


NALCOMIS: The Next Generation

- Workcenter maintainers are trained how to use VEDs and printed reports, how to initiate work orders, how to do job-status updates, and how to follow material-requisition procedures.

- Pilots, aircrew, ops yeoman, and maintenance-control AZs receive training on initiating flight documents, doing work orders, and verifying mission-commander approval.

Successful OOMA squadrons have two things in common: strong command support during implementation and initial training, and in-house OOMA training that is integrated into the periodic professional training already being conducted. The initial phase contains two weeks of classroom work for all OOMA users and is followed by two weeks of over-the-shoulder training. An integrated, in-house training plan that reenforces the initial effort has proven successful. Formal OOMA classroom training should be available at FASO (Lant and Pac) in FY03.

The OOMA implementation teams are made up of 12 instructors: five from the TyCom and seven from SpaWar. Each team member is a subject-matter expert (SME) in aviation maintenance and material management and has many years of fleet experience, possessing an in-depth knowledge of the OOMA system. The military, civilian and contractor mix works well for the four teams on each coast. The military team leader ensures a smooth transition and operates as the middleman to prevent any problems between the squadron and other team members.

An implementation team can install the optimized system at one squadron in approximately 30 days—from start to finish. The implementation includes two weeks of classroom training, database building, and backfitting. This effort is followed by system turn on and by two weeks of over-the-shoulder training. Refresher training is available from the TyCom or NATEC on a request basis. If an activity has problems after the team leaves, help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week from SpaWar, TyCom or NATEC SMEs. To request an on-site visit, send a naval message to the TyCom with details about the problem. 

Senior Chief Gilman is a ComNavAirLant implementation-team leader, and Mr. Keith Buttolph is the NALCOMIS OOMA-and-OIMA course manager at FASOTraGruLant.



By AME2 Katherine Robins

Here's a riddle: When trying to cross a carrier's landing area, what's the difference between a red or a green flashlight waved vertically? In my case, it could have meant the difference between life and death.

On this particular night, our alert bird was parked on the finger, and I needed to cross the landing area to complete a daily inspection on an ejection seat. I was well aware of my location, the foul line, and the aircraft parked on the starboard side. I made my way back to where the arresting gear officer was positioned and got his attention by waving my flashlight vertically, signaling him that I needed to cross. He acknowledged my request and motioned to me by waving a green flashlight in a vertical direction. I recognized this as my signal to go and sprinted across the landing area to the jet on the finger.

As I did my inspections, the fact that jets were lined up for miles and would pass one by one very close to my head crossed my mind. I finished my work, closed the canopy, and crouched under the nose of my aircraft to wait for a jet at the two-mile mark. At this point, I thought about asking to cross before the incoming jet landed. Better judgment, a gut feeling, or my guardian angel saved me, and I chose to wait.


Once the jet had landed, and, before the next one was called at the four-mile mark, I signaled again. A red flashlight was waved vertically in response to my signal. As before, I

Red Means Stand Fast, Green Means Go, But Not All the Time

interpreted the vertical motion as a signal to go. I was wrong! On this particular ship, a green flashlight waved vertically means “go,” a red flashlight waved in the same direction means “stand fast.”

When I had completed my flight-deck observer PQS, I was told that a flashlight being swept vertically meant “go” and one swept horizontally meant “standby.” No one had said anything about the color of the flashlight used.

Three of the four people who had signed off my PQS did not complete a flight-deck PQS for this carrier. They had completed their books on other ships and were unaware of this specific procedure. The one person who had completed qualification on this ship was unaware of these signals.

This incident reenforced the fact that I needed to keep my head on a swivel during flight operations. My incident did not affect flight ops but was a serious hazard, and I’m happy to be alive to tell the story. 

Petty Officer Robins works in the AME shop of the VFA-87 Golden Warriors.

I took Petty Officer Robins’ story to the air ops branch head at the Naval Safety Center, LCdr. Mark Persuitti, several months ago. I shared this story and told him I was surprised a standard set of signals didn’t exist. He agreed and took it to the AirLant and AirPac Handling Teams. Because of this story, ComNavAirLant issued an urgent change recommendation (111331Z SEP 02) for NA 00-80T-113, Aircraft Signals NATOPS Manual, and NA 00-80T-120, CV Flight and Hangar Deck Manual. Great job, Katherine!—Ed.

