

Summer 2020

Combat Edge

Air Combat Command's Safety Magazine



A WOUNDED EAGLE

PAGE 8

Survival AFTER the Storm!

STAY ALIVE

Avoid these Deadly Hazards:



Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning:

Never use portable generators, charcoal grills or camp stoves inside your home. CO is an "invisible killer" — you can't see it or smell it!

— you can't see it or smell it!

Keep generators at least 20 feet away from the home*.



Electrocution:

Stay away from downed power lines or anything they touch.

Never operate or touch electrical appliances, circuit breakers or outlets that are or have been in standing water. Have a qualified electrician check first.



Fire:

No lights? Use flashlights or battery operated lanterns instead of candles.



Gas Leaks:

If you smell gas, get out, then call 911.

Don't turn lights on or off or use electrical equipment.

*Minimum distance recommended by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

GEN. JAMES M. HOLMES
COMMANDER

COL. ANTHONY A. KLEIGER
DIRECTOR OF SAFETY

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EDITOR

KURT REILLY
ART DIRECTOR

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THE COMBAT EDGE

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COVER PHOTO BY
AIRMAN 1ST CLASS MADELINE HERZOG

ACCent



Airmen of ACC,

I'm Col. Tony Kleiger, your new Director of Safety. I wanted to share some thoughts on accomplishing our mission, while protecting our people and our equipment during and after the mission. To put it simply, it is all about resources. Conserving, preserving and getting every drop of utility from those resources to ensure the mission gets accomplished. Our people and our equipment are precious, limited resources that we must continuously protect if we are to exist beyond next week, next year and the next decade. Protecting our resources is a deliberate and intentional way to think, operate and live. This is the driving force behind all we strive for in safety.



Col. Anthony A. Kleiger
Director of Safety

Growing up, many of us can probably recall the close calls and experiences that we may have not survived had it not been for being "lucky." In the Air Force, our responsibility to the nation requires us to be deliberate in our actions; not "lucky." Being deliberate in your actions means thinking about and anticipating obstacles that could prevent you from accomplishing your mission — on or off duty. Recognizing those obstacles comes from training, experience and education; it's not as simple as putting on a pair of glasses to "see" the obstacles.

Safety Glasses ... On a clear sunny day, the intensity of the light and the glare forces you to squint to see where you're going. You simply don't see everything — especially the obstacles that may be in your way. However, once you put sunglasses on, you instantly see everything more clearly — including the obstacles. In my view, a safety mindset (i.e. Safety Glasses) functions much like sunglasses and enable us to see obstacles more clearly and help us navigate our Air Force and our personal lives. This clarity empowers us to preserve our resources: our people and our equipment.

Most of us serving our Air Force have taken an oath "to support and defend the constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic." This means we may be asked to do things that are dangerous and potentially life-threatening, and most definitely challenging. The environments we operate in, the jobs we perform and our personal lives are all filled with obstacles, challenges— and sometimes danger — that we must navigate to preserve our resources and achieve our mission.

ACC requires every available resource to be successful, and this resource is YOU — no matter your job, your rank or your position. There are no "nonessential parts;" if you were not required, you would not be here. Every person and every piece of equipment, contributes to getting the ACC mission done for our nation, and it's our duty to conserve, preserve and protect them.

Thank you for your daily contributions to the mission. Our success depends on you seeing the obstacles that will threaten our resources: our people and our equipment. So keep wearing those Safety Glasses — you're a part of the team, and we need each and every one of you.

Combat Edge

4 | WORLD-UNIQUE TIRE TESTING CAPABILITY

by Marisa Alia-Novobilski
AFMC/PA, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH

8 | A WOUNDED EAGLE

by Staff Sgt. Giovanni Sims
378 AEW, USCENTCOM

12 | HIDDEN HEROES

by Airman 1st Class Bryan Guthrie
57 WG/PA, Nellis AFB, NV

18 | HOME SAFETY

by Lynn Kirby
SECAF/PA, Arlington, VA

22 | OVER THE LINE

by Master Sgt. Chad Grady
ACC/SEW, JB Langley-Eustis, VA

24 | 2ND QUARTER AWARDS

26 | STATS



World-Unique Tire Testing Capability Saves Millions For Warfighters

BY MARISA ALIA-NOVOBILSKI

The ability of an aircraft's tires to endure a landing at high speeds is critical to an Air Force pilot returning to land following an operational flight.

However, predicting aircraft tire wear is a complex, time-intensive phenomenon, highly dependent on multiple variables. Historically, testers focused on the structural integrity of a tire prior to fielding and use; however, the ability to quickly and accurately predict tire wear remained a challenge across the logistics community – until now.

At the Air Force Test Center's Landing Gear Test Facility located at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, engineers have developed a new, one-of-a-kind test capability that can identify, characterize and classify tire wear under realistic operational conditions, saving thousands per tire over the life cycle.

“This capability significantly reduces acquisition development timelines, life cycle costs and mishap risks prior to production and fielding,” said Gary Wollam, director of the 704th Test Group’s Aerospace Survivability and Safety Office. “We’re combining digital modeling, testing and field data to effectively replicate runway surfaces and predict the behavior of a tire over time. This improves the safety of a tire and can identify issues prior to actual manufacturing and implementation on an aircraft.”

Missionized Tire Wear Testing, an effort augmented by Air Force Materiel Command Squadron Innovation Funds, leverages specialized lasers and digital scanning technologies with a 168-inch internal drum dynamometer, a machine that

operates at speeds up to 350 mph and can provide variable levels of brake torque for aircraft tire wear testing. Replicated 3D runway surfaces enable predictive tire wear data based on tests that use realistic ground conditions, therefore identifying potential issues and providing for design improvements early in the manufacturing process.

“The ability to clone and replicate individual runway surfaces to examine tire interactions is key to this capability,” Wollam said. “We can examine take-off, taxi and landing conditions, with the data leading to the identification of better tire wear requirements for future tire specs.”

Wollam identified a number of recent successes leveraging the testing technology.



Photo by Sandy Simison



U.S. Air Force Photo

The data from recent missionized wear tests improved tire life for one platform from approximately two to more than 24 landings per tire, with savings anticipated to exceed \$6 million per year.

As a key tool in the KC-135 Life Cycle Cost Program assessment, the technology simulated the impacts of three years of landings on a tire in less than six months. The data collected is predicted to result in nearly \$1.2 million in

cost savings per one tire across the fleet over the next three years.

During a recent T-38 mishap investigation, the tool was used to assess crosswind landing conditions. The testers were able to accurately replicate mishap conditions and results in a ground test environment. This resulted in new tactical guidance for landings that will be implemented into training simulators, thereby improving pilot safety.

“This next generation technology has helped us to fill test gaps, reduce flight test risks and reduce life cycle costs for the DoD fleet,” Wollam said. “This is just another one of our world-unique capabilities. As the premier Department of Defense landing gear ground test organization, we continue to innovate and push technology to ensure the safety and readiness of our warfighters.”

A WOUNDED EAGLE

BY STAFF SGT.
GIOVANNI SIMS

On a mild Middle Eastern morning in January, combat operations seemed standard for the two U.S. Air Force aircrew at the helm of an F-15E Strike Eagle. U.S. Air Force Maj. Peter Kaszynski, F-15E Strike Eagle pilot, and Capt. Jonathan Kipp, weapons system officer, from the 494th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron led a two-ship of F-15Es on a close air support mission. Four hours into the flight, while providing seamless coverage to the joint terminal attack controller on the ground with the support of their wingman, this particular mission turned into a harrowing situation usually only encountered in emergency procedures simulators. Thick cloud cover meant that the air-to-air refueling rendezvous had to be accomplished with flying primarily by reference to instruments rather than visually. Additionally, the datalink and air-to-air distance measuring equipment that improve situational awareness on their wingman were both inoperative. Finally, coalition ground control radar was temporarily down, meaning they were not getting updates on where other aircraft were in the area. This left them with only one way to locate their wingman – their radar.



Photo by Senior Airman Giovanni Sims



Photo by Master Sgt. Russ Scalf

While training and proficiency make air-to-air refueling routine, connecting two airplanes in the skies above a modern day war zone is anything but mundane. As Kaszynski and Kipp were completing their rendezvous with the tanker for their last top off, the aircrew observed a “MASTER CAUTION” warning, indicating failed flight control hydraulics, utility hydraulics and generator power on their right engine. They rapidly assessed the situation as an airframe mounted accessory drive, or AMAD, failure. The dual-engine fighter provides redundancy so the aircrew still had operable flight controls, utility hydraulics and electrical power; however, the AMAD failure checklist restricts use of the affected engine to idle power.

“We left it to our wingmen to continue the show of force because our main goal was to help the guys on the ground,” Kipp said. “We just took a breath, took out our checklist and ran through the safety procedures.”

The aircrew immediately executed the appropriate emergency action items. Kaszynski and Kipp pulled the engine to idle power and diverted toward the nearest appropriate airfield in the area of responsibility, using thrust from only the remaining engine.

As they continued their emergency divert, communication with their wingman was further complicated by two radio failures, forcing them to juggle the monitoring of tactical frequencies. Once they were able to direct their wingman to rejoin as they continued to the emergency divert location, Kaszynski and Kipp accomplished cleanup items on the emergency procedure checklists. While their wingman conducted a battle damage check on the exterior of the aircraft, Kaszynski and Kipp observed a left bleed air caution associated with their left engine, compounding an already serious emergency with a second malfunction that could have resulted in an in-flight fire. The aircrew rapidly accomplished the emergency checklist items for a bleed air caution, but the problem remained. Because the left bleed air caution remained illuminated even after accomplishing the checklist, the compound emergency resulted in checklist guidance to leave both the left and right engines in idle.

“Following the checklist precisely would have given us minimal thrust or another idle engine,” Kaszynski said. “We chose to maintain engine power to get us to our destination safely.”

The aircrew soon faced a third problem when the Environmental Control System, or ECS, caution light illuminated. The aircrew ran the ECS caution checklist and accurately assessed the caution to be a result of relying upon the bleed air source from the right engine, as directed by the left bleed air checklist, which was in idle as directed by the AMAD failure checklist. Amidst this challenging and complex emergency, which could have very easily

resulted in an unsalvageable situation, Kaszynski and Kipp were able to successfully divert and land their aircraft at a suitable airfield.

Upon inspection of the aircraft, maintenance discovered that the AMAD completely failed, resulting in heat damage that could have led to a fire had the aircrew not quickly diagnosed the situation and executed the checklist properly.

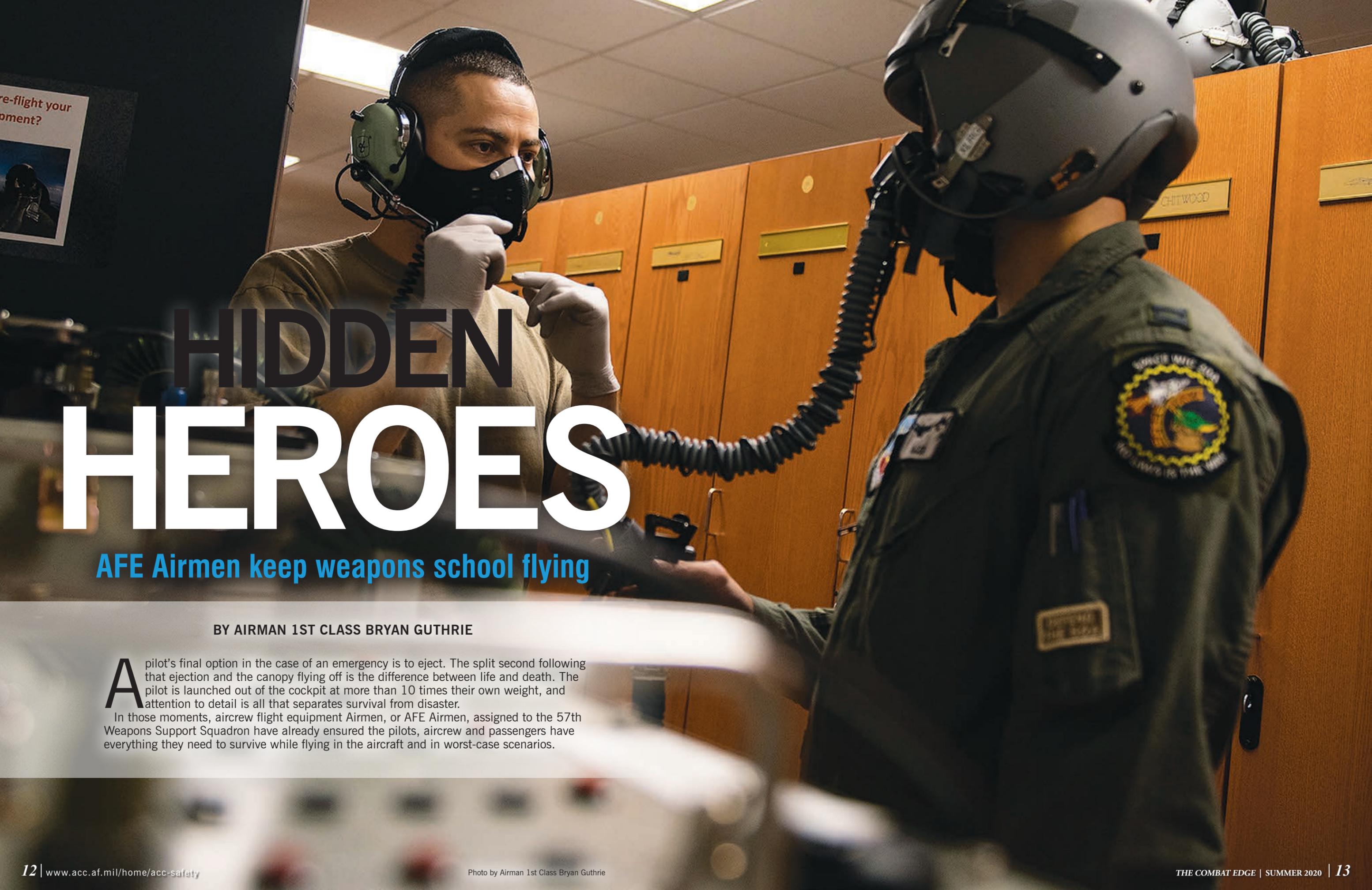
“I’m not going to lie. It was scary, but our training and the system we have in CENTCOM is really good,” said Kipp. “Our wingmen throughout the AOR took care of us while in the air and getting us operational again on the ground. It was great teamwork.”

Overall, any one of the above emergencies experienced in isolation is a major aircraft malfunction. Kaszynski and Kipp seamlessly managed compounding emergency procedures in a dynamic combat environment, resulting in the safe return of both the aircrew and aircraft.

As a testament to the U.S. military’s readiness in the theater, the F-15E was repaired and resumed flying combat sorties within the week. The operational depth provided by numerous allied airfields throughout the area of responsibility coupled with the ability for logistics and maintenance Airmen to rapidly repair a seriously damaged aircraft and return it to combat demonstrated operational flexibility. These actions are representative of the desired safety culture in the U.S. Air Force, one in which systems are integrated seamlessly to mitigate risk at every level, and a great example of the professionalism and dedication of U.S. Air Force personnel that keep Airmen safe and in the fight. ✪



Photo by Airman 1st Class Cory W. Bush



HIDDEN HEROES

AFE Airmen keep weapons school flying

BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS BRYAN GUTHRIE

A pilot's final option in the case of an emergency is to eject. The split second following that ejection and the canopy flying off is the difference between life and death. The pilot is launched out of the cockpit at more than 10 times their own weight, and attention to detail is all that separates survival from disaster.

In those moments, aircrew flight equipment Airmen, or AFE Airmen, assigned to the 57th Weapons Support Squadron have already ensured the pilots, aircrew and passengers have everything they need to survive while flying in the aircraft and in worst-case scenarios.

These AFE Airmen take on an even bigger role because they are assigned to the U.S. Air Force Weapons School to support the year-round curriculum of about 100 weapons officers and enlisted specialist graduates every six months.

"If a pilot has a problem at 30,000 feet, that's when our job matters the most," said Tech Sgt. Claudiu Golosie, 57th WPSS noncommissioned officer in charge of AFE. "Pilots and aircrew can't pull off to the side of the road and ask AAA for help. They rely on us to do our job."

Aircrew flight equipment specialists are responsible for ensuring all flight and safety equipment is in working order to make sure Airmen have the supplies necessary to complete the mission.

"My career field is important due to the simple fact that I can't have a bad day," said Staff Sgt. Derwin Ford, 57th WPSS AFE specialist. "My gear needs to work each and every time. If the equipment fails, there is a scary chance of a life being lost."

Not only are these specialists responsible for the equipment

itself, but all that encompasses aircrew flight equipment.

"AFE entails anything from routine equipment maintenance, the build-up and repair of helmets, oxygen masks, anti-gravity suits, gloves, harnesses, parachutes and night vision goggles," Ford said.

In addition to providing all the essential gear for pilots, aircrew and students stationed here, AFE Airmen also support the different tenant units of the Weapons School that come to Nellis for Weapons School Integration.

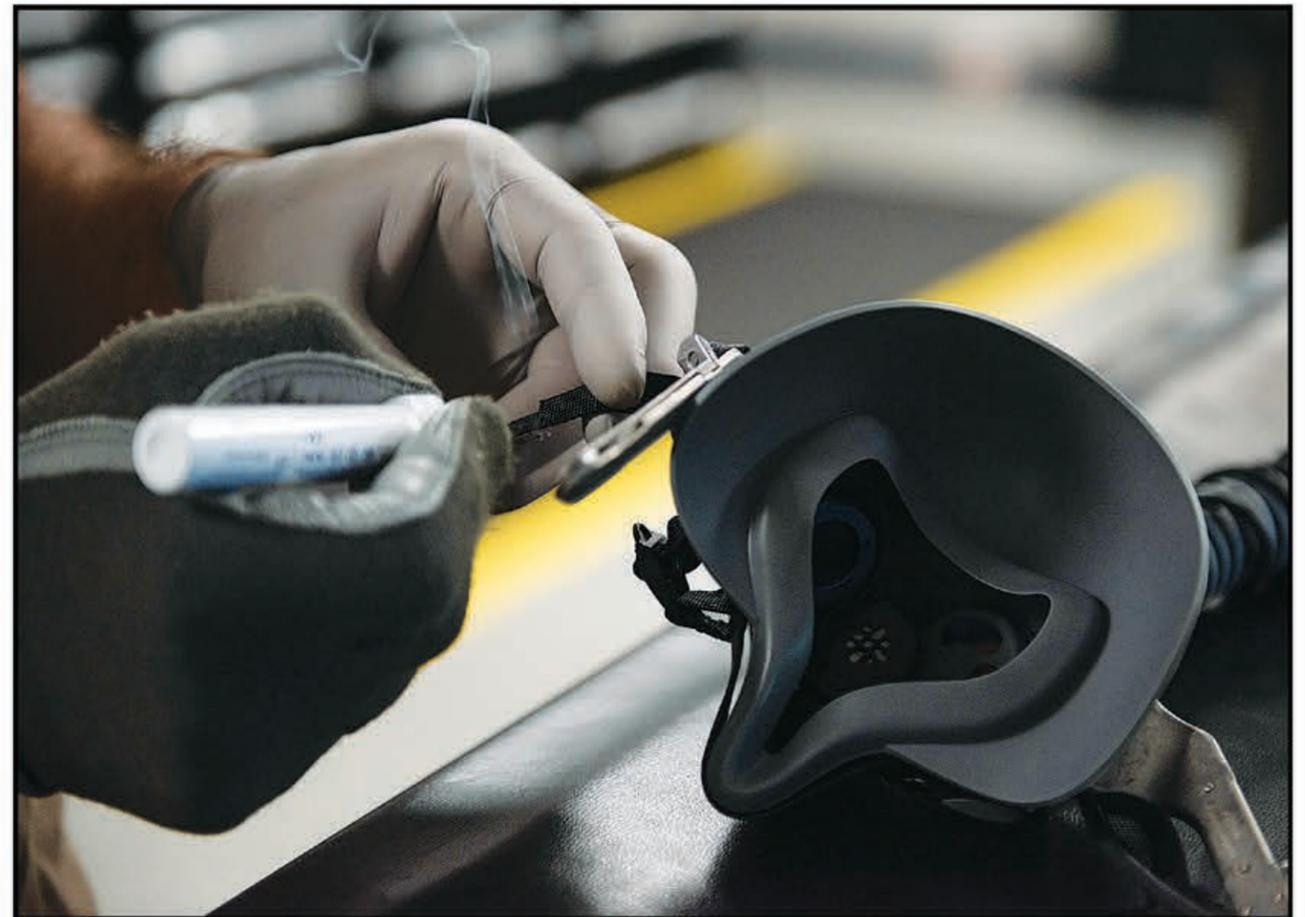




Photo by Airman 1st Class Bryan Guthrie

“Every airframe in the Air Force’s inventory is typically used in Weapons School Integration,” said Ford.

The Weapons School is made up of 19 different weapons squadrons with seven of the squadrons being tenant units stationed at different bases around the U.S.

“We have to specialize in all airframes,” Golosie said. “It’s a lot more than just the average AFE shop. It’s one of the most demanding shops I’ve been to in the past 15 years.”

During Weapons School Integration, or WSINT, which is a series of complex, large-force employment missions that serve as the capstone portion of the U.S. Air Force Weapons School, sortie volume increases significantly, producing a heavier demand for AFE Airmen expertise.

“On top of the daily workload, we have to prepare for double and sometimes triple the number of flying sorties that we are accustomed to during WSINT,” said Ford. “We cover an 18-hour flying window to support 19 different mission design series.”

AFE is one of the significant factors in guaranteeing graduates return to the field to serve as tactical experts and leaders to control and exploit air, space and cyber.

“Every Airmen here is doing their best,” said Golosie. “I’m not making the mission happen; it’s my Airmen who make the mission happen. I am very appreciative of every single one of them.”

The Weapons School is able to teach and push out the newest weapons instructors in the Air Force thanks to the AFE Airmen at the 57th WPSS. The hard work and dedication of those Airmen is represented in each and every graduate of the Weapons School. ✪



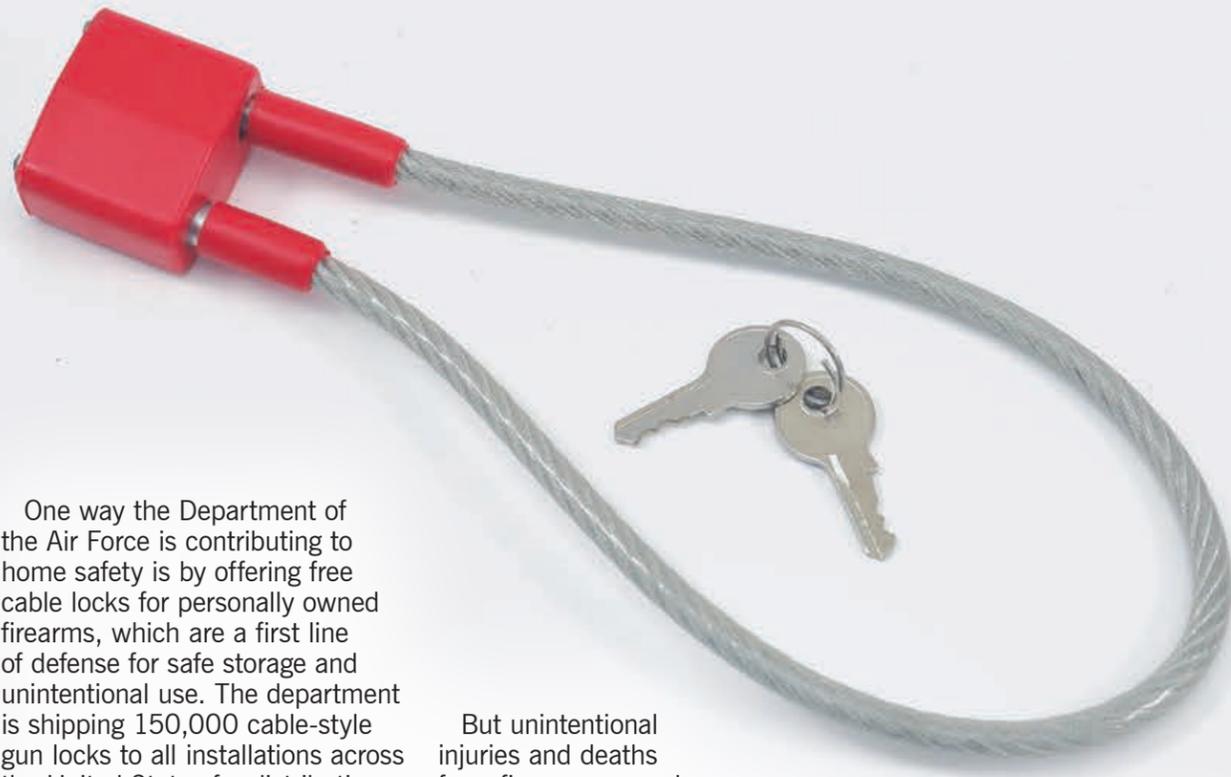
HOME SAFETY

BY LYNN KIRBY

When searching the internet for information about home safety, there are numerous government agencies and nonprofit organizations dedicated to reducing accidental injuries and deaths. Yet, according to statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 167,000 people died and more than 20 million were injured in the United States in 2018 from unintentional means or accidents, many of which occurred at home.

These unintentional deaths and accidents in most instances are preventable by implementing home safety measures such as properly storing chemicals, proper use and storage of home improvement power tools, disposing of expired prescription medicine, and proper use and storage of firearms and BB guns. Now that people are spending more time at home in efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19, home safety is paramount.

"It's important we each take a look around our homes and identify chemicals and equipment that could pose a risk of injury to ourselves and our family members," said Michael Ballard, Air Force Occupational Safety chief. "As we are all spending more time at home, there is an increased risk for accidents. Take proper steps now to secure your chemicals, equipment and firearms from unintentional use."



One way the Department of the Air Force is contributing to home safety is by offering free cable locks for personally owned firearms, which are a first line of defense for safe storage and unintentional use. The department is shipping 150,000 cable-style gun locks to all installations across the United States for distribution to members on a first-come, first-served basis.

"Our forces and families are the most vital resource we have, and it is imperative we each do our part to keep each other safe," said Brig. Gen. Claude Tudor, Air Force Integrated Resilience director. "Adding a cable lock to a firearm adds, on average, a couple minutes to a person's ability to pull the trigger once they've accessed the weapon. When that's your child, who doesn't understand the danger, or a person in distress trying to access that weapon to potentially do harm, those extra minutes are precious to prevent a tragedy."

Members can contact their first sergeant for details on local distribution of the cable-style gun locks.

Accidental firearm discharges were responsible for the deaths of 458 people in 2018, 54 of whom were under the age of 14. Additionally, unintentional firearm and BB gun discharges account for about 18,000 and 14,000 injuries, respectively, according to data from the CDC.

But unintentional injuries and deaths from firearms are only a small portion of the total number. The National Safety Council states more than 90% of all poisonings happen at home, and drug poisoning is now the top cause of unintentional death in the United States. The NSC data shows that in 2017, a total of 61,311 people died of drug overdoses – many from prescription opioid medicine, and some of those from unauthorized access to a family member's prescription.

The Health Resources and Services Administration recommends storing chemicals and prescriptions in their original containers and out of reach of children and other unauthorized persons. Medications that are expired or no longer needed can be properly disposed of through the Drug Enforcement Agency's National Take Back Day, which occurs twice a year. Individuals needing to dispose of medications during other times can visit www.dea.gov for alternative solutions.

Data shows that the impact of these accidents goes far beyond the injury or death of the individual. Those who survive or

witness these types of traumatic accidents can develop invisible wounds. An invisible wound is post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury or other cognitive, emotional or behavioral conditions associated with trauma experienced by an individual. Anyone can develop an invisible wound, and some people are more susceptible than others to developing an invisible wound. The signs and symptoms differ for every person and may not appear immediately, sometimes emerging years after a traumatic event.

"An invisible wound can develop following any traumatic event, including accidents, and are as real and as severe as physical wounds," said Col. Karen Downes, director of the Department of the Air Force Invisible Wounds Initiative. "Our first line of defense against invisible wounds is to prevent traumatic events where we have the power to do so. We must each check our homes for safety to reduce the risk of avoidable accidents." ❖

Know Your Poison Center's Number.



POISON
Help
1-800-222-1222
poison.org

**You could
save a life.**

1-800-222-1222



Over the Line

BY MASTER SGT. CHAD GRADY

If you have ever seen an installation explosives location map, you may have noticed red circles or arcs located across the installation. You may have also noticed these locations are typically near the munitions storage area, flight line and explosive ordnance disposal, but they are not restricted to those areas. Those red lines represent

explosives clear zones where certain activities are restricted, or they identify the level of protection resources require within the boundary in the event of an accidental explosion. Department of Defense explosives safety rules help protect people, mission and infrastructure using quantity distance, where any quantity of explosives requires a minimum distance to stay safe. In turn, this dictates what activities can occur in these areas.

The arcs are important when it comes to planning and conducting activities on an installation; everything from construction and day-to-day operations to recreation and social events. It is important for people to respect the lines, think of them as a fence and ask what you can and can't do before you cross the fence. Stepping over these lines – even a little – may not seem like a big deal, but the potential damage or injury from an accidental

explosion certainly is. Any time an activity is planned within these clear zones, individuals must contact the installation weapons safety manager, or WSM, for specific guidance.

Construction projects require a lot of planning so civil engineering and other concerned agencies should get the WSM involved early in the planning process to avoid delays, increased costs, or worse, building something that can't be used as intended. Also,

there can be a fine line between construction and maintenance activities, and the WSM can tell you what procedures workers will need to follow.

Different events may be authorized within a clear zone; however, different levels of safety may apply based on a laundry list of variables, so once again, ask the WSM for specifics. For example, a running path in a clear zone will have signs posted if the clear zone is in effect, but

people have to obey the signs in order to be safe. Although the WSM is responsible for being aware of installation activities, they can't be everywhere or see everything. A combined effort from organizations and people on base is critical to successful explosives safety. Be proactive, and let your WSM know what activities are being considered in these explosives clear zones. Keep your people and mission safe, and don't step over the line. 🗡️

2nd Quarter FY20 Awards



Aircrew Safety

Crew of Sentry 41:
Capt. Christopher D. Schmidt
Capt. Alberto Rios
1st Lt. Austin K. Harris
1st Lt. Robert B. Sellers
1st Lt. Christopher C. Turner
Tech. Sgt. Justin M. Hester
Staff Sgt. Rollin J. Fitton
964th Airborne Air Control Squadron,
552nd Air Control Wing
Tinker AFB, Oklahoma



Crew Chief Safety

Staff Sgt. Malcolm A. Conduff
4th EMS, 4th Fighter Wing
Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina



Explosives Safety

Staff Sgt. Verity S. Rogers
355th AMS, 355th Wing
Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona



Safety Career Professional

Staff Sgt. Zhaviyon M. Jester
355th Wing Occupational Safety
Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona



Unit Safety

55th Helicopter Maintenance Unit
655th AMS, 355th WG
Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona



Unit Safety Representative

Tech. Sgt. David A. Anderson
18th Weather Squadron,
Pope Army Air Field, North Carolina



Weapons Safety

Tech. Sgt. Brandon J. Browning
367th FS, 495th Fighter Group
Homestead ARB, Florida



Flight Line Safety

Senior Airman Spencer F. Johnson
Senior Airman Matthew A. Carpenter
Senior Airman Will A. Martin
704th AMS, 4th Fighter Wing
Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina



Flight Safety

Maj. Derek J. Raabe
436th TS, 552nd Air Control Wing
Dyess AFB, Texas
MSgt Justin D. Parsons
53rd Wing Flight Safety Division
Eglin AFB, Florida

Pilot Safety

Capt. Daniel A. Gidasi
421st FS, 388th Fighter Wing
Hill AFB, Utah



FY20 Flight As of 30 Jun 2020			
	Fatal	Aircraft Destroyed	Class A Aircraft Damage
1 AF			
9 AF			
12 AF			
25 AF			
USAFWC			
ANG (ACC-gained)			
AFRC (ACC-gained)			
AFCENT (ACC-gained)			

FY20 Occupational As of 30 Jun 2020			
	Class A Fatal	Class A Non-Fatal	Class B
AFCENT		0	0
USAFWC		0	1
9 AF		0	0
12 AF		0	0
16 AF		0	0

FY20 Weapons As of 30 Jun 2020		
	Class A	Class B
ACC	0	0

Legend

Class A - Fatality; permanent total disability; property damage \$2.5 million or more
 Class B - Permanent partial disability; property damage between \$600,000 and \$2.5 million
 Class C - Lost workday; property damage between \$60,000 and \$600,000
 (Class description effective Oct. 1, 2019)

* Fatality ** Non-rate producing *** Performing SOUTHCOM mission

Flight Notes

Unfortunately, ACC had an increase in Class A aviation mishaps for the third quarter of fiscal year 2020; one mishap was fatal, one aircraft was destroyed and five had significant damage, bringing our quarterly total to seven. Those seven mishaps bring our aviation Class A count for FY20 to a total of 10. These mishaps have been attributed to everything from parts to procedures and maintenance discipline. In a time of increasing adaptation to change, it is imperative that we stay present, maintain attention to detail and strive to make ACC mishap-free.

Occupational Notes

The third quarter of FY20 yielded two fatal mishaps, one involving a four-wheeled all-terrain vehicle and one involving a motorcycle, along with one Class B motorcycle mishap, resulting in permanent partial disability of an Airman. While investigations are ongoing, there are valuable lessons we can take from them:

Although COVID-19 may have affected many vacation plans, Airmen aren't living in a risk-free vacuum. Motorcycle riding brings the same hazards it does every year, and riders must remain vigilant and protect themselves.

Additionally, many Airmen are finding time to invest in hobbies, which can be a great way to get through difficult times. However, it's extremely important to consider associated risks. Always consider the equipment needed to safely conduct an activity (Gear), the method to safely complete the task (Plan), and the training to safely conduct the activity (Skills).

Weapons Notes

During the third quarter, ACC experienced four Class E mishaps. Two mishaps involved munitions loading ops on the flight line – a dropped 2.75-inch rocket and a damaged AGM-65 lens. Another incident involved a small-arms discharge, but luckily caused no personnel injury. The final mishap involved an impulse cartridge damaged during removal from the aircraft. With higher temperatures and in most cases, increased flying ops, attention to detail and taking the time to ensure safe munitions handling can decrease this pattern. Complacency endangers you and those around you. Thanks for all you do in support of the ACC Weapons Safety community.

Symbols for Mishap Aircraft



Be there for those who need you

KEEP SUMMER FUN BY KEEPING KIDS SAFE



Supervise

Never take your eyes off children in and around water.

Use Barriers

Fences, self-closing/self-latching gates and secured doors with alarms can prevent young children from wandering into the pool.

Avoid Entrapment

Suction from a pool's drain is so powerful it can trap an adult underwater. Check for broken or missing drain covers.

Learn to Swim

To stay safe in the water, all family members should learn to swim well.

Know How to Respond

Get training in basic water rescue skills, first aid and CPR. Have rescue equipment and a phone by the pool.

Partners in Drowning Prevention



U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
 CPSC hotline: 800-638-2772 and 800-638-8270 (TTY)



OVER the
Edge
MAGAZINE



**SAFE
CYCLING**



MAKE A SEVERE WEATHER PLAN

Find out how at ready.gov/make-a-plan



4 | NOT FUNNY
by Senior Master Sgt. Bruce Strong
175 WG/SE, Martin State Airport, MD

6 | SAFE CYCLING
by Senior Master Sgt. Lucas Shay
ACC/SEG, JB Langley-Eustis, VA

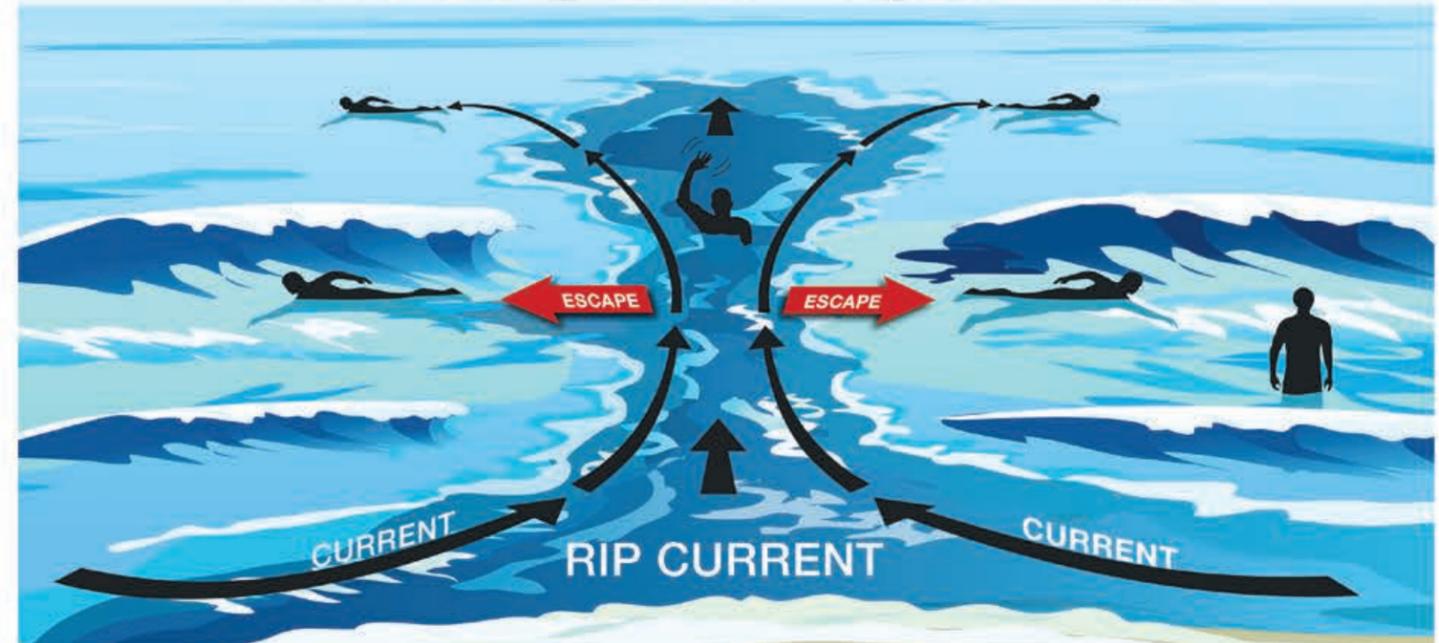
8 | THOUGHT I WAS PREPARED
by Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Wright
7 MUNS, Dyess AFB, TX

10 | MOTORCYCLE TRAINING CURRENCY
by Tech. Sgt. Devin J. Bell
432 WG/SE, Creech AFB, NV

Cover photo by Eugene Onischenko/Shutterstock.com

RIP CURRENTS

Know your options



Rip currents are powerful currents of water moving away from shore. They can sweep even the strongest swimmer away from shore. If at all possible, swim near a lifeguard.

IF CAUGHT IN A RIP CURRENT

- ◆ Relax, rip currents don't pull you under.
- ◆ Don't swim against the current.
- ◆ Swim out of the current, then to shore.
- ◆ If you can't escape, float or tread water.
- ◆ If you need help, yell or wave for assistance.

SAFETY

- ◆ Know how to swim.
- ◆ Never swim alone.
- ◆ If in doubt, don't go out.
- ◆ Swim near a lifeguard.

More information about rip currents can be found at weather.gov/safety/ripcurrent/usla.org



NOT FUNNY

Even Pros Have Close Calls



BY SENIOR MASTER SGT. BRUCE STRONG

Not all close calls or mishaps start with “Here, hold my beer,” and not all of them occur because of poor risk management practices or principles. Close calls or mishaps can, believe it or not, involve ... a safety professional.

My close call occurred in summer 2008 during a visit from my cousin and his family. I remember it like it was yesterday ... The weather was gorgeous, the sun was shining, the temperature was in the mid 80s, the winds were calm, and the water on the bay was smooth. A perfect day for a boat ride.

At the time, I was 33. I was raised on the water. I had my first boat when I was 11, and I’ve had my Maryland Basic Boaters License since I was 11. The boat we were using that day was equipped with all of the Coast Guard required gear. The maintenance was up to date, and I had even done a once-over of the boat the day prior. I was also very familiar with the waters we would be traversing. As you can see, my deliberate risk management principles were, I think, pretty solid.

On the boat were my cousin, his wife, their little girl, my wife, son and me. We put out from our community marina and were off. We were enjoying the ride and were about to put back in when we saw a cargo container ship making its way down the bay from the Port of Baltimore. I asked my cousin’s daughter if she’d like to see the ship up close. She excitedly said yes, so off we went.

The ladies were sitting on the bow of the boat, and the guys were in the main area. I was at the helm, and we were heading toward the ship. We were making good time due to the calm bay, and we were having a great time.

We approached from the ship’s starboard bow, or right front. As we moved toward the container ship, I realized how fast the ship was going and that it was carrying a lot of containers. This meant that the ship sat lower in the water. So a heavy ship that’s sitting low in the water, paired with the speed it was moving at meant it was creating a huge wake.

If you’re paying attention, you may start to realize that this is where my real-time risk management principles were lacking. We were passing the ship and about to turn and head home when I saw it – one of the largest waves I’d ever seen in all my time on the bay. I was looking at a wall of water at least 10 feet tall coming at us. It was at this point I knew I’d messed up.

I throttled back as to not launch us into the air. The waves are normally spaced far enough apart that at low speeds, you just roll over them with no problem. This time the waves were running close together, and as we crested the first wave, I was looking at the crest of the next wave right behind it! We started down the back of the first wave as the next wave washed over us. I was standing at the helm and had to close my eyes because we passed right through the wave.

Once the shock wore off, I did a quick count. To my relief, everyone was still on board. I then realized that I had about 18 inches of water in the cabin of the boat. I was freaking out, but I

managed to keep a level head. I quickly throttled up so all the water moved to the rear of the boat toward the drains. I also turned on the bilge pump to empty the bilge just in case any of the water made into the hull of the boat. Once I realized we were going to be OK, I started talking to everyone to make sure they were OK. Everyone on the boat – with the exception of me – burst out laughing. Although I was thankful that no one was hurt – or worse – had fallen out of the boat, I was not in a laughing mood; I thought I’d just sunk my boat.

We made it back to the marina without any additional issues. Let’s just say that memories were made that day. For some they were great, and for others – me – they weren’t.

To this day, my wife thinks it’s the funniest thing she’s ever experienced, and to this day, I still don’t think it’s funny at all. 🐼



SAFE CYCLING

A Guide for Biking on (and off) Base

BY SENIOR MASTER SGT. LUCAS SHAY

Since cross-training into the Air Force's occupational safety career field in 2013, I have routinely observed a potentially fatal hazard: I rarely see people on wheels – bikes, scooters, skateboards, etc. – wearing helmets. Now, unless they are all donning the \$600 Swedish “invisible helmet” airbag-style collar, they are in violation of, Air Force Instruction 91-207, Safety, local operating instructions, base housing rules, and most importantly, they are putting themselves at serious risk.

We don't live in Copenhagen, where they have designated bike lanes, city centers closed to cars, laws that provide real protection to cyclists, and decades of investment in bike infrastructure. Throughout Air Combat Command, we live in areas with sparse bike lanes, roads that favor cars, and drivers who don't expect or anticipate having to share the road with cyclists.

Even if we did live in a bicyclist's utopia, I would still advocate for wearing bicycle helmets – especially for children. Children simply lack bike-handling skills and judgment. My wife's brother was riding his bike without a helmet at the age of 9. He thought it would be a good idea to go as fast as he could down a hill. He skidded on some dirt, went over the handlebars and hit his head on a curb. He had seizures resulting from the accident until he was 18, when he had part of his brain removed at Cleveland Clinic. Even those children who aren't daredevils could be injured due to someone else's lack of judgment. While we were living in Germany, a little girl on her bicycle was hit by a truck and killed. I am particularly cognizant of this lesson during the summer and permanent-change-of-station season, which brings a lot of new people and moving trucks into our neighborhoods.

Simple Bicycle Safety Guidelines

- Wear a helmet!
- Children under the age of 10 should ride in a controlled environment until they develop the skills to control the bike; driveways, parking lots, and multi-use paths are great. Older kids with more control are typically capable of safely riding in quiet neighborhoods and on low-traffic streets.
- The safest place for bikes to operate is on the road, in the SAME direction as traffic. Children under 12 can ride on sidewalks, but they must know the risks:
- Always yield to pedestrians, watch for cars coming in and out of driveways, stop at corners of sidewalks, and always enter the street at the corner – never between parked cars. This is especially important in off-base neighborhoods where cars line the streets.
- It's also a great idea to ride with your kids and model these practices.
- Finally, if you are living in base housing, helmets are not an option; they are a requirement.

While a helmet can help prevent fatality and serious injury, such as traumatic brain injury, a helmet alone is not enough. You wouldn't give your children a bulletproof vest and have them run around in a shooting range. In the same sense, you can't give them a helmet and send them out into the street. Helmets coupled with bike safety guidelines are the best way to protect your child.

As the old saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Let's take the necessary steps to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe. For more information on bicycle safety, contact your wing safety office. 🚲



Thought I Was Prepared

BY TECH. SGT. JEREMY WRIGHT

Ever since I was a kid, I've had an interest in various aspects of preparedness and survival. I never wanted to be inside playing video games or watching television; I wanted to be out running through the woods, exploring it all. I always carried a pocket knife of some sort – in case I needed to aid myself or those with me. As I've gotten older, I've carried that mentality with me. I always have a flashlight and at least one knife on me, and although that might sound weird, I cannot count the number of times having those tools paid off for me or someone else.

But sometimes, no matter how much you think you know, or how many tools you have at your disposal, that just isn't enough.

My fiancé and I decided to take a trip to a national park and few state parks in Texas for some camping and hiking. Our first destination was Guadalupe National Park in West Texas, where we planned to hike to the top of Texas on Guadalupe Peak. This is an 8.5-mile round trip to the tallest peak in Texas where you gain 3,000 feet in elevation as you trek

to the top. We planned to camp in the backcountry that night a mile from the peak in a primitive camp site. To plan for this trip, we gathered everything we would need to make it to the top and back – food, tents, sleeping bags, cook systems, clothing, first aid kits and water. We knew it was going to be a strenuous hike, and we needed to condition our bodies.

To prepare for the hike, we decided to make a few trips out to Lake Abilene and hit the trails there. Since these trips were close to home, our gear was minimal. Water, first aid kit and snacks for a few hours around the lake. Doing a few of these trips prior to heading out for the tallest peak in Texas, we felt confident with our undertaking.

As we pulled up to the trail head and slung our packs on our back, the excitement was overflowing. Being that our campsite was in the backcountry, we were the only ones around for miles. There were no water sources, so we had to carry water for both days. That water is your life source, and it is not light: two gallons of water per person for the trip up and down. Our packs weighed about 45 pounds,

and we had a four-plus hour hike ahead of us. Not to mention we got a late start and began our hike at 2 p.m.

The hike started nicely – spectacular views, fresh air ... unplugged and away from it all. A thunderstorm skirted us and made me wonder if we really were ready for this, but the storm passed and we trekked along. The monotonous switchbacks – the sharp turns in the opposite direction going up to the peak – were the absolute worst. Constantly stepping up and slowly making our way up the mountain, each step began to get harder and harder with those packs getting heavier by the minute.

After taking an hour longer than anticipated to reach the campsite, we finally made it to camp. The sun was setting, and darkness was creeping in. We had never set up the tent before, and doing it the first time in the dark while exhausted wasn't fun. We finally got the tent set up, ate, and we were ready for sleep. That night was colder than we planned, so both of us had a cold night's sleep on hard ground. We woke the next morning, made it to the peak, and made our way back to the car. We both were

so tired, hungry and thirsty. Although we did make it to the top and back, we had moments where we weren't so sure, and we definitely learned some lessons.

Our packs were too heavy. Yes, we needed water, but we didn't need everything we brought. We brought way too much, and it weighed us down. Lighter materials are available for clothing, backpacks, tents and sleeping bags. The items we did bring should've been multipurpose to reduce the number of items we carried. Practicing putting up the tent prior to leaving would have saved time and frustration. The biggest factor that would have helped us more was training. We thought we were good to go after a few passes around a small lake, but we didn't do it with our packs on, using the full weight we would be carrying.

No matter how much gear you have, not knowing how to use it makes the gear useless. If you have too much gear, it weighs you down and also makes it useless. If you train for a trip around the lake, a trip up a mountain could be more than you're capable of accomplishing. 🏔️



Deciphering the Great Mystery of Motorcycle Training Currency

BY TECH. SGT. DEVIN J. BELL

We have all taken note of the change in the season – the sun is setting later, the temperature is allowing for more time outdoors, and with that comes the resurgence of the motorcycle season. For the Air Force motorcycle rider, this is when we should be checking the serviceability of our motorcycles and making sure our training is up to par.

Many riders are familiar with the requirements listed in Air Force Instruction 91-207, *The US Air Force Traffic Safety Program*, but for the aspiring riders, it may not be so clear. In essence, in addition to your initial briefing with your unit commander, you also require practical training at defined intervals. The types of training are as follows:

Initial: This is your very first training with motorcycles and the curriculum is geared toward the individual that has little to no knowledge of riding motorcycles. The instructors normally provide bikes for this training. This is required training for all riders with the exception of those that have a state license with a motorcycle endorsement.

Intermediate: This training is completed with the rider's personal bike and should be accomplished 60 days after initial training, but no later than one year. There is a split at this training level in regard to the type of bike you ride. If you ride a bike that is considered a sport bike, such as a GSXR, Hyabusa, Ninja, etc., you are mandated to take the Advanced Rider Course or equivalent. Riders of cruisers, adventure bikes and other models must take any form of approved intermediate level training.

Refresher: This training is the simplest to remember. Five years after the completion of your intermediate training, you must accomplish another intermediate training course that is commensurate with the style of bike you are riding. Simple!

Briefings: As stated above, the motorcycle safety representative, or MSR, is required to brief all on-road operators within 30 days of arrival or upon identification from the rider. If the MSR is unfamiliar with motorcycles, they may use Attachments 2 of AFI 91-207 to guide the conversation. In addition, riders must receive an annual preseason briefing. This briefing is normally provided by the unit commander or MSR but can be provided in other forums.

During the last year, the 432d Wing safety office has noticed many units that have overdue training for their riders. It is incumbent upon Air Force motorcycle riders to follow training guidance that is set forth. Additionally, it is the MSR's responsibility to track their unit's rider training records and coordinate with members to remain current to the best of their ability.

Let's say your training is current, you've received the necessary briefings, and you've got the green light to ride. Have you checked your bike to make sure it's road-ready? Perhaps you purchased a bike to ride this season or maybe you've been storing your bike all winter. Either way, you need to check it over before getting your knees in the breeze. That's where **T-CLOCS** comes in:

Tires, wheels and brakes

Check out where the rubber meets the road. Check the wear bar on your tires, tire pressure, visually check the wheel for defects, and thickness of your brake pads.

Controls

Your handlebars should be straight, clutch and brake hand levers should be tightly fastened, and not indicative of any cable binding.

Lights and electrics

A great deal of risk imposed on riders is visibility. Makes sure ALL of your lights are operating in full serviceable condition.

Oil and fluids

Consider the last time the oil was changed. The start of the season is the best time to get a fresh tank of oil flowing through the engine to keep it running smoothly. Old fuel that was not mixed with a stabilizer can also cause a bike to sputter and misfire. Drain out old fuel and get a fresh tank.

Chassis

With half the wheels, comes twice the risk. A fracture in a motorcycle frame due to stress cracks or rust is a critical equipment failure. Be sure to keep a look out for any kind of structural failure.

Stands

Last but not least, check the stand that keeps your bike off the ground when you park it. Nothing is more embarrassing, and dangerous, than being the person that dumps over the bike when coming in to park. You could hurt more than just your pride.

Our goal is always zero motorcycle mishaps, and you can strive to achieve that by taking a vested interest in your personal safety and getting the required training and inspecting your bike before riding. As always, please contact your MSR for questions regarding motorcycle safety or call your wing safety office.

Remember: Rubber side down and never ride faster than your guardian angel can fly. 🦋

Fool's Gear

Cool Gear

HEAD. Considered precious by sensible people, never exposed by the pros. When fully in view, allows immediate identification of unsafe person not using his or hers. Hand out rider education info on sight.

HELMET. Most important piece of protective gear a rider can use. Protects against head injury, windblast, cold, and flying objects. Full-face helmet recommended.

EYES, EARS AND FACE. Exposure leads to irritated eyes, noise-deafening windblast, and distracting impacts from bugs and road debris.

FACESHIELD. "Saves face." Any rider who's been hit in the face by stones, insects, or debris can tell you the benefits.

HANDS. *Au naturel* (not for long). Known to lock into curled position when exposed to cold; not genetically evolved to withstand abrasion.

GLOVES. Keep hands comfortable, functional, and protected. There's an infinite variety for all seasons.

BARE LIMBS. A phenomenon seen only in riders who think it's other people who crash. Subject to ridicule in riding circles.

JACKET AND PANTS. Long sleeves and sturdy trousers resist abrasion and protect against sunburn, dehydration, or hypothermia. Some riders wear padded gear with "body armor" for more protection. Light colors in the daytime and reflectivity at night make it easier for car drivers to see you.

FLIP FLOPS. Terminology for what sandals, toes and feet do upon contact with road surfaces, shift lever, brake pedal, or footrests.

BOOTS. Provide protection against foot and ankle injuries and give you a good grip on footrests or road surfaces.

BOTTOM LINE. Fool's gear identifies an unaware rider. Learn how to avoid embarrassment, ridicule and injury, while gaining valuable skills and knowledge by completing an MSF RiderCourseSM.

BOTTOM LINE. Dress for the ride as well as for the crash. Proper riding gear allows you to enjoy the ride in comfort and helps minimize injury.

800.446.9227 or www.msf-usa.org
or contact:

ACC Occupational Safety
(757) 764-8840 | acc.seg.af.mil



The more you know, the better it gets.