

Letter to the Editor

The May-June 2004 edition included a picture (pages 1 and 16) of a pilot flying an H-60 with his flight-suit sleeve rolled up and not wearing gloves. With decreasing numbers of inflight fires or explosions, I realize this habit may have taken hold in some naval-aviation communities. However, I believe a publication dedicated to reducing the likelihood and consequences of mishaps should make sure, whenever possible, crewmen are shown properly wearing all required flight gear. To do otherwise reinforces unsafe cultural norms and undermines the hard work of naval aviation's life-support-equipment experts.

The "front line" for reversing the unsafe trend of flying without all required flight and safety gear is the daily diligence of each aircraft commander.

I acknowledge and appreciate all the great work that goes into making *Approach* such a high-quality and valuable publication—an awesome tool to advance naval-aviation safety.

—Cdr. Chip Strangfeld, Chief, Coast Guard Aviation Safety Division (G-WKS-1)

Thanks for reading Approach with a critical eye. You're right about the photo; the sleeves should be down and the gloves on (look closely and you'll also see a ring). The reference is OpNavInst 3710.7T, dated 1 March 2004, Chapter 8 (Aeromedical and Survival) p. 8-1. We used a file photo for the article.

I also want to reference the statement on the inside front cover of this magazine. Doing any task right also applies to this magazine—that's what we strive for. In this case, we came up short.

Aviation is dangerous enough without taking shortcuts. Follow the rules, wear the protective gear, and let's get the job done right.—Ed.

There is a common misconception in many helo communities that flight gloves are optional when flying over water. This behavior is apparently justified by the belief gloves get slick and

slippery when wet, hence decreasing the ability to egress during ditching. The pilot in the picture obviously is more concerned with personal comfort than following the rules.—Cdr. Chris Spain, aircraft operations division head, Naval Safety Center.



Photo of a gloveless pilot from our May-June issue that caught the eye of one of our readers.

Aeromedical and Survival

8.1 GENERAL

To improve the survivability of flight personnel, CNO (N78) has implemented the aircrew survivability enhancement program (ASEP). Sub-elements of this program are aviation life support systems (ALSS), CBRND, safety, human performance, and training. Guidelines and requirements contained here are considered minimum. Recommendations for changes or improvement in equipment, procedures, or training shall be addressed via the chain of command to

- COMNAVAIRFOR (N32) for evaluation and, if appropriate, implementation.

(NVD) performance. Temporary, nonreflective cloth covers may be worn over the reflective tape.

Note

Up to 65 square inches of nonwhite reflective tape is authorized on the HGU-64/P visor housing and a locally fabricated international orange cover is authorized for use on the HGU-64/P in Antarctic environment. Visor housings will be taped in accordance with previous paragraph and all covers removed while in CONUS.

8.2 AVIATION LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The safety and survival equipment specified in paragraphs 8.2.1, 8.2.2, 8.2.3, and 8.2.4 of this manual are minimum requirements. Deviations shall be specified by the NATOPS flight manual for individual model aircraft. The latest available equipment, as authorized by aviation crew systems manuals, NAVAIR 13-1-6.1 through NAVAIR 13-1-6.10, shall be used by aircrew personnel and passengers for flight in all naval aircraft.

8.2.1 Aircrew Personal Protective Equipment Requirements

8.2.1.1 Aircrew

Note

Items marked * may be omitted by flight personnel flying in fixed-wing cargo/transport class aircraft if such flight does not involve carrier operations.

*a. Protective helmet — The helmet and visor housing shall be 100 percent covered with white reflective tape except as modified by approved aircrew system changes. Up to 30 square inches of light-colored reflective tape may be applied so long as the white reflective tape remains visible from all directions. The use of reflective tape may degrade night vision device

*b. Aircrew safety/flyer boots.

*c. Fire-resistant (aramid) flight gloves.

*d. Fire-resistant flight suit (aramid) — Aramid or cotton-type undergarments shall be worn. Suitable fire-resistant unit issue clothing (aramid) may be substituted for the flight suit for flight personnel in fixed-wing cargo/transport class aircraft.

*e. Identification tags — Two tags on a chain worn around the neck.

*f. Survival knife — Do not wear exposed or attached to the life preserver.

*g. Personal survival kit — Appropriate to the area of operations.

*h. Signal device — Required for all night flights and flights over water or sparsely populated areas.

i. Survival radios and beacons

(1) Survival radios

(a) An approved voice-capable survival radio shall be carried by each aircrewman on all flights, unless otherwise directed by aircraft NATOPS manuals.

(b) A voice-capable radio shall be packed with all multiplace rafts.