

Benefit Didn't **Outweigh** the Risk

By SSgt. Tony Allen, Jr.

We had had a successful night, considering our workload. Most of our work was done for the night, but we still had to op check a couple of lights on the C-9B transport jet and sign off MAFs. It sounded simple.

We needed to pull the NC-10C, a mobile ground-powered generator, next to the aircraft to apply ground power—normally an easy task. It was tougher this time, though, because three HH-46 helicopters and the C-9B were parked inside the hangar, just inches from one another. The NC-10C was in the far left-hand corner of the hangar; we needed it toward the middle. The

TA-75B, a gasoline-powered tug, was parked next to the NC-10C. I have a license for the NC-10C, and the C-9B CDI working with me said he had a license for both the TA-75B and NC-10C. We proceeded to check out both pieces of equipment, after a preoperational check was done.

The Marine licensed to drive the tug asked me if I wanted to drive it. The idea seemed harmless enough, and I had operated a tug similar to this one while deployed with a previous squadron. But I did not have a license, nor did I have phase one or two training for the TA-75B, which is required to operate this equipment.



I Saw

It took me four or five attempts to get the tug started. I then shifted it into drive while the engine rpm still was high. I had my foot on the brake, but it took off like a race car anyway. An HH-46 helicopter sat just 10 feet in front of the tug, and we were heading right for the helicopter's main mount. I tried changing direction and pressed harder on the brake, but nothing affected the tug's heading. We ran into the landing strut and wheel assembly, canting the strut and damaging the outer rim of the wheel assembly.

We were fortunate that the damage was light, and it didn't require a mishap report. The pintle hook hit directly on the wheel assembly, preventing damage to the stub-wing.

We were just trying to get the job done, but I failed to apply the four ORM principles to minimize both risk and cost during this maintenance action:

1. Accept risks when benefits outweigh costs. The risk of driving a tug that I wasn't licensed to operate and the potential cost of the damage that could have occurred outweighed the benefit. I simply was lucky no one got hurt and the damage wasn't worse.

2. Accept no unnecessary risk. I ignored this clear rule.

3. Anticipate and manage risk by planning. I could have and should have anticipated that operating a tug near an aircraft was risky in itself. We should have managed the risk better and simply moved the NC-10C by hand, like we've done so many times before. Relying on luck isn't a part of a good plan.

4. Make risk decisions at the right level. As a CDQAR, I'm the enforcer of the NAMP in my shop and squadron, and I knew better. The NAMP, previous lessons learned through mishap reports, and stories in *Mech* repeatedly have told maintainers how to prevent Navy and Marine aviation and ground mishaps of this nature from happening. But I ignored that information.

The four ORM principles apply to being a leader of Marines and senior maintainer. A big mistake was operating a piece of support equipment for which I wasn't formally trained or licensed to operate. The biggest personal error was endangering the life and health of the Marine in the passenger seat next to me. I learned a career lesson. ✿

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By AT2 Joshua Skiles

One duty section weekend, I was working inside aircraft 603, looking for a wire that had been giving our avionics shop a fit for the past couple of weeks. I wanted to start from the beginning to make sure all the troubleshooting we had done wasn't lost because we had missed something simple. We almost had gutted the entire cockpit and right side of the aircraft for a modification, and it now was the perfect time to be searching for breaks in this line. But I wasn't prepared for a break of a different kind.

To start searching for the troublesome line, I told maintenance control I needed the aircraft in "no power" status because I was working inside the circuit-breaker panels. I started from the switch in the cockpit and noticed that the wire I had to chase went up and behind the overhead, center circuit-breaker panel in the cockpit. I lowered that panel and continued to follow the wire 20 feet back through the aircraft's fuselage before finding the break. Realizing I needed a flashlight to avoid fixing