

# CROSSFEED

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## QUALITY ASSURANCE

### Do You Know What You Should Know?

By AMCS(AW) Michael Malley

Are you a command safety petty officer or NCO? Are you getting ready to assume those duties? Are you familiar with your responsibilities, billet requirements, and the tons of publications and instructions that outline those duties? If not, you had better get smart...quick!

I have spoken with hundreds of AIMD and squadron safety professionals and am alarmed at their lack of billet knowledge. The old billet descriptions, now gone in the "paperless Navy," outlined the minimum requirements to do a particular job. Those documents are gone, so, instead, I will offer a "Keep It Simple Stupid" solution to give our safety people the basic tools needed for success.

The *Naval Aviation Safety Program* outlines the basic requirements for a command to establish a safety program. It states that safety professionals, either full time or collateral duty, require formal training to do their duties effectively. As an assistant to the aviation safety officer, you must be a graduate of the Aviation Safety Specialist course (A-493-0065) within six months of assignment. This document also gives the safety professional a list of primary responsibilities. Every person assigned to a safety billet must know its contents.

AIMDs and MALs usually assign the safety person to QA. The location doesn't matter because the training requirements still apply. The only major difference is the duties involve an industrial site, instead of a flight line and flight schedule.

All safety representatives should have these three instructions in their toolbox: *Naval Aviation Safety Program*, OPNAVINST 3750.6 (series); *NAVOSH Policies for Forces Afloat*, OPNAVINST

5100.19 (series); and *NAVOSH Policies for Forces Ashore*, OPNAVINST 5100.23 (series). A safety professional also should have instructions from any local wing, base, region, or federal agency. These documents often contain work-related information and can offer insight on traffic, recreational, athletic, and home safety. A simple rule to remember about conflicting guidance: A local or base instruction can add to but cannot take away from a higher-governing instruction.

Once the safety professional has reviewed these items and is aware of all duties, this person must get formal training. Courses for safety-and-health personnel can be found in the NAVOSH ashore instruction. Additional safety-related classes can be scheduled through the NAVOSH Environmental Training Center [www.norva.navy.mil/navosh](http://www.norva.navy.mil/navosh). Their classes quickly get filled, so request course quotas as soon as possible.

Once armed with basic information and classroom training, the safety professional must apply that knowledge in aviation squadrons and I-level shops. This step is not always easy, and it requires a strong, experienced, senior enlisted member with an aviation background. A person with a good amount of common sense often will make or break a command's aviation safety program. This point is echoed in the *Naval Aviation Safety Program*: "The most efficient and direct detection of hazards is accomplished by individuals or commands with firsthand knowledge of the circumstances attendant to the hazard. Analyzing data, observing near-mishaps, safety surveys, reviewing command plans, policies, procedures, and instructions will all help detect hazards before a mishap."

To be effective, the safety professional must step back from previous duties and observe with open eyes. This step will allow those people who violate safety standards in the name of “getting the job done” to be on guard. An effective safety petty officer or NCO knows the price of making the flight schedule isn’t worth losing a finger, toe, arm, leg, or life.

Another great tool is visibility. I often ask Sailors for the name of their safety PO or NCO’s. Squadrons with an active and visible safety team tend to answer correctly. To catch violators or to make people more safety conscious, you must be on the line, hangar, or workshop floor. This technique applies also to our QARs. Everyone is a safety person, and the effort to reduce mishaps requires every maintainer to review their work practices.

An awesome responsibility rests on the shoulders of the safety department. I have offered a few tools to make that transition easier, but this new job

requires your utmost effort. It is up to each individual to fill in the rest of your resume. Never stop learning about safety or about ways to make things better.

*Senior Chief Malley is a maintenance analyst at the Naval Safety Center.*



For more info...

Contact your base safety office and the Naval Safety Center. Our website [www.safetycenter.navy.mil](http://www.safetycenter.navy.mil) contains a lot of information on general safety. The maintenance department site [www.safetycenter.navy.mil/aviation/maintenance](http://www.safetycenter.navy.mil/aviation/maintenance) has a number of specific program guides and process-review sheets.

OPNAVINST 3750.6 (series) outlines the basic requirements for a safety program. Chapter 1, Paragraph 107.h.(3) gives safety course requirements. Paragraph 107.n. gives primary duty responsibilities.

OPNAVINST 5100.19 (series) outlines the specific guidelines for safety afloat.

OPNAVINST 5100.23 (series) outlines the specific guidelines for safety ashore. Chapter 6, Paragraph 0602.d.(2) lists the required classes for safety-and-health personnel.

## LINE

### Facts About Lightning to Keep You Safe

*By CWO4 Don Borkoski*

Most aviation maintainers know to stay off the flight line when lightning is in the area. You are a walking lightning rod on that huge, flat tarmac. When an area goes into thunder condition 1, aircraft maintenance and flights are stopped to protect everyone. But what happens when lightning moves in too fast, and you can’t make it back to the hangar and have to duck into your aircraft? How safe are you inside that huge metal box?

Lucky for you, the answer is pretty safe. Lightning is a high-frequency current, and that fact keeps you safe inside the metal skin of an aircraft either on the ground or in the sky. High-frequency current flows on the outside of metal objects, even on solid conductors. Called skin effect, it means the closer to the center of the fuselage you are, the safer you are if the aircraft takes a direct hit from a lightning strike.

The skin effect will keep you from getting zapped, even if you are standing on metal decking. Just make sure you don’t touch the fuselage or anything made of metal that protrudes on the

outside of the aircraft. These conductive items usually get “cooked off” and can conduct dangerous “electrical potentials” inside the aircraft should you touch any metal objects connected to them. Lightning does and will hit aircraft on the flight line. If you can’t make it to a safer place, an aircraft can be a good substitute, provided you are careful and knowledgeable.

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For more info...

The National Lightning Safety Institute at <http://lightningsafety.com> has excellent information and pictures on lightning. Thanks to AZC(AW/NAC) Kimberly King, the safety LCPO with VR-54 in New Orleans, for her question about lightning strikes and people in aircraft.

Photograph by James Shryne

