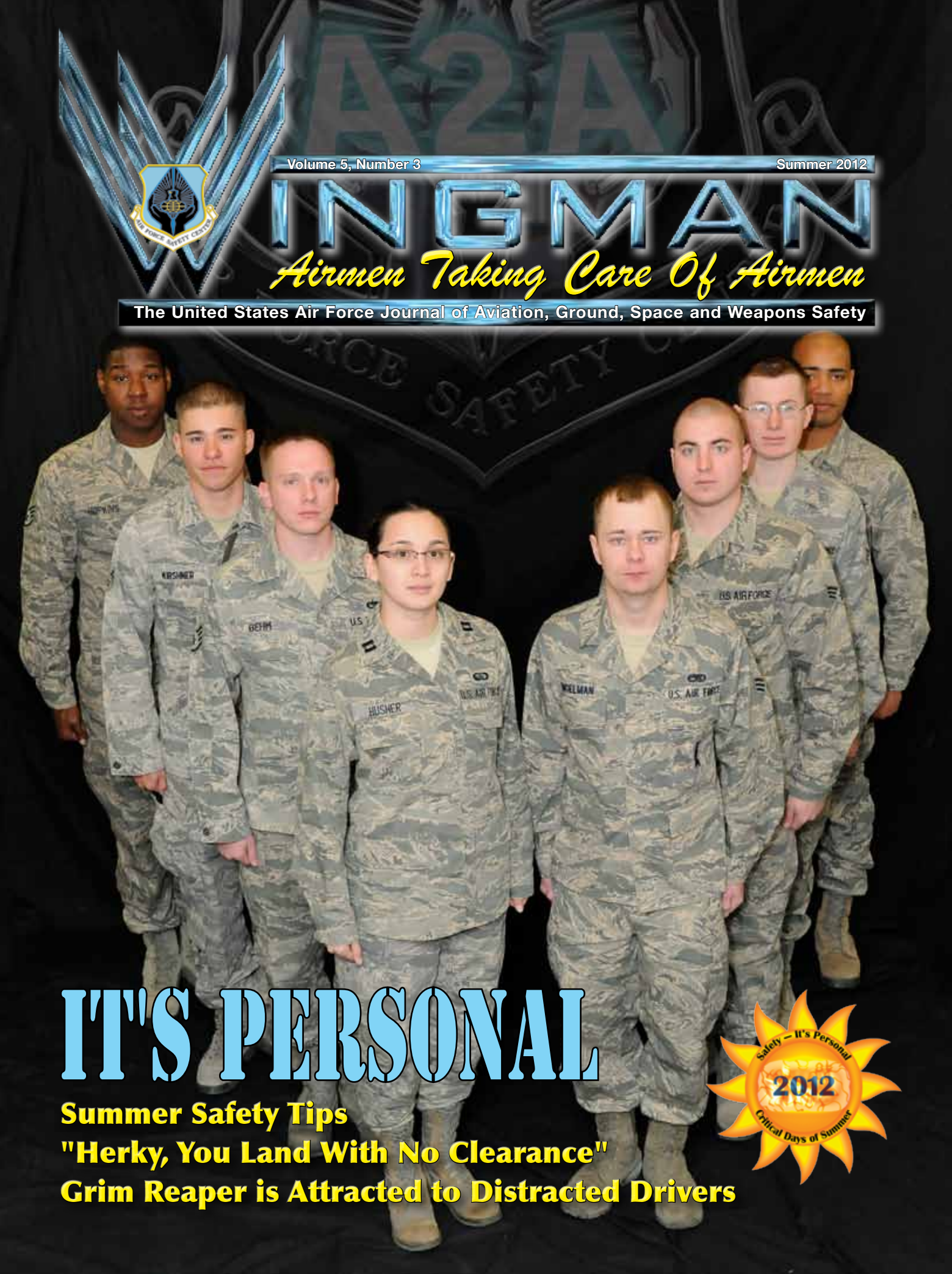
Volume 5, Number 3 Summer 2012

WINGMAN

Airmen Taking Care Of Airmen

The United States Air Force Journal of Aviation, Ground, Space and Weapons Safety



IT'S PERSONAL

Safety – It's Personal 2012 Critical Days of Summer

Summer Safety Tips

"Herky, You Land With No Clearance"

Grim Reaper is Attracted to Distracted Drivers

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FEATURES

GROUND

AVIATION

HUMAN FACTORS

WEAPONS

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Front cover: Airman-to-Airman Safety Advisory Council representatives met at the Air Force Safety Center in February to plan their communication strategy for helping Airmen make the right choices. (Left to right) Staff Sgt. Dwayne Hopkins, Senior Airman James Kirshner, Staff Sgt. Robert Behm, Capt. Kim Husher, Senior Airman James Engelman, Senior Airman Caleb Zody, Airman 1st Class David Steele, Airman 1st Class Trevor Jones.

SAFETY

IT'S PERSONAL

MAJ. GEN. GREG FEEST
Air Force Chief of Safety and
Commander, Air Force Safety Center
Kirtland AFB, N.M.

Memorial Day weekend marked the kickoff of the 2012 Critical Days of Summer safety campaign that continues through Labor Day. This year's theme, "Safety – It's Personal," underscores the personal responsibility of every one of us to make safety an integral part of our plans and activities – on and off duty. Remember that the personal decisions you make can affect your loved ones, friends, co-workers and your entire Air Force family.

A certain amount of excitement accompanies these early days of summer. It's natural to rush to the garage to dig out the lawn and sporting equipment as you begin to plan and anticipate the thrill of outdoor activities and getaways. The ground safety section of this ***Wingman*** issue includes practical tips and reminders to help keep your summer outings full of fun and free of mishaps. Be sure to review the articles highlighting solid safety practices for gardening, grilling, water activities and trip planning. A good review of these tips is a must for safe summer plans. The price of complacency can be deadly. Additional ground safety topics range from the potential danger posed by a loose item in a vehicle accident to proper helmet selection for specific recreational activities.

We are proud to share the initial experiences of one of our Airman-to-Airman Safety Advisory Council representatives. His enthusiasm for helping other Airmen make smart decisions is commendable. This section also presents the Ground Safety Well Done Awards, recognizing the efforts of four pros who've made tremendous contributions in promoting safety programs and processes.

The aviation section offers lessons learned by sharp, skilled professionals who found themselves in surprising scenarios. One of these articles outlines steps to mitigate the dangers of taxiing aircraft in low visibility, and another underscores the critical need to verbalize checklist, clearance and configuration in order to avoid complacency. There are several other aviation articles including another cautionary tale of how to avoid "get home-itis."

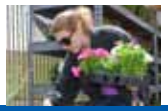
In the human factors section, the serious topic of distracted driving is presented in an informal interview format. Here, an exchange with the Grim Reaper reveals how distractions from both inside and outside your vehicle can spell VSLD, or viable strategy for likely death.

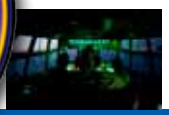
On the weapons front, the directed energy weapons team shares insights about laser eye protection and night vision goggles to address a growing number of inquiries.

Lastly, the 2011 Air Force Safety Award winners are listed in this issue. Congratulations to all recipients for an outstanding year. Thanks to every one of you who strive every day to make this a safer Air Force.

Be a good wingman on and off duty, and remember "Safety – It's Personal." ★★







Communication is the Key to Safe Workplaces

BILL "TOP" PARSONS
Air Force Chief of Ground Safety
Air Force Safety Center
Kirtland AFB, N.M.

Livestrong.com defines communication as the process of sharing information, thoughts and feelings between people through speaking, writing or body language. Effective communication extends the concept to require that transmitted content is received and understood by someone in the way it was intended. The goals of effective communication include creating a common perception, changing behaviors and acquiring information.

When I talk with folks about working safely, and safety culture in general, I always include communication as a key element to having a safe workforce. Let's face it, with much of our communication today being the written word, sending the wrong message is easily done. An example of this that most people are familiar with is one I frequently encounter. I seem to have problems interpreting tone in e-mail. I'm sure you know what I mean. When information is poorly communicated, the wrong message is received, causing unintended consequences. However, all too frequently, verbal communication isn't always effective either. I'll give you a funny example – funny now, not so funny at the time.

A few years ago a close friend had some workers painting the interior of his home. (The workers were also landscapers.) For several days, my friend constantly bragged on the good work ethic and professionalism of these workers. After they finished painting, I thought I would ask them to do some landscaping work for me. Oh, did I mention that they spoke no English?

On the day they stopped in to meet me I hadn't planned to see them and, therefore, had no access to an interpreter. I did my best to convey my desires for the day and they went about their work doing a wonderful job of grooming my lawn. Once they finished their work, I paid them, and since they had done such an outstanding job, asked how much it would cost if I decided to remove my concrete patio and prepare it for new concrete. They quoted me a price, and I told them that I would be in touch. My wife, Nancy, and I then went on our way to visit our grandkids.

About 9 p.m., we returned home tired from a long day behind us. Nancy suggested we head out back for a glass of wine before bed. As I'm pouring the wine Nancy screams, "Bill, someone has stolen our patio furniture!" This was followed immediately by, "Oh my God, they've stolen the whole damn patio!" OK, so I know I should have informed my wife, and I know

I shouldn't discuss such matters with my Hillbilly Spanish, but who knew what the outcome would be?

You're right, the friendly workers thought I wanted the work done right away. My neighbors told me the next morning that we hadn't been gone more than 30 minutes when a crew of about 15 family members pulled into our driveway and began the work of removing my concrete patio. The entire thing was broken up, the site leveled and a form set in place in less than two hours!

This example is harmless enough. Unfortunately, communication errors don't always end in a chuckle. Throughout history there seems to be a limitless number of disasters brought on through poor, or ineffective, communication. They range from getting lost in the forest to plane crashes.

Obviously, I hadn't effectively communicated my desires to the crew that "stole" my patio. I'm just thankful that I hadn't bartered for a brake job on my car or to have my roof replaced!

Remember, effective communication requires a sender and a receiver. Be sure what you're sending and what is being received are one and the same.

What's Flying Around in Your Car?

LT. COL. TAMMIE GREVIN
Ground Safety Division
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If you're like most people, you don't think about the items you toss into your car. Did you ever think that those things can become dangerous projectiles in an instant? Newton's First Law of Motion states that an object in motion will stay in motion. You don't even need to be in an accident for objects to go flying around inside your car.

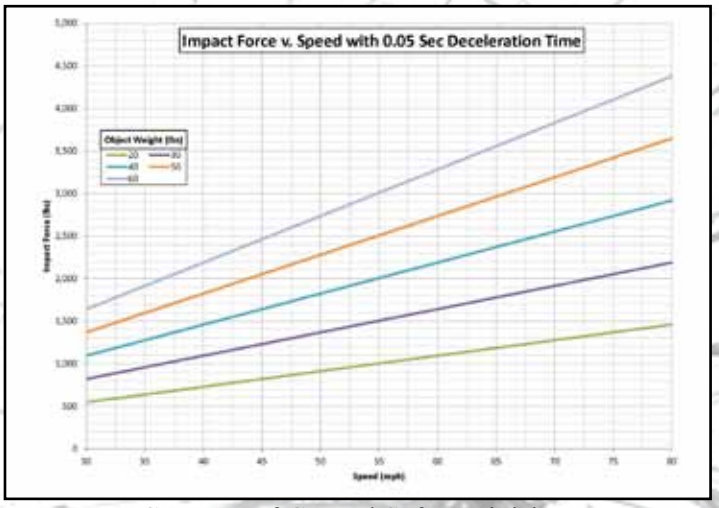
Many of us travel during the summer and load everything into the back of our cars – computers, kid's toys, groceries and luggage – without even considering the hazards they pose. Those who drive vans, hatchbacks or SUVs with an open storage area in the back are even more at risk.

Consider if you were driving at 55 mph and had to stop suddenly. Even though your vehicle stops, unsecured items don't and can travel inside your car at the same speed. An object as small as a pen can penetrate the car's upholstery or, worse yet, you or a passenger (see chart).

"At 55 mph, a 20-pound object hits with 1,000 pounds of force – so powerful that a suitcase can literally sever the arm of a crash test dummy," said Sean Kane of Safety Research and Strategies. "From head impacts to serious internal injuries, it's a wide range depending on the severity of the crash."

Here are some measures you can take to protect yourself and your passengers:

- Always wear your seat belt.
- Use cargo nets, anchors and tethers to secure your cargo if you have a van, SUV or hatchback.
- Use the trunk or cargo area of your vehicle instead of the back seat or passenger seat for storing items.
- Don't keep unnecessary items in your car.
- Keep pets in carriers or use a pet safety harness.
- Pack larger and heavier items low to the ground, placed forward against fixed components and centered inside your vehicle. This position will prevent objects from building momentum as they are thrust forward in a crash.
- Store personal items (cell phones, sunglasses, games) inside the glove compartment or center console.



Courtesy of Ground Safety Division

This chart depicts the force with which a 20-pound object can strike you if it's not secured within the interior of your vehicle. The 1,000 pounds of force has the potential to kill. The average packed suitcase weighs 30-35 pounds, increasing the force to approximately 1,500 pounds. Whether packing your car for a trip or carrying simple items for daily needs, consider the possibility of lose objects striking you or a passenger.

Almost-Deadly Sippy Cup Incident Warns Against Projectiles in Car

An article written by Christie Haskell for TheStir.CafeMom.com reports that a little boy was scalped by a soft-spout sippy cup when his mother's car was hit by another car going about 45 mph. His skull was fractured in three places and his forehead muscle was severed. (From http://www.actsoregon.org/pdf/EmailNews/TSC_Email_Newsletter_OctNov_2011_FINAL.pdf)

Laptop Kills Woman

The Canadian Broadcasting Company reported that police in Surrey, British Columbia, are warning people to secure their belongings while driving after a young woman was apparently killed by her laptop.

According to Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the woman didn't have her laptop secured inside the vehicle and it struck her in the back of her head and neck, causing her death. (From http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/story/2009/04/15/bc-surrey-laptop-crash-kills-woman.html)

From Simple Task to Tragic Accident

CAPT. KIM HUSHER
Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center
Tinker AFB, Okla.

I've always considered myself pretty safety conscious. I mean, never reckless or irresponsible. I've got all the big things covered: I wear my seat belt, don't drink and drive, look both ways when crossing the street and don't run with scissors. But it took the little things for me to put it all into perspective. It was these little things that caused a loved one to get hurt.

I remember the phone call. "Hun, I've gone and done something stupid," my father said.

It started out like a dull story. It was a nice day in September, and he decided to clean a spot on the outside of his home. He got a rag and ladder and figured the job wouldn't take more than 10 minutes. It wasn't a complicated task, so he didn't put much thought into it. He placed the ladder on the uneven ground. There was nobody to hold the ladder steady, but it didn't wiggle much. It seemed safe enough for a quick job, and he was only going up a couple of rungs.

It was a bit awkward for him to be on the ladder, face the wall and lean all the way over, so he decided to turn the ladder sideways. It seemed like a good idea at the time. He proceeded up the ladder and leaned over to reach the side of the house. What he didn't take into account was the direction of the force he was putting on the ladder. Since the ladder was sideways to the house, there was no support when he leaned over to start washing the side of the house.

So, what happened? The ladder started to fall and, being up against a wall, there was nowhere to go. In that split second he thought, *I'll dive away from the ladder so I don't fall on top of it!* Good thought, except his foot was stuck between the rungs. He fell with all his body weight coming down on one spot, was knocked out and nobody was around.

He lay there for hours with his foot mangled and bleeding before someone found him and drove him to the hospital an hour away. By the time I got there, he had been in surgery for hours. His foot had twisted more than 90 degrees. They put it back together, but the doctors couldn't save it. Two days later, they had to amputate below his knee.

Uneven ground, bad positioning, leaning too far, not having a wingman – it was the perfect storm of small things done wrong which, in retrospect, seems obvious. Simple risk management and assessment steps weren't executed because the task was just going to take a minute – no big deal, except my father fell and lost his leg.

Admit it, when bringing up good safety habits in normal activities, people sort of sigh and shrug it off. When you hear of a household ladder accident, you think broken arm or concussion. These are things that aren't good either, but you kick yourself for doing it, you heal and move on with your life as if it never happened. But, when you lose your leg over disregard for the simplest, everyday safety measures, THAT changes your life. I hope it makes everyone else think twice. I know I do.

Photo courtesy of author

Yard and Garden Safety

Compiled by
Ground Safety Division
Air Force Safety Center
Kirtland AFB, N.M.

Warmer weather is here, trees have sprouted leaves and the flowers are blooming. Summer is a great time to be outdoors to enjoy backyards and barbeques. However, summertime also brings outdoor cleanup and gardening chores which can be hazardous.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:

- In 2010, more than 35,500 people injured themselves using a stepladder.
- More than 41,000 Americans injured themselves while gardening or using gardening equipment.
- More than 127,000 people were injured while operating a lawn mower.

Safety tips for outdoor cleanup and gardening activities:

- Check all the equipment to ensure it's in good condition and that safety devices are in place and work correctly.
- Wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts and sturdy shoes. Clothing should be as close-fitting as possible to avoid getting caught in moving parts of equipment. Protect your eyes with goggles or glasses.
- Put away garden tools such as rakes, spades, forks, pruning clippers, files and metal plant stakes when not in use.
- Never allow young children to operate power lawn and garden equipment.
- Keep children away from chemicals, both applied and in containers.
- Ladders should be placed on their sides, and rakes should lie with the tines down.
- Protect your hearing when using motor-driven equipment.
- Wear gloves when changing, sharpening or cleaning blades.

Lawn mower safety:

- Keep spark plugs clean, and have an expert adjust the carburetor.
- Use the gasoline and oil recommended by the manufacturer.
- Regularly sharpen rotary mower blades.
- Frequently tighten the blade and engine mounting bolts, as well as any other nuts, bolts and screws.
- Clean the underside of the mower with a strong stream of water after each use.
- Keep the engine free of grass, leaves and excessive grease to reduce fire hazard.
- When working on the mower, be sure the blade and all moving parts have stopped.

For on-duty lawn care and mowing safety requirements see Air Force Occupational Safety and Health Standard 91-501.

Background photo by PhotoSpin, Inc

All About Helmets

Why are helmets so important?

For many recreational activities, wearing a helmet can reduce the risk of a serious head injury and even save your life.

How can a helmet protect my head?

During a fall or collision, most of the impact energy is absorbed by the helmet, rather than your head and brain.

Are all helmets the same?

No. There are different helmets for different activities. Each type of helmet is made to protect your head from the impacts common to a particular activity or sport. Be sure to wear a helmet that is appropriate for the particular activity you're involved in. Other helmets may not protect your head as effectively.

How can I tell which helmet is the right one to use?

Bicycle and motorcycle helmets must comply with mandatory federal safety standards. Many other recreational helmets are subject to voluntary safety standards. Helmets specifically marketed for exclusive use in an activity other than bicycling (for example, go-karting, horseback riding, lacrosse and skiing) don't have to meet the requirements of the Consumer Product Safety Commission bicycle helmet standard. However, these helmets should meet other federal and/or voluntary safety standards. Don't rely on the helmet's name or claims made on the packaging (unless the packaging specifies compliance with an appropriate standard) to determine if the helmet meets the appropriate requirements for your activity.

Are there helmets that I can wear for more than one activity?

Yes, but only a few. You can wear a CPSC-compliant bicycle helmet while bicycling, recreational roller or in-line skating and riding a non-powered scooter.

Are there any activities for which one shouldn't wear a helmet?

Yes. Make sure your child takes off his/her helmet before playing on playgrounds or climbing trees. If a child wears a helmet during these activities, the helmet's chin strap can get caught on the equipment or tree and pose a risk of strangulation. The helmet itself may present an entrapment hazard.

How can I tell if my helmet fits properly?

A helmet should be both comfortable and snug. Be sure it's level on your head — not tilted back on the top of the head or pulled too low over your forehead. It shouldn't move in any direction, back-to-front or side-to-side. The chin strap should be securely buckled so that the helmet doesn't move or fall off during a fall or collision.

Information provided by U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/349.pdf

❶ Activity	❷ Helmet Type	❸ Applicable Standard(s)
Individual Activities – Wheeled		
Bicycling (including low speed, motor assisted) Roller & In-line Skating – Recreational Scooter Riding (including low speed, motor assisted)	Bicycle	**CPSC**, ASTM F1447, Snell B-90/95, Snell N-94†
BMX Cycling	BMX	**CPSC**, ASTM F2032
Downhill Mountain Bike Racing	Downhill	**CPSC**, ASTM F1952
Roller & In-line Skating – Aggressive/Trick Skateboarding	Skateboard	ASTM F1492†, Snell N-94†
Individual Activities – Wheeled Large Motor		
ATV Riding Dirt- & Mini-Bike Riding Motocrossing	Motocross or Motorcycle	DOT FMVSS 218, Snell M-2005
Karting/Go-Karting	Karting or Motorcycle	DOT FMVSS 218, Snell K-98, Snell M-2005
Moped Riding Powered Scooter Riding	Moped or Motorcycle	DOT FMVSS 218, Snell L-98, Snell M-2005
Individual Activities – Non-Wheeled		
Horseback Riding	Equestrian	ASTM F1163, Snell E-2001
Rock- & Wall-Climbing	Mountaineering	EN 12492†, Snell N-94†
Team Sport Activities ‡		
Baseball, Softball & T-Ball	Baseball Batter's	NOCSAE ND022
	Baseball Catcher's	NOCSAE ND024
Football	Football	NOCSAE ND002, ASTM F717
Ice Hockey	Hockey	NOCSAE ND030, ASTM F1045
Lacrosse	Lacrosse	NOCSAE ND041
Winter Activities		
Skiing Snowboarding	Ski	ASTM F2040, CEN 1077, Snell RS-98 or S-98
Snowmobiling	Snowmobile	DOT FMVSS 218, Snell M-2000
Although a helmet has not yet been designed for the following two activities, until such helmets exist, wearing one of the three listed types of helmets may be preferable to wearing no helmet at all.		
Ice Skating Sledding	Bicycle	**CPSC**, ASTM F1447, Snell B-90/95 or N-94†
	Skateboard	ASTM F1492†, Snell N-94†
	Ski	ASTM F2040, CEN 1077, Snell RS-98 or S-98

The federal CPSC Safety Standard for Bicycle Helmets is mandatory for those helmets indicated by **CPSC**.

† This helmet is designed to withstand more than one moderate impact, but protection is provided for only a limited number of impacts. Replace if visibly damaged (e.g., a cracked shell or crushed liner) and/or when directed by the manufacturer.

‡ Team sport helmets are designed to protect against multiple head impacts typically occurring in the sport (e.g., ball, puck, or stick impacts; player contact; etc.), and, generally, can continue to be used after such impacts. Follow manufacturer's recommendations for replacement or reconditioning.

Definitions: ASTM - ASTM International; CEN - European Committee for Standardization; DOT – Dept. of Transportation; EN - Euro-norm or European Standard; NOCSAE - National Operating Committee on Standards in Athletic Equipment; Snell - Snell Memorial Foundation.

Summer Safety Tips

NATALIE ESLINGER, Contractor
Ground Safety Division
Kirtland AFB, N.M.

The 2012 Critical Days of Summer campaign, "Safety – It's Personal," began May 25 and continues through Sept. 4. The vision of the Air Force Ground Safety Division is to ensure all our Airmen have zero preventable fatal mishaps throughout the year and an injury-free summer. Bill "Top" Parsons, Air Force chief of ground safety, coined a rallying cry, the "Quest for Zero," to describe this vision.

The information that follows provides safety guidelines for some favorite summer activities. Keep these handy as you enjoy the season.

All Terrain Vehicle enthusiasts

The ATV Safety Institute says:
- Always wear a Department of Transportation compliant helmet, goggles, long sleeves, long pants, over-the-ankle boots and gloves.
- Never ride on paved roads except to cross and permitted by law. ATVs are designed to be operated off-highway.
- Never ride under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Never carry a passenger on a single-rider ATV and no more than one passenger on an ATV specifically designed for two people.
- Ride an ATV that's right for your age.
- Supervise riders younger than 16; ATVs are not toys.
- Ride only on designated trails and at a safe speed.
- Take a hands-on ATV course such as the one at http://www.atvsafety.org/

Trip planners

The TRiPS Planning Tool can help mitigate many hazards associated with your vacation. TRiPS is an on-line, automated driving risk-assessment tool, hosted by the Army Combat Readiness Center for the Air Force. To use this tool, visit https://www.my.af.mil/gcss-af/USAF/ep/browse.do?programId=t6925EC3163FF0FB5E044080020E329A9&channelPageId=s6925EC13537F0FB5E044080020E329A9

Barbecues

The National Fire Prevention Organization offers these important safety tips:
- Propane and charcoal barbecue grills should only be used outdoors.
- The grill should be placed well away from the home, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches.

- Keep children and pets away from the grill area.
- Keep your grill clean by removing grease or fat buildup from the grill and in trays below the grill.
- Never leave your grill unattended.

Water sports

The American Red Cross offers these tips for swimmers:
- Swim in designated areas supervised by lifeguards.
- Always swim with a buddy; don't allow anyone to swim alone.
- Ensure everyone in the family learns to swim well. Enroll in an age-appropriate Red Cross water orientation course and swimming lessons.
- Never leave a young child unattended near water and don't trust a child's life to another child; teach children to always ask permission to go near water.
- Have young children or inexperienced swimmers wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets around water, but don't rely on life jackets alone.
- If you have a pool, secure it with appropriate barriers. Many children who drown in home pools were out of sight for less than 5 minutes and in the care of one or both parents at the time.
- Actively supervise children whenever around water — even if lifeguards are present.
- Always stay within arm's reach of young children.
- Avoid distractions when supervising children around water.
- If a child is missing, check the water first. Seconds count in preventing death or disability.
- Know how and when to call 911 or the local emergency number.
- Enroll in water safety, first aid and CPR courses to learn how to respond.
- Have appropriate equipment, such as reaching or throwing equipment, a cell phone, life jackets and a first aid kit.

Boaters

Useful information can be found at http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fishboat/boat/safety/safety_tips/. Here's a preview:
- Always wear a life jacket.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Be especially careful on personal watercraft.
- Children younger than 13 must wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal floatation device while under way.
- Enroll in a boater education class.
- Don't overload your boat.
- Operate at a safe speed.
- Always have a passenger serve as a lookout in addition to the operator.
- Watch out for low-water areas or submerged objects.

These are just some of the safety guidelines available for your summer activities. To learn more, check out the Air Force Safety Center Ground Safety website at https://afkm.wpafb.af.mil/community/views/home.aspx?Filter=OO-SE-AF-18.

A2A SAFETY ADVISORY COUNCIL: HELPING FELLOW AIRMEN

Editor's note: Members of the 2012 Airman-to-Airman (A2A) Safety Advisory Council convened Feb. 14 – 16 at the Air Force Safety Center to plan communication strategies to share the consequences of their experiences and help others avoid repeating the same mistakes. Council member Staff Sgt. Dwayne D. Hopkins II describes below his initial experience as a council member and his thoughts about how the council's efforts can benefit all Airmen.

STAFF SGT. DWAYNE D. HOPKINS II
1st Special Operations Logistics Readiness Squadron
Hurlburt Field, Fla.

After reviewing last year's nine A2A YouTube videos, I was intrigued about the opportunity to serve on the 2012 A2A Safety Advisory Council. Every video was backed by a powerful message from a unique life-changing experience. I thought, This is a way I can save someone else from making the same mistake(s) I did.

Upon my arrival at Kirtland, I was greeted by other A2A participants. We got to know one another at dinner and shared our individual stories. I and two other senior airmen had motorcycle mishaps, two had sobering stories about their DUIs, one had a deadly story of texting and driving, and a captain had a story of the dangers of ladders. And, we quickly learned our days would be fully integrated with meetings, video sessions and radio addresses to push our stories to the rest of the Air Force.

The next day, the safety center leadership laid out what was expected of us: to provide our honest, candid opinions. We were tasked to find better ways to communicate safety to Airmen in the 17- to 26-year-old demographic.

With that in mind, we praised the quality and amount of information found in *Wingman* magazine. However, we noted the lack of edginess, entertainment value and awareness of the magazine, as well as the Air Force Safety Center web pages. It became clear that until our selection, none of us knew that these resources existed. Once all thoughts about the current program were on the table, we made some recommendations to improve the communication of safety messages, such as posting *Wingman* magazine on the Air Force Portal log-in page.

The second day started with a full plate of taskings. But, like a page out of Airman Leadership School, we came together after the storming, norming and forming in the clutch. Our first objective was to videotape a 60-second version of our stories. Then, we moved on to taping a radio public service announcement for the Army/Air Force Exchange Services and Defense Commissary Agency, which will be heard on installations worldwide. It was a cleverly crafted skit about two Airmen celebrating their promotions but didn't have a plan to get home safely. We then focused most of our efforts on a video to cover several of the topics supporting the Critical Days of Summer campaign. By the end of day two, we'd accomplished a good part of our task.

The third day began with a meeting with Maj. Gen. Greg Feest, Air Force chief of safety and commander of the Air Force Safety Center. He told us what he expected from us: to share our stories at our installations and across our major commands, as well as continuing to provide input for sharing safety messages to our peers.

Then it was back to the task of completing our video. We taped segments at the base enlisted club, a memorial site, picnic area and then taped a council member on his dirt bike as he tore into the gravel with his back tire, while being safe. The video was about risk management and featured our only female in the group playing the antagonist, walking through each set and tempting people to act unsafely. We think the final product will be on point.

Our last day ended with an out-brief presented to Maj. Gen. Feest where we gave him our honest assessment of the program and how we thought our efforts would contribute to make it a stronger communication program.

My TDY to the safety center broadened my horizons. I left with a sincere feeling that what we accomplished there would benefit each and every Airman in the Air Force!

Ground Safety Well Done Awards

... presented in recognition of non-safety personnel who make a significant contribution that affects overall mishap prevention activities toward ground and weapons safety.

Adam F. Buehler and
Master Sgt. Jeffrey T. Richards

The Ground Safety Well Done Award is presented to Adam Buehler, 87th Air Base Wing, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., and Master Sgt. Jeffrey T. Richards, 509th Bomb Wing, Whiteman AFB, Mo. As founder and co-founder, respectively, of the Green Knights Motorcycle Club, Buehler and Richards created an organization based on the wingman concept that encourages experienced riders to share their knowledge with less experienced motorcyclists. The Green Knights charter ensures that chapters promote safety, provide information on local and state motorcycle laws, and ensures riders understand how to safely operate a motorcycle. Buehler and Richards help all the chapters through a monthly radio show and the Green Knights' website. Their foresight and tireless volunteer spirit has grown the club from a single Air Force installation in 2000 to 91 chapters in 2011 with more than 2,000 members, including groups in the Royal Air Force, Irish Defense Force and Canadian Army. Buehler also helped the Air Force Safety Center with 36 motorcycle training modules currently under development. Richards' instructor background is instrumental in promoting a motorcycle safety culture throughout the Green Knights organization and the Air Force. The Green Knights military-based motorcycle club is a catalyst for smart decision making on the road and camaraderie within the entire military motorcycle community. Their exceptional performance and commitment to safety reflect great credit upon themselves, Air Mobility Command, Air Force Global Strike Command and the U.S. Air Force.

Master Sgt. Andrew Wells

The Ground Safety Well Done Award is presented to Master Sgt. Andrew Wells, 65th Air Base Wing, Lajes Field, Azores, from Jan. 17, 2011, to May 15, 2011. Wells co-investigated 21 mishaps, assisted with 12 annual inspections and conducted 28 spot inspections. His attention to detail helped identify 234 discrepancies and 75 new risk assessment codes. Wells also served as an exceptional ambassador for safety by hosting four Armed Forces Network radio shows and authoring four safety newsletters, reaching more than 3,000 Airmen, dependents and host nation employees. He briefed 157 people during seven wing Right Start briefings and two major command inspection teams. Wells also single-handedly drafted and implemented the 65th ABW motorcycle mentor program. He developed two island-wide routes to expose base riders to the local riding environment and created PowerPoint presentations to illustrate the associated hazards. His distinctive accomplishments reflect great credit upon himself, U.S. Air Forces in Europe and the U.S. Air Force.

Tech. Sgt. Eric Morales

The Ground Safety Well Done Award is presented to Tech. Sgt. Eric Morales, 65th Air Base Wing, Lajes Field, Azores, from Sept. 27, 2010, to Jan. 14, 2011. Morales utilized his expertise as an aircraft structural maintenance craftsman to serve as a key advisor to a safety mishap investigation of a civilian 747 aircraft. During this investigation, he served as a liaison between civilian maintenance personnel and Boeing engineers, facilitating aircraft repairs. His actions enabled repairs to be completed seven days earlier than planned. Additionally, he used his expertise to identify severe corrosion on three emergency response trailers. His analysis and recommendations led to the decommissioning of the trailers and prevented the imminent loss of critical emergency response equipment and lives. Morales co-investigated 19 minor mishaps and assisted with four unit annual inspections. His attention to detail helped him identify more than 40 discrepancies which led to the assignment of 20 new risk assessment codes. His distinctive accomplishments reflect great credit upon himself, U.S. Air Forces in Europe and the U.S. Air Force.

Fireworks Safety

Fireworks during the Fourth of July are as American as apple-pie, but did you know that more fires are reported on that day than on any other day of the year in the United States? Nearly half of these fires are caused by fireworks. The good news is you can enjoy your holiday and the fireworks, with just a few simple safety tips:

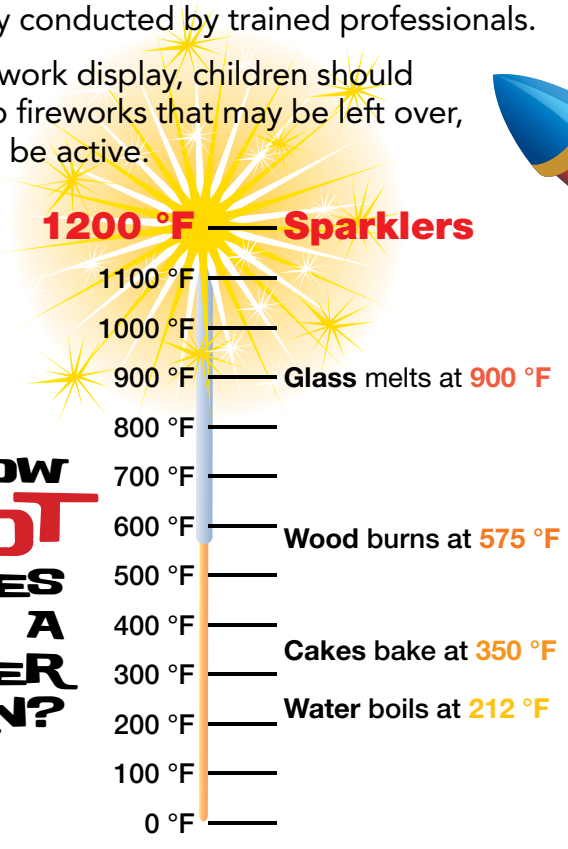
PROCEED WITH CAUTION!

- Leave fireworks to the professionals. Do not use consumer fireworks.
- The safest way to enjoy fireworks is to attend a public display conducted by trained professionals.
- After the firework display, children should never pick up fireworks that may be left over, they may still be active.

CONSUMER FIREWORKS

include sparklers and firecrackers. The tip of a sparkler burns at a temperature of more than **1,200 degrees Fahrenheit**, which is hot enough to cause third-degree burns.

HOW HOT DOES A SPARKLER BURN?



FACTS

- Each July Fourth, thousands of people, most often children and teens, are injured while using consumer fireworks.
- The risk of fireworks injury is more than twice as high for children ages 10–14 as for the general population.

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The Danger You Don't See
Taxiing in Low-Visibility Conditions

MAJ. MICHAEL PASTUZYN
310th Airlift Squadron
MacDill AFB, Fla.

It has happened to all of us. We diligently plan our sortie, prep for all contingencies, and Mother Nature drastically increases our workload at showtime with bad weather and low visibility. Every pilot has a system to ensure he or she can make the mission happen. You ask yourself, *Can I legally depart? Do I need a departure alternate?* However, the question that's often forgotten is, *How do I get from parking to the runway?* Taxiing an aircraft usually rates pretty low in level of difficulty, but all that changes during low-visibility operations.

As I think back to all the times I've taxied in low visibility, no event stands out more than a routine cargo mission during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The flight in was less than a two-hour sortie from Incirlik AB, Turkey. The approach was flown without incident. The crew took a good breath as we blocked in, since ground operations should be the easy part. The download went smoothly and, due to international agreements, there was no upload. We prepped the jet for the flight home, briefed the departure and blocked out. We were the only heavy aircraft on station and were promptly cleared to hold short of the runway.

The taxi seemed all but routine – one parallel taxiway and a right turn but, as stated earlier, low visibility can make even the most benign tasks difficult. As we taxied to the runway, we ran through the normal flow of checklists when our loadmaster yelled, "Stop," from the left aircrew member seat. He just happened to be wearing night vision goggles and picked up static electricity discharge from two Army helicopters that were "blacked out" and holding approximately 75 feet in front of us. The helicopters were working on a separate frequency and weren't notified of our taxi clearance, nor were we notified of the additional traffic. This situation ended without incident but clearly demonstrates how poor visibility can complicate even a simple taxi route.

So what steps can we take to mitigate the danger of a low-visibility taxi? The first should be detailed planning. Make sure everyone on your crew is familiar with the airfield layout and knows what taxiways can and can't be used. During the pre-mission prep, blow up an airfield diagram, mark off unsuitable taxiways, then rehearse potential taxi routing with your crew. Once in execution, pay attention to other traffic on the field. Listen to the clearances they receive from ground control and see if that fits with what you're expecting. This will give you situational awareness on the field's flow and alert you to any taxi clearances you may not be able to accept. Take things slowly when it's time for you to taxi. Taxiing at the speed equivalent for runway conditions is also helpful in low-visibility environments. Taxiing at a walking pace should give you ample time to react in a low-visibility environment.

Finally, resist the pressure to rush. There are usually outside forces pressing the mission time on target, and user pressures come with the job. But, I can assure you that taxiing slowly in low visibility will cost you less time than a ground incident.

The simulator is another place where pilots can better prepare themselves for low-visibility operations. During your next simulator training session, practice taxiing in low visibility, and see if your normal cues still apply. Review airfield markings and lighting systems. These cues can assist you in defining your taxi route. Also, reference an airfield diagram and taxi at an airfield equipped with a Surface Movement Guidance and Control System. These airfields have slightly different markings and procedures for low-visibility taxiing, and a first-time look in the simulator will be helpful if you ever end up taxiing at one of these fields.

Reduced-visibility ground operations offer a unique set of challenges that can be reduced with detailed preparation and good situational awareness. Safe operations start at showtime. As you assess each part of your sortie, look for areas that could present difficulty, and take steps to mitigate the risks. Remember that a good plan on the ground goes a long way in the air. Fly safe!

Snowy Owl Finds Grissom

MAJ. DOUGLAS PERRY
434th Air Refueling Wing
Grissom ARB, Ind.

Bird hazards at Grissom ARB are typically posed by small birds such as killdeer, barn swallows, horned larks and doves. Our bird hazard became unique with the December visit of a large snowy owl that flew continuously over and in the vicinity of the runway. Despite all initial efforts to rid the bird from the area, it became apparent that he wouldn't be easily discouraged. He had a wing span of more than four feet and didn't seem afraid of anything. We named him Hedwig, after the owl of J.K. Rowling's famed literary character Harry Potter, and intensified our efforts to eliminate the hazard to airfield operations.

Jerry Skiles, weapons safety manager, and Master Sgt. Johnny Armes, NCO in charge of ground safety, exhausted all usual attempts to scare the bird. I called the airfield manager, Steve Bailey, to get his perspective. Bailey and I then spent that afternoon chasing Hedwig around the airfield, and I knew by the end of the day that we had a rare situation and needed to learn as much as possible about this owl.

For more advice, Skiles contacted Daniel Sullivan, a wildlife biologist and chief of the U.S. Air Force Bird/Wildlife Aircraft Strike Hazard Team at the Air Force Safety Center, Kirtland AFB, N.M. Following that discussion and a little research, it appeared that we were looking at a record year for snowy owls migrating farther south than usual, and the birds had already been reported throughout the northern 48 states.

The next day began just like the previous one. Hedwig was still on the airfield and going nowhere fast. I spent most of that afternoon on the phone with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Division and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to make them aware of our problem and seek their advice. Our goal at that point was to exhaust all reasonable non-lethal means before considering the option of "taking the bird." However, we were prepared to take the bird, if necessary, in order to protect Air Force assets and human life.

By the third day of Hedwig's visit, Bailey had put together data on the locations, times and known areas of Hedwig's operations. Those efforts gave us a pretty good picture of the bird's perching points and areas of activity. He continued to resist the screamers and bangers we used for pyrotechnics. Those tactics only scared him up and around but he kept coming back to fly circles around us.

The USDA and USFWS advice was to keep up the pyrotechnics and keep the pressure on the bird 24/7 or as much as our manning would allow. The thought was that with no relief in scare tactics, he might figure it wasn't worth the effort to hang around the airfield and he would simply move on. They also stressed that the longer Hedwig stayed, the harder it would be to get rid of him.

That night, we had a close call with an aircraft. A KC-135 was doing a full-stop taxi back and planned to go back into the pattern when they reported the owl flew past the cockpit. The Bird Watch Condition was raised and transition was canceled. The next morning, Hedwig was back in his favorite spot – on an electrical box between the runway and taxiway gulf.

I held a BASH meeting the morning of the fourth day to bring the operations group commander and everyone else up to speed on the details of the situation and our plan. I had already contacted a local falconer who would try to trap Hedwig, and Bailey had submitted work orders to install spikes on the electrical box and to level a dirt mound where Hedwig frequently perched. We were also planning to keep up the pyrotechnics and harassment techniques.

That afternoon, I took falconer Adam Speicher to the flightline where Bailey was tracking Hedwig. Speicher had a bal-chatri (BC) trap and planned to bait it with live rats which are similar to lemmings, a natural food for snowy owls. This trap consisted of a small wire cage with several monofilament nooses attached to the surface of the cage. When the bird attempts to take the bait, the nooses catch its talons and it can be grabbed from behind.

After a few minutes of observation, the falconer baited the trap and set it just below the hangar where Hedwig was perched. Within minutes, Hedwig swooped down onto the cage and tried to get the rat. After a few more minutes, one of his talons was snagged in a noose, then the falconer rushed in and grabbed him. Success!

We later learned that Hedwig was a juvenile male, estimated to be 6 or 7 months old, and he was given a clean bill of health from a falcon rehab center. The falconer kept Hedwig through the winter and planned to release him back into the wild far north of Grissom in hopes Hedwig will find his way back north. The snowy owls' normal habitat is in the Arctic tundra region and Hedwig ended up a lot farther south during winter migration. Hedwig was one of seven confirmed snowy owls seen in Indiana.

The four-day effort took close coordination with airfield management to track the bird and learn its habit patterns. The outside agencies provided advice and referrals to find out what to do, and we were fortunate to have a falconer assist in trapping the bird.

"In all my days, I never thought I would be chasing a snowy owl around the airfield," Armes said.

I must admit, I certainly didn't think it would be a week-long chase. It was a win-win for flight safety and Hedwig.

Facts about snowy owl behavior

- Snowy owls occasionally migrate South from the arctic in the winter when their food supply runs low or they're chased from their territories.
- Adult males are pure white; females are larger than males and are white with brown marks on the chest. Chicks, which were hatched in June, have black blotches over their white body.
- Young birds have never seen darkness before they arrive in Southern Canada or Northern U.S.
- There are no trees on the tundra where they live most of their life. That is why migrating Arctic birds such as snowy owls and rough-legged hawks sit on low perches or on the ground.
- They are attracted to well-lit areas. Having never known absolute darkness, they feel more comfortable in the light.
- They function and hunt during the day since they live in daylight most of their life.
- They don't have a natural fear of people. They often allow people to come quite close.
- Snowy owls prefer rodents as a prey species and eat birds as a poor second option.

"Herky, You Land With No Clearance"

Not one crewmember remembered running the checklists

CAPT. TYLER FISK
71st Rescue Squadron
Moody AFB, Ga.

There we were – a C-130 crew who had just wrapped up the third flight in the AOR and were headed "home" for the night. Little did we know we'd be talking with the commander in a couple of hours and possibly getting sent home a few months short of our planned return date.

Let me set the scene.

I was a relatively experienced navigator heading out on my third deployment. The aircraft commander was on his first deployment in the left seat but had deployed several times before, as had the co-pilot, flight engineer and loadmasters. Overall, we were a combat-seasoned crew. We'd flown the aircraft from the states uneventfully and were getting settled into our new digs. We'd all deployed to this particular location in Southwest Asia several times and knew the airspace, controllers, flying ops, ground ops, parking spots and chow hall extremely well. We even spoke the local language with proper dialect. In case you can't read between the lines, this foreshadows complacency in the first degree.

We'd flown on a day schedule for the past week and already flown several missions. We all seemed to pick up where we left off a few months prior, and it felt like we never left theater. On this particular mission, we got quick turned to a night line and went back into the box. We hacked our 12-hour day and returned to base for termination. It was about 3 a.m., and we got handed off from center to approach. We were the only aircraft in the terminal area and started to set up for the visual approach. The last thing any of us remembers was being at 3,000 feet above mean sea level. Then we heard, "HERKY 31, you land with no clearance! You no clearance to land!" This guy was seriously upset.

After you feel your heart fall to your feet and the crewmembers look at each other and think, Did we not?… it occurs to you to push up the throttles and call a go-around. That did not happen. Instead, we put the Herk in reverse, got on the brakes and taxied clear of the active runway to finish talking with the tower.

The American liaison got on the tower frequency and told us not to worry about it; it was partly their fault. We briefly considered going with the thought, *Freebie.*

No one saw; no one's the wiser. Instead, we parked the plane, went into ops and fessed up our mistake.

The night operations officer sent us to bed, and we reported back down to the squadron a couple of hours later to sort out the matter. Things did get ironed out, and we finished our deployment. We were much more vigilant for it.

It's worth taking a look at some of the lessons learned and what you can take away from our errors.

The overriding culprit in this scenario was complacency. Just because we had flown this identical approach to this base a hundred times doesn't preclude us from basic airmanship. GET CLEARANCE TO LAND. As a crew, we had become so used to the sequence of events in this portion of the flight that we forgot the basics. The entire segment from 3,000 feet to touchdown was a blank. It was like driving your car when you're too tired, and the next thing you know you're pulling into your driveway. Except this was a multimillion-dollar, 100,000-pound piece of metal.

The scariest part is that not one crewmember even remembered running the checklists, configuring the airplane, getting the hand off to tower and doing the other parts of an approach, such as putting the aircraft in a safe position to land. We did it all subconsciously. Think about this: If we weren't doing these things, do you think we were visually clearing for other traffic, monitoring systems or looking at the runway for other hazards like trucks or wildlife? Unfortunately, the answer is no. Thankfully, there was no one else on final approach or taking the runway at the time.

There were other compounding factors, like being quick turned and over confident. The bottom line was there is no excuse for what happened, and we are all better aviators now for that experience.

One of many take-aways I learned from the experience was the 3 C's: *Checklist, Clearance and Configuration*. If you ask yourself these three questions or verbalize them to the crew every time you set up for a landing, chances are you might just save yourself some time in front of the man or a trip to an early grave.

GOT THE "ITIS"?

CAPT. BRYON T. SHIELDS
39th Airlift Squadron
Dyess AFB, Texas

After four years of deploying overseas as a C-130H navigator, I finally landed the coveted "Iron-Swap" mission. The mission was to deliver a freshly refurbished C-130 from Dyess AFB, Texas, to the Middle East to replace another C-130 due to its required maintenance inspections. Since our departure for the 10-day trip was scheduled for Dec. 9, we knew we might miss Christmas with our families. However, we had 16 days before Christmas and figured that was plenty of time to complete the 16,000-mile mission.

The mission went well until we picked up the aircraft that had been flying in the bone-dry climates of the Middle East and took it to the cold, wet climate that was typical of Mildenhall AB, England, in mid-December. There we encountered our first maintenance delays due to electrical problems with the generator control units. We ended up stepping to fly four out of five days and took off once only to return to Mildenhall when the No. 4 prop spinner gushed hydraulic fluid over Scotland. We eventually left Mildenhall with a new prop, but we were down a generator.

We landed in Prestwick, Scotland, to top off our tanks and then took off over the North Atlantic into an 80-knot headwind for a seven-hour trip to St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada. After a long flight of over-water procedures and listening to the scratchy high frequency radio, I was relieved to see the coast slowly brighten up my radar scope. The day went smoothly until we were on a seven-mile final for the straight-in visual to the runway. The pilot called for "gear down," then the co-pilot promptly responded with "Gear down," and he lowered the gear handle. However, the cranky, cold 50-year-old Herk responded by lowering only the nose gear. We knew it wasn't good because we only had about an hour of extra gas to resolve the problem. We were about three miles out and 900 feet above ground level. We went around, and notified the tower of our intentions to miss the approach and hold on the published holding point to troubleshoot the problem. Meanwhile, we discussed the Dash 1 procedure. About two minutes after the gear handle was lowered, the left main came down and then we felt the rights release and lower. The indicator showed all the gear down and locked, and the loadmaster confirmed by looking through the small wheel well windows. We entered the downwind and landed uneventfully.

We all knew our flying crew chiefs were going to say that there was nothing they could do there – zero

maintenance support or jacks to lift the aircraft for a gear inspection. We had only a couple of days to get back to Dyess AFB before the Christmas weekend. I told the pilots it would take 16 hours of flight time to get to Texas while flying with gear down and straight headwind of around 80 knots. The aircraft commander worked with the higher-ups to get a one-time gear-down waiver and duty day extension from 16 to 18 hours.

We showed the next day after 14 hours on the ground for the last legs of our trip. At this point, we just wanted to get home. You could say we had the "itis" – the "get-home-itis." We were limited to a maximum indicated airspeed of 165 knots with the gear down, and scheduled to land at Westover ARB, Mass., for customs and gas. Flying at 160 gave us a true airspeed of more than 200, however, a lovely headwind of 60 to 80 knots meant our groundspeed wasn't good. After a six-hour flight to Westover ARB, we quick-turned through customs, gas and flight planning for the final leg.

The winds were right on the limit of making it to Dyess at the end of our 18-hour duty day. We decided to press on and hope for the best. After going around some winter weather, we noticed we weren't looking good on time, and starting looking at Little Rock AFB, La., as a possible alternate. I told the pilots we had to descend if we were to make it to Texas in time. We tried it, and the gamble paid off. The winds were significantly better at 12,000 feet versus 18,000 feet. We shut down the engines on the exact minute of our 18-hour limit. We took a risk knowing we would be close, and we were fortunate we didn't encounter more maintenance or weather issues.

We were glad to finally be done, but we all agreed that we wouldn't do that again. We'd left ourselves with zero time for the "what-if's" like missing an approach and proceeding to an alternate. We backed ourselves into a corner and came close to breaking our duty-day limit and our own personal fatigue limit, as well.

The point is: Don't lean so far forward that you end up falling on your face. The mission is to get home to your families every time, not by a certain time. Important dates and family will wait for you. Just be careful not to fall victim to the "itis".

Update: Grim Reaper

AL JONES
Human Factors Division
Air Force Safety Center
Kirtland AFB, N.M.

Editor's note: The Grim Reaper visited with us back in 2008 (*Wingman Special Issue*, Vol. 1, No. 3). He recently dropped by again to update us on his activities. Dr. Love sat down with Death and had the following exchange.

Dr. Love: Welcome back and thanks for taking time away from your duties to speak with us. It seems like just yesterday you were here but I guess that was actually five years ago … it's been too long.

GR: Time is just flying. I'm on the road a lot, and I like to drop in and see you guys when I find myself in Albuquerque.

Dr. Love: I've tried to keep up with your work and it looks like you're staying busy. It must be nice to have a secure job in these troubled times.

GR: I'm a lucky guy. But honestly, it's been non-stop. Seems like I'm juggling a hundred projects, and good help is impossible to find. Every time I get someone who's doing a good job, I try to give them a pat on the back but they just … well, you get the idea.

Dr. Love: Sometimes it's best not to get too close to your employees. Anyway, life, or I guess in your case death, is being pretty good to you. Natural disasters, wars and disease seem to be doing better than ever.

GR: They're the staples … and don't forget the folks who are overweight and out of shape. I'm guessing that would be hard for you to forget.

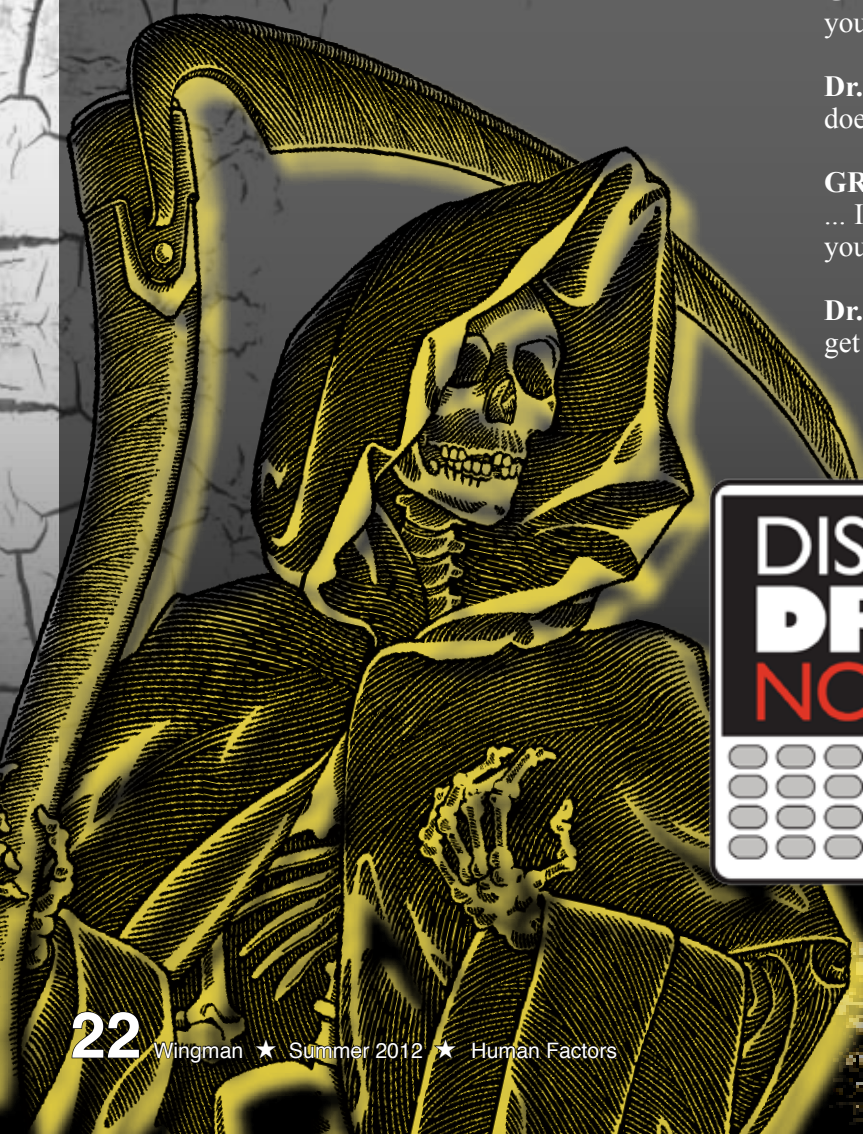
Dr. Love: What do you mean?

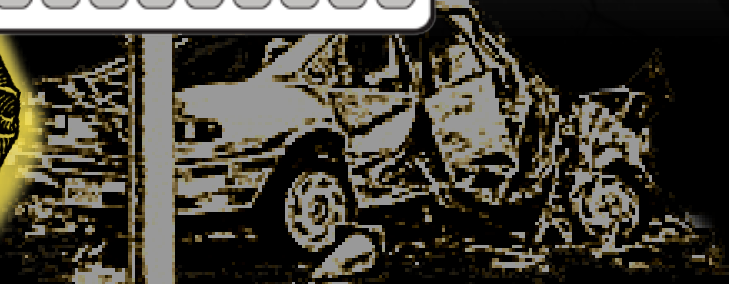
GR: You do look in the mirror every morning don't you?

Dr. Love: Hey, I'm big-boned and my work schedule doesn't easily accommodate a workout schedule.

GR: Dial it back Jack. I'm just playing with you. I kid ... I kid because I love. You look great. No, seriously, you're overweight and out of shape.

Dr. Love: Well … maybe I'm a bit sensitive. But let's get back on topic. What's new in the world of death?





Attracted to Distracted Drivers

GR: We've talked about the staples, but those are old school, and these days I'm really excited about emerging technologies. Medical technological breakthroughs are allowing people to live longer. So I've decided to fight fire with fire. I'm not going to fight technology to stay competitive. I'm going to embrace technology. I'm into high tech, baby. If you check out my Facebook page you'll ...

Dr. Love: What? … You have a Facebook page?

GR: Absolutely … High tech is the wave of the future and you can bet I'm going to ride that wave. Facebook, Twitter, My Space, Craigslist, EBay … I'm selling T-shirts to Goth groups like crazy on E-Bay.

Dr. Love: That seems a bit odd. Why do you need to publicize your appearances and activities? I thought you were the master of surprise.

GR: You're missing the point. I'm just supporting an industry that's supporting me. Quid Pro Quo. Distracted driving is what it's all about. I've had good luck with drinking and driving, motorcycles going too fast and failure to wear safety gear, but I have to stay fresh and distracted driving is a market with unlimited growth potential.

Dr. Love: What do you mean?

GR: Distracted driving started out as a cottage industry with drivers looking down to read a map, yelling at the kids in the back seat or trying to unwrap a burger and stick it in their mouths while driving. True, I got some deaths here and there but I never got the volume I needed to make it a VSLD.

Dr. Love: VSLD?

GR: OMG, you are out of touch with the times. VSLD is … Viable Strategy for Likely Death. In order to get a driving death by distraction, I have to line up a dangerous situation outside the car with a distraction inside the car. Sounds easy, but in the old days it was tough. It's like Vegas.

Dr. Love: Vegas?

GR: Yes Vegas … Las Vegas. It's all about the odds; the percentages. Every time you're distracted while driving, you're gambling that nothing outside the car is presenting a threat; no child walking across the street, no red light that you're about to run, no driver in front of you slamming on the brakes before you notice and slow down. Most times, when you're distracted, you get away with it. I needed to increase my odds. I could only do that by increasing the amount of time you're distracted as a driver and/or by increasing the threats outside the car.

Dr. Love: That actually makes sense. When did you realize distracted driving had the potential to obtain VSLD status?

GR: I really noticed a change when people started using cell phones – distraction by making or answering a call and the added distraction by engaging in a conversation on the phone. And these conversations can become emotionally charged. Sometimes, it's not just relaxed idle chitchat, but intensely-heated conversations regarding problems at work and home. Distraction by making or answering the call and the added distraction from the conversation itself – that's two for one, and that's not bad.

Dr. Love: But cell phone use is illegal and …

GR: Illegal … WAKE UP AND SMELL THE ROSES … Let's go down to the street about a block away from the gate. We can just stand there (I love it when people see me standing by the road … it really freaks them out) and count the number of people who pick up their cell phones once they're a block away from the gate.

Dr. Love: Well, we do have a lot of employees over at Sandia Labs and I guess some of them …

GR: Really? Sandia Labs employees? We can stand here in the safety center parking lot and see ….

Dr. Love: Easy, easy … we are trying to publish this article in the safety center's *Wingman* magazine.

GR: Of course, of course. When I say safety center parking lot I'm just speaking figuratively … I actually

mean any parking lot. The point is, illegal, or not, people still talk on cell phones while driving. But that's just the tip of the iceberg. Now we have texting, internet access, even GPS systems you can argue with. More systems are on the way. The added beauty of this is that the driver isn't only engaged in this activity but everyone around the driver is equally distracted. Even pedestrians and cyclists are tuned in to their electronics and tuned out to the dangers all around them. I've dramatically increased the distraction in the car while increasing the threat outside the car. That spells VSLD in my book. It doesn't get much better than this.

Dr. Love: It does seem made to order for you. Can anything go wrong with your plan?

GR: I suppose the only possible flaw is the fact that people have the ability to neutralize the potential for accidents by managing the distractions.

Dr. Love: How so?

GR: Think back to your old aircrew days. Aircrew members are taught to aviate, navigate and then communicate. If people simply choose to use technology in a responsible manner, I may go bust on my new endeavor. First and foremost, drive the car and be aware of your surroundings. Pay attention to the task at hand … driving. Now more than ever folks need to be defensive drivers. Secondly, navigate in such a manner that you're positioning yourself away from potential threats outside the vehicle. Avoid blind spots and give yourself plenty of distance from other drivers. Drive like you know other drivers and pedestrians around you are distracted, because they probably are. Lastly, but equally important, put yourself in a safe situation when you choose to communicate. Pull over or just wait a few minutes and return a call once you get to your destination. I'm just betting that people aren't willing to take these simple steps because they all think, *It will never happen to me.*

Dr. Love: People can change. It took a while, but we've made great strides in getting people to wear their seat belts when …

GR: Mention seat belts one more time and this interview is over.

Dr. Love: Sorry. The point is that people can change bad habits. The time to decide how you're going to handle the potential distractions inside your car is before you ever get into the car. We just need to get a little discipline and decide that our normal behavior will be to not make or answer a call from our cell phone when we are the driver, to not text or access the internet while we are the driver, and to not allow ourselves to get into a distracted situation when we are the driver. I'm betting our Air Force members are smart enough to see the danger and become much more judicious in how they handle distraction while driving.

The situation is only going to become more demanding as technology continues to advance. I'm betting Air Force members are going to be good wingmen and call their friends out when they engage in dangerous distracted-driving practices. They'll not only look out for their friends but also cover their own backside at the same time. When the accident occurs, death will not discriminate … drivers and passengers will be equally accommodated.

GR: Oh stop with the flattery ... I'm blushing.

Dr. Love: Also, our members know that their kids are always watching and learning by their example. I'm betting we're going to say enough is enough … and that we have to be safe for our own sake and for the sake of our children.

GR: Maybe, but I think I'll take that bet.

Dr. Love: Well, I want to thank you again for stopping by. Your insights are always appreciated. I hope it won't be another five years before I see you.

GR: Oh I'll be seeing you much sooner than that, tubby. How's that heart doing?

Dr. Love: What do you mean by that?

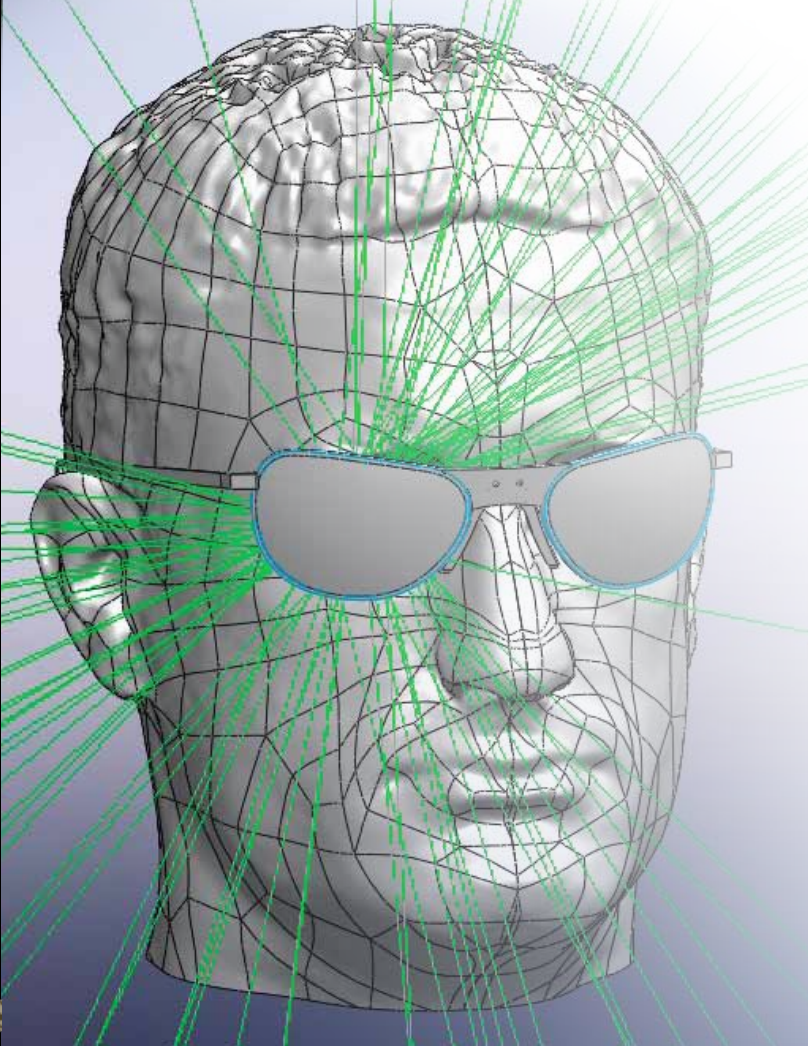
GR: I kid … I kid.
I kid because I love.

What's all the chatter about LEP and NVGs?

CAPT. MICHAEL GIFFORD
Air Force Safety Center
Weapons Safety Division
Kirtland AFB, N.M.

Lasers are becoming more useful and abundant in the operational Air Force. The Directed Energy Weapons Team at the Air Force Safety Center averages one to two Directed Energy Device (laser) approvals every month, and there are plenty more on the list to tackle. Those approvals allow our comrades in arms to safely handle lasers in the field. The educational piece of this is absolutely crucial. We are given only two eyes and, if they are not protected, there is no saying, "We will get it right next time."

A basic understanding of Laser Eye Protection (LEP) is that it is wavelength specific and contains an optical density (OD) rating at each protected wavelength. Each laser has an operating wavelength. For example, a handheld laser that can be mounted on a rifle may operate at a wavelength of 830 nanometers. Wavelengths or frequency are the two main variables of a laser that you need to be aware. Given those variables associated with laser design, there are several combinations for LEP. As stated earlier, LEP also has an OD rating. OD describes the attenuation factor, or how well the lens absorbs the laser energy. The Air Force has a program office located at ASC/WNUV, Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio, that is dedicated to handling LEP issues.



Night Vision Goggles (NVGs) come in all different shapes and sizes, and they operate on different principles than LEP. They take an image, digitally alter it and send it to the user. It is essentially a video camera on your head. There are image enhancing and thermal signal processing options available. The mission drives these requirements.

So they seem quite different, yet they both protect our eyes from lasers? Here is where we apply what we have learned thus far. LEP is only "good" if specifications of the LEP match those specifications of the laser lasing you. They have to correspond to provide full protection. A higher OD provides more protection if it's tuned to that wavelength. However, if you know you are being lased, LEP rated at a lower OD is better than nothing on your eyes.

The bottom line is that NVGs will protect your eyes. The laser wavelength or operational characteristics do not matter if you are being lased; NVGs will stop any laser not powerful enough to melt them. Remember, the NVG duplicates and alters the image for you to view. That sounds like a wonderful alternative right? Well, my fellow Airmen, all that glitters is not gold. NVGs can become saturated and/or ruined if the right amount of power is transmitted into the lens, thus causing the image to be lost. Should this occur, there can be negative affects to your ability to execute the mission.

Well, what do we do with all of this information? First, we apply it when the time comes. Lasers are out there and damage to your eye can happen in a blink of an eye. Some lasers are so powerful that the human aversion response of 0.25 seconds is not quick enough to protect you. So beware and know what lasers are used by your unit and other units operating near you. The more educated you are on a subject, the more effectively you can address problems and provide the right solutions.

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Category II – AFOTEC

Col. Will L. Tubbs Memorial Award
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Category II – AFOTEC

Maj. Gen. Benjamin Foulois Trophy – AMC

Chief of Staff Individual Safety Award – Senior Master Sgt. Sydney Parker, Ramstein AB, Germany (USAFE)

Lt. Koren Kolligian Jr. Trophy – Capt. Frank Baumann, Sheppard AFB, Texas (AETC)

Colombian Safety Award – ACC

System of Cooperation Among the American Air Forces Flight Safety Award – PACAF

Safety Career Professional of the Year Award
Tech. Sgt. Justin Carwile, 721st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Ramstein AB, Germany (AMC)

Air Force Nuclear Surety Outstanding Achievement Award
Capt. Garrett Houk, 2nd Bomb Wing, Barksdale AFB, La. (AFGSC)

Air Force Explosive Safety Outstanding Achievement Award
Master Sgt. Christopher Kreyling, 321st Air Expeditionary Wing, Sather AB, Iraq (ACC)

Air Force Chief of Safety Outstanding Achievement Award for Ground Safety
Category I – 30th Space Wing, Vandenberg AFB, Calif. (AFSPC)
Category II – 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, Joint Base Balad, Iraq (ACC)
Category III – 6th Air Mobility Wing, MacDill AFB, Fla. (AMC)
Category IV – 353rd Special Operations Group, Kadena AB, Japan (AFSOC)
Category V – 721st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Ramstein AB, Germany (AMC)

Air Force Chief of Safety Special Achievement Award
Air Force Research Laboratory, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio (AFMC)

Air Force Chief of Safety Aircrew of Distinction Award
Crew of Pedro 84, 18th Wing, Kadena AB, Japan (PACAF)

Air Force Chief of Safety Aviation Maintenance Safety Award
Senior Master Sgt. Earl Wellman, 437th Maintenance Squadron, Joint Base Charleston, S.C. (AMC)

Air Force Chief of Safety Medical Achievement Award
633rd Aerospace Medical Squadron, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va. (ACC)

Air Force Space Safety Outstanding Achievement Award
Francis McDougall, Space and Missile Systems Center, El Segundo, Calif. (AFSPC)

Air Force Chief of Safety Space Team of Distinction Award
Advanced Extremely High Frequency Satellite Recovery Team, Space and Missile Systems Center, El Segundo, Calif. (AFSPC)

Air Force Chief of Safety Cyber Safety Award
Staff Sgt. Bruce W. Woo, 688th Information Operations Wing, Lackland AFB, Texas (AFSPC)

FLIGHT SAFETY PLAQUES

ACC	1st Fighter Wing, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va. 4th Fighter Wing, Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C. 46th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron, Balad Air Base, Iraq 552nd Air Control Wing, Tinker AFB, Okla.
AETC	12th Flying Training Wing, Randolph AFB, Texas

	33rd Fighter Wing, Eglin AFB, Fla. 37th Flying Training Squadron, Columbus AFB, Miss. 41st Flying Training Squadron, Columbus AFB, Miss. 48th Flying Training Squadron, Columbus AFB, Miss. 49th Fighter Training Squadron, Columbus AFB, Miss. 314th Airlift Wing, Little Rock AFB, Ark.
AFGSC	54th Helicopter Squadron, Minot AFB, N.D.
AFMC	Air Armament Center, Eglin AFB, Fla.
AFRC	512th Airlift Wing, Dover AFB, Del. 10th Flight Test Squadron, Tinker AFB, Okla.
AFSPC	45th Space Wing, Patrick AFB, Fla.
AMC	1st Airlift Squadron, Joint Base Andrews, Md. 62d Airlift Wing, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. 436th Airlift Wing, Dover AFB, Del. 22d Air Refueling Wing, McConnell AFB, Kan. 375th Air Mobility Wing, Scott AFB, Ill. 317th Airlift Group, Dyess AFB, Texas
ANG	110th Airlift Wing, Battle Creek, Mich. 193rd Special Operations Wing, Middletown, Pa.
PACAF	459th Airlift Squadron, Yokota AB, Japan 33rd Rescue Squadron, Kadena AB, Japan 90th Fighter Squadron, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska 354th Fighter Wing, Eielson AFB, Alaska
AFSOC	353rd Special Operations Group, Kadena AB, Japan 371st Special Operations Combat Training Squadron, Small Unmanned Aerial Systems Flight, Hurlburt Field, Fla.
USAFE	100th Air Refueling Wing, RAF Mildenhall, U.K. 480th Fighter Squadron, Spangdahlem AB, Germany

MISSILE SAFETY PLAQUES

CATEGORY I

ACC	20th Fighter Wing, Shaw AFB, S.C. 83rd Fighter Weapons Squadron, Tyndall AFB, Fla.
AFMC	Air Armament Center Range Safety, Eglin AFB, Fla.
PACAF	18th Wing, Kadena AB, Japan 35th Fighter Wing, Misawa AB, Japan
USAFE	31st Fighter Wing, Aviano AB, Italy 48th Fighter Wing, RAF Lakenheath, U.K.

CATEGORY II

AFGSC	90th Missile Wing, F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo.
AFMC	Air Armament Center Range Safety, Eglin AFB, Fla. Utah Test and Training Range, Hill AFB, Utah
AFSPC	30th Space Wing, Vandenberg AFB, Calif.

EXPLOSIVES SAFETY PLAQUES

CATEGORY I

ACC	9th Munitions Squadron, Beale AFB, Calif. 99th Air Base Wing, Nellis AFB, Nev. 355th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight, Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.
AETC	56th Fighter Wing, Luke AFB, Ariz.
AFGSC	90th Missile Wing, F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo.
AFMC	Aeronautical Systems Center and 88th Air Base Wing Weapons Safety, Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio

	Afloat Preposition Fleet Team, Hill AFB, Utah
AFRC	315th Airlift Wing, Charleston AFB, S.C.
AFSOC	1st Special Operations Equipment Maintenance Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Fla.
AFSPC	30th Space Wing, Vandenberg AFB, Calif.
AMC	6th Air Mobility Wing, MacDill AFB, Fla. 19th Airlift Wing, Little Rock AFB, Ark. 22d Air Refueling Wing, McConnell AFB, Kan. 87th Air Base Wing, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. 92d Air Refueling Wing, Fairchild AFB, Wash. 62d Airlift Wing, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. 375th Air Mobility Wing, Scott AFB, Ill. 436th Airlift Wing, Dover AFB, Del. 43rd Airlift Group, Pope Field, N.C. 721st Aerial Port Squadron, Ramstein AB, Germany
PACAF	3rd Wing, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska 18th Wing, Kadena AB, Japan 36th Wing, Andersen AFB, Guam 35th Fighter Wing, Misawa AB, Japan 374th Airlift Wing, Yokota AB, Japan
USAFE	31st Fighter Wing, Aviano AB, Italy 48th Fighter Wing, RAF Lakenheath, U.K. 52d Fighter Wing, Spangdahlem AB, Germany 86th Airlift Wing, Ramstein AFB, Germany 100th Air Refueling Wing, Mildenhall, U.K.
CATEGORY II	
AFMC	Air Armament Center, Eglin AFB, Fla. Air Force Research Laboratory, Detachment 6, Eglin AFB, Fla.
PACAF	354th Fighter Wing, Eielson AFB, Alaska

NUCLEAR SURETY PLAQUES

CATEGORY I

AFGSC	2d Bomb Wing, Barksdale AFB, La. 90th Missile Wing, F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo. 91st Missile Wing, Minot AFB, N.D. 509th Bomb Wing, Whiteman AFB, Mo.
AFMC	19th Munitions Squadron, Whiteman AFB, Mo.
USAFE	31st Fighter Wing, Aviano AB, Italy 39th Air Base Wing, Incirlik AB, Turkey 52d Fighter Wing, Spangdahlem AB, Germany 701st Munitions Support Squadron, Kleine Brogel AB, Belgium 702d Munitions Support Squadron, Buechel AB, Germany

CATEGORY II

AFMC	708th Nuclear Sustainment Squadron, Kirtland AFB, N.M.

SPACE SAFETY PLAQUES

AFSPC	30th Space Wing, Vandenberg AFB, Calif.

GROUND SAFETY PLAQUES

AETC	14th Flying Training Wing, Columbus AFB, Miss. 17th Training Wing, Goodfellow AFB, Texas 33rd Fighter Wing, Eglin AFB, Fla. 48th Flying Training Squadron, Columbus AFB, Miss. 56th Fighter Wing, Luke AFB, Ariz. 59th Medical Wing, Lackland AFB, Texas
AFGSC	91st Missile Wing, Minot AFB, N.D. 341st Missile Wing, Malmstrom AFB, Mont.
AFMC	88th Air Base Wing, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

	Air Armament Center, Eglin AFB, Fla. Air Force Research Laboratory Headquarters, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio Air Force Research Laboratory, Det 15, Kihei, Hawaii
ACC	1st Fighter Wing, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va. 20th Fighter Wing, Shaw AFB, S.C. 4th Fighter Wing, Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C. 552d Air Control Wing, Tinker AFB, Okla. 332d Air Expeditionary Wing, Joint Base Balad, Iraq
AFRC	512th Airlift Wing, Dover AFB, Del. 315th Airlift Wing, Charleston AFB, S.C. 446th Airlift Wing, Joint Base Lewis-McChord Field, Wash.
AMC	6th Air Mobility Wing, MacDill AFB, Fla. 19th Airlift Wing, Little Rock AFB, Ark. 317th Airlift Group, Dyess AFB, Texas 375th Air Mobility Wing, Scott AFB, Ill. 436th Airlift Wing, Dover AFB, Del. 721st Aerial Port Squadron, Ramstein AB, Germany 721st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Ramstein AB, Germany 724th Air Mobility Squadron, Aviano AB, Italy 727th Air Mobility Squadron, RAF Mildenhall, U.K. 728th Air Mobility Squadron, Incirlik AB, Turkey 734th Air Mobility Squadron, Andersen AFB,Guam 817th Global Mobility Squadron, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. 92d Air Refueling Wing, Fairchild AFB, Wash. 62d Airlift Wing, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.
USAFE	31st Fighter Wing, Aviano AB, Italy 39th Air Base Wing, Incirlik AB, Turkey 435th Air Ground Operations Wing, Ramstein AB, Germany 100th Air Refueling Wing, RAF Mildenhall, U.K.
PACAF	36th Wing, Andersen AFB, Guam 51st Fighter Wing, Osan AB, Korea 354th Fighter Wing, Eielson AFB, Alaska
AFSPC	45th Space Wing, Patrick AFB, Fla.
ANG	148th Fighter Wing, Duluth ANG, Minn.

AERO CLUB SAFETY CERTIFICATES

AFMC	Hanscom AFB, Mass. Robins AFB, Ga.
AFRC	March AFB, Calif.
AFSPC	Rocky Mountain Flight Training Center, Peterson AFB, Colo.
AMC	Dover AFB, Del.
PACAF	Yokota Flight Training Center, Yokota AB, Japan Kadena AB, Japan
USAFA	U.S. Air Force Academy, Colo.

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