

Establishing SMS Risk Registry

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ESTABLISHING RISK REGISTRY

Imagine you are starting your day and preparing to drive to work. You start your vehicle, buckle your seatbelt and scan behind you for any obstacles before reversing. This routine exemplifies how we instinctively create personal risk registries based on our experiences and learned behaviors; but what if conditions change?

Consider the additional risks if it were dark outside, your check engine light is on, you were in a rush or a pet unexpectedly darted behind your vehicle. These changes would significantly alter your risk assessment. Similarly, flight crews conduct risk management (RM) briefs daily, actively questioning, “What’s different today?” to identify potential risks that could affect the mission and crew.

Identifying and Managing Risks in Naval Aviation

The Naval Aviation Enterprise actively tackles the challenge of identifying risks, preventing their recurrence and communicating them effectively throughout the command and broader community. A risk registry, as defined by Safety Awareness Dispatch 23-23, is a dynamic tool that documents, tracks and raises awareness of risks, enhancing safety throughout all organizational levels.



Aviation Electronics Technician 2nd Class Caleb Davis, left, and Aviation Ordnanceman Freddie Colon, both assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 25, conduct maintenance on an MH-60S helicopter aboard USS America (LHA 6) while conducting routine operations in the Pacific Ocean, Feb. 23, 2024. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Cole Pursley)

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Leaders customize risk registries to address specific threats to command operations, missions, personnel and equipment. By critically asking “Is my command safe to operate? and are we operating safely?” leaders align their strategies with the Safety Management System (SMS) four desired outcomes: Safe Place, Safe People, Safe Property/Material and Safe Processes/Procedures (OPNAV-M 5100.23 CH-2).

Tools and Implementation

Recent Naval Safety Command assessments reveal few commands have established and integrated comprehensive risk registries within their safety departments. To bridge this gap, aviation commands can model their risk registries on the Naval Aviation Risk Register v3 app, accessible through the Commander, Naval Air Forces (CNAF) N45 (Safety) share portal. This app documents a broad range of identified risks, to include manning and resource shortages, high operational tempo, environmental hazards and more.

Furthermore, the Risk Management Information system offers another essential tool. Safety officers can obtain detailed data on reported hazards and mishaps by contacting Code 10 (Aviation) at SAFE-AVNFDKB@navy.mil. Once established, commands must make the risk registry accessible to everyone, whether through postings, e-mails or briefings at safety meetings and councils.

Cultivating a Culture of Risk Awareness

Creating a successful risk registry involves actively identifying, communicating and documenting risks. Everyone bears responsibility for reporting potential and active risks to their supervisors and within their chain of command. By training personnel to actively participate in this process, commands cultivate a culture of conscious risk awareness, thus enhancing safety and operational effectiveness across the Navy.



Cover: Sailors assigned to Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 142 signal to the bow safety before launching an E/A-18G Super Hornet from USS Gerald R. Ford's (CVN 78) flight deck, May 15, 2023. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jackson Adkins)