

ORM CORNER



IT'S TOOLMAN TIME!

By Lt. Tom Binner,
Naval Safety Center

Just 10 seconds – that’s all the time it would have taken a PO2 to do a little risk assessment. Instead, he rushed into a job and ended up slicing a nerve in his right palm. He spent 14 days on convalescent leave before a doctor re-evaluated his injury and scheduled him for surgery, which led to six months of limited duty. He never returned to his command.

The PO2’s problem started when he decided to use one of the knife blades on a multi-purpose tool to remove a plastic tie from the leg of a desk. The blade sliced his palm, and he had to go to a naval hospital for treatment. As outlined in the mishap report, he should have used a pair of wire cutters or snips for the job.

We want to hear how operational risk management (ORM) is changing the way you do business. That’s why we ask these questions on all of our customer satisfaction surveys:

- ◆ Has your SOP changed as a result of ORM training?
- ◆ Are officers, CPOs, LPOs, and the crew asking questions about risk?
- ◆ Was the time spent on ORM training worth it?
- ◆ What accomplishments or success stories do you have as a result of ORM?

Painful injuries like this one remain common aboard some ships. Elsewhere, Sailors are learning the purpose and benefits of using ORM.

Here’s a random sampling of some fleet comments I’ve read during the last two months:

USS Moosbrugger (DD 980)

“We have had no mishaps since implementing ORM.”

USS Gonzales (DDG 66)

“Because of our in-depth risk assessments before boat operations, we have been able to re-schedule them when heavy weather isn’t a factor without sacrificing mission accomplishment.”

USS Sides (FFG 14)

“ORM puts you in the right frame of mind; it helps you ask the right questions—the ‘what ifs.’”

USS The Sullivans (DDG 68)

“Using ORM has helped us accomplish small-boat ops in heavy seas and after dark without incident.”

USS Yorktown (CG 48)

“Since we received ORM training, we assess the risks of all shipboard drills. We have operated mishap-free since we had the training.”

Share your stories with us, so we can pass them along to the fleet in future issues of *Fathom*. Sound off and be counted for ORM. It’s not a program; it’s a way of life. ☺

The author’s e-mail address is tbinner@safetycenter.navy.mil.