

## Taking Care of No. 1 Isn't Enough

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*[Written as Ike's crew prepared to enter the Adriatic and then the Arabian Gulf on deployment.—Ed.]*

Simply doing your job and taking care of yourself is not enough to accomplish our mission. We must go the extra mile and watch out for each other in the challenging shipboard environment. This means we have to search for and eliminate hazards that can harm people.

For a large portion of the crew, this is their first deployment, and they do not have the experience that is second nature to others who have been underway before. The quicker these first-timers learn the basics required to live and work aboard ship, the sooner we can operate at the higher operational tempo demanded during deployment.

Most minor injuries, including cuts from sharp objects on bulkheads, crushed fingers in doors and hatches, and pulled muscles and broken bones from falling down ladders, are happening to our junior Sailors. In many cases, these victims' problems start with not recognizing what can happen when they don't pay attention to the task at hand.

Take the case of junior Sailors who carry too large a load and leave no room for error. They're



Is this Sailor carrying too large a load? Has he left room for error?

destined for trouble if the ship takes an unexpected roll or a wet deck greets them around the next corner. What about the Sailors who rush through the next hatch or up the next ladder without looking? They're apt to find themselves wondering what hit them as they stumble to medical.

I would ask all senior personnel to look out for these Sailors who haven't yet developed an awareness of their environment. Let's eliminate hazards such as loose ladders, spilled liquids, broken lights, and hard-to-open hatches. Let's also remember to warn our junior shipmates about the need for wearing personal-protective equipment. When you see them working without the required gear, stop them and insist that they get it.

With more than 5,000 Sailors and 2,500 spaces aboard *Ike*, it's difficult for the 90-member Safety Department

and division safety petty officers to find all shipboard hazards. Everyone has to report hazards and enforce the rules. If we all get involved, we'll have 5,000 "guardian angels" looking out for our well-being. Be alert for problems, and the favor will be returned many times over. ☺

*Cdr. Miskiewicz is the safety officer aboard Ike. His article first appeared in the ship's newsletter.*