Fall Edition 2011 COMBAT COMMAND'S SAFETY MAGAZINE



WHEN FAILURE IS NOT AN CPTICN PAGE 4



TOWARDS A CULTURE OF RISK MANAGEMENT PAGE 10

We are here for you.

Safety is everyone's business. Hopefully, we are helping.

Let us know what you think.





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From the Eyes of Two Survivors by Capt Chris Mendoza 31 TES, Edwards AFB, Calif.

SEASONS END by SSgt Pierre Convers 4 FW, Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.



Did you notice?

Two motorcycle riders pictured in our summer COMBAT EDGE weren't wearing full PPE, including our cover-photo Airman: He was on an enclosed official training course. The other photo comes from an era when off-base bright vests weren't required ... can you find it? We are thrilled that so many COMBAT EDGE readers were paying attention ... well done!

STATS

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP

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PHOTOGRAPHY FOR THE COVER ILLUSTRATION SHOT BY: LT COL JUDD FANCHER



ON SAFETY

Changes

Change is in the air at ACC. The seasons are changing, slowly and subtly. And like the seasons, we're seeing subtle adjustments to our mission, leadership, and personnel. Professional Safety Airmen pay close attention whenever things change because that's when hazards creep in and bite you if you're not on your guard.

Move along, hot summer! As of this writing, we haven't received the final tally for our Critical Days of Summer campaign, but we're on the way to setting another record for low summer mishaps. So now as the days cool off and get shorter, ACC Airmen squeeze in those final autumn motorcycle day trip opportunities



Colonel Sidney F. Mayeux Director of Safety

before putting the bike away for the winter. Shorter autumn days mean night flying, so get your gear and mind ready. Pilots, brush up on your instrument flying skills before the winter weather sets in. Don't let the changing seasons catch you by surprise.

Just like the season's cool-down, our Commander in Chief announced plans to scale back combat operations in the CENTCOM AOR. Stay frosty! Our ops tempo is still hot and heavy, and we're still expanding mission sets like the MC-12 and more RPA CAPs. We're seeing real successes with our leaders' approach to Risk Management in today's "expe-during" environment. Two great examples include the wing and group leaders at Hill's 388th Fighter Wing and Ellsworth's 28th Bomb Wing. They're totally changing their wings' ways of thinking and execution, evolving from cultures of production to cultures of compliance and discipline. Change like that does not come easily, but it's a positive change that will save Airmen and equipment. This change is good, and I

The summer PCS cycle is complete, so you probably see new faces around you. Same-same here at Langley! By the time this issue of THE COMBAT EDGE hits the streets, General Gilmary Hostage should have received the ACC Commander flag from Gen Will Fraser. We'll miss Gen Fraser. He is a strong Safety leader, who believes if he takes care of our people, they'll take care of the mission. And we're excited to welcome Gen Hostage aboard, as well as our new A3 (Maj Gen Charles Lyon), A5 (Brig Gen Peter Gersten), and A8 (Maj Gen Mike Boera). When it comes to listening to ACC Airmen and providing what you need to safely accomplish the mission, well, they're all ears and ready to help.

Some things don't change. Risk Management, compliance, and discipline are still the best ways to take all those other changes in stride. Nothing takes the place of solid, back-to-basics compliance. Think about it: Tons of experience, thought, and (sadly) Airmen's blood went into our AFIs and tech orders. Through straight-forward disciplined compliance with established procedures, we mitigate most of our mission risk. Personal Risk Management, the Wingman Concept, and Airman-to-Airman accountability ... those are your primary weapons to defeat mishaps and self-defeating behaviors.

So stay focused! Check each others' 6. Be ready for the threat, environment, and conditions to change. Don't get complacent, because it will kill you in a changing environment.

FLIRTING WITH A MISHAP

WHEN FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION

BY MR. NED LINCH





over the fridgid waters of the Yellow Sea, 60 miles off the coast of The Kun (Kunsan Air Base, South Korea) with the smell of burning oil leaking into the cockpit. Should I knock-it-off (KIO) or continue pressing the attack? I've smelled this oily, humid air many times after flying a jet that had recently been in maintenance. It should be OK, right? Failure is not an option! After a nanosecond of rationalizing, I elected to continue with tunnel vision, my "fangs" out, and pulling aggressively to gun my opponent, the Vice Wing Commander. Bad move.

As I carved through the skies in my Viper, the burning smell intensified to a point that it distracted me from focusing on fighting and pulling Gs. The logical side of my brain finally engaged and I knocked-it-off, started climbing, and pointing my nose toward home. Good call, especially since the oil pressure reading was now less than 10 PSI which means LAND ASAP! To point toward home first and then analyze the situation is a built-in flight discipline reaction. However, I should have knocked-it-off earlier before allowing my fangs to control my decision making. About all I could do at this point was point toward home, climb, use minimal throttle movements, and pray because failure (ejecting into the frigid waters) was not an option.

It seemed like an eternity before reaching a 1:1 (the rule-of-thumb glide ratio for the F-16 which is 1 mile for every 1,000' of altitude) with Kunsan. Finally, I could relax just enough to allow the seat cushion to reform in the seat. After circling down from high key in idle power and landing the jet, maintenance said I had about 1 minute left on the engine before it would have seized. It was another lucky day and the Lord was keenly watching over me.

The human body is able to detect stimuli long before the mind has consciously put it all together. It should be cut and dry, but the wiring in our brains prevents conscious, logical thought during critical and urgent moments. If something doesn't look, smell, and/or sound right, then it's time to KIO. Electing to continue with a known problem is a crapshoot game and a balance between risk and reward.

"There I was" 7 years later, on a night Operation IRAQI FREEDOM

with troops desperately calling for help. I was faced with the decision of my life. To press and fly beyond the limits of my aircraft and all established rules of engagement or leave these men behind who were being overrun by a numerically superior force. The weather was not conducive to flying an F-16 at night in a sandstorm with zero illumination for our Night Vision Goggles. Without hesitation, my wingman and I elected to continue and descend into the storm where we repeatedly descended below safe altitudes to attack the enemy in near zero visibility conditions. In the end, the troops escaped and were later rescued. We survived through pure will power to not

and logical thought. It was the toughest night of my entire career to balance life with a group of men that I will never know. This was not a situation to KIO for safety and danger. We were deep in enemy territory and no one else was there to help. If a kid was drowning in your pool, you'd jump in regardless of the risk. This night required us to abandon all established rules to complete the mission. We had to act now because *failure was not an option*.

A few years after the war "There I was again" ... this time I was in my experimental Vans RV-4. Ironically, I was trying to make it home from a funeral with evening thunderstorms along our route. With my 4-year-old daughter in my backseat, I elected to continue home in the dark and land on a dimly lit grass strip surrounded by tall trees. I can still see my daughter's face lit up by the lightning from nearby clouds. As I reflect on that evening, I'll admit that I allowed my fangs or emotions to control my decision making in order to get home that evening. Although I mitigated the risk with experience, flight following, extra fuel and remaining VFR over major highways, this was a bad move and I swore I'd never do that again.





Recent mishaps validate you must keep the focus and discipline to balance out the brain's weaknesses to prevent rash decisions.

- The SOF notified the crew that sparks were coming from the right side of the aircraft and remnants of tires were found on the runway; however, all indications were good in the cockpit so they elected to continue. Significant damage to an engine was the end result.
- The crew didn't think the thunderstorm activity was that bad and elected to continue ... significant damage to the aircraft was the end result.
- All warning systems were screaming at the pilot to pull up, but he elected to continue the attack into the ground.
- The pilot was fatigued beyond his physical limits, but he elected to continue and experienced Type 3 spatial disorientation that took his life.
- The crew experienced a hard landing and elected to continue with a touch-and-go followed by a full stop. Instead of writing up the hard landing, they did a crew change. The second crew found significant damage after their mission.
- The crew felt a rumble, heard a pop and a bang; however, all looked fine on the instruments so they elected to continue until the engine came apart.
- After a firm landing, the crew noticed a vibration as they taxied, so they continued taxiing the jet versus stopping. This caused significantly more damage to the aircraft.

- The tower noticed a fireball coming from one of the engines. The crew was notified and said all indications were normal in the cockpit. So they elected to continue until the engine completely failed and were further away from the base.
- The flight safety NCO recommended changing the tire; however, the crew elected to continue without changing the tire. The tire disintegrated on takeoff causing engine FOD and damage ... another mishap for no reason.
- The crew elected to continue with excessive fatigue and lost the focus when it was time to land ... they forgot the gear despite all the warning systems screaming at them.

How many times does it take for someone to press the fuel, the weather, a maintenance problem, and/or fatigue before learning a lesson? History repeats itself and the only way we can break this mentality is for pilots and aircrew to avoid continuing the flight when things aren't right.

I challenge you to avoid flirting with mishaps and develop a mindset to knock-it-off versus trapping yourself with tunnel vision and letting your fangs control your decision making when things don't look, sound, or smell right because failure is never an option.

Edward H. "Ned" Linch II, Lt Col (ret.) is a former Chief of 12th Air Force Flight Safety and F-16 instructor pilot. He currently flies 737s in Los Angeles, Calif.



TOWARDS A CULTURE OF RISK MANAGEMENT



THE AFSO21

Air Force Smart Ops For The 21st Century

"SAFETY STEP"

BY COL J. ALAN MARSHALL

n efficiency oriented leader wanted to reduce the amount of time that flight line personnel were spending traveling between administrative offices and work areas on the flight line. After applying the standard 8-step AFSO21 model for process improvement, the leader and his workers moved several small air conditioned trailers near the flight line for personnel to occupy during downtimes. These trailers were equipped with computers and ready rooms so that Airmen could have access to e-mail and Air Force websites while they waited for aircraft needing support. The effort seemed to make sense and optimized Airmen's time. HOWEVER, the supervisor overlooked one small but important AFSO21 step: Step 5a. Step 5a should be universally known among Airmen as the "Safety step." But before focusing on the Safety step in this real world example, a quick review of AFSO21 is in order.

The Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st Century (AFSO21) Playbook directs leaders to establish an environment where "all Airmen are actively eliminating waste and continuously improving processes" (p. A-4). In short, Airmen are encouraged to maximize value and eliminate waste. Value is defined as a need that a customer is willing to pay for (DoD Continuous Process Improvement Transformation Guidebook), and waste is described as "Defects, Over production, Waiting time, Non-standard over processing, Transportation, Intellect, Motion, and Excess inventory"; (represented by the acronym D-O-W-N-T-I-M-E, AFSO21 Playbook, p. J-13). The AFSO21 Playbook names five desired AFSO21 effects: Productivity, Asset Availability, Agility, Energy Efficiency, and SAFETY. The Playbook states that "In everything we do, we must consider Safety." (AFSO21, p. D-5). However, despite this overall guidance, a closer look at the

AFSO21 Playbook highlights why the and one course of action is flight line leader may have missed the "Safety step" in the 8-step process.

The AFSO21 Playbook provides general guidance to consider safety in the AFSO21 process. However, specific guidance on how to incorporate safety into the process is harder to spot.

Consider the published AFSO21 8-step process:

- 1) Clarify and validate the problem
- 2) Break down the problem
- 3) Set improvement target
- 4) Determine root cause
- 5) Develop countermeasures
- 6) See countermeasures through
- 7) Confirm results and process
- 8) Standardize successful processes

Step 5 of this process is crucial to safety. Step 5 is the step where potential courses of action or "countermeasures" are developed

selected. In the Playbook, Step 5a - "Analysis of Alternatives." directs Airmen to evaluate the effectiveness, feasibility and impact of all proposed countermeasures (J-32). Within the description of "feasibility" the AFSO21 Playbook asks "Is this countermeasure possible in this situation in light of cost, safety, resources, management approval, and time?" (J-32). Within the description of assessing "impact." the Playbook asks "Will this countermeasure create more problems than it helps solve?" (J-32). Later in step 6, when the Airman is tasked with seeing the chosen countermeasure through, the Playbook directs Airmen to access the "Six S's": Sort, Straighten, Shine, Standardize, Sustain, and Safety. The "Safety S" directs Airmen to "make sure that no improvement to the workplace is operating in a way that decreases the level of safe operation in the area (p. J-45). However, this



SEVERITY	MISHAP PROBABILITY				
•	Likely	Probably	Possible	Unlikely	
Death					
Disability					
Lost Work					
First Aid					
Imminent	Serious	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	

assess the risks on a two dimensional

safety step in Step 6 is well after the course of action is chosen in Step 5 and would have been little help to the flight line leader in our example. The faulty course of action had already been selected. The main point of this article is that the "Safety step" of the AFSO21 should be accomplished before a course of action is taken that could be unsafe.

Now back to that flight line leader. The problem with moving workers nearer to the flight line was that it put the workers well within the explosives clear zone of weapons stored and loaded on the assigned base aircraft. Due to the strict Air Force Instruction requirements for explosives clear zones, there was no other option but to remove or relocate all of the new trailers as soon as a Weapons Safety inspection 5 means negligible danger. "RACing" identified the threat. What started as an effort to "eliminate waste" ended up wasting significant resources, time and supervisor credibility. An emphasis on the AFSO21 Safety step was the only way to avoid this kind of mistake. Given the embedded nature of the 'Safety step" in AFSO21 Step 5a, it is understandable how a cursory application of the 8 -step process could under-emphasize safety; but understandable doesn't mean justifiable. Every application of the formal Step 5a, and the informal the AFSO21 8-step process should include a thorough "Safety step" executed in Step 5a.

One approach would be to apply a routine Risk Assessment Code (RAC) to every proposed countermeasure. In Safety, we identify risks and then

scale incorporating the expected "possibility of occurrence" and the "severity of outcome" if the risk item occurs. Possibility of occurrence is rated on an immediately likely, probable over time, possible over time, and unlikely scale; and severity of outcome is rated on a death or total disability, partial disability, lost workday, and minor injury scale. Risks rated high on both possibility of occurrence and severity of outcome garner a RAC code of 1; Risks rated as low on both possibility and severity might garner a RAC code of 5. A RAC code of 1 means there is imminent danger, RAC code 2 means serious danger, RAC code 3 means moderate danger, RAC code 4 means minor danger, and RAC code (pronounced 'racking') AFSO21 countermeasures would give decision makers a quick way to determine if the rewards of implementing the countermeasure outweigh the risks and would also provide a way to rank order courses of action. Even Airmen on the flight line could informally apply this "Safety Step" to small process improvement efforts that don't warrant a formal AFSO21 8-step process. The point is to make "Safety Step" of AFSO21 a part of Air Force culture so that we continually improve processes without decreasing our safety margin.

In the original example, the effort to reduce transit time of workers to the work area was admirable:

however, there may have been other ways to reduce wasted time such as placing trailers closer to, but not within, explosives clearance zones. As it was, much effort and resources were wasted on the misguided plan. Several other examples could be discussed but leave it to say that over the last century of aviation, many aircraft and crews have been lost due to a shortcut being taken in manufacturing, maintenance or operations in an effort to reduce costs or time. Wilbur Wright may have said it best when he said that "In flying I have learned that carelessness and overconfidence are usually far more dangerous than deliberately accepted risks" (Letter to father, as cited in Apr 11 Torch Magazine). Although AFSO21 plays an important continuous process improvement role in our Air Force, carelessness in planning and overconfidence in our experience can undermine the effectiveness of the program.

Colonel Al Marshall is the ACC Chief of Flight Safety and has served as the Director of Operations and Commander of a Flying Training Unit, as well as the Commander of a deployed Combat Flying Squadron. His previous assignments included duties as a Squadron Safety Officer and a tour as a Wing Chief of Safety.

AFSO21. (2009). AFSO21 Playbook: Concept of Operations, Version 2.3.

FROM THE EYES OF TWO SURVIVORS

BY CAPT CHRIS MENDOZA

irst and foremost I need to say that I am grateful to be alive today. I thank God for protecting my family; and I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to the firefighters who successfully put out the fires in Palmdale, as well as the police officers who evacuated us to safety. Because of all their actions, my family and I are safe. The flames, smoke, and stench have gone; we have blue skies and our house still stands.

I am a survivor and what better way to provide lessons learned than having an individual who was right in the middle of the action. It was a Thursday night in July, when I came home from a very busy day at work and saw flames and smoke on the distant horizon. As most of us would, I presumed the source of the crisis was coming from somewhere else, "This couldn't happen to me." But lo and behold, as I kept on driving south on CA-14, I seemed to be approaching the source of the flames. By the time I got home, it was evident that the flames and heavy smoke were on top of the hills, within view from my driveway!

The police ordered a mandatory evacuation, and by 11 p.m., most of the neighbors had vacated their premises with all the necessary items in their possession. Meanwhile, firefighters were busy battling what is now known as the "Crown Fire," which at that time was only 5 percent contained. Evacuating the neighborhood reminded me of apocalyptic movies in which the protagonist would leave the city with his or her family to avoid impending doom.



The following day, firefighters kept fighting the seemingly never-ending inferno amidst all the winds that blew the burning embers for thousands of feet; where new fires would erupt. There were also some sophisticated aircraft that provided assistance. I saw helicopters with giant buckets scooping water from the Antelope Valley aqueduct and dumping the water onto the fires. I also witnessed a DC-10 and a 747 fixedwing aircraft dumping red flame-retardant material at the peripheries of the fires to prevent further spreading.

By Friday afternoon the flames were 62 percent contained, but unfortunately, the problem wasn't over; we had to bear the fallout – smoke-filled skies. This was a health hazard, so more evacuations had to be made. We went to the Antelope Valley Mall to evade the smoke, but the smell permeated inside of the mall! We had evacuated to Edwards Air Force Base lodging.

By Sunday morning we finally had blue skies; no smoke and the smell was gone. It was like nothing had happened. There were only four houses that burned, and most importantly, there were no casualties. The police and fire departments did an outstanding job in rectifying the situation. Since I am a military officer, people would usually come up to me when I'm in uniform and thank me for my service to our country. But in actuality, these firefighters and police officers are the real heroes.

Now for the lessons learned and safety precautions. Major fires occur in Southern California every year and threaten people's homes and lives. The only questions are where and when. Developments encroach further and further into the foothills closer to potentially dangerous burn areas. Therefore, it is prudent for each family to have a list of items that can be readily mobilized at a moment's notice. These items must be in a particular place in the house that is readily accessible. When you hear the megaphone from police ordering an

evacuation, be prepared to leave. In some cases there is no time for police to approach your neighborhood, or the fire may already be in your backyard.

These items can be easily transported from that nook in your house to your car in less than 60 seconds. These items are, but are not limited to:

- 1. A safe that has your passports, important documents, social security cards, wills, deed to your house, hazard insurance information, keys to the safe deposit box, a CD or thumb drive that has digital pictures and video clips showing all your furniture and belongs (for insurance purposes). When you only have 60 seconds, you do not have time to take pictures of all your belongings. You want those pictures stored from the beginning. It may also be practical to have these stored offsite.
- 2. All hard-copy photographs that can never be replaced. You do not have to worry about CDs with digital pictures, since most soft copies are stored in remote hard drives or websites like Carbonite, Face Book, or Twitter. Leave DVDs and CDs behind only if you are certain all soft copy files are stored offsite.
- 3. All personal computers, laptops, portable hard drives, and any electronic equipment that stores important information, such as bank accounts, confidential spreadsheets, etc. Backup websites like Carbonite would be another avenue in storing data, in case you don't have time to unhook and carry out all your PCs.
- 4. A list of usernames and passwords for all financial institutions, credit card companies, investment firms, and utility companies in order to revert back to normal ops without delay.

- 5. Jewelry, cash, or any valuables.
- 6. Any items that appreciate in value over the years, such as: comic books and baseball cards in mint condition, collectibles, etc.
- 7. Any items with sentimental value. But keep in mind to minimize the weight. The heavier the cargo, the longer it would take and the more energy you will have to expend to transfer it to your car. Remember - time is of the essence ... you only have 60 seconds, or less.
- 8. A suitcase full of extra clothes. The clothes in this suitcase are for emergencies only, and cannot be used during normal operations.
- 9. Some non-perishable food. Just like the clothes, this is to be used for emergencies only.

In the general scheme of things, the most important thing you need to bring with you ... all the members of your family. Just like a typical slogan in the military, "leave no person behind." If there is no time to pack the above items, get your family out of the house as soon as possible. Safety is paramount and always first! The above items can be replaced – your family cannot.

Major Antony Pohl, also from the 31 TES, and his family were also evacuees. The above recollection, lessons learned, and punch-list items were applicable to his situation, as well as other survivors' situations.

Investigation revealed that the fire was started by individuals who were changing a flat tire. The weather was so hot that when the jack hit the asphalt, sparks ignited and the fire ensued.



SEASONS

BY SSGT PIERRE CONVERS

t's hard to believe summer has come to an end. Autumn for some means cooler outdoor temperatures and scenic leaf changes. For most of our younger members in the community, it means the beginning of a new school year. A new school year can be exciting and fun, but unfortunately it can also present some hazards.

School buses will be on the roads taking children to and from school, and it's important that motorists familiarize themselves with some of the rules to help ensure children's safety. Knowing and following proper procedures can help prevent serious injuries to our community's children. Here are some helpful suggestions and tips on the proper procedures and rules that surround school buses and school zone areas.

According to some studies, most school bus-related injuries occur when children are going to and from the school bus. A stopped bus on a busy road can make the process of boarding and exiting very dangerous. Be sure to tell your children to obey all school bus safety regulations and respect the authority of the bus driver. Children should be waiting for the bus well off the road and not playing where they would be exposed to traffic. School buses have a 10-foot perimeter around the exterior known as the "Danger Zone." School bus drivers may not have a clear view of children in this area. Children should be reminded to maintain visual contact with their bus driver while entering and exiting the "Danger Zone." They should look for oncoming traffic before crossing the street to enter or after exiting a bus.

While driving your vehicle, make sure you are aware of bus stops along your route. Drivers should look out for young children approaching and waiting at their bus stops. Make an effort to allow yourself plenty of time in your morning commute for school bus slowdowns and extra traffic. It is unlawful to pass a stopped bus while the bus is displaying its mechanical stop sign, flashing

red lights, and is stopped for the purpose of receiving and discharging passengers. This is a serious traffic violation, and school bus drivers will report violators to authorities.

Motorists are required to obey the school zone speed limits. School zones are marked with signs and pavement markings with special speed limits posted. Some school zones also have blinking lights. In a marked school zone, motorists must yield to pedestrians on all turns and when pedestrians are in marked crosswalks. Drivers should come to a complete stop if pedestrians are crossing or preparing to cross. Wait until pedestrians have crossed at least one lane past the lane you are in before resuming travel. Never pass another vehicle that has stopped or is slowing down at a crosswalk.

Some children are driven to school instead of taking the bus. There are rules that these children and their drivers need to follow to ensure their safety. First and foremost, they must use seatbelts. Some children will need to use booster seats or even car seats if they are small. They must be taught to walk to and from the vehicle and never run into a traffic lane. Drivers need to park their vehicles so that when the children enter or exit, their passenger door is on the sidewalk side, and when they get out of the vehicle, they never have to cross in traffic lanes.

The new school year promises to be full of opportunities. Let's do our part to ensure there are no school bus- or vehiclerelated injuries. By following these safe practices. we can all ensure our children are well protected.



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As of July 31, 2011 FY11 Flight Class A Aircraft Destroyed Aircraft Damage 1 AF 9 AF ±** ▲ 12 AF USAFWC ANG ACC-gained AFRC ACC-gaine

FY11 Ground As of July 31, 2011				
	Fatal	Class A	Class B	
9 AF	††	3	0	
12 AF	1111	5	3	
DRU's		0	1	

FY1	1 Weapons	As of July 31, 2011
	Class A	Class B
9 AF	0	0
12 AF	0	0
AWFC	0	0

Flight Notes

ACC experienced six Class A mishaps in June and July, continuing the high number of mishaps from the spring. Three of the mishaps were MQ-1s in the AOR where weather appears to have been a factor. This summer's unusually hot temperatures affect many aspects of flight; plan ahead for the impact on personnel, equipment and be ready to make timely decisions.

Ground Notes

We are over half way through the Critical Days of Summer (as of editing date). The Air Force has lost seven Airmen: three to motorcycle mishaps, two to sports and recreation activities, one to a PMV4 mishap, and one to a miscellaneous incident. The sports and recreation mishap occurred when an Airman drowned trying to save his stepson from drowning. They had been kayaking down a river when the stepson went over a dam. The Airmen removed his floatation device in an attempt to rescue the child and they both drowned when they became caught in the undertow of the dam spillway. Risk Management needs to be in every activity you plan to persue. Knowing the risks and planning for their mitigation or elimination will ensure a safe outcome.

Weapons Notes

The ACC weapons community is doing an outstanding job in the mishap prevention arena. However, since the last issue, we have experienced two Class E events. The only thing these mishaps had in common was the lack of attention to detail and following tech data. Both mishaps were preventable and could have been avoided. If we could eliminate these types of mishaps we would be mishap free. So when you're out on the job, remind your buddy that it takes less time to do it by the book than doing the job over and fixing damaged equipment. Let's make the next issue mishap free.

Legend

Class A - Permanent Total Disability: Property Damage \$2,000,000 or more

Class B - Permanent Partial Disability; Property Damage between \$500,000 and \$2,000,000

Class C - Lost Workday; Property Damage between \$50,000 and \$500,000

* Fatality

(Class Description Effective October 1, 2009)

** Non-rate Producing

= Fatal due to misconduct



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JUNE - JULY AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

Aircrew Safety



CAPTS MATT PLUNKETT, TRENT BROWER, DAVID UNDEUTSCH, EDWARD RIVERA, 9 BS, 7 BW, DYESS AFB TX. Shortly after Bone 22 took off on an operational readiness training sortie, the pilots noticed abnormal gear indications show that the gear had not retracted properly. The crew heard a loud bang followed by the #2 hydraulic system quantity rapidly decreasing and the pressure starting to bleed off. The crew took all appropriate actions to successfully extend the gear. Due to the inoperable hydraulic system, braking power was reduced to 80 percent effectiveness. They brought the aircraft to an uneventful stop with 5,000 feet of runway remaining and brake temps well below limits. (Jun 11)

CAPT KENDALL P. CHUDY AND 1LT TRAVIS J. SLACK, 335 FS, 4 FW, SEYMOUR JOHNSON AFB NC. PEYOTE 23 departed Hill AFB to execute a 12v4 large force exercise with F-15Es and F-16s. After 9 minutes of flight, the aircrew had unsafe gear indications and a landing gear circuit breaker popped. They confirmed both LMLG doors were open. Upon inspection, it was discovered that 8 wires in door 15 had chaffed and caught fire leading to the incorrect landing gear tone as well as the unsafe landing gear indications. Their actions culminated in the safe return of the aircraft and personnel. (Jul 11)

Crew Chief Safety

SSGT BIRDEAL D. FERGUSON, 763 MXS, 23 FW, MOODY AFB GA. During the launch of a 2-ship 66 RQS sortie, SSgt Ferguson prevented a ground mishap involving an HH-60G helicopter when he noticed a lanyard securing a 55-gallon plastic drum support had snapped. The equipment rolled toward a taxiing helicopter a short distance away and inevitably headed under the tip-path of the rotating main rotor blades. SSgt Ferguson donned all required protective gear and stopped the drum from entering the rotor tip-path at the last possible second. His actions prevented serious damage and saved lives. (Jun 11)

SRA KENNETH A. KAHLER, 28 AMXS, 28 BW, ELLSWORTH AFB SD. After the recovery and push back of aircraft 86-0018, SrA Kahler's attention to detail and training led to the discovery of an excessive hydraulic leak coming from the left nacelle. He gathered all necessary equipment and performed the safe-for-maintenance task, finishing the safety prep and depanel in minimum time. He also directed others to contain the hydraulic spill, preventing fluid from reaching the drains. His quick actions averted the \$27,500/day per incident fine that the EPA would have imposed on Ellsworth. (Jul 11)

Flight Line Safety



TSGT JASON P. OAKES, 379 EAMXS, 763 EAMU, AL UDEID AB, QATAR. While performing engine squib serial number verification on an aircraft, TSgt Oakes discovered the number three engine strut forward fire bottle squib and aft squib were installed in the incorrect positions. He realized that this misconfiguration could result in an engine fire bottle being discharged into the wrong motor during an in-flight emergency. He corrected the issue and found the same issue on two other aircraft. TSgt Oakes attention to detail resulted in the proper reconfiguration on two of six \$39.6 million KC-135 aircraft. (Jun 11)

1LT JASON R. MENDEZ, 552 ACW, TINKER AFB OK. Lt Mendez assisted in investigating the recent trend of in-flight engine shutdowns resulting from oil system malfunctions. His investigation uncovered that a majority of the oil system problems involved the oil pressure switches. He also discovered that the E-8 community had experienced a similar spike. As a result of his efforts, he was able to narrow down the malfunctions to two possible causes - the oil pressure switch or the oil filter. The oil filters were replaced back to a 180-day cycle and they kept all used pressure switches to establish a test bed. (Jul 11)

TSGT MELANIE Y. MANLEY, 532 ESFS, 332 AEW, JOINT BASE BALAD, IRAQ. SSgt Manley guaranteed the safety of 335 defenders tasked with conducting outside the wire combat operations. She inspected 122 fire extinguishers ensuring their authenticity and met AF Central Command's short-notice suspense within 8 hours. She also spearheaded preparations for the annual 332 AEW safety inspections. Researching 29 checklist items and 60 AF pubs, she swiftly corrected deficient areas. Additionally, she conducted underwater egress training for 30 coalition force personnel. (Jun 11)

Ground Safety A. A. A. A.

TSGT MICHAEL S. FALKOSKI, 407 EOSS, 321 AEW, ALI AB, IRAQ. As the stand-in Fire Prevention Chief/Fire Inspector, TSgt Falkoski conducted 174 fire inspections and found/corrected 426 deficiencies during regularly scheduled and no-notice inspections. He also trained 173 personnel on fire extinguisher operation, using a realistic live fire scenario allowing the students to gain hands-on training while safely extinguishing a fire. His training paid big dividends to the base mishap prevention program when 12 actual fires around the camp were kept from becoming catastrophic. (Jul 12)



CAPT MICHAEL J. HILKERT, 74 EFS, 451 AEW, KANDAHAF AB, AFGHANISTAN. During a night combat sortie in support of a special ops mission to capture insurgent commanders, Capt Hilkert experienced a right hydraulic system leak. With the possibility of a complete hydraulic failure, he analyzed the problem and isolated the right system; this prevented further system degradation. After executing follow-on critical emergency actions, Capt Hilkert coordinated continued support for the operation. (Jun 11)

MAJ CRAIG L. MORASH, 74 EFS, 451 AEW, KANDAHAR AF, AFGHANISTAN. During RTB the nose of the A-10C pitched up to 10 degrees nose high as Maj Morash added power and stalled. At night, with zero moon and poor illumination, Maj Morash expertly reduced power while simultaneously transitioning to instruments and allowed the nose to fall avoiding an outof-control situation. Fighting unusual forward aft stick forces, he called a KIO and ensured his flight had positive deconfliction. Based on his low fuel state he decided to continue RTB and run all A-10C T.O. checklists en route home. (Jul 11)

Weapons Safety

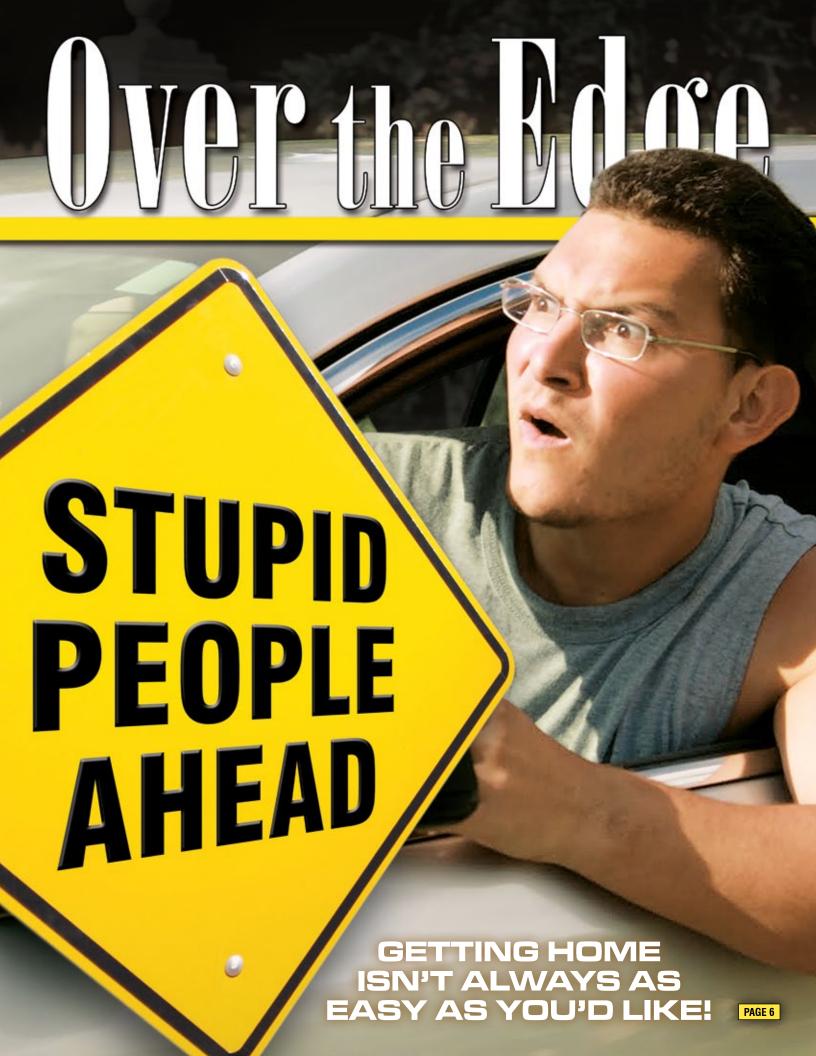
SSGT BRIAN J. CLACK, 355 EMS, 355 FW, DAVIS-MONTHAN AFB AZ. After visually inspecting several sticks of dynamite, SrA Clack noticed that one of the sticks appeared "mushy." He then discovered crystallization had formed on the next stick. After inspection by the senior inspector, an immediate evacuation was ordered. EOD and the fire department were notified and found 11 more sticks had crystallized. The dynamite was loaded for transport to the range destruction. SrA Clack ensured the safety of munitions personnel and averted the destruction of a multi-million dollar inspection facility. (Jun 11)

A1C RYAN P. HUDALLA, 332 EMXS, 332 AEW, JOINT BASE BALAD, IRAQ. A1C Hudulla spotted an unusually shaped object roughly 20 feet from stored munitions assets (further investigation identified the item as being an UXO). He immediately contacted Munitions Control and marked off the area surrounding the UXO. His efforts led to rapid evacuation of the entire MSA potentially saving 32 lives and securing access and future use of more than \$56M worth of munitions assets, mission essential vehicles, and International Organization for Standardization shipping containers valued at \$150K. (Jul 11)

Unit Safety Management

42ND ELECTRONIC COMBAT SQUADRON, 55 WG, OFFUTT AFB NE. The 42 ECS has had an impeccable record over the past year in safety on the ground and in the air. They deployed two aircraft to Phoenix in order to continue operations during the runway closure; augmented crews that deployed in support of Operation Unified Protector and OEF; and continued home station training all with zero ground or air mishaps. Emphasis on the "wingman" concept has resulted in zero DUIs while strengthening the bond between students and permanent party personnel. They are the lead for "Don't Be That Guy." (Jun 11)

20TH SECURITY FORCES SQUADRON, 20 FW, SHAW AFB SC. The staunch efforts of the 20 SFS culminated in zero Critical Days of Summer DUIs to date. Their unit Standard and Evaluations section administered 12 duty position evaluations without any mishaps. This included practical exercises throughout the base for Installation Patrolman, Entry Controllers, Response Force Leaders and Members, Desk Sergeants, and Flight Armorers. The ever-present safety reminders and briefings further enabled SF armorers to dually arm, on average, 85 civilian and military personnel each day. (Jul 11)



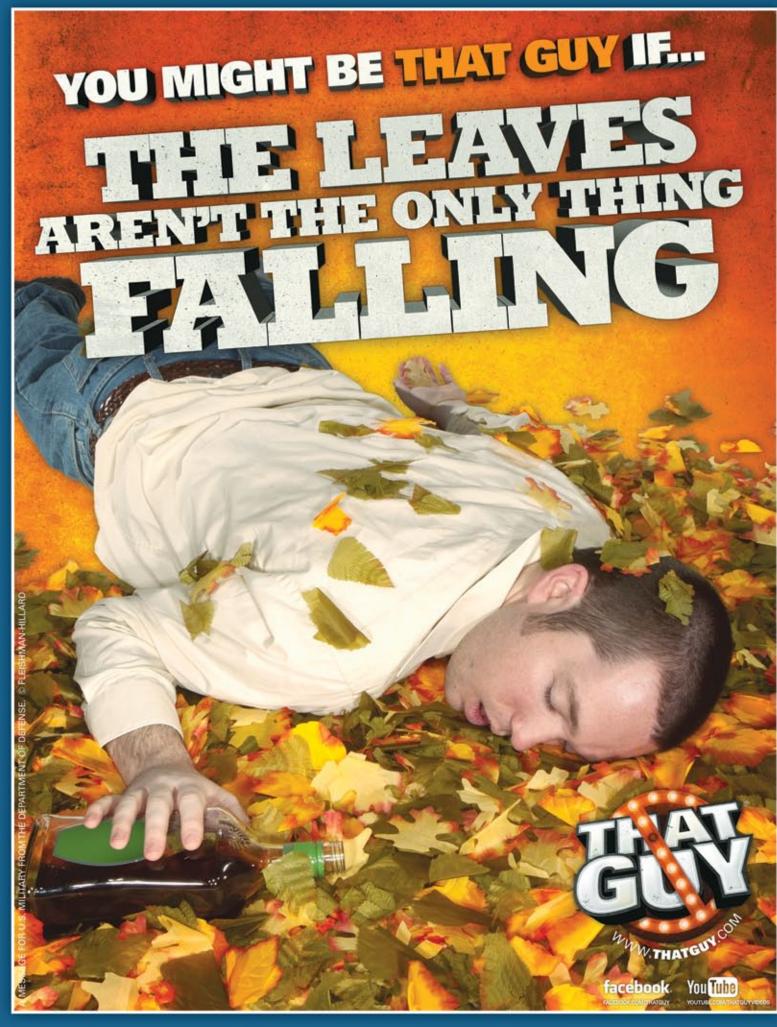


3 | You Might Be THAT GUY

DON'T ROLL THE DICE by Mr. Bryan W. Doyle Altus AFB, Okla.

STUPID PEOPLE AHEAD by Mr. Anton Komatz

Over the Edge



ROLLING

BY MR. BRYAN W. DOYLE







that would have landed you in jail if you were caught. Maybe you had a couple of drinks and drove your vehicle home from a bar, party, or maybe even a restaurant. I know I've rolled the dice on more than one occasion, and if you're being honest, your answer is probably "yes" as well. The following is based on a true story, but the names have been changed out of respect for those involved.

efore reading

this story, take

a moment and

ask yourself if

you have ever

done anything

"John" was an above average student who excelled in several sports. At 6'2", 205 lbs, his athletic abilities were notable: starting varsity running back, a phenomenal lacrosse player, and was selected as the most valuable baseball player on the tristate all-star team. Good looking and well dressed, John was dating the hottest cheerleader in school, and was headed to Boston College after high school. John's life was on the fast track to success. The slide started slowly: minor behavioral changes, a slight drop in grades, and he wanted more privacy at home as he began to develop into a young adult, but there were no major concerns.

One night at approximately 9:15 pm, the police called John's home. The officer explained that John and another friend had been involved in an automobile accident and were en route to the local emergency room. Upon arrival at the ER, John's family was told that they were not allowed to see him. Two policemen (one whose son played football with John) and one of the ambulance team members who knew the family explained just what had happened. John's speed was estimated at over 80 miles per hour as he attempted to manipulate his way through a posted 35-mph curve. The vehicle departed the roadway, rolled three times and snapped two telephone poles like they were twigs before coming to a stop. They had their seatbelts on, but it was a miracle either of the boys lived. An elderly gentleman came upon the wreck and pulled the boys out of the car before it caught fire. The police went on to explain that alcohol and a large torn bag of prescription drugs were found in and around the partially burned vehicle.

After what seemed an eternity, the doctor came out. The doctor explained that John's good friend had only incurred minor cuts and bruises, but that due to the large amount of drugs in their systems, neither of

them could receive any additional pain medication. John underwent a series of operations that night without any additional pain medication. He had numerous lacerations requiring stitches, suffered a concussion, broke several bones, and had a metal rod inserted in his lower leg to repair a shattered shin bone.

After several operations and a lengthy stay, John was released from the hospital and returned home, but everything in his world had come crashing down around him at 17. His dreams of college sports were gone, his girlfriend was not allowed to communicate with him when her parents found out he was using drugs. He was angry and violent and became a very different person. John went to court where the Judge convicted him of several charges and fines, as well as a court-ordered stay in a youth drug rehabilitation center. The morning John was to report to rehab, his father found him in his room slumped over in a chair with his eyes rolled back in his head and a needle in his arm. Near death and complete organ failure, he once again cheated death.

Upon recovery, John was released from the hospital and sent to a drug rehab center. John turned 18 while in rehab, and as an adult, he was given the choice to continue his stay in rehab or move to an adult prison to serve out his time. John chose prison because the time was shorter, but while in prison, the negative changes accelerated, and John refused all contact with his family. "John" is my nephew, and he's still in jail. In the space of a single night, he went from a popular star athlete with a bright future to a handicapped, recovering drug addict with a criminal record. The seatbelt he wore that night saved his life, but drugs and bad decisions destroyed it.

After reading this story, take a moment and ask yourself if you have ever done anything that would have landed you in jail ...

STUPID PEOPLE AHEAD 6 https://afkm.wpafb.af.mil/CombatEdge

GETTING HOME ISN'T ALWAYS AS EASY AS YOU'D LIKE!

BY MR. ANTON KOMATZ

ike many, I commute to and from work about 300 miles every week via a very busy stretch of interstate. The drive is never dull as there are a number of life-threatening hazards to keep you on your toes. Some days the mood is relaxed and flowing, while other days, the attitude of the drivers cause the interstate to take on a life of its own and idiots seem to line up to take the chance of killing themselves and others in new and innovative ways.

One drive home in particular stands out. It started with bumper-to-bumper traffic through the construction zone, followed by a no-holds-barred sprint to 70+ MPH to be in front once the traffic cones disappeared. Next, an idiot in a compact car held together with bungee cords, duct tape, and rust, swerved across four lanes of traffic to make their exit, only to realize that it wasn't the one they wanted, and swerved back into traffic. That was matched a bit later when a stepladder fell out of a pickup truck, passed through my lane as the legs opened up, hit the center median and slid under the rear wheels of a semi truck and exploded in a cloud of splinters.

Two close calls, several "mystery stops," and a traffic jam caused by everyone slowing to watch a future unmarried couple have a marital spat complete with hand gestures and suitcases being thrown into the median, I decided to cut my losses and take the secondary roads home. Getting off the interstate I thought I could finally relax a bit. One quick stop for gas, and I would be safe at home.

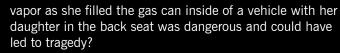
Pulling up to the pump, I shut off the engine, left my cell phone in the car, grounded myself on the bare metal of the pump before filling the tank, leaned back against my car to take a breather, closed my eyes and let my guard down in the process. I was aware that there was a young woman filling her gas tank on the other side of the pump, but having just run the interstate gauntlet, I chose to not pay attention, and that nearly spelled disaster.

After several angry shouts of "Get back in your seat," I finally looked up to see a four or five-year-old girl jumping back and forth from the back seat, over the center counsel. "Irritating yes, dangerous, no," I reasoned and tried to block out the noise. I didn't begin to pay attention until the young woman lost her temper, stopped filling her tank, and with gas pump still in hand, opened the passenger door to yell at her daughter to sit down. She was scolding her at length, and making back and forth gestures (gas pump handle in her hand the whole time), when I noticed the two-gallon gas can in the front seat sitting on top of a pile of discarded fast food bags and napkins, and my "danger meter" jumped a few pegs.



I realized that she was about to fill the gas can while it was still in the car, and remembered video footage of the gas station fire caused by a static electric discharge. My danger meter began to rise steadily, pegged, and then broke as she reached for the cap of the gas can. Over her shoulder, I noticed a faint flicker of flame near the center counsel, followed by a thunderous report of, "STOP!" I don't recall consciously making the decision to yell at her, I think it was just self-preservation on my part, and it was loud. It caught her attention and she stood up and looked at me with that classic, irritated look that screams, "What's your problem?" I quickly rank ordered her missteps from the least to the most dangerous, and then asked myself, "Where to start?"

I could have pointed out that leaving her child unrestrained in the car where she was free to jump back and forth from the back seat to the driver's seat where the keys were still in the ignition was unwise as well as unsafe. Maybe I should have reminded her that while it's never a good idea to scold a child while making wild hand motions, it's always a bad idea to do it with a wet, dripping, gas pump in your hand, inside your vehicle, where an inadvertent squeeze of the handle would pour large amounts of flammable gasoline into the vehicle. I might have pointed out that transporting a gas can in the passenger compartment surrounded by a large amount of flammable fast food garbage, is asking for trouble in the event of an accident; always keep gas cans in the trunk or truck bed. The fourth point I could have made was that a static discharge could have ignited the gas and



I couldn't make a decision, so I went with the fifth point, which combined the previous four infractions, but which incorporated that innocent looking little flame that turned out to be a lit, yes, LIT, decorative candle burning in a pool of melted wax, nestled in the center counsel cup holder.

"Blow out the candle, before you start a fire!" I exclaimed. Before I could explain why I stopped her, she gave me a look of irritation, put the pump handle back in its holder, blew the candle out, and replied with, "I forgot to turn it off when I pulled in, but you didn't have to yell." With that, she got in her car and left.

I couldn't help thinking that while I had just dodged another person's attempt to kill me that day, I had only delayed her future enshrinement in the infamous Darwin Awards, which "commemorate those who improve our gene pool by removing themselves from it." I can't come up with a single reason why someone would think it was wise to drive around with a candle burning in their car, much less with a partially filled can of gas less than 2 feet away. How that little girl managed to avoid knocking the candle over, spilling the hot wax and igniting the paper napkins followed by the gas can, while her mother filled the gas tank, I'll never know. I finished filling my gas tank, put the hose away, got in my car, and slowly turned toward my final destination ... home.



Remember, there are people out there who are late for their date with death, and they don't care if they take you with them.

That may sound harsh, but people acting without thinking wind up hurting innocent bystanders without intending to all the time. So stay on your toes, drive defensively, and make it home safe.



