



The Initial Approach Fix

As we fight the Global War on Terrorism and face tough challenges around the world, Admiral Mayer's words on the previous page are clear when we analyze our mishaps, "We have met the enemy; it is us."

For more than 50 years, aviators have shared their experiences in *Approach*. As you read the articles and discuss them with your squadronmates, you build your experience and knowledge levels. While we draw attention to the **Blue Threat** in this issue, we ask that you read each story with an added perspective. Try and link the story to the **Blue-Threat** concept, identify the hazards or threats, but also think of ways you can attack or defend against the threat, and thus improve our capabilities. As our authors write and submit their articles, they include lessons learned as they see it. And that's the value of sharing experiences through these stories: What can we learn and take away from the story so we don't duplicate the event? The articles in this issue were selected because we feel each lends itself to analysis from a **Blue-Threat** perspective.

Our analysts have reviewed these articles and have provided comments to help analyze the situation, but more importantly, to identify what actions or controls could have or should have been followed.

Below are selected comments from our analysts from several stories. To view our analyst's full comments at the conclusion of each story, visit *Approach* online at: www.safetycenter.navy.mil/approach/issues/sepoct06 and select the html version of this issue.

"Internal Loss of Communication," by LCDr. Rex Kenyon, p.7. This article takes a good look at one of our major **Blue Threats**: CRM problems, specifically poor communication. The seeds for the crew's problem may have been sown through months of flying together and thinking their CRM procedures were well-honed. But the crew was flying a very different mission than they were used to, with an approach that they hadn't seen in months. Confusion ensued on the approach, the brief was lacking, and **thoughts went unspoken**. The situation could have been avoided with better preparation, reliance on training, and proactive communication.

"Outta Control," by Ltjg. John Petrasanta, p. 12. Our analyst points out that this story has **Blue Threat** written all over it when you factor in a **junior crew**, **crew-rest issues**, **change in prelaunch pattern**, **poor weather**, and a **long duty day**. The crew gets launched on a real-life SAR, and all these factors come into play. Monday-morning quarterbacking is always easy after the fact, but could many of their problems have been avoided with better risk analysis and crew-rest guidance?

"Two-Way Street," by LCDr. Dick Vitali, p. 23. Flight crew and tactical crew-**task saturation** dominate this story. When the saturation levels are high for the front-end and the back-end crews, and then a fire of unknown origin is added to the fray, the **Blue Threat** is on board. CRM again dominates this story. Setting priorities in communication and crew coordination are key for this crew. Sharing techniques in dealing with emergencies among crews is a point well-taken.

Reading these stories, not just in this issue but every issue of *Approach*, with a critical eye may give you that extra insight, that extra tool in your toolbox.

Have you had a similar experience? Fought the same threat? We invite you to scour this issue to find the threats, the **Blue Threats**—our deadliest enemies. We have identified many threats in the articles by highlighting them in blue ink; we urge you to find others.