

# CROSSFEED

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## SUPPORT EQUIPMENT

### How Good Are Your SE Pre-Ops?

*By ATCS(AW) Wallace Williams*

I am an avionics analyst at the Naval Safety Center and normally don't look at pre-op inspections on tow tractors. However, I've been trying to cross-train on the line, support equipment, and SE PMS portions of our checklist. That training has allowed me to do a few pre-ops with Sailors, and I have been surprised at what I have seen.

I have found one glaring problem at every Naval and Marine Corps Air Station: flat tires! I know young maintainers get nervous when a senior chief looks over their shoulder, so I thought they might skip a step. I surprisingly found most Sailors and Marines diligently follow the checklist, line by line.

But, they do tend to overlook the inside tires on dual-wheeled, rear-axle tow tractors.

The pre-op cards direct a visual check of the tires for obvious damage and under-inflation. If the two outside tires look good and properly were inflated, most maintainers assume the inside tires also were inflated. On the vast majority of tractors that I've seen, I could push in on the sidewalls of the inner tires with my hand. The air pressure clearly was low but was not visible with a casual glance.

Without removing the outer tire, you can't see the inner tire, and the valve stems are not long enough to attach a pressure gauge. The inner tires seem to support the unit, but a tractor with 40,000-pound load has the potential for a serious mishap.

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## MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT

### Class C Mishaps: They Happen Everywhere...Don't Be Next

*By AMCS(AW) Steve Novak*

In this summary of incidents from June 19, 2002 to Oct. 21, 2002, no one died, and no airplanes were stricken from the inventory. These incidents never made it to CNN, *Navy Times*, or even your local news. The dollar cost wasn't huge, but the damage did cost \$145,129. The mishap causes were varied: a lack of attention to detail, poor headwork, and a failure to follow SOP. But they were all preventable.

● A tow tractor was driven into a parked FA-18 aircraft. During the night-shift maintenance meeting, the maintenance chief emphasized that only licensed operators were authorized to drive

tow tractors. The airframes night-shift supervisor passed this word to his shop—even though no one was qualified. The squadron did have qualified tow-tractor operators available. Later that evening, an airframer had to do pre-CQ checks on four squadron aircraft. After doing three of the four aircraft, the unlicensed Sailor drove a tow tractor into the port horizontal stabilator of the Hornet. The damage to the aircraft and an attached nitrogen cart cost more than \$28,000. The supervisor failed to supervise, the Sailor disregarded oral and written guidance, and both were inattentive, lax and overconfident.

● Aircraft exhaust blew down a flight-deck

troubleshooter, who suffered a major injury after hitting a tow tractor. An aircraft was taxiing toward cat 3, after a hot pump, crew switch, and, while en route to the cat, it got hung up on one of the cross-deck pendants. Just as the pilot added power to get over the wire, a troubleshooter started to cross behind the aircraft. The exhaust blew the troubleshooter aft and into a parked tow tractor. Several cause factors were cited: The pilot failed to notify the air boss about an increase in power (no requirement exists to do so), the aircraft director failed to notice an unsafe condition, and the troubleshooter didn't adjust to the change in his normal habit.

● Rotor wash from a landing helicopter damaged an S-3B that had been prepared for down traffic and was parked on the starboard shelf. The tailfin had been folded; however, the jury strut needed to be installed. A “pull forward” was requested so

maintainers could install a jury strut. When the elevator did not run, the squadron decided to do the maintenance on the flight deck. The “pull forward” never occurred because of flight ops, and the flight deck had been secured for deceptive lighting. After the aircraft was moved to the port side the next morning, a turn crew successfully turned the engines. That crew noticed the tailfin still was folded and decided to wait for the upcoming launch before erecting the tailfin. It was damaged when the rotor wash from a landing helicopter pushed upward on the fin; an E-2's prop wash later forced it downward. Numerous cause factors were cited: violating technical procedures and NATOPS, poor judgment, and a loss of situational awareness.

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## Fasteners and Hardware Musters Made Easy

*By ATCS(AW/SW) David D. Clark*

I was halfway through my survey checklist when a young maintainer strolled into the workcenter. He was carrying about half an airplane in fasteners, hardware, adel clamps, and panels. “203 is opened and ready for the mod team, Boss,” he barked—while looking at his supervisor. I continued with my checklist, verifying a few items. The maintainer began to sort his pile of goodies, and his methodical steps caught my attention. I had to ask him about his process.

He said he had to sort them by fastener and job-control number (JCN). He started to fill out several small slips of paper. “These help us to track parts and to keep from losing them,” he said. “We check the parts against our NALCOMIS workload report daily to verify that we still have everything. Maintenance gets mad when we need to order screws and stuff because we lost the original hardware.”

Their shoptalk didn't hit home until I looked at the part shelves. Sure enough, the fasteners and hardware were in a bag with a slip of paper, provid-

ing instant and positive control.

The NAMP states, “Most FOD can be attributed to poor housekeeping, facility deterioration, improper maintenance practices, or carelessness.” They fixed that problem and the part that says, “FOD must be controlled.” They did it by implementing an effective FOD prevention program that identifies, corrects, and eliminates causal factors. The slips of paper were not fancy but served the purpose of identifying common items such as side number of the aircraft, bureau number, JCN or MCN, and type fastener. Other items could be added, such as the system, component or panel name and number.

This is one nifty idea that works to eliminate a hazard. FOD prevention is an all-hands effort, but a simple slip of paper can keep your fasteners from going UA.

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For more info...

OpNavInst 4790.2H, Volume V, Chapter 12, provides the specific requirements for establishing and maintaining a FOD program.

## Safety Survey Trends

*By Cdr. Al Stephens*

I often am asked what trends we see on safety surveys. My latest response to that question took a

systemic approach, rather than the usual response of focusing on the details of a single discrepancy found on a specific program. The items below are examples of problems we find on a regular basis