

# DECISIONS

Smart Choices. Good Strategies.

## Combating Fatigue

Do you depend on a 'hi-octane' fix to stay awake or energized? Know the risks.

**Energy Drinks Promise to Beat 'That 2:30 Feeling'** Page 6

**SAFETY STANDDOWN** Let's Move It Outside! Page 10

**OPERATIONAL STRESS CONTROL** No One's Going to Die Today Page 14

**PLUS:** Summer Safety Guide Page 27

# DECISIONS

The Naval Safety Center Magazine for Shore, Ground and Industrial Operations  
Spring-Summer 2013 / Vol. 2, No. 1

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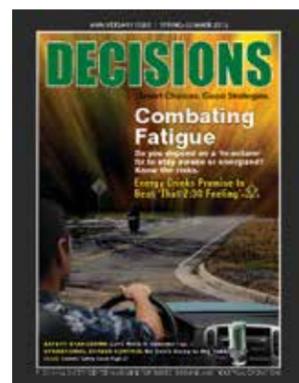
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FRONT COVER: Photo-Illustration by John Williams  
BACK COVER: Courtesy of Jeff Morelen

## READER COMMENTS

“Just wanted to let you know the recent issue of *Decisions* Magazine is timely and chock full of useful information that I hope to incorporate into a training program for the construction workers at my current place of employment. I was working on a way to get the crews more involved and thinking ahead about their tasks and this issue will be of great help. It's just what I needed.

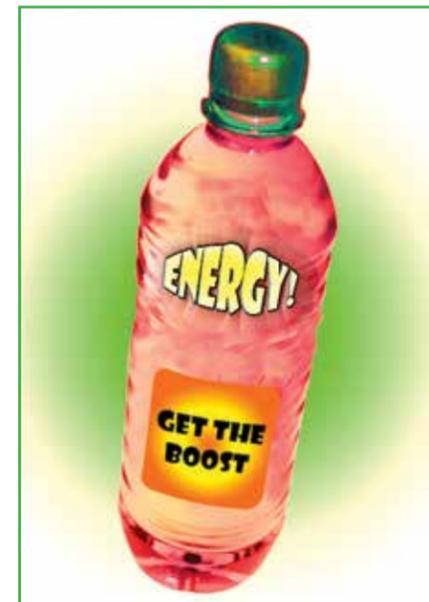
I also wanted to let you know that Naval Safety Center has an impact beyond the Navy, even way out here in Illinois at my local construction company, just north of Great Lakes. So, please keep up the good work. We're all in this together. Thanks for a great issue.”

—Michael Hirvela, YNC (SW) USN (Ret.)

# DECISIONS

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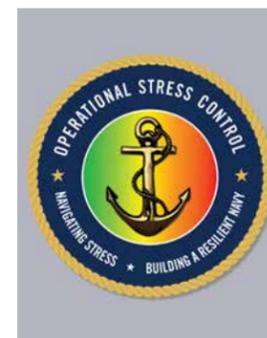
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**EDITOR'S NOTE**

Welcome to our first-anniversary issue. Since publishing the first edition of *Decisions* last spring, we have addressed a variety of topics to inform, educate and entertain our readers. We hope the articles we've published have helped you manage risks associated with your job and daily activities.

Our contributing writers, subject-matter experts and fleet photographers have given us substantial material to cover in these issues. Their expertise, knowledge and personal experiences have been instrumental in providing you with relevant information. We also thank our readers and subscribers for keeping our magazine's distribution active.

In conjunction with the hard copy, *Decisions* magazine is also available on the Naval Safety Center Web site. If you have not taken advantage of this feature, visit us online to read or download back issues, submit stories and get on our distribution list. As with any safety magazine, we strive to capture the essence of our mission: to provide resources so you can operate safely.

In his inaugural commander's message, Rear Adm. Kenneth Norton, outlines his role and expectations as the new Safety Chief (page 5). Our feature stories highlight critical elements that can impact your ability to manage risks. The article on energy drinks (page 6) reveals some of the dangers of substituting caffeine for a good-night sleep. VFA-22's creative approach to safety standdown gets personnel out of the classroom (page 10). A hospital corpsman reveals that listening to a fellow Marine can help reduce operational stress (page 14). Cmdr. Daniel Dolan, a professor at the Naval War College, offers his perspectives on the Navy Reading Program (page 16). This issue is also packed with best practices, takeaways, off-duty lessons learned, and safety resources to help you get started with your summertime planning.

Most importantly, we want to hear from you. Let us know how we're doing or if there's anything else we should be offering. Are these articles helpful in getting your job done? Give us some feedback on topics you want us to cover. Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to receiving your articles for the fall/winter issue.

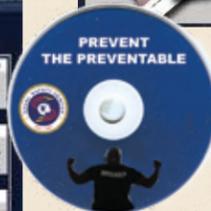
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**MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES**

Need material for your next safety standdown? Browse our collection of resources to complement your activities. **See full listing on page 12.**

- Posters for download
- Presentations to customize
- Brochures to hand out
- Videos to educate and entertain



<http://www.public.navy.mil/navsafecen/pages/media/media.aspx>

# You Have the Ability to Lead

*We can help.*

## 15 THINGS THAT CAN HELP IMPROVE YOUR TRAFFIC-SAFETY PROGRAM

1. Use the tools available on our Web site in the Traffic Safety Toolbox.
2. At least do the inexpensive things.
3. Include a safety check-in sheet in your Welcome-Aboard Packet.
4. Develop a sponsorship/mentorship program.
5. Incorporate risk management into indoctrination program.
6. Conduct a culture assessment.
7. Extend risk management to off-duty activities.
8. Empower individuals to speak up when they see something that can jeopardize the command's mission.
9. Recognize people who help run safety campaigns.
10. Encourage use of the buddy system.
11. Sponsor alcohol-free events.
12. Create high-risk recreational assessment checklists and contracts to be signed by both leader and member.
13. Inspect to make sure people are complying with instructions.
14. Hold each individual accountable for actions.
15. Share ideas and best practices with other leaders.

**You Don't Always Know What's Ahead. Be Prepared.**

Naval Safety Center Motor Vehicle Division



## COMMANDER'S MESSAGE



### Greetings Shipmates,

As the new Safety Chief, I'm extremely concerned about the impact of the fiscal challenges we face on our abilities to train warfighters, operate forward and maximize readiness. There is no better time than now for the Naval Safety Center to align efforts with Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command. Together, we will "operationalize" safety and amplify the need for a culture that enables our people to manage the risks that threaten combat readiness.

By operationalizing risk management throughout the fleet, we will strengthen our abilities to bridge resource gaps and infuse safety in our daily operations. Managing risks and preventing the preventable must not take a backseat to mission planning and execution—they are an intrinsic part of that planning and execution.

Engaging and protecting our people means giving them resources to get the job done and holding them accountable for their actions, on or off duty. I encourage all leaders to take a severe look at your respective organization and see how you're doing with mishap rates. Having a mishap-free operational goal requires an all-hands effort. As an example, scheduling a safety survey from the Naval Safety Center doesn't mean you're not doing well; it demonstrates a commitment to welcoming training opportunities for your people to identify and correct the discrepancies that potentially can lead to mishaps.

The expectation is that each Sailor, Marine and civilian will use every tool in the tool kit to recognize hazards and subsequently minimize exposure to them. Hone your time-critical risk management skills and make them second nature in your daily tasks.

Our responsibility for being safe, operationally and personally, requires a culture that doesn't allow mishaps to dictate our performance. Featured articles in this issue address critical components of that responsibility. The authors share tips for smart driving, techniques for making safety standdowns engaging, and resources for preventing operational stress. Our contributing writers are also a great resource for best practices, takeaways and off-duty safe practices.

No doubt, the months ahead will be challenging. But by applying our expertise and resources together, we can make big improvements on how we prevent mishaps. And finally, by sharing lessons learned in mediums like *Decisions* magazine, we'll keep pointing out safety issues that degrade our readiness so we can preserve our resources; the most important of which is our fellow shipmates.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kenneth J. Norton".

RDML Kenneth "K.J." Norton

# Energy Drinks Promise to Beat 'That 2:30 Feeling'

By Lt. Cmdr. T.E. Sather, MSC, USN, CAsP  
Naval Aerospace Medical Institute

**After a long shift, you head out for a long weekend. You're tired and sleep-deprived. The long stretch of road seems endless, especially when you're driving by yourself. Trying to stay alert, you start consuming energy drinks. Eventually you've had three of them. Are you feeling safe?**

One of the many problems with energy drinks is that although they increase a driver's alertness for about an hour or so, there are serious after-effects. Studies have found that an hour after drinking a highly caffeinated and sugared drink, motorists suffered delays in their reaction times and are less able to concentrate. The drinks can even make drivers feel more tired.

Drinking an energy drink to replace a good night's sleep for driving is a terrible idea. For many of us, drinking coffee or tea is part of our daily routine. But caffeine cannot compensate for the mental and physical alertness that a person gets from a full night of sleep.

Researchers have reported that those who consume large amounts of caffeine have been known to display erratic behavior such as restlessness, agitation and irritability. This poses danger not only to the driver but also to other motorists.

As a driver begins to feel tired, it is normal to have another energy drink. The more energy drinks a person consumes, the greater the risk of developing a clinical condition known as "caffeine intoxication." The dangers of caffeine intoxication have been noted by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which described it as having similar effects to drunkenness, including irritability, muscle twitching and slurred speech. (See "Caffeine Intoxication," page 9.)

Studies have shown that moderate use—one or two cups of coffee or one energy drink—has significantly improved driver alertness and reduced sleepiness during prolonged highway driving. The problem with consuming energy drinks to combat fatigue is that although energy drinks do give a temporary boost, they are known to cause energy slumps when they wear off. Tired drivers may drink a can of energy drink and

be fine for an hour, but after that they will experience a dramatic drop in their energy levels and will have trouble concentrating or reacting to sudden alterations on the road.

As workloads grow and demands on schedules increase, many people turn to stimulants, painkillers and anti-anxiety medications to help launch themselves through the endless daily to-do lists. In today's culture, better living through chemistry is the norm. So what happens when we find ourselves tired on a daily basis? We turn to some type of energy booster. This could be a cup of coffee, tea or a drink with "energy blends."

Energy drinks promise to give us wings, to provide a boost to beat "that 2:30 feeling", to be a remedy for a poor diet, and to give the user athletic prowess like never before. Energy drinks go beyond the effects of simple caffeine by adding additional stimulants derived from vitamins, herbs, and amino acids to create a more intense energy boost or rush. (See "What's in Your Drink?," page 9.)

While the idea of slamming down an energy drink before getting on the road or working a long shift may help you stay awake or get the team "re-energized," research is showing that this may not be in everyone's best interest.

What's the best single way to improve energy levels, increase the ability to concentrate, sharpen memory, strengthen the immune system, and decrease the risk of being killed in accidents? Get an extra 60-90 minutes of sleep each night.

While many people argue that they get by just fine on very little sleep, they also find themselves reaching for a little boost as that mid-afternoon slump takes hold once again.

**Energy drinks promise to give us wings**



As advertised, energy drinks will give you a boost of energy. They deliver high concentrations of caffeine and other stimulants for that rush of energy. The combination of the ingredients, the concentration, and the speed of ingestion is what makes energy drinks dangerous. Energy drinks still have not been well-studied, and researchers do not know the exact effects of all the ingredients in them when used in combination.

This is not to say that energy drinks are bad. Rather it is the abuse of energy drinks that is bad. Practice moderation. Don't gulp down energy drinks to stay awake at work or on a long-distance drive. Don't mix energy drinks with alcohol or prescription drugs. Plan appropriately before you get on the road. Take frequent breaks or naps at rest stops. But most importantly, nothing can substitute for a good night's sleep. ■

*Lt. Cmdr. Sather is deputy director of training, MSC/HM Training Programs NMOTC command high-risk training safety officer at the Naval Aerospace Medical Institute, Pensacola, Fla.*

**Related article by Lt. Cmdr. Sather:**

"The Dangers of Energy Drinks and Supplements," *Approach*, January-February 2013.

**Online Resources:**

**U.S. National Safety Commission**

► <http://alerts.nationalsafetycommission.com>

**Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**

► <http://www.fda.gov/Food/NewsEvents/ucm328536.htm>

**The Travel Risk Planning System (TRiPS)**

► [http://www.public.navy.mil/navsafecen/Pages/ashore/motor\\_vehicle/trips.aspx](http://www.public.navy.mil/navsafecen/Pages/ashore/motor_vehicle/trips.aspx)



This is not to say that energy drinks are bad. Rather it is the abuse of energy drinks that is bad. Practice moderation.



**Caffeine Intoxication**

**What is Caffeine?** It is the most frequently used psychoactive drug in the world. Caffeine and its relatives theophylline (tea) and theobromine (chocolate) heighten our alertness. Caffeine is present in a number of dietary sources including tea, coffee, cocoa beverages, chocolate bars, and soft drinks. Caffeine can also be "hidden" in herbs such as guarana (1 gram of guarana has about 40 mg of caffeine) so you may be unsure.

**Caffeine Intoxication.** Caffeine poisoning or reports of caffeine intoxication is no longer uncommon in the U.S. It has been reported that caffeine-poisoning cases have increased significantly over the last few years, from 1,128 in 2005 to 13,114 in 2009. Doses over 250 milligrams consumed over a short period of time can trigger a condition called "caffeine intoxication." This is a clinical syndrome which is marked by nervousness, anxiety, restlessness, insomnia, gastrointestinal upset, tremors, rapid heartbeat, restlessness and pacing. In some people, they may also experience euphoria and muscle twitches. Caffeine in extremely large doses can be deadly. Most people won't ever ingest this much caffeine accidentally. Fatal overdoses would require drinking 30 to 60 cups of coffee in one morning.

**Caffeine Content.** The caffeine content of energy drinks vary. While the FDA limits the caffeine content in soda to 71 milligrams per 12-ounce serving, energy drinks are not regulated by the FDA and therefore are not beholden to these limits. A 12-ounce serving of a popular energy-drink brand may contain 107 milligrams of caffeine, compared with 34 to 38 milligrams for the same amount of brand-name soda. The number goes higher as more energy drinks appear on the market shelves, with caffeine contents ranging from 116 to 428 milligrams per 12-ounce can.

**What's in Your Drink?**

- There are over 600 brands of energy beverages on the U.S market and you would expect to find a wide variety of ingredients in them. However, most are just slightly different concoctions of the same stock ingredients. They contain huge quantities of sugar, caffeine, the amino acid taurine and B vitamins.
- Some of the newer beverages are throwing in powerful herbal compounds such as yohimbine hydrochloride and evodiamine (EVO) which some in the nutrition field believe are more powerful (and maybe dangerous) stimulants than caffeine. Some of these products are so potent that an 8-ounce can contains four times the caffeine per ounce as a traditional brand-name energy drink.
- Additionally, some of the ingredients, at least those ingredients that are monitored and regulated by the FDA, can be over 800 times more than the recommended daily allowance (RDA). Energy drinks may also contain a huge variety of natural, exotic ingredients like guarana, green tea extract, yerba mate, bitter orange (synephrine or octopamine), vinpocetine, 5-hydroxyl tryptophan, methylphenylethylamine (5-HTP) and ginseng. In today's society, people assume that natural products are safe and do not have side effects. However, this is far from the truth. "Natural" products can be as toxic as synthetic ones.
- There are a large number of supplemental products on the market of dubious value, content, and quality. Independent tests have found them contaminated with unwanted, potentially harmful ingredients such as heavy metals, pesticides, and even bacteria. A few of them have even been found to contain prescription drugs.
- The purity, potency and identity of a supplement may also vary by manufacturer and from product to product. It is important to note that the makers of energy drinks are under no legal obligation to disclose the source of any natural supplement that might be used in the product. Due to the classification of their product line as a nutritional supplement, they are not bound by the same level of regulation and oversight as the soda or juice companies. As a result, consumers have no way of knowing whether the herbs and other natural supplements used in the energy boosters may have been contaminated by pesticides, herbicides, or contaminated in any other manner.

*Sources: U. S. National Safety Commission, Food and Drug Administration*



# Let's Move It Outside!

## Fighting Redcocks Host Creative, Interactive Events

By Lt. Cmdr. Michael "Dim" Witt

In my previous article, "Combating Safety Fatigue" (*Decisions*, Fall-Winter 2012), I discussed personnel not receiving the safety message that our leaders are trying to send. Due to repetition and lack of creativity and innovation, our safety message delivery methods have resulted in "watered down" safety information and ineffective training.

Safety standdowns are not effective. There, I said it. Someone had to.

If there are any questions as to the accuracy of that statement, review your command's most recent safety survey. After reviewing the results of my command's survey from nearly a year ago, I was surprised to see that almost 90 percent of the VFA-22 Fighting Redcocks agreed with that statement. After asking around the base, I found that the results were similar at other commands as well. What this tells us is that the standard format of gathering everyone in the base theater for two hours of PowerPoint presentations is not an effective use of our already limited number of man-hours.

If our customers (personnel who are the intended recipients of the message) are not satisfied, then what we're sending is not being received. This article addresses other ways of sending the safety message in

an all-hands setting. Let's get away from the default, indoor "death by PowerPoint" standdown format and move outside to interactive, efficient methods of information delivery.

One such method we incorporated at our command was the "Redcock Safety Fair." The concept had been used before: Set up 10 to 12 booths and have command personnel rotate around to each presentation during a specified time block. A drawback to this format is that it can be difficult to track who goes to which booths and how long each person spends listening to each subject.

To combat this, we created a disciplined rotation method. The command was divided into 12 groups (the number of groups equaled the number of presentation booths) and a group leader was designated for each one. "Group One" began at "Table One," "Group Two" at "Table Two," and so forth. Every 10 minutes, the lead coordinator blew a whistle notifying each group to rotate to the next table.

The safety fair was divided into a "Presentation" section and an "Activities" section. The Presentation section included such topics as gun safety, drug and alcohol awareness and information delivered by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD).



Left: On a motorcycle simulator is the only time riders should ride without a helmet. Photo courtesy of the author  
Right: Beer goggles simulate walking and seeing with a blood alcohol content of 0.18. Photo courtesy of Sheppard Air Force Base

The guidance for presenters was to take only the top three-to-five main points of their respective topics and focus on those items.

The Activities section was more hands-on to keep personnel interested and engaged. For example, one of the activities involved participants taking shots at a basketball goal while wearing beer goggles (eyeglasses that simulate the perception errors an individual experiences at specific blood alcohol content levels). A three-foot tall basketball goal was placed several feet from the shooter who subsequently tried to make baskets. This activity illustrated how simple tasks can become extremely difficult as a result of alcohol-related impairment.

Other activities included proper lifting demonstrations by the command fitness leaders, how to change a tire, motorcycle simulators and CPR/first aid training. Personnel from NAS Lemoore Aviation Survival Training Center also participated and provided man-overboard and raft-survival training. To add a personal touch, the kitchen safety presenters baked chocolate chip cookies in the Base Chapel's kitchen for each group while discussing ways to stay safe when preparing meals. An added benefit to this format is that presenters have shown strong initiative and a willingness to make their respective presentations or activities fun, memorable and informative.

Experts from the Naval Safety Center recommended that I asked the team from Stay Alive from Education (SAFE) come to NAS Lemoore and give us their presentation called "Street Smart." The SAFE presenters are a team of firefighters/paramedics from Florida who provide an interactive presentation on what first responders must handle at the scene of traf-

fic accidents. The presentation is gory, highly informative and at times humorous. The underlying message is to always wear a seat belt and to not drive distracted or under the influence of drugs or alcohol. We invited all personnel on base and had more than 1,000 attendees over a two-day period. Following one of the presentations, I overheard an attendee tell one of the presenters, "This is the best safety presentation I've seen in my 23 years in the Navy."

Seven months after the previous, unsuccessful safety survey, we administered another survey. On this later survey, the effectiveness of safety standdowns ranked as the top item when compared to similar commands. By an overwhelming number, our command personnel enjoy our new safety fair format and are much more receptive to the safety message.

We did not create anything new. We simply put some thought and creativity into already established methods. Adding twists such as fresh-baked chocolate chip cookies to kitchen safety discussions in an actual kitchen, taking shots at a basketball net while wearing beer goggles, demonstrating how to winterize a personal vehicle and showing how to change a tire all transform the safety standdown concept. This method takes personnel outside the typical sterile venue and puts them into one that is more realistic and applicable. It is this relatable difference which allows those safety message "seeds" we constantly try to plant to possibly take hold and actually grow. ■

*Lt. Cmdr. Witt was the VFA-22 safety officer.*

This is the second part of the author's "Making Smart Decisions" seminar. —Ed.

# multimedia Resources

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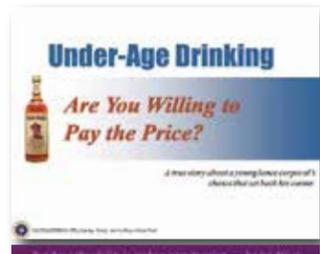


### TRAFFIC POSTER DOWNLOADS

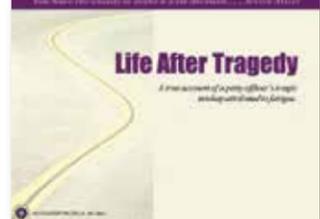


## PRESENTATIONS

View and download presentations to complement your next event.  
▶ <http://www.public.navy.mil/navsafecen/pages/presentations/index.aspx>



A young lance corporal's bad choice sets back his career.



True story of a Sailor who falls asleep while driving, and forever lives with the consequences.



Texting and driving is impaired driving. A close look at the hazards and dangers.

## VIDEOS

We have a collection of videos including public-service announcements (PSAs), training and seasonal campaigns on various topics.  
▶ <http://www.public.navy.mil/navsafecen/pages/video/videos.aspx>

### Popular Titles

- "Prevent the Preventable" campaign with a character called "Mishap." The campaign conveys the fact that a mishap may be waiting for you at any time.
- Elizabeth Crot, Miss Virginia 2011, took time to tape a PSA on cellphone use, specifically about texting. The stats show that, depending on vehicle type, your risk of a crash could be as much as 23 times higher than if you didn't text.
- CS2 John Scherr felt compelled to tell his story about DUI. He doesn't want any Sailor or Marine to make the same mistake that he did. Despite the Captain's Mast, court visit, fines, and penalties, the loss of status from leader and mentor (first class) to second class hurt most.
- The Naval Safety Center partnered with the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board on a series of 59-second vignettes and a 27-minute training video on various alcohol-related topics.



Download via You Tube:  
▶ <http://www.youtube.com/user/navalsafetycenter>

## SPEAKERS AND PRESENTERS

Commands are encouraged to coordinate with these speakers to organize a hands-on presentation.

### Street Smart Program



Firefighters/paramedics and members of the Stay Alive From Education (S.A.F.E.) program, demonstrate consequences of poor decision making on a volunteer. The "Street Smart" program is designed to encourage people to make smart decisions by focusing on the consequences of driving under the influence or without a seatbelt. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Gabriel S. Weber)

### Save a Life Tour



The Save a Life Tour shows that tunnel vision is the most dangerous part of driving while drunk. The Save a Life Tour offers a realistic drunk driving simulator to demonstrate the dangers of driving while intoxicated. (U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Matthew Bookwalter)



## Operational Stress Control

### Building Your Unit's Resilience

The Navy describes resilience as "the capacity for Sailors, families, and commands to withstand, recover, grow, and adapt in the face of stressors and changing demands." Resilience is about fitness in balance. To be ready for what's coming, our Sailors have to be physically, psychologically, spiritually, financially and emotionally fit. Leaders must create command environments that encourage optimal performance and personal growth. It is normal for everyone to face some degree of stress every day, but there is a tipping point. When stress outweighs the ability to cope, people need to ask for help—whether it is for others or ourselves.

*Rhumblines, March 20, 2012*

## Unconditional Trust

By Capt. Kurt Scott, USN

**W**hen it comes to building resilience, the concept of trust doesn't usually come to mind. We don't always appreciate its value because we often take it for granted.

In his "Kicking Off 2013" blog post, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert talks about how incredibly important trust is to life in the Navy. Whether it's the trust pilots have in their crew chiefs for the condition of their aircraft or confidence submariners have in their shipmates when rigging for a dive, we place unconditional trust in each other. From damage control to normal operations, trust is the key for a successful Navy. We can't do the job alone.

Trust is more than just having confidence in yourself and your co-workers' abilities; it's about knowing your shipmates and leaders have your best interest at heart. Trust is built through experience and includes certain expectations (for example, that a parachute will open, or that medical services will be there in times of need). Trust plays a critical role in withstanding adversity and extends beyond individual relationships. Trust provides a positive expectation from the organization and systems in which we operate and includes integrity, dependability, and competence on the part of leaders and larger organizations.

Trust is also a key to increasing our psychological health. If a shipmate trusts you, it increases his or her willingness to confide in you or to reach out to you. Let them know you care, and they will trust you to help them recognize and address stress reactions before they become stress injuries.

*Capt. Scott is the director of the Navy's Behavioral Health Programs, Millington, Tenn.*

Source: <http://navynavstress.com>. Posted Jan. 15, 2013.

### Guiding Principles

- Predictability: Create a predictable environment for your Sailors, one in which they can prepare for the unknown.
- Controllability: Allow Sailors to control situations whenever possible.
- Relationships: Encourage healthy supervisor-subordinate and peer-to-peer relationships.
- Trust: Trust in yourself, in your shipmates, and in your leadership.
- Meaning: Explain your Sailor's role in the mission.

### Strategies for Managing Stress

- Assess the risks associated with the decisions you make as a leader. You can make a difference in your own life, as well as in the lives of your Sailors and their families.
- By controlling what you can, you may find ways to lessen the impact of a stressful activity or event.
- Take care of yourself physically. Know the rules, exercise and stay in good physical shape – it reduces stress and sets a good example.
- Eat well; a balanced diet will keep you operating at your maximum potential.
- Live well below your financial means. Finances are one of the leading stressors to service members. Teaching them ways to live within their means and plan for the future can relieve these stressors.

## ONLINE RESOURCES

### Operational Stress Control Resources

▶ <http://navynavstress.com/resources/>

### Leader's Guide for Managing Sailors in Distress

▶ [http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/documents/LGuide/op\\_stress.aspx](http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/documents/LGuide/op_stress.aspx)



# No One's Going to Die Today

Wonder what Operational Stress Control looks like in a combat zone? Having served in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, I want to share one of my experiences that had a positive outcome.

By HM3 (FMF) Michael V. Pilati

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Eric Nobriga, assigned to Combined Anti-Armor Team (CAAT) 2, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, takes a security halt during a foot patrol in Nawa District, Helmand Province, Afghanistan. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. James Purschwitz)

## ONLINE RESOURCES

### Naval Center for Combat & Operational Stress Control

► <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcsc/nccosc/pages/welcome.aspx>

### Stress Management

► <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcsc/nccosc/serviceMembersV2/stressmanagement/pages/default.aspx>

► <http://navynavstress.com>

### Success Stories

► <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcsc/nccosc/serviceMembersV2/successstories/pages/default.aspx>

He began to play and I knew that for those moments, he forgot about his buddies dying before him.

A patient comes in, Special Forces fellow, a 20-year-old Marine. He's a linguist, works for intel—real smart, but he's detached from reality. Sees dead bodies everywhere, blood, constant vivid nightmares. Why?

He has seen and done quite a bit. When he went home on R&R, he discovered the body of his cousin, who had committed suicide. He returned to Afghanistan and went out on a mission where he watched two of his best friends die. Bled out. No air.

Pain. Hate. Regret. Numb. Disconnected. Empty. No affect and no emotion.

Doc tells me, "He needs temp, vitals, meds, then bring him back here."

From pharmacy to vitals then back to our tent, I ended up speaking with this Marine for 12 minutes. I sat him down and drew a stick figure on paper with a large cloud above it. I wrote along the perimeter of the cloud "relationship problems," "depression" and "self-esteem."

"What can you add to this?" I asked. Hate, numb, regret, he said. All written along the perimeter of the cloud leaving the inside blank.

"What's the one thing that has you down—the most weight that bears on you?" I asked.

"Empty," he said.

In the center of the cloud I wrote, "Empty emotions."

I then explained how it all ties in: Regret so you hate, which makes you angry, which affects your self-esteem and makes you depressed, which causes problems

with relationships, family, friends and co-workers. All because you weren't there to help save, to react more quickly. So you feel "empty and numb."

This made an impact, and I then asked him about coping skills. He said he liked music and writing, and told me he played guitar.

"Do you want to play now?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied.

I went to get a guitar that had been sent in a USO box. He began to play and I knew that for those moments, he forgot about his buddies dying before him, his cousin's suicide, his abuse as a child. I went to the provider's office and waved him out. "Sir, you have to see this. Check out your guy."

"What did you do to get him to play?" the doc asked me later as he shook my hand. I explained what I did from the pharmacy tent to the guitar.

"Strong work." Then he said, "Do you know what I did after I saw him play? I went to my office and sat down and cried."

"You're joking, pulling my leg, sir." I smiled.

As tears began slowly descending from his eyes, he said, "No, I sat there and cried."

So I got my notebook and I wrote:

"The patient was medevac'd to us for suicidal ideations with firm concern that he would make an attempt. We did medevac the patient stateside to receive further care that could not be obtained at the present time in theater. No psych-related patients died on our watch. Hoorah." ■



# A Leadership Foundation Built on Theory, Fact and Fiction

Cmdr. Daniel Dolan is a professor at the U.S. Naval War College and serves as Deputy Director of the Navy's Professional Reading Program

President Harry Truman once said that, "Not all readers are leaders, but all leaders are readers." Books contribute a great deal of intellectual content that can serve to deepen and strengthen a leader's foundation of knowledge. Like a well-balanced diet, a varied menu of selected books informs our world view far beyond our own individual human experience.

Books add valuable reference points that are not limited by the constraints of time, culture, or (in the case of fiction) reality. In regards to safety and risk management, books provide a leader with a depth of experience to draw upon when faced with a complex problem. I would like to describe a few of the books I recently read. Many are selections from the CNO Professional Reading Program; others are just where my musings led me.

The first book, *The Tipping Point* (by Malcolm Gladwell), is an interesting attempt to discover why ideas and things, such as fashion trends or teen suicide, dramatically increase in frequency or popularity. The title borrows the term "tipping point" from the medical profession that uses the term to describe epidemics. Gladwell uses the theoretical principles of the tipping point to examine how troubled public schools can become good ones, how crime waves begin and end, and how a handful of individuals can start popular trends. Understanding the theory of the tipping point allows a leader to identify and employ the "connectors, mavens and salesmen" in an organization to create positive change. *The Tipping Point* changed my perspective on how trends are created and can be controlled. Several current CNO Professional Reading Books, such as *Longitude* (by Dava

Sobel) and *The Innovator's Dilemma* (by Clayton Christensen) are a great way to strengthen your critical thinking skills.

In the realm of non-fiction, the *Pacific Crucible* (by Ian Toll) is an outstanding history of World War II in the Pacific during the period of 1941-42. Toll's history of this period, like his previous book *Six Frigates*, is well suited to any reader interested in U.S. Navy history and heritage, but is particularly valuable for senior leaders. His in-depth research on all of the

major leaders on both sides of the fight provides an excellent study of the interaction between strategy, policy, operations and tactics. Toll's account of the battles of the Coral Sea and Midway provides a gripping account of the biggest risk decisions that leaders on each side of the fight confronted—when

to risk the fleet or ship.

With the exception of a few minor incidents and accidents since 1945, history is our only source of information on the critical decision-making and risk calculations that confront a leader in a major war at sea. Books such as James Hornfischer's two great WWII Pacific books *Neptune's Inferno* and *Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors* allow today's leaders to build a bridge to connect with the past.

I like to mix a good work of fiction into my reading. Fiction allows us to see the world of the what-ifs and the world of the possible. Following the recommendation of several colleagues, I recently finished reading *World War Z* by Max Brooks. I found this science fiction selection surprisingly insightful. The plot of the book is built around a far-fetched global epidemic that creates millions of zombies. The global zombie virus epidemic provides an interesting per-

**“Thanks to my reading, I have never been caught flat-footed by any situation, and I've never been at a loss for how any problem has been addressed before.”**

— Gen. James Mattis, Commander, U.S. Central Command

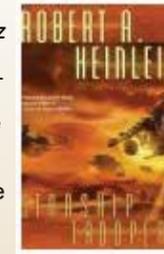


Navy Reading is the official website of the Chief of Naval Operations Professional Reading Program (CNO-PRP), and is maintained by CNO-PRP program managers at the U.S. Naval War College. To browse recommended readings, essential readings, titles of interest, videos, and e-books, go to <http://www.navyreading.navy.mil>.

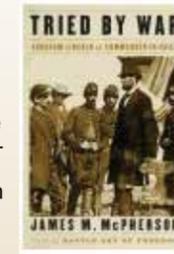
## WARFIGHTING FIRST



*The Art of the Long View* by Peter Schwartz  
Hopes and fears affect us in planning for a better future. The scenario approach gives you the ability to visualize different kinds of futures. This book gives you the tools for developing a strategic vision.

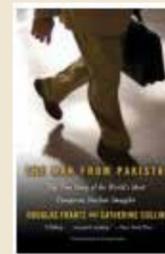


*Starship Troopers* by Robert Heinlein  
For today's Sailor, this novel is extremely worthwhile, for it shows that the travails and aspirations of those who serve are universal and timeless. Its point-of-view, that of an idealistic young man learning the ropes in the military, will seem refreshingly familiar to the reader.

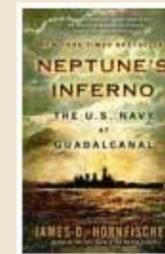


*Tried by War* by James McPherson  
Tried by War provides an enjoyable read with important lessons on civil-military relations, leadership and decision making at the strategic level.

## OPERATE FORWARD



*The Man From Pakistan* by Catherine Collins and Douglas Frantz  
This book provides an excellent foundation of knowledge for one of the greatest threats confronting the United States in the 21st century. It offers valuable lessons for Navy personnel who must confront this threat as they operate forward in an increasingly dangerous environment.



*Neptune's Inferno* by James D. Hornfischer  
Rich in Navy history and heritage this book contains many insightful lessons on leadership and the high cost of tactical failures in combat. This gripping book offers valuable lessons for Sailors and Officers of all pay grades.

## BE READY



*Time Management from the Inside Out* by Julie Morgenstern  
Time management, important for anybody, is all the more important for those who serve in uniform, and this, the bible of time management, has the game plan that can get the reader's career on track and keep it there.



*Leadership, the Warrior's Art* by Christopher Kolenda  
Edited by Christopher Kolenda; foreword by General Barry R. McCaffrey, USA (Ret.)  
This work is a bold, fresh, and broad-scale examination and analysis of the single most critical factor in what makes groups drive for success in the face of daunting resistance.

spective on how societies and cultures would confront such an overwhelming threat. *World War Z* offers some particularly interesting lessons on level of military innovation and adaptation that had to take place in order to defeat the zombie hordes. For instance, all of the military's wonder weapons were useless against the zombies. Brooks provides a great deal of thought on how new weapons and tactics had to be developed to confront this previously unanticipated threat. Although we are never likely to confront a zombie horde, the likelihood of having to adapt our weapons and tactics to counter an emerging threat is just one practical lesson from this fascinating book.

U.S. Marine Corps Gen. James Mattis, Commander of the U.S. Central Command, once wrote, "Thanks to my reading, I have never been caught flat-footed by any situation, and I've never been at a loss for how any problem has been addressed before."

The books I presented here are examples of how some of my recent reading selections have served to strengthen my own intellectual foundation. Whether you are reading theory, fact or fiction, there are ingredients to be found on the printed page that will strengthen a leader's foundation. A command reading program is a great way to ensure that you, your Sailors and officers are reading to be ready! 📖

# The Right Lift

## New Devices Reduce Back Pains and Strains



Story and photos by AT1 (AW) James Vasileff

In the heart of the EA-6B Prowler is the airborne integrated tactical jamming system. The system's assets (equipment and antennas) are stored in pods, which are carried under the wings and on the fin tip.

The Prowler can carry up to five pods for transmitting and receiving radio frequency signals. The EA-6B also can carry any mix of pods, fuel tanks and/or HARM anti-radiation missiles depending on mission requirements.

Maintaining these pods (also referred to as hard-backs) takes

a significant amount of manpower and muscle strength. Up until August 2012, workers at the Fleet Readiness Center Northwest (FRCNW) repair facility were straining shoulders and backs, which slowed productivity.

Thanks to the Navy's Hazard Abatement Program, workers are seeing improvements in shop productivity while reducing the risk of injury to the personnel and equipment. This program distributes funding to commands throughout the Navy for projects dealing with ergonomics. The ergonomic abate-

ment project for the crane installation at FRCNW, along with a scissor lift and ramp, was started over seven years ago after the analysis of the work center by a certified professional ergonomist.

### Seven Years Ago

Workers used to manually extract assets from the pods and transfer them onto a transportation fixture. Up to three assets were installed or removed from each hard-back. Two workers were required to lift and carry the assets while in the fixture to move it within or be-

The ergonomic lifting devices include the following:

- A crane for inside the warehouse which allowed the moving of assets around from various areas of the work center.
- A scissor lift that would allow personnel to easily move assets into position for building pods for the EA-6B and F-18G Growler aircraft.
- A vehicle ramp for safe handling of the heavy assets.



tween the shops. Carrying the assets resulted in shoulder and back strain, because workers had to overextend their arms and shoulders. It also violated MIL-STD 1472F (Department of Defense Design Criteria Standard Human Engineering) for a two-person lift and carry.

Once the assets were removed the pods were stored in a vertical rack system (also called a tree) before and after restoration. A four-person lift with hernia bars was used for moving and lifting the hard-backs, which weighed between 250 and 325 lbs. Lifting to the top-two storage points required a difficult above-shoulder maneuver. This operation also posed a risk to the assets. There was always the probability of workers dropping them.

### A Better Way

Ken Davis, a Navy Region Northwest safety specialist, contacted the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC)—which manages the Mishap

Prevention and Hazard Abatement Program—concerning the ergonomics issues. NAVFAC provided ergonomic technical support to help identify and solve problems.

Certified Professional Ergonomist Theresa Stack visited the repair facility.

“We identified ergonomics risk factors and proposed abatement options,” said Stack. “Our goal was to reduce the risks associated with the handling operation without compromising mission readiness. I was able to help FRC get funding to correct the hazards.”

FRCNW received funding to abate the hazards identified with the asset handling. These ergonomic improvements are now helping workers perform more efficiently and manage risk to prevent injuries.

A new overhead crane located in the 64E Pod Pool facility virtually eliminates manual lifting of the assets. The crane not only keeps the workers safe but also saves time and protects the valuable assets. The shop also received

lift tables that are flush with the floor to help further reduce fatigue and physical stresses while installing assets.

The crane is now certified under the Hazard Abatement Program and began full operations last summer. The crane allows personnel to move all avionic assets around the facility in a 360-degree rotation. It also requires only two personnel to complete operations with the equipment instead of four.

This greatly reduces the labor hours needed to complete a project and return assets to the fleet much quicker. The overall benefits of ergonomic solutions are evident in improved health, safety and comfort, improved quality, and increased productivity. In the long term, ergonomic improvements help decrease workers' compensation costs. ■

*AT1 Vasileff is the safety leading petty officer and safety manager at FRC Northwest, NAS Whidbey Island.*



Providing workers with appropriate hazard-based eye protection is critical to injury prevention. However, this does not necessarily mean workers will use the provided personal protective equipment.

## Eye Protection Injury Prevention

Thus, the Department of Defense and Secretary of the Navy require the following, in accordance with the Department of Defense Safety and Occupational Health Protection Program and as outlined in Form DD 2272:

- All installations shall be responsible to acquire, maintain, and require the use of approved personal protective equipment and safety equipment.
- DOD personnel shall be responsible to use personal protective equipment and safety equipment provided by their installation/facility.

It is critical that employers and workers understand and appreciate the danger that hazards may pose to their vision.

### Worker Behavior

Many workers incorrectly believe one type of PPE will protect them from all eye injuries, giving them a false sense of security. Workers also may be unaware of the potential severity of eye injuries, which are often perceived as only being minor. Another factor leading to non-compliance is the belief that eye protection reduces productivity in other areas, such as fogging or sweating. Some workers find eye protection uncomfortable or unstylish.

To encourage worker compliance, employers should explore the many options for acquiring eye and face protection and involve workers in the selection of the products used. Offering workers a selection

of eyewear styles may improve fit, coverage and comfort while allowing workers personal style choices.

### Work-Related Injuries

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that more than 800,000 work-related eye injuries occur each year. Every day more than 2,000 U.S. workers receive some form of medical treatment because of eye injuries sustained at work. In 2000, U.S. hospital emergency departments treated 300,000 eye injuries. This was 22.2 cases per 10,000 full-time workers. Of these workers, 80 percent were men. In 70 percent of cases, the injury was caused by contact with an object or equipment. In 26 percent of cases, the injury was caused by exposure to harmful substances or environments.

In addition to common eye injuries, health care workers, laboratory staff, janitorial workers, animal handlers, and other workers may be at risk of acquiring infectious diseases via ocular exposure. Infectious diseases can be transmitted through the mucous membranes of the eye as a result of direct exposure (e.g., blood splashes, respiratory droplets generated during coughing or suctioning) or from touching the eyes with contaminated fingers or other objects. The infections may result in relatively minor conjunctivitis or reddening/soreness of the eye or in a life-threatening disease such as HIV, B virus, or possibly even avian influenza.

Sources:  
National Safety Council's Safety & Health Magazine  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

### ONLINE RESOURCES

#### Work-Related Eye Injuries, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

► <http://www.cdc.gov/features/dsworkPlaceEye/>

#### National Safety Council, Safety and Health Magazine

► <http://www.nsc.org/safetyhealth/pages/appreciate-the-danger-of-eye-injuries.aspx>

### The correct eye and face protection for the task

VARIOUS WORKPLACE TASKS may require different eye protection. The following are some common eye protection options and examples of work tasks where they would be applicable.

|                    |   |    |    |   |   |
|--------------------|--|---|---|--|--|
| WHAT               | <b>Safety spectacles, with optional side protection</b><br>Impact-resistant lenses and frames constructed of metal or plastic. | <b>Goggles with direct or indirect ventilation</b><br>Tight-fitting eye-wear meant to completely cover the eyes, eye sockets and skin surrounding eyes to protect from impacts, particles and splashes. | <b>Faceshields</b><br>Transparent plastic sheets that extend from the eyebrows to below the chin and across the width of the worker's head to protect from dust, splashes or sprays of hazardous liquids; may be polarized to protect from glare and may be combined with safety spectacles or goggles for impact resistance. | <b>Welding shields</b><br>Vulcanized fiber or fiberglass fitted with a filtered lens to protect eyes from infrared or intense radiant light burns; shield also protects against flying sparks, metal spatter and slag chips. | <b>Laser safety goggles</b><br>Shaded lenses to protect against the intense light produced by lasers.  |
| EXAMPLE WORK TASKS | Chipping, grinding, machining, masonry work, riveting and sanding; make sure to use optional when applicable.                  | Woodworking, buffing and working in dusty conditions.   | Acid and chemical handling, degreasing, and plating.  | Welding, brazing, soldering and cutting operations.  | Lab work with lasers; may require specific color shading based on light source. Must provide protection for light wave length generated by the particular laser. |

Sources:  
ANSI Z87.1-2010 Standard Update for Non-Prescription Eye and Face Protective Devices  
OSHA, "Personal Protective Equipment"

### EDUCATION AND INTERVENTION

Employers are required to train workers on the proper eye protection for each hazard. For example, a construction worker who readily wears safety glasses while performing carpentry work may be unaware that eye protection must be worn when working with cement, which in powder or wet form can cause severe alkaline burns.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health suggests safety professionals follow the following guidelines when updating or creating an eye safety program:

- Review applicable OSHA eye safety standards and learn about common eye safety hazards in their industry.
- Identify hazard sources by walking through a work area and speaking with employees, including asking about hazards at all times of the day.
- Evaluate ways to mitigate eye safety hazards at the root cause, reducing the need for employees to use PPE.
- Look to the ANSI standards for each hazard to determine appropriate eye protection.
- Consult with workers on their eyewear preferences, and offer a variety of styles and sizes to increase the likelihood that employees will find the eyewear appealing.
- Incorporate employee input into training programs and written eye safety plans.
- Ensure supervisors and health and safety staff serves as role models when implementing or updating an eye safety plan by wearing the same eye protection from the options given to all employees.

Ultimately, safety professionals should establish a culture where eye protection is the norm. Culturally, wearing eye protection must become equivalent to a construction worker wearing a hard hat – a symbol of who they are and what they do, a piece of PPE that goes on before work begins.

# The First 96 Hours of Homecoming

Using their last few weeks of deployment as a Return to Homeport training opportunity, the VAQ-139 Cougars ensured the first few days back home were uneventful and memorable.

By Lt. Cmdr. Jack “Farva” Curtis

One year ago this spring, the VAQ-139 Cougars completed a highly successful Western Pacific and Fifth Fleet deployment. We took extra special steps to make sure everyone had a safe and enjoyable homecoming.

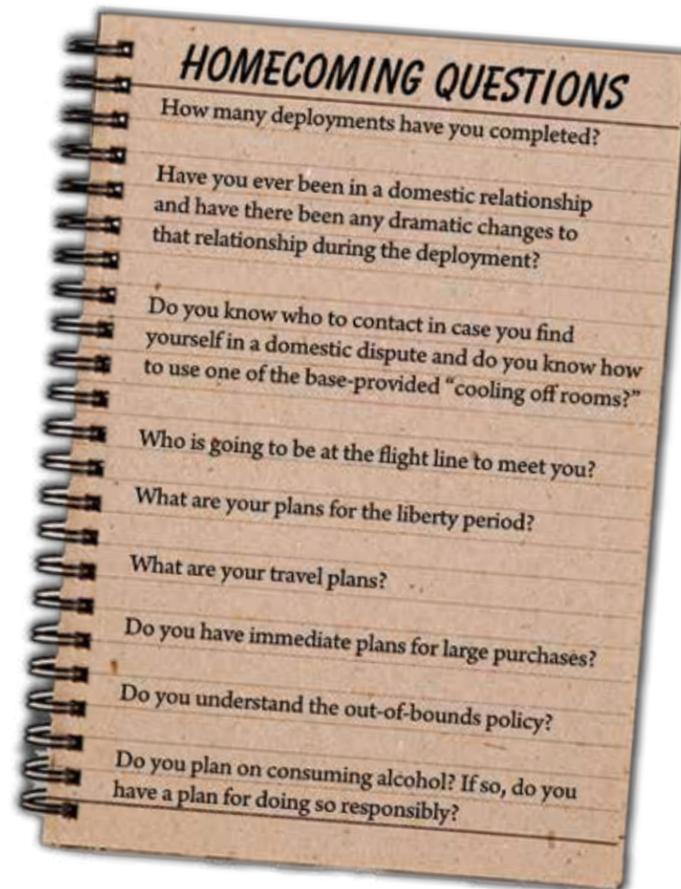
Return to Home Port training conducted on transits home is standardized across the Fleet, thanks to the incredible work by Fleet and Family Support Centers (FFSC). This training is often mandatory for specific demographics and covers a broad spectrum of topics from returning to intimacy to personal motor vehicle (PMV) safety.

The Cougars felt the training provided was invaluable, but we also thought that we could add value by going a step beyond FFSC presentations. We wanted direct ownership to ensure our squadron mates had the happiest and safest homecoming possible.

It was imperative that our squadron leadership (beginning with the work center LPO) fully understood each member’s plans once they climbed out of the jets or walked off the airlift. The Cougars accomplished this by requiring every squadron member to complete a brief worksheet. The worksheets were filled out and discussed during one-on-one conversations with supervisors, which focused on the first 96 hours after homecoming.

Completing these worksheets in a low-threat, conversational environment allowed supervisors at all levels to help each squadron member think through and make plans for their first 96 hours at home.

In addition to these interviews, the Cougars augmented FFSC training sessions by conducting our own age-specific training forums. Because the information and delivery method that benefits a salty chief is different from that needed by an airman, we chose to break the squadron down into three groups: E-1 to E-3, E-4 to E-6, and Khaki.



We scheduled the forward wardroom for three consecutive mornings immediately following morning shift change. We capitalized on squadron expertise for additional training. This training covered PMV safety, responsible alcohol use and DUI prevention, family reunion and reintegration, suicide awareness, and general conduct expectations.

The training was held in a relaxed forum led by the chiefs and first class petty officers, with assistance from the ship’s religious programs office (who serves as our squadron DAPA), enlisted safety specialist, motorcycle program manager, command master chief, and Navy career counselor.



Sailors aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS *Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) observe the crowds waiting to greet them as the ship returns to homeport. (U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Donald Walton)

Feedback from these forums was extremely positive. There was no “death by PowerPoint.” The conversational atmosphere allowed for interaction and fostered a low-threat environment where Sailors could ask and answer tough questions that may not have occurred in a more formal setting. Notice that the commanding officer, executive officer, and safety officer were not present—this was by design to foster open communication.

One of the final steps we took to prepare ourselves for a safe homecoming was using the ship’s print shop to produce “Free Ride” wallet cards. Keeping with the theme of “Cougars Helping Cougars,” we asked the First Class Petty Officers Association for volunteer drivers. We listed their names and phone numbers, along with those of local cab companies,

on the cards. Having these cards produced before our homecoming was important for two reasons. First, the ship’s print shop is free. Second, it allowed us to hand these cards to Sailors as they walked off the airlift before beginning their hard-earned, 96-hour liberty.

Nothing we did to prepare our squadron mates for homecoming was rocket science. Much of the information discussed while completing the worksheets and conducting the targeted training forums is already provided by supervisors. However, as we all know the last few weeks of deployment are very hectic, and our course of action helped to ensure that nobody slipped through the cracks. As a result of our efforts, the Cougars saw no injuries, accidents, or DUIs during our first 96 hours home. ■

*Lt. Cmdr. Curtis was the safety officer for VAQ-139.*

# Probably Safe? Hmm...

By Lt. Mike McLaughlin



I was just over two months into my helicopter second pilot (H2P) cruise, preparing for an early morning launch. It was my first time sitting in the right seat since deploying, so I hadn't done the right-seat checks for a few months. During the boost-servo part of the prestart checks, the pedals didn't feel right.

The checklist was going more slowly than normal, and it was a hot summer day in the Gulf of Aden. Everyone in the crew was anxious to get the big fan blowing.

I paused to consider if what I was feeling was normal or within limits. There was about an inch and a half of free play. The pedals hung up and felt ratchety when traveling in one direction. I moved them back and forth again. They still didn't feel right, but I had full control in either direction once past the free play.

Maybe this was just an idiosyncrasy of the bird — nothing to worry about. We continued with the checklist. During the tail servo check, I noticed that feel was gone. I hadn't imagined it, but why was it different now?

I told my helicopter aircraft commander (HAC) that something was wrong with the pedals. He moved them back and forth quickly, said they felt normal, and told me to keep going.

"Hold on," I said and explained what I noticed before.

"But they feel fine now?" he said.

"Yes, but here check this out." I secured boost again and let him check the pedals.

"Everything's normal over here. You sure you felt something?" I tried my pedals again and felt the original problem. I was sure something wasn't right.

My HAC was giving me a weird look at this point and asked if my feet were getting stuck on the floorboards. Then he started explaining to me how to use the trim microswitches on the pedals.

"I understand how trim works," I said. "Boost is secured anyway, so it doesn't matter. There's something wrong with the linkage." Now I was getting impatient looks from the flight deck crew as well.

"Alright, call a troubleshooter." I gave the signal, and our junior air framer came to the door. He listened to my explanation of the problem. He jiggled the pedals by hand to reassure himself that they were still attached to the aircraft, then gave me a cheerful thumbs up and exited the rotor arc. His assessment didn't inspire much confidence so I continued to explore that dead zone in the pedals. There's no way that's normal, I thought. But it's probably safe.

Probably safe? Not a good answer. I radioed for deck to wake up our lead air framer, who had just gotten off the night shift. The HAC was irritated that the pedals were becoming such a production, but he waited patiently for the next troubleshooter. Our chief was on the flight deck to find out what the delay was. He checked the pedals by hand as well. He admitted there was some play in the pedals but didn't seem concerned.

We were already past our takeoff time for a VERTREP in the internationally recommended transit corridor (IRTC) before heading down to the eastern Somali coast. The ship was taking on 67 pallets

**My credibility had been wearing thin with everyone else on the ship, and I had been starting to doubt my own sanity.**

and had not made any preparations for a continuous replenishment. This was going to get painful very quickly.

"Heartache 17, this is deck. Charlie Oscar wants to know what the delay is." Cue the awkward silence. My HAC radioed that we were troubleshooting a controllability issue and would be starting up in 10 minutes. Moments later our lead air framer came through the hangar door with the Air Boss on his heels.

"Out of the seat. What's going on?"

As I explained the problem to a pair of very agitated gold oak leaves, the troubleshooter began inspecting the pedals. It took him about 20 seconds to decide the aircraft was down. I breathed a sign of relief—my credibility had been wearing thin with everyone else on the ship, and I had been starting to doubt my own sanity.

A few hours later, maintainers determined the cause of the malfunction was a loose connection in the control linkage under the floor boards. Had that part broken loose in flight, we would have lost tail-rotor control. With no big decks in the area, and Somalia not being a suitable divert by any means, it would have been a bad day.

Based on the condition of the malfunctioning part, it's most likely that the problem had been progressing for several days. Because we fly the same aircraft every day, it's difficult to pick up on gradual changes. Attention to detail is always important. This incident demonstrates the benefits of switching crew stations and changing routines to stay sharp and avoid complacency.

I was able to resist the pressure from the aircraft commander, maintenance crew and commanding officer, as well as my own fear of embarrassment, because I knew that the problem hadn't gotten proper attention from maintenance. Also, I had a strong understanding of checklist procedures and aircraft systems. ■

*Lt. McLaughlin flies with HSL-48.*

*Note from the Editor:* Assertiveness is one of the seven skills vital to crew resource management (CRM) and demonstrates good decision-making ability. CRM is applicable to any situation, on or off duty. Learn more about CRM and download resources from the Navy and Marine Corps School of Aviation Safety: [https://www.netc.navy.mil/nascweb/crm/standmat/seven\\_skills/AS.htm](https://www.netc.navy.mil/nascweb/crm/standmat/seven_skills/AS.htm). The site is also accessible via the Naval Safety Center: <http://www.public.navy.mil/navsafecen/pages/aviation/aviation.aspx>.

U.S. Navy photo, modified.

# Power Lines: The Towering Danger

## FACTS

Almost all workers are exposed to electrical energy during their daily duties, and workers in a variety of job categories are electrocuted each year. These facts make electricity a serious, widespread occupational hazard, according to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Nevertheless, many workers are unaware of the potential electrical hazards present in their work environment. This lack of awareness makes them more vulnerable to the danger of electrocution. Electrical injuries consist of four main types: electrocution (fatal), electric shock, burns, and falls caused as a result of contact with electrical energy.

Source: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/electrical/>

## TAKEAWAY

Electrocutions from unintentional contact with overhead power lines can be prevented by being aware of the hazard and taking precautions. Simply put, don't touch power lines with poles, ladders, or other objects that can conduct electricity.

Here are some tips to help identify potential risks when working under and around power lines:

- ▶▶ Don't assume that overhead power lines are insulated—they usually aren't.
- ▶▶ Beware of power lines in your vicinity when using ladders, erecting antennae or moving equipment.
- ▶▶ Treat all power lines as "live" at all times.
- ▶▶ Honor the 10-foot-or-more rule:
- ▶▶ Arcing between the line and metal objects can occur within three meters.
- ▶▶ Lower your man-packed radio's antenna to below head/shoulder level.
- ▶▶ Vehicle drivers should ensure there is proper clearance.

Source: CMC Safety Division *SafetyGram*, Issue 14, June 2012

### DID YOU KNOW?

▶▶ The average height of an American male is between 5'10"-6' tall. An extended whip antenna is 10 feet. Together, that puts the top of the antenna at about 16 feet, well within the height to arc with overhead power lines.

▶▶ The distance from ground to power line in the U.S. is 18-20 feet; in Afghanistan, 6-18 feet.



## 6 ELECTRICAL-RELATED DEATHS



In FY12, five electrical-related mishaps resulted in six deaths

- Nov. 26, 2011—A Marine was electrocuted while on a routine dismantled patrol. The Marine's 3-foot-whip antenna extending from his tactical radio touched a power line that drooped due to rain.
- Jan. 14-15, 2012—A Marine died after touching a live power line during night-time generator maintenance. The next morning, another Marine died after touching the power line while trying to help.
- March 1, 2012—A driver of a Humvee maneuvered to an over-watch position on a hill outpost during a daytime patrol. The Marine in the Humvee's turret died when he contacted a low-hanging power line.
- March 14, 2012—As an MATV approached a power line, electricity arced through the vehicle's antenna, blowing out three tires. An exploding tire rim struck an Afghan patrol Soldier, killing him.
- June 8, 2012—During a night-time dismantled patrol, a Marine scaling a 4-foot berm died when the 10-foot whip antenna from his tactical radio touched a power line.

Naval Safety Center data did not show electrical-related mishaps for the U.S. Navy in FY12. —Ed.



## PREVENT HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES

Under normal conditions, your skin, blood vessels and perspiration level adjust to the heat. But these natural cooling systems may fail if you're exposed to high temperatures and humidity for too long, sweat heavily and don't drink enough fluids. The result may be a heat-related illness.

- **Heat stroke** – a life-threatening illness in which body temperature may rise above 106° F in minutes; symptoms include dry skin, rapid, strong pulse and dizziness
- **Heat exhaustion** – an illness that can precede heatstroke; symptoms include heavy sweating, rapid breathing and a fast, weak pulse
- **Heat cramps** – muscle pains or spasms that happen during heavy exercise
- **Heat rash** – skin irritation from excessive sweating

Know the risk factors:

- Staying out in the heat too long
- Exercising too much for your age and physical condition
- Older adults, young children and those who are sick or overweight are most at risk

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



## PLAY IT SAFE AROUND WATER

If you are planning to be in, on or near the water this summer, follow the basics of water safety, maintain constant supervision of children and get trained.

Practice water safety:

- Swim in designated areas supervised by lifeguards
- Always swim with a buddy; do not allow anyone to swim alone
- Ensure that everyone in the family or your group learns to swim well
- Never leave a young child unattended near water and do not trust a child's life to another child
- Have young children or inexperienced swimmers wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets around water, but do not rely on life jackets alone

Know how to respond to an aquatic emergency

- If a child is missing, check the water first
- Know how and when to call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number
- Enroll in water safety, first aid and CPR courses
- Have appropriate equipment, a cell phone, life jackets and a first-aid kit

American Red Cross



## STAY COOL OUTDOORS

Ultraviolet (UV) rays are an invisible form of radiation. They can penetrate your skin and damage your skin cells. Sunburns are a sign of skin damage. Suntans aren't healthy, either. They appear after the sun's rays have already killed some cells and damaged others. UV rays can cause skin damage during any season or at any temperature. They can also cause eye problems, wrinkles, skin spots, and skin cancer.

To protect yourself:

- Stay out of the sun when it is strongest (between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.)
- Use sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher
- Wear protective clothing or a hat
- Wear wraparound sunglasses that provide 100 percent UV ray protection
- Avoid sunlamps and tanning beds

Check your skin regularly for changes in the size, shape, color or feel of birthmarks, moles and spots. Such changes are a sign of skin cancer.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



## WATCH FOR SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

During hot-weather activities, pay attention to warning signs of heat-related illnesses. If you ignore these symptoms, your condition can worsen, resulting in a medical emergency.

- Muscle cramps
- Nausea or vomiting
- Weakness
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Confusion

If you develop any of these symptoms, immediately lower your body temperature and get hydrated. Stop the activity and get out of the heat. If possible, have someone help monitor your condition. Remove extra clothing or sports equipment. Drink fluids to prevent dehydration, replenish salt and minerals. If symptoms persist, seek medical attention right away.

When you exercise in hot weather, keep these precautions in mind:

- Watch the temperature
- Get acclimated
- Know your fitness level
- Hydrate properly
- Dress appropriately
- Avoid mid-day sun
- Wear sunscreen
- Have a back-up plan
- Understand your medical risks

CMC Safety Division





*See, What Happened Was...*



By Gunnery Sgt. Amber Allison

I have come to recognize that what follows after these words are uttered is either a lie to cover up an embarrassing story, or a story so ridiculously true that the speaker couldn't make up anything better. Whatever story ensues, the outcome could have been prevented.

Here's a Sailor's story ...

"See, what had happened was this little kid was running around with lit fireworks in his hand. And, uh, that bad boy went off and came straight for me. Well, the next thing you know it hit me in the mouth and knocked out my front teeth."

That looks and sounds really bad, Sailor. We need to get you over to Dental because I think the lies are flying out the gap between your teeth. I wonder what really happened.

A Marine says ...

"See, what had happened was I used an empty beer bottle to set off a Roman candle. I lit it and as I

turned to walk away I lost my balance and fell right into the fireworks I had just set up. That's when I got shot in the eye with one of the delayed charges—did not see that one coming at all."

Really, Marine? I think it really started, "Hey guys, watch this!" Are you sure you weren't nursing that beer, trying to look cool for your friends and juggling fireworks and shot yourself in the eye?

See, what really happened was ...

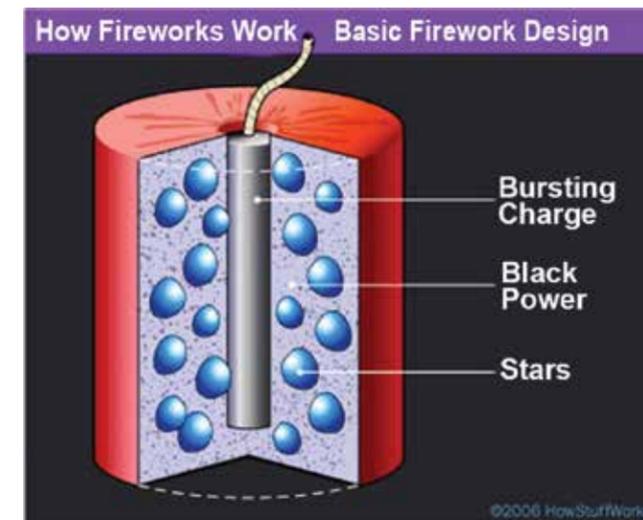
"It was 0200 and I was flying down the highway at 70 miles an hour," a Marine said. "I thought it would be cool if I lit off a Roman candle while I was driving real fast. So, I pull a MacGyver in a moment of clarity and decided to take one from a new bag of fireworks I had just bought. In my moment of genius, I lit it with the car's cigarette lighter and held it out the window. Man! You should have seen the first three charges go off. It was cool. But wait a second; it started getting hot in my hand. That's when I lost control of the car and flipped it a couple times. Next thing you know, Jed's a millionaire as I was ejected from my car and discovered myself flying through the air. In a moment of clarity, all I could think of was "Well that was pretty stupid." One of my passengers wasn't wearing a seat belt, either, and was tossed into the back seat; his face was pretty cut up. But my other passenger, the smart one, was wearing a seat belt and nothing much happened to him. Actually, we are all pretty fortunate to be alive today."

Fireworks mishaps are infrequently reported to the Naval Safety Center (NSC). It's either because most Sailors and Marines are handling them correctly, or because the victims are too embarrassed to tell any-

one and don't want to end up on the "Stupid Videos" montage.

There have only been 22 reports to the NSC since the summer of 2004, but those 22 reports have life-altering consequences and injuries associated with them. Some of the victims will never be able to wear a wedding ring on the proper finger again. Others have lost some eyesight, and some have disfiguring burns to the torso, neck and face.

Don't be "that guy" this summer when enjoying the 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities. Most fireworks are made from black powder—yes, the same stuff used to fire old-time cannons. Although considered low explosives, gun powder and fireworks can cause significant burn or damage to skin, face, hands, and hearing. ▀



**Keep in mind these precautions when handling fireworks.**

- Always have a bucket filled with water nearby. Have a water hose as a backup for unexpected fires.
- Don't use fireworks around flammable material (i.e. gasoline and paint solvents).
- Never relight a "dud." Always wait 20 minutes and then soak it in a bucket of water.
- Never shoot fireworks when drinking alcohol, and always have a designated shooter.
- Wear leather gloves and eye protection when you are designated as the shooter.
- Never use fireworks indoors. When outside, do not use around dry grass, leaves or trees.
- Only use fireworks as intended. Read all labels and warnings.
- Never give fireworks to young children.
- Obey all laws regarding the use of fireworks.
- Never use fireworks around an open flame such as a campfire.

Gunnery Sgt. Allison is a weapons analyst in the Shore/Ground Safety Programs Directorate, Naval Safety Center.



# Never Underestimate Mother Nature

## Your Driving Bubble: Make It Big

By Don Borkoski

**N**eurologists have been studying the human brain for years, and the jury is still out on one question: Can we multi-task? One thing they all agree on is that our brain can do one thing very well. Everything else we add slows down the process. To compensate, our brain sucks in our focus to remove outside distractions so it can perform the task at hand. This phenomenon makes us feel like we are in a “bubble.”

When we drive, we operate in a bubble that expands down the road, about a quarter of a mile. Here’s a simple experiment:

**1. Be a focused driver.** Eliminate as many distractions inside your car as you can. Drive around the block at normal speed. When you return, write down all that you have seen on the trip. The trip can be as short as a half a mile. Your list will be long: clouds, stores along the road, the horizon, road signs, people, other vehicles.

**2. Be today’s typical driver.** Before starting, turn on the radio, find a volunteer front passenger, put kids in the back seat, have a soft-drink in the cup holder and eat something. Make a quick phone call. Then drive around the same block. When you return, again write down all that you have seen on the trip. Compare it to the first list and you’ll discover that most of the things you noticed were inside the car. When your brain registered “automatic response clues” (brake lights, stop signs, red lights) it may have switched priorities to those concerns, but then immediately

shrunk back into the bubble when you passed them. You also will have a hard time remembering some things until reminded by your passenger. Yes, your memory also shuts down. You may have been driving with traffic, but you may not remember the speed. Lots of people drive like that every day.

**3. Don’t try this one.** You probably don’t need to, because most of you already know the results. When you text, or dial your cell in the car, your bubble shrinks to about 10 to 20 inches. That’s right: inches! That is the distance from your eyes to your phone. Texting is, in itself, multi-tasking. You must be looking at the phone, think about what you are reading or writing, hold your phone and type text. Those few items completely monopolize your senses, your thought process and your mechanical abilities. You can’t even respond to automatic response clues, because you can’t see them!

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported that in 2010 driver distraction was the cause of 18 percent of all fatal crashes – with 3,092 people killed – and crashes resulting in an injury – with 416,000 people wounded.

If you want to improve your odds of staying out of a crash, minimize the distractions inside of your vehicle and for everyone’s sake, keep your hands on the wheel. **D**

*Mr. Borkoski is a traffic and recreation safety specialist in the Shore/Ground Safety Programs Directorate, Naval Safety Center.*

### ONLINE RESOURCES

**Travel Risk Planning System (TRiPS)**

► [http://www.public.navy.mil/navsafecen/pages/ashore/motor\\_vehicle/trips.aspx](http://www.public.navy.mil/navsafecen/pages/ashore/motor_vehicle/trips.aspx)

**The Dangers of Texting While Driving**

► <http://www.fcc.gov/guides/texting-while-driving>

By Lt. Cmdr. John Hellmann, USN (Ret.)

“Two people drowned in an MWR rafting mishap. Their raft hit a log that was blocking the river and flipped over. They got trapped beneath the water in the log’s submerged branches.”

**W**hen I heard that announcement at an all-officer’s training brief, my mind raced back to an incident in which only a whim of Mother Nature spared three others and me from a similar fate.

At the time, I was stationed in Pensacola for flight training. Ten of us had decided to go canoeing on the Blackwater River in Milton, Fla. Conditions on the river seemed benign.

The river was waist-deep along the entire route, and all of us were strong swimmers. With the current running only two or three miles per hour, we certainly weren’t concerned about being sucked under. Our greatest perceived hazards were snakes and possibly an alligator.

Toward the end of our six hours on the water, our canoes brushed against a log with submerged branches. It was the umpteenth time we had to push off a log or the shore with our oars. This time, though, the current sucked our canoe under the log and tipped it over. I found myself trapped under the canoe. It took a couple tries and a surge of adrenaline for me to pull my head above water. My girlfriend, who also had been in the canoe, was nowhere in sight.

My roommate and his girlfriend were in the canoe behind mine, and they experienced the same ordeal. He likewise struggled to pull his head above water, but we didn’t see the girlfriend.

For what seemed like an interminable period of time, my friend and I futilely struggled to dislodge and right our canoes. The two girls suddenly popped up on the other side of the log and its matted branches. They stood up, gasping for air. Their life jackets had snagged on the submerged branches, and all they could do was hold their breath and struggle to free themselves. We finally waded ashore to gather our wits and to calm down.

Mother Nature is indomitable. In such a slow current, the log seemed harmless, but it nearly drowned us. The scariest part

of the day for me wasn’t being trapped under the canoe; it was feeling helpless while waiting for the two girls to surface.

I was thankful that the end of the day found us releasing our stress through laughter, instead of tears. It would have been a nightmare to have to walk to the door of my girlfriend’s house and apologize to her parents for the death of their only daughter.

When I heard the story of the rafting tragedy, I couldn’t help but wonder how many others have found themselves in similar circumstances. Never underestimate the risk of water sports, whether it’s rafting, canoeing or otherwise. Know the risks and use the right swimming gear or sports PPE. **D**

*Lt. Cmdr. Hellmann flew with HC-3.*

### ONLINE RESOURCES

**U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Resource Center**

► [http://www.uscgboating.org/safety/life\\_jacket\\_wear\\_wearing\\_your\\_life\\_jacket.aspx](http://www.uscgboating.org/safety/life_jacket_wear_wearing_your_life_jacket.aspx)

**How to Choose the Right Life Jacket Brochure**

► [http://www.uscgboating.org/assets/1/publications/howtochoosetherightlife-jacket\\_brochure.pdf](http://www.uscgboating.org/assets/1/publications/howtochoosetherightlife-jacket_brochure.pdf)

**Fundamentals of Canoeing by the American Red Cross**

► <https://redcrossrc.org/canoeing.html>

# Listening Devices Not Part of Bicycle PPE

By Capt. Jeffrey Studebaker, USMC

Recreational and off-duty hazards greatly impact the lives of Marines and Sailors. If an activity leads to a mishap, it will affect them personally and the fleet's mission readiness. Managing these risks goes beyond wearing the proper recreational PPE; situational awareness is paramount.

I recently investigated a recreational mishap that resulted in the death of a Sailor who was riding his bicycle. He was on a base road that had a posted speed limit of 55 mph at around 0630. A truck approaching from the rear struck the bike, killing the Sailor instantly. The driver of the truck reported that the Sailor made a sudden turn in front of him, giving him no time to avoid hitting the rider.

The Provost Marshall's Office (PMO) reconstructed the mishap and confirmed the driver's statement. Investigators also discovered that the Sailor had an MP3 player strapped to his arms with the volume turned all the way up. The ear buds were not in his ear, but the PMO accident investigators concluded that the ear buds had been knocked from his ears when struck by the truck. The investigators concluded that the Sailor's decision to wear ear buds limited his situational awareness.

The Marine Corps Traffic Safety Program (MCO 5100.19E, Enclosure (2), Page 10, Paragraph 10.c.) and the Navy Traffic Safety Program (OPNAVINST 5100.12J, Pages 29/30, Paragraph 15.d.), clearly prohibit Marines and Sailors to PT with ear buds/ear phones anywhere near a road. The area in which this Sailor worked was near a high-speed road and also a popular area for exercising. To prevent bicycle mishaps, the Safety Investigation Board stressed enforcement and adherence to the pedestrian and bicycle safety guideline and recommended use of bright clothing, flashing lights and a dedicated bicycle path.

*Capt. Studebaker is a tactical mishap investigator in the Shore/Ground Safety Programs Directorate, Naval Safety Center.*

## ONLINE RESOURCES

### Bicycle Safety Tips

► <http://www.nhtsa.gov/bicycles>

### Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

► [http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped\\_bike/](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/)

Photo courtesy of Creative Commons Attribution/Coolcaesar

## On the Road With Makin Island Riders

By MC3 Kory D. Alsberry

Sailors from the amphibious assault ship enjoyed a cool-weather drive from Naval Base San Diego to neighboring Alpine, Calif., during a motorcycle safety and awareness ride in February.

The Carlson's Raiders Riding Club, a command-sponsored motorcycle club consisting of Sailors assigned to USS *Makin Island* (LHD 8), hosted the 63-mile ride. The event's purpose was to promote the safe operation of motorcycles, supporting the Secretary of the Navy's focus on safety as part of the 21st Century Sailor and Marine Initiative.

"This event raises awareness for *Makin Island* Sailors who ride and that they need to get on board with our safety training, camaraderie, esprit de corps, and unity in numbers," said Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class (AW) Rollie Sturdavant, *Makin Island's* riding club president. "From the time they check in, experienced riders can mentor new riders and offer practical learning in a relaxed environment."

Each rider conducted a pre-ride safety inspection of their motorcycle that included checking the frame, oil, lights, other controls, wheels and tires, and ensured they had the required personal protective equipment (PPE).

The club is open to all *Makin Island* personnel—senior leaders to junior Sailors—with all levels of riding experience. Riders of all types of motorcycles including cruisers, street and dirt bikes are welcome to join to stay current and to keep up with proficiency.

"We want to promote a positive, constantly growing, rider community within our command and the San Diego region," said Sturdavant. "With the margin for error on a motorcycle being so low, no one is exempt from being susceptible to injury, or death, both of which impact the ship's ability to complete the mission."

More riding events and trips are being planned this year for riding club members.

"Quarterly rides are a good way to refresh ourselves with the latest riding techniques, to practice what we preach in a classroom, to assess how our individual riders are doing and provide additional hands-on training for everyone," said Sturdavant.

Carlson's Raiders Riding Club honors Maj. Evans Carlson, who led Marine Raider Companies A and B, 2nd Raider Battalion on Japanese-occupied Makin Island on Aug. 17-18, 1942. That historic battle, along with the heroes who fought and died there, is honored with the ship's name of *Makin Island*. The riding club—with its focus on the safe operation of motorcycles—is supported by leadership at all levels aboard *Makin Island*, especially the ship's safety department.

"The key element to this club and all rides is safety," said Lt. Harriet Johnson, *Makin Island's* safety officer. "Safe riding habits mean Sailors get to ride for many more years because they didn't hurt themselves. They are able to decompress in a constructive manner and return to work refreshed and ready to fight."

Sailors who took part in the event said they enjoyed the opportunity to ride with other shipmates.

"The ride gave us a chance to get together with other riders on the ship and have fun together," said Logistics Specialist 2nd class Dustin Cummings, an avid motorcycle rider who is assigned to *Makin Island's* supply department. "We learned new skills and helped early riders by pointing out problems they may have had with their riding. It's important to me because I have the chance to police my shipmates and let them know whether their bike is safe to ride or not"

The 21st Century Sailor and Marine Initiative consolidates a set of objectives and policies, new and existing, to maximize Sailor and Marine readiness, safety, physical fitness, inclusion, and continuum of service. The initiative builds resiliency and hones the most combat-effective force in the history of the Department of the Navy. ■

*MC3 Alsberry is with USS Makin Island Public Affairs.*

# Stay in step with managing risk.

Because conditions can change with little or no warning, being ready and alert can manage that change and minimize risks associated with it.

**A — Assess the Situation**

**B — Balance Resources**

**C — Communicate to Others**

**D — Do and Debrief the Event**

**Time-Critical Risk Management**

[www.public.navy.mil/navsafecen/pages/orm/ORM.aspx](http://www.public.navy.mil/navsafecen/pages/orm/ORM.aspx)

