

Aircrew Safety

Award of Distinction

Capt Hayes and Capt Mulloy briefed as SKEETER 01 flight, a two-ship of A-10s flying an out-and-back Close Air Support (CAS) sortie from Pope AFB, N.C. to support USAF Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) training at Ft. Benning, Ga. During the initial climb to FL230, the flight accomplished operations and systems checks passing through 10,000' MSL, 13,000' MSL, and FL180. During these checks, neither Capts Hayes nor Mulloy noted any anomalies with their aircraft fuel and oxygen systems. The flight leveled off at FL230 and accomplished a Level-Off check where Capt Mulloy noted her cabin altitude to be 16,000'. According to the A-10 pressurization schedule, the cabin altitude at FL230 should be approximately 14,000'. Immediately thereafter, Capt Mulloy's Master Caution Light illuminated with an associated Oxygen Low Light. She discovered that the Oxygen Quantity Indicator needle was slowly spinning and that the Master Caution Light and Oxygen Low Light would illuminate each time the indicator decreased below 0.5 Liters. Capt Mulloy called a Knock-It-Off and quickly received the lead from Capt Hayes. While analyzing the aircraft malfunctions, Capt Mulloy began to recognize her personal hypoxia symptoms — euphoria, foginess, mental confusion,

and an inability to perform simple tasks. She requested a descent with Washington Center but, due to the hypoxia, initially had difficulty taking action to begin the descent. After Capt Hayes prompted Capt Mulloy multiple times, she finally pulled the power and lowered the nose of the aircraft. Capt Hayes instructed Capt Mulloy to gang load the oxygen regulator by selecting EMERGENCY and 100 percent Oxygen. Capt Mulloy's hypoxia symptoms also made it difficult for her to operate the Embedded GPS/INS (EGI). Recognizing that Capt Mulloy was having trouble with the EGI, Capt Hayes talked her through the process of selecting Pope's TACAN and turning direct to Pope. Capt Hayes declared an emergency with Washington Center and communicated that Capt Mulloy was experiencing hypoxia. Since Capt Mulloy continued to experience her hypoxia symptoms, Capt Hayes needed to continually prompt her to maintain a nose low attitude for the descent and to change radio frequencies during the emergency flight back to Pope AFB. Eventually, Capt Mulloy's hypoxia symptoms diminished and she landed uneventfully via a straight-in with Capt Hayes in chase. Capt Hayes' flight leadership and Capt Mulloy's ability to overcome hypoxia in a single-seat aircraft demonstrated the proper use of cockpit resource management and were instrumental in the safe recovery of the aircraft.



**Capt Dax Hayes, Capt Julie Mulloy,
74th Fighter Sqdn., 23rd Fighter Group, Pope AFB, North Carolina**

Crew Chief Safety

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On 17 June, 2004 SrA Chad Alexander and Amn Adam Liller of the 509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron were preparing to recover the B-2A "Spirit of Georgia" returning from a normal training sortie. As they marshaled the aircraft to its final parking spot, the number three brake became engulfed in flames. SrA Alexander immediately took control of the situation and instructed the flight crew to shut down engines and evacuate. SrA Alexander and Amn Liller ensured the safe evacu-

ation of the crew and began combating the brake fire. Within a few seconds, they were able to extinguish the fire using a 150-pound Halon fire extinguisher. The quick reaction time and expert understanding of emergency procedures enabled SrA Alexander and Amn Liller to save lives and prevented the loss of a \$2.2 billion B-2 stealth bomber. To their credit, the entire ground emergency was handled without any damage to equipment or injuries to personnel. Their superior actions are a testament to the caliber of men and women in the 509th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.



**SrA Chad Alexander, Amn Adam Liller,
509th Aircraft Maint. Sqdn., 509th Bomb Wing, Whiteman AFB, Missouri**

Flight Line Safety

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While performing duties required to launch a \$74M B-52 bomber on a local training sortie, SSgt Holloway and A1C Beames prevented the loss of life and a valuable combat aircraft. SSgt Holloway and A1C Beames were assigned as crew chiefs to launch Skull 29 on a Functional Check Flight (FCF). The launch was plagued by multiple minor maintenance issues, and Red Ball maintenance was expertly and quickly coordinated. Problems included failure of the Hobart AC power cart, the pilot's Attitude Directional Indicator gyros, autopilot, and TACAN/VOR navigation set. After starting the number 4 engine in accordance with Technical Order procedures, engine number 5 would not start after applying fuel to the engine. Maintenance was coordinated to work on the problem. After motoring the engine to clear unburned fuel from the engine, and waiting the prescribed time for starter limitations, a restart of engine #5 was attempted. Shortly after the attempted re-

start, fuel vapors ignited around and below the engine. The crew chiefs took immediate action to warn the crew and used the nearby HALON bottle to quickly extinguish the flames. Their timely response prevented any damage to the aircraft. Finally, just prior to taxi, the team of crew chiefs noticed that one of the aircraft's air refueling doors on top of the jet was partially open. SSgt Holloway notified the crew, and a recycle of the system corrected the problem, preventing any damage to the system on departure and climb out. SSgt Holloway and A1C Beames' attention to detail yet again protected America's tip of the spear. The expert workmanship of the ground crew team allowed for an on-time takeoff despite all the encountered setbacks and delays. Working together, their quick action saved the lives of the five-member crew, two onboard maintenance Airmen, and an irreplaceable national resource.



**SSgt Michael D. Holloway, A1C Bradley T. Beames,
2nd Aircraft Maint. Sqdn., 2nd Bomb Wing, Barksdale AFB, Louisiana**

Pilot Safety

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On 7 June 2004, Capt Hank McKibban displayed superb airmanship and flying ability in handling an in-flight F-16 engine emergency. Capt McKibban (call sign Lord 1) led a 4-ship of F-16s from Cannon Air Force Base on a defensive counter air mission. During the first ops check on departure, Lord 1 discovered the oil pressure was fluctuating. Capt McKibban assessed the oil pressure to be within operating limits and decided to monitor the engine instruments while continuing the departure. He climbed the aircraft to 15,000' MSL in accordance with the departure procedure and slowed to 300 KIAS. Shortly after entering the military operations area (approximately 40 nm from Cannon Air Force Base), Lord 1 received an ENGINE LUBE LOW warning. Capt McKibban initiated an immediate left turn direct Cannon, selected afterburner, and began climbing to achieve a one-to-one glide ratio to home base. He cleared #3 to a chase position for mutual support and declared an emergency. After 20 seconds of afterburner use, the afterburner failed and the

nozzle fully closed due to oil loss. Capt McKibban continued to climb in military power to achieve parameters for a flameout approach and landing. At this point the aircraft fuel weight was approximately 9,500 pounds, well above a safe landing weight on a 10,000' runway at 4,300' elevation. Capt McKibban expertly guided his aircraft south of the airfield and worked together with Lord 3 to emergency jettison two external fuel tanks over an unpopulated area. Capt McKibban initiated a left turn and selected idle power after achieving proper flameout landing parameters. He turned on the emergency power unit (EPU) in anticipation of engine seizure and lowered the landing gear while performing the approach. On short final Capt McKibban selected full speed brakes and landed the aircraft approximately 800' down the runway at 185 KIAS. Realizing his idle thrust was higher than normal due to the fully closed nozzle; he lowered the tail-hook and successfully engaged the departure-end cable at 90 KIAS. Capt McKibban's timely decisions and disciplined actions prevented a Class A mishap and saved the Air Force a valuable combat asset.



**Capt William H. McKibban, 522nd Fighter Sqdn.,
27th Fighter Wing, Cannon AFB, New Mexico**