

The Chart Page

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The Safest Year

Despite an unusually high operations tempo, many worldwide deployments, and continued turmoil from restructuring, US armed forces in Fiscal 1996 set new records in aviation safety. The DoD-wide rate of Class A accidents (Figure 1) dropped for the fifth consecutive year and hit a record low of 1.50 per 100,000 flying hours for the most recent fiscal year, which ended September 30. Figure 2 demonstrates even more sharply how the major accident rate has been plummeting for nearly four decades (except for a brief uptick in the mid-1960s). DoD aircraft losses also continued to decline; in FY 1996, it fell to a low of 67 destroyed aircraft (Figure 3). DoD defines a Class A accident as one that results in a fatality or at least \$1 million in damage.

Figure 1: DoD Class A Accident Rate: FY 1984-96

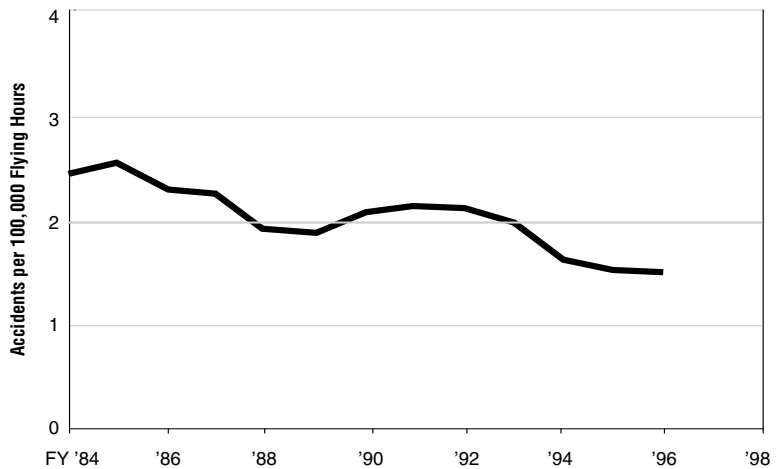


Figure 2: Class A Accident Rate: The Long-Term Record

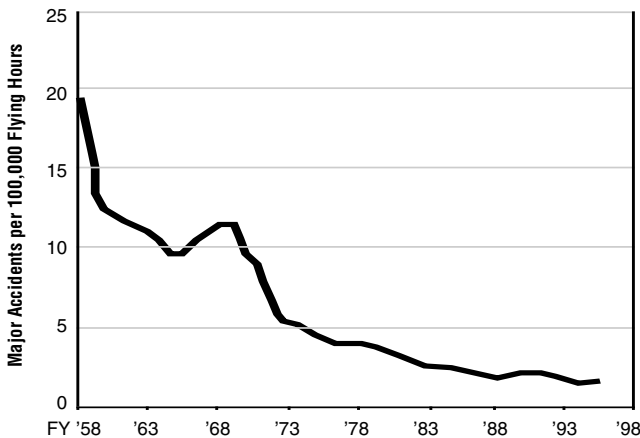
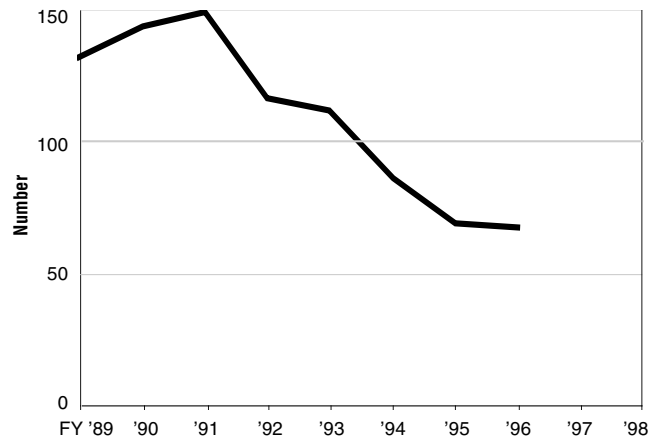


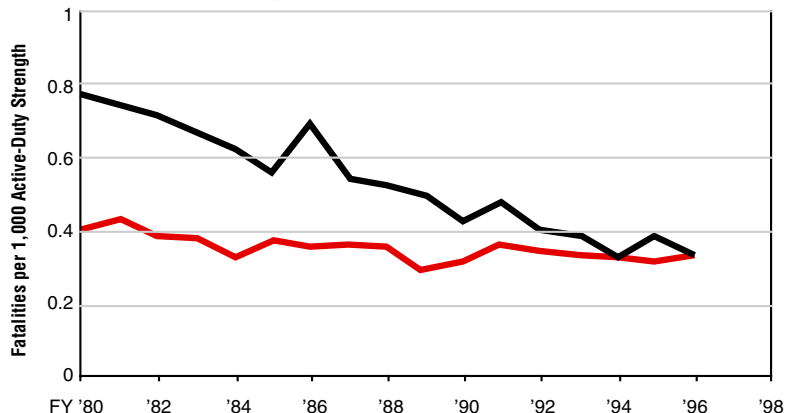
Figure 3: Decline in DoD Aircraft Losses



The on- and off-duty military fatality rate (from an aviation or any other kind of accident) fell in Fiscal 1996 to under .4 per 1,000 active-duty personnel (Figure 4).

Source: Department of Defense

Figure 4: The Drop in Fatalities*



* Does not include deaths due to hostile action. Non-accidental includes natural causes, homicides, diseases, and suicides. Does include friendly fire accidents.