



Safety Gram

Protecting Resources Through Better Risk Management

Safety Division's Monthly *Safety Gram* is provided to senior leaders to maintain awareness of mishap trends that directly affect the operational readiness of the Corps. This information should also be disseminated at every level of your command to assist high-risk Marines and Sailors in understanding the impact of the decisions they make every day both on and off-duty.

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February - April 2015: Mishap Summary

The Mishaps below occurred throughout the USMC from 1 February to 30 April 2015, causing serious injury or death to Marines, and/or damage to equipment.

7 February 2015. SNM was involved in a motor vehicle mishap and is currently on life support. Anticipated permanent total disability (PTD).

7 February 2015. SNO sustained a rattle snake bite during liberty and was taken to a nearby hospital, where amputation of the left leg at the knee was required.

13 February 2015. SNM collapsed while exercising at the gym and was transported to the hospital, where he was pronounced dead after arrival.

15 February 2015. A Marine was riding his motorcycle when a small animal ran in front of him. SNM attempted to brake, losing control of his motorcycle. The motorcycle departed the road and went off of an estimated 60-foot drop. SNM suffered a broken back and pelvis. Prognosis is PTD.

22 February 2015. An F/A-18D crashed during a training flight. Both aircrew ejected safely, sustained no significant injuries, and received treatment at a local hospital. The aircraft crashed in an unpopulated area and there are no reports of any additional damage.

24 February 2015. SNM sustained a gunshot wound from another Marine's issued M4 carbine, resulting in multiple internal abdominal injuries. The Marine was admitted to hospital and is in stable condition.

28 February 2015. SNM was the passenger in a POV involved in a multi-vehicle mishap. SNM had not been wearing his seatbelt and subsequently died. Another passenger (the vehicle owner, and a non-affiliated Army soldier) was also killed.

9 March 2015. SNS partially amputated the right thumb while conducting maintenance on a motorcycle. The thumb could not be reattached.

11 March 2015. SNM was involved in a motor vehicle mishap and was declared deceased upon the arrival of first responders.

12 March 2015. SNM died in a single vehicle roll-over crash after being ejected from the vehicle.

17 March 2015. SNM was placed on life support after being found in bed unresponsive and having difficulty breathing. Alcohol and opiates were found in the Marine's system. SNM was removed from life support by NOK.

21 March 2015. SNM was en route to work on his motorcycle when he struck a vehicle on the freeway. The car was stopped, perpendicular to the flow of traffic, after being rear ended by another vehicle that fled the scene.

21 March 2015. SNM was found unresponsive in the barracks room, transported to the medical center, and was pronounced deceased from cardiac arrest.

27 March 2015. SNM lost control and crashed a motorcycle into a semi-truck. SNM was declared deceased a short time later at the hospital.

28 March 2015. SNM was involved in a motor vehicle mishap. After being air-lifted to the nearby medical facility, the Marine later died. SNM was wearing a seatbelt.

21 April 2015. While participating in WT12-15, SNM – the driver – died from head injuries sustained when he rolled the MTRV in an attempt to avoid a civilian vehicle. A second Marine – the A-driver – sustained leg injuries and was transported to a nearby medical center.



The Problem with the Safety Stand-Down

MCO 5100.29B directs units to conduct operational pauses in order to refocus units on safety requirements after, or in preparation for, holidays or other periods of concern. Unfortunately the “safety stand-down” as it has come to be known, often is transformed into a vehicle for annual training and thereby merely a “check in the box” for inspection purposes. Trying to fit all required annual training, unit specific training and mission oriented training into an increasingly cramped training schedule is a real and understandable problem. We do a disservice to our Marines and Sailors when we don’t spend time assessing and mitigating the hazards present at our units. The safety stand-down is designed to do just that, “...provide a break from operations to conduct safety training, review procedures, and assess the command’s safety posture.” Make no mistake, like all safety programs, the operational pause/ safety stand-down is a readiness tool:

Effective Risk Management = Cost & Injury Avoidance = Increased Individual Performance and Increased Unit Readiness!

What should the safety stand-down look like? That all depends... what is the current safety posture of your unit? What short or long term safety hazards are present? For some units, an effective safety stand-down agenda will focus on the hazards related to PMV and motorcycle operation. For other units, the focus of the agenda may need to be time-critical risk management in order to enhance adherence to unit SOPs, i.e. duty limits for vehicle operators or “lock out, tag out.” The agenda for a safety-stand-down should always be the result of a thorough hazard analysis which may lead you away from traditional

topics. Note that both unit safety statistics and Ground and Aviation Climate Assessment Survey (GCASS/ACASS) are valuable tools in assessing the current safety posture and analyzing local hazards. There are also specific surveys available to gauge your unit’s trends in off-duty recreational activities, and PMV and motorcycle mishaps.

A well thought out agenda is just the first step. Remember, for a safety stand-down to be an effective use of time it should be designed to positively affect the behavior of the target audience. Having all your Marines and Sailors in the base theater for 4 hours of lecture is less effective than a participatory event and/or small unit discussion. Effectively reaching your target audience takes planning well in advance. Establishing the dates for your safety stand-down on your unit’s Training, Exercise and Employment Plan (TEEP) is a best practice that allows your Safety Officer/Manager the time to lock on specialty organizations, equipment or training venues.

What’s the bottom line? Per MCO 5100.29B units must conduct operational pauses, at least semi-annually. Unit Safety Officers and Managers should strive to make this requirement an effective use of time in order to enhance individual performance and increase unit readiness. To do so takes analysis and planning that results in impactful and meaningful instruction relevant to your Marines. Leverage your HHQ and Installation Safety offices as well as CMC(SD) in your preparation for safety stand-down events. We want to hear from you! Send your best practices, lessons learned (good or bad), comments and questions to hqmc_safety_divison@usmc.mil.

POOL DRAIN & SUCTION SAFETY

With Memorial Day just around the corner, adults and children alike will be looking forward to the many signals of summer. Among those indicators is the opening of your installation and neighborhood pools. Most regions opt to make these facilities available to communities around this late May holiday. There are a number of safety concerns that arise in and around pools, and one of those overlooked threats is the pool’s suction and drain system.

As of 2007, the Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act enforces these systems’ compliance at facilities that are used by, and available to, individuals aged 14 and younger. Inadequate systems have previously caused drowning when young persons became entrapped by suction systems. Young swimmers can become entrapped in outdated equipment by hair entanglement, limbs lodged in suction openings, body parts trapped by suction, evisceration, or by jewelry/bathing suits being caught in the system mechanisms. Parents and guardians should see that young swimmers avoid playing or swimming near drains or suction outlets, and children should never enter a pool or spa that has a loose, broken, or missing drain cover.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) offers a free online course which clearly outlines the requirements for state and local pool safety requirements in accordance with the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety Act. It can be found at <http://poolsafely.gov/pool-spa-safety-act/technical-guides/>. Numerous other resources are available through the CPSC website.

For more information on requirements for installation pools, please contact CMC(SD)’s Occupational Safety and Health Industrial Hygienist, Rufus Godwin, at rufus.godwin@usmc.mil. or HQMC Semper Fit & Recreation’s Aquatic Specialist, Kari Hemund, at hemundkl@usmc-mccs.org.



CMC(SD) Builds New Motorcycle Training

After investing three weeks of intense course development, Safety Division is eager to introduce Marine motorcyclists to the newly built Riders Essential Skills Training course.



From L to R: A Marine rider from MCAS Yuma participates in a brake-assisted steering exercise; SSgt Andrew Eichelberger conducts classroom training to REST participants and members of the development team at MCB Pendleton; riders watch a demonstration performed by YCRS' Keith Culver.

Personnel at CMC(SD) recently sought the expertise of the Yamaha Champions Riding School (YCRS) for the development of the USMC's most comprehensive motorcycle course to date. With the support of the YCRS team and several experienced Marine riders, SD staff conducted three weeks of intense course development at MCAS Yuma and MCB Camp Pendleton to assemble the Riders' Essential Skills Training (REST) program.

During this time frame, the REST team reviewed course/range layouts, drafted the student POI, and conducted trial courses – in both four and eight hour formats – with over 70 Marine riders. Under the supervision of YCRS' Nick Ianetsch, instructors administered the courses, which focus significantly on the use of motorcycle controls to accomplish effective, safe manipulation of the vehicle in various situations. Thanks to the time of these Marine participants, CMC(SD) gathered a great deal of valuable information. These experiences seemed to affirm for the team that any rider – regardless of bike style, riding experience, and skill level – can benefit from the instruction offered at REST.

Many of the Marines who partook in the trial courses were enthusiastic about the offerings. CMC(SD) garnered positive feedback from a large swath of participants, ranging from 40-year motorcyclists to newly-licensed riders.

“I have been riding for over a decade and have completed the various Level I and Level II courses,” said GySgt Jan Pocaigue of 3d RTBN, MCRD. “This course has taught me more about my motor cycle, my abilities, and proper technique more so than any course [I've] previously attended.”

MGySgt Toby Eberle, a 40-year rider with 2/1, spoke highly of REST after his time with the course instructors. “HQMC should invest deeply in this course and assist in development of a permanent facility for the POI,” he said. “This course identified my shortfalls in riding techniques and allowed me to become more comfortable with executing the POI at a comfortable level of speed.”

“The Marines are headed in the right direction in teaching these fundamentals and techniques,” said 1st Mar Div's 1stSgt Sael Garcia.

Presently, the REST team continues to build the program of instruction, evaluate participant feedback received from this recent outing, and beta test the course.

The goal is to teach every rider to effectively use their controls at realistic speeds. **REST is for every bike and every rider — teaching riders to remain in control in all situations.** For more information about REST and its forthcoming development, contact Safety Division's Traffic Safety Manager John Waltman at john.waltman@usmc.mil or Senior Enlisted Advisor, GySgt Tina Kelly at tina.kelly@usmc.mil.

