



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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March 2014: Mishap Summary

The Mishaps below occurred throughout the USMC from March 1-31, 2014, causing serious injury or death to Marines, and/or damage to equipment.

1 March 2014. F/A-18C impacted terrain while conducting a day-time training flight. Wingman observed the impact and did not see an ejection.

2 March 2014. The suspect allegedly shot the victim in the face during "horseplay," while victim was sitting in the rear left passenger seat of another Marine's truck, which was parked at a friend's residence at the time of the incident. The victim was pronounced deceased by the emergency medical professionals. The suspect was arrested.

9 March 2014. Marine suffered a blow to the head and sustained a fractured skull near his barracks. SNM was declared deceased 13 days later due to complications from a fractured skull. The details surrounding the cause of the injury are unknown at this time.



Naval Hospitals Okinawa and Camp Lejeune Recognized for Outstanding Safety Achievements

Congratulations to Naval Hospital Okinawa, the winner of the FY2013 CNO Award for Achievement in Safety-Non-Industrial OCONUS category.

The CNO wrote, "these awards recognize outstanding support and achievement in safety and occupational health... promoting a superior level of safety culture.... commended for the significant contributions... made toward reducing mishaps, increasing mission readiness and preserving our most precious asset - sailors and civilians."

Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune was also recognized for outstanding safety efforts with the Fiscal Year 2013 Department of Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery Award for Excellence in Medical Safety:

"Congratulations to Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune for a superb Medical Safety Program. . . demonstrated a strong safety program as evidenced by safety data and most notably its mishap reduction efforts. . . .During all phases of construction and renovation, Naval Hospital Camp Lejeune implemented an aggressive Interim Life Safety Program to maintain and enhance patient and staff safety. . . The command's culture is focused on the preservation of a safe environment resulting in early identification and resolution of safety hazards with over 90 percent of all deficiencies being corrected within 15 days."





A Best Practice from the High Desert

Examining a Case Study of an Effective Force Preservation Council at HQ Battalion 29 Palms

In order to improve communication, mentoring, and accountability, Headquarters (HQ) Battalion, Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command (MAGTF-TC) enhanced their Force Preservation Council (FPC) process utilizing a tiered approach. In the first week of the month, Marines are mentored. New joins and individuals who meet low, medium, or high-risk criteria are asked to complete a Force Preservation Worksheet. During the second week, company-level force preservation meetings are conducted. During this time, the company assesses if a Marine is high-risk in accordance with the Battalion Order. And on the third week of the Month, HQ Battalion conducts their battalion-level FPC.

The structure of the HQ Battalion's FPC revolves largely around the Council Co-Chairs, the required Council Members, and a number of other attendees, all of which are encouraged to participate, even if not required. The Co-Chairs consist of the Chief of Staff, the Battalion Commander, and the Battalion Sergeant Major. The required Council Members consist of the following:

- Battalion Executive Officer/FPC Coordinator
- Base Medical Clinic
- Naval Hospital Mental Health
- Family Advocacy Program
- Substance Abuse Counseling Center
- Personal Financial Manager
- Military Continuity Project
- Marine and Family Life Counselor
- Sexual Assault Response Coordinator
- Semper Fit Representative
- Base Safety
- Company Representatives (Alpha/Bravo/Charlie Co.)
- Battalion Chaplain
- Career Planner
- Substance Abuse Control Officer
- Safety Officer
- Family Readiness Officer
- Violence Prevention Officer
- Suicide Prevention/Awareness Officer
- Legal Officer
- Victim Legal Counsel
- ALL Platoon Commanders and Platoon Sergeants

To expand on the structure of the three-tiered FPC program, the design of the FPC was further decomposed into three Phases.

- **Phase I** reviews on and off-duty mishaps, DUI information, and compliance with the Warrior Preservation Status Report to gain insight to the threats that exist within the unit and throughout the Marine Corps as a whole.
- **Phase II** focuses on identifying wellness resources. These resources may include programs such as Arrive Alive, Families Overcoming Under Stress (FOCUS), Semper Fit, Lifelong Learning Center, Marine Intercept Program, Single Marine Program, etc.

The image shows a screenshot of a 'HEADQUARTERS BATTALION'S FORCE PRESERVATION WORKSHEET'. The form is divided into several sections: 'Marine Being Considered', 'Marine Being Considered Force Preservation Organization', 'Marine's Current Status', and 'Remarks'. It includes checkboxes for 'High Risk', 'Medium Risk', and 'Low Risk'. There are also fields for 'Date', 'Time', and 'Location'. At the bottom, there is a section for 'Remarks' and a signature line for the 'Battalion Commander'.



- **Phase III** focuses on high risk cases as identified by leadership. Thorough consideration of the incident and individual Marine's background information, associated stressors, and peripherals such as prior training allows the command to assess each case and pave the way for solutions.

HQ Battalion's execution of the three-tiered, FPC approach resulted in an **87% decrease of high risk cases and an 86% decrease in open sexual assault cases**. Additionally, HQ Battalion's council identified gaps and friction points that led to improving the organization. For example, HQ Battalion reorganized into three Companies with Platoons. Those platoons were designated with Platoon Commanders and Platoon Sergeants. Each platoon was required to identify, appoint, and train Marines to fill eight key collateral duties. These platoon-level collateral duty holders are then able to assist other Marines with wellness resources. Subsequently, they improved their training plans by incorporating Commandant of the Marine Corps-directed programs and training requirements. And finally, HQ Battalion drove the development of a new FAP Order that overhauls general and billet-specific requirements, billeting plan, sponsorship, and check-in processes.

This best practice demonstrates how an effective program can have a significant positive impact on a unit, yielding quantifiable results and a more comprehensive approach to command safety. For more information on Force Preservation Councils, visit <https://ehqmc.usmc.mil/org/mcmsd/default.aspx> under Admin Branch and the FPC folder, or for more information on HQBN, MAGTF-TC, contact 1stLt David Resto at (760) 830-7394.



Safety COMMUNITY of PRACTICE

All safety professionals are eagerly encouraged to participate in the USMC Safety Community Share Point site. This platform affords Marine Corps safety personnel with valuable resources, references, and a hub to share risk management information. If you have not had the opportunity to visit the Community of Practice (CoP), it can be found at <https://eis.usmc.mil/sites/usmcsafety/SitePages/Home.aspx>.

To contribute to the site, visit the listed URL and add your name by clicking the "+ Add New Item" button. Below the list of participants on the right-hand side of the home page, you can fill out and submit the form.

Once you have joined the CoP, you can set alerts to receive notification in the event that fellow participants

add, delete, or changes a posting. This can be accomplished by clicking on "COP Announcements," and clicking the "Actions" button. You will be prompted to select "Alert Me," and under "Change Type," you can select for which actions you would like to be notified. Once you make the appropriate selections, you can expect to receive notifications based on your set qualifications.

To become a content reviewer or a content topic expert, you are encouraged to contact a Community Administrator: Ms. Connie Nance (constance.nance@usmc.mil) or Mr. Reese Olger (reese.olger@usmc.mil).



NIOSH Releases Report on Noise and Lead Exposures among Helicopter Pilots and Gunners



The below information is courtesy of the Center for Disease Control, on behalf of the National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety.

NIOSH's latest health hazard evaluation (HHE) report details the agency's response to a request for technical assistance from the flight safety office of a federal agency related to concerns about helicopter crews' exposures to firearm noise and lead during target training. The crews were part of a unit that assisted in the interception and disabling of a drug- and contraband-running watercraft.

NIOSH investigators found that pilots and gunners were exposed to excessive noise above NIOSH exposure limits during the training – primarily from gunfire – and that noise exposure peaked at levels exceeding 150 dB and TWA exposures above 100 dBA.

The agency recommended several engineering controls to help reduce noise exposures, including installing a noise-dampening bulkhead behind the helicopter pilot seats and installing a small window on the side of the helicopter cabin that can be opened during gunfire to help dissipate cabin pressure. Helicopter crews should also be fitted for, and use, double hearing protection, NIOSH stated.

While personal air samples for lead did not find exposures over occupational exposure limits, surface wipe samples showed lead dust on surfaces in the helicopter cabins. To help protect employees from lead exposures, NIOSH recommended using non-lead bullets and primers, as they become economically feasible, and cleaning the inside of helicopter cabins quarterly to remove surface lead accumulation.

To view the complete report, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/reports/pdfs/2009-0216-3201.pdf>. Additional HHEs can also be viewed at the CDC website here: <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/hhe/>.

Exposures of Helicopter Pilots and Gunners to Firearm Noise and Lead During Gunnery Target Training Exercises

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

