

Traffic-Safety Video Message Reaches Sailors and Marines

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By Dan Steber, Naval Safety Center Public Affairs

NORFOLK, Va. (NNS) -- Commander, Naval Safety Center Rear Adm. George Mayer speaks directly to Sailors and Marines in a recently completed video called, "Facing the Challenge," which started playing on AFRTS/DTS (Direct to Sailors) during the first week of February.

The video is just one of many media segments planned to help stem the increase in private motor vehicle (PMV) and motorcycle mishaps that have occurred this year.

"You need to live long enough to enjoy the freedoms you are fighting for," said Mayer. "These tragedies [PMV mishaps] are even more tragic when a Sailor or Marine survives the war only to come home and die on the streets of our own country."

"As of 16 January 2006 we've lost 32 Sailors and 20 Marines in private motor vehicle mishaps, including 9 Sailors and 5 Marines who died on motorcycles, and I think you'll all agree with me that it's unacceptable," Mayer said at the time the video was filmed in mid-January. Eleven additional people have been lost since then. "Do your part to help reduce mishaps these mishaps."

The admiral urged Sailors and Marines to work at using simple risk-management steps to help prevent mishaps, like wearing seatbelts or helmets, reducing speed, checking the conditions of the road, avoiding aggressive driving, getting plenty of rest to prevent fatigue, and not drinking and driving. He stressed that the mishaps mean more than a tick mark on a graph or numbers on a chart, meaning that Navy and Marine Corps families are affected.

"These people were shipmates, friends and loved ones. Too many families are now grieving the unnecessary loss of these Sailors and Marines," the admiral said. "I need your help, now, to turn things around."

The admiral also pointed out that these mishaps affect operations, too, because it means the loss of trained and experienced personnel that reduce our readiness, especially while we are fighting the global war on terrorism.

The spots that are playing on Navy broadcast media and are available on the Naval Safety Center's Web site. It is hoped that commands will watch the segments, download them and make them part of safety and PMV training. It's important for commands to discuss the messages found in these videos and to work at solutions to reduce mishaps. Deputy Commander, Naval Safety Center, Col. Jim Jamison also did a spot aimed directly at Marines, which is also available for download.

The admiral ended his message saying, "Take care of yourselves and take care of your shipmates. If you think a motor-vehicle crash won't happen to you, you need to think again, or else you may be dead wrong."

To view or download the full "Facing the Challenge" video (2 minutes and 45 seconds), or the 29- and 59-second clips, visit the Naval Safety Center Web site at <http://safetycenter.navy.mil/media/gallery/videos/general/default.htm>.

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