



## NAVAIR earns pair of aviation safety awards

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NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. — NAVAIR has won two top naval aviation safety awards for its outstanding 2016 safety record and ongoing contributions to readiness and efficient operations, the Naval Safety Center announced Oct. 16.

The Naval Aviation Readiness Through Safety Award and Adm. James S. Russell Naval Aviation Flight Safety Award are presented annually to the aircraft-controlling custodian that has contributed the most toward readiness and economy of operations through safety during the fiscal year.

The Russell award, which automatically goes to the winner of the Readiness through Safety award, is presented by the Order of Daedalians, a fraternal organization of American military pilots that advocates for air and space power.

The chosen command must have an outstanding safety record and an aggressive safety program, showcasing an improving safety trend over the previous three years and low rates of Class A and Class B mishaps.

“NAVAIR’s 28,000 employees are dedicated to providing Sailors and Marines with aircraft and related systems that are safe to operate, often under very challenging operational conditions,” said NAVAIR Commander Vice Adm. Paul Grosklags. “I’m proud that our safety team and the NAVAIR units which conduct flight operations set that same high standard for our own operations, which typically focus on testing of new or post-major maintenance aircraft and systems.”

NAVAIR recorded more than 21,000 flight hours during fiscal year 2016 with no Class A or B flight, flight-related or aviation ground mishaps, best among its competition for the awards. The command is responsible for the flight operations of, among other aviation units, Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft and Weapons Divisions and the Fleet Readiness Centers (FRCs).

A Class A mishap is one which results in more than \$2 million in damage, destroys a DoD aircraft, or results in a fatality or permanent total disability. A Class B mishap results in between \$500,000 and \$2 million in damage, a permanent partial disability, or when three or more personnel are hospitalized.

"These awards are a testament to the people of NAVAIR and their commitment to our aviation safety management system," said Lt. Cmdr. P. Elliott Porter Jr., NAVAIR aviation safety director. "There's an excellent safety culture in NAVAIR. People look out for one another and are encouraged to freely voice their concerns. Leadership is critical. Because leadership allows people to raise issues freely, it opens the aperture and increases the probability hazards will be identified and controlled."



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Historically, about 80 percent of mishaps are due to a lack of procedural compliance, or human error “where someone didn’t do something they were supposed to do,” Porter said. “I think these awards are reflective of the commitment by the people here at NAVAIR to brief what they fly and fly what they brief.”

NAVAIR provides full life-cycle support of naval aviation aircraft, weapons and systems operated by Sailors and Marines. This support includes research, design, development and systems engineering; acquisition; test and evaluation; training facilities and equipment; repair and modification; and in-service engineering and logistics support.