



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, DC**

5 November 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR AFCRMS CUSTOMERS

FROM: AF/SE

SUBJECT: AIR FORCE COMBINED MISHAP REDUCTION SYSTEM (AFCMRS) USER POLICY

1. The Air Force Safety Center offers AFCMRS surveys as a safety climate tool that allows commanders to assess the safety of their units by analyzing real-time safety risk analysis and feedback about attitudes and perceptions. The primary goal of AFCRMS safety surveys is mishap prevention while protecting the anonymity of the individual respondents and the unit.
2. Upon AFCMRS survey completion, unit commanders receive a summary of the results through a debrief, which includes topics such as safety culture, resource availability, workload, progress of safety intervention programs, and safety-related operational factors. Commanders can use the results from AFCMRS surveys to identify safety concerns, focus resources, develop safety strategies, make risk-managed decisions, and implement controls to improve their unit's safety and performance.
3. The attached AFCMRS User Policy specifies details on the protection of both participant/unit identity and survey results, as well as procedures regarding the release of information.
4. Please direct any questions on AFCMRS, including requests for scheduling to the Surveys Branch, Human Factors Division, at 505-846-5384.

JEANNIE M. LEAVITT
Major General, USAF
Chief of Safety

1 Attachment:

1. AFCMRS User Policy, 5 November 2021

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE SAFETY

AIR FORCE COMBINED MISHAP REDUCTION SYSTEM (AFCMRS) USER POLICY

1. Terms. AFCMRS is a legacy program name. AFCMRS utilizes a commercial website to administer surveys. The name AFCMRS applies to all USAF and USSF organizations within the Department of the Air Force (DAF). As related to AFCMRS User Policy, the following terms apply:

- a. Unit:** Organization at the squadron, group, delta, garrison, wing, NAF, MAJCOM, or Field Command.
- b. Data:** Individual responses to survey items by respondents.
- c. Results:** Information produced from data that is anonymized, and analyzed for description, inference, or conclusion.
- d. Squadron Result:** Results that only include data from one identified squadron.
- e. Aggregate Results:** Information produced from data combined from multiple squadrons to provide anonymized information for leadership review at echelons higher than a squadron.

2. Survey Requests and Debrief. When an AFCMRS survey is requested, AFCMRS administrators will describe to the requesting unit POC how the data is used, what analytical methods are used, and who shall receive a debrief. After the survey is started a commander may choose to consider the survey incomplete and decline the debriefing if respondent participation does not meet the target sample size after 60 days. If desired, a commander may leave the survey open beyond 60 days in order to increase the sample size and improve the interpretability of results. A commander may also choose to receive the debriefing when the target sample size is not met, with the understanding that lower response rates can degrade the interpretation and generalizability of the results.

3. Respondent Anonymity. AFCMRS surveys offer respondent anonymity, reassuring participants that they are free of reprisal, and encourages honest feedback. To preserve survey quality, AFCMRS collects data digitally, it is stored on a secure server, and only AFCMRS administrators have access to it. Furthermore, aggregation of data entails de-identifying respondent data and excludes response data that cannot be combined with data from at least five other respondents with the same demographic fields in common. While AFCMRS administrators edit identifying or sensitive data from open text comment items, survey respondents can lose anonymity if they share subtle identifying information. Any data that reveals potential criminal activity, implies a threat to anyone, or reveals classified information risks anonymity and will be referred for the appropriate investigation.

4. Squadron Anonymity. Unit identity is removed from all aggregate data and results that may be shared outside AFSEC. Aggregate results excludes any response data that cannot be combined with data from at least five other respondents within the same demographic field. An exception may be given to Safety Investigation Boards (SIBs). They may receive survey information that is not de-identified from the unit if it is necessary to conduct a safety investigation. In this case, an AFCMRS administrator will analyze the SIB request and report specific results to the SIB. Any SIB analysis of AFCMRS data will be kept within privileged safety channels. Providing AFCMRS data to SIBs does make the data itself privileged and so does not change data access or usage rights existing prior to SIB use.

5. Analysis. Survey analysis and feedback will adhere to established methodological standards for survey data that includes descriptive and inferential statistics.

6. Squadron Results and Security. Squadron results belong to the squadron surveyed. They are managed through an access code, which the squadron commander will use to view results. The access code belongs to the squadron commander position, not an individual; it is transferable to the succeeding commander. The commander may authorize anyone access, including higher echelons, by sharing the access code. All AFCMRS results are intended to serve safety purposes only.

7. Aggregate Results and Security. Aggregate results are combined de-identified results of subordinate units to maintain respondent and squadron anonymity. Aggregate results are accessible to commanders and safety professionals at the group, delta, garrison, wing, NAF, MAJCOM, and Field Command level through an echelon specific access code after coordination with Air Force Safety Center (AFSEC) Human Factors Division (SEH). Aggregate results provide leadership an understanding of the safety culture of their combined subordinate squadrons.

8. Data management. The Air Force Chief of Safety owns AFCMRS data and is responsible for maintaining, managing, and approving the use of data. AFSEC/SEH will perform periodic analysis of AFCMRS data internally for Air Force Safety purposes. Since squadron results are owned by the squadron commander, requests for squadron results and/or aggregate results will be directed to the effected commander. A DAF organization or individual outside of AFSEC may request, and be granted AFCMRS data, but this is highly scrutinized and reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The review will include an assessment of (1) the requestor's purpose, (2) how the data will be controlled, (3) a description of how the data will be used, (4) the techniques of analysis planned, (5) to whom the data or analysis will be presented or where it may be published, and (6) a review of the final product before presentation or publication. The review will include a signed information use agreement. AFSEC/SEH will remove all individual and squadron-identifying demographics from the data set prior to releasing it.

9. Release Authority for Survey Data, Results, and Results Analysis Requests. Release of AFCMRS survey data, results or results analysis by AFSEC will only be authorized after thorough review and assurance that the conditions in paragraph 8 are met. When data requests have the potential to uniquely impact a specific group, wing, delta, garrison, MAJCOM or Field Command, the impacted MAJCOM or Field Command will be involved in the approval process. Requests for squadron identifying data, results or results analysis may also have the potential to uniquely impact a specific group, wing, delta, garrison, MAJCOM, or Field Command. In this case, AFSEC will coordinate between the effected MAJCOM or Field Command and the AFSEC/CV before release. AFSEC will also require a review of the final product before presentation or publication. AF/SE must approve the release of any AFCRMS survey data for non-safety purposes.

Like all government records, AFCMRS data is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Since AFCMRS data resides at AFSEC, the FOIA release/denial authority is AFSEC/CC or /CV. Since AFCMRS results belong to the requesting unit, FOIA requests for those products are referred to the unit. The FOIA requires that some information be protected from release, including PII and certain information that could impact national or installation security.

10. Records Disposition. AFCMRS records should be destroyed when superseded by later study or survey or after 2 years, whichever is later, in accordance with Air Force records disposition rules (AFRIMS Table 32-10, Rule 4).