

THE SENTINEL



OFFICIAL SAFETY NEWSLETTER OF CIVIL AIR PATROL

Are You Qualified?

The Antarctic Wing was having its annual mid-winter SAREX. Capt Icy was overseeing the sign-in roster when brand new 2Lt Wannabe arrived. Capt Icy said, "Where would you like to train today?" Lt Wannabe said, "I would like to be your Mission Pilot." When asked for a copy of his CAPF 5 or 91 he stated, "Oh, I have never been in an airplane, but it can't be any harder than flying my computer simulator at home."

This may seem like an oversimplification; however, this very thing is happening every day in CAP with Safety Officers. Commanders are designating unqualified CAP members as their squadron, group or wing safety officers, the number two position of importance in their unit, that have no CAP safety training. These "safety officers" are overseeing your units, SAREXs, cadet encampments, etc., and the results are shocking.

The Safety Officer and the Medical Officer should be working closely during every operation. Out of 194 Bodily Injuries (BI) in 2007, 8 were senior members. This leaves 186 cadets with BIs. The leading cause of BIs for cadets (86) was heat related, i.e., dehydration, nausea, headaches, vomiting and fainting. When the first victim comes in it should be noted, but when the second

arrives, now it is time for the Safety and Medical Officers to quickly find the cause.

Commanders, don't put your cadets and seniors at risk by appointing the last person in the door as the Safety Officer. The Safety Officer reports directly to you and is the most important member of your staff. Here are some of the duties of wing safety officers:

- Assist and advise the commander in developing the overall accident prevention program.
- Place emphasis on Operational Risk Management (ORM). Make risk management a part of every activity.
- Perform safety surveys both annually and at other times when hazards or hazardous operations so warrant.
- Direct accident investigations and prepare mishap reports.
- Plan safety training programs and arrange guest speakers to acquaint all personnel with their responsibility for applying safe practices.
- Conduct staff visits to subordinate units to assist them in identifying and solving safety problems.
- Maintain a roster of subordinate unit safety officers.
- Review and analyze findings of accident reports to determine trends and methods for preventing future accidents.



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- Develop training guides and arrange for publicity of safety programs through such media as bulletin boards, newsletters, websites, press releases, etc.
- Establish a safety hazard reporting program.
- Perform safety reporting as required by the region director of safety.
- Ensure unit compliance with

CAPR 62-1 and CAPR 62-2.

Ensuring and spreading a safety culture requires complete dedication and never-ending attention.

Safety officers must be supported fully by their commanders for the safety program to be effective.

Lyle E. Letteer, Col, CAP
National Safety Officer

Patience is a (safety) Virtue

Many accident investigations uncover that human factors involving the decision making process, resulting from the pilot's lack of patience, were a contributing cause. Whether due to lateness, an overloaded schedule or "get home-itis", rushing can lead to poor decision making and/or poor judgment.

There may be many factors that lead to impatience. The purpose of this article is to help recognize a sampling of the traits so you can work through and control your impatience. Loss of patience during important procedural actions can lead to undisciplined operations, miscalculations, or simply losing sight of the danger signals leading to an accident.

One place to be aware of impatience is the preflight. You are rushed to fly a mission, or darkness is approaching, or you are running late. You rush the checklist and miss some items. As you prepare to take off, something happens. Perhaps the engine quits because you didn't drain the fuel sumps, you get no airspeed indication because the pitot tube cover is still installed, or you can't communicate with the tower because you have the wrong frequency or the wrong radio selected. Maybe the plane does not lift off the runway when it should because you didn't clear the wings of ice or snow.

Perhaps in flight you inadvertently enter instrument conditions because you didn't take time to get or update your weather briefing; or maybe while cruising you can't find the proper charts because in your haste you left them behind. How many "get home-itis" pilots have we searched for who did not take on more fuel and found themselves short due to unexpected winds or route deviations.

Impatience can grow as the flight progresses. You become anxious to reach your destination and forget to put the gear down, or set the correct altimeter setting or approach frequencies. You're in a rush to get home for supper and you push the aircraft into the hangar and hit something.

You can also be involved in a mishap resulting from someone else's impatience, like your unit commander, the IC or ground team leader. As commanders it is very important to realize what your impatience is doing to those working around you and taking instructions from you. You could lead them into a disaster.

Individuals responsible for command decisions are responsible to recognize their own impatience and put it in check. It is important as a leader to control one's emotions and ego so that you can effectively manage the task at hand. This is especially important during actual

or practice ES missions, where the stress level elevates and our emotions can take control of the disciplines needed for safe operations.

Losing control of our patience can and will lead to unsafe situations with disastrous results. It is important that each of us recognize our own tolerance level for impatience and take control of

ourselves. Those of us around an individual showing signs of impatience need to be assertive and politely challenge that individual. When it comes to safety we all have the authority to stop, think and control our patience.

Larry Mattiello, Lt Col, CAP
Assistant National Safety Officer

Summary of CAPFs 78 Received at NHQ CAP for December 2007

Aircraft

Right wing tip struck building while taxiing.

Low oil pressure during check ride; flight promptly terminated and aircraft taxied to local maintenance shop.

Vehicle

Nothing listed.

Bodily Injury

SM fell in the parking lot; small fracture of an arm bone.

Cadet injured eye while acting as a crash victim; taken to a local ER.

SM on confidence course fell to the ground; landed on his right hip and could not move his right leg.

Operation CAPSafe

As you all know, CAP Safety is always in the forefront of my mind and I would like to see that same dedication from each of you. A short six-slide PowerPoint presentation of Operation CAPSafe can be viewed on the NHQ Safety web page at www.cap.gov/safety at "Presentations."

Operation CAPSafe is a very simple program that has only one request, that everyone send in a safety suggestion once every month. By doing that, it will have you thinking of your situational awareness, i.e., Safety at least once a month. There is an ulterior motive to this. I am hoping that this will eventually create a Safety mindset that will carry

you throughout your day and into the other areas of your life.

I cannot make CAP a safer environment without your assistance. You may be the one whose idea saves other CAP members from injury or death, or saves CAP assets from being damaged or destroyed.

Please send your suggestions to CAPSafe@cap.gov. I look forward to reading your suggestions. What you think really matters to me.

Don't Just Be Safe, Be CAPSafe!

Lyle E. Letteer, Col, CAP
National Safety Officer