# **The Bonhomme Richard Fire: An** Internal Control Analysis

## Abstract

The USS Bonhomme Richard fire of July 12, 2020, has prompted critical assessments of naval operations' internal controls. This research closely examines the events preceding the fire, focusing on internal control factors contributing to its escalation. It conducts a detailed analysis of the USPACFLT command investigation and Major Fires Review, drawing from the COSO Internal Control - Integrated Framework (COSO Framework) to pinpoint deficiencies. Five key questions about internal control factors in naval operations are addressed, highlighting the importance of robust controls in preventing disasters. This study aims to enhance the Navy's understanding and offer actionable insights for policy and training improvements, ultimately striving to prevent similar incidents and strengthen operational resilience.



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Fire onboard the USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6), 12JUL2020 (U.S. Navy photo)

#### **Methods**

This research study aims to analyze the Bonhomme Richard fire event through the lens of the internal control framework examining the relationship between the events leading to the fire and its continuance and the five internal control components: control environment, risk assessment, control activities, information and communication, and monitoring activities. This research study also aims to compare the results of this study with the recommendations given in the USFPACFLT command investigation to see how well their internal control components align.

This research study aims to review publicly available documents related to the Bonhomme Richard fire to address the following questions:

- What were the critical incidents that contributed to the fire aboard the Bonhomme Richard?
- How do the critical incidents that contributed to the fire align with the COSO Framework?
- What internal control lessons can be learned from the Bonhomme Richard fire?

#### Results





### Recommendations

- Mandate internal control training
- Enhance internal control implementation
- **Revise existing instruction**
- Enhance internal control implementation

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