

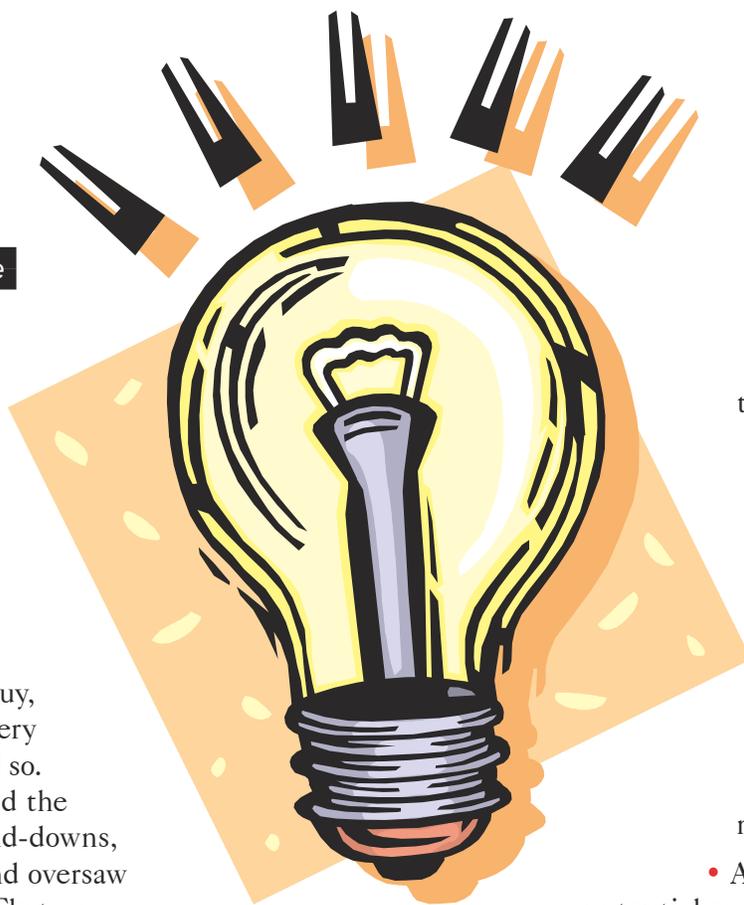
The Bigger Picture

By Lt. Connor S. McLemore

By the end of my first sea tour, I thought I had a good idea of how the Navy safety program worked, as well as where I fit into it. I certainly knew what our squadron safety department did. I wasn't a safety guy, but I knew their work was very important—the skipper said so.

The safety folks updated the read board, gave safety stand-downs, held my NATOPS jacket, and oversaw training before unit evals. That was about the extent of my safety knowledge. I was confident I was doing my part, and the safety folks had the rest covered. After all, I knew I safely operated within the rules set forth by higher authority. I even had bought into the concept that safety was everyone's job, even mine.

I did my best to be an active participant in the squadron's safety program. Unfortunately, at the same time, I was failing in my responsibilities to the Naval Aviation Safety Program (OpNavInst 3750.6R): I was unaware I had specific responsibilities under the safety program.



The list below identifies the minimum knowledge I believe everyone involved in naval aviation should have to be an effective participant in the naval aviation safety program.

- The goal of the program is to identify and eliminate hazards before they result in mishaps.
- A hazard is defined as a potential cause of damage and injury under human control.
- There are three situations you are required to report to your squadron safety department:
 1. Whenever less than mishap-reportable loss occurred. (This means whenever something breaks on the aircraft, you are required to inform your safety department.)
 2. Whenever a hazard is detected or observed.
 3. Whenever an event occurs that should have been a mishap, but for luck, quick reaction, or procedure.
- The formal hazard-reporting process of the program is ideally initiated when you report any of the

above three situations to your safety department. Less ideally, the formal-reporting process is initiated if you are involved in a mishap.

- You shouldn't be assigned tasking from your safety department for reporting a hazard. In fact, your squadron safety department is required to encourage and reward hazard reporting.

- Nothing needs to break, and no near-mishap needs to occur for a hazard to exist. In the E-2 community, the radar altimeter is an example of a hazard that goes unreported. Despite the radalt being a system that rarely malfunctions, it is a fleet, top-10 safety concern because of its poor positioning in the cockpit, its blinding light at night, and its lack of an aural tone. Reporting the hazards of the radalt to the safety department should be initiated in the ready room, when you and the bubbas are talking about how much the radalt sucks and how it blinded you during that night Case III.

- If you have a safety concern you think everyone already knows about, ask your safety department to see recent related hazard reports. If no hazard report exists, you can assume no fix is in work.

- The naval aviation safety program eliminates hazards in the fleet by getting systems fixed and publications changed. The program works only when everyone in the squadron is involved.

- Your skipper is the top safety officer in your squadron. If you have serious concerns or questions your safety department just can't seem to handle, go see the skipper and let him know what's on your mind. He has

the experience and authority to determine the best way to deal with the issue.

Since becoming wing safety officer, I have learned the purpose and importance of the naval aviation safety program. The program is not just for safety officers, it requires all naval-aviation personnel to familiarize themselves with its contents. I believe this requirement exists because the program will not work without active participation from all squadron members. If you don't know what you are required to report to your safety department, they won't be aware of the hazards you know about. Those hazards then could go uncorrected, not just in your squadron, but also in other squadrons and throughout the fleet. Maybe someone else will report the hazard, or maybe it will result in a costly and unnecessary mishap. It really is up to you. 🦅

Lt. McLemore is with ComACCLogWing.

My hat is off to Lt. McLemore. He has it right. We would much rather use the OpNavInst 3750.6R, Naval Aviation Safety Program, for preventative purposes than to get familiar with the instruction after we have sustained a mishap. The 3750 is, after all, just a bunch of words on paper, it only becomes a working program when aviators, Sailors and Marines heed those words.

The 3750 was first written in the 1950s and we are working on the 3750.6S revision. If you have suggestions, please pass them to your controlling custodian (TYCOM) safety officer. Thanks again.—Kimball Thompson, EA Aviation Safety Programs, Naval Safety Center (The 3750 guy)

Mishap-Free Milestones

VAW-125	38 years	73,251.6 hours
VAW-123	38 years	72,000 hours
VP-9	28 years	170,000 hours
VP-8	28 years	168,000 hours
VFA-143	17 years	55,316.9 hours
HS-5	10 years	32,513 hours
VQ-2	9 years	45,000 hours