



May 2019

# The Safety Chain

Kentucky Wing CAP  
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For unit and group safety officers. Here is the latest information regarding National Safety Officers College from the CAP Chief of Safety, Mr. George Vogt:

## The Plan for NSOC

The plan for National Safety Officer College is coming into better focus. According to our agreement with the Air Force the course must cover, among other things, the new CAP Safety Management System (SMS). Since the new regulations outline the SMS, we need to get those regulations in place, and then NSOC will follow shortly thereafter. The agreement with the AF also says that all wing directors of safety must attend, and that requirement will also be extended to region directors of safety, as well as all candidates for the master rating in the Safety Specialty Track. I would also encourage wing commanders and region commanders to take part if their schedules allow (the last region commander to attend NSOC is now your National Commander, Maj Gen Mark Smith). With that large of an audience it would be impractical, inconvenient, and prohibitively expensive to have a week-long in-residence NSOC course. Our current goal is to run the course like an online university program offering readings, personal assignments, webinars, group sessions, projects, and problem solving in the context of our Safety Management System and risk management approach to safety in CAP. Some of it will be self-paced, with a targeted date to complete course requirements. Stay tuned for more information; we're looking forward to the school kicking off shortly after the National Conference.

## Shortcuts

This topic applies to ground teams and to air crews. All of us have taken short cuts at one time or another. For example, we may leave our home later than usual and we are running late. We take a short cut to arrive at our destination before we are late. Maybe it is a short cut through a neighborhood we usually go around. Maybe we drive faster than normal. But whatever the reason, are we compromising safety?

Shortcuts are actions that people assume will save time and effort, but at the risk of possible injury. Typically, individuals have both the knowledge and the control of an existing unsafe condition or action, but consciously choose to perform the action or ignore the condition. People take shortcuts for a variety of reasons, including: the rush to get a task completed due to deadlines, running behind schedule, poorly functioning equipment, or for one of many other rationalizations or justifications.

Some people are unaware or just did not perceive the safety hazards associated with a task. Through the training provided by CAP, members should be experienced with their job but have become complacent in following safety procedures. That is, they actively decide to ignore safety rules.

Some time ago now in the Kentucky wing I remember the time when one of the wings aircraft had come out of maintenance where the nose trim wheel cabling was reversed, that is nose up trim actually moved the nose down instead of up. The pilot realized the problem and compensated for it early after takeoff. This occurred with a high wing Cessna so the problem probably may not have been apparent during the pre-flight inspection or run-up just prior to takeoff. The question is: why did the cabling get reversed by a mechanic who should be experienced with aircraft systems? Was the mechanic in a rush to finish the job and move onto the next aircraft? Did a wing maintenance officer put a rush to get this aircraft back into service?

I am not saying that short-cuts were taken in this incident, but provide us with an example of what can happen when short-cuts are taken. Bottom line, short-cuts can and do compromise safety. Maybe the outcome is that nothing happened this time after taking a short-cut, but let's don't gamble with safety.

*Semper Vigilans*