



Naval Safety Center

LESSONS LEARNED



19-05

BEST PRACTICE — EMBEDDING YOUR TRAINERS

Aggressive Navy and Marine Corps training programs are designed to prepare military personnel to perform professionally in normal and potentially hazardous operations. This training is often accompanied with an element of risk.

OPNAVINST 1500.75 for High Risk Training establishes policy and procedures to eliminate or minimize mishaps during such high-risk training. The instruction applies to all naval commands responsible for management, administration, oversight, and conduct of high-risk training, whether that training is formal, informal, or unit level.



With an understanding of the instruction, commands determine how they can mitigate the risk during training. During a recent assessment of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 5, the Naval Safety Center ORM/Expeditionary Directorate assessment team observed a “best practice” the unit employed to effectively monitor the risks the command was accepting during training for deployment.

The command embedded their trainers into the field exercises, working and living in the same field conditions as the trainees throughout the multi-day training event. By personally experiencing the same conditions as the trainees, the trainers could more effectively monitor personnel issues such as fatigue, stress, the effects of environmental conditions, and the comprehension of the training being presented. The logic behind this practice is solid. If the trainers themselves have issues keeping up with the personnel being trained (and trainers are not wearing all the equipment), they have a much better idea of when the trainees may be reaching their limits, both for safety and for effective training value.

There are times we must push our personnel in appropriate level training to prepare them for the difficulties of operational situations. Even in that training we must ensure personnel comprehend what/why they should learn. That training loses value when we push our personnel beyond their limits. Embedding trainers in such scenarios is an excellent tool to ensure we remain safe and effective.

BEST PRACTICE / LESSONS LEARNED

1. Embedding trainers with the trainee unit provides:
 - Understanding of pressure placed on students and when to press or relax training posture
 - Awareness of training being conducted
 - Effective implementation of correctly developed controls
 - Trainee awareness that training can be terminated at any time if they see or suspect a problem.
2. Conduct deliberate risk assessment for training events. Continue to ask “What’s different today?” for training actions to capture and mitigate all hazards that may be associated with the event.