

# THE SENTINEL



OFFICIAL SAFETY NEWSLETTER OF CIVIL AIR PATROL

## Check Your Attitude

During flight training, instructors talk about the five hazardous attitudes that can interfere with the ability to make safe and sound decisions? We all have a natural tendency toward one or more of these attitudes. The important thing is to recognize this tendency and take action against it. This applies any time we are doing something where safety is paramount, which is most of the time. The five attitudes are listed below, along with some common examples of each and some suggestions of what to do if we find ourselves showing the symptoms.

**Anti-Authority** is where you believe that rules and procedures are for the other guy. An example might be the aircraft crosswind limitation. You feel that the limitation is for lower time, less experienced pilots, but not for you. If you catch yourself with this attitude, you need to think about why the rules were written in the first place. They are for your safety. Most safety rules are a result of someone else's mishap and are there to protect us all.

**Impulsivity** is the perceived need to act immediately when a situation arises. In CAP there are very few scenarios that require an immediate response. A scenario needing an immediate response might be an engine failure at rotation, and even that should be briefed prior to take-off so you will be prepared for the eventuality. For most other events CAP members face, action does not need to be immediate. When an event happens, try to stay calm. Take a few deep breaths, THINK, and analyze the situation. Use the checklist or trained procedures and think about the safest scenario; and use all available resources.

**Invulnerability** is when you hear about a mishap and think it would never happen to me. When you think that accidents can not happen to you, you are thinking you are invulnerable. We need to understand that accidents can happen to any of us. It is easy to get so comfortable that we forget how serious our activities can be. We must never take safety for granted and think that we are invulnerable.



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**Macho** occurs when you try to outdo your co-workers to try and make yourself look better. Do you take risks to prove you are a better pilot or driver than anyone else? Do you push the safety envelope just to impress others? Are you the pilot who departs after a large jet without waiting for the proper separation? There are many more macho attitudes on the list, but the point is this: taking risks is foolish. If you are the macho type, find another activity to express this need that doesn't put others at risk. When you take chances, you are not only jeopardizing yourself, but you are putting everyone around you at risk, too.

**Resignation** is when you think, "What's the use; there is nothing I can do about it." An example might be accepting a RADAR controller's heading into a weather system that you are not comfortable with. You just resign yourself to the situation and fly into the weather rather than querying ATC. All you really need to do is speak up, thus putting yourself in a safer situation. So what should you do if you find yourself just giving up? You need to know that you can make a difference. Always try to be safer in everything you do. If you make a mistake, don't give up, but try to fix the situation before it's too late.

People who care about the safety of themselves and others need to examine the decisions they make and try to understand the reasons behind the decision making process. Are you consciously putting safety first or do you suffer one of the hazardous attitudes? Each of us should routinely do a self evaluation to make sure we are acting with the proper motives. The better you understand yourself, the safer you will be.

Capt Caleb Leach, CAP

## Sounds of Silence

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There are many times when each of us enjoys some peace and quite, a little tranquility and just shut out the rest of the World. The sounds of silence do have their appropriate place, but not when we are engaged in our mission activities. Communicating and doing so correctly at the appropriate time is very important to keeping ourselves safe. It is important that when we work together in the CAP environment that we keep our team well informed, making sure they understand our message. During a mission is no time for anyone to be guessing what your "real" intentions are. For those in a leadership role who are giving instructions, you need to be patient and to anticipate those receiving your instructions will act upon your full and complete communication. This is not the time to expect or assume the team knows what you meant to say. Say it, and say it clearly; more than once if need be.

**Having the right tools** and equipment for communicating at a mission base, in working order, is required. Instructions and guidelines from the communications officer should be strictly followed and adhered to. One of the biggest lessons learned following the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center was the lack of adequate communication procedures during and immediately following the disaster. It was noted that the communication devices differed between the various rescue departments and were on different frequencies. Those in need were not heard because of the variety of procedure and differentiated communication policies.

**Speak up and keep the team informed.** Pilots at all times should be communicating and reporting positions. This is required not only for missions, but any time when operating an aircraft. It is still surprising how many mid-air collisions could have been prevented if only the pilots were communicating or on the proper frequency. At uncontrolled airfields, it is important to report your position often and advise those in the traffic area of your intentions. Also, make sure you are on the correct frequency when doing so. Some recent accident reports point to pilots perhaps communicating to a mission base while another aircraft, in the same vicinity, was reporting to their personnel on another base frequency, but they were not talking to each other. In one case this resulted in two aircraft colliding, killing everyone onboard. This was an actual accident that, thankfully, did not involve CAP personnel.

When appropriate, relaxing peacefully and enjoying the sounds of silence can be very rewarding and welcomed for our well being. However, when we are interacting with others, whether in flight, on a CAP mission, or other activities you find yourself involved with, the sounds of silence can hurt or kill.

Lt Col Larry Mattiello, CAP  
Assistant National Safety Officer

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## **A Colder Safety Culture**

As summer turns to winter, our safety attention needs to focus more on the coming weather. Whether you operate in southern Florida, the upper Midwest or Alaska, preparing for colder weather is important for safe flying, driving or even walking. Understanding your environment and its geographic challenges will make your winter operations safer and allow you to function more efficiently as you perform Missions for America.

Winter driving demands that you understand many safety issues. Ice is just as important to safe road travel as it is to safe flying. "Black Ice", which is not as visible as snow or frost, can be very dangerous. Know when this hazard can occur in your area and plan accordingly. Before

attempting to drive your vehicle be sure ice and frost are removed from the windows and mirrors, the wipers work freely, and the heater and defrost systems work properly to avoid ice reforming on the windshield. You should have a roadside safety kit in case you breakdown that may include flares, tire chains and warm clothing. A mobile phone during emergencies is well worth the cost.

Airplanes perform better in cold weather. Engines produce more power and the performance envelope is at the maximum. However, the cost for that performance is the extra safety issues we must deal with during winter operations. Ice is the biggest concern. Frost, snow, or ice that accumulates on an airframe adds weight to the plane, changes the center of gravity and, most importantly, adversely affects aerodynamics (lift) in flight. They must be removed before flight. Once you have melted the frozen stuff, be sure it hasn't refrozen on the control surfaces or blocked important air intakes when reintroduced to the environment. Winter preflight needs to be extra meticulous.

Engine preheat is important to prevent extra load on the starter and prevent additional wear on the engine during starting. Most manufacturers recommend preheat when the ambient temperature is 40 degrees or less. Some aircraft may have an engine heating system installed while some may use a hot air blower. Whatever you have at your disposal be sure you know how to operate it and have read the manufacturer's recommendations. The cost of a preheat from the local FBO is probably worth the saved engine wear.

Once under way, pay careful attention to any flight control binding or stiffness. Taxi the aircraft slowly to avoid skidding on ice and to prevent water from splashing back onto the airplane where it may refreeze in flight. Test the brakes for signs of freezing and do the run up on a dry surface.

After your flight, conduct a post flight inspection to ensure the plane is free of ice. Top it off to help prevent condensed water in the tanks and install cowl plugs, pitot covers and any other devices your squadron may have to protect the plane from the elements.

Spend some time reading the winter operations section of your aircraft's POH and become familiar with other articles and publications on winter flying. Knowledge is power, which will keep you safe and proficient.

Lt Col Larry Mattiello, CAP  
Assistant National Safety Officer

## **Holiday Safety (reprinted from a previous *Sentinel*)**

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T'is the season for joy and sharing, families and home. We should, however, never let our guard down when it comes to safety; our own and those around us. So to help you with a checklist of Holiday safety I will share with you some good ideas from the McKinney, Texas fire department.

Use only decorations labeled flame resistant, flame retardant or non combustible. Keep candles at least 3 feet from any combustible material and never leave them unattended.

Purchase only electrical decorations bearing the name of an independent testing lab such as UL.™

Follow manufacturer's directions for light use, never connecting more than 2 or 3 strands together on one outlet.

Never leave cooking unattended.

Never use your fireplace to burn wrapping paper or other trash.

Always keep the stand for a live tree filled with water and check the water level daily. A fresh tree will be green with needles that are hard to pull from the branches.

Avoid leaving your live tree up for longer than two weeks.

Avoid using electrical lights on a metallic tree to eliminate the risk of electrocution.

Turn off all decorative lights when going to bed and when leaving home.

Have working smoking alarms on every level of your home and in each bedroom or sleeping area.

Remember to practice your home escape plan as a family.

Have your tree recycled or collected rather than burning it, or making it available for "others" to do so.

Enjoy the Holidays with family and friends, and never let your guard down to keep yourself and everyone safe!

## **Summary of Form 78 Accidents and Incidents for Sep and Oct 08**

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### **Aircraft**

Left wing tip brushed the hangar door

Left side of the vertical stabilizer and rudder contacted the upper "t" section of the hangar structure

Elevator trim tab struck vehicle in hangar

Right wing tip struck chain link fence

## **Aircraft (Continued)**

Damage to right horizontal stabilizer leading edge discovered during preflight  
Fiberglass horizontal stabilizer end-cap contacted the hangar wall  
Owner of the hangar reported damage to right wing tip  
Nose gear lower fitting was found to be cracked during maintenance  
During post flight and tie-down, a broken chock was found in parking area;  
    revealed damage to the leading edge and underside of one prop blade  
Right wing tip strobe light discovered broken  
Precautionary landing was due to a rough engine  
Upon take-off, pilot noted excessive, increasing vibration and made decision  
    to land immediately. High speed landing both main tires to blow out.  
Two precautionary landings; EGT high and low take off power; left rudder  
    mushy  
Post flight pilot reported flat spot on right main  
Aircraft hit a deer turning off runway  
Two bird strikes  
Wind gusts lifted tied down glider breaking right wing spar  
Practicing short filed take off tail hook struck runway

## **Vehicle**

Deer hit mini-van head on, deploying both air bags and cracking windshield  
Deer crossed driver's path, striking and damaging front door and headlight  
Left rear wheel dropped off pavement and the van leaned far enough to the  
    left so that the right, rear brake light lens contacted a mailbox  
Right passenger door window broken out  
Hit a motorcycle backing out of parking lot  
CAP vehicle pulled to right so another vehicle could pass; other vehicle  
    impacted CAP vehicle

## **Bodily Injury**

Cadet was running and fell on arm dislocating left elbow  
SM twisted ankle while walking across a parking lot resulting in sprained left  
    knee and left rotator cuff, as well as abrasions to her left elbow  
Cadet fainted, fell face down and split open chin requiring stitches  
Cadet complained of shortness of breath and showed some signs of possible  
    heat stroke  
Cadet suffered pulled ligament/muscle in left hip and upper thigh during  
    basketball game  
Cadet complained of chest pains and general weakness  
Cadet dislocated kneecap during tent setup  
SM exiting tent tripped and fell on her left wrist resulting in non-displaced FX  
SM stung by a hornet with allergic reaction  
SM tripped in parking lot and cut forehead, both palms and nose