

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED/
ROUTINE
R 131408Z MAY 25 MID180001762687U
FM SECNAV WASHINGTON DC
TO ALNAV
INFO SECNAV WASHINGTON DC
CNO WASHINGTON DC
CMC WASHINGTON DC
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ALNAV 039/25

MSGID/GENADMIN/SECNAV WASHINGTON DC/-/MAY//

SUBJ/2025 101 CRITICAL DAYS OF SUMMER MESSAGE//

RMKS/1. The 101 Critical Days of Summer runs from 26 May to 1 September 2025, encompassing Memorial Day through Labor Day. This period is historically the most dangerous time of year for off-duty mishaps across the Navy and Marine Corps. Despite years of awareness efforts, 23 Sailors and Marines were lost in summer 2024 alone, losses that were preventable. We can, and must, do better. These are not just numbers; they are teammates, friends, and loved ones. We must act with urgency and purpose.

2. Commanders and leaders at all levels are expected to take decisive action. Complacency and poor risk awareness continue to be primary causes of these incidents. Leadership is more than awareness briefs - it means modeling the right behaviors, checking in with your people before leave or liberty, and holding each other accountable.

3. Every Sailor and Marine has a role in preserving life and mission readiness. That means watching out for each other, using the buddy system, planning your outings, drinking responsibly, and knowing your limits. Summer should be a time to recharge - not a time for regret. Make sound decisions. Take care of your shipmates. If something doesn't feel right, say something.

4. Numerous resources are available to support this campaign. The Naval Safety Command provides presentation-ready products that can be tailored to your command's particular location, climate and activities. These products can be found at <https://navalsafetycommand.navy.mil/Off-Duty/101-CDOS/>.

5. A consistent hazard noted during the 101 Critical Days of Summer includes private motor vehicle and motorcycle accidents which are the highest cause of fatalities during this timeframe for the Department of the Navy (DON) each year. As a result, it is imperative that we instill risk management and defensive driving principles to foster a safer approach as we hit the road to visit family and friends or participate in a fun recreational activity. Remember, a preventable off-duty mishap is still a readiness loss for our team and our mission.

6. I continue to be impressed with the professionalism and work ethic of the DON team. The 101 Critical Days of Summer provides another opportunity to engage with your personnel by applying proactive and deliberate leadership to stress good decision making for their safety.

Please engage, use those resources noted above and take this seriously as lives depend on it.

7. Released by the Honorable John C. Phelan, Secretary of the Navy.

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