



NAVAL SAFETY COMMAND

SAFETY AWARENESS DISPATCH



SA 24-20

The 50.5 Critical Days of Summer (A Mid-Period Review)

“Our judgment doesn’t change during summer, only the activities to which we apply it.”
— Anonymous safety specialist.

The weekend of 13-14 July marked the midway point of the 101 Critical Days of Summer. So, we decided to look in the database to check on how we’re faring so far; a mid-period review, if you will. We tallied up off-duty mishaps, and while we’re doing better this summer in general off-duty stuff (*insert knocking on wood sound here*), we’re woefully underperforming in vehicle (PMV) mishaps, both the four-wheel and two-wheel kinds. In fact, we’re crashing cars and motorcycles (*especially motorcycles*) like nobody’s business. With the up to 30-day reporting window for mishaps below Class A, we expect this year’s numbers to rise over the next several weeks—we’re hoping by only a few. Need examples? Of course, you do, but first, here’s a snapshot of our mid-period performance by the numbers:

Note: This data was extracted on 23 July.

Motorcycles (PMV-2) topped the stats with 33 mishaps, including 8 fatalities.

PMV-4 mishaps were second with 23, including 5 fatalities.

Individual exercise (PT) was third highest with 5 mishaps, followed closely by team sports with 4.

Water-related mishaps were fifth, with 3 mishaps, including 1 fatality.

- **A Split Decision.** After a long day of boating, a Sailor tried to take a cooler off the boat at the dock. Like a weird 3D version of the game Twister*, he hung onto the upper frame of the boat with his left hand, the other hand was holding the cooler, his left foot was on the side of the boat and his right foot was on the dock. When he tried to pull the cooler up, his left foot slipped, causing his right foot to slip, and then he got one of those feet caught in a mooring line, causing the cooler to pull him forward. The impromptu split and fall landed the Sailor on his right side, fracturing a rib, earning him more than 30 days of light duty. —*The report doesn’t note if the cooler made it to the dock, but based on his injury, it appears that only half of the Sailor did, so the cooler probably wound up in the water. Any transition off a boat can be tricky. Add a bulky cooler and you’re playing an unintentional body-twisting game where everyone loses. Get help or stay in the boat when passing heavy items to the dock.*
- **Swept Away.** Marine 1 and Marine 2 were swimming at the beach on base when a rip current caught them by surprise and pulled them away from the beach. They tried in vain to escape the current until the lifeguards and a good Samaritan rescued them. EMS evaluated the Marines and released Marine 1 while transporting Marine 2 to the ER for further evaluation. He was later released and given 24 hours of light duty. According to the report, the Marines didn’t recognize the rip current and didn’t know how to get out of it. —*We’ve covered this topic in several products, including SA dispatches (see SA 23-13 Rip Currents), articles, a poster, and a video in the Safety Promotions and Stand Down sections on our public website: <https://navalsafetycommand.navy.mil/>. Please help us serve you by spreading the word about these products. They could help save a life!*
- **Know the Signs.** During a soccer game, a Sailor collided with other players on the field. The Sailor then experienced momentary dizziness but did not lose consciousness. He left the game but was able to walk and run unassisted. Throughout the evening, the Sailor experienced momentary dizziness, lightheadedness and headaches until the next day when he reported to base medical. They found he needed immediate care at the local urgent care center, where the physician diagnosed the Sailor with a concussion. He was placed on 72-hours SIQ with a follow-up in one week. He experienced continued symptoms of concussion, including momentary lightheadedness and dizziness. One week later, the base medical team placed him



* The Naval Safety Command does not endorse the game Twister or any other body manipulation game, 3D or otherwise.

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again on 72-hours SIQ with further follow-up. —*Collisions are going to happen in soccer, but symptoms of concussion should be treated immediately. Waiting until the next day could be a deadly decision. Don't wait!*

- One Flew Over the Handlebars. A Sailor was on the way home from work on his motorcycle. Traveling on the highway, he looked down to check his speed. As he looked up, a dump truck appeared in front of him and he braked hard to avoid running into the back of it. He missed the truck but flew over the handlebars in the process. He was transported to a local hospital and treated for a fractured left arm and right wrist. —*This Sailor deserves credit for wearing all required PPE, but he also withdrew from the Basic Rider's Course (BRC), sigh. Had he finished the course, he might have learned about safe following distance and speed, but two fractured bones later, he should know it well now...we hope. Take the BRC; it's required for a reason. Note for the younger crowd: the subtitle is a play on the movie "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest," a classic Jack Nicholson movie from, well, a long time ago.*



- No Marine Left Behind. One summer evening, a Marine decided to go for a ride on the beach on his One Wheel Rider (OWR)—see photo. He was “fine riding on the sand on the beach” (or so he thought). As he was accelerating to 10-15mph, “there was a sudden stop,” and the laws of physics performed flawlessly, propelling the Marine forward off the OWR and landing hard on his right side on the sand. Realizing he was heavily injured, the Marine contacted a friend to take him to the hospital, but they were unable to reach him with their vehicle. So—in classic Marine fashion—he rode on the beach back to the road where his friend could pick him up. At the hospital, the Marine was diagnosed with a fractured rib, scapula (shoulder blade) and clavicle (collarbone). —*Sand may be better than pavement when you fall, but it also isn't solid or even, so the chance of the sand stopping your OWR in a hole is pretty good. Slowing down is your best bet. It's also helpful to know how to fall—yup, there's a technique. A quick web search of "how to fall off a skateboard" should get you the best results.*

- Down Around the Corner. A Marine was driving back to her duty station (after midnight) from dropping her friend off at their home. As the Marine rounded a curve, she saw an 18-wheeler parked partially on the road. She swerved to avoid hitting the 18-wheeler—which she did avoid—but ran into the median. She escaped with only minor injuries. She was driving approximately 10 MPH over the speed limit while passing through a part of town where street lighting was almost non-existent. The 18-wheeler was stopped on the top half of the curve with no lights on. —*While the driver of the 18-wheeler shared partial responsibility here, the Marine had options to avoid the mishap. Speeding in unlit areas is just asking for trouble. Driving after a day's work can be fatiguing, further reducing reaction times. Like we have always said, nothing good happens after midnight.*

Key Takeaways

We usually list our helpful advice here, but in this case, we think it's appropriate to paraphrase the 101 Critical Days of Summer safety message from Carlos Del Toro, Secretary of the Navy, General Smith, Commandant of the Marine Corps and Admiral Franchetti, Chief of Naval Operations:

As we spend more time doing our favorite summer activities and celebrating with family and friends, we often participate in potentially dangerous activities without stopping to think about how to mitigate their risks. —*Assess and mitigate risk off duty as you would on duty.*

Take care of yourselves and your families, and continue to look out for each other, physically and mentally. —*Don't leave your shipmate or fellow Marine hanging. Be the one to break the error chain, not contribute to it.*

Take time this summer to enjoy family and friends, engage in your favorite activities and recharge your batteries—**wisely and safely**. Assess and manage the risks in all you do and apply risk management principles and **self-discipline**. —*e.g., don't drink and [fill in activity here].*

Leverage the resources available on our website here: <https://navalsafetycommand.navy.mil/>

And remember, "Let's be careful out there."