Frequently Asked Questions ?

Question: What is WESS?

Answer: The Web Enabled Safety System (WESS) is the Naval Safety Center's on-line reporting and data-retrieval system. It allows users to prepare initial 5102 mishap/hazard notifications and 3750 hazard reports and route them through the releasing chain for validation prior to being sent to the Naval Safety Center. The Naval Safety Center checks the report for accuracy and then enters it into the database.
- Meets VCNO's web-enabled requirement.
- Provides real-time reporting.
- Eliminates the need for redundant local data-entry systems.
- Allows fleet users to retrieve and download data so they can perform their own analyses.

Question: Is WESS mandatory?

Answer: Yes. Regulations require the Navy and Marine Corps to collect a complete picture of all mishaps and hazards. Also, the Naval Safety Center must meet the VCNO's requirement for all applications to be web-enabled. This requirement is outlined in OPNAVINST 5102.1D/MCO P5102.1B of 7 January 2005. A Naval message can always serve as a back-up method for submitting reports on time, but even the message reports will be entered into WESS once received by the Naval Safety Center.

Question: Why can't you just track mishap data in Microsoft Access?

Answer: A much more robust engine is needed to maintain the WESS database, which contains more than 12 million records containing up to 2,000 data points each. Approximately 2 million records are added each year, and over 3,500 queries are performed each month. A corporate-level type data-base is needed, and our IBM/Informix relational database meets these requirements. Also, we make changes to WESS almost every week—enhancements and bug-fixes—and since WESS is web-based, these changes are transparent to users the next time they open WESS.

Question: How can I search for "key words" in the WESS aviation database?

Answer: Search in JReports by event dates, then select the type aircraft. Once all the events have appeared, export them to an Excel spreadsheet and then search for your key words. For a short Power-Point presentation that gives a step-by-step guide to this process, call (757) 444-3520, Ext. 7245 (DSN 564).

Question: Why hasn't my WESS report been disseminated via email to others in my community?

Answer: You either did not enter a COI (Community of Interest) or you entered the wrong COI.

Question: Who is responsible for entering WESS reports?

Answer: Commands may designate anyone they choose to make the entries. Much of the information originates with the medical department representative and command safety officer. In any case, we recommend safety officers review the information since they are familiar with many of the required elements in the data. The commanding officer is responsible for ensuring that the reporting is accomplished.

Question: Can one individual enter reports for multiple UICs?

Answer: Yes. If authorized by their chain of command, individuals with user accounts may prepare and send reports on any UICs under their purview. The system allows one reporting UIC to report a complete event, which may include people and property from other UICs, or to report for any other UIC.

Question: Do I need separate accounts for each of my tenant activities?

Answer: You may enter information for more than one UIC. The UIC you use on your account request will be the UIC to which you are assigned, but this does not restrict you from entering mishap/hazard information for other UICs.

Question: Do I need a password to use WESS? Can anyone get one?

Answer: Yes, a user account with password is required. Visit https://wess.safetycenter.navy.mil and "Request an Account." In general, you should be authorized to request an account from the safety manager, CO or XO of your command. At some activities the CO or XO will designate a Safety Authority (SA), who will approve your request and forward it to the Naval Safety Center for creation of your account.

Question: Can an entire group or office get just one password?

Answer: In accordance with DoD and DoN information assurance (IA) guidelines (DoD Directive 8500.1, NAVSO P-5239-15, OPNAVINST 5239.1B), passwords are issued to individuals only. If you enter data into WESS, you must have your own user account and password. DoD and DoN IA guidelines require audit trails to monitor who is adding, changing and deleting records.

Question: If I can't reach the website, how do I report?

Answer: You may use the message traffic system to report your mishap or hazard. The message format is provided in OPNAVINST 5102.1D/MCO P5102.1B or 3750.6R. You may also use the WESS-DS (Disconnected System) CD.

Question: What browser should I use? Can I use Netscape?

Answer: You must use the NMCI-approved standard: Internet Explorer 6.0. WESS will not function properly in Netscape.

Question: Do Echelon 2 Commands have access to subordinate activities' data?

Answer: Queries of any UICs/RUC/MCCs by the chain of command are included in the reporting options. UICs/RUC/MCCs can only be accessed individually. There is currently no option to roll-up all UICs/RUC/MCCs together in one data extract.

Question: Do I have to enter a mishap in WESS and send a message report?

Answer: No. Sending a message report is not required if you are entering the report in WESS.

Question: Is Marine Corps data part of WESS?

Answer: WESS includes all Marine Corps required data and is used for all Marine Corps mishap and combat mishap reporting. Marine Corps data from MARTRAK and the Marine Corps Ground databases are included and are available using the WESS report functions.

Question: What about locally developed databases?

Answer: WESS is the Department of the Navy's single authorized data system. Activities wishing to maintain an additional database of their reports will be able to download data from WESS via a number of formats, including XML, Excel, Word and PDF.

Question: What sort of data will I have access to?

Answer: Your permission level determines privileged or non-privileged access to your command's or other commands' reports. All WESS users have access to pre-formatted and custom reports for

all Navy and Marine Corps activities. Only those granted permission as users of the ad-hoc query tool have access to the entire database. If you do not see the data or reports desired, use the WESS help form to request that data.

Question: Is there a place to input the UIC in the reporting form?

Answer: Yes. Since WESS is tailored to capture a variety of mishap events with varying degrees of complexity, UICs, and Marine Corps RUCs/MCCs are needed to attach people to equipment to locations to users to owners. The UIC/RUC/MCC function is set to default to the Reporting Activity UIC/RUC/MCC. Throughout the application, whenever you are asked for a UIC/RUC/MCC, you only need to select the offered activity and hit "Next," after you select and verify that the correct activity is given for the person, equipment, locations, etc.

Question: Can I print the data I entered into WESS before I send the report?

Answer: Yes. After the entry screens, there will be a screen listing all the functions you can now perform before you submit the report. One of these options is to generate a PDF of the entire report or generate a PDF Injury Log report. The report can then be printed.

Question: Is there a pick list for MSDS?

Answer: No, the complete list of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) is too large. Every activity is required to have access to an MSDS sheet for each chemical used by its workers. Please use that MSDS sheet to answer the MSDS-related questions.

Question: Can I get the software that you are using so that I can start to use your format to collect my mishap information?

Answer: No, there is no software to download. The application is web-based and requires our IBM/Informix relational database, which cannot run on a PC. However, you can find forms in Microsoft Word format on our website that will guide you through the questions WESS asks, based on the type of report you are entering. Download the form(s) at http://www.safetycenter.navy.mil/wess/tutorial/worksheets/ and use them offline to gather the information required for submission before you sit down and fill out a WESS report.

Question: How do I suggest modifications or request enhancements to the system?

Answer: Submit a feedback form. Depending on the level of work required, a configuration control board will determine acceptance of changes for WESS development. From the WESS main menu, click on "Feedback Form" to access it.

Question: Can I use ESAMS to report an aviation hazard?

Answer: No. ESAMS is a personnel-management system that can be used to report minor OSH-related events. If there is a naval aircraft involved, you must use WESS to report your event. ESAMS is not designed to route, notify or endorse a report and does not collect the level of detail required to obtain a full OPNAVINST 3750.6R report.

Question: If I report using ESAMS, do I still have to report to WESS?

Answer: Yes. Once you have entered the information into ESAMS, the report will be forwarded to the Naval Safety Center. If the report is a mishap that is anything beyond minor OSH-related information, the report will have to be completed in WESS. The information you entered through ESAMS will be captured, however you will be required to complete the information as outlined in the OPNAVINST 5102.1D.

Question: Is there training for WESS?

Answer: Yes. Currently we have several sources available for training. We recommend the tutorials available on our website. Another option is to contact the Naval Safety Center and request a mobile training team visit for your command.
Aviation units: 757-444-3520, Ext. 7245
Afloat units: Ext. 7127
Shore commands: Ext. 7157 ✦