# Hazardous Attitudes:

An Assessment for Aircraft Dispatchers and Flight Followers

Scenarios developed by Laura Laster

Note: This is intended for training purposes only to assist flight operations personnel in understanding hazardous attitudes as defined by the FAA and as applied to dispatch-related scenarios. This document is not produced by the FAA and is not intended as operational guidance but is for learning purposes only.

# Hazardous Attitudes: An Assessment for Aircraft Dispatchers and Flight Followers

This assessment asks you to decide why you, as a flight operations professional, might have made certain decisions. Ten operational situations are presented, each with a decision that was made. After each situation, you will find a list of five possible reasons for a decision. No "correct" answer is provided for any of the situations. The assessment includes many choices a competent dispatcher or flight follower or flight crewmember would NOT make. Be assured that these scenarios are NOT suggestions as to how aviation professionals would behave but to help assess your own personal hazardous attitudes.

This inventory presents extreme cases of poor decision making to help introduce you to the five hazardous attitudes identified by the FAA and explained in their Advisory Circular on Aeronautical Decision Making. Plenty of hazardous attitude assessments exist for pilots, but very few exist for aircraft dispatchers or other flight operations personnel, so that is the reason this assessment was developed. Use the following instructions for taking the assessment:

1. Record your responses on the Attitude Inventory Answer Sheet (included).
2. Read each situation and corresponding choices. Decide which one is *the most likely reason* why you *might* make the poor choice that is described. Write number 5 in the space provided on the answer sheet next to the *most likely reason* you would have for making that choice.
3. Write number 4 by the next most probable reason you would have to make that poor choice and continue until you have filled in all five blanks with the numbers 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1.
4. Read through all 10 situations and *fill in each blank,* even though you will very likely disagree with the choices described. There are no *correct* or *best* answers.

Example of completed score sheet for one of the situations:

a. 1 (least likely reasoning)
b. 3
c. 5 (most likely reasoning)
d. 2
e. 4

## Attitude Inventory Answer Sheet

| **Situation 1:** | **Situation 6:** |
|---|---|
| a. | a. |
| b. | b. |
| c. | c. |
| d. | d. |
| e. | e. |
| **Situation 2:** | **Situation 7:** |
| a. | a. |
| b. | b. |
| c. | c. |
| d. | d. |
| e. | e. |
| **Situation 3:** | **Situation 8:** |
| a. | a. |
| b. | b. |
| c. | c. |
| d. | d. |
| e. | e. |
| **Situation 4:** | **Situation 9:** |
| a. | a. |
| b. | b. |
| c. | c. |
| d. | d. |
| e. | e. |
| **Situation 5:** | **Situation 10:** |
| a. | a. |
| b. | b. |
| c. | c. |
| d. | d. |
| e. | e. |

**Situation 1**
The crew calls while inflight to tell you there has been an incident closing the destination airport, but the airport may reopen within the hour. The airplane has its required fuel reserve plus more fuel you planned to use for the next flight (tankering through.) What's your initial thought?

a. Fuel planning is just for pre-flight regs. Once inflight, I can mostly let the crew figure it out.
b. I can handle a diversion planning in 10 min if needed, since I do that pretty much every week.
c. Just tell the crew how much fuel they have until they reach min fuel, and I hope the destination airport reopens soon.
d. It's simplest to immediately divert the flight to the nearest airport in the ops specs.
e. Even if the crew lands with less than the usual amount, they're totally safe.

**Situation 2**
You are preparing a load manifest for a B737 flight and note that due to a CDL and a shorter runway, the flight is weight limited below its usual takeoff weight. You find the flight is completely sold out including some high-priority cargo that MUST be carried to the destination. You keep preparing the manifest while thinking the following:

a. If the crew catches the issue, you can just fix it fast and impress them with fancy math.
b. Weight limits are for safety in an engine failure, & that's never happened to a flight you dispatched. Count a few less bags and hope more bags don't show up.
c. Bump 25 passengers and start working on something else.
d. Just use half weights for a couple of adults. FAA climb limit weights include safety buffers.
e. It wasn't your fault the CDL got added. Why doesn't maintenance fix these things?

**Situation 3**
You are monitoring 15 enroute flights and planning flights for the rest of your shift. It's late, and only one other dispatcher is on duty. One of your flights calls with an urgent abnormal situation. You know you need to help, but what is your initial reaction?

a. Once inflight, the crew follows the QRH and troubleshoots. You're not there with them.
b. Immediately tell the other dispatcher to handle all 15 of your flights and plan all your other flights.
c. Don't worry about dispatch workload. Other flights will take care of themselves. Focus everything on the flight with the abnormal.
d. You can totally handle monitoring all your flights, plus the abnormal, plus finishing your other releases. You are an excellent multi-tasker.
e. This type of abnormal has never amounted to anything, in your experience. If they really need help, the crew will call again.

**Situation 4**
Maintenance adds an MEL that severely limits performance (no flying IMC) for an airplane you're going to be dispatching in area filled with IMC conditions. You are frustrated, so what is your first inclination?

a. I should call maintenance control with a stern lecture about how it needs to be fixed.
b. I should start re-evaluating the weather to see if maybe the forecasts are totally wrong since most weather products are super conservative. Maybe an EWINS forecast can help.
c. I believe it is unlikely anything serious would happen if the plane flew into IMC. These planes can handle a lot.
d. I wish I were a mechanic so I could just leave my desk and drive out to fix it!
e. I'm not the airplane scheduler or maintenance control, so I better just start cancelling flights.

**Situation 5**
Preparing a dispatch release, you note ATC flow control restrictions starting up at your destination. You've got the release just right at the optimal fuel loading for the proposed load today. What is your first thought?

a. I can always quickly fix any changes right before departure IF the captain demands it.
b. ATC flow was never an issue for me, so I won't worry about it much right now.
c. Fuel reserves are just for planning. It's legal now, so I can just let them depart as is.
d. I don't have time to fix this release with more fuel. We're late again…and we'd have to call the fueler out.
e. The worst that happens is the crew must divert and get more fuel somewhere along the route.

**Situation 6**
You dispatched a flight without an alternate because regulations did not require one, and weather was forecast to be excellent. The flight departed. Now, its destination has received a weather update that means an alternate would have been required. What are you thinking just after you get the weather update?

a. It was not required legally when I made the release, and I need to work on something else.
b. It was not required legally when I made the release, and none of my flights have had an issue with continuing without an alternate in the past given this same scenario.
c. It was not required legally when I made the release, but I don't want my colleagues thinking I screwed up making the release. Hopefully the crew doesn't call me to ask.
d. It was not required legally when I made the release. Airline manuals might be written more conservative than the regulations, but really the regulations are fine.
e. It was not required legally when I made the release, and there's nothing to do about it now.

**Situation 7**
The dispatcher at the next desk is communicating with a crew about a recently added MEL item. You hear incorrect information being given to the newly upgraded captain about the airplane's limitations that is clear in violation of the MEL. As you contemplate what to say to the dispatcher or her supervisor, you are thinking…

a. I should barge into the conversation with the other dispatcher by merging the call, citing the specific paragraph of the MEL.
b. It is not my flight that's involved, so stay out of the situation and go on with my own work.
c. In my experience, that maintenance item hasn't caused major operational issues in the past, and it's sure to be fine for that flight as well.
d. The MEL is overly conservative in this area, because the manufacturer has to meet FAA requirements. Maybe I don't even need to call the supervisor.
e. As soon as they hang up, I should call my supervisor and then the crew directly and take over dispatching that flight.

**Situation 8**
While preparing to depart on a flight, you're sitting in the jumpseat. The captain asks you to check out the flight release and how efficiently the flight was planned by your colleague, then asks why your releases aren't as efficient. Your initial response is one of:

a. Frustration – doesn't he know I don't have time to tweak *everything* before sending releases?
b. Anger – does the captain seriously compare releases by other dispatchers with mine?
c. Apathy – these captains think they know it all, and there's nothing new to change or learn.
d. Grudging – why does operational control have to be *shared* with the PIC anyway?
e. Indifference – clearly the captain is in error about your releases, as they've always been fine.

**Situation 9**
You work for a small operation with about 20 other dispatchers. A huge ice storm hits your office area, and you and another dispatcher are the only ones on duty. The end of your 10 hour duty day is approaching, but dispatchers from the next shift are unable to get to the office. Your supervisor calls for a quick chat about the situation. Your thoughts as the phone rings are:

a. You are fine to continue working longer to get flights on the ground, even though you're a bit weary of all the extra work.
b. You are excited to show your supervisor and the other dispatchers how you can handle the extra shift time because of operational needs.
c. Since nobody can get to work, you're stuck here, and there's nothing to do about it.
d. Demand the supervisor get some dispatchers here and pronto because you need help *now!*
e. The regs do say that you have a shift time limit, but it doesn't apply in this situation, since operational needs dictate you stay put.

**Situation 10**
It is the night before your first competency check. Your thoughts as you drift off center on:

a. You're ready to show your awesomeness and ultimate efficiency to the supervisor.
b. You've shown your trainer that you're ready, so why show someone else too?
c. You have always had no problem passing any other FAA check in the past, and this isn't any different.
d. You've done everything you can possibly do up to this point, and whatever happens, happens.
e. You want to fall asleep quickly so morning will come and you can get this over with.

## Scoring Instructions

Now that you have completed taking the inventory, the next step is to score it to determine your hazardous attitude profile. Use your answer sheet, as well as the scoring keys, inventory totals form, and profile graph found later in this section.

1. Place the left side of the answer sheet on top of the first scoring key (Anti-Authority) so that it is lined up with the scoring key blanks for situations 1 through 5. Add the numbers written on your answer sheet which appear next to the "x's" on the scoring key. Keep these totals on a separate piece of paper.
2. When you have done this for situations 1 through 5, move the answer sheet so that its right edge now lines up with the blanks for situations 6 through 10. Add the numbers next to the "x's" for situations 6 through 10 to the first total, which you recorded on a separate piece of paper.
3. Write this sum on the appropriate line of the Attitude Inventory Totals next to the graph.
4. Repeat this procedure for all five scoring keys for each hazardous attitude score.
5. Enter the totals on the Hazardous Attitude Profile Graph.

See the following example for the use of the scoring key.

**EXAMPLE OF SCORING KEY USE**

| **Scoring Key for Anti-Authority** | **Your Answer Sheet:** |
|---|---|
| **Situation 1** | **Situation 1** |
| a. _____ | a. 4 |
| b. ____x____ | b. 3 |
| c. _____ | c. 1 |
| d. _____ | d. 5 |
| e. _____ | e. 2 |
| **Situation 2** | **Situation 2** |
| a. _____ | a. 3 |
| b. _____ | b. 2 |
| c. _____ | c. 5 |
| d. ____x____ | d. 1 |
| e. _____ | e. 4 |

3 (number next to "x" on scoring key at 1-b)
+ 1 (number next to "x" on scoring key at 2-d)
= 4 sub-total for situations 1 and 2
= ... (numbers next to "x's" for situations 3 through 10)

## Scoring Key For ANTI-AUTHORITY

**Situation 1**

a. _____
b. x
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 2**

a. x
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 3**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. x

**Situation 4**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. x
e. _____

**Situation 5**

a. _____
b. _____
c. x
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 6**

a. _____
b. _____
c. x
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 7**

a. _____
b. x
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 8**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. x

**Situation 9**

a. _____
b. x
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 10**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. x
e. _____

## Scoring Key For IMPULSIVITY

**Situation 1**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. x

**Situation 2**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. x
e. _____

**Situation 3**

a. _____
b. _____
c. x
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 4**

a. _____
b. x
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 5**

a. x
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 6**

a. x
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 7**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. x

**Situation 8**

a. _____
b. _____
c. x
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 9**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. x
e. _____

**Situation 10**

a. _____
b. x
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

## Scoring Key For INVULNERABILITY

**Situation 1**

a. _____
b. _____
c. x
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 2**

a. _____
b. x
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 3**

a. x
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 4**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. x

**Situation 5**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. x
e. _____

**Situation 6**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. x
e. _____

**Situation 7**

a. _____
b. _____
c. x
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 8**

a. x
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 9**

a. _____
b. _____
c. x
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 10**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. x

## Scoring Key For MACHO

**Situation 1**

a. x
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 2**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. x

**Situation 3**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. x
e. _____

**Situation 4**

a. _____
b. _____
c. x
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 5**

a. _____
b. x
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 6**

a. _____
b. x
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 7**

a. x
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 8**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. x
e. _____

**Situation 9**

a. x
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 10**

a. _____
b. _____
c. x
d. _____
e. _____

**Scoring Key For**
**RESIGNATION**

**Situation 1**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. x
e. _____

**Situation 2**

a. _____
b. _____
c. x
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 3**

a. _____
b. x
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 4**

a. x
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 5**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. x

**Situation 6**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. x

**Situation 7**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. x
e. _____

**Situation 8**

a. _____
b. x
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Situation 9**

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. x

**Situation 10**

a. x
b. _____
c. _____
d. _____
e. _____

**Profile Graph Results**

Enter the raw scores obtained from each scoring key in the correct blank space on the Attitude Inventory Totals below. Your five scores should equal 150. If they don't, go back and check your work. Next, look at the Hazardous Attitude Profile Graph. Notice that there are five columns, one for each of the raw scores. Place a mark on each line at the height that matches your score.

**Attitude Inventory Totals**

Anti-Authority _____

Impulsivity _____

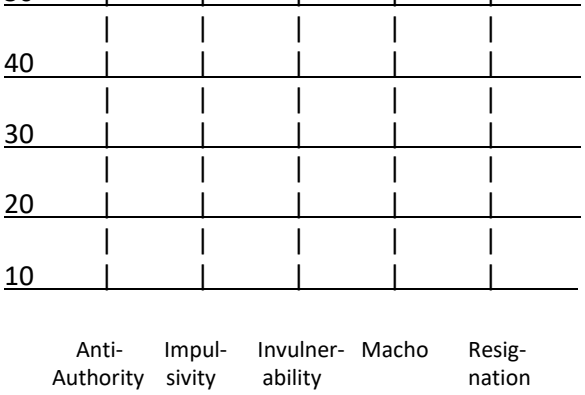
Invulnerability _____

Macho _____

Resignation _____

TOTAL (should be 150) _____

**Hazardous Attitudes Profile Graph**




**PROFILE EXPLANATION**

You now have a profile graph which indicates your predisposition to think thoughts in accordance with the FAA's identified hazardous attitudes. The higher the number, the greater the likelihood that you might be tempted to respond in accordance with that specific hazardous attitude. Keep in mind the scoring method means the lowest score you can get in a particular attitude is 10, and the highest score you can get in a particular attitude is 50.

Please note that this assessment does not show that you are doomed to act in accordance with your strongest hazardous attitudes. Having thoughts like the ones in this assessment described is not unusual. Hopefully, as you continue in your journey to become an aviation professional, you will find yourself thinking fewer and fewer hazardous thoughts as you learn to identify and counteract these attitudes. The important thing to learn is to balance all your thoughts against possible outcomes and mitigate risks so that you act safely.

For more information, check out the FAA's Advisory Circular about Aeronautical Decision Making.