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## ***Mission Complete***

I would like to thank the ACC Director of Safety for allowing me, upon my retirement, 3 months short of 23 years active duty service, the opportunity to say farewell. In my career, I've had safety jobs in four different MAJCOMs: MAC, SAC, AETC, and ACC. Throughout those years, the tragic losses of far too many classmates, squadron mates, and even a student pilot, whose wings I pinned, has never gotten any easier to accept.

Early on, my work with a C-21 Class A Safety Inspection Board had a profound effect on my perspective of flying safety. Later, Flight Safety Officer training led to my investigation of a B-1 Class A mishap in which the investigators ironically became part of another Class A mishap when the UH-1 Huey that was ferrying us to the accident site made an autorotation forced landing in the Utah Test and Training Range -- fortunately I was prepared for that survival situation!

During nearly 4 years on the MAJCOM staff, I've struggled with the intangible nature of safety; you never know if or how many accidents you've prevented, only those you haven't. I joined the ACC/SEF team after 2 historic low mishap rate years (FYs 00 & 01), only to see abrupt spikes in 02 & 03. I'm very proud that we've achieved an all-time record low last year in 04, and we're on-track to meet or exceed the SECDEF's mandated 50 percent mishap reduction goal.

Flying is not inherently dangerous; yet, it can be quite unforgiving of three things: ignorance, arrogance, and complacency. I got to be an "old pilot" by making conservative decisions on the ground and in the air. I challenge you to always do the same. I'm honored to have flown with the truly finest and I salute all who continue to serve our great nation. Godspeed!



Courtesy Photo

**Lt Col David Hagginbothom,**  
**ACC Flight Safety**

*Mission Complete, H+11 OUT*