

Risk Management - A Different Look

Lt Col Thomas Ficarra, Deputy Commander for Senior Members and Safety Officer - SER-FL-286

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Assets, Threats and Vulnerability

Every year the Civil Air Patrol requires members to receive training in the ever-popular *Operational Risk Management*. Whatever name it goes by, risk management breaks down into the simple process of finding potential hazards and mitigating them. A different approach comes from the US Air Force Special Operations School (USAFSOS) which focuses on how the operator conducts a risk assessment during mission prep and evaluates *assets*, *threats*, and *vulnerability*. CAP uses the 5-Ms of Member, Medium, Machine, Mission, and Management. The USAFSOS uses ORM to look for violent threats against members, and could be used by squadrons in relooking at the use of and prioritization of assets and their effect on the missions. Safety Officers should not only look at the protection of our members, but the operational success of the mission.

Assets

Protecting assets is the responsibility of the Commander. In this example, assets are looked at as being critical. These include people, equipment, facilities, and information that if lost, degrades the unit's success in its mission. Which ones are more important? Well, assets need to be prioritized to determine its impact on the mission, how quickly it will be felt, and for how long can we continue without a replacement. An obvious CAP example would be aircraft and ground vehicles. Without them, the ability to move people and equipment to critical areas would be degraded significantly and the mission could fail.

Threats

Threats, either manmade or natural, act in a way that may negatively impact our plans. Threats break down into threat methods and threat sources. The methods impact the asset with an actual action. First, man-made threats could be airframes inside hangars damaged by impact with vehicles, tools, or other aircraft. A manmade source could be

inexperienced aircrews who are neither trained nor certified. The second is natural threats and, for CAP, includes high winds and flooded airfields that prevent takeoffs and downed power lines that block ground teams. The natural threat sources are natural disasters like earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados, or floods. For manmade threat mitigation, education, training and supervision are the typical response. While natural threat mitigation can be "hunkering down and waiting it out," one might look at prepositioning assets in safer areas ahead of the threat.

Vulnerability

Assets are vulnerable and can become non-mission capable in a variety of ways. These vulnerabilities require looking at countermeasures that protect assets by negating and mitigating the method of the threat. A countermeasure can be a device, a procedure, or a technique to make the assets less vulnerable. There are three ways to do this: through preventive, corrective, or detective countermeasures. Preventive means to not allow the threat to ever happen. This could be as easy as a padlock on a door. Corrective means to respond to an event after it occurred and helps members respond and minimize the event. This could be a GPS locator to track a stolen asset. Detective means to inform members when an event is detected, such as a tornado siren. We hear it providing us notification but it does nothing to stop the storm.

The Safety Officer's Job

As safety officers, it's our job to foresee possible risks to assets, provide a comprehensive and feasible solution, then assist in implementation and supervise the mitigation, and help others do the same. By expanding out to other tools and views, we not only view the situation in a different framework, but come up with different solutions for Commanders to review and consider. In the end, while the Commander is still ultimately responsible for the success of the mission, it's the Safety Officer that keeps our people safe. And just like pilots, we are always learning.