



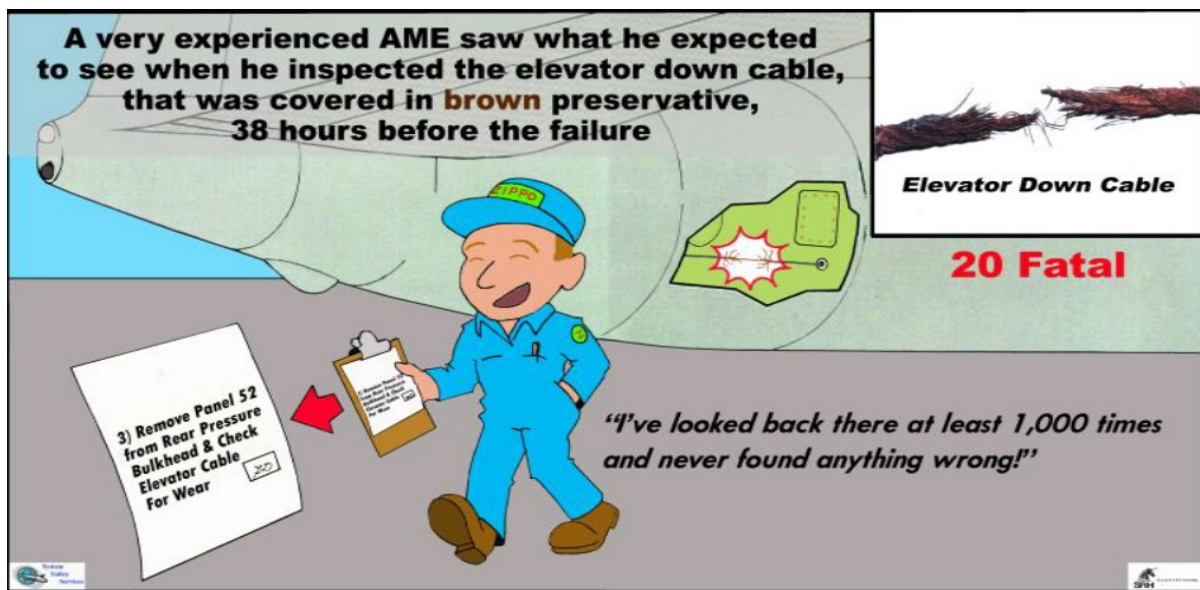
COMPLACENCY

Introduction

“Complacency” often refers to the lack of its precise definition. It is a topic which has not yet been adequately conceptualized and any use of the term contributes to an illusion of understanding of what causes risks and state of self-satisfaction with one's own performance coupled with an unawareness of danger, trouble, or controversy. Complacency is a human factor in aviation maintenance that typically develops over time. As an aircraft maintenance personnel, gains knowledge and experience, a sense of self satisfaction and false confidence may occur.

A repetitive task, especially an inspection item, may be overlooked or skipped because the maintenance personnel has performed the task several times without ever finding a fault. The false assumption that inspection of the item is not important may be made. However, even if rare, a fault may exist. The consequences of the fault not being detected and corrected could cause an incident or accident. Routine tasks performed over and over allow time for the technician’s mind to wander, which may also result in a required task not being performed.

When maintenance personnel find him or herself performing work without documentation, or documenting work that was not performed, it is a sign that complacency may exist. Approved, written maintenance procedures should be followed during all maintenance inspections and repairs. Executing the proper paperwork draws attention to a work item and reinforces its significance. To overcome complacency, a maintenance personnel must train oneself to expect to find the fault that created the inspection item in the first place. He or she must stay mentally engaged in the task being performed. All inspection items must be treated with equal importance, and it must never be assumed that an item is acceptable when it has not been inspected. A maintenance personnel should never sign for any work that has not been performed. Prior to the pen touching the paper for a signature, the maintenance personnel should read the item before signing and confirm it has been performed. People tend to become overconfident after becoming proficient in a certain task, which can mask the awareness of dangers.



SOURCE OF COMPLACENCY

Here is what a good sample of the literature has equated complacency with:

- Overconfidence.
- Self-satisfaction.
- Trait that can lead to a reduced awareness of danger.
- State of confidence plus contentment.
- Low index of suspicion.
- Unjustified assumption of satisfactory system state.
- Loss of situation awareness, and unpreparedness to react in timely manner when system fails.

MITIGATING & OVERCOME COMPLACENCY'S RISK

Fighting complacency involves cultivating vigilance. In this case, vigilance means vigilance of your own feelings and behaviours, as well as vigilance of others' behaviours. Some ways to help yourself practice vigilance are:

- Have detailed understanding of procedures and always follow the checklist or worksheet.
- Immediately stop what you are doing (if able) and reassess your situation when you notice you are falling into lack of awareness.
- Trust but verify your work, always double check your work and never sign off on something that you did not fully check.
- Always expect to find something wrong and set your own personal Safety limits.
- Learn from the mistakes of others.

