

# Best Practices Making It Happen

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A proactive, vice reactive, approach to all aspects of safety, both on and off-duty, is keeping the Sailors on board USS *Simpson* (FFG-56) safe and ready to support the ship's mission. They have not had a reportable mishap in FY04 or FY05.

However, life aboard USS *Simpson* hasn't always been this way. The turnaround came when leadership learned that safety discrepancies were being tracked poorly, with little to no follow-up. To correct this problem, they established a duty safety-officer program.

A qualified safety petty officer is placed in each duty section. One of his duties is to conduct a daily safety walk-through and submit his findings to the chain of command every day at the 8 o'clock reports. Discrepancies that can't be corrected within 48 hours require the responsible workcenter to submit a job order to fix the problem. This program is running extremely well and has reduced safety discrepancies on board by 50 percent. The ship's leadership feels the reduction of existing safety discrepancies will stop mishaps before they happen.

The *Simpson's* safety committee and council also identified the motor-vehicle safety program as another area requiring attention. Motor-vehicle incidents were occurring too frequently during FY03.

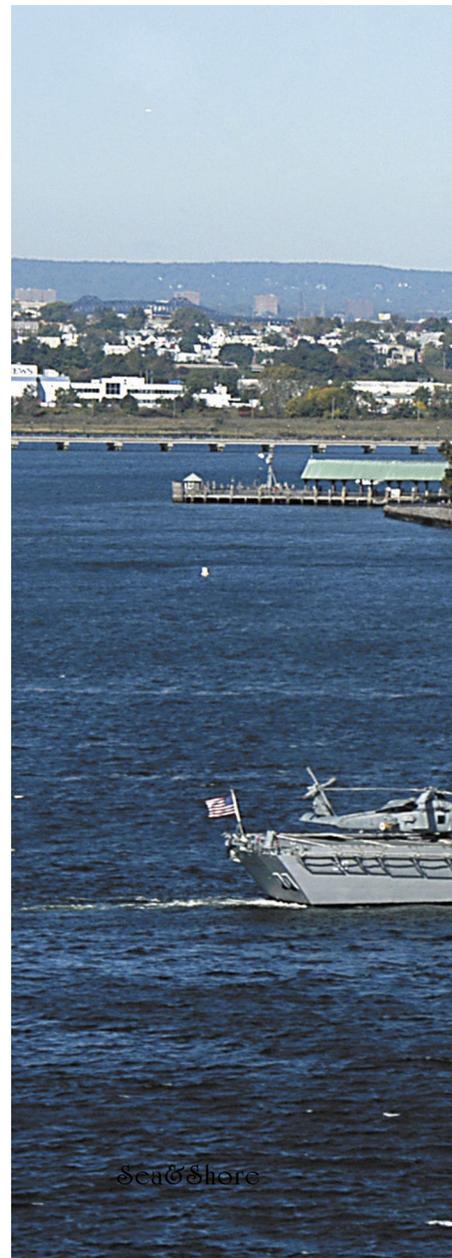
The first step was to hold three safety stand-downs regarding motor-vehicle safety. Presentations were given for both automobile and motorcycle safety. The ship also contacted the Jacksonville sheriff's office and enlisted their help in educating the crew. Jacksonville traffic officers attended all three stand-downs and passed some valuable information. The crew responded much better to and became more actively involved in

the traffic officers' presentations than those given by the ship's safety representatives.

*Simpson's* safety team also addressed preventing minor mishaps. Crewmen were experiencing a rash of what they believed were preventable incidents, such as small cuts, bruises and minor burns. The safety team attacked this issue through vigorous enforcement of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Division safety petty offices routinely check the quantity, quality and condition of all PPE on board. They immediately bring discrepancies to the attention of the division officers involved, as well as the safety officer. Division officers use planned-maintenance-system (PMS) spot checks as a tool for checking PPE. Failure to present proper PPE during a spot check or misuse of it results in a failed check, and a recheck is scheduled the next day. This rigid enforcement has helped the ship reduce minor, non-reportable incidents by 75 percent.

As a direct result of these aggressive efforts started in FY04, USS *Simpson* is one of the best of 98 ships we've surveyed in the past 12 months. From the pier to the pilot-



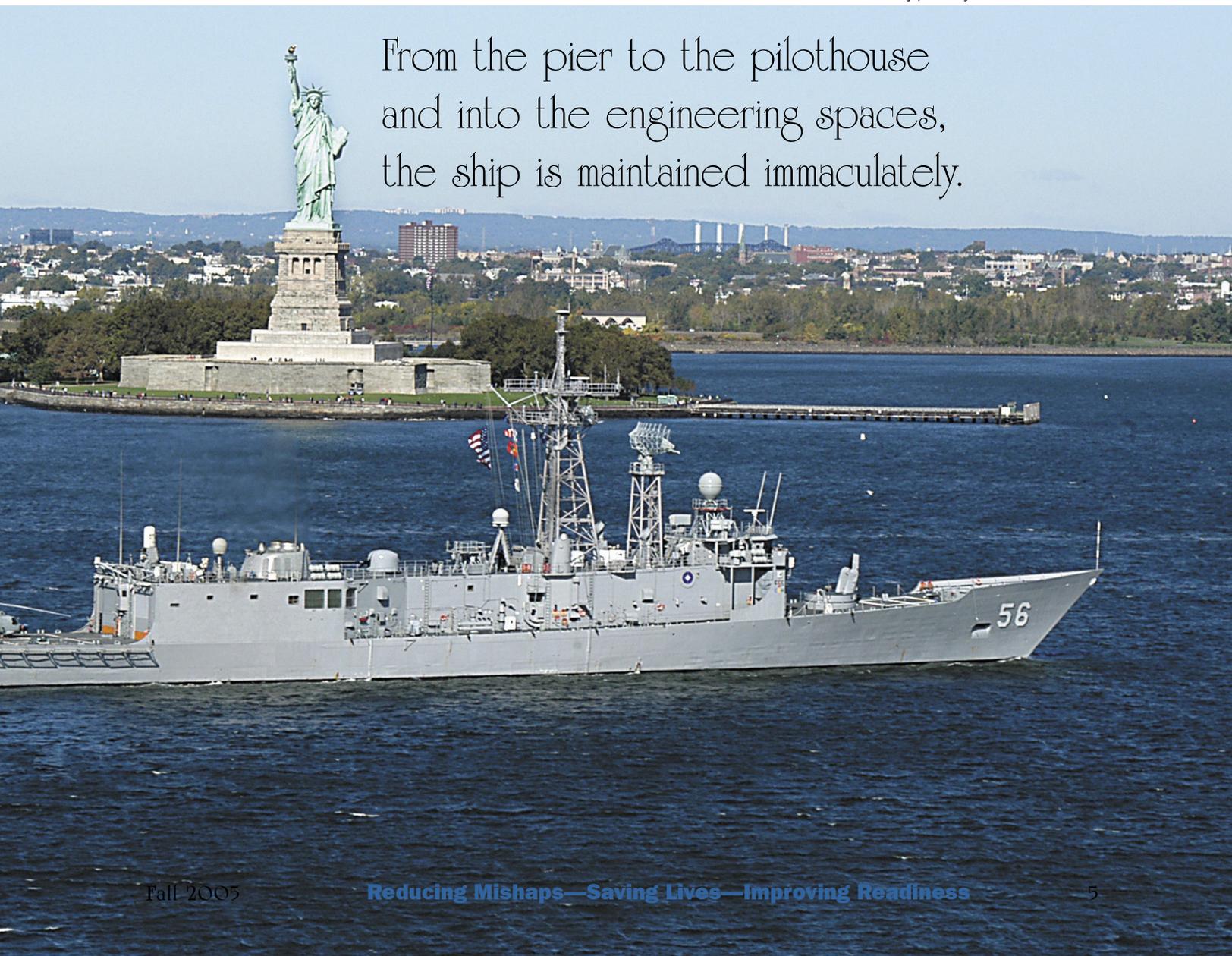
house and into the engineering spaces, the ship is maintained immaculately. The safety-program managers are intimately involved in the ship's daily routine and aggressively enforce all safety programs. With only minor exceptions, all safety-administration programs were evaluated as effective and in accordance with OpNavInst 5100.19D (with change 1), during our Feb. 15, 2005, safety survey.

The safety officer and his staff of division safety petty officers take their job seriously and are willing to go the extra mile for the safety of their ship and shipmates. The ship's safety committee and council are extremely active and are a viable part of the ship's daily routine. Besides posting the standard safety notes in the Plan of the Day, they publish a ship's safety newsletter (*The Falcon*) monthly. This newsletter reinforces safety committee and safety council concerns

and passes safety-related information to the crew, including the ship's reserve detachment. One of the keys to the success of *Simpson's* safety program is ISIC involvement. This ship was the first one surveyed in the past 12 months whose ISIC participated in the survey from the in-brief through the out-brief. Also, the port engineer was present to identify any material issues requiring outside repair assistance.

*Simpson* has an excellent traffic-safety record—in part, because of genuine involvement by all the senior leadership on board. The commanding officer is very forceful and clear in implementing safe-driver policies. The ship focuses on identifying high-risk personnel and then addressing those people through mentoring, intrusive leadership, and command involvement at all levels. ■

Navy photo by PH2 Steven J. Weber



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