



Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 24 Safety & Force Preservation Policy Statement



The overarching intent of everything we do at MAG-24 is Mission first, Marines and Sailors always. Within that, my number one priority is maintaining readiness to accomplish all assigned missions while preserving our most precious assets—our Marines and Sailors. My message is simple and clear—there is no mission important enough to risk our precious assets by working, training or flying when we are not ready.

We are part of America's expeditionary force in readiness, and we must be ready, responsive & relevant and prepared to respond to today's crisis with today's force today! Safety is central to the idea of readiness and must not be an afterthought of our actions in combat, in training and while on liberty. All leaders must guard against reckless behavior—both at the unit and individual level—because it jeopardizes the health, safety, and combat readiness of our entire Group. Safety and force preservation are an all hands effort. While risk is inherent in many things that we do, we must learn to manage it by controlling and mitigating risk regardless of operational complexity. We must continue to provide realistic training balanced with a strong emphasis on risk mitigation while applying the same principles and procedures equally to our off-duty activities. We do this through relentless training, awareness of the risks we are facing, and a clear-eyed understanding of the mission we face.

We must maintain strict adherence to standards in everything we do. Goals must be constantly weighed against risks, and controls must be implemented to make all operations as safe as possible. I cannot think of any event or operation at MAG-24 that would ever justify accepting unmanaged risk. Just as we plan to visit destruction on the enemy, we must work equally hard to reduce harm or damage to ourselves. I expect risk management to be embedded in every aspect of MAG-24 life—every plan, whether training, operational, or liberty, should include risk management considerations. Every one of us, from the CO to the most junior Sailor and Marine, must carefully weigh the outcome of every risk decision. We will use our force preservation councils to identify and help Marines identified as high-risk.

Every Marine and Sailor, regardless of rank or experience, is charged with stopping any event or action that poses an unacceptable safety risk. Don't allow safety to be sacrificed in the name of expediency or allow operational tempo to exceed our ability to operate safely. Stay within published procedures and standards, don't cut corners, and ensure that as we work toward mission accomplishment, we are not putting each other or ourselves at any unnecessary risk and actually degrading our readiness. Please use the chain of command to raise safety and force preservation issues without fear of reprisal.

A vital aspect of our safety program is the involvement of QA in our maintenance departments. I expect no one to waiver when it comes to adhering to acceptable maintenance standards—make sure our Marines and Sailors continue to do maintenance the right way. I task every supervisor and leader to instruct and carefully monitor the performance of his or her Marines and Sailors.

I charge each Marine and Sailor to maintain safety as a mindset both on and off-duty and ensure risk mitigation strategies are included in the planning and execution of all on-duty and liberty activities; we do it in combat—we need to do it in garrison. A training or off-duty death or injury is every bit as tragic as a combat loss. We must educate our Marines on the hazards of alcohol, speeding, fatigue, motorcycle riding & ownership, distracted driving, water activities; demand the use of required personal protective equipment; and ruthlessly enforce the standards as they apply to operating motor vehicles and recreational activities. Specifically, wear your seatbelts and required protective gear, don't speed, don't drive while fatigued, don't drink and drive, and operate within your limits and capabilities in everything you do. Good judgment and common sense are essential tools in our safety effort. I need your help in fostering a climate that promotes the safe and incident-free execution of liberty and a willingness to intervene at the first sign of irresponsible behavior. Make and stick to a liberty plan, be always aware of your surroundings, have a liberty buddy whenever possible, and take care of yourselves and each other.

With the active participation of every Marine and Sailor within our Group, we can preserve our most precious asset—our Marines and Sailors—and be the most ready when our Nation calls. My door is always open for you to ask questions or express your concerns. Together, as a Team, we can accomplish any mission and ensure the continued success of MAG-24 to our Corps. Mission first, Marines & Sailors always.

Semper Fidelis,

Paul A. Fortunato

Colonel, United States Marine Corps
Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 24