



# Admiral's CORNER

FROM COMMANDER, NAVAL SAFETY CENTER



## Strengthening Your Command's Safety Culture

A Navy C-2 Greyhound (COD) recently departed Naval Station Norfolk's Chambers Field on a seemingly routine mission to fly 20 aviation maintainers to Florida. Suddenly, the mission became anything but routine. It evolved into an in-flight emergency, covered live on the evening news as a local television station's helicopter crew filmed the C-2 circling Chambers Field, unable to lower its main landing gear. After a picture-perfect, arrested belly-landing on centerline, news coverage ended with the crew and passengers safely egressing the aircraft in an orderly column—exactly as procedures dictate.

This emergency landing was flawless because the pilots' and aircrew's training and adherence to procedures. They discussed options, dumped fuel, and shut down the starboard engine. We ultimately will find out why the gear malfunctioned, and then we'll fix the problem. What is critical is that the trained crew knew what to do, coordinated with ground personnel, and professionally worked through the problem.

We often talk about the value of crew resource management. In this case, the C-2 crew used their CRM training to mitigate risk. Operational risk management (ORM) was evident when they shut down the starboard engine to minimize the prop hazards upon landing. Everyone in this scenario did a lot of things right.

Having recently assumed command of the Naval Safety Center after heading the Naval Air Training Command, I am well aware of the dangers our pilots, flight crews and maintainers face daily. I also know that most mishaps are preventable. We are ending a two-year challenge for across-the-board mishap reductions, both on- and off-duty. Although we didn't

reach all of the numerical goals, we have made measurable progress. We have identified trends and areas of concern. Most importantly, our current efforts and initiatives will serve as the foundation of future mishap reductions. As we carry out our mission—in the air, afloat, sub-surface, or ashore—we must all work to create a new, powerful safety culture.

Every squadron essentially has a 100-percent turnover in personnel every three years, meaning all "corporate memory" must begin anew every three years. That's why we continually must review procedures, conduct refresher training, review NATOPS, and continuously bring new Sailors and Marines up to speed. The Safety Center offers tried-and-true resources to help strengthen your command's safety culture: We offer safety surveys and culture workshops, and our website has a wide variety of information, tools and presentations. Our staff is dedicated to helping you reduce and eliminate mishaps; your POCs are listed on the inside front cover of this issue. We are here to help.

I look forward to the challenges ahead and to working with dedicated safety professionals throughout the fleet. Our efforts will serve to strengthen the Navy and Marine Corps and render us more mission-capable and ready. I firmly believe we can eliminate mishaps. To quote the late Winston Churchill, "For myself, I am an optimist—it does not seem to be much use being anything else."

RADM George Mayer