

Behavior-Based Safety

Lesson Objective:

Lesson Objective: Comprehend the importance of safety in unit command.

Desired Learning Outcomes:

1. Define the role of behavior-based safety in a positive safety culture.
2. Describe the mandatory requirements of a unit safety program.
3. Discuss qualities a commander should look for when selecting a unit safety officer.
4. Summarize the commander's role in maintaining a pervasive culture of safety in the unit.

Lesson:

Overview

One of the unit commander's top responsibilities is to provide a high level of protection for our people, equipment, and organization. Personal injuries detract from the unit's mission, eliminate members temporarily or permanently from participating in activities, and the potential cost to CAP and its members are significant in terms of dollars, pain, and suffering. The financial cost associated with damaged equipment due to preventable mishaps is enormous annually and the money lost often reduces the purchase of other valuable CAP assets.

The unit commander has a significant responsibility in establishing a high degree of interest and participation in the CAP safety program. The program has several basic requirements the commander (along with a well qualified and motivated safety officer) can use to establish and maintain a positive safety culture that will sustain a strong and enduring unit.

Safety Culture Defined:

How would you define Safety Culture? This is how the FAA AC 150 defines it: “Effective safety management requires more than establishing an appropriate organizational structure and establishing rules and procedures to be followed. It requires a commitment to safety on the part of senior management (CAP Leadership). The attitudes, decisions, and methods of operation at the policy-making level demonstrate the priority given to safety.”

“Safety culture...is both attitudinal and structural, relating to individuals and organizations. It concerns the requirement to not only perceive safety issues but also match them with appropriate action. Safety culture relates to such intangibles as personal attitudes and the style of the organization.”

The commander must instill a positive culture of safety that reinforces desired behaviors and guides the planning and execution of every approved CAP activity.

CAP’s definition:

A simple working definition of a culture is “how we do business” within our organization. It is influenced from top leadership down and at the same time by members at the base of the organization. It encompasses both formal written policy and also the unwritten norms and intangible aspects of personal attitude and what we do on a daily basis. The unit commander is in a critical position to not only establish formal commitment and prioritization of safety policy, but also to monitor the day-to-day behavior of staff and personnel to ensure the processes and procedures are followed within the acceptable safety norms.

Mandatory Requirements and Tools:

The minimum safety program requirements can be found in the most recent version of CAPR 62-1, *CAP Safety Responsibilities and Procedures*. In general, these requirements can be divided into training requirements, status reporting requirements, and mishap reporting requirements.

Training Requirements

In this context, training requirements refer to the training taken by the unit’s members.

A. Annual Training

1. **Operational Risk Management (ORM) familiarization training.** All members are required to go through ORM familiarization training annually. Most members take basic ORM. However, activity directors and key staff must complete intermediate ORM as part of their activity preparation.
2. **Safety Day.** Every unit is required to hold a safety day once annually within the first 3 months of the calendar year.

- B. **Monthly Training.** All active members (not patrons) are required to attend monthly safety education. This education can be taken in-person (preferred method) or online. Lesson plans and supporting materials can be found at CAP's safety webpage.
- C. **Entry Training.** All active members entering CAP must complete Introductory Safety Training for New Members as part of their Level I orientation or their Curry achievement. In addition, all members currently in the program are also required to complete the Safety Training for New Members. Failure to do so could result in some restrictions in what they may do.

Members who do not remain current in their monthly safety education may be prohibited from participating in activities until currency is restored. The *unit commander* is responsible for ensuring that both safety education and the education requirements of the members of his unit are completed on a regular basis. Additionally, the commander must ensure that appropriate operational risk safety briefings are conducted before all CAP activities.

Status Reporting Requirements

CAP requires units to complete periodic and as-needed status reports related to safety.

- A. **Annual Safety Survey.** Every unit must conduct an annual safety. Survey results help the national safety team trend various issues of compliance and use the response data to establish education plans in areas of needed improvement. This tool also helps commanders manage areas of concern allowing for journal comments to document progress and completion.
- B. **Online Hazard Reporting.** Anytime a member finds a potential hazard, it is important to report it so that commanders, safety officers, and fellow members can take action to eliminate the hazard. The Online Hazard Report is used to report at-risk behaviors and problem areas and may be filed anonymously. They can also be used to make suggestions about how to improve the safety program. These reports are disseminated throughout the chain of command and are answered by the commanders involved.

Mishap Reporting Requirements

Before we get into mishap reporting requirements, it's important to remind ourselves of CAP's revised definition of a mishap. This definition is, "Any unplanned or unsought event, or series of events, that result in, or has the potential to cause death, injury, or damage to equipment or property."

One of the most important tasks of a commander after a mishap has occurred is to report it to NHQ CAP through CAP's safety reporting system. This is true for a "close call" as well as for more severe mishaps. It's not an empty exercise, particularly when there is a potential for bodily injury or property damage. This is how the wheels are set in motion to take care of the injured member(s) or to repair damage and establish process corrections. In the CAP Safety Program, the primary focus is not to affix blame or "fault find," but rather to identify patterns or process breakdowns which need to be corrected, through remedial education or repair of assets, resulting in the restoration of a safe environment for all members.

- A. **General.** Unit commanders will often be the first command elements notified of a mishap. As stated, these can be "close calls" or something very serious. There is no single appropriate command response because regions and wings often have mishap reporting instructions organic to their territory. That said, there are some general principles and guidelines which must be followed no matter the severity of the event. These include the completion of the online Mishap Notification (CAP Form 78) and sometimes the Mishap Investigation (CAPF 79).
- B. **Online Mishap Notification (CAPF 78).** Technically, any member can complete the online Mishap Notification (CAPF 78) which must be submitted within 48 hours of the mishap. However, you as the unit commander should be notified immediately, and the member completing the online Mishap Notification should have some training or guidance on how to use the form. In some instances, as outlined in CAP Regulation 62-2, *Mishap Reporting and Investigation*, the commander should call the National Operations Center (NOC) immediately after the mishap (after calling 911, if necessary) to receive guidance on reporting before using the online CAPF 78.

Remember, the online CAPF 78 is not to be used to actually investigate the mishap or to assign blame and should not include member information or asset numbers in the written account. These should be entered in their appropriate entry blocks in the safety database. The CAPF 78 is designed solely to report the facts of what happened. Identifying and mitigating the causes will occur later.

It's also important to note that the revised definition of mishap requires "close calls" to also be reported. Why? Sometimes close calls are warning signs of a more serious problem or systemic breakdown. Examining the pathology of the close call can often identify problems and lead to ways to mitigate risk – locally or even across the country, BEFORE injury or damage occurs.

When completing the CAPF 78, it's important to avoid these common pitfalls:

- A. Forgetting to include all people involved (including non-members), as well as involved vehicles, aircraft, or other property.
- B. Not completing the report within 48 hours of the mishap.
- C. Forgetting that it's an initial report, not an investigation. You should not wait to have ALL the facts; and you should not use it to place blame or draw a conclusion.
- D. Giving personal opinions or speculating. As Joe Friday from "Dragnet" said, "Just the facts."
- E. Not calling the NOC for help or notification. When in doubt, call.
- F. Not talking to your commander. Wing Commanders HATE surprises.
- G. Not reporting a mishap. Nothing is too minor. When in doubt, report it.

Online Form 78 Pitfalls

- Not including all _____ persons.
- Failing to complete it within ____ hours.
- Waiting to get unnecessary_____.
- Including personal _____.
- Not utilizing the _____.
- Not informing your _____ _____.
- Not _____ it at all.

Once a mishap is reported, three things may occur:

1. NHQ determines that no further action is required and the matter is closed.
2. NHQ asks for additional information through the chain of command or that a follow-up report on the progress of medical care or repair be rendered.
3. NHQ asks for an investigation to be completed. (If an outside agency, such as the NTSB or the police is investigating, CAP will wait until the outside agencies give their permission). CAP investigations are documented using the online CAP Form 79.

Mishap Investigation (CAPF 79)

Simply stated, the online Mishap Notification (CAPF 79) begins where the online CAPF 78 leaves off. It is designed to root out the links of the chain of events that contributed to the mishap as well as to develop corrective actions to help ensure that the mishap is not repeated.

For CAP investigations, the CAP Wing Commander (or higher, depending on the circumstances) will appoint an investigating officer or team to formally look into the events and causes of the mishap.

Appointments to the investigating team MUST be done by a corporate officer and these appointments are automatically documented in the safety database when completed through eServices. This must be done before an investigation begins to ensure the investigator has the authority to gather sensitive information needed to establish a complete fact pattern. Investigations should not be started when outside law enforcement or other federal agencies, such as the NTSB, FAA, EPA, or OSHA, are involved until released by NHQ Safety and/or General Counsel. (In rare instances, NHQ Safety or CAP's General Counsel will perform the investigation.) To assure an unbiased investigation, the affected unit commander and/or Safety Officer may or may not be involved in the investigation.

Once the investigation is completed all the factual data and statements collected will be entered in the CAPF 79 online. Data includes photos, reports, witness statements, police reports, repair bills, etc. The goal is to have a single, complete online file documenting all aspects of the mishap.

To enhance the quality of investigations, CAP provides training for selected members to perform more detailed in-depth investigations. Unit commanders may want to encourage experienced unit safety officers and other appropriate members to take that training as it is offered.

Online Tools for a more effective safety program

CAP has implemented a comprehensive set of online tools to standardize the documentation of routine safety training and allow simple tracking to identify members completing or needing this training. Unit commanders should ensure that they and their staff members are up to date on what is available, especially the various reports and worksheets, and make the most of these time-saving, standardized tools.

Command Tools

The unit commander with the assistance of the unit safety officer (SE) manages the safety program, and there are several time saving tools available that can make the job simpler. In addition to the e-Services Forms Section already discussed, there are several other online tools to make the job less time consuming:

1. Before conducting a regular safety meeting, the unit can print a Safety Meeting Sign-In Roster that will show all the current members and include additional blank lines for members from other units. The participants can sign the sheet and later the SE (or designated representative) can enter the results in the on-line system.
2. A commander can run a safety currency report to see the status of all members in the unit to verify compliance with education requirements before allowing participation activities.

3. In the Member Reports module, a commander can run a Safety Officer Roster and Safety Training Report to quickly determine who is officially assigned in e-Services as an SE or assistant, what ORM courses they have completed, what safety professional development courses they have completed, and if they are qualified as a Mission Safety Officer (MSO).
4. From Operations Qualifications it can be determined which members have completed or are missing various ORM or safety courses as well as safety currency.
5. Also helpful to you and your SE is the Members Search feature because at times you may need to contact members of the unit for various safety related items.

WMIRS

Safety related operational information can also be found in the Web Mission Information Reporting System (WMIRS). This system is not designed directly for safety but a commander or safety officer can pull important indirect data to support safety functions. Examples of material that may be important from a safety perspective are safety plans (or safety sections of mission operation plans), mission flight plans, flight times and aircrew members (e.g. for determining duty day limits), A/C usage and maintenance write-ups, crew compositions for mishap investigations, etc. CCs and SEs can use this information to identify safety related trends or problems with ongoing or past operations.

Commercial and Air Force tools

Important commercial tools including magazines and online safety resources are also available for use. The SE should develop working relationships with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) (i.e. National Safety Council, American Red Cross, etc.) and state and local governmental agencies to exchange knowledge and obtain valuable cross-training. Encourage the use of the USAF Torch magazine and the USAF safety website and other free online safety resources to provide variety and currency to your safety program. There are many of these links available on the CAP national safety webpage.

By becoming familiar with the various online tools, the unit commander can gain significant insight and use the information to manage a successful safety program.

Selecting a Unit Safety Officer:

The unit commander can feel overwhelmed by demands on time, and it is at those times that the safety well-being of a unit can be at its highest risk. Through selection and development of a quality safety officer (SE) who isn't distracted with other unit duties, the unit commander can help ensure that member and organization safety doesn't get pushed to the wayside.

Duties

The formal job description for a safety officer can be found in CAPR 20-1, but as one quickly learns, the safety officer is tasked with far more than providing monthly education sessions. They also help educate others in the squadron to implement risk reduction strategies on a continual basis. It is important for a commander to pick a safety officer wisely and to use that person effectively to move both the unit safety culture and safety program forward.

The unit safety officer (SE) is the commander's subject matter expert when it comes to the safety program. Due to this critical role, the unit SE reports directly to the commander and to be effective needs access to operational data, mission plans, event plans, and other information that the commander has in order to provide sound and accurate counsel to the commander. Furthermore, it is important for the unit commander to pass along safety related material and guidance to the safety officer in a timely manner for them to carry out their tasks.

The unit commander is also instrumental in highlighting the importance of the safety program. By including the safety officer in the planning and operational decision making of the unit, the commander is sending a strong message that safety influences everything the unit does. Conversely, the commander can send a negative safety message if the SE is left out of activities and planning. This does not mean that the safety officer has a "veto" over activities; that is ultimately the commander's responsibility. It does mean that the safety officer has the access and ability to provide quality safety advice and assistance to the commander and staff. A commander must not let risks go unanswered because this sets the tone that it's ok to let things "slide." Safety, through risk mitigation, must always be in the forefront of the commander's mind and demonstrated by action to unit members.

Skills and Traits

When selecting a unit SE there are some skills and traits the commander should look for. The Safety Officer:

- A. Should have a basic understanding of the risks associated with the unit's primary activities. It's logical for a unit with a heavy flying mission to have a safety officer with an aviation background. Likewise it's logical for a cadet unit to have a safety officer who understands the types of activities conducted within the cadet program. Without the core knowledge of the mission and the associated hazards, it will be difficult for an SE to assist in applying ORM to the unit's activities.
- B. Must have the motivation to research and discover new risk areas and then use their skills to recommend changes as necessary to reduce the risks.
- C. Must have the willingness to understand safety related rules/practices/procedures and ensure they are being followed.
- D. Must be willing to present risk reduction measures and also to be willing to comply with them. This again truly reemphasizes when it comes to safety, actions speak louder than words.

On occasion, a unit may recruit a person without an extensive professional safety background. Some may have better exposure to proactive safety programs or safety systems, but in many cases the new safety officer will have little background. Therefore it is critical for unit commanders to promote professional development of the safety officer and encourage a wide range of development activities. Commanders should encourage advancement in the Safety Officer Professional Development Specialty Track (CAPP 217) as well as support interaction between the unit safety officer and peers at the same and higher echelons. The commander can also encourage safety officers to train as Mission safety officers and actively support attendance at other safety education that is applicable, such as investigator courses and safety colleges.

Cadet Safety Officer Program

Cadet and composite squadrons offer additional resources for safety officers. Senior cadets can be very effective at helping to integrate the CAP safety program throughout the unit, especially among their own. This also provides trained personnel for the safety officer track when cadets transition from cadet to senior membership.

Safety Leadership:

Commanders must insist safety and ORM are included from the early stages of activity planning and not approve plans that don't include it. As stated earlier, if commanders waver and let things "slide by", a subtle and mixed message is transmitted that safety is not important. If you praise positive safety performance, you reinforce it. If you praise accomplishments that bypass good safety behavior (either directly or indirectly), you are sending a mixed message, possibly reinforcing undesired behaviors.

The unit commander can go a long way in establishing a quality safety program but it is still up to the individual members to carry through with it in day-to-day practice. The responsibility for safety falls to every member of the unit and all members are accountable for the safe operation of the unit. The key to this effort is the commander's careful and effective selection and development of the Safety Officer.

Each member should be a safety force multiplier working as part of a large team in keeping all activities safe. Commanders should pay special attention to developing contingency plans and always being ready to stop an unsafe activity before a mishap occurs. However, the decision-making for stopping unsafe behavior should not rest solely with the commander; it needs to be encouraged and expected from all the members of the unit. A commander should positively reinforce and praise members that make the call, "Knock it Off," when an unsafe situation occurs. The unit CC is instrumental in providing positive support for this culture by correctly supporting and praising positive safety behavior.

Conclusion

The unit commander plays a significant role in protecting the members of the unit and the equipment used to carry out CAP missions. By ensuring mandatory requirements are met, by selecting and using a qualified safety officer, by using the various management tools available, and by encouraging a safety attitude in members of the unit, a commander can accomplish this important role as the leader of the safety program. Be accountable, hold accountable, and praise those who demonstrate a willingness to hold themselves and others accountable for safety.