC Journeyman
32 CCS, 3 CCG
Tinker AFB, Okla.

SSgt. Nieves Neftali
Aerospace Ground Equipment
(AGE) Craftsman
57 EMS, 57 WG
Nellis AFB, Nev.



Pilot Safety Award of Distinction

Capt. Tommy Hoard was approaching Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., in his A-10 following an uneventful low altitude surface attack tactics two-ship training mission. Hoard simultaneously reduced the throttles and selected the speed brake switch on the throttles to an intermediate deployed (40 percent) position to maintain airspeed at 250 knots indicated airspeed (KIAS). A few seconds passed and Hoard determined visually that it had appeared the speed brakes had blown shut on their own accord. He held the speed brake switch on the throttles full aft and they fully deployed as advertised. Approaching the pattern altitude with 200 KIAS, Hoard pushed the switch forward to reset the speed brakes to 40 percent, the normal landing configuration. The speed brakes did not move and the airspeed was decaying rapidly. He then selected full power with the throttles and activated the Speed Brake Emergency Retract switch, which is the guaranteed method to ensure retraction in all cases — except this one. The airspeed continued to decay and the speed brakes re-

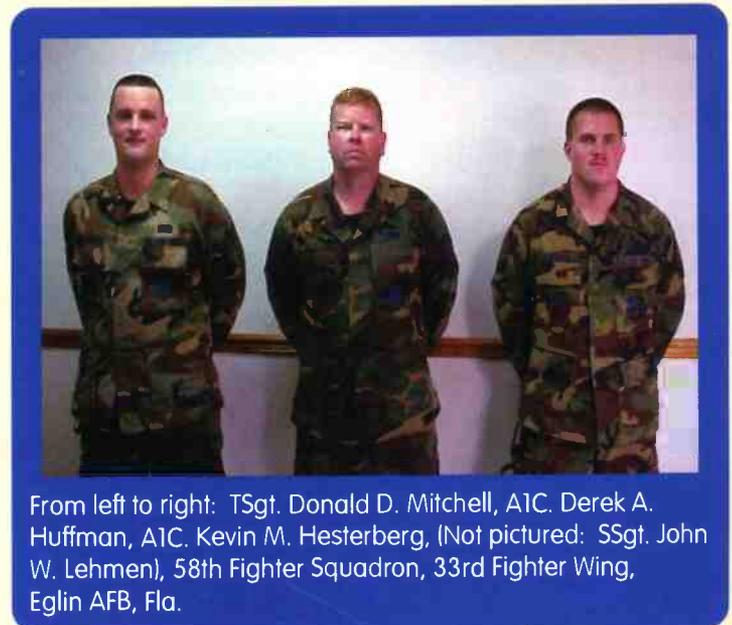
mained fully deployed. Hoard rechecked all switches and noted the airspeed continuing to decrease as he stayed at pattern altitude. He allowed the altitude to decrease, declared an emergency with the tower, and set himself up for an immediate turn toward the active runway. Hoard noted he could not make the runway with any additional drag deployed, such as flaps or landing gear, and elected to proceed around the final turn until he saw the aircraft heads up display's total velocity vector (TVV) was on the runway threshold. With only a quarter mile to fly until touchdown, Hoard lowered the landing gear and selected seven percent flaps. The gear lights came on just before touchdown as the aircraft firmly settled to the runway at full power. Following his landing, Capt. Hoard taxied back to parking.



Capt. Tommy J. Hoard
355th Operations Support
Squadron, 355th Wing
Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

Flightline Safety Award of Distinction

A1C. Derek Huffman was replacing expended argon bottles on an F-15C when he noticed smoke coming from the #1 engine bay of an F-15 returning to the chocks after a routine sortie. Huffman ran across the parking ramp and notified A1C. Kevin Hesterberg of the situation. Hesterberg directed the pilot to shut down the aircraft and assisted the pilot out of the cockpit. TSgt. Donald Mitchell, who was performing expediter duties, was in his truck when he was notified of the incident and drove to the scene to render assistance. The fire was in the process of engulfing the entire engine bay when Huffman and Mitchell manned two Halon fire extinguishers and extinguished it. SSgt. John Lehmen, who was working on an adjacent aircraft, evacuated the area, ensured no other personnel were at risk, and guided the fire department vehicles to the scene.



From left to right: TSgt. Donald D. Mitchell, A1C. Derek A. Huffman, A1C. Kevin M. Hesterberg, (Not pictured: SSgt. John W. Lehmen), 58th Fighter Squadron, 33rd Fighter Wing, Eglin AFB, Fla.



Ground Safety Award of Distinction

As the Flight's Safety Representative for over 5 years, SSgt. Neal Therrien developed one of the most comprehensive Hazard Communication programs found within the Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC). All hazardous chemicals utilized by the Aerospace Ground Equipment Flight are stored in well-maintained and easily identifiable Flammable Storage Lockers. Each chemical is placed on a shelf that has been clearly labeled and numbered for that particular item. The corresponding number is also printed on each chemical container and on the Material Safety Data Sheet for that product. This labeling and numbering system allows for the expeditious recognition of the chemical should there ever be an emer-



SSgt. Neal Therrien
939th Maintenance Squadron
Portland IAP, Ore.

gency where the Material Safety Data Sheet is required to render emergency first aid to an employee. His program was identified as a benchmark practice during a recent Annual Safety Assessment. Therrien has also developed one of the most exceptional lockout/tagout programs within the AFRC. His program meets all AF Occupational Safety and Health (AFOSH) Standards and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Therrien took additional measurements to incorporate digital photographs of each piece of equipment covered by this program in the flight. These photos allow employees to quickly recognize what the equipment item should look like when locked and tagged appropriately. This significantly reduces the chances that an employee will lock and tag a piece of equipment out incorrectly and prevents individuals from exposing themselves and others to any hazardous condition.

Crew Chief Safety Award of Distinction

During a routine U-2S tow, SrA. Jonathan Horrigan was the chock walker member of the tow team. The U-2 was fully loaded with fuel and at that time weighed over 35,000 total pounds. Also, the aircraft was carrying a full suite of unique sensor equipment valued in excess of \$70 million. When towing a U-2, the chock walker is the "last line of defense" because there is no brake rider in the cockpit. Shortly after the operation began, the tow-bar disengaged from the tail landing gear. The aircraft began to roll forward; heading directly toward another U-2 parked less than 100 feet away. It gained speed and momentum quickly due to its gross weight and a slight decline in the paved surface. Horrigan immediately recognized the aircraft was uncontrolled and acted quickly to prevent a colli-

sion. He ran alongside the main landing gear and attempted to insert a chock under the main tire. The aircraft's combined weight and speed knocked out the chock, which struck Horrigan in the right leg. Undeterred, he immediately inserted a second chock, which successfully stopped the U-2 less than 50 feet away from the parked aircraft. SrA. Horrigan's focus on safety and his calm actions under pressure prevented a potentially disastrous collision between two multi-million dollar aircraft.



SrA. Jonathan M. Horrigan
5th Reconnaissance Squadron
9th Reconnaissance Wing
Beale AFB, Calif.

ACC is proud of our Monthly safety honorees

Halloween

It's that time again when children enjoy dressing up and roaming the neighborhoods in search of some of their favorite candy. Everyone wants to have a safe and happy Halloween for themselves, their guests and their children. Using safety tips and common sense can help you make the most of your Halloween season and make it as enjoyable for your kids as it is for you!

Treats:

Warn children not to eat any treats before an adult has carefully examined them for evidence of tampering.

Flame Resistant Costumes:

When purchasing a costume, masks, beards, and wigs, look for the label "Flame Resistant." Although this label does not mean these items won't catch fire, it does indicate the items will resist burning and should extinguish quickly once removed from the ignition source. To minimize the risk of contact with candles or other sources of ignition, avoid costumes made with flimsy materials and outfits with big, baggy sleeves or billowing skirts.

Costume Design:

- Purchase or make costumes that are light and bright enough to be clearly visible to motorists.
- For greater visibility during dusk and darkness, decorate or trim costumes with reflective tape that will glow in the beam of a car's headlights. Bags or sacks should also be light colored or decorated with reflective tape. Reflective tape is usually available in hardware, bicycle, and sporting goods stores.
- To easily see and be seen, children should also carry flashlights.
- Costumes should be short enough to prevent children from tripping and falling.
- Children should wear well-fitting, sturdy shoes. Mother's high heels are not a good idea for safe walking.
- Hats and scarfs should be tied securely to prevent them from slipping over children's eyes.
- Apply a natural mask of cosmetics rather than have a child wear a loose-fitting mask that might restrict breathing or obscure vision. If a mask is used, however, make sure it fits securely and has eyeholes large enough to allow full vision.
- Swords, knives, and similar costume accessories should be of soft and flexible material.

Pedestrian Safety:

Young children should always be accompanied by an adult or an older, responsible child. All children should WALK, not run from house to house and use the sidewalk if available, rather than walk in the street. Children should be cautioned against running out from between parked cars, or across lawns and yards where ornaments, furniture, or clotheslines present dangers.

Choosing Safe Houses:

- Children should go only to homes where the residents are known and have outside lights on as a sign of welcome.
- Children should not enter homes or apartments unless they are accompanied by an adult.
- People expecting trick-or-treaters should remove anything that could be an obstacle from lawns, steps, and porches. Candlelit jack-o'-lanterns should be kept away from landings and doorsteps where costumes could brush against the flame. Indoor jack-o'-lanterns should be kept away from curtains, decorations, and other furnishings that could be ignited. ▶

For further information on product safety, consumers may call the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's toll-free hotline on (800) 638-2772. Hearing impaired consumers may use TTY (800) 638-8270.

Halloween Safety Tips





M

Late one night, I learned that my best friend had lost his eldest son a couple of days earlier in a moving accident. His son, helping a family member move some furniture, had climbed into the back of a pick-up truck to sit on a mattress and help weigh it down. During the drive, the wind

caught the mattress and vaulted my friend's son onto the roadway. He died from the injuries sustained in the accident. This tragedy did not have to happen.

We all move household items. Many of us have used this same method because we could not or would not pay for a moving truck. We have put stuff wher-

ever it fits, leaving just enough room to drive the vehicle. We start off at a slow pace, but after a while we find ourselves getting complacent and not watching our speed. The next thing we know, there goes a seat cushion, a chair, a chest of drawers, etc. We know from these experiences that the force of the wind generated by a ve-



I personally have dodged two barstools, a wingback chair, a card table, and countless seat cushions while driving behind these “make-shift moving vans.”

We stuff the passenger compartment full of items leaving little room for your loading/unloading crew. We think it is not far, they can ride in the back on top of the furniture. Besides they can help ensure none of your stuff blows away, right? Tragically, as my best friend discovered, this can be a lethal decision. Not only is the wind a prob-

I truly felt helpless when I was talking to my best friend. There was nothing I could say to him to ease the pain of his loss. There was no way I could even begin to comprehend that pain. What I do know is that this tragedy could have been avoided and that is why I am sharing this story with you. I can only pray that people will read this, think about it, and, the next time someone moves some furniture or lends a

oving On ...

By MSgt. Darrell Davis, Jr., Barksdale AFB, La.

Photo by Staff Sgt. David McCarrison

hicle in motion can easily send items airborne before anyone has the time to react. I personally have dodged two barstools, a wingback chair, a card table, and countless seat cushions while driving behind these makeshift moving vans.

Most of the time, we use a pickup truck because this is a local move and we are not traveling far.

lem, but so is the fact that you might not be able to see surrounding traffic because of all the loaded items. This greatly increases your chances of colliding with an unseen vehicle and propelling your unsecured riders into traffic. Loads also shift during travel, which can also cause the riders to fall into traffic or onto the roadway.

helping hand, they will take the time to remember the hazards involved in what they are about to do and will make safe decisions. A few dollars for some rope to tie down the load and a little common sense will ensure that everyone who shows up to help at the beginning of moving day will still be around when the last box has been unpacked. ►

Hypothetically speaking, is bigger always better? In general, I guess the answer depends on how we are personally impacted by the situation. If you ask me this question in regards to my paycheck, I'd agree whole-heartedly that bigger is definitely better. I'm sure many of you would agree with me. What if we are talking

We should never expose personnel to the potential hazards of explosives by utilizing more explosives than needed to get the job done. The handling, storage, and transportation of explosives are driven by mission objectives. How many of you have ever stopped and wondered if you or your loved ones are in danger of being injured while updating records at the base personnel of-

is generally because the military has done a good job of mitigating the risks by implementing things like clear zones, which deal with a concept called Quantity-Distance (Q-D). Clear zones ensure each of us is not unnecessarily exposed to the things that can go BOOM!

We owe much of our serenity and explosives safety awareness to the guidance mandated in Air

Clear zones ensure each of us is not unnecessarily exposed to the things that can go BOOM!

about explosives? You may still think bigger is better. Realistically, it depends on the objective of the mission.

What if we are talking about explosives? I imagine most of you who work, live, or visit a military installation, never think about the potential dangers involved. That

Force Manual 91-201, *Explosives Safety Standards*. Whether we live in the continental United States or at an overseas location, we can rest assured that explosives safety is being emphasized and enforced throughout the Air Force. All explosives safety operations are designed to ensure compliance with the "cardinal principle of explosives safety." This principle states, "Expose the minimum amount of people to the minimum amount of explosives for the minimum amount of time." "Hey, wait a minute," you might ask, "if the principle says to expose the minimum people to explosives, then who or what determines who gets exposed?" The determining factor for identifying who is and is not exposed is the degree of their "involvement" in the operation.



Photo by SSgt. Justin D. Pyle

Is Bigger Always



Photo by SSgt. Greg Davis

The terms “essential” or “non-essential” and “related” or “non-related” express the relationship between people and the explosives operation. People, who do not directly perform military duties essential to the explosives operation, are called non-essential or non-related and require greater protection than essential or related personnel. That’s good news to the majority of people who work, shop, or visit our military installations.

Commanders must ultimately determine the proper amount

and type of explosives needed to complete their mission. Each wing has trained explosives safety experts, called Weapons Safety Managers (WSMs) and their primary job is to assist commanders and advise them on explosives safety criteria. The WSM has the responsibility — among other duties — to calculate the safe amount of explosives used in an operation and assess the potential explosives risks involved in the event a mishap occurs. Bigger being better is not normally considered a measurement tool. Actually, the smallest amount of explosives possible to get the job done is the golden rule. In other words,

place the minimum amount of munitions near the minimum amount of people for the minimum amount of time.

You may ask, if bigger means more and more is faster ... what about the time factor involved with meeting explosives mission requirements? People should be exposed to explosives for the least amount of time. Being a weapons loader, I always thought this part of the “cardinal principle of explosives safety” gave me the OK to load bombs and missiles on fighter

aircraft at neck-breaking speed ... I was wrong! On the other hand you do not want to take 2 hours when you can very reasonably get the job done in 1 hour. There is sometimes a fine line between too fast or too much exposure. The environment plays a key role in the amount of time needed to complete the mission. The bottom line is exposure to explosives must be limited to the minimum amount of time required to perform the immediate task at hand.

So, what have you decided about the Big Bang Theory? Is bigger always better? Would you be comfortable adjusting your pay at finance if it were located within the storage area explosives clear zone driven by the philosophy that bigger is better? I guess your attitude of how much explosives are really needed is all relative to whether or not you are directly involved, or how it directly affects you. Now, don’t get me wrong ... if that bigger paycheck scenario becomes a reality, then bigger would still be much better! But until then, I have to admit that bigger is not necessarily always better — especially when dealing with explosives and their inherent risks. If you are ever in doubt when it comes to explosives, contact your local weapon safety expert. ►

ways Better?

By MSgt. Cary Huddleston, Nellis AFB, Nev.

Suicide Prevention

It Takes a Community

By Capt. James Sharpnack, Cannon AFB, N.M.

Everyone experiences daily stress and major life events that can be difficult to handle. Examples of daily stress include health problems, time pressure, financial issues, work-related problems, family issues, etc. Major life events include death of a loved one, divorce, marriage, getting a new job, etc.

Everyone uses some sort of stress management to help them cope with the daily pressures of life and those major life events when they do occur. Talking to family members, friends, coworkers, supervisors, or counseling professionals about important issues represents one of the most effective ways to manage stress. Other

effective methods include exercise, managing your diet, developing a consistent time of going to sleep and getting up, and replacing bad habits with more healthy behaviors.

For some individuals, a lack of coping resources and/or not using effective stress management techniques can make it much more difficult to adjust to everyday stress and major stressors. If people continue to make poor choices for themselves and have insufficient resources to develop good stress management skills, feelings of depression may begin to occur. If you suspect that you or someone you know is depressed, look for the following symptoms often associated with depression:

1. **Sleep.** People can sleep too much, too little, or frequently wake up.

2. **Appetite.** As with sleep, people can eat too much or too little resulting in weight loss or weight gain.

3. **Withdrawal.** People may decline invitations to go to social events, and they may not communicate as they once did.

4. **Lack of interest.** People who are depressed often will become less involved in activities they once enjoyed.

5. **Poor concentration.** People may have difficulty remembering appointments or finishing tasks.

6. **Fatigue.** People often report feeling very tired. Some

Ignoring Signs Can Cost a Life

By TSgt. Dee Ann Poole, Whiteman AFB, Mo.



When I was a sophomore in high school, my older brother, Rick, moved in with my dad, my younger sister, and me. Rick was 29, a father of two,

unemployed, having marital problems and having a hard time dealing with the loss of our mom a year earlier.

Rick and I didn't talk about personal feelings, though. Maybe it was because I was only 16. I assumed my dad talked to him, but I'll never know. Rick is no longer alive and my dad doesn't talk about that April day that ended so tragically.

In 1980, suicide was a whispered word and people didn't talk openly about it. Maybe it's because they didn't know how to recognize the signs and offer help. Maybe it was thought of as

a cop out. It's not until after an event that people find themselves saying, "If only ..."

But why must we say that? There's no easy answer because we won't be able to stop all suicide attempts. But we can do our best to help someone who may feel suicide is the only answer to life's problems.

The Air Force began its battle against suicide in 1996 when it created the Air Force Suicide Prevention Program. It was designed to educate people on the symptoms of suicide and curb what appeared to be an increasing number of suicides

ntion



Photos by TSgt. Jack Braden

among active duty members.

In the 5 years before the program started, the Air Force averaged 60 deaths annually. Since 1996, there has been a noticeable reduction in the number of suicides. Between 1998 and 2000, the service averaged 28 suicides annually.

Even though the trend is down, some people still see suicide as the only way to fix their problems. So far in 2001, the Air Force has suffered more than 20 suicides, said officials at the Air Force Surgeon General's office. Even one is

one too many. The burden carried by the people who are left behind is tremendous. No one can be replaced. It's impossible.

So how can we help reduce the number of suicides? We must know the symptoms and help people find a cure. Many stressors can trigger a suicide. The most common are relationship, financial, and legal concerns.

When Rick died, we didn't know what to look for. We didn't have the training or the knowledge to help him overcome his problems. Would Rick still be

here today if we had known how to help? I don't know. But I do know everyone in my family would feel better knowing we had tried to save his life. Instead, my dad lives with the guilt of finding my brother in the garage.

I urge all of you to be aware of what's going on with those you know and point them in the right direction before life's stressors overwhelm them. When a person is at risk of committing suicide, it's better to try to help than to live with the guilt of being quiet. Guilt can be a heavy burden. Just ask my dad.

people may lie in bed for hours at a time or sometimes go all night without sleeping.

7. Feeling worthless or guilty. People may feel guilty for even minor things that they had no control over.

If you know someone who seems depressed, you might suggest that they contact a mental health professional, chaplain or their Primary Care Manager for

further assistance. Despite the resources that are available, people with depression or continuing stress can still struggle with coping. Some of these individuals may develop feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. The combination of untreated depression with hopeless and helpless feelings can lead to suicidal thoughts for some individuals. People who have suicidal thoughts may exhibit some of the following factors:

- They may talk about suicide.
- They may make final arrangements.
- They can give away prized possessions.
- They could have had a previous suicide attempt.
- They may have experienced a severe loss or have serious legal, administrative, or relationship problems.
- The risk is compounded if they are abusing alcohol or other

substances that lower inhibitions.

If someone is talking about suicide, you can — as a friend — contact a mental health professional, a chaplain or an Extended Hours Clinic immediately. Do not worry about betraying their confidence if they are making suicidal statements. It is more important to keep them safe.

The secret will be out anyway if they are dead or even if they attempt to harm themselves. It is easier to live with the possibility someone may be angry with you than it is to live with the fact that someone is dead and you may have been able to prevent it. You cannot be too cautious in dealing with individuals who are in crisis. ►

Sergeant Stops Woman's Suicide Attempt

By Capt. Denise Shorb
Hurlburt Field, Fla.

What would you do if you came across an individual contemplating suicide? Would you be able to recognize the signs, and then take the time to help that person? A technical sergeant from the 18th Flight Test Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Fla., did recognize those signs, and took it upon himself to try to help a person in need.

TSgt. Matthew Griffin, an MH-53 Pave Low test director, was recently driving through Wayne County, Ga., when he noticed a woman leaning over the edge of a bridge. Deciding she looked a little out of place on a bridge in the middle of the night, he stopped to make sure she was all right. As it turned out, the woman was going through difficult times in her life and did not see it getting any better. She had decided to come to the bridge to end her life.

Griffin spoke with the woman at length, hoping to dissuade her from completing the attempt. Even after talking with her for a while, it became evident to him that she was not going to come away from the side of the bridge. The woman actually moved over the railing, and was on the verge

of jumping when he continued talking while inching toward her. Fortunately, Griffin was close enough to lean over and grab her as she pushed herself off the bridge. He pulled her back onto the road and held on to her until the police arrived.

The Wayne County Sheriff applauded Griffin for his selfless act. Other people had seen the woman on the bridge and called the sheriff's department to report it, but none had actually stopped to check on her. Sheriff David Herrin pointed out in a letter how wonderful it was to know "there are still a few people like [Griffin] left in this world that care enough to actually get involved when someone is in such dire need of help." Griffin said, "I tried to remain calm, and felt like I was in control of myself, and just kept telling her that it was not worth it, that there was too much to live for. I just wanted to make sure she was OK." Griffin credits the suicide prevention training he received at the NCO Academy and the yearly suicide prevention training he has received through Hurlburt's Behavioral Health Services Flight.

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Publisher (Name and complete mailing address) KEVIN W. SMITH, Colonel, USAF HQ ACC/SE 175 Sweeney Blvd Langley AFB VA 23665-2700		
Editor (Name and complete mailing address) REBECCA S. COLAW, Major, USAF HQ ACC/SEM 175 Sweeney Blvd Langley AFB VA 23665-2700		
Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address) None		
10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, give its name and address.)		
Full Name	Complete Mailing Address	
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PS Form 3526, October 1999 (See Instructions on Reverse)

We are authorized by the U.S. Postal Service to use Periodicals postage to distribute **The Combat Edge** magazine. Certain users of this rate are required to publish their Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation annually.

- The Combat Edge

13. Publication Title THE COMBAT EDGE		14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below Sep 01	
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run)		12,693	13,031
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation	(1) Paid/Requested Outside-County Mail Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541. (Include advertiser's proof and exchange copies)	12,428	12,766
	(2) Paid In-County Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541 (Include advertiser's proof and exchange copies)	0	0
	(3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution	0	0
	(4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	0	0
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 15b. (1), (2), (3), and (4))		12,428	12,766
d. Free Distribution by Mail (Examples, complement any, and other free)	(1) Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541	0	0
	(2) In-County as Stated on Form 3541	0	0
	(3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	0	0
e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)		0	0
f. Total Free Distribution (Sum of 15d. and 15e.)		0	0
g. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c. and 15f.)		12,428	12,766
h. Copies not Distributed		265	265
i. Total (Sum of 15g. and h.)		12,693	13,031
j. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (15c. divided by 15g. times 100)		100	100
16. Publication of Statement of Ownership <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Publication required. Will be printed in the <u>Oct 01</u> issue of this publication. <input type="checkbox"/> Publication not required.			
17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner  Major, USAF, Editor		Date 1 Sep 01	
I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties).			
Instructions to Publishers			
1. Complete and file one copy of this form with your postmaster annually on or before October 1. Keep a copy of the completed form for your records.			
2. In cases where the stockholder or security holder is a trustee, include in items 10 and 11 the name of the person or corporation for whom the trustee is acting. Also include the names and addresses of individuals who are stockholders who own or hold 1 percent or more of the total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities of the publishing corporation. In item 11, if none, check the box. Use blank sheets if more space is required.			
3. Be sure to furnish all circulation information called for in item 15. Free circulation must be shown in items 15d, e, and f.			
4. Item 15h, Copies not Distributed, must include (1) newsstand copies originally stated on Form 3541, and returned to the publisher, (2) estimated returns from news agents, and (3) copies for office use, leftovers, spoiled, and all other copies not distributed.			
5. If the publication had Periodicals authorization as a general or requester publication, this Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation must be published; it must be printed in any issue in October or, if the publication is not published during October, the first issue printed after October.			
6. In item 16, indicate the date of the issue in which this Statement of Ownership will be published.			
7. Item 17 must be signed.			
Failure to file or publish a statement of ownership may lead to suspension of Periodicals authorization.			
PS Form 3526, October 1999 (Reverse)			



Weapons Notes

Reportable weapons mishap events have been astonishingly low to date for the entire FY01 reporting period.

- Who or what can this be attributed to — well the jury is still out.
- Based on an overall analysis of mishaps and events, ORM takes the lead in mishap mitigation.
- Taking the extra time to conduct operations takes second and supervisor involvement and oversight comes in third.
- Lastly, the operations tempo has not been as significant as past years. Keep up the good work.

Flight Notes

FY02 has begun. By now, you've all made new "fiscal" year resolutions to integrate ORM processes into all aspects of your operations. It's also time for annual ACC and USAF flight safety award nominations. Please let us know about your best

Flight

As of August 30, 2001

8 AF	
9 AF	  
12 AF	
AWFC	 
ANG	 
AFRC	
Aircrew Fatalities	

Ground

As of August 30, 2001

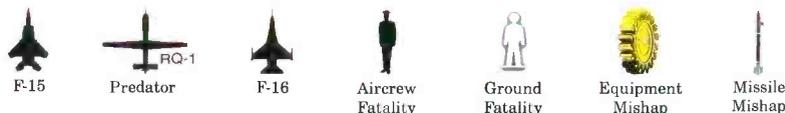
	Class A	Class B	Class C	Fatalities
8 AF	0/0	0/0	131	0
9 AF		0/0	125	  
12 AF			201	   
DRU		0/0	41	
FY 01 Totals	 		498	   

Weapons

As of August 30, 2001

	Class A	Class B	Class C	Fatalities
8 AF	0	0	  	0
9 AF	0	0		0
12 AF	0	0		0
AWFC	0		0	0
ACC Totals	0		   	0

Class A - Fatality; Permanent Total Disability; Property Damage \$1,000,000 or more
 Class B - Permanent Partial Disability; Property Damage between \$200,000 and \$1,000,000
 Class C - Lost Workday; Property Damage between \$20,000 and \$200,000



Flight Notes cont.

and brightest stars from the last 12 months by submitting their packages for consideration.

Ground Notes

Class A Mishaps:

- 2 of 16 were sports and recreation related and had motor vehicle involvement
- 13 of 16 involved vehicles
 - 12 of the 13 were fatal
 - 11 of 13 involved four-wheel vehicles with 7 not wearing seat belts

Cost Totals

8th Air Force
 Class C: \$964,652

9th Air Force
 Class A: \$428,412
 Class C: \$507,919

12th Air Force
 Class A: \$ 1,375,120
 Class B: \$115,000
 Class C: \$863,754

DRU
 Class A: \$1,125,000
 Class C: \$199,692

FY 01 Totals:
 Class A: \$3,028,532
 Class B: \$115,000
 Class C: \$2,536,017



The Combat
EDGE

Our hearts go out
to all those affected.

F.D.N.Y.