

Letters



Mech Summer 2004

My shared shop (VAQ-132 and VFA-34 QA on board USS *John F. Kennedy*) noticed the back cover showed an ordie (CAG ordnance) ducking under a wingtip missile after arming it. That step violates the rule never to pass under weapons stores. We also noticed the blueshirt on the cover with two pairs of goggles. I don't think there's a rule against the extra pair, but they could be a FOD hazard. We think it's bad practice to use two sets of goggles.

AT1(AW) David Lind
VAQ-132 and VFA-34 QA Departments

It's great to have eagle-eyed readers like you and your shipmates. The back cover may be a bit deceiving because of the camera angle, but your point is well taken. The front cover is a bit tougher because we don't have a rule. However, it's an excellent point to share with ship's safety or CAG. Maybe your action will change the safety or CV NATOPS manual.—Ed.

Mech Summer 2004

I'm surprised, being an ex-Air Force guy and having worked with the Army, that the Navy allows their people to work without gloves. The cover shows a chock-and-chains person handling equipment without gloves. These flight-deck workers easily could get cut from nicks or burrs. Gloves were required equip-

ment when I tied down equipment inside Air Force aircraft. I'm sure you want to set the right example in the photos you choose.

Again, a good catch, but, after talking with our maintenance staff, gloves are considered optional. Some ships, air wings or squadrons will make them mandatory, but it's not a specific requirement. A comparable issue would be cranials on Air Force folks working on top of aircraft. It makes sense, but I seldom have seen those maintainers wearing head protection, which is mandatory in the Navy. Good food for thought—Ed.

Mech Summer 2004 and Others

I was in the Army in the '60s and retired from the Navy as an HT. I'm now a health-and-safety trainer for a non-profit COSH group in Syracuse, N.Y. The Admiral's Corner and other articles speak of human factors being involved in 80 to 85 percent of mishaps, a number based on an old study, but I hate to blame the individual. We need improved systems engineering to eliminate problems. I heard the UAW deputy director for health and safety say, "You've never cooked your arm in a microwave because it's designed so you can't." Let's fix systems first.

Jack Quinlan, Health Safety Trainer
Syracuse, N.Y.

The Navy has done a good job with systems safety and design. However, it's impossible or too costly to design away every conceivable hazard. Our stats clearly show, not rumor or old facts, that mishaps—across the board—involve human factors in about 80 percent of our cases. We constantly are looking at ways to improve systems safety and to raise awareness with our people. It's not one idea over another; we do both. This magazine shares the good, bad and ugly that happens in the fleet, so our workers will know about hazards and how they can stay safe, avoiding the injuries or deaths described in the pages of this magazine. Thanks for your input.—Ed.