

CNO to Elevate Navy Safety Center to a Two-Star Command



A helicopter from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 3 combats a fire aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6). *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class David Mora Jr.*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The chief of naval operations is increasing the focus of the Navy on safety in its operations by elevating the Naval Safety Center to a full command.

CNO Adm. Michael Gilday, speaking Jan. 11 to an audience at the Surface Navy Association's annual symposium in Arlington, said the Naval Safety Center in Norfolk, Virginia, would be redesignated the Navy Safety Command and its commander would be a two-star admiral with experience as a carrier strike group commander.

"That command will evaluate how the entire Navy – from the fleet commander down – manage safety and risk, and it will

grade how effectively commands are self-assessing performance,” the CNO said.

The commander of the Navy Safety Command would report directly to the CNO.

Gilday said he considered the Navy’s Board of Inspection and Survey as a model for the Naval Safety Command and how it will perform.

The Navy has suffered a number of high-profile collisions at sea in recent years, most notably the 2017 collisions of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Fitzgerald and USS John McCain with merchant ships, resulting in the deaths of 17 Sailors. The amphibious assault ship US Bonhomme Richard was damaged beyond economical repair in 2020 by a fire while pierside.

Gilday noted in his speech that the fleet had suffered “14 other major fire events in the past 12 years.”