



Department of the Air Force RESILIENCE

SUPPORTING BOTH OUR AIR AND SPACE FORCES AND FAMILIES



Prevention - #9

Safety/Injury

SAFETY, UNINTENTIONAL INJURY, AND DUTY RESTRICTIONS

Personnel working for the military perform a wide range of duties. Some of them require ongoing situational awareness, concentration, quick reaction time, and decision-making; some require effective problem solving and sound judgment to ensure the safety of oneself and others; some contribute to and ensure proper execution of the mission; and some safeguard valuable government assets and information. Many job responsibilities allow little tolerance for error.

Signs Wingmen Should Know/Look For

- Appearance of being distressed or chronically fatigued.
- Indications of impaired situational awareness, concentration, memory, problem solving, judgment, cognitive flexibility, or reaction time.
- Failure to follow established rules, procedures, or protocols.
- Demonstrated failure to use safety devices or personal protective equipment.
- History of mental or emotional stress leading to unsafe acts, including aggressive behavior.
- Involvement in an alcohol- or drug-related incident.
- History of suspended base driving privileges.
- Involvement in multiple mishaps.
- Impulsive behavior.

Recommended Wingman Action

- Know appropriate safety, operating, and security precautions. Be aware of the behavior/performance of coworkers and ensure they are all within required standards.
- Let personnel know if their behaviors, performance, or conduct falls below required standards.
- Inform leadership of concerns.
- Be particularly vigilant regarding personnel who are known to be under stress.

Leadership Considerations

- Create a unit climate that emphasizes safety, security, and performance standards/requirements.
- Create a unit climate that provides for free communication of concerns.
- Ensure all personnel receive proper initial and follow-up training.
- Communicate the expectation that safety violations are to be addressed immediately.
- Create a unit climate in which supervisors are expected to “know their people.”
- Look into any information that suggests personnel are not performing adequately.
- Talk to those for whom inadequate performance is suspected to understand the situation better.
- Consider duty restrictions as needed for personnel who are recognized as not performing adequately. This may include limiting access to firearms, explosives, toxins, and other hazardous substances, equipment, or situations.

- Consult with helping agencies such as medical and mental health personnel.
- Consult with a mental health provider regarding the appropriateness of a Commander Directed Evaluation.
- When medical or mental health personnel recommend duty restrictions, do not remove restrictions without consulting with the individual who recommended them.
- Require remedial safety training as appropriate.
- Adjust unit policy to mitigate recognized safety concerns.
- Emphasize Operational Risk Management at all levels of unit leadership, supervision, and mentoring. Make it a frequent topic at Commander's Call.
- Visit the duty sections within the unit and directly observe working conditions and personnel behavior.