

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



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REPLY TO
ATTN OF: AFMCFN-F

SUBJECT: Accident Rates of Pilots in Upper Age Brackets

TO: Honorable E. R. Quesada
Administrator
Federal Aviation Agency
Washington 25, D. C.

JAN 13 1960

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Dear Pete

1. Reference our recent conversation relating to available statistics on numbers and rates of accidents of pilots in the upper age category.
2. The latest data on Air Force pilot strength by age are as of 30 June 1959. These data verify that there were 331 pilots on flying status 50 years of age or older in the Air Force on 30 June 1959. There were 390 between ages 50 and 54, 39 between 55 and 59, and two who are 60 years of age or older.
3. The only statistics that could be readily compiled relating accidents to age of pilots follow:

Major Accidents Per 1,000 USAF Pilots
By Age Groups
3 $\frac{1}{2}$ Year Period Ending 30 June 1959

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Mean Strength*</u>	<u>Average Major Accidents Per Year**</u>	<u>Rate Per 1,000 Pilots</u>
Up thru 39	47,527	886	18.6
40 thru 44	6,937	44	6.3
45 thru 49	679	3.4	5.0
50 thru 54	303	1.14	5.8
55 thru 59	43	-	0
60 and over	3	-	0
Total	55,492	935	16.8

* Rated USAF pilots on flying status.

** Major accidents of pilots operating (at the controls of) an accident aircraft.

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4. It should be noted that the rates have been computed per 1,000 pilots, and do not reflect accident exposure in terms of quantity of flying hours nor do the figures reflect the kind of flying performed. A definitive evaluation of the problem would require consideration of these factors, but computation of these figures entails a long term project. Such a project has been underway for some months, and estimated date of completion is 1 June 1960.

5. These figures should be interpreted with full consideration of these factors:

a. Older age groups represent small comparative numbers.

b. With increasing age and experience USAF assignments gravitate toward command and staff jobs and away from "cockpit slots." Accident exposure - both in time, and type of aircraft is undoubtedly lower in the upper age brackets.

6. In relating years of age to individual pilot proficiency and accident potential at least four significant variables must be considered:

a. Physiological age.

b. Experience level.

c. Proficiency practice.

d. Available help (i.e. co-pilot or instructor pilot support).

Sincerely



JOSEPH D. CALDARA
Major General, U. S. Air Force
Deputy Inspector General for Safety

1/25/66
from Gen. Callahan

S A C

	<u>Average Age of Aircraft Commanders</u>	<u>Aircraft Commanders over 45 yrs of age</u>
B-52 and B-47	36.9	NONE
KC-135	36.7	3 (46 yrs of age)
KC-97	33.6	NONE

Requirements for qualification as MATS Aircraft Commander:

- a. Qualify under MATS Manual 55-1
- b. Successfully complete a course of instruction at a Transport Training Unit.
- c. Be assigned to a MATS operational unit and receive additional unit training.
- d. Ride as a crew member until completely checked out.
- e. Each 90 days receive a line check by a member of the standardization board.
- f. Each 90 days successfully complete a proficiency check.

MATS Policy on Pilots over 45 Years of Age

All pilots are required to pass an annual physical examination and to take regularly scheduled rigid flight examinations.

At present MATS has a total of 16 active line pilots over 45 years of age. The oldest MATS line pilot is 58 years of age.

MATS Number and Rate of Passenger Fatalities Per 100,000,000
passenger miles.

	<u>Statute Miles Flown</u>	<u>Nr. Passenger Fatalities</u>	<u>Fatality Rate</u>
1954	1,960,063,519	3	.152
1955	2,783,815,025	68	2.44
1956	3,225,954,588	93	2.90
1957	2,627,552,671	58	2.205
1958	2,567,956,306	2	.078
1959	2,421,385,802	0	0