

# Combat Edge

July 2006

**FLIGHT SAFETY**

**GROUND SAFETY**

**WEAPONS SAFETY**



**Vol. 16 Issue No. 2,  
ACC SP 91-1**



# Combat Edge



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# ACCent on Safety



## Parting Shots

It has been 2 years of learning, and hopefully making a difference for the better. As I leave ACC Safety I want to say thanks for all the hard work that the ACC Safety Professionals put forth every day. I also want to say thanks to everyone in ACC that cares – thanks for caring about your fellow warriors and our mission. Safety can never be at the expense of the mission; but if we use common sense and an attitude of risk management, we accomplish the mission successfully and safely.

Take advantage of our leadership; COMACC and his staff are no-nonsense, common sense people who are truly looking out for you. They have been huge supporters of the Safety Program because, done right, safety supports operations and the mission. As we go through the downsizing of the Air Force, our leadership will need your support and ideas more than ever to keep ACC strong and capable of defending our nation. Don't hesitate when someone asks you for your ideas; the best inputs come from the line, those people out there that make the mission happen each and every day.

I also want to congratulate all those Safety Professionals out there going on to assume command. Over the last 2 years, the number of safety officers going on to command is on the rise. Our leadership recognizes the hard work being done and have given many of you out there the greatest reward: command ... treasure it, and remember how you got it. As commanders, safety is your responsibility, and every member of your squadron depends on you to take it seriously.

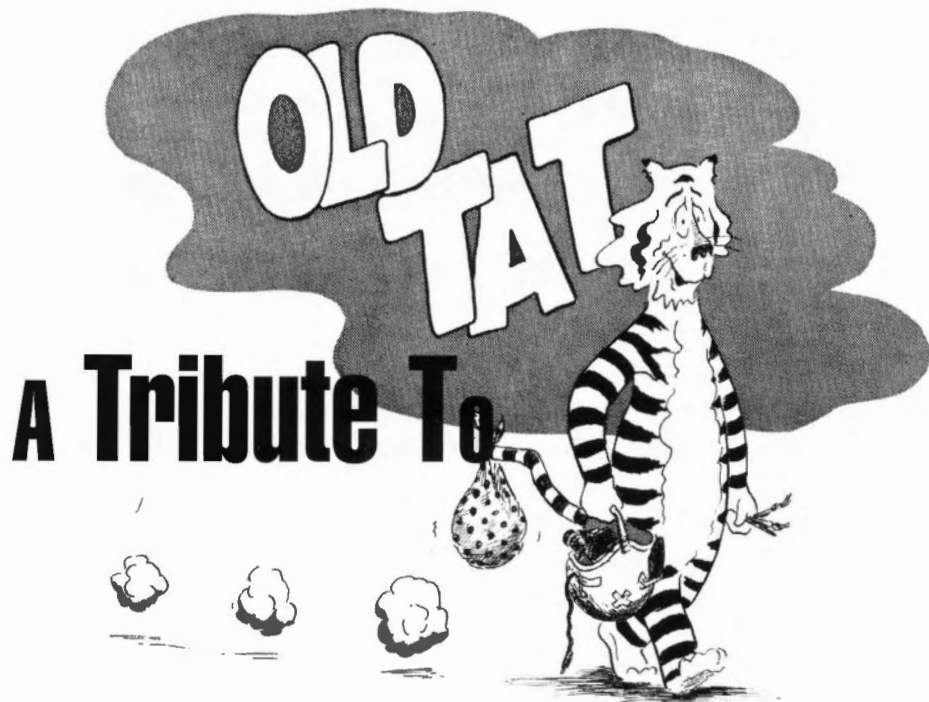
With all that said, I'm moving on to a dream assignment as the Wing CV for the 8th Fighter Wing – the Wolf Pack. I am looking forward to being back on the line again. I thank the Air Force for the opportunity, and I promise to never forget what I have learned over the last 2 years. See you out there, and remember to keep your **Combat Edge**.

Stone



**Colonel Preston B. Thompson,**  
ACC Deputy Director of Safety





## A Tribute To

In January 1961, a new safety magazine, TAC ATTACK debuted from Langley AFB. The editor was a Major with combat experience in WWII and Korea who used his callsign, Old TAT (Tired-A\*\* Tiger). TAT set the stage and tone for a safety culture transformation in TAC with this line, "If you goof up, you can well expect to find an account of your exploits indelicately aired on these pages, right alongside similar accounts of TAT's own less professional exhibitions." And so began a 5-year run of humorous war stories and lessons for every type of aircraft flown.

With annual losses costing nearly a wing of aircraft and 30 - 40 lives, something had to change. The change they needed was a cultural change that sought, through the means of a safety investigation, to find the root cause of a mishap or incident by asking "why it occurred." That investigative mindset is how "Old

TAT" first caught his wing commander's attention and landed him in the safety business. As was usual in the 50s, when you crashed a jet and lived, you became a safety officer. TAT's crash was an F-86 engine failure that forced him to eject.

A fairly common occurrence with the high accident rates of this period, TAT's ejection stood out because he wrote a light-hearted article about the experience. In it he pointed out that he failed to accomplish the ejection boldface, which could easily have gotten him in trouble, but TAT used this opportunity to identify the problem with the boldface of the era. The memorized sequence of events started with, "Stow loose items" and continued with steps like "Tighten chin strap" and "Squawk 7700" before the pilot ever reached for the arming handles and squeezed the triggers to start the ejection sequence. In a time-critical emergency, an aircrew was forced to either

skip to the important life-saving steps or die trying to complete the entire sequence.

Needless to say, change came, and aircrew now recognize the steps mentioned above in the Ejection Checklist as less urgent actions that should be accomplished when time and altitude permit. Our critical action procedures today consist of steps like, "Ejection handle - pull." TAT investigated quite a few mishaps, - many of them involving close friends. To help ensure these accidents didn't recur, he worked to find the root cause, even if it meant exposing poor leadership or policies, or inappropriate operating procedures ... these he worked to correct within the system. Releasing a detailed safety report might work for enlightening the chain of command, but seldom played well when briefing squadron mates.

TAT knew that to get the message out to this audience took a different approach. He used humorous cartoons and war stories to reach these flyers. Rather than ask the audience what's the boldface for an in-flight fire, he would ask how they would respond if they saw high fuel flow, EGT out of limits, or smoke in the cockpit. These are some of the indications you might see in flight if your aircraft were on fire - because a fire doesn't necessarily announce itself! A lot of what I've described is taken for granted today. It's partly why we have relatively low mishap rates. When you peel back enough layers of the onion, I think you may find an attribute that Old TAT used: learning from our mistakes,

and sharing what we learn with each other. Others can learn from your mistakes by avoiding the same pitfalls you may have made, if you can just identify why you executed poorly, and then communicating that to others.

There are cultures in this world that are more concerned about "saving face" than they are about finding why they lost a particular engagement, mission, or exercise. The USAF flying community, led by the Weapons School, has learned the art of the debrief. The notion of a "ranks off," closed door debrief is not something most outside of the operations community can visualize in this Air Force, but it's the brutally honest experience sharing (good and bad, especially the bad)

that allows evolutionary learning to take place.

Why we make a mistake on a mission needs "reconstruction" to find the mistake, then analysis to determine the role that everyone played in the incident. A Lt may screw up because of inexperience, whereas a Lt Colonel may make the same mistake because of old habits, complacency, or due to distraction brought on by other responsibilities. The root cause as to "why" needs to be shared with the entire flight because each crewmember in that debriefing room is susceptible to the hazards caused by inexperience, complacency, and poor prioritization of tasks and actions.

TAT ensured that the Safety process, under the protection of privilege, allowed a full investigation both up and down the chain. TAT edited TAC ATTACK until 1967, drawing his cartoons, armchair quarterbacking, and airing his personal flying mistakes for all to read and learn from - he checked his ego in the map case. It'd be difficult to determine how many aircrews owe their lives to Karl K. Dittmer, but the culture TAT instilled with this one safety magazine, and just streamlining boldface procedures probably saved several.

I know I for one owe my life to him. My father, Old TAT, passed away 20 Nov 2003 after losing his battle with Alzheimer's. 🕒

**NOW  
THAT... WOULD BE A  
GOOD ARTICLE FOR THE  
COMBAT EDGE!**



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This edition of *THE COMBAT EDGE* is dedicated to Karl K. Dittmer, the first editor, and originator of *TAC ATTACK*. The following article was written by someone who knew him best, and is a tribute to the "old school" mindset that TAT held himself, and others to, as well as his dedication and steadfast resolve to face the harsh realities and unvarnished truth in the interest of keeping others safe while accomplishing the mission. I hope you enjoy this "throw back" issue as much as we did putting it together.

THE COMBAT EDGE STAFF



After about 6 months on the job as a new Air Liaison Officer (ALO), I was beginning to adjust to the responsibilities of command. Two such responsibilities, however, weighed heavily on my mind as our squadron prepared for a combat deployment. The first was making sure that my Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) Airmen were combat ready — physically and mentally fit for the crucible of combat. The second was facing the possibility that someday I might have to write a letter home to a wife or mother after one of my TACP Airmen lost his life in the service of his country. This November I was provided a small glimpse of what that might feel like.

On 10 November 2005, the 21st Air Support Operations Squadron deployed to one of the Army's premier mission readiness exercises, the Joint Readiness and Training Center (JRTC). Our mission was to provide Close Air Support (CAS) liaison and terminal CAS control to the newly forged 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), 10th Mountain Division, as they conducted combat operations and support and stability operations against a robust Opposing Force (OPFOR), replicating real world enemy tactics. After several days of successfully incorporating A-10 and B-52 firepower into the 4 IBCT's scheme of maneuver, we experienced a "simulated" mishap which no one involved will soon forget. Rifle 35, a qualified Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC), directed a simulated Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) from a B-52, on his own position, which, had it been live ordnance, would have likely killed all 35 friendly personnel in that location.

As I contemplated the magnitude of the situation, the events of the day continually replayed in my mind. Immediately evident were the mishap chain and the layers of risk mitigation that were ignored or misapplied. Like the accident investigations I had been privy to as an aviator, there were definite breakdowns in doctrine, communications, and tactics by all parties involved, which led to the fratricide and the battlefield implications of that fratricide.

This particular CAS mission was triggered when an Other Governmental Agency (OGA) member reported to the brigade ALO, that he had friendly observers watching a meeting of 8-10 "Al Queda" militants. These enemy personnel were in a small shack in the Brigade's area of operations and the observers were 75 meters from the target. After moving the observers back to a safer distance more than 300 meters from the target, I assessed the situation and determined that we were set up for a fairly simple type 2 CAS control. (NOTE: Prosecuting a target like this would normally go from the OGA Air Operations Center Strike aircraft/Ground commander as a Time Sensitive Target (TST), but for training reasons it was presented as a CAS scenario.) We had a JTAC and his apprentice, Rifle 35 and 32 respectively, collocated with the Army Battalion commander responsible for that sector. Additionally, Rifle 35 was in contact with a two-ship of B-52s, equipped with JDAM, Global Positioning System (GPS) guided munitions. I received permission at the Brigade level to prosecute the target and contacted Rifle 35 to pass the target info and begin the strike.







# B-52 Close Air Support

by Capt Dave "Bucket" Bennett, 21 ASOS

US Air Force Photos





The coordinates that were given to me by the OGA observers were in the Military Grid format (MGRS). As a B-1 pilot familiar with JDAM employment, I knew that the grid would need to be converted to latitude and longitude format for input into the weapon, but I ignorantly assumed that the B-52 had the capability to switch freely between MGRS and Lat/Long coordinates as the B-1 does. Therefore, mistake #1 was my own for not immediately converting the target coordinates to Lat/Long to make things easier for everyone.





After contacting the B-52 and giving the update, Rifle 35 passed an "abbreviated" 9-line, which consisted of target location in MGRS coordinates, elevation, and position of friendly forces. Mistake #2 was the JTAC's for not giving lines 1 through 3, which would have established a known point, a reference heading, and distance from that point to the target. This requirement was stated expressly in the exercise Special Instructions (SPINS): "Bomber aircrews will confirm all target coordinates with a known offset prior to employing, e.g., they

will confirm IP to target heading/distance matches target coordinates passed." This was the sole way for a bomber crew, without any visual or sensor eyes on the target, to confirm that the coordinates were actually for the target in question. Therefore, mistake #3 was the B-52 crew's failure to adhere to the SPINS and demand lines 1-3 from the JTAC.

Next, the B-52 stated that they were unable to convert from MGRS to Lat/Long and needed the JTAC to do the conversion. In the exercise debrief we learned that the lead jet in the formation did not have an operable laptop with the Falcon View mission planning program. This forced the TAC team to convert the coordinates themselves, a task they are trained and certified to accomplish. Rifle 32, the apprentice working with Rifle 35, was operating a piece of equipment called the Digital Advanced GPS Receiver (DAGR), which is a newly fielded navigation tool that allows for, among other things, conversion between coordinate formats. It was fielded as an upgrade from the Precision Lightweight GPS Receiver (PLGR). Rifle 32 had reviewed some training slides on DAGR operation but had not been formally trained on it and was learning to use it operationally for the first time. He had successfully converted coordinates in previous attempts; however, this time he inadvertently got himself back to the "present position" page. This led him to mistakenly read the coordinates in Lat/Long of their own position to the JTAC for relay to the B-52. Mistakes #4 and #5 were Rifle 32's failure to properly convert the target coordinates and Rifle 35's failure to cross-check his young apprentice's work by plotting the two positions on a map. Again, a fundamental principal was violated, this time the JTAC's responsibility to be sure of the target he is striking.

A breakdown in standard terminology was the final error in the mishap chain. The B-52 crew told the JTAC that they were, "60 seconds out," from weapons release. Rifle 35 came back with, "continue," which is the standard response for the aircraft to remain on the attack, but to stand by for clearance. Rifle 35 never gave the clearance for release required in Joint doctrine, which for simulated weapons is, "continue dry." Despite not receiving this clearance, the next call from the aircraft was, "Weapons away; 40 second time of fall." Although Rifle 35 admits that he intended to clear the bomber for release after his "30 seconds out" call, mistake #6 was the B-52's release of ordnance without clearance. Yet another basic tenet of the CAS procedure was violated in the failure to adhere to standard terminology.

Shortly after the attack, the Air Force JRTC observer-controllers informed us that a fratricide had taken place and that Rifle 35 had employed the weapons on his own position, the 2-30 infantry battalion's forward command center. The mood in the brigade tactical operations center was tense. I was forced to explain how an Air Force aircraft had decimated the command staff from one of the three combat battalions. Rest assured it was a trying and difficult explanation. Had this mishap occurred in theater, the reduction of combat power for the brigade would have been catastrophic. The letters home to 35 wives and mothers, however, would have been infinitely more devastating.

Before this exercise, the effort of our entire squadron was focused on convincing a newly transformed brigade that airpower could be a decisive contributor to their upcoming fight. I felt a responsibility in the aftermath of this event to make sure that the Army did not lose confidence in the TACP community







US Air Force Photo

and the Air Force's inventory of CAS aircraft and weaponry. In this case, our air-ground team clearly failed them. In order to prevent mishaps like this one from happening again, one must examine the crux of the mishap: procedural breakdowns.

An initial review of the incident led many to focus on the failure by both bomber and TAC team to properly convert MGRS coordinates to Lat/Long. The JTAC, embedded in an Army maneuver unit, has maps and equipment oriented to MGRS because the Army uses it exclusively. It is a much faster way to extract information from a map and battle track friendly and enemy positions. By passing MGRS target coordinates to the aircraft, the JTAC now allows the aircrew and the TAC team a chance to convert the coordinates independently and provide mutual

support for each other on what goes into the weapon. In the exercise debrief, a discussion developed about whether an operable laptop providing conversion capability should become a GO-NO GO consideration for the B-52 when employed as a CAS platform. The aircrews involved seemed reluctant to accept that as plausible, and for good reason. Until recently, the B-52 lacked an external power source for the laptop and, therefore, was limited by the short life of the battery. Currently in theater, however, all B-52 aircraft are operating with Extended Duration laptops (EDL) to help alleviate that problem; and a permanent upgrade, which will allow for coordinate conversion, is expected to be on line in November of 2006. This entire discussion, however, is predicated on the JTAC plotting

the coordinates exactly right in the first place, regardless of the format. This potential single point of failure is mitigated by CAS doctrine and procedure, which requires detailed integration between the JTAC and the aircraft before beginning a strike in close proximity to friendly forces.

This is clearly the take away lesson from this unfortunate event. The coordinate conversion issue is regrettable, but the crucial mistake was the breakdown in procedural checks and balances that exist to prevent fratricides. Some level of detailed integration is always required when operating in a CAS environment, regardless of aircraft or capabilities. No aircrew employing coordinate dependent weapons in close proximity to friendly troops can afford to simply receive coordinates and



elevation then begin a strike. There will always be the "fog" and "friction" of combat, especially when communications are difficult and the enemy shoots back. Therefore, it is essential that some other form of target verification be accomplished, even if it increases the time required to affect the battlefield. This verification may include targeting pods, high resolution radars, gyro stabilized binoculars, mark one eyeballs out the side window, heading and distance from an offset, Bullseye, or IP, or an "old-fashioned" plot on a 1-50K scale map.

The mistakes described above and the lessons derived from them are equally important to all air-ground players, and especially for the TACP and bomber communities. First and foremost, our TACP Airmen in the field must be 100 percent sure of the target information they are passing to every aircraft. This means they should never abbreviate

nine lines when employing JDAM and they must make every effort to plot the target and friendly positions on a map, and then cross-check what they send to an aircraft. The enduring lesson for my fellow aviators is that CAS is not as easy as it looks. The difficulty increases with changing battle conditions, enemy movement and saturated communications. This necessitates that all air-to-ground platforms in theater not only be intimately familiar with the CAS tactics, techniques, and procedures, but have the mindset to look for friendly errors. The procedures are outlined in Joint Publication 3.09.3, and like our individual jet's DASH 1, written in blood. The redundancies built into the CAS strike exist for a reason and must not be ignored. Also, coordinate dependent weapons, originally engineered for all-weather strategic targeting capability, are being employed with greater frequency in close proximity to friendly

troops. Aviators MUST use a second source of target verification when employing coordinate dependent weapons.

Despite emerging technology, the detailed integration of fires and maneuver between the ground and air team in today's battleground is like walking carefully on a tightrope. Aircraft that must drop coordinate dependent weapons, with little or no sensor capability or other options to cross-check for friendly errors will walk the tightrope blindfolded, and will depend on others in the CAS kill chain to get it right. Therefore, it is imperative that all CAS aviators and TACP combatants develop and employ the tools they have, and adhere to training rules, regulations, and SPINS without exception. The consequences of ignoring them in training or in combat can be deadly. I never want to address those letters home. 🗑️

US Air Force Photo







# A Motorcyclist's Rant

by TSgt Edward L. Moats, Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.

US Air Force Photos

There seems to be a growing trend today to place blame on the motorcyclists any time one is involved in a mishap, but are we always the ones to blame? Sometimes we all need to take a few steps back and take a look at the whole picture, and not just the fact that there was a motorcycle involved. Let's take a look at the "cagers" (a term I like to use when referring to automobile drivers) versus the "scooters" (a term some of us bikers use to describe ourselves) from the view of the "biker."

It seems that everyone and their brother (or sister) today owns a cell phone. Though good for com-

munication, the cell phone is yet another hazard bikers have to negotiate on the road. The Insurance Institute of Highway Safety has stated automobile accidents involving cell phone use have quadrupled from April 2002 to July 2004. Ask yourself this, "Is that phone call so important that you might cost another person their life?" If so, then by all means, answer that call. If not, then please find an exit, driveway, parking lot, or any other safe place to pull over and safely answer it. Just remember though, I might just be that headlight in your rearview mirror. Heard enough?

Sorry, but we also need to discuss stoplights and stop signs. Slowing down really slow, and then proceeding is not stopping. Your vehicle needs to come to a complete stop. It was only a few days ago that I was almost T-boned by a car running a stoplight. Please remember that when the yellow light goes on, it means to slow down and prepare to stop, not to stick your pedal to the floor and race the guy in the other lane through the light. In 2003, red light running caused an estimated 206,000 crashes, resulting in 934 deaths and 176,000 injuries. This will cost taxpayers over \$14



million per year. You know that bright orange flash you passed running the yellow light? Yes, that was me, safety vest and all, slowing down and trying not to get hit by the red light runners.

Lastly, I would like to discuss tailgating. No, I'm not talking about a barbeque in the parking lot; I'm talking about how close the "cagers" think they can get to the rear of my two-wheeled stress reliever while on the road and still think they're safe. Average stopping distances for the average production motorcycle is 120 to 140 feet at 60 miles per hour. For an automobile at the same speed, the distance is 150 to 180 feet. Being 10 feet off of my fender is not safe driving. It's dangerous. Back off a little

— no, back off a lot! Use the general rule of thumb of approximately 2 full seconds (more is better) behind me to allow for an adequate amount of reaction time and braking distance.

Now, you might be thinking to yourself, why is this information being brought up? Well, friends, my belief is that we can all be safer, two wheels and four, if we are a little more educated on what each other is doing and if we just make a little more of an effort to think about what we're doing. Bikers usually aren't bikers all of the time. We drive our cages too. I can't speak for other bikers, but I always make a conscious effort to look for bikes. I ask that the next time you decide to pick up the cell phone on the way home

from work, or when you're in such a hurry that you have to run that yellow light to save yourself the 2 minutes it would have taken to sit and wait for the next green light, or when you feel the need to be 10 feet off of my bike's fender out on the Interstate, that you stop and think about this article. Take a look in your mirrors to see if you see a lone headlight anywhere. Education is the key to a peaceful and safe co-existence. Not just education about what each other is doing, but education on what we, as cagers and bikers, are doing to make it a safer environment for each other. I know that some bikers are guilty of unsafe riding practices, but when there is an accident, are we always the ones at fault? 🏍️







**W**ell you've been tasked to perform the weapons safety role during an Air Expeditionary Force rotation. Face it, whether you are a veteran, or new to weapons safety, you will be challenged. Therefore, the most important thing to do when arriving at the deployed location is to get a good turnover from your predecessor. In some instances, you may not get this chance due to billeting availability at some locations. Whether you get a turnover or not, you must find out what has been done and what needs to be done. The best starting point is the continuity book. This should have what

was accomplished on the last rotation. Another location to find information will be the end-of-tour report from the last rotation. What you don't want to do is re-accomplish or start over from scratch.

Explosive site plans should be your primary focus. Common sense will tell you to find out what site plans have been accomplished and which ones need to be accomplished. Most weapons safety managers are always hoping that the explosive site plans have been accomplished prior to their arrival and, of course, this is not always true. So, if you are rusty with Assessment System Hazard Survey (ASHS) II, get

some retraining before deploying. The bases are always changing plans on what they want done, so weapons safety always plays a roll in providing advice, and ASHS II helps make adjustments, due to these changes, easier.

Another area of concern is finding out where all of your explosives are located, such as your explosive facility licenses. When you go out and locate these facilities, this is the prime time to meet and greet your safety representatives. This is also the prime time to verify that these areas have operating instructions. If so, familiarize yourself with these instructions. This will also allow you to make sure things are the way they should be.

While you're out and about, how about conducting a few spot inspections? There is no substitute for learning firsthand, and spot inspections enable you to put eyes on the target. By being out of the office, you will uncover shortfalls that otherwise go unnoticed. This is the prime time to look at site plans to ensure that the explosive clear zones are established properly. In some instances, while out performing spot inspections, you may see things that were not on the original explosive site plans. This is the time to find these problem areas — talk to people that can divulge these problems, which is one of the benefits of spot inspections. My former chief of safety once said, "we are trained to fight and should fight as we are trained.". This is what you, as the weapons safety manager, must ensure. With your spot inspections,

# The Greatest Challenge

## (Deployed Weapons Safety)

by MSgt Marty Curtis, 9 AF/USCENTAF/SEW



these areas can be identified ensuring a safer work environment.

One thing you need to keep in mind is that we fight jointly. Each service has a different way to accomplish the task of defeating the enemy. Sometimes that results in different standards. For every situation, and everything you do, you must meet with your on-base joint counterpart(s). This is essential to voicing problem areas and help the other services understand your view on safety policies. This has been an issue in the past and demands your utmost attention.

After you arrive and get a good turnover, you are set to begin your tour. You are expected to fix those items within your control to fix, not to fix everything that comes up. This is where time management comes into play. Identify to your leaders what is not in your control and offer recommendations, while remembering that you are only there for 4 months or so. While you aren't expected to fix every problem that comes your way, you should at least recognize and address as many as you can.

Lastly, when you come to the end of your tour, make sure you accomplish a good turnover. In addition, document everything you have done during your tour. This will ensure that your replacement will get a good turnover, and have something to jog their memory when things get busy. Make the most of your experience! This will help you down the road, as you will re-deploy with many ideas that you can use at your home installation. 🕒

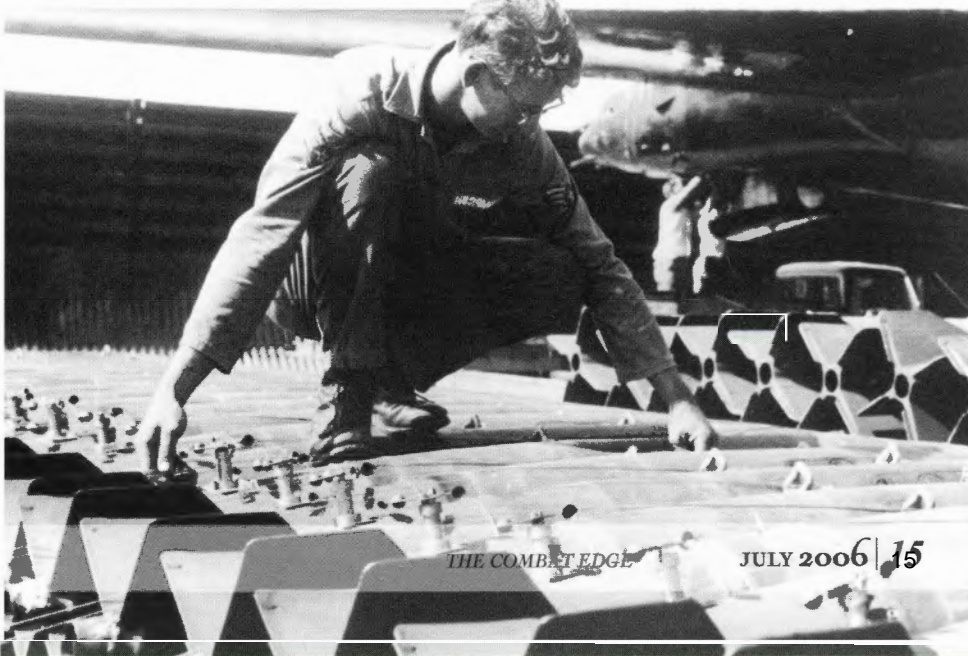
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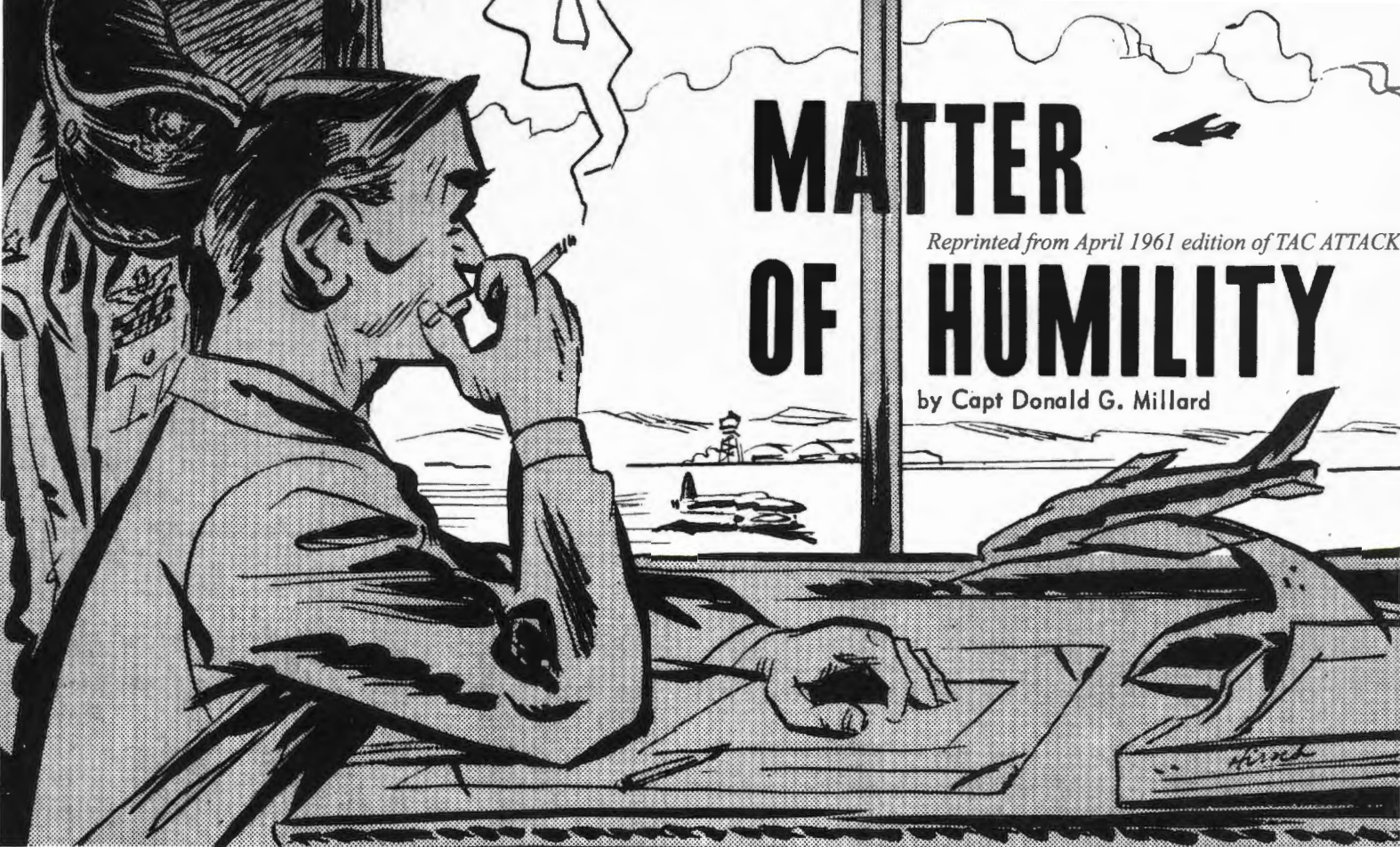
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# MATTER OF HUMILITY

Reprinted from April 1961 edition of TAC ATTACK.

by Capt Donald G. Millard

**A** CONTEMPORARY SAGE not so long ago observed, "the greatest potential hazard to flight safety is the staff officer who holds a command pilot rating."

Well, in some instances this might be true, but as a generalization it could be ripped completely to shreds. Statistics will show that a large percentage of accidents occur in highly qualified operational organizations, and that it is the younger, less mature (emotionally and flying-wise) pilot, who buds the accident columns under "operator error."

But let's journey to the other end of this aviator spectrum. Let's look at the older, more mature (emotionally and flying-wise) pilot, the man who has amassed an impressive amount of flying time in many diversified aircraft. A pilot who has in the neighborhood of 4000 hours total time with about 420 hours of instrument time. And of these 420 hours, 200 might be in actual weather. This man has probably held every job from Squadron Ground's Beautification Officer to Squadron Commander and has had various stints in odd jobs at the old Group and Wing level. After several professional schools, he finds himself behind a big, awesome desk at a major command performing staff duties which tax every bit of his long and varied experience. He now begins to see the whys and wherefores of what he scornfully tossed off in the past as mere irrelevancies.

It is fairly obvious from this man's Form 5 that he has an insatiable love for flying. He prefers the newer, hotter aircraft, but will settle for almost anything with wings. However, he soon discovers that it is increasingly more difficult to get out to smell the kerosene, and a paradox develops. It has happened to all of us. The less we are able to fly, the harder it is to get us into the cockpit, even





though once behind the stick or wheel, we are ready and eager to go. And so it goes, month after month.

But while our conscientious staff man is busily reorganizing and rewriting the Air Force, a lot of changes and innovations are occurring. The airways are being altered radically; procedures are changing; old reliable aircraft are undergoing major modifications; a lot of new blood is being injected into old arteries and this pilot of ours is changing. He is growing older and he finds himself a little too content to rely upon his past knowledge and experience (the old cliché... "it got me this far, why change?"). He is slowly drifting farther and farther into right field, out of play. It is an insidious but relentless movement, and it probably comes as quite a shock to our lad when he first realizes what is happening. With some alarm he will make a rapid, conscientious effort to catch up. But with other seemingly higher priorities he finds himself bound more and more to the swivel chair than to the cockpit. Unfortunately, this pilot cannot afford to take a few weeks or a month off to live in a flight suit. Instead he is subjected to what he considers tortuous and time wasting periodic refresher courses and occasional flights with highly competent IPs.


A good pilot normally possesses a moderate supply of pride and self-confidence. This brings us to our second paradox: These qualities will, nine times out of 10, keep a staff pilot from utilizing the services made available to him at flight operations. Our pilot doesn't want to appear ignorant; consequently, his pride won't allow him to ask questions. His conscience tells him he should know of certain changes and he will try, with a prideful and nonchalant air, to pick what he can out of casual conversations or through desultory reading of the many bulletins, manuals, pamphlets, newsletters, and other things that pass across his desk. He

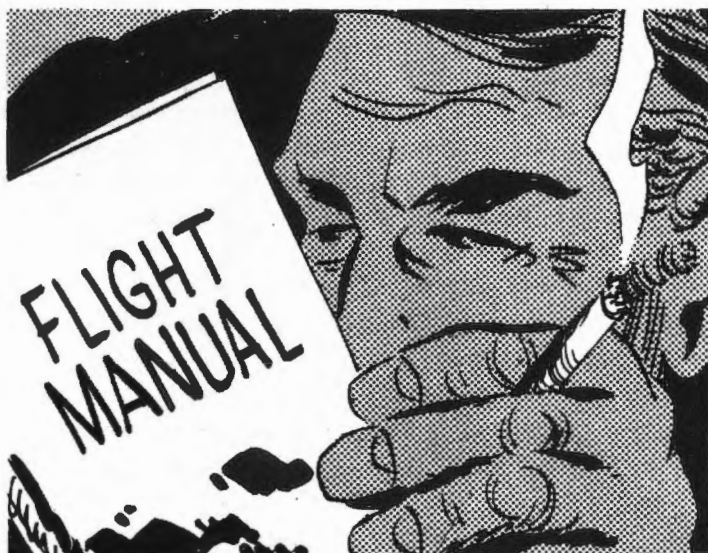


should know that ignorance can be illuminated where stupidity cannot. Stupidity might be a very harsh word, but what else is it that keeps a man from asking questions whose answers might save him an untold amount of embarrassment and possibly even his life? To be redundant, "what you don't know won't hurt you, it will kill you."

This totally unwarranted pride and self-confidence gives birth to another serious problem. Our pilot has never faltered when he received the "go" signal. He scoffed at other pilots who questioned their own ability to complete a certain mission or crack a lowering ceiling. But not this intrepid aviator! He was a young tiger and a man well-qualified in his aircraft. He knew the sky and was as at home in the clouds as in the Officer's Club. But notice the past tense. He was a young tiger, he was well-qualified, he knew the sky, he was familiar, etc., etc. Some people refuse to realize that "then was then and now is now." To put it very bluntly they are not always as sharp as they used to be.

There are still many instances when a staff pilot feels compelled to perform a flight for which he is not presently qualified when the wise thing to do would be to tell the scheduling people that he doesn't consider himself proficient enough to hack the mission. No one in his right mind is going to scoff. Instead, additional proficiency training flights may be scheduled.

There are many well-qualified instructor pilots on the flight line who are available for proficiency training flights and who can give assistance in flight planning or explain new procedures and equipment. Usually IPs understand the problem and are more than willing to answer, or to find the answer, to any question they are asked. The clue is that they must be asked. When in doubt bow to humility, bury pride, and interrogate! 





An aerial, black-and-white photograph showing the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The image depicts a large, multi-story building complex that has been severely damaged. The roof is partially collapsed, and debris is scattered across the surrounding area. The building's structure is exposed, and the surrounding landscape is a mix of sand and rubble. The title "Katrina Diary" is overlaid in a large, stylized, white font with a black outline and a drop shadow effect. The word "Katrina" is on the top line, and "Diary" is on the bottom line. The font has a distressed, hand-drawn appearance.

# Katrina Diary

## Part 2

by Lt Col Randy Coats, Keesler AFB, Miss.



**Editor's Note:** This is the final installation of a two part story which began with last month's magazine. The story will run in it's entirety on the July web edition of *The Combat Edge*.

**I**t doesn't quite register at first, so I ask, "How'd you get in?" He looked me straight in the eye and said, "I walked through your back wall." That can't be good at all. Looks like a total loss. My wife is on a cot in the hallway. I woke her up to give her the news and her response? "I guess it'll be easy to pack when we move next year." (She's getting anything she wants for Christmas, forever.) Spend the rest of the night thinking of how to stay focused and project a positive attitude given that all my worldly possessions will probably fit in a gym bag. (Note: We were eventually able to save most things above 4 feet.)

**7:00 a.m.:** Bad news spreads like wildfire. Entire shelter knows about my house. Lots of supportive comments as I wander the halls, but I see the struggle behind the words; they're sorry for my loss, but worry about their own. Their concern for my family despite fears for their own touches me deeply. First time in 19 years I've really had to fight back tears, but I've got to do the commander thing and project a positive attitude. As I walk the hallways, I truly feel "the burden of command." My family is safe; I have to push aside my losses for now. These 730 people have no access to information other than what I tell them. I am their link to the outside world. I see them watching me, watching how I react, and looking for cues as they try to figure out how they should feel. Is the commander scared? Depressed? Worried? Confident? I realize that their mood over the next few days will be a direct reflection of what they perceive of my mood. I've been tested in command before, but never like this.

**8:00 a.m.:** Drive to CAT meeting across base. Devastation is shocking. Trees are down everywhere. Cars are trashed everywhere. Windows are out. Walls are out. Buildings are collapsed. Roofs are ripped apart.

**9:30 a.m.:** Mass briefing to the natives. Most uncomfortable briefing I've ever given. Reports indicate widespread devastation. The death toll will probably be in the hundreds. Power will be out for at least 3 weeks. We all must begin water conservation. Minimum 3

months to resume base mission. No one will leave the shelter for at least another 3 days. Seven hundred thirty stunned and scared faces focus on me. All are easy to read: (1) Realization of how bad it is, and (2) fear of what it did to their homes. Worst possible situation for a commander; troops need reassurance I can't give. I struggle to keep my voice steady. Not sure how well I did.

#### **Afternoon:**

- Natives' supplies running out. Most critical shortfalls: food, diapers, baby food, and feminine hygiene products. Issue MREs to adults. Assign "Baby POC" to track baby supplies. Develop new metric for morning/evening briefings. Diaper burn rate: 17 infants in shelter, each uses five diapers per day and four jars of baby food per day. Have one-day supply of diapers and 2-day supply of baby food and at least 3 more days in the shelter. Submit urgent supply request to Command Post. Luckily, sanitation kits include 44-year-old feminine products.

- Still no cable TV and no Internet. Information is life. I average (I counted) no more than 10 steps before someone stops me to ask what's going on outside.

- Lieutenant students offer to take over operation of the Children's Recreation Room. One has been to Clown College; several brought coloring books. First Sergeant asks me later: (a) "How come the officers have coloring books?" and (b) "How come some of the pictures were colored in before the children started using them?" Honor of the officer corps is at stake; I quickly assign the Shirt to a meaningless task to distract her. Hope it worked; best not to ask. (Note: To be perfectly honest, that actually happened during Hurricane Dennis in July, but it's 100 percent true and was too good a story not to include here.)

- Pregnant native goes into premature labor. Ambulance evacuates her to the hospital.

- Another uncomfortable night. All natives (myself included) report profuse sweating in lieu of sleep. Set up special room with lots of fans for children to sleep in. Authorized the chaplain



“Seven  
hundred  
thirty-one  
people, 36-  
plus hours  
with no air  
condition-  
ing and no  
showers.”



to take a small raiding party to the chapel next door and get rocking chairs for parents with small children.

#### August 31st (Wednesday):

- Seven hundred thirty-one people, 36-plus hours with no air conditioning and no showers: natives stink; shelter stinks. Natives are convinced everyone else stinks but not themselves. Shirt reports natives blame it all on me. Wife asks if it's possible to boost SGLI coverage before things go south. Tasked my most creative NCO to come up with some way to hose people off. Result: water hose connected to sink in bathroom supply closet, with sandbag walls leading to drain in center of bathroom. No hot water, but showers are a success. Still rationing water; 3-minute shower every other day. Nonetheless, natives can wash away the stink for at least 10 minutes until they start sweating again. I'm a hero.

- Still hot! Two cases of dehydration evacuated to hospital. I'm dehydrated, nauseous, and weak despite drinking constantly. Can't believe I let this happen. Check with medics, but saline solution is in short supply, and if I'm still walking, I don't need it bad enough. They give me some good drugs to control symptoms. Eight hours, 240 ounces of water (I had to keep track), and 9,000 bathroom breaks later, I feel much better.

- Lots of debris around the building. Still dangerous for people to go outside, but natives are getting stir-crazy. Assigned a team to clear and rope off an area near the building. Posted guards to ensure nobody wanders off and then allowed small groups outside for fresh air for short periods of time. They love me again.

- Wing Commander reads off list of inbound aid at CAT meeting. Not the same as hearing it on TV. I never imagined that it would mean so much to know that so many people are focused on helping you.

- Baby supplies critical. Wing Commander orders a raid on what's left of Commissary and BX. Deliveries to shelters save the day.

- Another bad briefing to the natives. Only one way to explain why they can't leave the shelter: Tell them the

truth as I know it. Looting is rampant off base. Looters are in base housing. Air Force member is car-jacked right outside the gate. No gas in the local area; nearest is \$5.00 per gallon 3 hours away. Chaos in New Orleans is moving our way. Extra SF troops with 0.50 caliber guns on HMMWVs en route to help secure the base.

- Natives frantic about their homes. They fear anything that survived the storm won't survive the looters. Try to focus them on aid headed our way. Emotions are running high. One woman goes into shock; evacuated to hospital.

- Another sweaty, sleepless night. Natives apparently locate world's largest stock of extension cords. Conservative estimates indicate we're running 500 fans off of five power outlets and 2,000 extension cords. Confiscated the most impressive daisy chains because of the safety hazard. Briefed Shelter Management Team to increase fire checks of the building.

#### September 1st (Thursday):

- Cannot release people to return to homes overnight due to security concerns. However, must let natives assess their homes or risk bodily harm trying to keep them here. Strict guidelines for home assessments: provide written route of travel; must have a wingman; no dependents can go; max of 1 hour to save what you can and return to shelter; and must be decontaminated before re-entering shelter because many houses (mine included) have sludge/sewage inches deep. Lieutenants do great job controlling departure and decon lines.

- Natives return to shelter. Many are homeless. Commander School never taught me how to respond to "I have nothing left," or how to comfort women and men crying uncontrollably in my arms. Some cried for what they lost and others for what they saw. News reports didn't prepare them for seeing not just their home but their entire neighborhood destroyed, or for the cops telling them the bad smell they noticed was probably neighbors who tried to ride out the storm and were buried in the rubble. My only consolation is that I know how they feel. The stink in the house made me gag; the mud was gooey, sticky, and got on ev-



everything. My wife spent years building a beautiful collection of Amish figurines; seeing the trail of broken figures across 2 yards (I never found the curio cabinet) was painful to endure. Crabs running across my feet in the bedroom (which scared the bee-jeezus out of me) were a comical twist to a non-comical situation.

- In an attempt to improve morale, the chow hall (excuse me, "Dining Facility") next to the shelter opens for one hot meal of whatever was available. Natives happily wait in line 2-plus hours for rice with spaghetti sauce and a piece of bread. After the week we've had, it's like Grandma's Thanksgiving dinner.

- Third straight day of gorgeous weather. Security is still a big concern. My Director of Operations reports her neighbors shot a looter (it may not be politically correct, but I applaud their initiative). Natives don't care, they just want out. Shelter Commanders compare notes at next CAT meeting; we're all seriously concerned about tempers rising in the shelters. Believe the natives are just about at the breaking point.

- Still no air conditioning. Lots of sweat and little sleep.

#### **September 2nd (Friday):**

- Security situation better. Natives are about worn out. Wing Commander authorizes release from shelters. Six days and five nights we will never forget, and the recovery efforts have only just begun.

To say that Hurricane Katrina has been a "life event" would be an understatement. During my time running the Bryan Hall shelter, I saw the best and the worst of people firsthand. Some sat on their little piece of floor space and watched others work to make the situation better; most looked for every opportunity to help others and make our little slice of hell a little more comfortable. I was amazed at how easy it was to read their faces. I could see clearly as fear changed to shock, disbelief, and then anger. I watched in amazement as the anger was replaced with a calm sense of resolve and focus to simply move forward and do what needed to be done. From the little boy I found wandering the halls at midnight (obviously looking

for a bathroom), to the Lieutenants who stepped up, took charge when I asked, and showed all of us what "officership" is all about; every person in that shelter taught me their own unique and valuable lesson about command.

The CE and SF troops in my shelter taught me the meaning of dedication. I watched them tramp in and out on shift work throughout the storm and its aftermath. They were wet, muddy, sweaty, and tired. But every time they came through those doors, they took time to find someone whose house they checked on, and they always stopped by to give me an update on what they saw. To quote a favorite TV show of mine, "They were ... magnificent." My Wing Commander described it perfectly a few days after the storm. Some puffed-up colonel called him up in the CAT and said "General so-and-so is coming down there. I want to know who the most important person on that base is and I want their name right now." The boss' response was classic, "Well, Colonel, the most important person on this base is a Staff Sergeant with a chainsaw and



Photo by AIC Christopher Walkenhorst





if you'll give me 10 minutes, I'll get that name for you." If you're looking for the heroes of Keesler, I'll be happy to escort you to the buildings of the CE and SF troops.

As for the rest of the folks in the shelter, they were just as amazing in a different way. For all but the first 16 hours of our 6-day adventure, they lived in a hot, poorly-ventilated building with virtually no amenities but running water. Most slept on tile floors. All slept in puddles of their own sweat. All spent 5 days not knowing whether or not they had a home to go home to. Yet through all of it, they kept a sense of humor and worked together to make the best of a bad situation. Even in the darkest moments, I never walked down the hall without hearing a constant stream of "Morning, Colonel!" "How's it going, Sir?" or "Hey, Sir! When's the beer truck getting here?" I was only chewed out once by a native. I believe that in a "typical" group of 731 people, I would've been chewed out several times a day at least.

In my 19 years of service, I have never seen a better demonstration of the military "family" or a better demonstration of true professionalism. I have to add, though, that what I've seen in the 12 days since has been just as impressive. The base and its leadership have been amazing. In addition to bringing our mission back on-line in less than 3 weeks, we've provided critical support

to local communities. At last count, we've sent nearly 50 missions out the gates to deliver food, water, and medical support. I was the CAT Director when a local cop showed up and said the shelter down the street had an outbreak of diarrhea and vomiting. The boss had medical teams, food, and water on site within 30 minutes. The list goes on and on.

The same is true for my own unit. With more than one-third of my squadron homeless, my troops (military and civilian) have done things that would bring a tear to anyone's eye. Not one single person in my unit has cleaned out a storm-damaged home alone. We've had teams out every day helping squadron members and retirees (and sometimes people we didn't even know) cut trees and clean out flooded homes. They have made me proud to be part of their team and proud to be part of the U.S. military. They've taught me that when it comes right down to it, they don't need leadership. They are, each and every one of them, leaders in their own right; leaders with the willingness, desire, and compassion to do the right thing without being told to do it. In truth, they didn't need a commander; they only needed a cheerleader who would give them the support and the freedom they needed to do what needed to be done. That may just be the most important lesson Hurricane Katrina taught me about command. ✦

## HURRICANE CONDITIONS (HURCONS)

**HURCON IV:** 50 knots or greater sustained winds expected within 72 hours.

**HURCON III:** 50 knots or greater sustained winds expected within 48 hours.

**HURCON II:** 50 knots or greater sustained winds expected within 24 hours.

**HURCON I:** 50 knots or greater sustained winds expected within 12 hours.

**All Clear:** Destructive winds, rain, and storm surge hazards have ceased.

## HURRICANE CATEGORY RATINGS

**CAT 1:** Winds 74 to 95 miles per hour.

**CAT 2:** Winds 96 to 110 miles per hour; storm surge.

**CAT 3:** Winds 111 to 130 miles per hour; storm surge.

**CAT 4:** Winds 131 to 155 miles per hour; storm surge.

**CAT 5:** Winds in excess of 155 miles per hour; storm surge.



# MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS

## Flight Line Safety Award of Distinction

**S**rA Olson was dispatched to the inspection section to install a left main landing gear aft door on an F-15C aircraft. Inspection section personnel were preparing to install the PC-1 accessories manifold. While on hold, Airman Olson took the opportunity to give refresher training on the manifold to another section Airman. He proceeded with a pre-installation inspection of the component and noticed what appeared to be a foreign object in the manifold check valve. Upon closer inspection, Airman Olson discovered that a washer had become jammed in the check

valve. His keen eye and attention to detail saved a \$41K component. Had the condition gone uncorrected, the aircraft could have potentially experienced catastrophic C-1 hydraulic system failure with possible injury to personnel, loss of a \$36M aircraft, or life.



**SrA Mathew S. Olson**  
33rd Maintenance Squadron  
33rd Fighter Wing  
Eglin AFB, Fla.

## Pilot Safety Award of Distinction

**A**pproximately 6-hours into a highly-sensitive U-2 reconnaissance mission supporting Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, Lt Col Henry, reported feeling ill, which was later diagnosed as Decompression Sickness (DCS). As Col Henry became increasingly incapacitated, ground mission commanders at a remote location noted his inability to perform basic aircraft maneuvers and notified flight supervision. Shortly after contact with the 99 RS communications trailer, Col Henry became violently ill and vomited into his helmet, shorting out his microphone, which required subsequent communication be made by using only a series of microphone clicks. Unable to perform more complicated tasks other than basic aircraft control, Col Henry received 4 hours of no-gyro vectors, navigating through and around several sensitive countries and through narrow navigable airspace corridors. Further complicating the recovery, the autopilot failed and Col Henry was forced to hand-fly the U-2 in a narrow stall/over speed band above FL600. Host-nation fighter aircraft joined on the U-2, in the weather, and found the aircraft in a stalled, spiraling descent. Alerted by the 99 RS communications trailer, Col Henry was able to recover the aircraft, follow the fighter pilots' hand signals, and receive escort through the weather and back to base. Ten hours after take-off, and 5 hours after the first symptoms of DCS, Col Henry arrived over home station. Col Henry made several attempts to land but his incapacitation prevented him from being within the tight landing parameters required by

the U-2. During one approach attempt, the aircraft flew between two hangars and within 5 feet of the ground. Urgent voice commands from the 99 RS communications trailer alerted Col Henry that he would have to eject if he could not land the aircraft. Col Henry later reported that it was this sobering information that jolted him to consciousness and allowed him to perform a textbook overhead approach and comm-out landing. Col Henry stopped the aircraft on the runway, shut down the engine, and slumped over the control yoke. He was quickly removed from his full pressure suit and found to have no arterial pulse. Without delay, the pre-positioned rescue helicopter took Col Henry to a local dive chamber for treatment. After an unheard of four full chamber dives to compress the nitrogen bubbles out of his lungs and brain, Lt Col Henry made a full physical recovery.



**Lt Col Kevin M. Henry**  
99th Reconnaissance Squadron  
9th Reconnaissance Wing  
Beale AFB, Calif.



## **Ground Safety** Award of Distinction

**T**Sgt Haresh's proactive approach and concern made him the #1 pick to brief all First Term Airmen during their initial in-processing phase. As a highly valued Reserve Deputy for the Yuba County Sheriff's Department, his experience as a first responder to numerous traffic fatalities brings a sobering reality to his presentations. He has been able to pass on to the Airmen the harsh reality of telling a family member or loved one their son, daughter, or friend has been killed because they were involved in an alcohol-related accident. This "shock and awe" presentation emphasizes the importance of the installation's Wingman Program, embraces the values spelled out in our Alcohol Risk Management Program, and was essential in decreasing the Wing DUI rate by 19 percent. He has also been able to procure several vehicles involved in fatal accidents and place these accident reminders at key intersections and entrance points to the installation; a graphic statement for being a safe and responsible driver. TSgt Haresh's broad knowledge and understanding of the local dangers associated with weather conditions, wildlife,

motorcycle, and outdoor recreational activities further enables him to be an invaluable local safety conditions presenter. His dynamic speaking enables him to put the listener at the event when one of our local communities has lost one of its loved ones due to mixing alcohol and swimming in an unfamiliar area. Through a vivid description of the chain of events, he is able to place the audience at the scene of a fatal traffic accident in which a driver attempted to pass through a railroad crossing even though a train was fast approaching. His descriptive account of the horrific tragedy enables all to visualize the car being ripped into two pieces and the three occupants being killed instantly because the driver exercised poor judgment. TSgt Haresh's dedication and commitment to Ground Safety make him an invaluable member of Team Beale and the USAF.



**TSgt David M. Haresh**  
 9th Reconnaissance Wing  
 Beale AFB, Calif.

## **Weapons Safety** Award of Distinction

**D**uring a high visibility transport operation involving four protection level II Department of Defense Consolidated Test Unit assets, the motorized gate at the Weapons Storage Area Entry Control Point inadvertently closed on the munitions trailer transporting the assets. SSgt Lanning seized immediate control of the situation and swiftly notified proper authorities to expedite the response by security forces and other support agencies. Once satisfied the appropriate agencies were en route, SSgt Lanning began a meticulous inspection of all related equipment for any signs of damage. After carefully scrutinizing each component, Sergeant Lanning determined the tie down chain no longer met the standards for nuclear certification and directed flight supervision to replace the damaged unit. Acutely aware of the need to minimize exposure for both safety and force protection reasons, he quickly organized his maintenance team and directed them to secure the asset in a safe and reliable manner for immediate transport. As a result, all four assets

were delivered and loaded onto the transport aircraft in time to make the scheduled take off, with absolutely no compromise to security or safety. Sergeant Lanning's quick action, proactive leadership, flexibility, and dedication to safe mission accomplishment minimized the danger to irreplaceable national resources and ensured the successful completion of a priority Special Assignment Airlift Mission.



**SSgt Darl Lanning**  
 2nd Munitions Squadron  
 2nd Bomb Wing  
 Barksdale AFB, La.



# MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS



**D**uring a B-52 training mission, the “Master Caution” and “Generator Overheat” lights illuminated following a simulated weapon delivery. The crew of Doom 94 reviewed the “Generator Drive Overheat” checklist, and isolated the problem to the number five generator. The copilot tried to decouple the generator as directed by the checklist but the procedure failed, leaving the crew no option but to shut down the engine to prevent fire or damage to the engine and engine-driven accessories. After shutdown, the pilots descended to a lower altitude and slowed to best endurance speed to establish a wind milling RPM of 25 percent or less. The reduced RPM minimized the potential for damage from the spinning generator drive components but forced the crew to cancel all remaining training activity. As the crew turned toward home, the “Master Caution” light came on again, this time accompanied by the “Forward Battery Discharging” light. The crew transferred all electrical loads from the forward battery to an alternate DC bus in accordance with the T.O., but the loss of the critical number five engine and its associated hydraulic pump meant the loss of all normal braking, crosswind crab, forward gear steering, and main landing gear extension on the right side of the aircraft.

The crew calculated the landing data and elected to burn down to 250,000 lbs gross weight to reduce ground run to an acceptable level and prevent exceeding brake energy limits with the partial braking available. After reviewing all relevant emergency checklists, the crew communicated their plan to the SOF and standby IP at home station and configured the aircraft using alternate gear extension procedures. The pilot executed a textbook approach and landing, touching down on centerline and minimizing steering inputs to avoid damage to the forward landing gear.



**Capt Nate Oltmans, Capt Max Dipietro,  
Capt Brian Grete, 1Lt Josh Nuccio,  
Lt Col Sterett Prevost, Capt Cam Warren,  
Maj Jeremiah Baldwin  
96th Bomb Squadron  
2nd Bomb Wing  
Barksdale AFB, La.**



**T**he trailer of a commercial fuel delivery truck separated without warning from its tractor while the vehicle was in motion and crashed onto one of the busiest roads on base. The impact ripped a 2-inch gash in the bottom of the tank, opening a gap for the 2,800 gallons of gasoline inside. Fire department personnel were the first on scene and attempted to construct earthen dikes to contain the stream of fuel pouring from the tanker, but quickly realized the barriers would not be sufficient to stem the rising tide. The Fuels Management Flight team immediately rushed in to contain and clean the rapidly spreading spill. On-scene fuels personnel swiftly assessed the situation and determined the best course of action would be to drain the remainder of the damaged fuel compartment under controlled conditions. They rushed fuel bowzers, a water trailer, and an R-11 aviation refueling unit to the site to aid in the effort. SSgt Rupert Wicks and SMSgt Armstead used a 1,100-gallon waste water trailer normally used to drain rainwater from flight line fuel hydrants to clean up the spilled fuel from the ground. Their incredible effort prevented fuel from breaching the earthen dikes and entering the local water sup-

ply. Meanwhile, the R-11 refueling unit was put to work evacuating the remaining fuel from the leaking compartment of the tank truck, stabilizing the situation within minutes. This operation was only possible due to a unique fuel-fitting adapter Fuels Management personnel had designed and fabricated in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to enable them to transfer fuel directly from commercial tank trucks if necessary. When the dust finally settled, approximately 2,335 gallons of fuel had been successfully recovered from the trailer and an additional 250 gallons from the ground. The quick thinking, decisive action, creative problem-solving, and unrivalled teamwork of the Fuels Management Flight prevented the incident from escalating into an environmental catastrophe.



**Fuels Management Flight  
2nd Logistics Readiness Squadron  
2nd Bomb Wing  
Barksdale AFB, La.**



# ACC Safety Salutes Superior Performance

**Maj Joseph P. McGrady**  
F-15 Pilot  
102nd Fighter Wing  
Otis ANGB, Mass.

**1Lt Mike Strasser**, Student Pilot  
**1Lt Chirs Beery**, Student WSO  
333rd Fighter Squadron  
4th Fighter Wing  
Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.

**Capt Gino Kelton**, B-1B Aircraft  
Commander  
**Capt Jim Farm**, Copilot  
**Maj Justin Lemire**, WSO  
9th Bomb Squadron  
**Maj Thom Dusek**, WSO, (12 AF)  
7th Bomb Wing  
Dyess AFB, Texas

**Capt Michael S. Bess**  
**Capt William L. Marshall**  
F-15E Instructors  
17th Weapons Squadron  
Nellis AFB, Nev.

**SrA Timothy R. Wolfe**  
Ass't Dedicated Crew Chief  
9th Aircraft Maintenance  
Squadron  
9th Reconnaissance Wing  
Beale AFB, Calif.

**MSgt Forrest Harrington**  
Production Supervisor  
9th Aircraft Maintenance  
Squadron  
9th Reconnaissance Wing  
Beale AFB, Calif.

**MSgt Ronald R. Crabtree**  
Jet Engine Specialist  
119th Fighter Wing  
Fargo, N.D.

**A1C Jodie Hubbard**  
**A1C Dante Henderson**  
Nondestructive Inspection  
Journeyman  
20th Equipment Maintenance  
Squadron  
20th Fighter Wing  
Shaw AFB, S.C.

**A1C Kenneth A. Hartsfield**  
Elect Warfare Systems  
Apprentice  
388th Component Maintenance  
Squadron  
388th Fighter Wing  
Hill AFB, Utah

**TSgt Joel W. Wilkins**  
**SSgt Michael B. Harkley**  
Armament Systems Craftsmen  
33rd Maintenance Squadron  
33rd Fighter Wing  
Eglin AFB, Fla.

**TSgt Joshua R. Oribello**  
Stockpile Surveillance Bay Chief  
355th Equipment Maintenance  
Squadron  
355th Wing  
Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

**SSgt Nicholas S. M. Hyman**  
B-1 Phase Controller  
7th Equipment Maintenance  
Squadron  
7th Bomb Wing  
Dyess AFB, Texas

**TSgt Brian R. Nelson**  
Weapons Safety Manager  
2nd Bomb Wing  
Barksdale AFB, La.

**TSgt Todd C. Moore**  
Ass't NCOIC, Precision Guided  
Munitions Element  
33rd Maintenance Squadron  
33rd Fighter Wing  
Eglin AFB, Fla.





# QUARTERLY AWARD WINNERS

## Weapons Safety

### Award of the Quarter

**S**gt Halloran's hard-charging attitude and dedication to the principles of explosives safety have paid great dividends to the 355th Wing's ability to fight and train safely while maintaining ACC's most robust flying hour program. His efforts were instrumental in the delivery of over 13,466 munitions while flying 2,910 sorties totaling 5,666.4 hours with no Class A, B, C, or D mishaps. In addition to the wing's A/OA-10A aircraft, he also provided oversight for Davis-Monthan's tenant units flying EC-130, MC-130, HH-60G, and F-16C/D aircraft and ensured the safe storage, handling, and loading of the wing's munitions stockpile. Prior to the wing's most recent ORE, his input allowed the wing to revamp the exercise play areas incorporating the newly built sunshades as well as the Desert Lightning City training area. He performed and authored a commander's risk assessment to incorporate the use of simulators and smoke-producing munitions to provide more realistic training conditions for the wing. As an EET member during the Phase II portion of the exercise, he immediately identified and provided guidance to cor-

rect a Q-D violation between the POL parking area and explosives located within the play area. SSgt Halloran performed an extensive EMR survey and power density verification on 295 radio frequency transmitters and then incorporated those findings into the "D8" Explosives Locations Map along with 19 other updates. He also implemented a new weapons safety database that provided a more efficient means of data input and enhanced the office's abilities to track trends. During the ACC Heritage Flight Conference in March, he masterfully coordinated inputs from 10 agencies to ensure an outstanding pyrotechnics demonstration for the A-10 as well as the personal certification by COMACC for the F-15E "demo" team. SSgt Halloran's proficiency in explosive site plan development and knowledge of ASHS resulted in the expedient approval of a new facility for the 162 ANG Alert detachment; upping D-M's total to 103 DDESB approved site plans out of 141, by far the best in 12 AF.



**SSgt John P. Halloran**  
355th Wing  
Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

## Ground Safety

### Award of the Quarter

**T**Sgt Winfield manages a NAF global strike safety program for 15 groups/wings within a 14 million square mile radius. He designed, developed, and compiled a NAF-wide CDROM toolkit for its 180 Safety Day Campaign Blitz. This premier toolkit highlights ACC's three safety flight plan focus areas for FY 06; Accountability, Leadership, and Training. The on-duty portion of the campaign provided inspiration to unit leaders and individuals in all phases of leadership and accountability in regards to safe operations. The off-duty portion of the toolkit centered its theme on "Operation Street Smart, Safety is no Accident" and spotlights mishap prevention efforts on what is hurting our AF personnel the most; PMV (Private Motor Vehicle) operations. His initiative slashed Class A vehicle mishaps by 50 percent compared to the same period in FY 05. TSgt Winfield pushed the ground safety division "eyes on" review and implementation of hangar towing procedures at all NAF locations after a Class B mishap investigation discovery. His direct actions enabled

54 discrepancies to be identified, compiled, and tracked throughout the NAF and had an immediate preservation impact on over \$50 billion in Air Force strike platform resources. His innovative design of an 8 AF traffic safety/driving initiative for Defense Safety Oversight Council was embraced by ACC and presented for possible adoption to the Air Force Safety Center. As a COMACC seat belt program pioneer, he established a tracking database and schedule that documented a 95 percent seat belt wear rate before initiating the program, and his guidance and program enforcement increased overall NAF wear rate by 4.3 percent, and continues to rise while decreasing mishaps due to non-restraint use. His attendance at the AF Environmental Symposium this quarter enabled him to attain OSHA 501 Certification vastly bolstering inspection/SAV capabilities for the 8 AF Safety Division, ACC, and the USAF.



**TSgt Joseph R. Winfield**  
8th Air Force  
Barksdale AFB, La.



# Flight Safety

## Award of the Quarter

**M**Sgt Morton took the lead to develop a permanent fix to prevent recurring B-2 safety of flight incidents. His effort resulted in three protective cover faceplates that will prevent future repeats of the incident. The first two faceplates are for the B-2 Engine/Auxiliary Power Unit (APU) Fire Extinguisher Control Panel. In the past, aircrews have unintentionally activated the control switches during normal cockpit operations. The new faceplates prevent inadvertent activation of the switches leading to an engine shutdown in flight or unintentional fire extinguisher bottle discharge into an engine compartment. He made two separate aircraft configuration solutions; one for normal aircraft configuration and a second for the personnel thermal protective system configuration. The third faceplate is for the B-2 Engine/APU Start Stop Control Panel. These control switches have been inadvertently activated by aircrew bumping their helmets against the panel. The engine start faceplate panel is a one-piece faceplate with cutouts making switch activation deliberate instead of accidental. MSgt Morton coordinated local manufacture for an on-aircraft fit check and sent a completed set to Tinker AFB for

stress testing. He had another set manufactured resulting in TCTO 1B-2A-952, successfully validated and verified on B-2 A0331. His efforts have reduced the chances of unintentional switch activation with possible loss of life and aircraft. During MSgt Morton's annual safety inspection by the 509 BW Safety Office, his program for the 509 MOS received a perfect "Zero Defects" result. To stress flight/ground safety to the entire squadron during a 509 MG safety day, MSgt Morton devised an entertaining game of "Safety Jeopardy." He divided the squadron into teams, quizzing members on safety issues ranging from cockpit egress to foreign object damage prevention. MSgt Morton's innovative approach was a huge success that highlighted strengths and weaknesses that can now be effectively addressed in unit safety education programs.



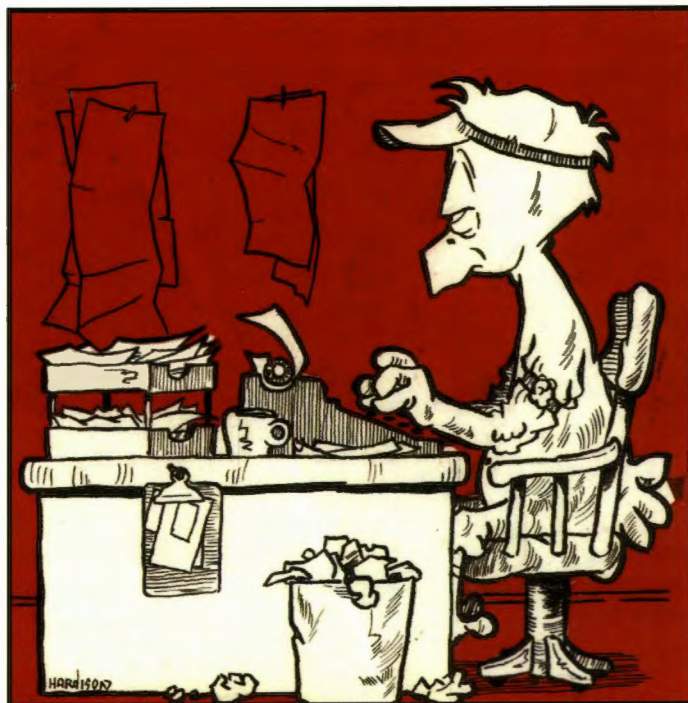
**MSgt Carl A. Morton**  
509th Maintenance Operations Squadron  
509th Bomb Wing  
Whiteman AFB, Mo.

## THERE ARE A MILLION STORIES IN AIR COMBAT COMMAND ... SEND US SOME OF THEM!

**D**on't be afraid to tell it like it really happened. You get more points for spreading the word than you lose by admitting to an error. Tell the reader why you think you made a mistake. Give a good reason. No one has ever gotten into trouble by writing an article for **THE COMBAT EDGE** and let us do the rest!

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or Fax: DSN 574-8975, Comm (757) 764-8975,  
Attn: Lt Col Komatz

Or send a letter:  
**THE COMBAT EDGE**  
HQ ACC/SEM, Attn: Lt Col Komatz  
175 Sweeney Blvd  
Langley AFB VA 23665-2700  
Telephone: DSN 574-8868, Comm (757) 764-8868





## FY06 Aircraft

As of April 30, 2006










	Fatal	Aircraft Destroyed	Aircraft Damaged
8 AF			
9 AF			
12 AF			 
AWFC			 
ANG (ACC-gained)			
AFRC (ACC-gained)			

## Aircraft Notes

ACC experienced one Class A mishap this month when a B-1B landed gear up. We have also seen a trend of air refueling mishaps ranging from minor to Class A damage. Flying two aircraft in close proximity is inherently dangerous — but we do it so often we can become complacent. Receivers closing faster than 3-5 feet per second and not stabilizing in the pre-contact position (zero closure) have topped the list of mishap causes. Exceeding A/R boom limits leading to binding and brute force disconnects are other big drivers behind boom and receiver damage. Don't rely on the boomer to call "DISCONNECT" or "BREAKAWAY." Take the opportunity to focus on basic A/R procedures before another more serious mishap occurs. There is a finite supply of spare booms. FLY SAFE!

## FY06 Ground

As of April 30, 2006

	Fatal	Class A	Class B
8 AF		1	5
9 AF	   	4	2
12 AF	  	4	1
DRU's		1	2

 = Fatal  = Fatal due to misconduct

## Ground Notes

ACC experienced one fatality in May. The mishap is still under investigation; however, preliminary information has revealed that speed and possibly alcohol contributed to this mishap. ACC did not experience any Class A mishaps over the Memorial Day Weekend and the start of the 101 Critical Days of Summer.

## FY06 Weapons

As of April 30, 2006

	Class A	Class B
8 AF	0	0
9 AF	0	0
12 AF	0	0
AWFC	0	0

## Weapons Notes

Another good month for the weapons safety community. While our statistics remain good, we still have room for improvement in the area of following Technical Order guidance. No matter how well you know the job at hand or how many times you've performed it, you must follow technical order guidance. It's the single, most important thing you can do to prevent mishaps.

### Legend

Class A - 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  
 \*\* Non-rate Producing

### Symbols for Mishap Aircraft





# Fleagle





# Celebration Contemplation



Rules we can live with this Independence Day:

- ~ Never allow children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- ~ Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
- ~ Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- ~ Only light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves, and flammable materials.
- ~ Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.
- ~ Keep a bucket of water nearby in case of a malfunction or fire.

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website at: <http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/july4/safetytip.html>

Bailey