

Commander's Call Topics



May 29, 2014

"The experienced fighting pilot does not take unnecessary risks.
His business is to shoot down enemy planes,
not to get shot down."

Eddie Rickenbacker
World War I American fighter ace
and Medal of Honor recipient
(1890-1973)

[Blue Star Museums](#)

is a collaboration
among over 2,000 museums
offering free admission to service
members and their families
all summer.

"Double Checks, Not Second Thoughts"

The term "risk management" sounds both uncertain and contradictory. When we think of risks, thoughts of financial uncertainty, environmental disasters and accidents come to mind. Combining any of those catastrophes with the idea that one could successfully manage such randomness almost seems mired in a blame-the-victim mentality.

The Air Force's 2014 Critical Days of Summer, May 23 – Sept. 2, reminds us all to focus on risk management of an entirely different nature. In this case, we are being asked to understand the logical consequences of certain behaviors, and do all in our power to remove unnecessary risks beforehand.

"Risk: Double Checks, Not Second Thoughts" is this year's theme, encouraging all to enjoy the carefree activities that are inherent in good weather and more hours of daylight, while avoiding negative outcomes by double-checking before one begins—think ahead, anticipate what could possibly go wrong, and establish responsible behaviors and habits that diminish or prevent adverse results.

For example, something as simple as taking your motorcycle out for a quick two-block spin to test its newly-tuned engine is as dangerous as an afternoon-long ride on the open road if one doesn't wear a helmet. Tragic outcomes don't lurk just beyond the two-block limit. They're everywhere, an equal opportunity misfortune, that can be diminished by wearing a helmet and other protective gear. If one really needs to hear whether the engine is, indeed, purring, establish a responsible behavior that results in success: Wear helmet and gear while driving to a closed track—a much safer place to conduct a helmet-less test. While still not an ideal situation, the opportunity for an uneventful test ride is greatly enhanced.

Risk management starts with careful planning. Anticipating what could go wrong and how best to avoid it, promotes the Air Force wingman culture of taking care of oneself, one's family and one's fellow Airmen. The Air Force Reserve has dedicated an entire website to the [Wingman Toolkit](#), and one of the pages on the site is devoted solely to [resources for the Critical Days of Summer](#). From sports injuries to fireworks safety to safe boating and jet skiing, seven safety topics are featured in depth, ready to be adapted to everyone's recreational plans.

"Each Airman is critical to our mission," said Bill Parsons, the Air Force chief of ground safety. "As you plan your summer activities, use the same risk management skills you apply on the job to ensure a safe return and assure mission success."

Last year's Critical Days of Summer ended with the loss of 21 Airmen. With "Risk: Double Checks, Not Second Thoughts," those numbers could trend downward.

► TRENDING...

"Plan for the unexpected and avoid unnecessary risks. Embrace safety as the foundation of our core values. Enjoy the warm weather; get out and have fun, but always keep safety in mind." From a Memorandum for all Air Force Personnel regarding the Critical Days of Summer Campaign for 2014, signed by [Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James](#), [Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III](#) and [Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James A. Cody](#).

► RESOURCES

Website access to the following resources can be gained by clicking on the name.

[AF.mil](#)

[Airman magazine](#)

[Military OneSource/HomeFront](#)

[Air Force Personnel Center](#)

[Air Reserve Personnel Center](#)

[Department of Defense News](#)

[Department of Veterans Affairs](#)

[TRICARE](#)

[U.S. Government Website](#)

[Air Force Association
Scholarships](#)

[Air Force Safety Center](#)

[Civil Service Employment
Opportunities](#)

[NAF Employment
Opportunities](#)

[Air Force Bands/Outreach](#)

► CURRENT ISSUES

[Air Force leaders issue Memorial Day message](#)

In a Memorial Day message remembering the fallen, captured or missing service men and women, Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III express gratitude for those who serve and exemplify the core value of Service Before Self.

► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[May 23—Pulse on AF Force management](#)

The latest, most accurate information about force management programs focuses on the cancellation of three retention boards, voluntary separation pay, civilian force management and more.

► ENVIRONMENT, SPACE, TECHNOLOGY

[USecAF touts Air Force capabilities at 30th Space Symposium](#)

Referring to “space power” as a “key element of warfighting for more than 30 years,” [Under Secretary of the Air Force Eric Fanning](#) spoke of the roles of the Air Force in space and cyberspace during the keynote address at the 30th Space Symposium in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

May 29, 1940 - The Vought F4U Corsair first flew.

May 30, 2001 - An aircrew from Edwards AFB, Calif., launched the first live joint air-to-surface standoff missile from a B-52H over the White Sands Missile Range. The weapon destroyed a concrete bunker from 195 miles.

May 31, 1908 - The Glenn H. Curtiss Manufacturing Company at Hammondsport announced that it would accept orders for and deliver flying machines in 60 days at \$5,000 a plane.

June 1, 1912 – Capt. Charles DeForest Chandler made the first night flight at College Park, Md.

June 2, 1949 – Gen. Henry H. Arnold received the permanent rank of General of the Air Force.

June 3, 1961 – Air Force engineers test-fired the most powerful solid-fuel rocket engine known to Western scientists. In the test at Sacramento, Calif., some 94,000 pounds of propellant produced in excess of 500,000 pounds of thrust.

June 4, 1997 - The Air Force reached a milestone in advanced missile propulsion with the successful ground testing of the Variable Flow Ducted Rocket (VFDR) at Atlantic Research Corp. in Gainesville, Virginia. A solid-fuel, ducted rocket engine, the VFDR increased the capabilities of conventional rockets by burning fuel-rich rocket-exhaust gases with air, thereby doubling or tripling the total energy produced by the engine.

For more information on Air Force heritage, visit <http://www.airforcehistory.af.mil>

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