CROSSFEED

Maintenance Officer
Cdr. Bert Ortiz
bert.ortiz@navy.mil

Editorial Coordinator
ADCS(AW) Michael Tate
michael.tate@navy.mil

Safety Surveys

Safety Survey Teams Aid Squadrons

By Dan Steber

A dedicated team of maintenance and safety professionals gathered several days before a short trip to North Carolina. The maintainers and "topside" members met to discuss the logistics for the survey trip and commands being looked at. It was the first step in a well-choreographed trip that would affect two squadrons: VMM-162 and VMAQ-2. They would be just two of more than 150 squadrons the safety center team looks at each year.

Shortly after arrival in Havelock, NC, the maintenance team mustered for one final brief before the first survey, which actually took place at MCAS New River in Jacksonville—a 45-minute drive away. The team leader, Capt. Chris Foley and Master Chief Johnnie Simmons briefed the upcoming schedule, the forecasted weather, and team conduct.

The next morning, an early team left the hotel before sunrise. They headed out early to look at the maintenance meeting and FOD walkdown. These are two critical events that start the day off at commands around the fleet. VMM-162 would be no different. "We simply are looking at how they conduct business," said ADCS Mike Tate. "A lot happens early in the morning."

The rest of the team arrived about 30-minutes later and mustered in the Gold Eagles Ready Room. It was clear, looking around the room, that this squadron takes safety seriously. CNO Safety "S" plaques ran down one complete wall: 1956, 71, 83, 90, 96, 98, 99, 2000, 01, 02, and 03.

LtCol. Karsten Heckl, VMM-162, briefed his people about the visit and introduced the team's senior officer, LtCol. Jon McCartney. He addressed the past successes the command faced during group and ADMAT inspections, saying, "We've been adamant about doing things the right way. The staff NCOs across the command are good, and they are known across the community."

LtCol. McCartney introduced the topside folks and told the CO and the command, "We'll give you a good honest look. And when we walk away…we leave with nothing, the results stay with you."

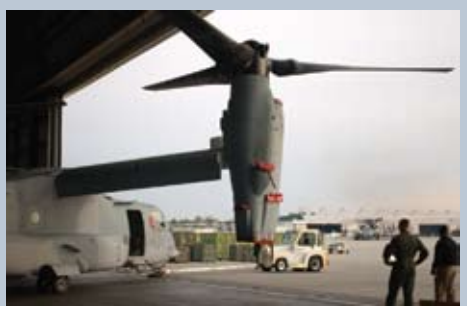
That point has been a highlight of the Naval Safety Center surveys. Some of the team calls it the "white hat" approach, meaning no punitive results come from the survey. The team looks for, finds and reports problem areas, but it then is up to the command to take action to fix any discrepancies. The problem areas are not reported to the group, wing or type commander.

After Capt. Foley and Master Chief Simmons introduced and matched up maintenance counterparts, the team and work center supervisors headed to the shops to begin the survey.

In airframes, Cpl. Mike Green of Atlanta, GA., worked with AMC(AW) James Litviak on some corrosion control items. They looked at respirator fit tests and discussed ways to avoid problems, including a recommendation for 100% fit test. They looked at training records, passdown logs, tool control, and many other maintenance programs.

In another maintenance space, ADCS(AW/SW) Chris Smith worked with Sgt. Ed Bukowski of Ripon, WI. They went through the command's tool room with a fine-tooth comb. When asked about any surprises, the Sgt. said, "Hearing stickers on the etchers. I thought the sound was well under decibels. It showed why we must keep up with programs. We never can take our jobs lightly."

The level of detail that the team looks at surprises people. Sgt. Wesley Sweeny of Atlanta, GA was working with AEC(AW) James Esslinger and



repeated a often-heard comment during the two-day trip: "I thought the team just was going to look at safety items like electrical plugs, extinguishers, hazmat, and similar items." The Sgt. did say that the team, "Gave us ideas seen in other squadrons they've looked at around the world and will make it [programs] easier and better." He went on to describe that the survey "definitely was different" than inspections he'd been through.

When asked what was different, he explained the team's process of asking a question, showing what they had, and then moving into "the training mode." He added, "It was one of the best looks I've had. The chief never made it feel like a reprimand. We discussed things. He broke out the reference, and we talked about what the book says and how we do things. The chief gave me things to look at and people to call should I get stuck."

GySgt. Jason Kanakis, a 20-year Marine, plankowner, QA chief from Detroit, Mi., said, "You end up learning something new."

Cpl. Carlos Santiago of Wilmington, Del., an admin clerk, said "I picked up some info that's in the manual, stuff that's in black and white. We had a nice 'give and take' training session. This survey helped polish my experience, gave me a broader outlook on my role in the squadron. We covered areas so I could learn and make sure safety procedures are being followed."

SSgt. Yancy Genoa, paraloft shop supervisor, said, "I enjoyed the visit. It was more 'calming' than other inspections. The way PRC Brian Westcott went through the programs and showed us how to do things more effectively and efficiently was great."

The team ended day one with a debrief, and all supervisors were invited back to the ready room. The maintenance team members already had briefed their counterparts in the work centers, but this gathering was a chance for them to hear an overall, generalized ranking and comparison with other squadrons. That session also went over positive things found throughout the command. The Golden Eagles were slightly better than average.

The next day, the team visited VMAQ-2, and the day went very much the same.

The skipper, LtCol. Robert Sherrill, had a pre-brief in his office with the Naval Safety Center's topside team and Capt. Foley. "We appreciate you

coming down to look at us," Sherrill said. "I think you'll find a good group of professionals."

LtCol. McCartney echoed his earlier statement about leaving with nothing, but he added, "…but trends and best practices that your command may want to share with us."

That one sentence summed up an important value of the survey process. A squadron gets a "free" look, but the Navy and Marine Corps win because of the sharing of ideas, programs and effective efforts than may work at other commands in the fleet.

LtCol. McCartney has a favorite saying, "Open the kimonos, show us what you've got, and let us help you with any issues that you might have."

No squadron is perfect. Some are a little better than others, but every maintainer and aviator is doing their best to make things safe.

AFCM(AW) Johnnie Simmons told the maintainers at VMAQ-2, "My guys love going around and finding issues, but they then shift to the training mode to help you out." And once again, the team did just that with their one-day, snapshot look at maintenance.

Sgt. Joe Medrano of San Antonio, Texas, said, "Chief Westcott was a good inspector and did things differently. He actually sat here and went through the programs. We discussed things and I got a lot of good training from him."

Those comments were consistent and similar with everyone.

GySgt. Scott King, QA Chief, said the survey was more than he had expected. "I like the idea of someone coming in, taking a look, and telling us how we're doing. And then we quickly can get back to business. It's not a long, drawn-out process. I also like the fact the team followed a specific checklist. The program-tracking database Senior Chief Tate recommended was a great idea. It will help me follow-up on all programs and audit discrepancies."

LtCol. Sherrill summed it all up with one simple statement, "Your look gives us a good rudder steer on where we have to go."

For more information on the survey teams and to get their published schedule, visit the Naval Safety Center website at www.safetycenter.navy.mil/aviation/checklists/default.htm and www.safetycenter.navy.mil/aviation/surveys.htm.

Airframes

Fixing Airframe-Related Problems — Part II

By AMCS(AW) Robert Chenard

Hazardous Material – CNAF 4790.2A, CH 10, Par. 10.19.3.4(Q) states the "HMC&M Supervisor shall maintain a HAZMAT log to identify material issued, used, retained for reuse, and disposed of as HAZWASTE." Finding unaccounted for HAZMAT in shop spaces is a common problem, so don't let co-workers put you in a bind. You also want to show that you track and follow-up on daily use materials. A "best practice" I've seen is to require a tool tag for HM, and then carry that material over to the next day if it really is required to be held over night.

MSDS and unique identifiers go hand in hand. CNAF 4790.2A, CH 10, Par. 10.19.3.4(C), requires the HMC&M supervisor to "maintain an up-to-date library of MSDS," and OPNAVINST 5100.23G, para. 0702g(5) is the requirement for the unique identifier.

A "Right to Know Station" is where MSDS binders should be kept. The best place for this is where it can be reached in an emergency. It should not be locked up, or kept in a work center that is not open when personnel are working.

A unique identifier is a numbering system to quickly identify the material in case of an emergency. The identifier should be kept as simple as possible and be located on the chemical label, MSDS, AUL, and inventory sheets. You can use letters, numbers, the MSDS number, or any combination. The key is quick identification and retrieval.

Finally, HAZMAT needs to be in an approved container and have a label. Secondary labeling is required for all containers when HM has been transferred from original containers. A "best practice"

I've seen is printing and laminating the small label (DD 2521) and then safety wiring it to the secondary container, for example, a grease gun.

Best Practice: Our grading scale compares your command against what we are seeing in the rest of the Navy and Marine Corps. "Below Average" lets you know more effort is necessary with programs. "Above Average" says you abide with the references, and you are doing more than other commands, but you still have room for improvement. Here is a sampling of recent visits where commands have had good programs:

VFA-87: Six above average programs, none below average.

FRC NW: Five above average programs, none below average.

VMR-1: Two above average programs, none below average.

HSC-22, HSC-25, HSL-37, MALS-31, VAQ-133, VMFA-312, and VMM-263: One above average program, none below average.

Your command can be on this list with just a few simple steps.

Senior Chief Chenard is a maintenance analyst at the Naval Safety Center.

Survey Schedule

May 2008	Cherry Point New River
June 2008	PAX River Brunswick Maine
August 2008	NAS Whidbey Island
September 2008	Camp Pendleton North Island

Class C Mishap Summary

By ADCS(AW) Michael S. Tate

From December 18, 2007 to March 13, 2008, the Navy and Marine Corps had 12 Class C Mishaps involving 12 aircraft.

Once again this quarter, we had a lot more TFOAs. We must get better at this area because it costs us time and money, and it has the potential to injure people on the ground. QA needs to do trend analysis to prevent the recurrence of TFOAs.

We had a few other incidents, including a Sailor who suffered a severe thumb injury while working on landing gear, and there were more aircraft crunches. These events are very similar to last quarter.

One new item was equipment shorting out during maintenance. We need to look a little closer at this problem.

The most common cause of shorted equipment is multiple maintenance actions being done simultaneously on aircraft. No one is saying you can't do multiple actions. In fact, it is necessary to keep our aircraft on the flight schedule. However, we often lack awareness of other maintenance actions being performed on the aircraft. It's very easy to go from one maintenance action to another, but unfortunately, that approach creates tunnel vision. For example, we troubleshoot a maintenance action on one aircraft and order parts, and then troubleshoot another aircraft, while waiting for the parts. The down side occurs when we get the parts a few hours later, run back out to the aircraft, and fail to repeat the set-up checks. We forget to make sure the breakers are set where we left them, verify power isn't applied, or check with maintenance control to see if other maintenance has been or is being done on the aircraft. Our haste to get the job done often can lead to more work, damaged parts, and an injury.

Never is maintenance pressure so high that we can't get the job done using the book. That pressure is real, and we know your supervisor and maintenance want the gripe fixed now, along with the other 10 items you need to complete today. Only you can decide how you react to these pressures. But remember, pressure is not an excuse to take shortcuts. Take the prep time to do the job right. It's time well spent and ultimately will allow us to have more aircraft ready for the flight schedule.

Senior Chief Tate is a maintenance analyst at the Naval Safety Center and coordinator of the Cross-feed section of Mech.