Air Education and Training Command's

TORCH

May/June 2006

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Back cover photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Allen

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Gen. William R. Looney III
Commander

Col. Frank A. Palumbo Jr.
Director of Safety

Timothy P. Barela
Editor
timothy.barela@randolph.af.mil

Sammie W. King
Senior Designer
sammie.king@randolph.af.mil

David M. Stack
Designer
david.stack@randolph.af.mil

Subscriptions and Contributions:
To request subscriptions or address changes, or to submit articles, photographs or artwork, e-mail information to torch.magazine@randolph.af.mil. Or you can write to: Editor, **TORCH**, HQ AETC/SEM, 244 F Street East, Suite 1, Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4328. You also can fax to: (210) 652-6982 or DSN: 487-6982. For customer service, call (210) 652-5818 or DSN 487-5818. Include your name, full unit address, phone number, fax number and e-mail address on all submissions. Unit distribution is based on a ratio of one copy per seven persons assigned. For personal subscriptions, write to New Orders, Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954.

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FROM THE
COMMANDER

By Gen. **William R. Looney III**
AETC Commander

'Zeroing' in on Goal

The high-risk season is upon us. The 101 Critical Days of Summer runs from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day (May 26 through Sept. 4). During this same period in 2005, the Air Force lost 29 Airmen to senseless mishaps. Three of the 29 losses were in Air Education and Training Command, with the first during the Memorial Day weekend. Even one loss is unacceptable. That's why AETC's 2006 summer safety campaign is entitled "Operation Safe Summer – Zero Fatalities."

With summer fast approaching, many Airmen are planning vacations that will expose them to long distance driving risks. Others will take advantage of good weather to go to the beaches and lakes, and motorcyclists are eager to hit the open roads. The point is risks go up exponentially this time of year. Regardless of your plans, remember this: Almost 90 percent of Air Force fatal accidents occur off duty, with the overwhelming majority involving private motor vehicles.

COMMANDERS: The success we have enjoyed in AETC has been in large part because our leaders at all levels have stayed engaged and have driven the safety message home. You bear the responsibility for the welfare of our greatest asset – our Airmen. While it is easy to know what risk management is all about on duty, we continue to have problems enforcing the same standards for our Airmen once they go out the gate. We are Airmen 24/7, and we must apply the same rules of risk management and personal responsibility around the clock.

"Risks go up exponentially this time of year. Regardless of your plans, remember this: Almost 90 percent of Air Force fatal accidents occur off duty, with the overwhelming majority involving private motor vehicles."

SUPERVISORS: Like commanders you are responsible for the well being of the Airmen you supervise. You are in the best position to listen to and influence their safe behavior on and off duty.

AIRMEN: Be good wingmen. Take care of one another. Step in when your wingman needs help. Don't be afraid to take the keys when your wingman has had too much to drink or is about to do something irresponsible. Be a friend!

In the upcoming weeks and throughout the summer, I ask each of you to emphasize summer safety, with particular focus on personal risk management and the wingman concept.

I am confident we can survive this summer with zero fatalities. It is very much within our control. Good luck, and enjoy the summer!

A DILUTED MESSAGE

Your rabies article ("A Rabies Menace," March/April 2006 issue, page 12) was informative, but I'm afraid it may leave an incorrect impression in folks' minds who may not read the article in detail.

Your "Table of Contents" entry says to "Arm yourself with the 'signs' of this sickness." Why? Once the signs appear, it's too late. Rabies is fatal. This is mentioned very briefly in the last column of the article. But then the entire half-page on 15 lists signs and symptoms. This implies that someone could wait to see if any of the signs appear after getting bitten before they worry about it.

The last lines at the bottom of the column say to go to the emergency room, but it doesn't say "or you may die." Including the signs and symptoms significantly diluted the message.

Col. Kelli Ballengee
Randolph Air Force Base, Texas

LETTERS TO TORCH

Have a comment or complaint? Letters to Torch may be sent via e-mail to: torch.magazine@randolph.af.mil. Or mail to Torch Editor, HQ AETC/SEM, 244 F Street East, Suite 1, Randolph AFB TX, 78150-4328, or fax to DSN 487-6982 or commercially to (210) 652-6982. For customer service, call DSN 487-5818, or commercially at (210) 652-5818. Please include your name, address and phone number.

CELL PHONE RESTRICTION NOT ENOUGH

The efforts of the Air Force to restrict cell phone usage to hands free devices while driving on any base is to be applauded ("Air Force Implements New Cell Phone Restriction," March/April 2006 issue, page 4). But there are still safety loopholes.

While hands free devices free up both hands of the driver to operate a vehicle, this does not take care of the human factor. When talking on a phone, you are concentrating on what the other person is saying. The human factor kicks in when the caller tells a joke and the driver laughs. Or perhaps the caller talks about an upcoming event that the driver is part of, and the driver concentrates on the details of the event instead of the road … maybe even tries to jot down notes.

The problem is the person on the other end of the phone is not in the car with the driver. He doesn't have to concentrate on the driving. When you are not in the car with the driver, you don't see what is happening on the road. You don't get the same cues as, say, a passenger in the car. A passenger usually knows when to leave the driver alone so the driver can concentrate on driving; a person on the other end of the phone doesn't share this advantage. A caller is oblivious to the traffic conditions, so he/she engages in a conversation with the driver as if both are at home sitting in a chair. This distraction makes it tougher to avoid an accident. It's a dangerous situation.

The bottom line is drivers need to be able to fully concentrate on their driving only. Allowing hands free cell phone usage is not the answer. Passing a law that outlaws any cell phone usage is!

Ed Love
Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla.

WELCOME TO FANTASY ISLAND

Reducing mishaps by 75 percent by 2008 ("Haunting Images," March/April 2006 issue, page 9)? Welcome to Fantasy Island! It's a worthwhile goal, but it will never happen. Actually, conspiracy theorists might say you'll come close to reaching the goal … but not the conventional way. Just keep reducing our resources through manpower and budget cuts. Pretty soon the numbers will be low enough to approach this outlandish goal. Less people, less equipment and less capability equals less mishaps. He shoots; he scores!

L.T. Pack
Via e-mail

BURSTING YOUR BUBBLE

I hate to "burst your bubble," so to speak, but I take issue with one of the statements in the article "A New Weapon? Caffeine Gum Helps Troops Stay Alert."

I found the article interesting, but I felt Dr. Tom Balkin was a little off base on one point. When asked about possible safety hazards associated with misuse of the caffeine gum, Balkin said the bad taste of the gum probably would prevent its abuse. He went on to say, "The stuff doesn't taste that good. It doesn't taste as good as regular gum, so people are not going to be chewing it for the taste. I think most people will use it for what it's intended, and that's to help with alertness."

I found this statement to be somewhat naïve. Since when does something such as taste or smell keep people – especially younger folks – from abusing products? Or maybe the good doctor hasn't heard of those who sniff glue or paint thinner to get high. And how many kids hate the taste of alcohol but drink it anyway to get drunk? I don't have statistics, but you can imagine the number has to be extremely high.

Anyway, I hope troops use the gum for its intended purpose, but to rule out abuse because of the taste is nearly laughable.

Stan Davis
Via e-mail

TORCH MAGAZINE·CALENDAR·E-ZINE·POSTERS

QUICKLY ENGAGED

Thank you very much for our (Company E, 5th Infantry) Torch subscription. We just received our first issue, and we were quickly engaged. The design, layout, photography and writing were great. I also like your calendar. I still have my 2005 Torch Calendar, and I'm loath to throw it away. Again, the design and photography are terrific, and the sidebar statistics thought provoking. Congratulations on the quality of your publications!

Eugene S. Canevari
Fort Montgomery, Santa Rosa, Calif.

INCLUDE JEWISH HOLIDAYS

The Torch calendar is lovely – a great, clean design. The calendar is quite comprehensive with most holidays and days of note. However, I missed the listing of the Jewish holidays, which would have been helpful. Hopefully, they can be included in the 2007 version.

Wendy Rulnick Hinzman
Via e-mail

THEN AND NOW

Thank you for printing such a fabulous magazine. I read it while I was active duty. Now that I'm retired, I still read it … when I can find it.

Bob White
Randolph Air Force Base, Texas

THE RIGHT TOOL

Torch E-zine is an excellent tool. I use your Web site all the time because it always has such interesting stories to help beef up my unit safety briefings. Thanks and keep up the good work!

Staff Sgt. Chris Ball
Via e-mail

DECORATION TIPS

Thank you very much for taking the time to mail us your safety poster series. They will be a great addition to our aerospace medicine walls.

Staff Sgt. Jen Sherman
Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.

Your posters will decorate my classroom walls where I teach F-15 electrical and environmental systems. Thanks!

Tech. Sgt. Jon Ryals
Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla.

BREAKTHROUGH RESEARCH ON REAL-WORLD DRIVER BEHAVIOR

BLACKSBURG, Va. — Driver inattention is the leading factor in most crashes and near-crashes, according to a landmark research report released April 20 by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute.

Nearly 80 percent of crashes and 65 percent of near-crashes involved some form of driver inattention within three seconds before the event. Primary causes of driver inattention are distracting activities, such as cell phone use and drowsiness.

"This important research illustrates the potentially dire consequences that can occur while driving distracted or drowsy," said Jacqueline Glassman, acting administrator of NHTSA. "It's crucial that drivers always be alert when on the road."

The 100-Car Naturalistic Driving Study tracked the behavior of the drivers of 100 vehicles equipped with video and sensor devices for more than one year. During that time, the vehicles were driven nearly 2,000,000 miles, yielding 42,300 hours of data. The 241 drivers of the vehicles were involved in 82 crashes, 761 near crashes and 8,295 critical incidents.

"The huge database developed through this breakthrough study is enormously valuable in helping us to understand — and prevent — motor vehicle crashes," said Dr. Tom Dingus, director of VTTI.

In addition, a follow-on analysis to the study also has been released. Focused on the types of driver inattention and their associated risk, key findings include:

- Drowsiness is a significant problem that increases a driver's risk of a crash or near-crash by at least a factor of four. But drowsy driving may be significantly under-reported in police crash investigations.
- The most common distraction for drivers is the use of cell phones. However, the number of crashes and near-crashes attributable to dialing is nearly identical to the number associated with talking or listening. Dialing is more dangerous but occurs less often than talking or listening.
- Reaching for a moving object increased the risk of a crash or near-crash by 9 times; looking at an external object by 3.7 times; reading by 3 times; applying makeup by 3 times; dialing a hand-held device (typically a cell phone) by almost 3 times; and talking or listening on a hand-held device by 1.3 times.
- Drivers who engage frequently in distracting activities are more likely to be involved in an inattention-related crash or near-crash. However, drivers are often unable to predict when it is safe to look away from the road to multi-task because the situation can change abruptly leaving the driver no time to react even when looking away from the forward roadway for only a brief time.

The 100-car study and its follow-on analysis were co-sponsored by NHTSA, the Virginia Transportation Research Council (the research division of the Virginia Department of Transportation) and Virginia Tech.

The background and results of both studies are available on NHTSA's Web site under "Research and Development" at *http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/departments/nrd-13/newDriverDistraction.html*.

— Courtesy of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

LEADERS PLAY SIGNIFICANT ROLES IN MOTORCYCLE SAFETY

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio (AFPN) — It seems like every time you see a safety article, the focus is on the rider. However, commanders and supervisors have significant responsibilities for motorcycle safety and accident prevention.

I often find that commanders and supervisors didn't know the injured party was a rider or simply assumed the rider knew the rules.

Too many Air Force people die on motorcycles: 15 died in fiscal 2005 and five more have died since the start of fiscal 2006. The common factors in these fatalities are judgment and speed. Males ages 18 to 26 are most at risk of an accident.

I recently investigated an accident that resulted in injuries to the rider. Many knew the person was a rider and assumed he'd been trained. Unfortunately, he hadn't been trained and didn't understand his responsibilities. He said he believed he only needed training to ride on base.

Commanders and supervisors can and must contribute to motorcycle accident prevention. Communication and proper training prevents unnecessary accidents and mitigates the severity of those that do occur.

Mentoring is a powerful tool available to commanders, supervisors and riders as you strive to prevent motorcycle accidents. Consider establishing a motorcycle safety focal point in your unit. Identify motorcycle riders during in-processing. Implement a process to identify current and potential riders in your unit. Talk to all riders about their responsibilities for training and use of personal protective equipment. Recommend that riders, regardless of experience level, seek and accomplish refresher training.

Don't assume your people are riding safely and are in compliance with Air Force regulations. Identify your riders and point them toward safer riding.

— Tech. Sgt. James Womack
88th Air Base Wing Safety

FIRE BURNS 100 ACRES, SINGES ALTUS AFB

ALTUS AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. (AFPN) — Altus Air Force Base and local firefighters worked together to battle a grass fire that consumed about 100 acres here March 12.

Local officials say dry conditions and high winds resulted in several grass fires in the area, including one at the southeast corner of the base.

The base suffered minimal fire damage to grass and brush at its perimeter, and no injuries were reported.

Five firefighting units from neighboring towns, along with Air Force firefighters, were able to subdue the flames at the perimeter of Altus' south entrance gate, according to Col. Keith Moncrief, the 97th Mission Support Group commander.

As a precaution, base officials evacuated more than 300 dormitory and base housing residents to the base physical fitness center.

After the brunt of the blaze was subdued, the Altus and local authorities' fire departments continued their efforts throughout the night.

"We continued to put down extra water on hot spots to prevent any more flare ups," Moncrief said.

"There was great teamwork and cooperation between civilians and military," the colonel said. "We appreciate the open lines of communication with the community."

— Airman 1st Class Aldric Borders
97th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs

Courtesy photo

A fire burns outside the south entrance gate *of Altus Air Force Base, Okla., March 12. The fire eventually made its way on base. No injuries were reported.*

SURVIVING A DEPLOYMENT

by Staff Sgt. Tammie Moore

To ensure Airmen aren't in danger of slipping and injuring themselves, *Tech. Sgt. Bob Brock surveys water buildup in a housing area at Balad AB, Iraq. He is the noncommissioned officer in charge of ground safety with the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing.*

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq (AFPN) — Keeping Airmen here safe is not a task taken lightly by the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing's ground safety office.

"Our job is to prevent the loss of life or damage to government equipment," said Tech. Sgt. Clyde Lathon, 332nd AEW ground safety manager. "We are the Air Force equivalent to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration."

To accomplish these goals, the two-person ground safety shop spends a portion of every day watching the daily operations of Airmen here.

"We are always out and about, watching ground operations on the base," said Tech. Sgt. Bob Brock, 332nd AEW noncommissioned officer in charge of ground safety. "We spend a lot of time monitoring operations on the fight line, looking at the aircraft ground operations. We also watch contracting operations to make sure they don't endanger Air Force people. We conduct mishap investigations. In addition, if someone is hurt at a Balad forward operations base, we will travel there to interview them if they are not medically evacuated here."

All this and more is done by the ground safety Airmen, who coordinate their programs down to the lowest levels with the assistance of unit safety representatives.

"Normally at a wing this size we would have more people to do this job," Brock said. "Because there are only two of us, we rely heavily on unit safety representatives."

"Unit safety representatives are a vital part of the program," Lathon said. "They serve as an extra set of eyes and ears for us. We have been blessed with very good unit safety representatives this rotation; they helped bring the number of safety incidents down."

During the most recent air and space expeditionary force rotation, wing safety efforts reduced safety mishaps more than 50 percent compared to the previous rotation.

"I believe this is because we have been out of the office talking to people," Lathon said. "We have been around the base asking people what they need to help make their work environment safer."

Despite the improved safety numbers seen during this rotation, Lathon and Brock asked those who are leaving not to become complacent and those who were arriving not to forget safety practices just because they are deployed.

"Most people who get hurt while deployed do so at the beginning or the end of a rotation," Brock said. "People get into the mindset that while deployed the rules don't apply and start taking shortcuts they would not normally take. Nine times out of 10, when someone gets hurt, it was because they took a shortcut."

— Staff Sgt. Tammie Moore
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

TALES OF THE STRANGE

BADGES? WE DON'T NEED NO STINKIN' BADGES!

An Airman only had 15 minutes to get to work. In his haste, he thought he forgot his security badge. Since time was of the essence, he didn't feel he had enough time to pull over and look for the badge. Instead, he started rifling through his pockets as he drove … at 65 mph!

Inevitably, he took his eyes off the road. In doing so, he drifted to the left of the four-lane highway, which was divided by a median. The vehicle drifted off the left side of the road onto the median. When the now fully attentive Airman realized he had driven off the road, he tried to steer the vehicle back onto the highway but overcorrected. The vehicle started to fishtail.

The Airman lost control, departed the right side of the road and struck a small grassy mound at nearly 50 mph. This caused the vehicle to roll two full revolutions and finally come to rest on its wheels.

In the end, the Airman had crashed his vehicle, but only suffered a bruised shoulder. So he paid a relatively small price to learn an important lesson: When driving a vehicle at 65 mph, you don't need no stinkin' badges … you do need your attention focused on the road ahead.

WOOD 'SMOKED' BARBECUE

An Airman asked a co-worker with some tree cutting experience if he would cut down a 50-foot oak tree at the Airman's private residence. The co-worker agreed.

While the co-worker proceeded to cut the tree down, the Airman fired up the grill for some tasty outdoor cooking. The Airman had positioned himself and the portable grill 30 to 40 feet from the tree-cutting operation and out of line of the intended fall position.

When the tree finally fell, it did start to fall in the intended direction; however, it hit a nearby maple tree on the way down and deflected right into the path of the Airman and his barbecue. The co-worker yelled in vain for the Airman to get out of the way. But, alas, it was too late.

As the Airman tried to run, the tree struck him down. An ambulance transported him to a local emergency room, where the fortunate Airman was only diagnosed with lacerations to his forehead and a contusion to the left elbow.

Hopefully, the conk on the noggin has helped improve the Airman's math skills for future endeavors. Because he didn't need a calculator to tell him that setting up shop 30 to 40 feet from a tree-cutting operation in which the tree is 50 feet tall is probably not going to cut the mustard as a safe distance.

WIFE PUMMELS HUSBAND?

An Airman recently experienced "woman power" in a more literal sense. As he and his wife playfully wrestled on the ground, the Airman dislocated his left shoulder. Perhaps in the end, he learned two valuable lessons:

1. Horseplay can lead to injury.
2. Never admit you got "pummeled" by your wife.

PUTTING KIDS IN THEIR PLACE

STUDY SHOWS DRAMATIC REDUCTION IN FATALITIES AS PARENTS BUCKLE CHILDREN IN BACK SEAT

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A recent study shows that a dramatic shift in behavior by parents to place children in a back seat of vehicles, coupled with increased use of child safety seats and safety belts, resulted in an 18 percent reduction in overall fatalities among children ages 0-12. Front seat fatalities declined by 46 percent. The study of child fatality trends appears in the National Safety Council's Journal of Safety Research (Volume 36, Number 4).

"This is the clearest evidence we've seen that the national public health campaigns begun in 1996 to get children properly restrained in a back seat are working, and paying off," said Phil Haseltine, Executive Director of the Air Bag & Seat Belt Safety Campaign of the National Safety Council. "More children are surviving in motor vehicle crashes because of these efforts."

The study examined fatality trends between 1992 and 2003 using the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System data, police-reported crash data, the NHTSA National Occupant Protection Use Surveys, and earlier NHTSA child fatality studies.

In response to increases in child fatalities from traffic crashes, including deaths associated with passenger air bags, the automobile and insurance industries, government and safety advocates undertook major campaigns to move children ages 12 and under from the front seat, and to increase child safety seat and safety belt use. The study's authors credit these collective public health actions for the reduction in front seat deaths, and the resulting decline in fatalities overall.

"This study is indeed good news," said NHTSA Administrator Jeffrey Runge. "But we must never let our guard down, especially in educating new parents. We need to constantly remind them that kids under 12 always should be properly restrained in the back seat on every trip."

According to the study, the immediacy and magnitude of the post-1996 reductions in front-seat deaths among younger children — particularly infants — provided the strongest evidence of change associated with programs implemented in 1996.

The analysis showed the shift to be more immediate among younger children, although older children also experienced a significant decline in total deaths after 1998.

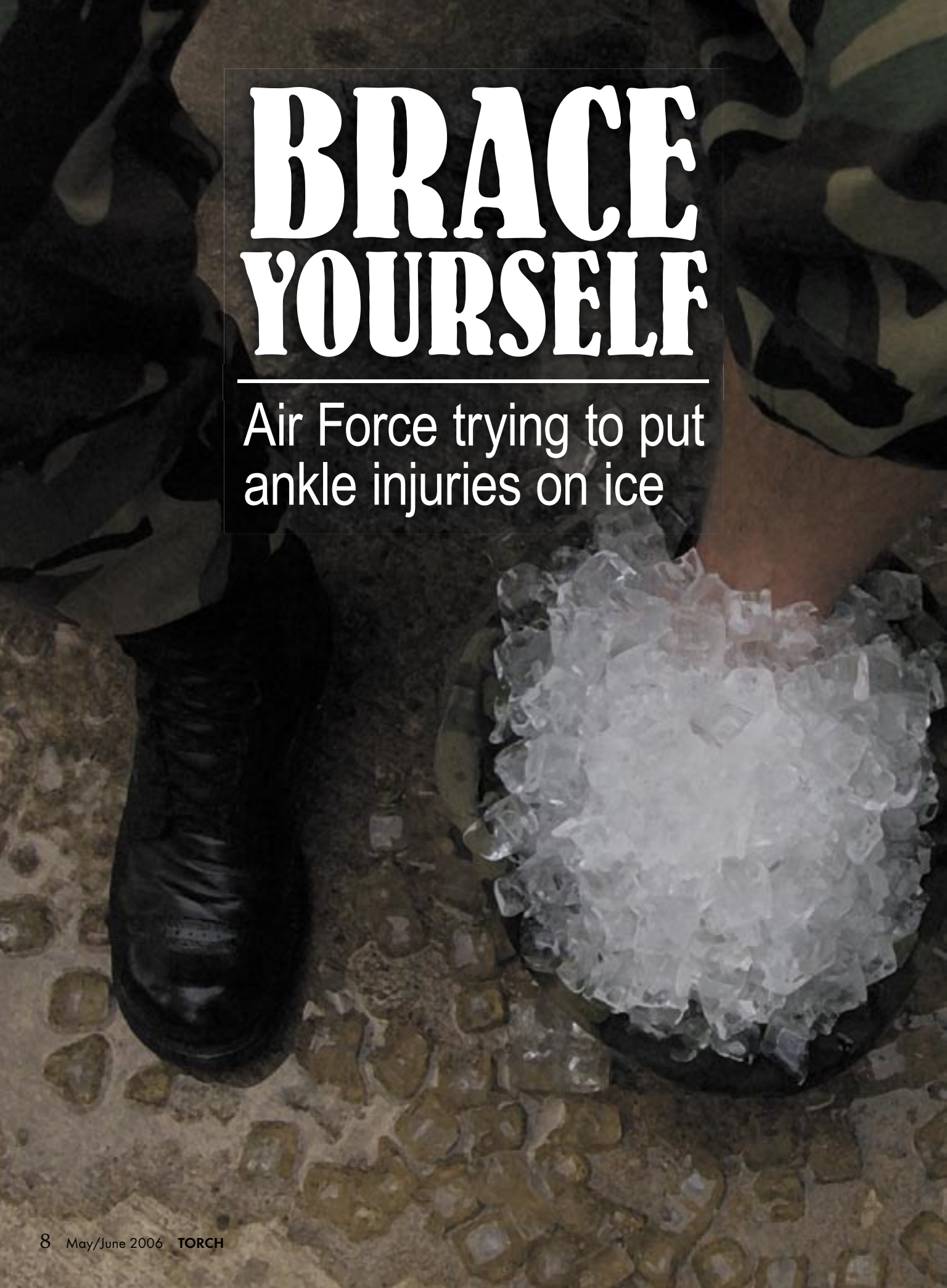
"Getting children to ride in a back seat of cars has demonstrated one of the most remarkably successful changes in societal behavior in recent decades, rivaling changes in attitudes toward smoking and drunk driving," said National Transportation Safety Board Acting Chairman Mark Rosenker. "In this case, we are directly saving the lives of hundreds of our children every year."

One of the principal efforts launched in 1996 to get children properly restrained in a rear seat was the Air Bag & Seat Belt Safety Campaign, funded by a private coalition of auto and insurance companies and occupant restraint manufacturers, in partnership with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the National Transportation Safety Board and scores of safety organizations, including law enforcement agencies at all levels. The campaign implemented a massive public education program to make parents aware of the dangers of placing children in the front seats of vehicles equipped with passenger air bags, and the importance of properly buckling up children on every ride.

Other factors that likely contributed to the fatality reductions include reduced force air bags and increased safety belt use because of the enactment of primary enforcement belt use laws and high-visibility enforcement of these laws.

Study co-author, Dr. James L. Nichols said, "These findings show that the public and private sector resources expended since 1996 have prevented hundreds of deaths among young children." The study, entitled "The Impact of a Nationwide Effort to Reduce Air Bag-Related Deaths among Children: An Examination of Fatality Trends among Younger and Older Age Groups," was also authored by Donna Glassbrenner, PhD and Richard P. Compton, PhD, of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

"The message of these findings for parents is simple: Old air bag, new air bag, no air bag — children are safer in back," Haseltine said.



BRACE YOURSELF

Air Force trying to put ankle injuries on ice

Ankle injuries *from sports and recreational activities are one of the leading causes of lost work days across the Air Force.*

Story and photo by **Tim Barela**

A lot of people speculated that with new, more demanding fitness standards, which began in January 2004, the Air Force would see a rise in sports and fitness injuries as the service strived to "get in shape." According to the Air Force's top safety chief, that theory has been confirmed, albeit ever so slightly.

by Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Allen

"This wasn't an experiment to see if the ankle braces work; we know they work. Pro teams and big-time college teams already use them and have proven they work."

— Maj. Gen. Lee McFann
Air Force chief of safety

"We've seen a very slight increase in sports and recreation injuries (since the implementation of the Air Force's new fitness standards)," said Maj. Gen. Lee McFann, the Air Force's chief of safety, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C., and the commander, Air Force Safety Center, Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M. "The more people get out and become active – the more they do – unfortunately, a byproduct of that is more injuries. However, the long-term physical fitness benefits override any slight increases in injuries. People who are more fit have better health and do better at their jobs across the board."

In Air Education and Training Command, sports and recreational injuries went up 26 percent during the first year of the new fitness program (fiscal 2004). In fiscal 2005, they actually decreased 7 percent – perhaps a signal that people are gradually achieving better fitness.

That doesn't mean, however, that the Air Force is sitting on its laurels when it comes to even a "slight" increase in injuries. According to the general, safety officials are not only identifying the top culprits as far as high-risk activities and types of injuries, but they are looking for solutions to counter them as well. They even are testing some experimental programs – at least one of them right here in AETC.

"We ran a test program at Lackland (Air Force Base, Texas) using ankle braces at the base gym," McFann said. "This wasn't an experiment to see if the braces work; we know they work. Pro teams and big-time college teams already use them and have proven they work. They issue them to their athletes, their athletes put them on, and they decrease ankle injuries."

Since the experts already know the ankle braces are effective, the study instead focused on an operational concept of how to use the safety devices, the general said.

"Do you give them to everybody when they come to the gym? Do you give them to just the basketball players or the racquetball players, since those are known high-risk sports?" McFann said. "After we get some decent data, the solution might be to require people to wear ankle braces when they play sports with the highest possibility of ankle sprains. The one that comes to mind first is basketball, which produces the highest number of ankle sprains, which, in turn, leads to the most missed work days by our Airmen."

The general said an obvious solution would be to simply restrict Airmen from playing basketball. But he insisted that the Air Force isn't looking to take such extreme measures.

"We want to reduce injuries, but we don't want a society of Air Force people who don't play basketball because it's too risky – give me a break," McFann said. "But if we can get basketball players to wear ankle braces like they do in college and pro sports, we believe we'll see reduced injuries, as well as a decrease in lost duty days."

by Tim Barela

Ankle braces might be the answer *to reducing ankle injuries, which officials say are negatively impacting the work force.*

Playing basketball *tops the sports and recreational activities that most lead to ankle sprains and injuries.*

Lackland ran its test program November through March, during the fall/winter intramural basketball season, said Dave Etrheim, 37th Training Wing ground safety manager.

"Our wing commander signed a letter making the wear of the ankle braces mandatory for all those participating in the intramural basketball season," Etrheim said. "We talked with the coaches and fitness center staff explaining the purpose of the program. Our staff would do spot inspections during games. If we identified a player not wearing the braces, the game would be stopped and he or she would be removed until the braces were in place."

For the season, there were 12 teams with nearly 10 players on each who participated in the study. The results were mixed. While there were no ankle injuries reported during the entire four-month intramural basketball season, not many players gave a rousing endorsement of the ankle braces. As a matter of fact, most thought the braces were uncomfortable and negatively impacted their performance on the court.

While survey respondents overwhelming said they agreed that athletes needed safety equipment in recreational sports and that they understood how the ankle braces help prevent injury, they were just as adamant that the braces provided didn't seem to be the answer. Most of those surveyed agreed that the braces negatively affected their speed, flexibility, confidence and overall game performance.

However, a majority of those surveyed weren't necessarily saying the ankle braces were a bad idea. As a matter of fact, at least half of the respondents had suffered an ankle injury in the past that had restricted their activities anywhere from one day to five months, so they were motivated to test new safety equipment. Most simply asked officials to find them more comfortable braces.

The Air Force Safety Center has gathered all the surveys and is recording the safety data and the customer comments. In the meantime, the fitness center at Lackland is still making the ankle braces available for checkout on an optional basis.

"We'll continue to try some different things, and see what works best," McFann said. "At the very least, we should make the braces available at base fitness centers."

Tips for Preventing Sports Injuries

Ankle braces aren't the only way you can prevent sports injuries. Whether you've never had a sports injury and you're trying to keep it that way or you've had an injury and don't want another, the following tips can help.

- Don't be a "weekend warrior," packing a week's worth of activity into a day or two. Try to maintain a moderate level of activity throughout the week.
- Learn to do your sport right. Using proper form can reduce your risk of "overuse" injuries such as tendonitis and stress fractures.
- Remember safety gear. Depending on the sport, this may mean knee or wrist pads or a helmet (or an ankle brace!).
- Accept your body's limits. You may not be able to perform at the same level you did 10 or 20 years ago. Modify activities as necessary. Don't overdo it.
- Increase your exercise level gradually.
- Strive for a total body workout of cardiovascular, strength training and flexibility exercises. Cross-training reduces injury while promoting total fitness.
- Avoid bending knees past 90 degrees when doing half knee bends.
- Avoid twisting knees by keeping feet as flat as possible during stretches.
- When jumping, land with your knees bent.
- Do warm-up exercises not just before vigorous activities like running, but also before less vigorous ones such as golf.
- Do warm-up stretches before activities. Stretch the Achilles tendon, hamstring and quadriceps areas, and hold the positions. Don't bounce.
- Cool down following vigorous sports. For example, after a race, walk or walk/jog for five minutes so your pulse comes down gradually.
- Wear properly fitting shoes that provide shock absorption and stability.
- Use the softest exercise surface available, and avoid running on hard surfaces like asphalt and concrete. Run on flat surfaces. Running uphill may increase the stress on the Achilles tendon and the leg itself.

— National Institutes of Health, Department of Health & Human Services

by Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Allen

Dea
Tire

Airman recalls fatal crash that cost

By Senior Airman **Amaani Lyle**
Photo by Tech. Sgt. **Jeffrey Allen**

d
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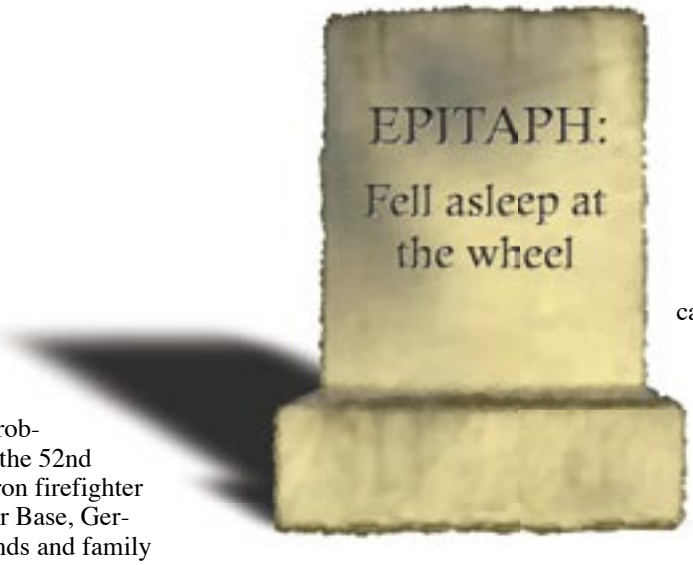
him two friends

Black sneakers. Boston baseball cap. Black shirt. Boots. "It's so clear, I can still remember what they were wearing," recalls Airman 1st Class Skyler Burts, of his friends and fellow firemen who perished in a single-vehicle automobile accident in August 2005.



The memories, much like the scar tissue etched across Burts' forehead, are probably permanent. Still, the 52nd Civil Engineer Squadron firefighter from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, cited faith, friends and family for helping him cope with the life-changing ordeal.

Spangdahlem's central location and idyllic country drives to several nearby countries make road trips common among Airmen of all ranks there.

So when 52nd CES firefighters Senior Airman Timothy Alford and Airman 1st Class Erik Salazar opted to take a drive to a popular nightclub near the German-Netherlands border, Burts obliged to join them.

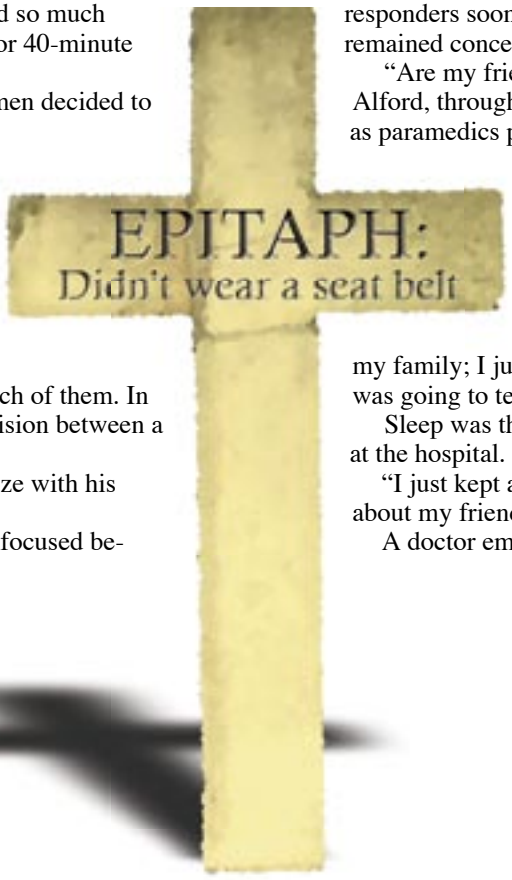
He even offered his car. The decision would alter the course of three lives.

Burts said he and his two friends stayed at the club dancing and socializing until nearly 6 a.m. the next morning. Alford was known to frequent clubs and stay out late without ever having a drop of alcohol. This particular night was no exception.

"Tim just always knew how to have a good time — completely sober," Burts said. "He had so much energy that he'd usually only need a 30- or 40-minute power nap, and he was cool."

Winding down from the club, the Airmen decided to listen to music on the drive back to base.

"We had the CD player going because I had just bought some new music I wanted Tim to hear," Burts said. "We also had it playing loud enough that I figured it would keep everyone awake."



Complete Chaos

But the lack of sleep soon overtook each of them. In an instant, a "power nap" became the division between a normal life and complete chaos.

Burts said he awoke from a short snooze with his eyes blurry.

He wiped them, thinking they were unfocused because he'd slept for a little while.

Autobahn lights illuminated a jarring amount of blood that covered his hand as he pulled it away from his head and eye. He turned to Alford, who lay motionless, slumped over the steering wheel.

"What the hell did you just hit man," Burts asked woozily.

No response.

Burts' first thought was that the vehicle had struck some wildlife on the road. He immediately slapped a non-responsive Alford to wake him.

His shock and terror intensified when he looked in the back seat of the sedan, only to find it empty.

"The back door was completely off the hinges, and Erik was nowhere to be found," he said. "Right then and there, I started flipping out," the Airman said. "I didn't care what might have been wrong with me — I just ran into the middle of the Autobahn to wave down anyone who could call for help."

Help soon arrived, and as blood continued to run into his eye, Burts directed emergency response units to Alford, and also managed to spot Salazar clinging to life about 50 feet away from the scene.

Adrenaline surged through his body as he explained to paramedics what he remembered of the accident. However, responders soon realized Burts had a concussion, and they remained concerned that he might pass out.

"Are my friends OK?" Burts repeatedly asked as Alford, through crushed ribs, emitted a choke and gurgle as paramedics pumped his chest.

They're Gone

"On the way to the hospital, one of the paramedics kept asking me about my family to keep me awake," Burts said. "I knew she didn't want me to fall asleep, but I wasn't really thinking about my family; I just thought about Tim and Erik and what I was going to tell their families."

Sleep was the last thing on his mind when he arrived at the hospital.

"I just kept asking, 'What about my friends, what about my friends?'"

A doctor emerged with a response.

by Senior Airman Amaani Lyle

Still bearing the scars *from a single-vehicle accident that took the lives of two friends, Airman 1st Class Skyler Burts rests on a banister at his dormitory at Spangdahlem, Air Base, Germany. He had to have hand and arm surgery following the accident.*

"Your friends are gone," he said.

"Gone where? To another hospital?" Burts asked, still not grasping the horrifying finality of the words.

"No. Just gone ... forever," the doctor replied.

The doctor went on to explain that Alford died at the scene, and Salazar died shortly upon arrival to the hospital.

Reality set in when a security policeman brought him a bag containing his deceased friends' blood-soaked cell phones and money.

A subsequent investigation revealed that Alford's fatigue after a long night of clubbing was the sole cause of the mishap.

Master Sgt. James Douglas, 52nd Fighter Wing ground safety manager, explained the vehicle, traveling at a high rate of speed, continued straight as the Autobahn lane curved right. The vehicle slid about 25 feet along the top of a dipped guardrail before slamming into a light pole. The car then spun 180 degrees and returned to the guardrail before crashing back onto the road.

Salazar, sans seat belt, was thrown from the car, and the steering wheel fatally crushed Alford's ribcage. Most of the car was destroyed except for the passenger seat where Burts sat.

Road to Recovery

"I thank God for every day that I'm here," Burts said. "Some people wondered if I could kill myself after something like this, but I could never kill myself. My life is too precious. Tomorrow's a better day."

During the next couple of weeks and his subsequent transfer to the Bitburg Annex Hospital, Burts said he found himself showered with the friendship, caring and concern of his fellow wing members.

"I really have to thank the fire department, the St. Vith and Bitburg Annex hospital staffs, and so many others who helped me get through this to keep me sane without pitying me," Burts said.

He said wing leaders also reached out to show their support.

"Chief Kelly told me that God kept me here for a reason — to realize my potential," Burts said of Chief Master Sgt. Jimmy Kelly, 52nd FW command chief.

Other close friends also availed themselves to help Burts cope.

"I reassured him that this wasn't his fault, and I would be there to help any way I could," said Tech. Sgt. Roderick Milbrooks, 52nd CES station captain. "I'm a big brother for him to lean on, until he can stand alone and deal with the horrific accident that took two wonderful people too soon."

Making such a difference in someone's life is apparently all in a day's work for firefighters.

"His extended firefighter family was there for him, but we only did what any other firefighter would have done," said Master Sgt. James Wenger, 52nd CES assistant fire chief of operations.

Perhaps the best guidance of all came from Salazar's mother, Gabriela Rojas.

"His mother called and told me she's heartbroken that her son is gone, but she can still find happiness in her life," Burts said. "She said, 'Remember that you're still alive — live your life.'"

Burts said he plans to do just that.

"All I need is to embrace my life, my wife and my son," he said. "I don't need nothin' else."

Airman Lyle is with the 52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany. (AFPN)

Body Count Summary

- *Three friends spend all night at a club.*
- *Two drink; the designated driver does not.*
- *However, none of them get any sleep.*
- *On the drive home at 6 a.m., two wear seat belts, one doesn't.*
- *Intoxicated and fatigued, the two passengers fall asleep.*
- *Soon afterward, a sober, but equally fatigued driver dozes off.*
- *Driving at a high rate of speed on the German Autobahn, the vehicle slams into a light pole.*
- *The Airman without a seat belt is ejected from the vehicle and dies at the hospital.*
- *The driver is crushed against the steering wheel and dies on scene.*
- *The one lucky survivor suffers permanent scarring, both physically and emotionally.*
- *Two friends are lost forever.*

Digital illustration by David Stack

In the Heart of a Combat Zone

Extraordinary care packed in ordinary tents

By Army Sgt. **Dallas Walker**

In a sea of tents and trailers on Balad Air Base in northern Iraq, shrapnel is being surgically removed from a limb, medics are racing to stop someone from bleeding to death and another life is being saved from wounds inflicted on the battlefield.

It is that sea of tents which houses the Air Force theater hospital, where servicemembers and civilians get the most advanced medical care possible in a combat zone.

Run by the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group, the hospital offers trauma and specialized medical care for people throughout Iraq and serves as the theater aeromedical evacuation support hub.

"If you arrive here alive, you have about a 96 percent chance of leaving here alive," said Col. (Dr.) Elisha Powell, 332nd EMDG commander.

The availability of specialized care at the hospital is like nothing seen in a combat zone in the past, making it easier to save lives, Powell said.

"What makes this hospital so successful in Iraq is that we push technology so far forward," he said. "We've never pushed specialties this far onto the battlefield before."

The hospital boasts a staff of surgeons who specialize in procedures on the brain, heart, bones and soft tissue. It has six operating rooms and nearly everything a standard hospital has, from a pharmacy and X-ray lab to a nutritionist – all in the heart of a combat zone.

First Line Care

"Medics and what they do, basic and advanced first aid, is where life saving begins," Powell said.

The survival of a combat casualty depends largely on the first echelon of medical care. The most important aspect is stopping the bleeding.

"The number one cause of preventable death in Iraq is exsanguination – bleeding out," Powell said. "If Soldiers don't stop the bleeding and use the tourniquets put in their first aid kit, then (the casualty) probably won't make it to us."

Dust Off – Arriving at the Hospital

The sound of medevac pilots calling in their status echoes as Army and Air Force medics in the patient administration office of the hospital prepare for their landing – the crucial first minutes of a casualty's arrival at the hospital. Most of the casualties treated at the hospital are brought in on a medevac flight.

"I give all the credit in the world to the flight medics," said Staff Sgt. Jalkennen Joseph, an emergency room medic. "I've never seen anyone perform their job above and beyond like they do. They do things you only see in movies or read about in books. They do it on a daily basis and they do it well."

The medevac crews try to get casualties to the hospital within the "golden hour" – the first 60 minutes after injury.

"Getting patients here quickly, keeping them warm and stopping the bleeding are key to life saving in trauma," Powell said.

Within minutes of landing on the hospital helipad, the medevac crew and hospital staff take the casualty to the emergency room.

by Army Sgt. Dallas Walker

After an improvised explosive device attack, *Colonels (Dr.) Elisha Powell and (Dr.) Jack Ingari operate on a wounded Soldier from the 101st Airborne Division. Both are orthopedic surgeons with the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group at the Air Force theater hospital at Balad AB, Iraq, which treats American and Iraqi forces, as well as Iraqi citizens.*

The ER

"This is (the casualty's) first stop in the hospital," Joseph said. "Our job is to stabilize the patient. We check the ABCs. We check their airway, we check to see if they are bleeding and we check their circulation."

Doctors assess the casualty in the emergency room to determine the appropriate course of action, Joseph said.

Next Stop ...

The hospital staff prides themselves on rapid care – stabilizing patients and getting them out of the hospital.

"If a patient requires surgery to survive, it will be done here," Joseph said. "Most of the patients we care for don't even know they were here. Most of them are severely injured and unconscious. We stabilize them and send them to (Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in) Germany as quickly as possible."

Patients stay at the theater hospital the shortest amount of time possible, Powell said. The goal is to perform whatever measures are necessary to save their lives and send them to a facility geared toward long-term care.

The Patient

The hospital provides care and treatment to anyone wounded in combat. More U.S. Army Soldiers are treated than anyone else, and coalition forces make up 60 percent of the patient load.

The remaining 40 percent of patients seen at the hospital are Iraqi citizens, terrorists and detainees injured in combat.

"We give (Iraqis) the same medical care as anyone else," Powell said. "We're not military police, we're not (military intelligence), we are medics. Detainees get the same healthcare as the Soldiers, as the Iraqi Police, as the Iraqi Army. Our job is to provide the highest standard of medical care."

The Team

The hospital has a mostly Air Force staff, with support teams from the U.S. Army and Navy as well as the Australian army, navy and air force. There are more than 250 medics assigned to the theater hospital.

"We have all really clicked working together," Joseph said. "We run this place smoothly, doing the same mission. We live by the hospital motto 'One team. One mission.'"

A majority of the Airmen assigned to the theater hospital, including Powell and Joseph, come from Wilford Hall Medical Center in San Antonio – one of only two military hospitals that treat civilian trauma patients.

"People here are selfless and go out and do their job," Joseph said. "Most of the people we treat got injured serving their country."

In the sea of tents, another life is being saved by a hard-working medic or an experienced surgeon with the best combat medical care available in Iraq.

"It's an honor to be able to care for the wounded out here," Joseph said. "It's a lifetime experience. I can't stress enough; it's what we are proud and happy to do."

Sergeant Walker is with the 101st Airborne Division Public Affairs at Balad Air Base, Iraq. (AFPN)

The Scare in Delaware

Wings-level landing might have saved C-5 crash survivors

By **Louis A. Arana-Barradas**
Photos by **Doug Curran**

A veteran C-5 Galaxy pilot said all 17 people survived the April 3 plane crash at Dover Air Force Base, Del., mainly because the pilot did his job.

Col. Udo McGregor said the "100 percent reason" everyone aboard survived the crash was because the pilot did a wings-level landing.

"The survivors are survivors because he put it on the ground wings level," said the colonel, commander of the 439th Operations Group at Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass.

The transport took off from Dover at about 6:20 a.m. bound for Spain and Southwest Asia. On board were Airmen and several passengers. Base officials said the aircrew noticed a problem with the aircraft soon after takeoff, and the pilot turned the aircraft around to land back at the base.

But at 6:42 a.m. the aircraft crashed into a grassy field and broke up into several pieces. Base officials think the aircraft might have struck a utility pole, which cut off the aircraft's six-story tail section. It had a quarter million pounds of fuel, but miraculously did not catch fire.

McGregor, a command pilot with more than 10,600 flying hours — more than 7,000 of those in the Galaxy — said there are other reasons why the accident cost the Air Force only a transport aircraft.

One is that the aircraft — almost

Emergency responders *are on the scene of a C-5 Galaxy crash April 3 at Dover Air Force Base, Del.*

as long as a football field — has many crumple zones.

"If you watch car commercials on TV and watch them do the crash testing — the more metal you have — the larger the piece of equipment — the more the chance you have of survival," he said.

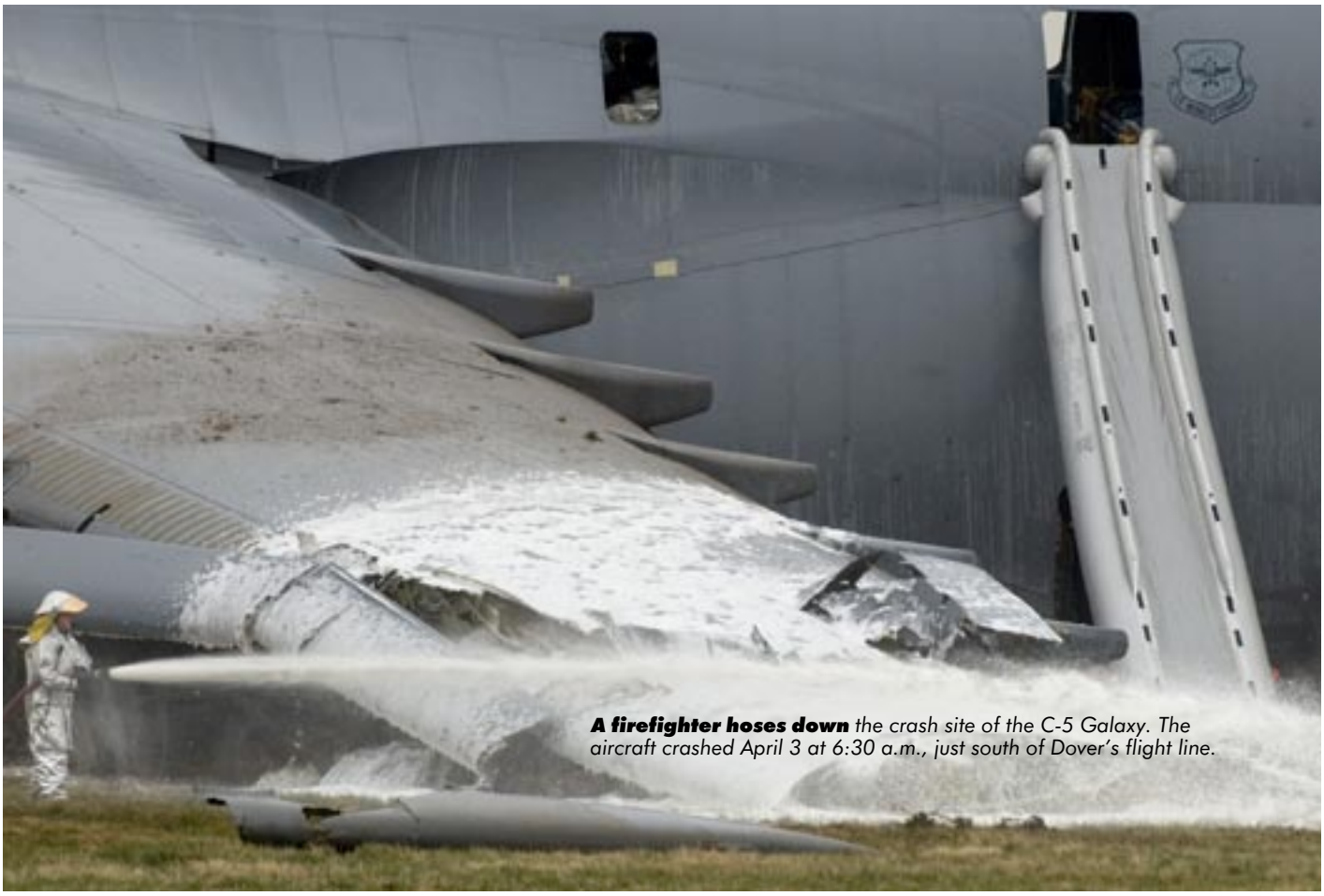
And the cargo plane has so much cargo space below its wings that a wings-level landing gives those on board "a pretty good chance of surviving," he said.

"It's an incredibly safe airplane," said the colonel from Savannah, Ga. "[It has had] very, very few accidents for the millions and millions of flying hours that it's accomplished."

The colonel has flown all over the world in the C-5. He knows the transport inside and out. The emergency that the Dover crew faced — a heavy weight, three-engine emergency return — is a "pretty standard" procedure for which Galaxy pilots are well prepared, he said.

"In this particular case, the experience level of the crew would suggest they've done it hundreds of times — practiced it hundreds of times in a simulator," he said.

McGregor has had to deal with similar in-flight emergencies during his 15 years at the helm of the heavy jet. More than once he has had to land a heavily-loaded Galaxy with only three engines. But with about a million parts, many mechanical things can go wrong with the aging aircraft, which entered the Air Force inven-



A firefighter hoses down *the crash site of the C-5 Galaxy. The aircraft crashed April 3 at 6:30 a.m., just south of Dover's flight line.*

tory in June 1970. After so many hours in the air, the aircraft is bound to experience one or two emergencies that aircrews will have to overcome, he said.

"That's just part of flying something for an extensive amount of time that has this many moving parts," the colonel said. "It's a very complicated airplane."

The colonel remembers a flight into Osan Air Base, South Korea, when the air conditioning turbine on his C-5 malfunctioned and filled the entire aircraft with smoke. The aircrew made an emergency landing and did an emergency evacuation of 73 passengers — who exited down the slide from the passenger compartment on the back of the aircraft. At Dover, the aircrew also used the inflatable slide to evacuate the aircraft.

McGregor said the aircraft has a great safety record. And the upgrades through which it is going — like getting new avionics and engines — will extend its life "a significant number of years."

"I would say more than 20 years is probably a reasonable guess," he said. And with the upgrades, "it's probably even more than that."

The colonel said two boards will now convene to find out the cause of the accident. The first, a safety investigation board, will try to determine what the issues or problems were. They have 30 to 45 days to come up with answers.

Then, an accident investigation board will convene to "find the magic BB, the causal effect — the thing or things that caused or created the accident," the colonel said.

The accident investigation board will probably have to have some kind of resolution to the commander of Air Mobility Command by the end of May.

"So it's a fairly rapid process," he said.

Mr. Arana-Barradas is with Air Force Print News in San Antonio. (AFPN)

C-5 Crash Survivor List

DOVER AIR FORCE BASE, Del. (AFPN) — Air Force officials released the names of the 17 survivors of the C-5 Galaxy crash here April 3. Survivor names, base and medical conditions are as follows:

- *Capt. Brian Lafreda, Dover, fair*
- *Lt. Col. Robert Moorman, Dover, fair*
- *Lt. Col. Harland Nelson, Dover, fair*
- *Master Sgt. Timothy Feiring, Dover, released*
- *Master Sgt. Michael Benford, Dover, fair*
- *Tech. Sgt. Vincent Dvorak, Dover, fair*
- *Master Sgt. Brenda Kremer, Dover, released*
- *Chief Master Sgt. David Burke, Dover, released*
- *Chief Master Sgt. George Mosley, Dover, released*
- *Tech. Sgt. Henry Fortney, Dover, released*
- *Senior Airman Scott Schaffner, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, released*
- *Tammy Lucas, Lockheed Martin employee, fair*
- *Staff Sgt. David Abrams, Dover, released*
- *Senior Airman Nicholas Vather, Dover, fair*
- *Retired Chief Petty Officer Paul Kath, released*
- *Hannelore Kath, released*
- *Retired Tech. Sgt. Raul Salamanca, released*

What Went Wrong?

■ Soon after takeoff, the C-5 crew noticed a problem with the aircraft.

■ The C-5 crashed upon landing in a grassy field near the Dover Air Force Base, Del., flight line.

■ Passengers and crew members sustained injuries.

■ The cause of the accident is unknown. Safety investigation and accident investigation boards are trying to determine what caused the crash.

What Went Right?

■ In incidents like this, the crew is trained to declare an in-flight emergency and would have checked to ensure the plane was still under control. At that point, the crew would assess the cause of the emergency, process their aircraft checklists, determine a location to safely land to mitigate risks and prevent loss of life, and communicate their course of action to everyone aboard the plane.

■ The crew landed the aircraft in a grassy area surrounding the base's fenced perimeter. The land is classified as proprietary to the base and was purchased years ago to provide a cushion of airspace to protect the civilian population from extremely rare and unlikely incidents such as this.

■ Nobody died. The pilot did a wings-level landing, which likely saved the passengers and crew.

■ The C-5B Galaxy is a structurally sound aircraft. It sustained a massive force against its hull during the crash, yet it still protected the passengers and crew. It broke apart into three major pieces, but it did not explode.

■ Air Force and local first responders, including medical professionals, firefighters, security forces and civil engineer personnel, immediately responded to the scene.

■ A board of Air Force officers has convened and is investigating the cause of the accident. The unclassified findings will be released to the public as soon as the board results are released.

— Tech. Sgt. Melissa Phillips
436th Airlift Wing, Dover Air Force Base, Del.

Incidents That Destroyed C-5s Over the Years

SAN ANTONIO (AFPN) — Since March 2, 1968, when President Lyndon B. Johnson attended the roll-out and christening ceremony of the C-5 – then the world's largest plane – there have been only six major crashes involving the aircraft. That makes it one of the safest aircraft in history. The following is a list of the accidents.

May 25, 1970 — Burned during a flight test at Palmdale, Calif.

Oct. 17, 1970 — Burned during a flight test at Marietta, Ga.

Sept. 27, 1974 — Crashed at Clinton Municipal Airport, Okla.

April 5, 1975 — Crashed in Saigon, Vietnam, during Operation Babylift.

Aug. 29, 1990 — Crashed at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, during Operation Desert Storm.

April 3, 2006 — Crashed at Dover Air Force Base, Del., while carrying supplies to support the global war on terrorism.

— Master Sgt. Orville F. Desjarlais Jr.
Air Force Print News

NEW CHAPTER IN AVIATION

58TH SPECIAL OPERATIONS WING WELCOMES CV-22 TILT-ROTOR AIRCRAFT

Photos by Staff Sgt. **MARKUS MAIER**

The Air Force's first operational CV-22 Osprey *tilt-rotor aircraft hovers upon arrival at Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M., March 20. The aircraft will be flown by Airmen with the 58th Special Operations Wing to train future Osprey pilots.*

OPPOSITE PAGE: ***Airmen with the 58th Special Operations Wing*** *hold a banner welcoming the Air Force's first operational CV-22 Osprey to Kirtland AFB. The aircraft was flown to Kirtland by Lt. Gen. Michael W. Wooley, commander of Air Force Special Operations Command.*

KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. (AFSOCNS) – A new chapter in Air Force aviation opened March 20 as the first operational CV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft arrived here.

The aircraft was flown from the test wing at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., by Lt. Gen. Michael W. Wooley, commander of Air Force Special Operations Command, to the 58th Special Operations Wing at Kirtland. The 58th provides advanced training to special operations aircrews.

The CV-22 Osprey is a special operations variant of the MV-22, currently used by the Marines. The aircraft has the unique ability to takeoff, land and hover like a helicopter, and it can tilt its propellers to fly like a conventional, prop-driven aircraft.

"The CV-22 has the capability to fly at turboprop speeds like a C-130 (Hercules), pull into helicopter mode and land like an MH-53J/M Pave Low," Wooley said. "This is truly transformational for Air Force Special Operations Command."

This dual capability gives the CV-22 extended range, speed and versatility over any other AFSOC aircraft. The extended range and speed will allow the Air Force to conduct long-range infiltration and exfiltration missions. The CV-22 and MV-22 are very similar, with differences existing mainly in the avionics.

The 58th SOW is scheduled to receive four CV-22s by the end of June. The first opera-

tional CV-22 unit will operate out of Hurlburt Field, Fla., starting in 2007.

The initial pilot training includes 400 hours of interactive computer-based training, 60 simulator hours and 40 flying hours in the MV-22 version of the Osprey. This will be followed by CV-22 mission-specific training for AFSOC pilots and flight engineers at Kirtland.

Through the use of live-fire testing, the Osprey has proven to be four to eight times less vulnerable to enemy fire than current aircraft. It is 75 percent quieter, can fly higher and has one-tenth the infrared signature compared to most rotary aircraft.

The CV-22 currently costs $89.1 million. However, cost reduction initiatives and a multi-year procurement contract is expected to significantly reduce that price.

The Air Force plans on buying 50 CV-22s from now until 2017.

OSPREY SIMULATOR UP, RUNNING

HURLBURT FIELD, Fla. (AFPN) — The CV-22 Osprey simulator was officially welcomed at Hurlburt's 19th Special Operations Squadron with a ceremony in March.

The $21 million simulator is intended to provide refresher and proficiency training to pilots, said Lt. Col. Jonathan Jay, CV-22 simulator program manager.

"We are not delivering a device to a training squadron today, but to the actual operators," said Marine Corps Lt. Col. Doug Schuler, assistant program manager for training systems.

The simulator is a secondary motion training device, which allows pilots to feel vibration and motion without the actual structure moving.

The device can put crews in various scenarios such as blowing rain, night snow storms, in-flight refueling and water rescue missions. It is also programmed to display a representation of the runway and surrounding areas of military bases in the southeastern region of the United States.

"When the pilots have to go to other bases for training missions, they can familiarize themselves with the area in the simulator before they even get there," Jay said.

The CV-22 is designed to land on naval ships, and the simulator allows operators to get some of that training without having to leave the base.

"This is the first time Air Force Special Operations Command has had a simulator at the operational base with the aircraft," said Col. Paul Harmon, 16th Special Operations Wing vice commander.

"Pilots will still have to actually go out and land on ships, but this allows them more opportunities to train," Jay said. "It's also a lot easier than having to coordinate with the other services to land on their ships."

Construction for the simulator began in March 2005. It was completed and released to the base in January. It is one of eight that are scheduled to populate the Air Force in the next five to seven years. There are two other CV-22 simulators located at Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M.

The CV-22 aircraft's mission is long range and infiltration and exfiltration, and it can function as a traditional airplane and helicopter. They're expected to start arriving here this fall.

— Staff Sgt. Mareshah Haynes
16th Special Operations Wing Public Affairs

USAF photo

CV-22 simulator program manager *Lt. Col. Jonathan Jay lines up for landing on an aircraft carrier in the CV-22 simulator.*

HIKER FINDS F-16 RACK

LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz. (AETCNS) — Airmen with the 56th Civil Engineer Squadron explosive ordnance disposal unit and the 56th Equipment Maintenance Squadron at Luke hiked up the White Tank Mountains March 23. The group was going to the site of an F-16 Fighting Falcon triple ejector rack to ensure it didn't contain unexploded cartridges. The rack was released from a 61st Fighter Squadron F-16 during an in-flight emergency on Aug. 11, 2003. A local resident found the item while hiking and led the Air Force team to the site.

by Tech. Sgt. Angela Clemens

ARRESTING SYSTEM STOPS AIRCRAFT SAFELY

SHAW AIR FORCE BASE, S.C. (AFPN) — An F-16 Fighting Falcon has an emergency braking system that can bring it to a stop called aircraft arresting systems.

At Shaw, for instance, there are eight arresting systems designed to safely bring an aircraft to a stop whenever a pilot feels it is unsafe to stop the aircraft on his or her own power, said Senior Airman Tyler Bergmann, 20th Civil Engineer Squadron electric power production.

The aircraft arresting system is designed to safely bring aircraft to a stop in the event of an emergency. It is used with the aircraft arresting hook to "catch" the jet, Bergmann said.

When an in-motion aircraft develops an emergency, the aircrew has to decide if they need to use the arresting system. If needed, the pilot deploys the aircraft's hook and lands the plane at least 1,000 feet from the arresting system.

by Tarsha Storey

A hook on an F-16 Fighting Falcon *catches the aircraft arresting system cable as part of a system test March 31.*

The hook drags on the surface of the runway until it comes in contact with the 1.25-inch steel cable. Once the aircraft's hook captures the cable, the cable rips the nylon cords, holding it flat on the runway, and unravels its attached nylon tapes from storage reels.

As the tapes are unraveled, the reels turn a hydraulic pump that applies pressure to a set of modified brakes. It is these brakes that bring the aircraft to a stop, said Bill Solanes, 20th CES barrier maintenance chief.

When a jet that is not using the system to stop drives over the cable, the cable bounces. If the cable is not held down, it may damage the jet. Small pieces of nylon rope are used to hold the cable flat on the runway, Bergmann said.

"The (aircraft arresting system) is important because it is the only safe way of stopping an aircraft with only a minimal amount of damage while preventing the loss of its crew," Solanes said.

In an average year, the aircraft arresting system stops between 10 to 12 aircraft, Solanes said.

Each time the system is used, the nylon tape must be inspected and rolled back onto its storage reels, Bergman said. The cable is then returned to its home at the start of the runway and tied down with nylon rope.

"The (aircraft arresting system) allows the pilots a sense of security," the Airman said. "We take pride knowing that every time a bird (jet) is caught, over $30 million dollars in Air Force assets are saved."

— Tarsha Storey
20th Fighter Wing
Public Affairs

BOOM OPERATOR BANGS UP F-16C

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va. (ACCNS) — A KC-10 air refueling aircraft boom operator's over compensation on the boom flight-control stick caused the boom to strike an F-16C Fighting Falcon during a refueling mission over Lake Andes Military Operations Area, S.D., Oct. 28, according to an Air Force report released March 29.

Both aircraft recovered and landed without incident. There were no injuries to military or civilian personnel. The F-16C, assigned to the South Dakota Air National Guard's 114th Fighter Wing at Joe Foss Field, S.D., sustained more than $930,000 damage. The KC-10, assigned to the 305th Air Mobility Wing at McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., sustained more than $75,000 damage to the refueling boom.

The investigation determined the incident was caused by the boom operator's abrupt and excessive boom flight-control stick inputs in reaction to the F-16C's elevated position within the acceptable air refueling envelope.

To avoid striking the F-16's tail, the boom operator jerked back on the boom flight-control stick, which caused the boom to move rapidly up toward the underside of the KC-10. The boom operator then abruptly pushed forward on the control stick to prevent the boom from impacting the KC-10, but in doing so caused the boom to hit the F-16C's right aft fuselage.

by Tech. Sgt. Erik Gudmundson

CREW CHIEF LOSES LANDING-GEAR PIN IN F-22A:
$6.7 MILLION IN DAMAGES

by Tech. Sgt. Ben Bloker

A crew chief *guides an F-22A Raptor into its parking space.*

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va. (ACCNS) — A maintainer's failure to control the nose landing gear pin streamer during removal from an F-22A allowed the pin to be ingested into the right engine Oct. 20 prior to a mission at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, according to an aircraft accident investigation report released March 22.

There were no injuries in the incident, and damage to the right engine totaled approximately $6.7 million.

The aircraft is assigned to the 27th Fighter Squadron, 1st Fighter Wing, Langley AFB.

At the time of the incident, the pilot had started engines before a night surface attack tactics mission. The crew chief then realized the nose landing gear pin was still in and instructed the pilot to shut down the left engine so he could remove the pin. During removal, the crew chief failed to control the pin's streamer allowing it to be caught in the suction intake of the operating right engine and torn from his hand.

Investigators concluded failure to remove the pin prior to engine start was a direct result of inadequate and incorrect technical order guidance that led to the pin remaining installed during engine start.

TIRE FAILURE CAUSES JET TO DEPART RUNWAY

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va. (ACCNS) — A tire failure caused an F-16C aircraft to depart the runway upon landing at Balad Air Base, Iraq, Oct. 9, according to an aircraft accident investigation report released April 12.

There were no injuries in the incident and damage was limited to the aircraft's Theater Airborne Reconnaissance System pod, an advanced medium range air-to-air missile and its left main landing gear. Total damage is estimated at $7.3 million.

The aircraft, assigned to the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing and deployed from the 482nd Fighter Wing, Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., was returning from a close-air-support mission at the time of the incident.

The incident happened on touchdown when the left rubber outer tire layer separated from the main landing gear and the aluminum rim locked and started grinding down into the runway, eventually making the aircraft veer to the left approximately 100 feet off the runway.

Investigators concluded the tire's failure caused the incident, with inadequate maintenance a contributing factor. Maintenance Airmen deviated from the requirement to change the main landing gear tires after 20 landings or when tires reach their maximum wear limit, whichever occurs first. The tire failed on its 22nd landing.

by Master Sgt. Joe Cupidow

An F-16C Fighting Falcon *from the 482nd Fighter Wing, 93rd Fighter Squadron, flies near the Southern Florida coastline. When maintainers deviated from requirements to change a tire after 20 landings, the tire failed on its 22nd landing, causing $7.3 million in damages.*


"The safety of the people shall be the highest law."
— Marcus Tuilius Cicero
Ancient Roman Scholar
106 B.C. to 43 B.C.
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