



Safety Beacon

May 2021

Upholding the public's trust through a safety-minded culture, safe environment for our members, and responsible stewardship of our valuable resources

Attitude and Safety

RIGHT MINDSET, RIGHT BEHAVIOR, RIGHT OUTCOME



When asked about safety, are you all in? Do you use the tools and follow the rules? Do you learn and stay up to date about safety? Do you mentor others in safety? Do you lead by example? **Bottom line: Safe outcomes depend on knowledge, attitude, and action.**

When leaders have a “safety attitude” they lead by example and take responsibility to ensure:

- A safe environment exists for members and resources under their care.
- Risk is assessed and mitigated to a reasonably acceptable level.
- Safety equipment is available and being used properly.

- Others know what a “safety attitude” looks like and how it benefits everyone when we do the right things.

DO YOU HAVE THE RIGHT ATTITUDE?

- Are you eager to learn more about safety?
- Are you using the tools available to ensure you, others, and our resources are protected to the greatest extent possible?
- Are you speaking up when you notice unsafe conditions?
- Are you open to receiving feedback from others when they observe you doing something that could be unsafe?

If you answered “yes,” to the above, there is a good chance you have the right attitude about our safety principles and practices.

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TOWARD SAFETY

Here are some ways you can demonstrate a good safety attitude.

- Pay attention to training.
- Use the tools and follow the rules.
- Give the task you are on your full attention.
- Ask yourself, “What can go wrong here?”
- Take responsibility for addressing safety hazards.
- Urge others to follow safety requirements and good safety practices.
- Ask questions when anything is unclear.
- Report safety hazards and encourage others to do the same.



Tired? Fatigue can make you more prone to safety incidents because situational awareness is hampered by exhaustion. Planning for and taking breaks can help you stay alert!

Heat Illness Awareness

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than [700 deaths per year](#) occurred in United States between 2004 and 2018 with heat as either the underlying cause or a contributing factor. The [CDC also says](#) that, “Almost all heat-related deaths occurred during May–September...with the highest numbers reported during July...and August.”

Know and manage the risk of heat-related illnesses and take precautions to beat the heat!

A few recommended precautions include (more at [“Health-Related Illness”](#) from www.cdc.gov):

- Hydrate – drink water or other non-alcoholic fluids
- Be especially watchful if you have an underlying cardiovascular condition or are taking certain medications (check the warning labels!)
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose fitting clothing
- Reduce or eliminate strenuous activities or plan them for the cooler parts of the day.
- Find shade – and be sure shade is available for cooling off.
- Keep an eye on each other and do not ignore the warning signs! To borrow a phrase, “If you see

something, say something!” A life could depend on it.

Some signs to watch out for in yourself and others ([click here for more from the CDC](#)):

- Muscle cramping
- Fatigue, dizziness, and/or nausea
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Red, hot, dry skin with no sweat
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Dizziness or Confusion
- Unconsciousness

The items labeled in red above could be signs of heat stroke. [Ready.gov](#) recommends calling 9-1-1 or getting the person to the hospital immediately. Cool them down by whatever means are available until help arrives.

Actions to take if you suspect a heat-related illness (more at [Ready.gov](#)):

- Get to a cooler location.
- Loosen clothing and/or remove excess clothing.
- Sip on a cool sports drink that contains sugar and salt.

Contact your primary healthcare provider first and follow their advice if you need medical attention.

Biases in Risk Assessment (part 1)

"It is never too late to correct our mistakes. And if we do not, we risk repeating them." – Lisa Madigan
(former Attorney General of the U.S. state of Illinois)



The image shows a risk assessment matrix on a piece of paper with a pen and a notebook. The matrix is titled "Risk Assessment" and has five columns labeled "Disaster", "High", "Medium", and "Minimal". The rows are labeled "Severity", "Probability", "Frequency", "Impact", and "Likelihood". The cells contain risk levels: "Critical", "High", "Medium", and "Low".

	Disaster	High	Medium	Minimal
Severity	Critical	Critical	High	Medium
Probability	Critical	High	Medium	Medium
Frequency	Critical	High	Medium	Low
Impact	High	Medium	Medium	
Likelihood				

We typically think of risk in two dimensions: likelihood (probability) and severity (impact). Put another way, we try to anticipate the probability of a potential impact on our activities. In the world of safety, we tend to deal in negative or undesirable impacts – usually in the form of damage or injury.

A goal of risk assessment is to manage uncertainty. We all hope every activity is completed successfully with no negative outcomes, but there is no such thing as absolute certainty. While we cannot eliminate uncertainty, we can reduce it with an eye toward reducing bias in the process.

LOOK FOR BIASES

- Familiarity – We tend to think risk is higher when we are unfamiliar with a situation and lower when we are familiar. “I’ve done this a million times before; nothing is going to happen.”
- Manageability – When we perceive that we have more control over a situation, we assess risk as lower. “I’ve been doing this for years; there’s nothing I can’t handle.”

- Time/space proximity – Risks that seem further away in time and space are assessed lower than those that seem near. “It’s been years since anything like that has happened. I think we’ve got it covered.”
- Closeness – The further the impact is from those assessing the risk, the lower its perceived probability. “It’s never happened to me, and I do this stuff all the time. People just need to pay attention more.”
- Defaults – Rules of thumb or best guesses we use because we do not have data to inform our assessment of risk. “Well, I don’t know what the likelihood is, so I’m just going to say ‘moderate’ and see how it comes out.”

MANAGING BIAS

Managing bias completely out of the risk assessment process is not possible. However, in the initial part of risk assessment, focus on information that only falls into the two dimensions of likelihood and severity and avoid applying any mitigating factors (that comes later).

Bottom line: Assessment of initial risk should stand apart from our biases.

For initial risk to be assessed as accurately as possible, it must be considered without any mitigating factors. After the initial risk is assessed, then bring in the mitigating factors and assess residual risk. For example, how much does level of personal/professional experience reduce the risk? Is that enough mitigation to reduce uncertainty to a reasonable level? If not, keep mitigating!

Coming up in Part 2: Factors affecting assessment of likelihood and severity.

Striking Airmanship

Costing thousands of dollars for repairs of external and internal damage to the tail sections and aft bulkheads of airplanes, tail strikes are largely human factors related, i.e., pilot error. Accordingly, two strategies for mitigating tail strikes are maintaining high level pilot proficiency and employing basic risk management (RM) principles, i.e., identifying predisposing hazards (sources of danger) of tail strikes and implementing controls to mitigate risks associated with those hazards.

[Click here](#) download and read Maj Michael J. Banner's full article on this common mishap.

The Safety Beacon is for informational purposes. Unit Safety Officers are encouraged to use the articles in the Beacon as topics for their monthly safety briefings and discussions. Members may go to [eservices Learning Management System](#), click on “Go to AXIS,” search for this month’s Safety Beacon, take the quiz, and use the certificate of completion to request safety education credit.

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We welcome your feedback! Let us know what you think about the Safety Beacon: safety@capnhq.gov