



Opening Night

On Jan. 9, 2006, the musical "The Phantom of the Opera" will become the longest-running show in Broadway history, with its 7,486th performance. And each spring, major league baseball opens a new season and each team plays 162 regular-season games. These are two different bits of information, but each accomplishment holds a parallel for naval aviators. How can the Broadway actors and the ballplayers go into each performance or game knowing that 100 percent is expected every time? Is that any different than flying almost every day on deployment?

When we read mishap reports and review the commanding officers' comments, or even when we read many of the articles in *Approach*, all too often the mishap or incident is linked to complacency. "It was a routine flight," or, "We've flown this same mission since we arrived here," or, well, you get the picture. Imagine eight performances of the same play every week. How about jogging out to first base to start a game every day for six months? On the surface, "Groundhog Day" might come to mind, a repeat of the same event over and over again. But professionals don't become complacent. Mistakes and subpar performances don't sell show tickets or score runs. Nor does a complacent aviator get a mission accomplished. Nobody has cornered the complacency market, but we do know the stakes are too high for us to allow it. Make every event opening night.

Do you man-up ready to give 100 percent to every flight? Our website has a message titled "Leadership Intervention Best Practices" that should be a starting point for discussions on this topic; view at: <http://safetycenter.navy.mil/aviation/articles/LeadershipIntervention.txt>.

As we move through the new year, take advantage of the resources the Naval Safety Center offers, whether safety surveys, culture workshops, online surveys, or the many products from our aviation or media and communications departments. Visit us online at: <http://safetycenter.navy.mil>.

Aviation Safety Surveys—Air Terminal and ATC

Aviation safety surveys are available to all Navy and Marine Corps active and reserve aviation squadrons, O- and I-level activities, air stations, aviation facilities and detachments. In terms of frequency, commands (other than air stations) are recommended to have surveys every two years. Based on aviation leaderships' requirements, the two-year cycle will be mandatory in the next OPNAVINST 3750.6.

Facility surveys are conducted aboard air stations. Areas surveyed include the air terminal/transient line/VAL, ATC, arresting gear, Airfield Vehicle Operator's Indoctrination Course (AVOIC), BASH, runways, crash/fire/rescue, and fuels. Air station facility surveys usually take one full week to complete. Each survey team has three members (one officer and two senior enlisted). In terms of frequency, air stations are recommended to have a survey every three years. The three-year cycle will be mandatory in the next OPNAVINST 3750.6.

Our Safety Center POCs for facility surveys are:

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Gloves—We need your feedback.

Do your flight gloves have the fingers cut out? We want your inputs on the flight gloves you're currently wearing. We want to know how prevalent is the practice of cutting off the finger tips of these gloves to improve tactility and sensitivity. Do you feel new fingertip designs are warranted? Log on to our Naval Safety Center website and complete our survey. Also, if you feel better gloves are needed, send in a hazrep to make sure funding and priority are given on this issue. Help us out; take a few moments and complete the survey at: <http://www.safetycenter.navy.mil/aviation/aeromedical>

Have you checked out your drysuit lately?

We're in the middle of winter and drysuits must be provided when operating in areas when the temperature is 32 degrees Fahrenheit or the water temperature is 50 degrees Fahrenheit or below (see figure 9-2 in OPNAVINST 3710.7T). Has your squadron sent your drysuit through AIMD for inspection and repair?

Inspect your drysuit before use. Make sure all the seals and fabric have no tears or deterioration. Also, make sure it fits. The March-April 2005 *Approach* ran an article "Size Does Matter," that points out the importance of a good fit; view it at: <http://safetycenter.navy.mil/media/approach/issues/marapr05>.

Take the time to make sure your drysuit is ready.