

## 6 Minutes for Safety Topic: Stress / Fatigue – Operational Impact

### Stress:

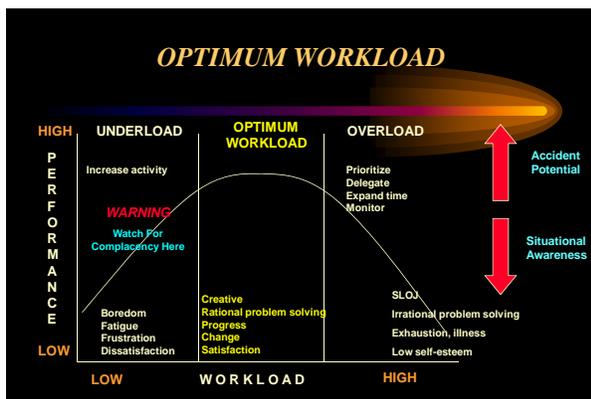
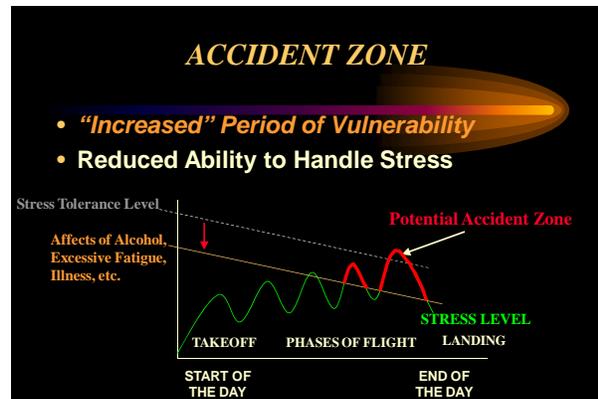
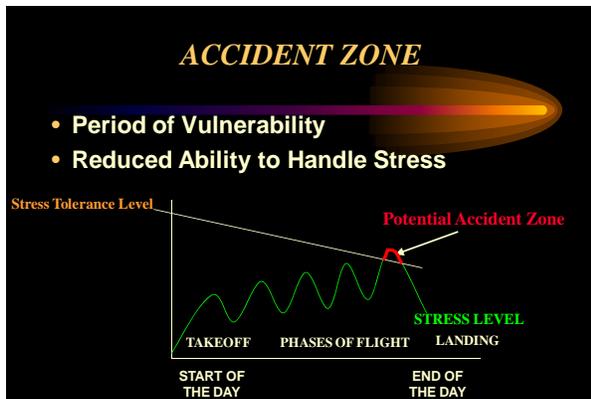
- Describes the body's non-specific response to demands placed on it (*internal / external*)
- Induces change to physiological / psychological patterns and forces the pilot to adapt
- Stress is insidious
  - Subtle signs that the pilot is beyond his / her ability to respond appropriately
- Stress is cumulative
  - If the number or intensity of stressors is too high, the *stress tolerance level* is exceeded and performance and judgment deteriorate

Stress can range from wind shear to a lost wallet:

- Loss of income
- Death in the family
- Change in residence
- Divorce
- Pay raise
- Birth of a baby
- **Self induced crisis management (due to loss of situational awareness, getting angry at yourself due to number and types of errors (bad day syndrome), etc.)**
- Illness
- Heat
- Dehydration
- Excess alcohol
- Lack of sleep
- Turbulence
- Aircraft malfunction
- Flying long hours for multiple days

Stress is good and bad

- Performance of tasks generally improves with stress onset, but peaks and degrades rapidly as levels exceed pilot capability to adapt. The difference between pilot capabilities and task requirements is *the margin of safety*.  
**Accidents occur when flying task requirements exceed the pilot's capabilities.**



The goal is to recognize when stress is or can have a negative effect on your current and future performance and take "the most conservative response" to back off as required (yes – maybe even not fly).

*Superior Pilots Use Superior Judgment to Avoid Stressful Situations Which Might Call for Superior Skills*