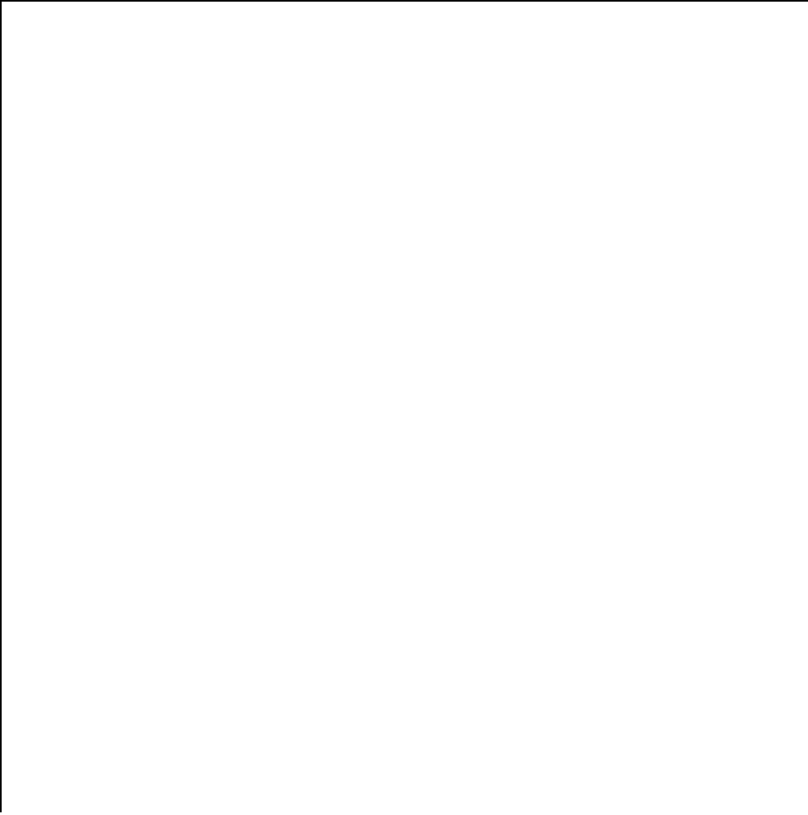


AIR FORCE GROUND SAFETY

FALL PROTECTION FOCUS WEEKS





Front cover photo: Senior Airman Daniel Reyes, 47th Communications Squadron airfield systems technician, hangs off the side of a Digital Airport Surveillance Radar tower on Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas, July 24, 2014. Laughlin's Airfield Systems Airmen maintain approximately \$6.5 million in equipment including 180 different types of radios, two instrument landing systems, one navigation system and two full weather systems that support flight line and base wide operations. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Nathan Maysonet)

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Overview

SUMMARY

This report summarizes the worldwide Air Force activities held during 2015 Fall Protection Focus Weeks sponsored by Air Force Ground Safety. This effort was developed in support of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's campaign, "National Safety Stand-Down."

INTRODUCTION

OSHA reports that over the last 10 years more than 3,500 workers died from falls, the leading cause of death in construction that accounts for more than a third of deaths in the industry. The Air Force experiences falls in more areas than construction, for example, those that occur during flight line operations.

According to the safety center's mishap reporting data, falls were responsible for 7,671 ground mishaps with injuries, including three fatalities, between fiscal years 2010 and 2014, resulting in 44,000 lost work days at a cost of more than \$30 million.

Air Force mishap reporting data also reveal that falls were responsible for the third most-frequent injury reported, behind contact with objects (such as parts, tools, wires and cables), and exertion. Falls accounted for 19 percent of all mishaps that resulted in injury for the same time period.

PURPOSE

The Air Force Fall Protection Focus was designed to reach every member of the Air Force family: active duty, Guard, Reserve, civilians and family members. The intent was to remind all members of fall hazards they face every day both on- and off-duty in order to effect a reduction in fall related mishaps.

METHODS

Air Force safety professionals were provided materials to be used in their local activities through the Air Force Ground Safety SharePoint website. AFSEC developed a fall protection Public Service Announcement and provided videos by Dr. David Michaels, OSHA assistant secretary of labor and Dr. Christine Branche, principal associate director of NIOSH and director of Office Construction Safety and Health to be broadcast on the Armed Forces Radio and Television Services to all outlets (1,000) worldwide. Additionally, the Air Force Safety Center Public Affairs division provided all major command public affairs offices with a template article for use in local promotions.

DATA

Data was collected to show the number of active-duty Air Force and civilian members and their families who were provided fall protection information. Data was also gathered to quantify those within the Department of Defense, but outside the Air Force, and all other categories to include civilians, all military (other than Air Force) members and their families stationed overseas.

The total audience reached: 1,542,912.

Also collected was the number of page views and the number of daily unique visitors to the Ground Safety SharePoint website. This data was reviewed for the time period March 2-May 15, 2015. Page views totaled 6,301 and daily unique visitors totaled 6,752. Page views are defined as "the number of times a page was viewed" and unique visitors as "the number of inferred individual people (filtered for spiders and robots), within a designated reporting timeframe, with activity consisting of one or more visits to a site. Each individual is counted only once in the unique visitor measure for the reporting period." (<http://www.logaholic.com/manual/references/web-analytics-definitions/>)

In addition to being published in installation newspapers around the world, articles about the Air Force Fall Protection Focus Weeks were printed in the following publications:

<http://www.pressreleasepoint.com/af-safety-center-sponsors-fall-protection-focus-weeks>

http://article.wn.com/view/2015/05/01/AF_Safety_Center_sponsors_Fall_Protection_Focus_weeks_USAF_U/

<http://www.shrm.org/hrdisciplines/safetysecurity/articles/pages/fall-protection-awareness.aspx>

www.raptacint.com/news.cfm

<http://www.hilltopstimes.com/content/af-safety-center-turns-attention-fall-prevention>

<http://ehsworks1.blogspot.com/2015/05/record-numbers-to-hear-prevention.html>

<http://www.penoguard.com.au/fall-protection-news.php>

http://foreignaffairs.co.nz/2015/05/14/air-force-puts-spotlight-on-fall-protection/New_Zealand



The information below is excerpts from a report authored by Bruce R. Burnham, DVM, MPH, CSP, Chief, Reports, Analysis and Investigations Branch, Air Force Ground Safety; and Nisara S. Granado, Lt Col, USAF, BSC, Injury Epidemiologist

U.S. Air Force Falls Mishap Review, Fiscal Years 2010-2014

A total of 7,671 USAF Ground mishap reports with an injury mechanism of “Falls” were included in this review. The reports included all civilian and military, on and off-duty, Class A-D, during the period FY 2010 through 2014. These mishaps accounted for over \$30M in costs and 44K lost workdays.

Count of Mishaps, LWDs and Total Cost by Mishap class

Mishap Class	Count	Lost Work Days	Cost
A	12	456	\$2,980,121
B	2	50	\$230,000
C	3,948	44,244	\$22,338,124
D	3,709	0	\$4,372,656
Total	7,671	44,750	\$30,045,901

During this period, falls were the third most frequent injury mechanism, trailing objects and overexertion. This highlights the importance of falls prevention in the Air Force. Falls account for 19% of all mishaps which included an injury.



Falls from heights include falls from one level to another, falls from cliffs/ledges/balconies, falls on/from ladders, falls from buildings/structures, falls from poles, falls from aircraft, and falls from trees, account for a total of 7,796 lost workdays.

	<i>LWDs</i>
Same Level--Slip, Trip, Stumble	16,711
Same Level caused by ice or snow	8,876
Slip, Trip, Fall From/On Stairs, Steps, Or Curb	6,385
From One Level To Another	2,918
Same Level Due To Collision With, Or Push By, Other Person	2,013
Fall On/From Ladder Or Scaffolding/Stand	1,986
Fall From Edge, E.G., Cliff, Ledge, Balcony	1,433
Fall From, Out Of Or Through Building Or Structure	1,140
Fall Involving Chair	892
Other	694
Diving Or Jumping Into Water	487
Fall Involving Other Furniture	459
Fall From Tree	275
Fall Involving Bed	191
Fall While Being Carried/Supported	185
Fall From Wheelchair	61
Fell Off Pole, Usually Utility	44
Fall From Aircraft Surface Or Fuselage/Cargo Hold	0
No Data	0
Total	44,750

Top 10 Functional Areas for Falls

<i>Functional Area</i>	<i>Count</i>
Maintenance - Aircraft	1,084
Security Forces	683
Services	683
Training	558
Medical	411
Communications	356
Maintenance - Other	341
Personnel	302
Maintenance - Weapons/Munitions	247
Civil Engineering - Other	226



Summary of Major Command Participation

Air Force safety professionals provided information and guidance to their installations throughout the world to promote Fall Protection Focus Weeks. Below is a summary of the activities that took place throughout the Air Force, by major command.

- Air Combat Command..... Developed Fall Awareness flyers
Gear, Plan, Skill (GPS) flyers
Two videos developed with MAJCOM Public Affairs office
Created word search
Created Fall Protection Awareness Jeopardy
Fall Protection question of the day—question posted each morning; 1st correct answer received Safety Coin
Competition throughout Command for the top unit supporters:
tie for winning, 325 FW, Tyndall AFB and the 7 BW, Dyess AFB
- Air Education and Training Command..... Wing Commanders were provided letters from the Director of Safety
announcing Fall Protection Focus Weeks for kick-off.
Bi-weekly articles beginning March 4, 2015
Distributed Fall Prevention Training Guide
Wings held fall prevention demonstrations
Briefings for all squadrons
Commander’s calls
Spot inspections
- Air Force Global Strike Command..... Created flyers specifically for Global Strike
In cooperation with ACC, distributed Fall Protection Jeopardy game
- Air Force Materiel Command..... Fall Protection briefed at AFMC Commander’s staff meeting
Briefed Quality Assurance Maintenance Chiefs conference
Flyers placed at all locations including: local credit union; dining establishments; etc.
Installation newspaper articles
Distributed tri-fold brochure on slips, trips and falls
Local news story covering event (Robins AFB)
“Tool Box Talks” focused on fall protection
- Air Force Reserve Command..... Strategic communication through wing news articles,
SharePoint sites, flyers and banners
Some units held official “Stand-Down Days”
Reserve unit at MacDill AFB held a fall protection class
- Air Force Special Operations Command..... Added Fall Protection discussion to all site visits
Fall Protection added as a high interest item for all AFSOC deployed locations
- Air Force Space Command..... All installations received a ladder safety demonstration
Members attended OSHA 7405 course
Installation staffs conducted inspections of fall protection devices
Developed presentations for all installations
Performed compliance spot inspections

Air Mobility Command.....Inspections were done at many locations across the command
Article in Dover AFB newspaper for worldwide use
Scott AFB, in coordination with local OSHA office, provided briefings
Airman who suffered a fall at Little Rock AFB briefed the incident and prevention methods
A SharePoint site was created at Travis AFB specific to fall protection

Pacific Air Forces.....OSHA Fall Protection Quick Card mandated on all unit bulletin boards
No-notice spot inspections across the command
Reviewed F-16 fall hazards; interviewed workers
An installation held a safety stand-down/fair with more than 3,000 attending
In partnership with the Navy, a Fall Protection Specialist Team conducted assessments

United States Air Force Academy..... Press release for all and articles in *Alert & Alive*, a quarterly publication
Comprehensive inventory of all USAFA operations, units, activities that have fall hazards
Fall protection talks at Field Engineering and Readiness Laboratory
– the hand’s on lab for future CE officers (this is a joint outreach with Navy cadets)
Seasonally tailored fall prevention articles in summer, fall and winter publicity forums to address the seasonal aspects of
slips, trips and fall hazards

United States Air Forces in Europe..... Developed a “Safety Talk” for all units
Flyers created to use in discussions within units

Promotional Methods

In order to reach the widest possible audience, the Air Force Ground Safety Division provided a variety of media through diverse delivery methods. The products included multimedia, technical data, statistical data and website links.

The Air Force audience includes active duty, Guard, Reserve, civilian employees and family members. Since this is a vital subject for everyone, AF Ground Safety expanded the audience to all military-related populations assigned overseas including those at deployed locations. To involve these groups, a public service announcement was developed and broadcast through the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service.

In addition, material was provided directly to the Department

of Defense Education Activity for dissemination for dissemination.

The material was used in the Air Force by the major commands and individual units to create the most effective program within their individual locations.

Air Force bases around the world developed fall protection events to serve their local audiences. The events included demonstrations, briefings, games and written material.

Highlights of activities and products are on the following pages:





INSIDE

VPP making strides, Page A2

116th CES helps Scouts, Page A3

It's all about wingmen, Page A4



NEW! The Robins Rev-Up now has two sections

ROBINS REV-UP

Team Robins - Performing to Our Potential

May 15, 2015 Vol. 60 No. 19

Making Tomorrow Better than Today

Just Hangin' Around

Demos help address fall injuries through education, awareness

BY JENNY GORDON
jenny.snider.ctr@us.af.mil

Full protection was the focus of a two-week campaign across the Air Force as well as various construction and high-risk fields across the country.

At Robins that awareness message is taken to heart each and every day, and this week it included several live demonstrations of how protective equipment is used by professionals in the field.

Outside Bldg. 321, home of the 402nd Maintenance Support Group's Plant Services, harnesses, shock-absorbing lanyards, tie-down anchors and other equipment were showcased to workers, as well as a scenario of how much force can be exerted from a 220-pound weight if the proper fall protection is not used.

Team Robins partnered with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in support of the message, giving workers like Johnny Watkins, a 402nd MXSG production mechanic, insight and additional information on equipment he uses on the job.

"This is very educational because we're out there in all of this every day," he said.

Coworker Jeff Cravey, 402nd MXSG equipment specialist, agreed.

"We basically have much of what they showed us in our own tool cribs," he said. "Most of the time people tell us how things work, but it's nice to have a demonstration."

A representative from Capital Safety also talked about the do's and don'ts of personal protective equipment. For example, no sharing of PPE is allowed, such as sharing and connecting lanyards. It's also important to frequently and closely inspect PPE.

Another thing for workers to pay close attention to is what is kept inside their pockets, as it can pose a hazard. Keys, pens and other objects have been known to cause serious injuries and fatalities when PPE such as harnesses were deployed.

The same hazards can be encountered by workers whether working in an industrial base atop a C-130 wing, or from someone stationed on top of a roof on a construction project.



U.S. Air Force photo by TOMMIE HORTON
Will Bazela, a representative from Capital Safety, demonstrates the safety features of various harnesses and attachments for fall protection Tuesday.

Much of the PPE demonstrated is used by 78th Civil Engineer Group and other units who may work on rooftops, tops of aircraft or on lifts.

A few times a week Juan Solis, also with 402nd MXSG Plant Services, uses some of the equipment described in the presentation.

"We use harnesses quite a bit, and I do a lot of work using hoists, scissor lifts and (equipment) that goes up to 135 feet," he said. "It's a good class to keep us on our toes. That's why we use wingmen and always have spotters - safety is our No. 1 concern."

Workers in the 402nd MXSG provide a wide range of industrial and engineering services for maintenance production groups in the Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex.

That can include designing, installing, modifying and maintaining, and repairing ground support equipment, and facilities maintenance.

Demos were also conducted in Bldgs. 91 and 125.

"We wanted to highlight this at Robins as a

► see HANGIN', A5

Just the FAQs

What standard covers fall protection? AFI 91-203, Air Force Consolidated Occupational Safety Instruction and OSHA Standard 1910, General Industry and OSHA Standard 1926, Construction.

How do I know if I need fall protection? Your supervisor needs to perform an in-depth risk evaluation. Generally, you need fall protection when performing work in an elevated location, on open-sided floors and platforms, and near floor and wall openings.

How do I get training? Most people will receive fall protection training as part of their initial job safety training. However, your supervisor must ensure you are trained IAW AFI 91-203, Chapter 13 prior to performing work in a location where specified fall protection procedures or equipment is needed, such as working from heights above four feet.

Is fall protection training an annual requirement? For most workers it's not. However, for anyone who uses a Personal Fall Arrest System, recurring training should be done annually, when work conditions change or new fall arrest systems are used.

Robins AFB installation newspaper article about Fall Protection. Robins AFB also invited local TV station, WMAZ to attend. WMAZ aired a local news story about this demonstration.

Safety Talk

Risk:

- Present in everything
- Perceived differently
- Can be managed

USAFE Fall Trends (FY10-FY14):

- On Duty: 91
 - All minor
 - Common Activities:
 - Walking
 - Housekeeping
 - Aircraft Mx
 - Admin Work
 - Flight line Ops
 - Material handling
 - Common Factors:
 - Risk Mgt Errors
 - Complacency
 - Inattention

- Off-Duty: 137
 - 2 fatal
 - Parking Deck
 - Hiking
 - All others minor
 - 18% at night
 - >50% in quarters
 - Walking

- MICT Trends:
 - 484 Open Discr.
 - 6173 N/A answers

Shop Briefs – Fall Protection

The Mission goals of the Shop Briefs are:

- Build risk awareness among workers
- Enhance mishap prevention through deliberate focus

Group Composition and Rules of Engagement

- Group size (shop level)
- Facilitated by competent member (any rank)
- Length: 30 min
- Integrated into existing safety briefing meetings
- Everyone participates
- No one should dominate time
- Shared experiences are valued
- Empower all to develop solutions
- Pass innovative ideas up the chain

Guided Discussion Talking Points

1. (Duty Related) While risk is manageable, people perceive it differently. What is an unnecessary risk to you? Who do you believe should determine what is unnecessary?
2. (Duty Related) What are some of the potential fall hazards we have in our area? How can we better control them?
3. (Duty Related) What do you think contributes to inattention and complacency? How can supervisors better mitigate these factors?
4. (Off-Duty) What are potential household hazards that contribute to slips/trips/falls? How is night a factor in a good portion of these mishaps? Does anyone have any lessons to share in preventing household falls?
5. (All) What other information do you need to better understand the problem with falls? If any, what are the barriers preventing you from being empowered to fix the slips/trips/falls mishaps?

Air Force puts spotlight on fall protection

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Jeff Andrejcek, 380th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

Southwest Asia -- Air Force Ground Safety sponsored Fall Protection Focus weeks from May 4-15 to raise awareness of fall hazards as well as how to mitigate fall-related accidents.

Here, safety and contracting officials organized a fall protection demonstration to educate base personnel on proper pre-climb procedures.

"This demonstration shows [everyone] how to use the equipment as well as the safety and rescue procedures involved in a situation like this," said Tech. Sgt. Russell, RF Transmissions NCO in-charge.

The annual fall protection initiative is partnered with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's campaign, "National Safety Stand-Down."

Air Force safety statistics indicated falls were responsible for 7,671 ground mishaps with injuries, including three fatalities, between fiscal years 2010 and 2014. These incidents resulted in 44,000 lost work days at a cost of more than \$30M.

"With the high operations tempo [here] something that's seemingly basic, like climbing a tower, could easily cause complacency and you tend to forget little things," said Russell. "It's really important to pay attention to detail especially in this fast pace environment."

Bill Parsons, Air Force chief of ground safety, noted that falls shouldn't just be thought of as situations involving heights.

"Fall protection or prevention is not only for activities related to heights that are encountered every day on-the-job, but also includes, for example, falls that can happen because of wet floors or obstacles on a walkway," said Parsons.

The two weeks dedicated to fall protection is an opportunity to create awareness of fall hazards and according to the Air Force Safety Center, to further the cause, installations and/or MAJCOMs can execute this focus awareness whenever it is deemed appropriate.

"We want everyone to remember that preventable falls are inexcusable and that we must continue to do all we can to protect ourselves and each other," said Parsons.



Staff Sgt. William, RF Transmissions craftsman, explains proper pre-climb procedures to base personnel in support of the Air Force fall protection focus initiative at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia May 11, 2015. According to the Air Force Safety Center website, The Fall Protection Focus alerts the entire Air Force family - active duty, civilian, Guard, Reserve and family members - of what can be done to prevent fall-related injuries and deaths.



Senior Airman Eric, Cable Maintenance journeyman, climbs a communication tower as part of a demonstration in support of the Air Force fall protection focus initiative at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia May 11, 2015. According to the Air Force Safety Center website, the Air Force experiences hundreds of fall mishaps annually that result in thousands of lost man-hours as well as injuries and deaths.



Staff Sgt. William, RF Transmissions craftsman, climbs a communication tower as part of a demonstration in support of the Air Force fall protection focus initiative at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia May 11, 2015. According to the Air Force Safety Center website, the Air Force experiences hundreds of fall mishaps annually that result in thousands of lost man-hours as well as injuries and deaths.



Base personnel observe a climbing demonstration in support of the Air Force fall protection focus initiative at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia May 11, 2015. According to the Air Force Safety Center website, The Fall Protection Focus alerts the entire Air Force family - active duty, civilian, Guard, Reserve and family members - of what can be done to prevent fall-related injuries and deaths.

"It's really important to pay attention to detail especially in this fast pace environment," said Tech. Sgt. Russell, RF Transmissions NCO in-charge.

Deployed locations also participated in AFSEC's Fall Protection Focus weeks as reported in this local publication from the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing.

Bagram Support Group, Afghanistan

Display for all personnel, U.S. and Coalition forces, assigned to this location during the Health, Safety and Environment Day.



FSS PROUDLY SUPPORTS

FORCE
SUPPORTS IN AIR FORCE BASE
SLIPPERY SITUATION

Your Laughlin POC is:
James "Mac" McAllister
Ground Safety Manager
DSN 732-5679 or Comm (830)256-5679

Good sites for more Safety-related info:
<https://ca3.es.af.mil/sites/00-3E-AF-18/default.aspx>
<http://www.afnec.af.mil/>

THE AF 2015 FALL PROTECTION AWARENESS FOCUS

Advertisement for the Fall Protection Awareness from Laughlin AFB, Texas.

Fall Protection Focus

AFGSC GROUND SAFETY * OSHA FALL PROTECTION FOCUS 2015

AFGSC Percentage of Occupational Fall Related Mishaps Compared to Other Occupational Mishaps

226
Fall Related Mishaps (FY10 - FY15)

25%
Averaged over 5 years (FY10 - FY15)

Negative Growth
(FY10 - FY14)

Positive Growth
(FY14 - FY15)

Will we see an increasing trend over the next 5 years?

FY	Percentage of Mishaps that are falls	Total Mishaps
FY10	~35%	\$169,948
FY11	~30%	\$79,841
FY12	25%	\$86,495
FY13	25%	\$69,531
FY14	25%	\$52,391
FY15	25%	\$93,700

MITIGATION

Breakout of Fall Injuries by Type	Mitigation
Slippery Surfaces 53% - FY10 - FY15	Inspect areas frequently Clean up spills Spread rock salt/sand
Trip/Stumble (Same Level) 25% - FY10 - FY15	Secure loose rugs/carpet Correct inadequate lighting Fix cluttered walkways/aisle
Falls (One Level to Another) (Ladders, Roofs, Scaffolding etc...) 17% - FY10 - FY15	Place ladders proper Use fall protection Avoid standing on chairs etc.
Stairs 5% - FY10 - FY15	Correct uneven steps Correct inadequate lighting Fix broken/loose steps

Air Force Global Strike Command developed this poster for use at all command installations.

2015 Fall Protection Awareness Focus

4 - 16 May 2016

Air Combat Command created this game to be played at squadron briefings, commander's calls, etc.

HISTORY OF THE AIR FORCE	FALL PROTECTION FOR CONSTRUCTION	PORTABLE LADDER SAFETY	FALL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT	FIXED LADDER SAFETY
<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
<u>200</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>200</u>
<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>	<u>300</u>
<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>	<u>400</u>
<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>500</u>

FALL PROTECTION WORKPLACE CHECKUP

In support of the Air Force's 2015 Fall Protection Focus and the OSHA National Fall Prevention Stand-Down, units are requested to conduct a workplace checkup to ensure their working environments are free from fall hazards. Please check the following:

Yes No

- Are stairs with four or more risers equipped with a hand rail?
- Are open-sided floors or platforms four feet or more above an adjacent floor or ground level guarded by railing?
- Are floor openings covered or barricaded?
- Are aisles and walkways even/level and in good repair (look for torn carpets, peeling laminate on raised floor tiles, or other impediments/defects)?
- Are aisles and passageways kept clear and free of obstacles?
- Are spilled materials cleaned up immediately?
- Are cords and cables routed out of walkways or taped securely to prevent tripping?
- Is good housekeeping maintained?
- Is furniture arranged to provide open walking pathways?
- Are workplaces sufficiently illuminated?
- Are step ladders in good repair?
- Are workers that use ladders at any height trained?

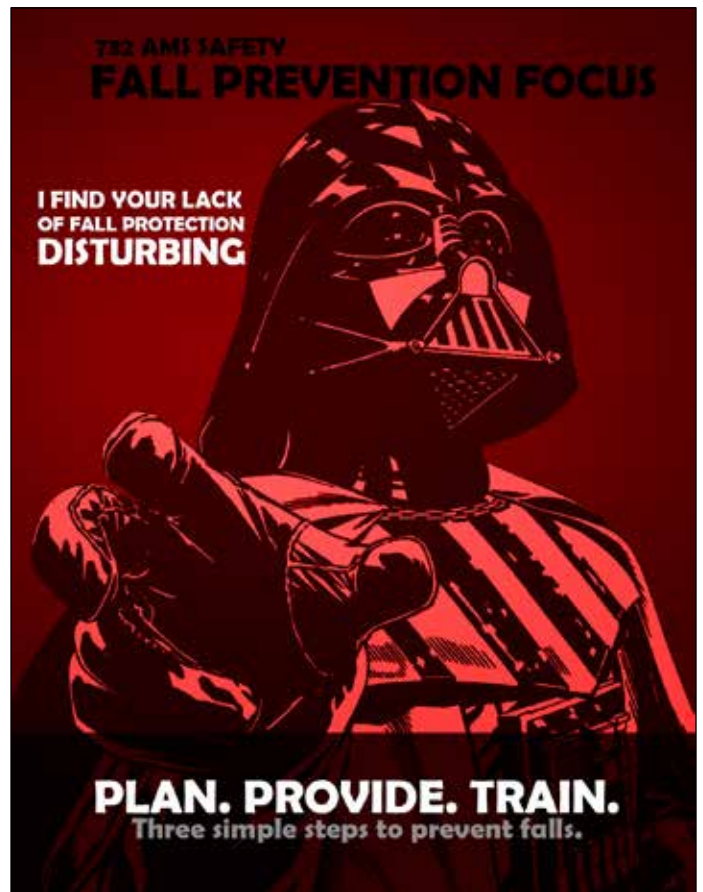
Report any hazards/deficiencies observed to the supervisor, facility manager, or unit safety representative.

Results of workplace checkup / actions taken:

Name of person that conducted workplace checkup

Date

Unit assigned



The 732nd Air Mobility Squadron from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska designed these posters.

42nd Air Base Wing, Maxwell AFB, Alabama Wing Safety Day

Although Maxwell AFB has a small fall protection program, it was important to address slips, trips and falls. This event was held ahead of the official Fall Protection Focus dates, on April 24, 2015, in order to coincide with their scheduled Safety Day. This expanded their reach to all in a single location. There were over 35 on and off base agencies participating.



Putting the Focus on Fall Protection

Air Force Ground Safety will sponsor Fall Protection Focus weeks May 4-15 to draw attention to avoidable mishaps due to falls. The initiative is a partnership with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's campaign, National Safety Stand-Down.

During fiscal years 2010-2014, falls were responsible for 7,671 Air Force injuries, including three fatalities, resulting in 44,000 lost work days at a cost of more than \$30 million.

Throughout the two-week focus, Commanders and Supervisors are encouraged to partner with their safety offices to raise the awareness of day-to-day fall hazards and use the information provided through your safety staffs to foster prevention of fall-related injuries and fatalities.

Fall protection is not only for activities accomplished at heights, it also includes falls that can happen because of poor housekeeping, wet floors or obstacles on a walkway. We want everyone to remember that preventable falls are inexcusable and that we must continue to do all we can to protect ourselves and each other.

In the U.S., falls are the leading cause of death in both construction and general industry. Most fatalities occur when employees fall from elevated work areas, like open-sided floors and through floor openings. Falls from as little as 4 to 6 feet can cause serious injuries and sometimes death.

As well as being the leading cause of workplace injuries, slips, trips and falls accounted for 17% of the total mishaps for the Air Force and 19% of the total Air Force Reserve Command mishaps. Supervisors are required to identify workplace fall hazards in their Job Safety Training Outline. Identified workplace fall hazards will be briefed to all employees who are exposed to the hazard.

General Fall Prevention Topics

Slips Trips and Falls: There are several situations that may cause slips, trips and falls in the workplace and controls to prevent mishaps. The controls needed to prevent these hazards are usually obvious but too often ignored. Controls include but are not limited to:

* Steps and stairways. Naturally, to prevent a stairway fall, awareness and prevention is the key. The following preventive measures should be in place or should be kept in mind:

- Always use handrails when going up and down stairs.
- Ensure stairs are well lit and should be supplied with on and off switches at the top and bottom of the stairs.
- Keep walkways and stairs clear of scrap and debris and never use for temporary storage.
- Routinely check stairs for worn or loose carpeting and flooring and repair immediately.
- Ensure the edge of each stair is noticeable.



— Paint the bottom basement stair or floor a different color to make it more visible.

— Don't carry vision-blocking loads up or down stairs.

* Icy and snow-covered areas. Keep outdoor areas such as parking lots, side-walks, loading docks and other industrial walkways clean and in good condition. If ice and snow are factors, additional controls should be implemented to remove the snow or ice where feasible.

— For ice, treat the surface with sand or other environmentally friendly material.

— Wear lug soles (shoes) in icy weather.

— Clear parking lots, stairs and walkways during icy and snowy weather.

— Use salt or sand as needed.

— Develop a plan to have members come in early to treat/remove ice and snow before they become a problem.

Fall Protection:

When workers are 4 feet (minimum) or more above ground, a fall protection system must be used. Examples of fall protection systems are:

— Evaluate the need for fall protection for each individual situation.

— Passive fall protection is a system such as standard guardrails placed on all open sides of floor or walking (stairs) or working surface (top of roof) to protect worker.

— Active fall protection requires workers to wear harnesses connected to a fixed point that can bear their weight. These systems are designed by a qualified and experienced person.

Ladder Safety:

Each year in the United States, 300 deaths and another 130,000 injuries require emergency medical attention. There are inherent hazards associated with ladder use, and personnel should be trained on ladder use and those hazards before using ladders. Countermeasures to prevent ladder injuries are to perform a visual inspection prior to use:

- Check for broken or missing steps, rungs, cleats and rails.
- Check steps and rungs to ensure they are free of grease and oil.
- Check for sharp edges or burrs and ensure it is free of splits, cracks and dry rot.
- Check for stability. Look for loose or bent hinges and loose, broken or missing extension locks.
- Check for damaged or worn non-slip bases, safety feet, wheels or casters.

Additionally, poor planning is also a factor in that it is easy to procrastinate and get behind on a task and then make up for lost time through haste and speed. Being in a hurry will result in walking too fast, running or being so focused on a task that we are completely oblivious to surroundings. **Plan work activities and assess risk as part of the planning process.**

The 377th Air Base Wing at Kirtland AFB published the article above as part of their weekly newsletter.

Commander's Call Topics



May 7, 2015

"And so my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country."

*The Inaugural Address of John F. Kennedy (1917-1963)
35th President of the United States
January 20, 1961*

The Air Force celebrates
May 3-9 as
[Public Service Recognition Week](#).

"Government Works"
is this year's theme.

Safety Focuses on Fall Mishap Prevention

Falls accounted for 7,671 injuries, including three fatalities, to Air Force active-duty and civilian employees during fiscal years 2010 through 2014. That number becomes even more significant when one considers that those injuries resulted in 44,000 lost work days at a total cost of more than \$30 million. Even when there is no loss of time on the job (i.e., zero lost work days) productivity suffers and contributes to the overall lost-dollar amount.

The Air Force Safety Center is partnering with the U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to promote fall safety and prevention during Fall Protection Focus Weeks, May 4-15, launching a concerted effort to eliminate mishaps due to falls.

Falls are caused by a wide range of circumstances. Lack of attention during simple activities and lack of awareness of hazardous conditions are common factors in the majority of costly slips, trips and falls. Slips on icy parking lots and wet floors, for instance, account for almost 500 injuries a year. Trips and missteps on stairs and curbs account for more than 200 injuries a year. Many of these mishaps can be avoided by wearing shoes and boots appropriate for the conditions, and by paying attention to terrain and sidewalk changes and obstacles such as stairs and curbs.

Falls from a higher level – ladders, scaffolding, second

stories or higher, fuselages, cargo holds and utility poles – occur less frequently, but can result in more extensive injuries that require longer recuperation and incur greater expense. However, they all have one thing in common: Most mishaps are preventable.

"We can eliminate preventable mishaps with a heightened awareness and use of available training resources," said Maj. Gen. Kurt Neubauer, the Air Force chief of safety. "Each Airman – active duty, Guard, Reserve, civilians – is vital to preserving combat readiness and capabilities. On- and off-duty mishaps impede mission readiness and accomplishment."

Risk management, both at work and during leisure activities, is key to fall prevention. According to Bill Parsons, the Air Force chief of ground safety, "Preventing fall injuries and fatalities in every workplace – the flightline, the construction site, the office and at home – through education and awareness keeps our Airmen mission ready."

Commanders and supervisors are encouraged to discuss fall hazards and review fall prevention methods during Fall Protection Focus Weeks. Additional information and products to enhance fall prevention awareness are available from the [Air Force Safety Center](#).

Air Force Safety Center Public Affairs, Kirtland AFB

Fall Mishaps FY 2010-2014

Class	Count	LWDs	Cost
A	12	456	\$2,980,121
B	2	50	\$230,000
C	3,948	44,244	\$22,338,124
D	3,709	0	\$4,372,656
Total	7,671	44,750	\$30,045,901



Class categorizes severity, with Class A being the most severe, often resulting in death or disability.
Count is the actual number of such occurrences.
LWD is the number of Lost Work Days.
Cost is the AF expense (in dollars) incurred as a result of the mishap.

This document is a weekly product of topics for commanders at all levels to use for their briefings to all personnel.

THERE'S NO EXCUSE

ALWAYS USE FALL PROTECTION

It'll only take a second

It's a flat roof

It's not that high

This ladder's probably ok

It takes too long

This harness is too uncomfortable

Watch this!



OSHA Occupational Safety and Health Administration

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
NIOSH

