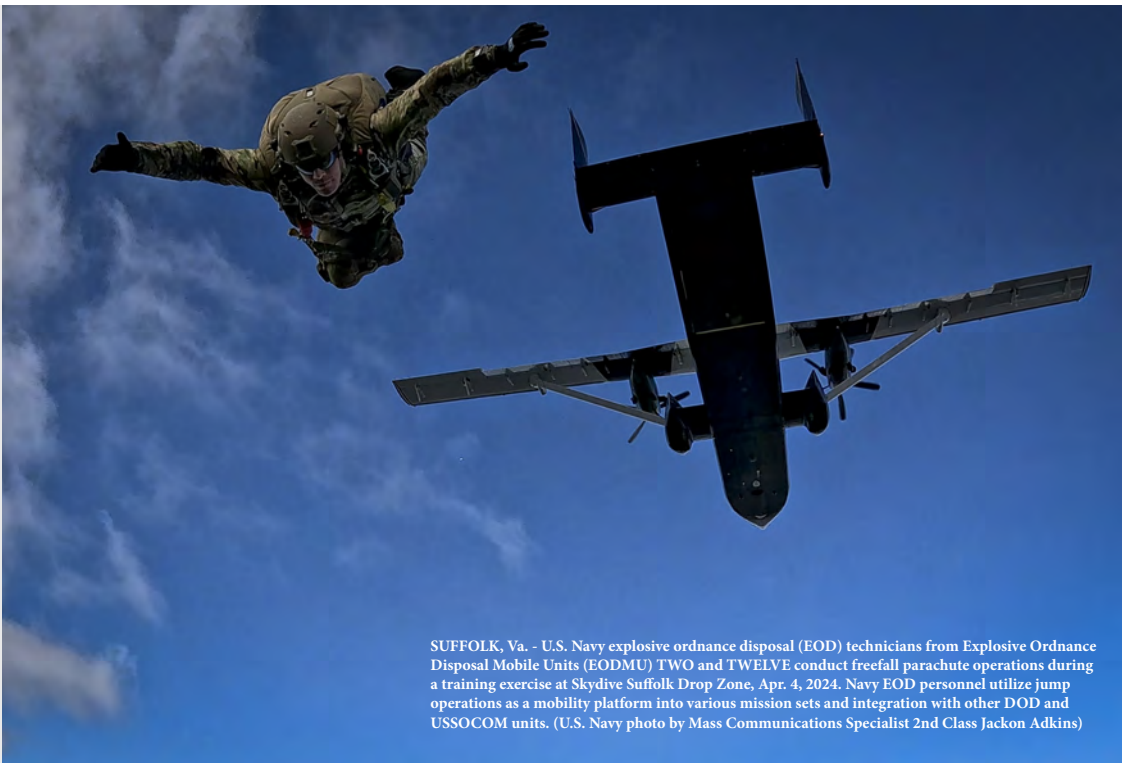
SPRING/SUMMER 2024

DROP ZONE

EXPEDITIONARY & SPECIAL WARFARE JUMP SAFETY NEWSLETTER



SUFFOLK, Va. - U.S. Navy explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) technicians from Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Units (EODMU) TWO and TWELVE conduct freefall parachute operations during a training exercise at Skydive Suffolk Drop Zone, Apr. 4, 2024. Navy EOD personnel utilize jump operations as a mobility platform into various mission sets and integration with other DOD and USSOCOM units. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communications Specialist 2nd Class Jackon Adkins)

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MALFUNCTION and INCIDENT REPORTING IMPORTANCE

Significant breakdown in reporting incidents and malfunctions by some commands continued during 2023 which resulted in the Naval Safety Command (NAVSAFECOM) taking a closer look. Units need to ensure malfunctions, incidents and near-misses are entered into the Risk Management Information (RMI) system and a safety representative is present to brief the event at the quarterly Malfunction Review Board (MRB). The importance of proper reporting cannot be overstated since these reports are essential for trend analysis to help prevent injuries and fatalities. Here are recommendations to ensure the appropriate (and accurate) information is submitted for all reports:

1 Ensure the write-up matches the malfunction. The Aerial Delivery Field Services Department needs accurate information to detect trends. This information also assists the MRB panel in determining the root cause of the malfunction. An additional benefit is the timely response by NAVSAFECOM for all requests for information.

2 Remove all personally identifiable information (PII) from the incident write-ups. Use "Mishap Victim (MV)" or "Jumper #1." PII is only required for data purposes in RMI.

3 Ensure you are present to input pertinent data at the time of entry as more information is required than what is on a 1748-2. If there are any questions, NAVSAFECOM is always available to assist.

MALFUNCTION & INCIDENT REPORTING PROCESS

Malfunction and incident reporting procedures were updated (Naval message 161817Z MAR 22) to align with OPNAV M-5102.1 and the requirement to use RMI to report all mishaps, incidents and near misses that occur with naval personnel.

All parachute malfunctions and incidents involving Navy and Marine Corps personnel and equipment conducted during airborne operations shall be reported according to OPNAV M-5102.1/MCO 5100.29 via RMI. This reporting is a three-step process:.

1 A thorough malfunctions officer investigation includes causal and contributing factors as well as risk mitigation efforts and recommendations to ensure the data pertinent to the jump is prepopulated in the RMI report.

2 A comprehensive review of the findings and implementation of any recommendations conducted by the unit safety officer, who will enter the report into RMI.

3 A quality assurance review by NAVSAFECOM's Code 40 parachute analyst who will forward the report to the Aerial

NAOP KEY FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

Delivery Manuals and Malfunctions Office at Fort Gregg-Adams, Virginia.

NAVSAFECOM will notify the following activities of malfunctions or incidents: Chief of Naval Operations (N95), Naval Sea Systems Command, Program Management Ships, Naval Special Warfare (PMS–340 NSW), and Commander, Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division at China Lake (Code 466200D).

NAOP KEY FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

During recent Naval Airborne Operations Program (NAOP) assessments there were varying lengths found on control lines across the board for MT2XX and MC-6 parachute systems. It is important both the reserve and main MT2XX parachute control lines are measured every 182 days. Failure to have the correct line lengths can result in a lack of braking performance during the landing flare sequence subsequently causing injury to the jumper. Figures 1 and 2 are excerpts from the NAVSEA SS400-AX-MMO-010 Rev 2 depicting the procedure for setting the correct measurements:

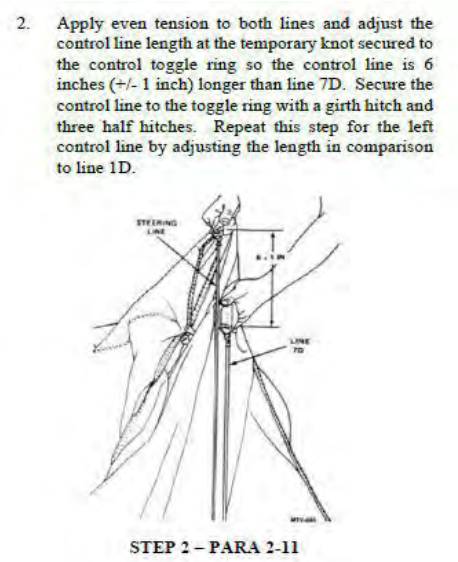

Figure 1 - MT2XX Main Canopy

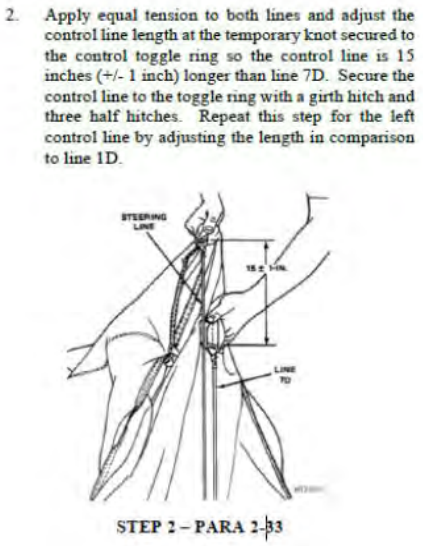

Figure 2 - MT2XX Reserve Canopy

MC-6

The next pictures are excerpts from the NAVSEA for the MC-6. It is important to note this must be done after the first five jumps or any new control lines to ensure proper flight and braking characteristics of the MC-6 are maintained.

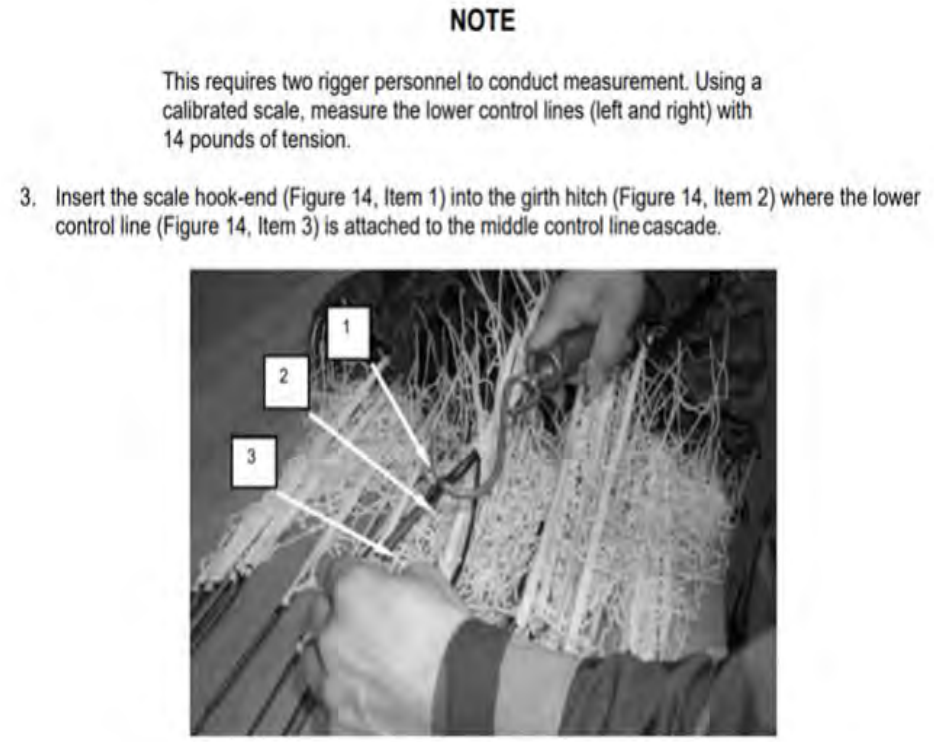

Image Left: U.S. Navy explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) technicians from Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Units (EODMU) TWO and TWELVE conduct freefall parachute operations during a training exercise at Skydive Suffolk Drop Zone, Apr. 4, 2024. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communications Specialist 2nd Class Jackon Adkins)

NAOP KEY FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

4. Measure from the top of the zigzag stitch (Figure 15, Item 1) and verify the manufacturer toggle mark is located at 290 ±1 inches. If the mark is missing, illegible or incorrectly located, mark the control line at 290 inches (Figure 15, Item 2).

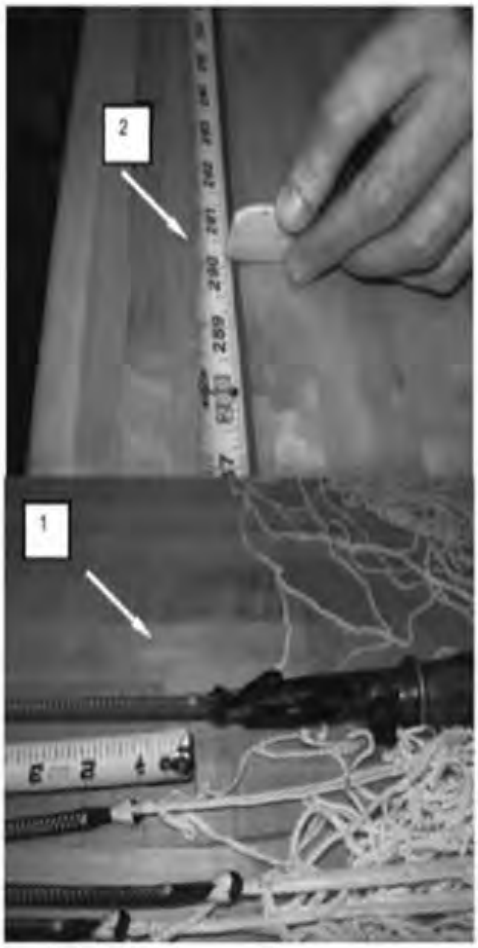

Figure 15. Marking Control Line at 290 Inches.

MEASURE LOWER CONTROL LINES AFTER FIRST FIVE JUMPS

1 After the first five jumps have been performed on a new MC-6 main canopy or any new control lines, measure the location of the toggle mark using the procedures above. If the measurement is not 290 +/- 1 inch, send the main canopy serial number, number of jumps, initial toggle mark measurement, and current toggle mark measurement to the following: Special Operations Units send to U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) G-4 CMD Office. All other units send to TACOM-ILSC Military Liaison, Natick, MA.

2 Undo the three overhand knots in each control line free end and remove toggle.

3 Measure and reassemble the lower control lines IAW WP 0007, Position Control Lines on Main Parachute.

DROP ZONE

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REPORTED MALFUNCTIONS & INCIDENTS BREAKDOWN

The following chart provides a breakdown of reported malfunctions and incidents from fiscal year 2022 to the first quarter of fiscal year 2024. The numbers don't lie. Since FY 2022, we have conducted **181,448** jumps with 61 reported malfunctions or incidents. That's a **.03%** jump to incident rate for the last 2.5 years. However, as some malfunctions and incidents from FY23-24 are still under investigation and have not been completed in RMI, that number will go up.

FY 2022

PLF injury	13
Main parachute failed to open (bag lock)	5
Canopy entanglement	2
Pilot chute deployment	2
Riser step through	2
Cypress activation	1
Closed end cells	1
Premature brake release	1
Unstable body position during deployment	1
Line twists	1
Burble	1
Released combat equipment too low	1
TOTAL	**31**

FY 2023

PLF injury	9
Main parachute failed to open (bag lock)	4
Line over	2
Steamer/snivel	2
Tree landing	2
Riser step through	1
Pilot chute wrapped suspension lines	1
Broken steering line	1
Power line landing	1
Pilot chute activiated in aircraft	1
Reserve parachute activated in aircraft	1
Jumper induced emergency deployment	1
Building impacted (fatality)	1
Dual deplomentof main and reserve parachutes	1
Cypress activation	1
TOTAL	**29**

FY 2024 (1st and 2nd Qtr)

Horseshoe malfunction due to pilot chute entanglement with combat

Image Left: Navy EOD Technicians assigned to Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 5, with support from the "Island Knights" of Helicopter Support Squadron (HSC) 25, conduct free fall and static line parachute operations into Apra Harbor, Guam, Oct. 12, 2023. (U.S. Navy Photo by Ivan Skvaril)

HAIL AND FAREWELL

Fair Winds, Following Seas

Thank you and farewell to PRCS St.Clair, who has transferred to the Fleet Reserves.

We would like to take a moment and recognize Senior Chief St.Clair's end to 23 years of faithful service. He led the effort to revamp the Special Operations Parachute Rigger (SOPR) course of instruction at Fort Gregg-Adams, Virginia. He identified and raised awareness of the lack of maintenance for the tactical floatation support systems. He was instrumental in educating Navy leadership about the T-11R issue. His experience, knowledge and leadership will be missed within the Navy Airborne Operations Program! Please reach out to wish him Fair Winds and Following Seas!

Image Above: Senior Chief St.Clair

Image Above: Senior Chief Moen & Family

Welcome Aboard!

We are excited to announce the addition of PRCS (EXW/FPJ) Tom Moen to the Code 40 Expeditionary and Special Warfare Safety Directorate, NAVSAFECOM. He has taken over for PRCS St.Clair as the Navy Airborne Operations Program Parachute Safety Data Analyst.

Originally, he's from a dairy farm in Minnesota and joined the Navy in 2004. After completing "A" School in Pensacola, Florida, PRCS Moen reported to NAS Oceana Sea Operational Detachment, Virginia. In March 2008, he attended the U.S. Army Airborne School at Fort Benning, Georgia followed by SOPR School, Fort Gregg-Adams, Virginia. After completing both courses, he was assigned to Naval Special Warfare Group TWO Logistics and Support Unit for four years. During that time, PRCS Moen attended Military Freefall, Static Line Jumpmaster, Helicopter Roping Suspension Techniques/Cast (HRST/C) Master, and Joint Airdrop Inspector schools. He also qualified as an Expeditionary Warfare Specialist, and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Senior Parachute Rigger. In 2011, PRCS Moen deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom with SEAL Team TEN. Once that deployment was complete, he transferred to Advanced Training Command Detachment Little Creek, Virginia. From 2012 to 2015, he served as an instructor teaching static line jumpmasters and HRST/C masters for East Coast based SEALs, while earning Master Training Specialist. In February 2015 PRCS Moen was assigned to Naval Special Warfare Group THREE Logistics and Support Unit Pearl City, Hawaii where he served as FAA Master Rigger, Master Naval Parachutist (NEC 9554), Naval Special Warfare Combat Support (NEC 5307) and air operations trainer/examiners within Naval Special Warfare Group THREE. In May 2018, PRCS Moen reported as the PERS 4010 Special Programs Detailer in Millington, Tennessee. His following duty assignment was aboard CVN 76 out of Yokosuka, Japan where he served in the Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department over three deployments. In December 2023 he joined Naval Safety Command and will be stationed here through January 2027.

ONE-LINER HIGHLIGHTS

Reported jumps since Nov. 1, 2023:

14,228

Reported malfunctions and incidents since Nov. 1, 2023:

1

One-Liner Highlights:

1. Contractor incorrectly packed main parachute.

2. Corrosion found on canopy release assembly, chest strap friction adapter and leg ejector snaps.

3. MC-6 control line lengths not verified after five jumps and found to be less than 290 inches.

4. MC-6 left and right leg strap friction adapters installed incorrectly.

5. Three years of jump records not kept as required by COMNAVSPECWARCOMINST 3000.3.

6. Jump currency for those receiving SKIP not maintained in the Dive Jumping Reporting System.

7. MT2XX main canopy full flight trim measurements not set to correct length.

8. Altimeters not tested and maintained every 182 days in accordance with the maintenance plan.

9. Non-tactical main parachute control line measurement not annotated correctly on the parachute history card.

10. Non-tactical reserve parachute serial numbers and deployment bag contract numbers not annotated correctly on the parachute history card.

11. Parachute maintenance facility lacks controlled storage for non-ready-for-issue parachutes pending maintenance or re-pack.

12. Commanding Officer's signature lacking on access lists.

FUTURE ASSESSMENTS

The NAOP assessment schedule was released via naval message Oct. 17, 2023, and listed the following commands due for inspection:

JUNE 2024
- **EOD MU 8** (Rota, Spain)

JULY 2024
- **NSWG 10 LOGSUPPU 8** (Honolulu, Hawaii)

AUGUST 2024
- **NSWG 4 SPECBOAT TEAM 12** (San Diego, California)
- **NSWG 4 SPECBOAT TEAM 22** (Stennis, Mississippi)
- **EOD TRAINING AND EVALUATION UNIT 1** (San Diego, California)
- **EOD MU 11** (San Diego, California)
- NSWG 1 SEAL TEAM 7 (San Diego, California)

Commands who employ or maintain parachutes and ancillary airdrop and HRST/C equipment should be prepared to provide four ready-for-issue parachute systems of each type for inspection. Command leadership will be evaluated on their ability to conduct self-assessments on all command airborne and HRST/C programs with the results provided to the assessment teams upon arrival.

Do you have feedback or ideas? Let us know!

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