

THE HUMAN EFFECTIVENESS DIRECTORATE

US Army Non - Human Factor Helicopter Mishap Findings and Recommendations

By

Major Robert Kent, USAF, MC, SFS



Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE MAY 2010		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE US Army Non - Human Factor Helicopter Mishap Findings and Recommendations				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Air Force Research Laboratory, Human Effectiveness Directorate, Wright Patterson AFB, OH, 45433				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 51	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			



Statement of Accountability



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Cleared for public release by ASC Public Affairs.

Disposition Date: 3 May 2007

Document Number: AFRL-WS 07-1099





Background



- This study describes all 207 U.S. Army Class A-B Rotary Wing Mishaps ascribed to 'Non - Human Factors' (NHF) from FY 85 to 05
- This data is based on a study of data archived in the mishap files of the USA Combat Readiness Center at Fort Rucker, Alabama
- This data is the third part of a study that will include all rotary wing aircraft in the DoD
 - The first part 'USAF Helicopter Mishap Data' was publicly released on 18 Sep 2006
 - The second part 'USA Human Factor Helicopter Mishap Data' was publicly released on 29 Mar 2007





Method



- **Obtained all U.S. Army Rotary Wing Aircraft Class A & B Mishaps ascribed to 'Non - Human Factors' from FY 85 to FY 05 inclusive from the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center**
- **Reviewed all 207 mishap reports**
- **Created a data base for initial analysis**
- **Major injuries resulted in approximately four weeks or more of lost duty time or permanent disability**
- **Minor injuries resulted in approximately less than four weeks of lost duty time**





Definitions



Aircraft were placed in 7 groups for the analysis

AH-1 AH-1E/F/G/S
FAH-1S,
JPAH-1S

H-47 CH-47C/D
MH-47D/E

OH-58 OH-58A/C/D/DI/DR

UH-1 UH-1H/V
JUH-1H

H-60 EH-60A
MH-60A/K/L
UH-60A/L

H-6 AH-6C/G/J
MH-6B/E/H/J
OH-6A

AH-64 AH-64A/D





Overview



- **Definitions**
- **Mishap Characterization**
- **Phase of Flight Data**
- **Fatality & Injury Data**
- **Summary & Recommendations**





Definitions



Non-Human Factor Definition:

- Any mishap where the proximal cause was not due to a human factor in accordance with the Department of Defense Human Factors Analysis and Classification System
- Generally speaking: mechanical failures and weather
- Weather cases are those where severe weather was encountered but was not forecast



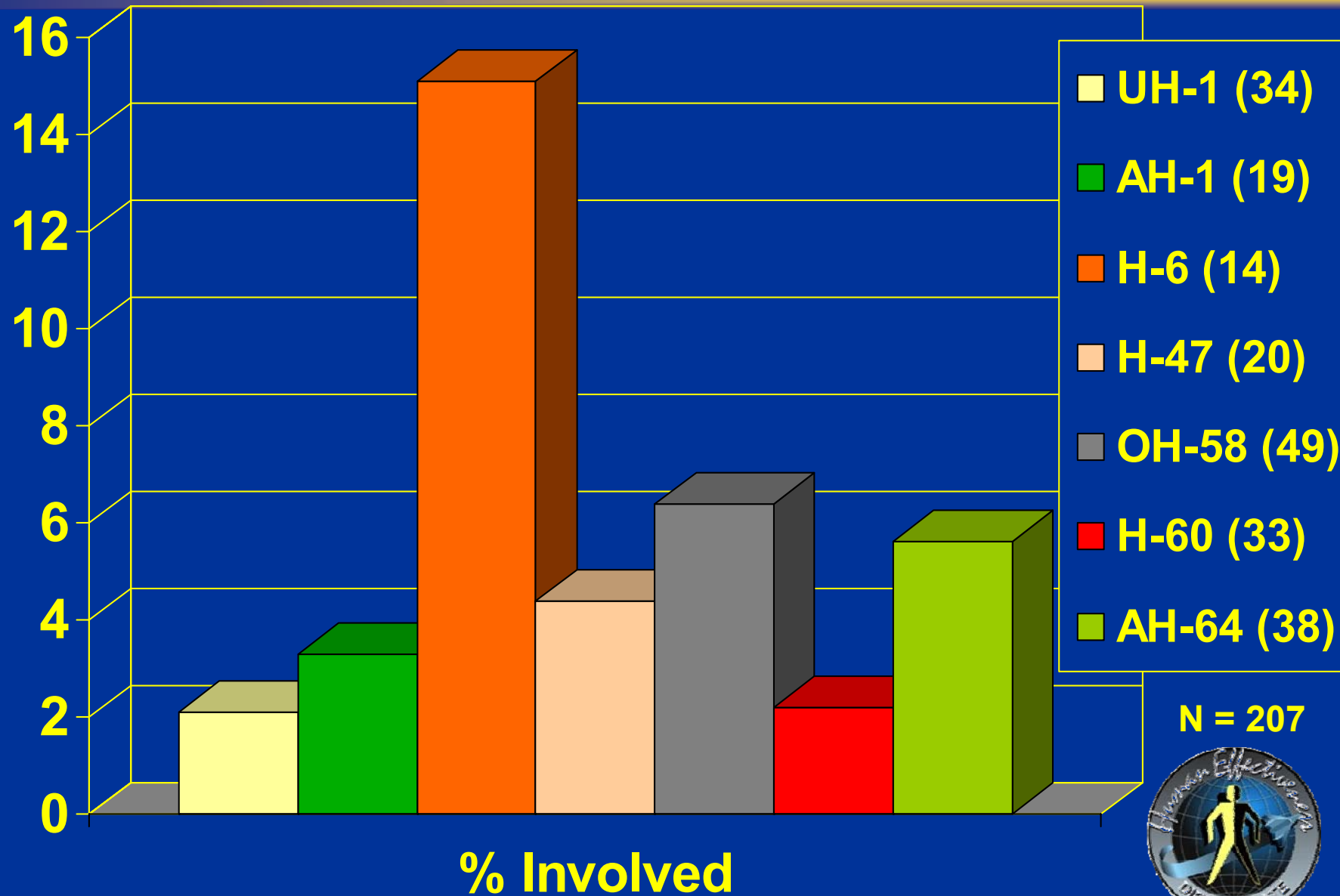


Non-Human Factor Mishap Character



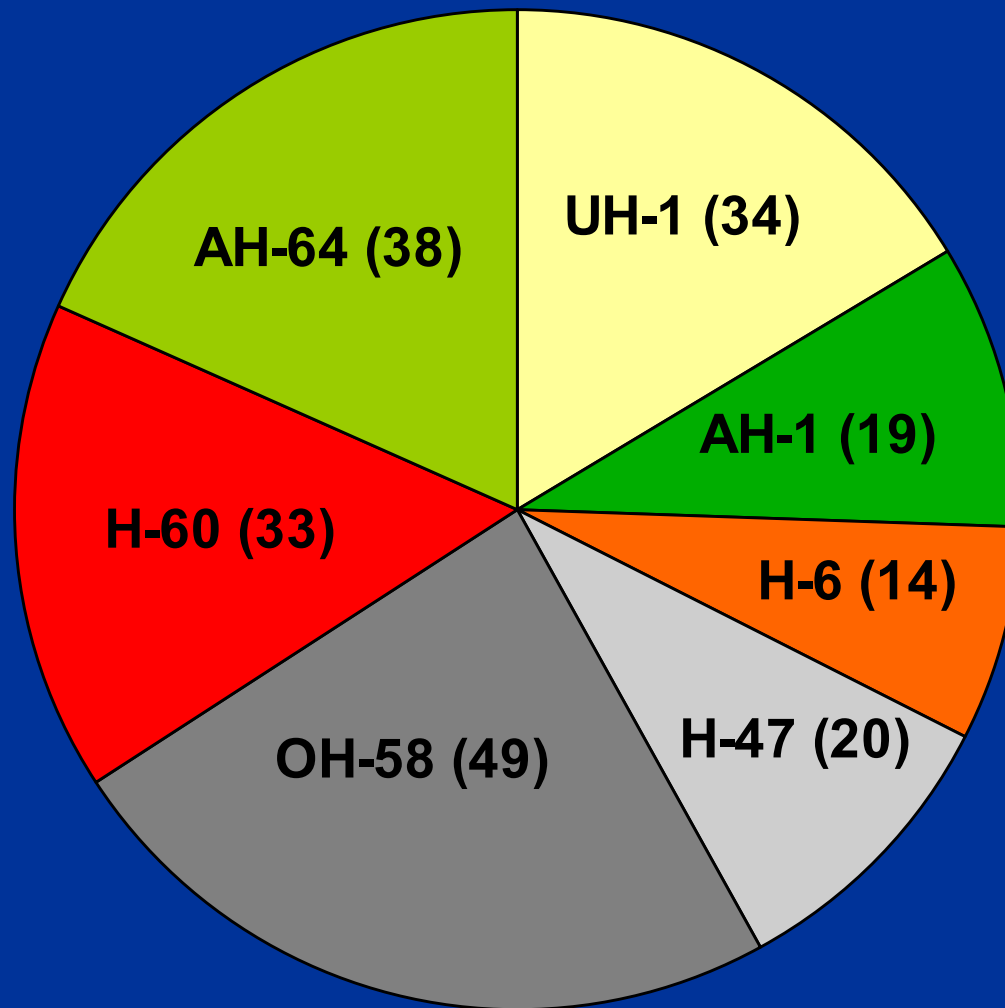


% of Inventory, FY 85 – 05, Involved in Class A or B NHF Mishaps





NHF Mishaps by MDS

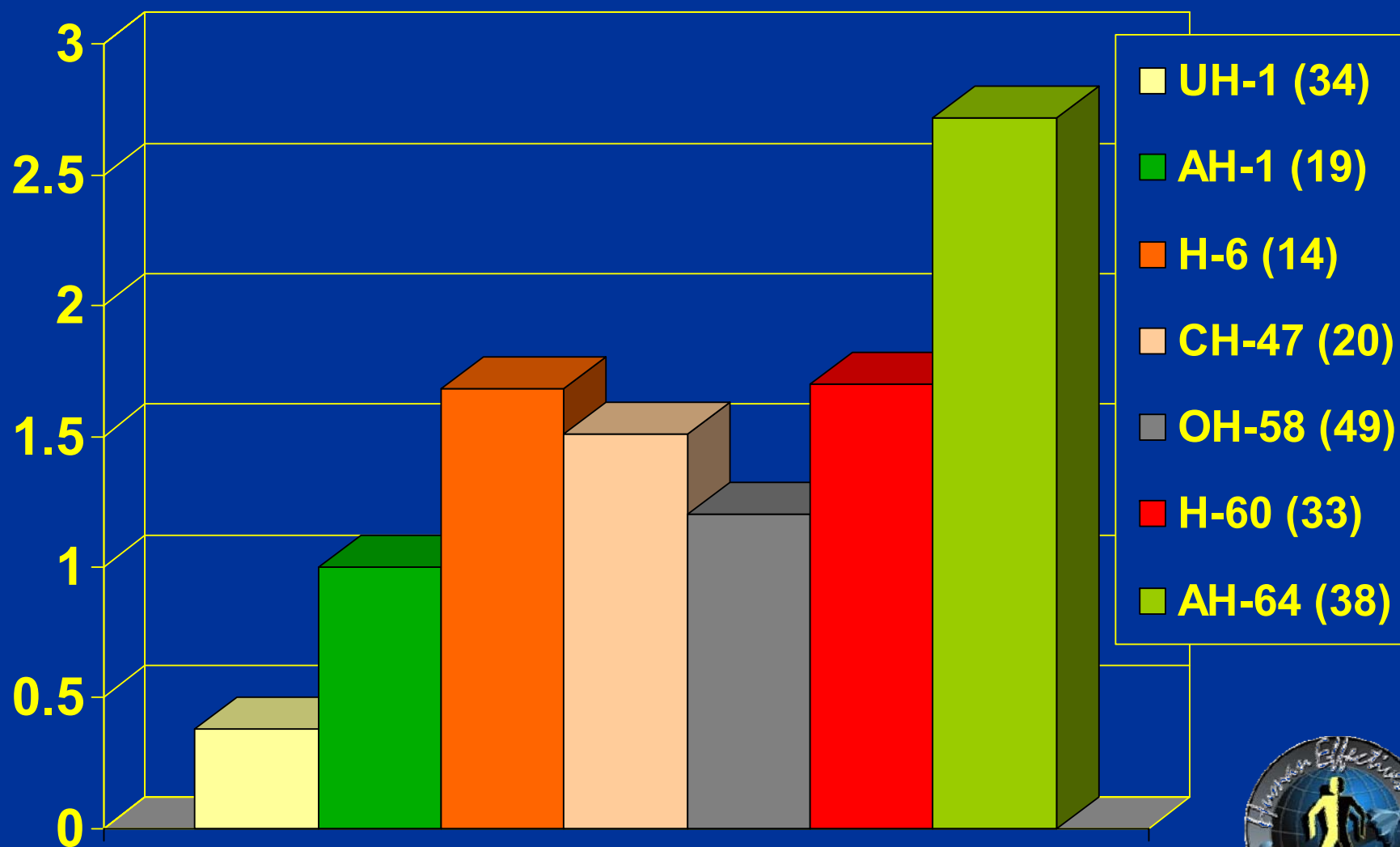


N = 207





NHF Mishap Rates/100KHrs by MDS



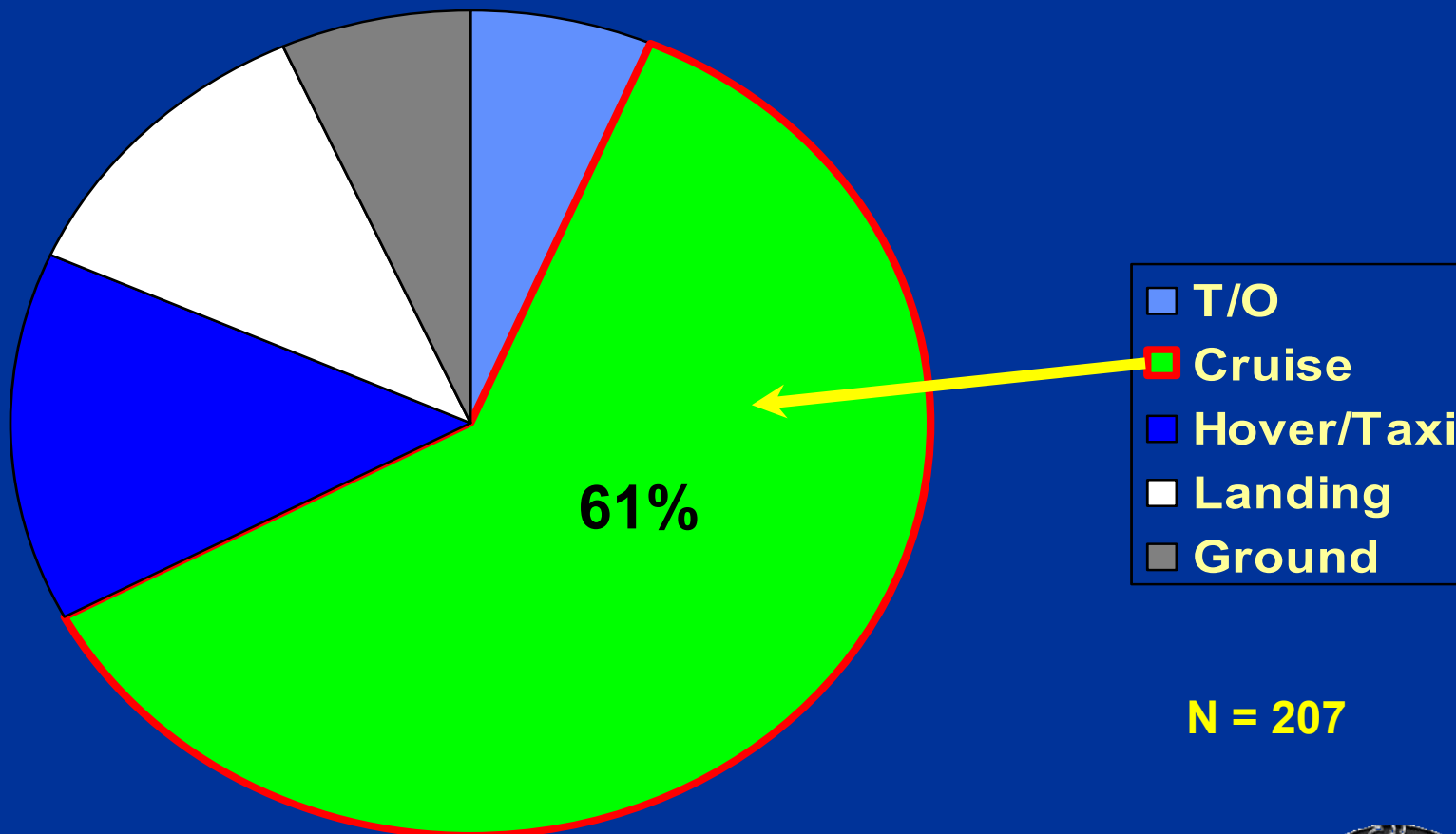


Non-Human Factor Mishap Character Phase of Flight





NHF Mishap by Phase of Flight FY 85-05

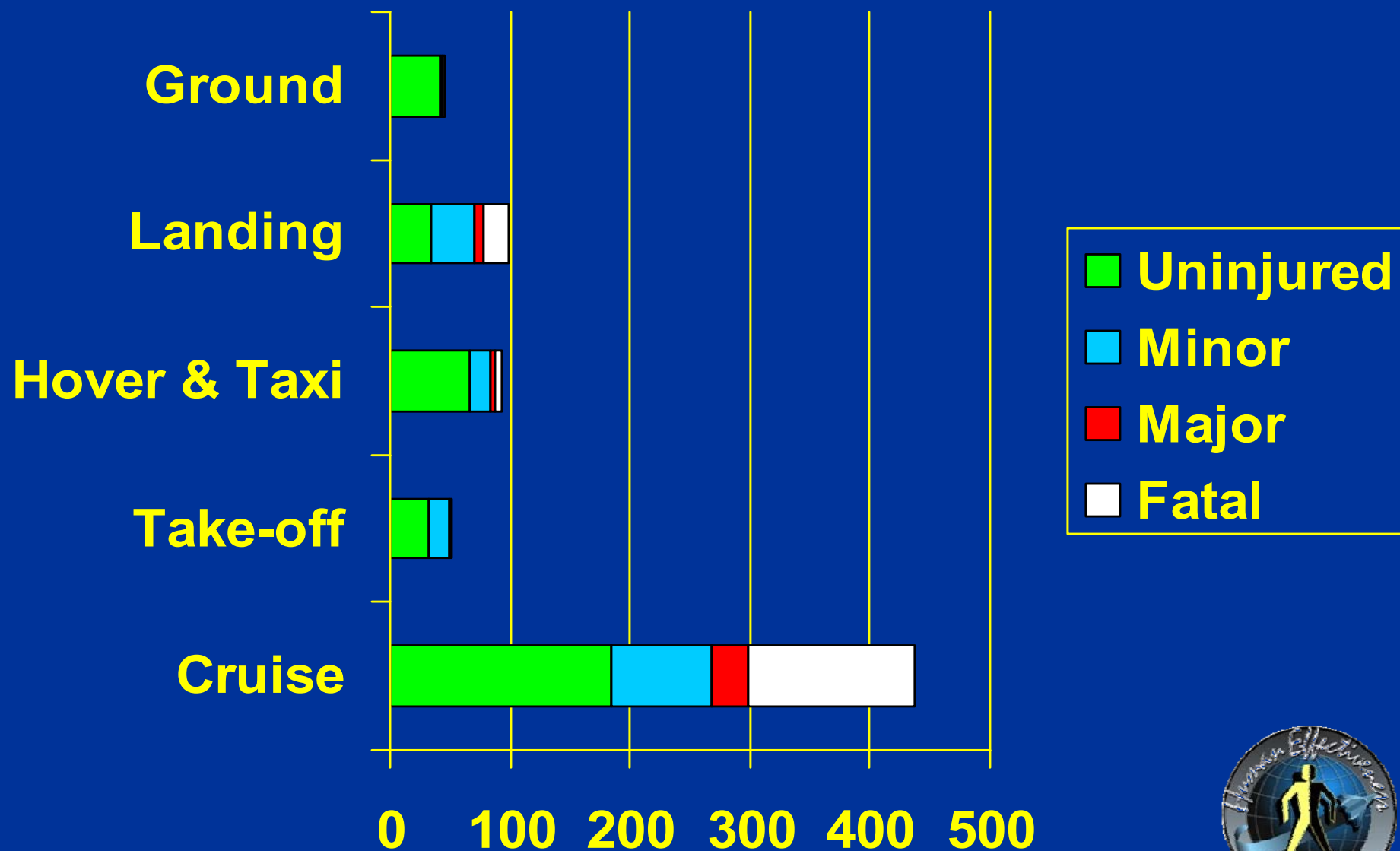


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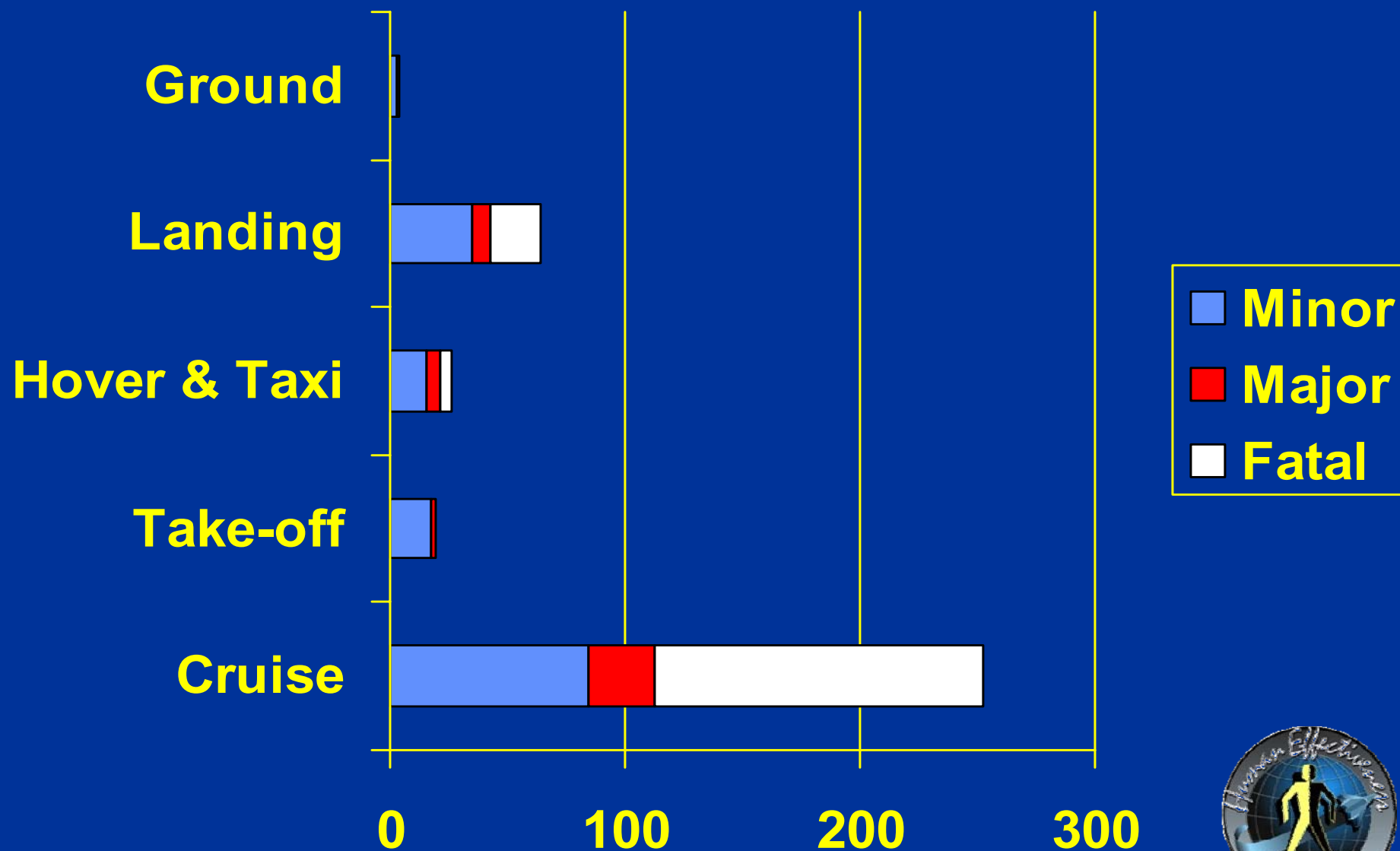


NHF Fatalities & Injuries by Phase of Flight



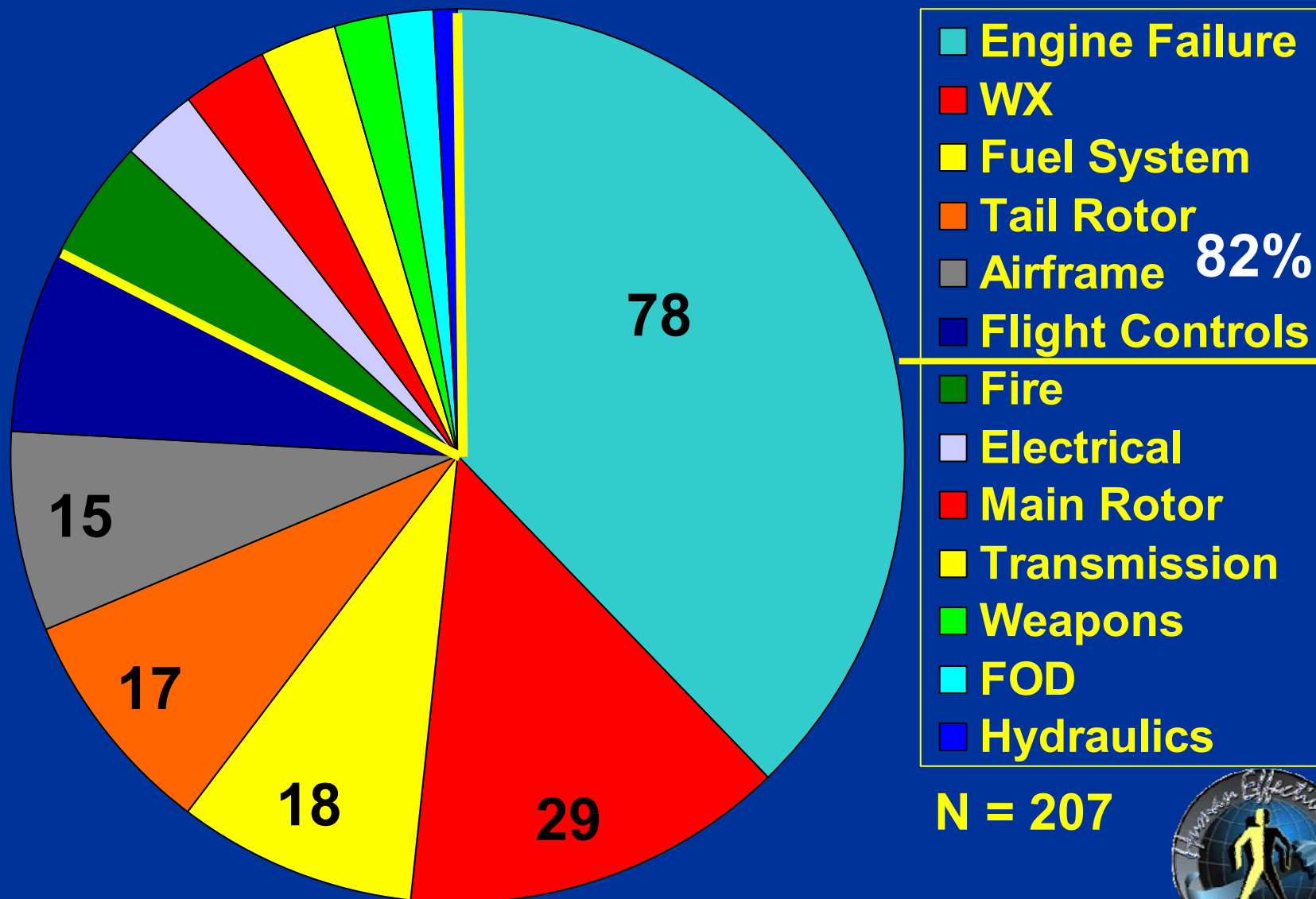


NHF Fatalities & Injuries by Phase of Flight - Overview



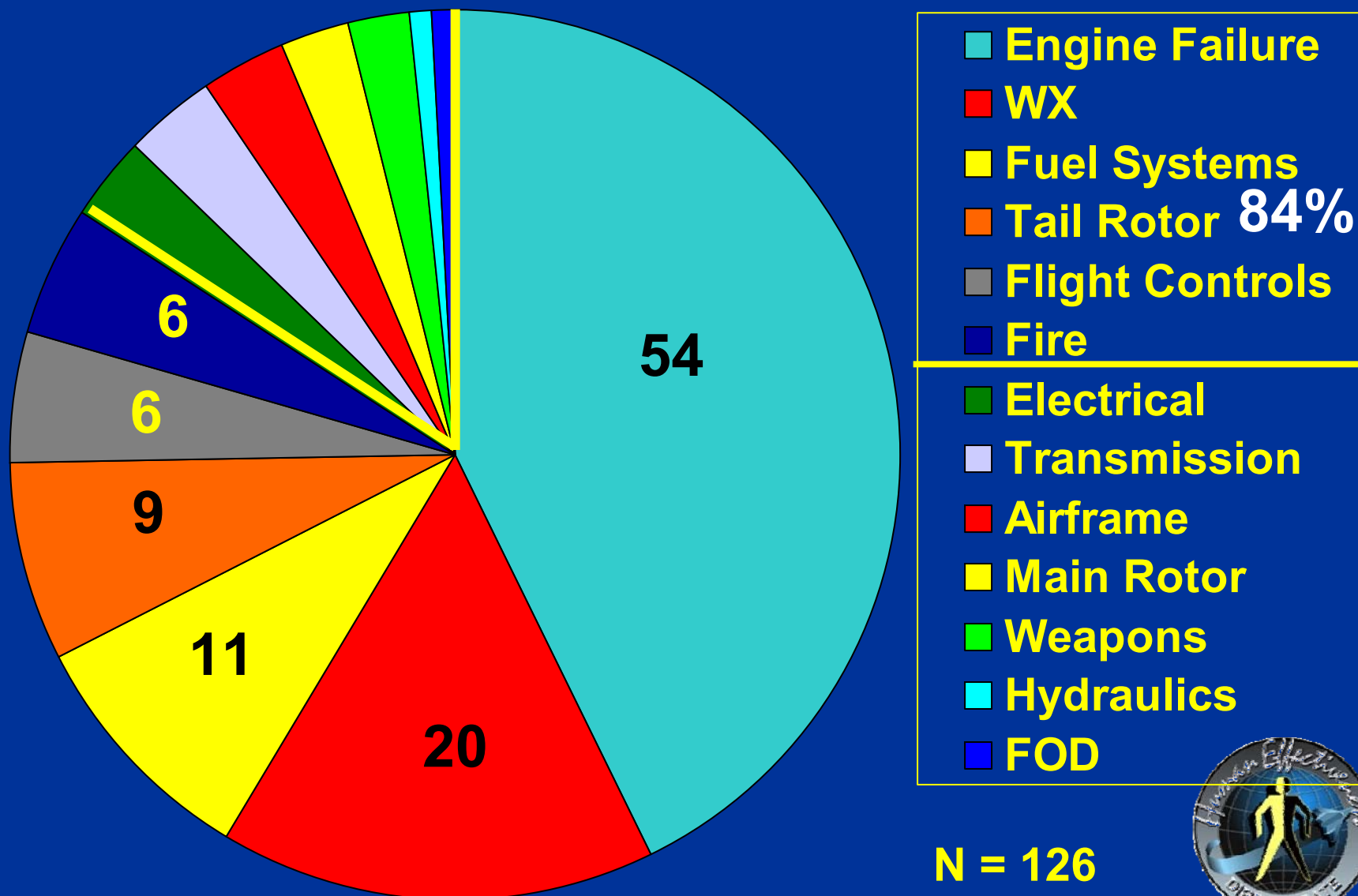


All NHF Mishaps Malfunction Categories



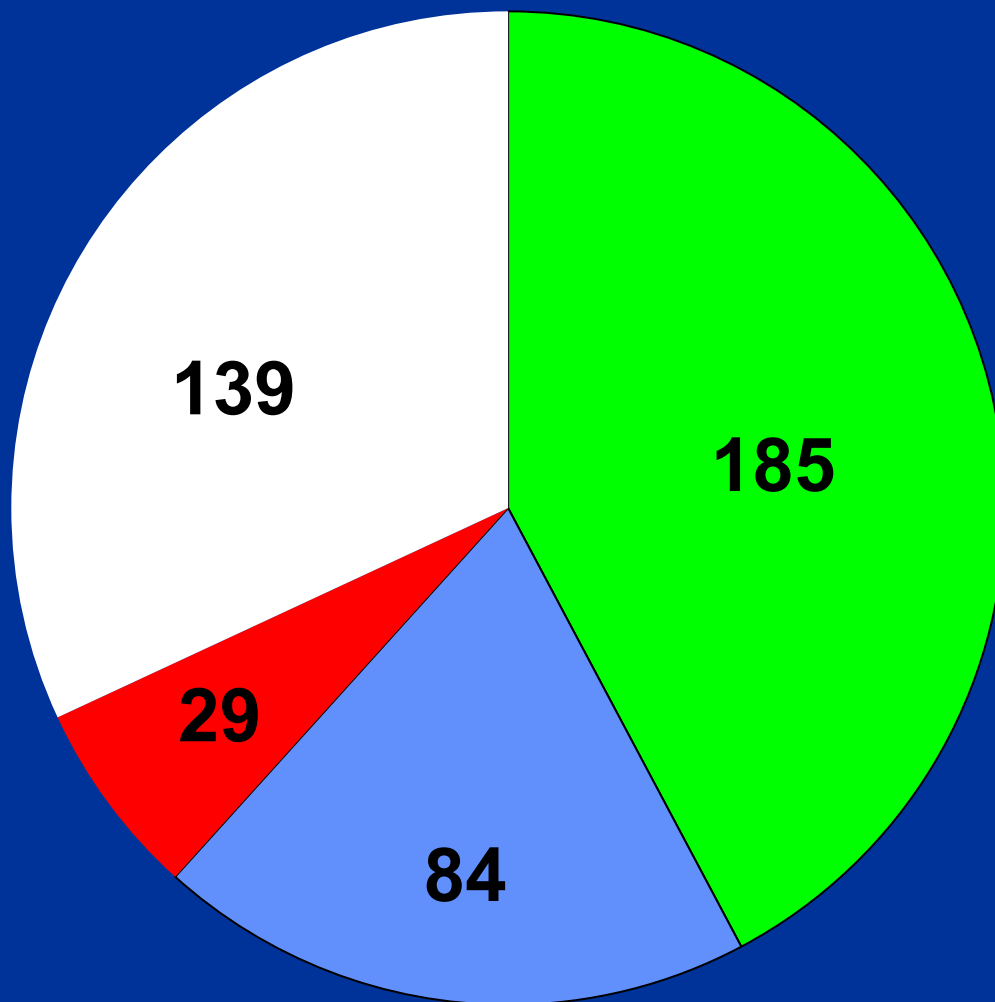


NHF Cruise Mishaps Malfunction Categories





NHF Cruise Mishaps Fatalities & Injuries



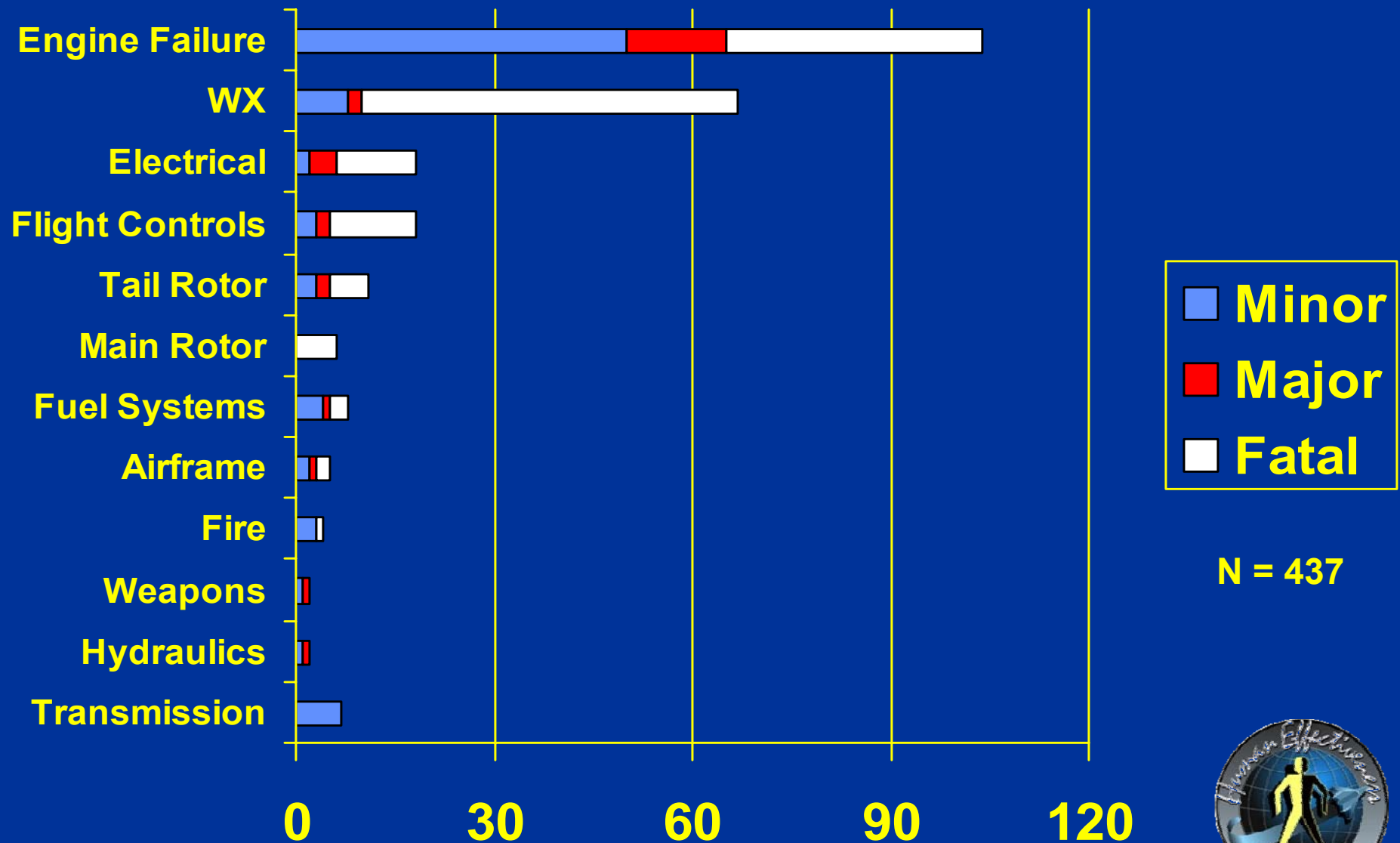
- Uninjured
- Minor
- Major
- Fatal

N = 437



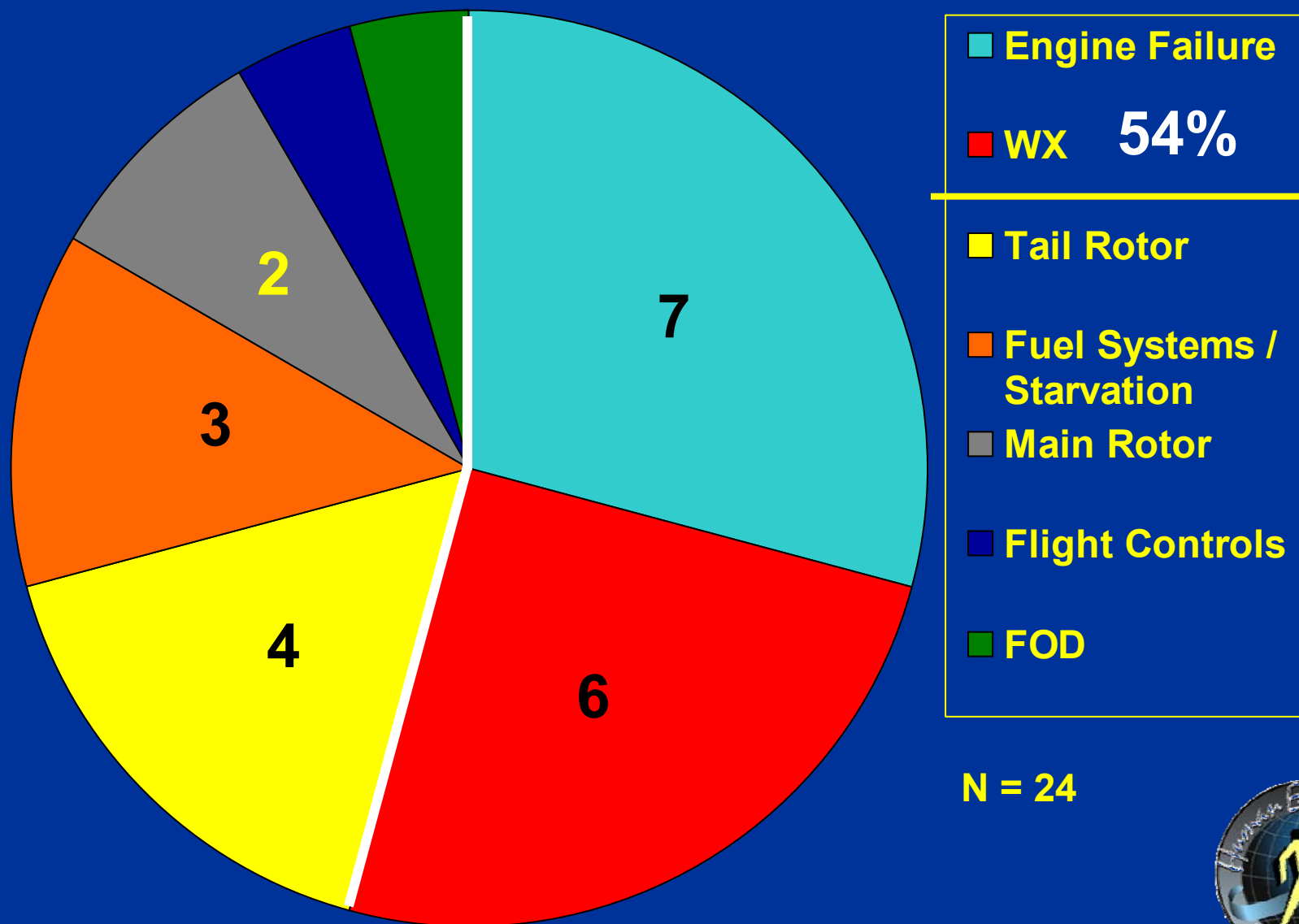


NHF Cruise Fatalities & Injuries by Malfunction Category



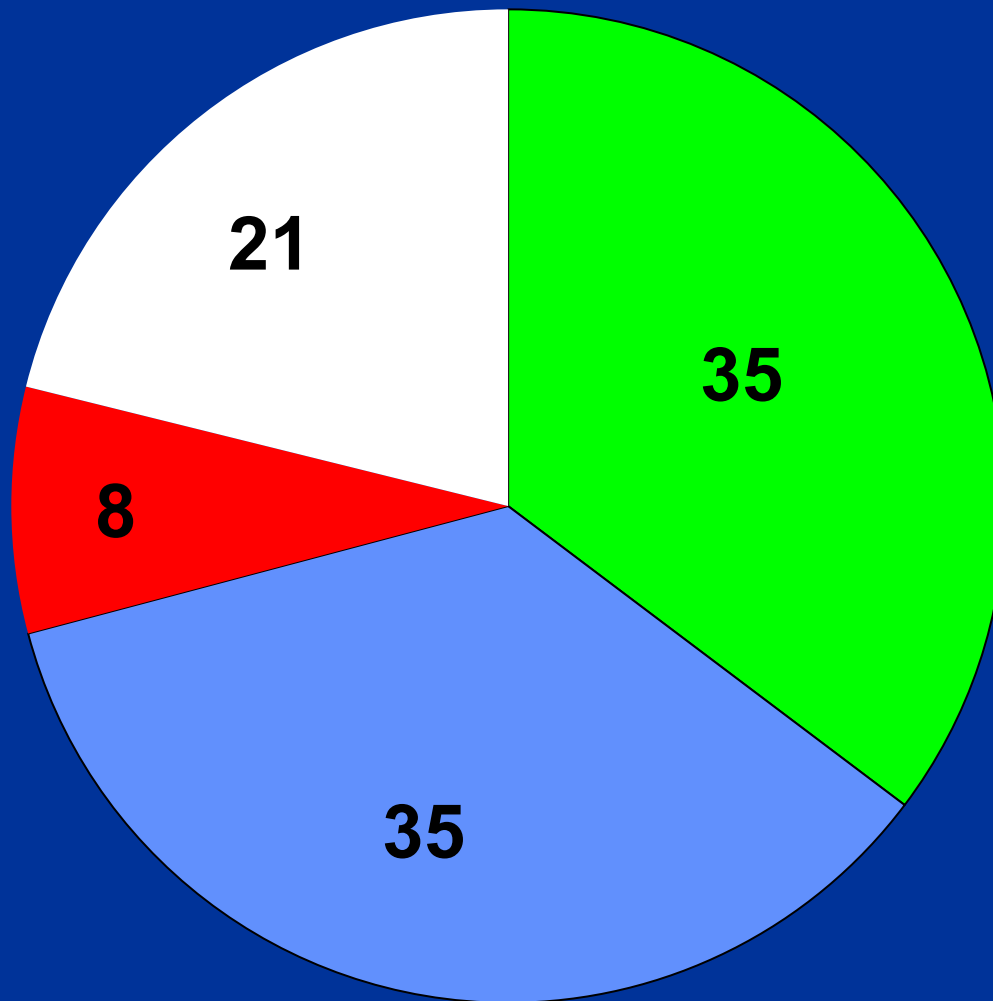


NHF Landing Mishaps Malfunction Categories





NHF Landing Mishaps Fatalities & Injuries



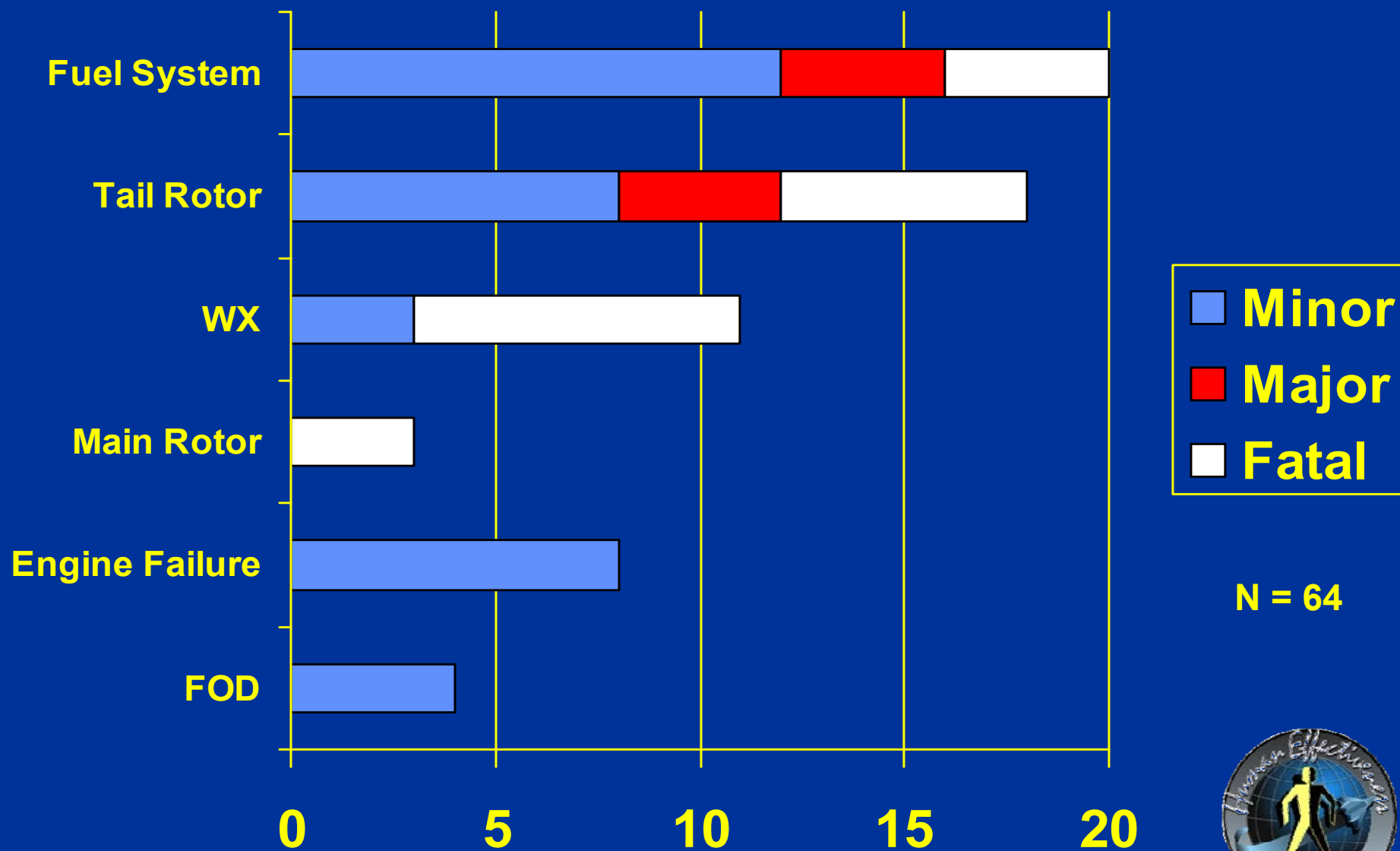
-  **Uninjured**
-  **Minor**
-  **Major**
-  **Fatal**

N = 99



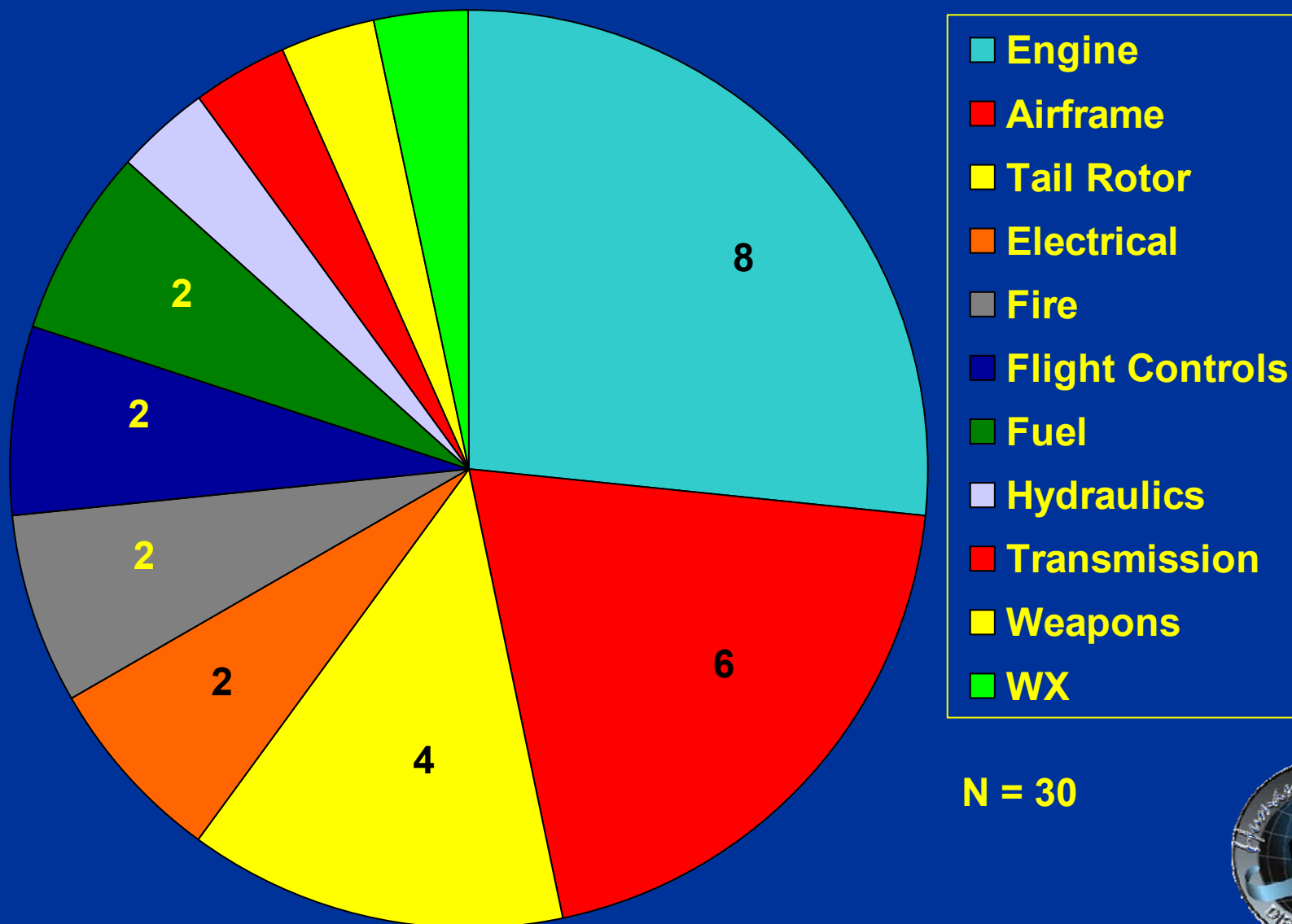


NHF Landing Fatalities & Injuries by Malfunction Category



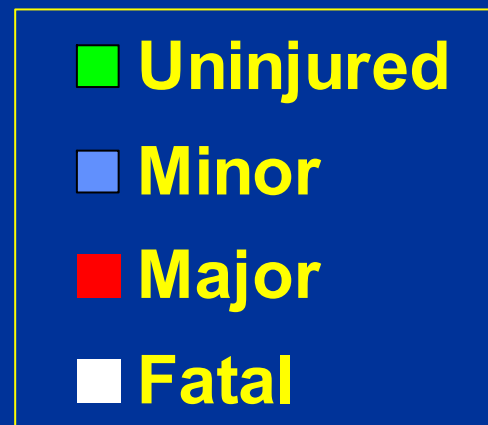
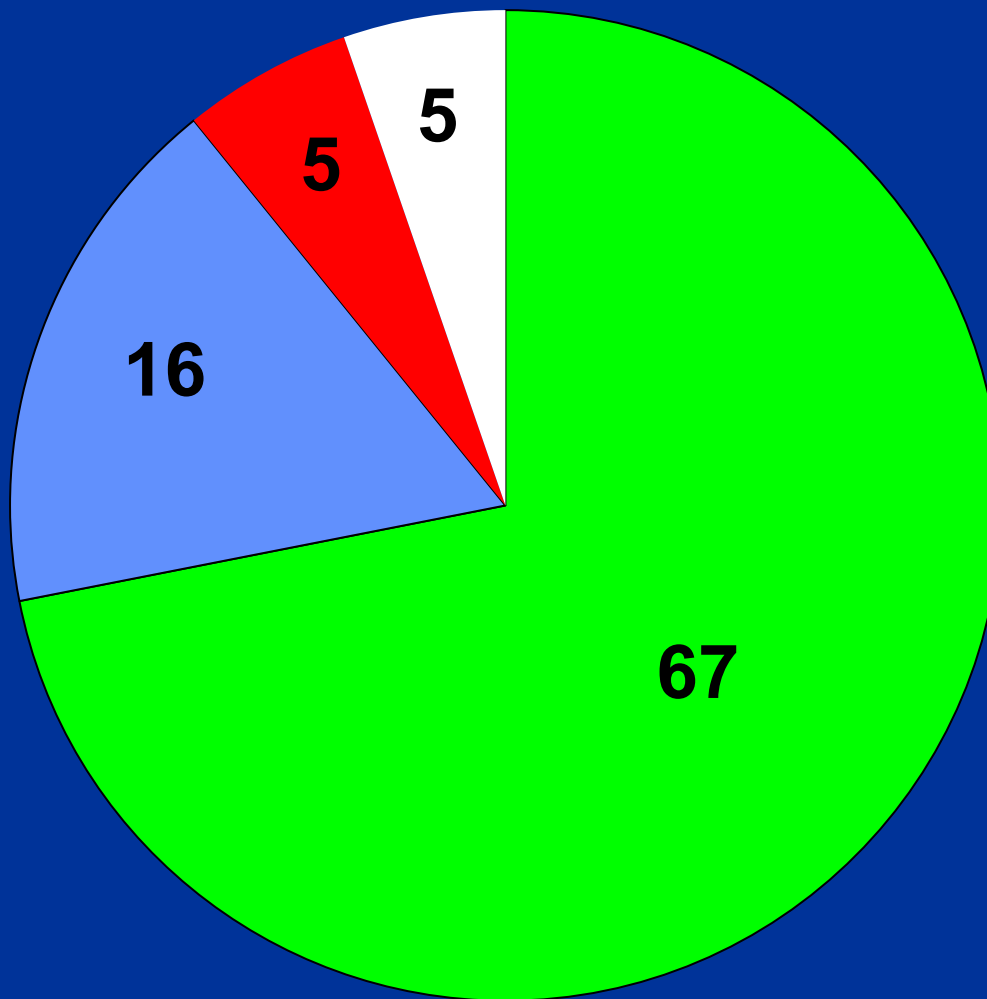


NHF Hover/Taxi Mishaps Malfunction Categories





NHF Hover/Taxi Mishaps Fatalities & Injuries

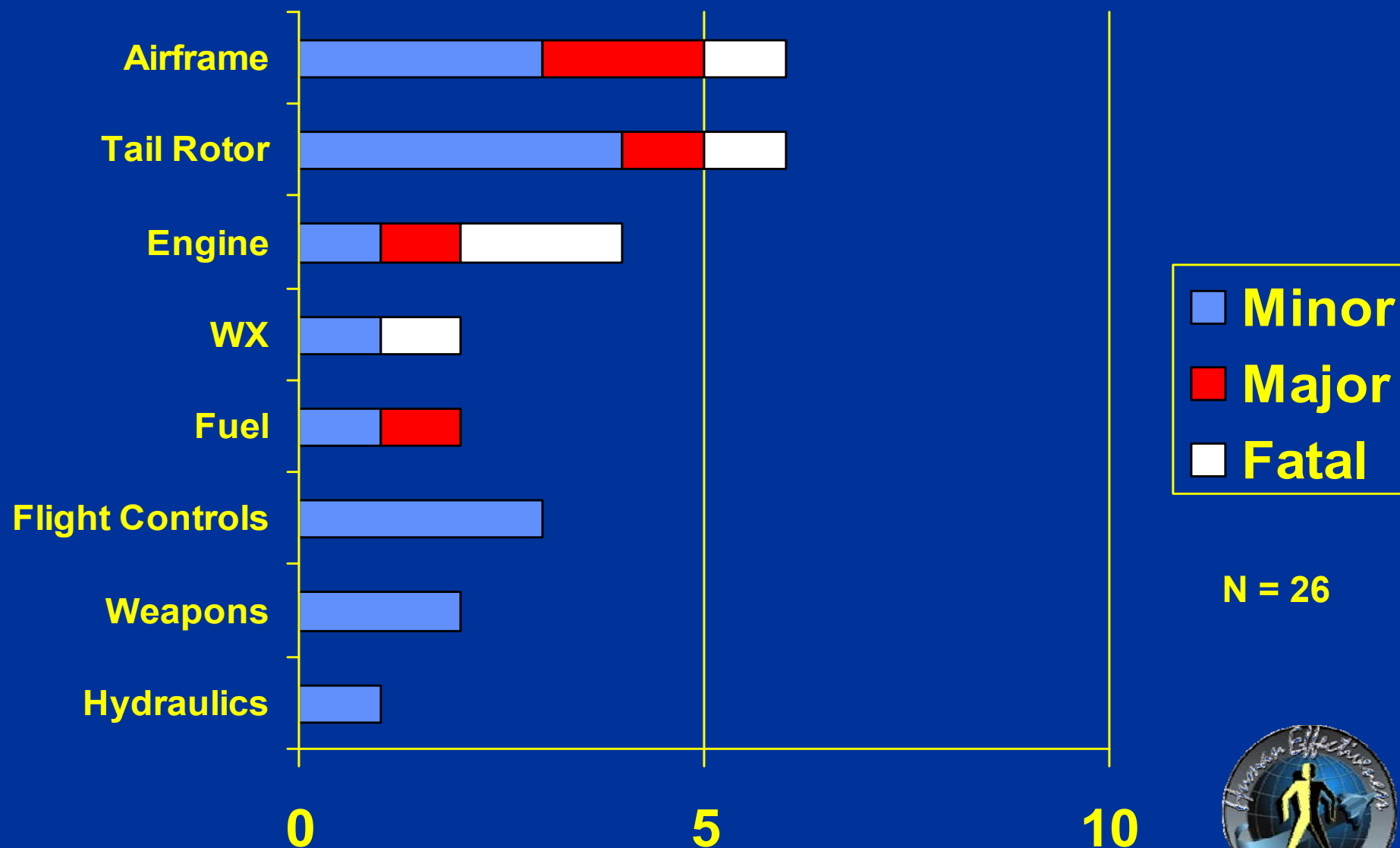


N = 93





NHF Hover/Taxi Fatalities & Injuries by Malfunction Category

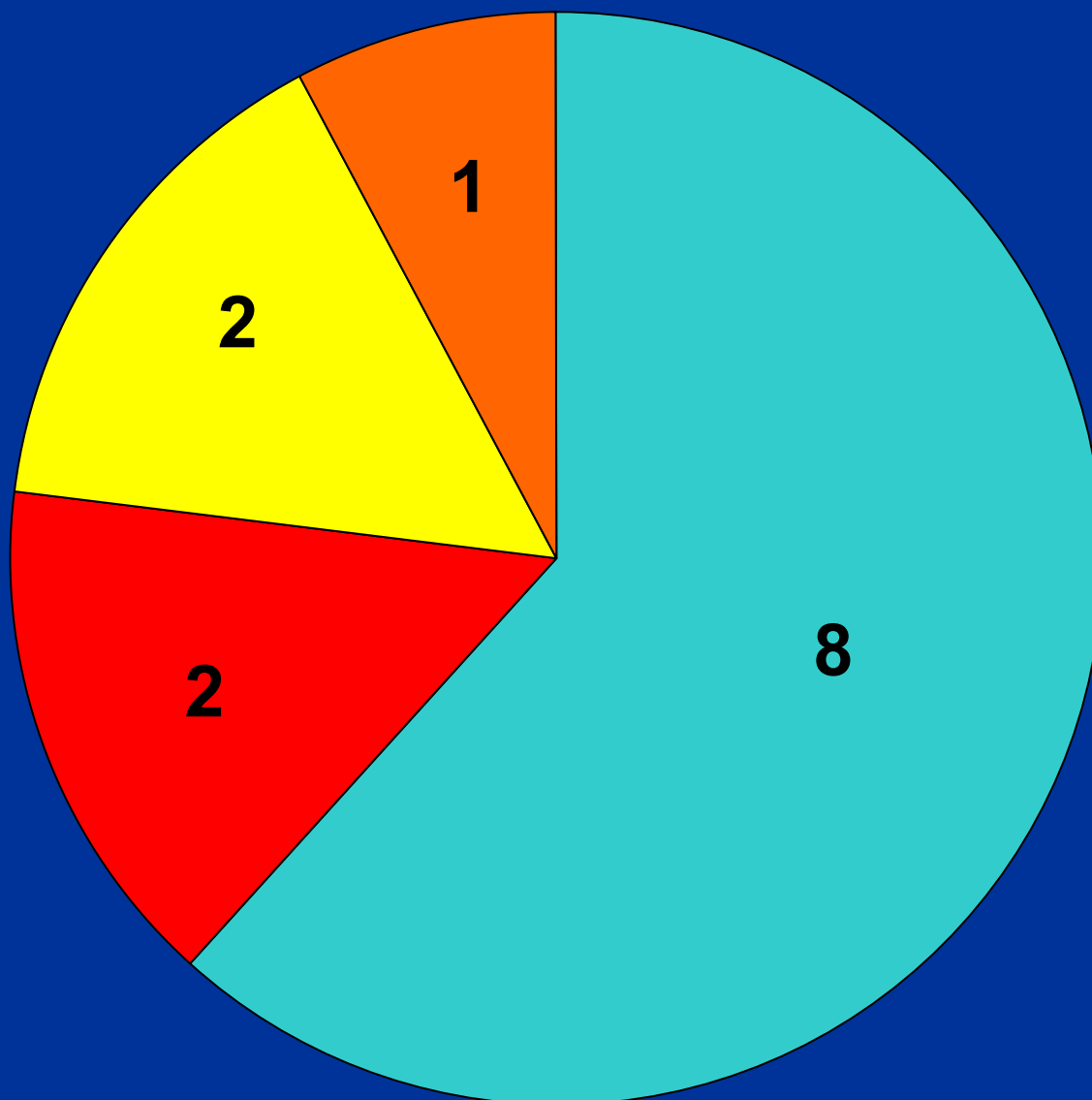


N = 26





NHF Take-Off Mishaps Malfunction Categories



Engine

Flight Controls

Fuel Systems

WX

N = 13

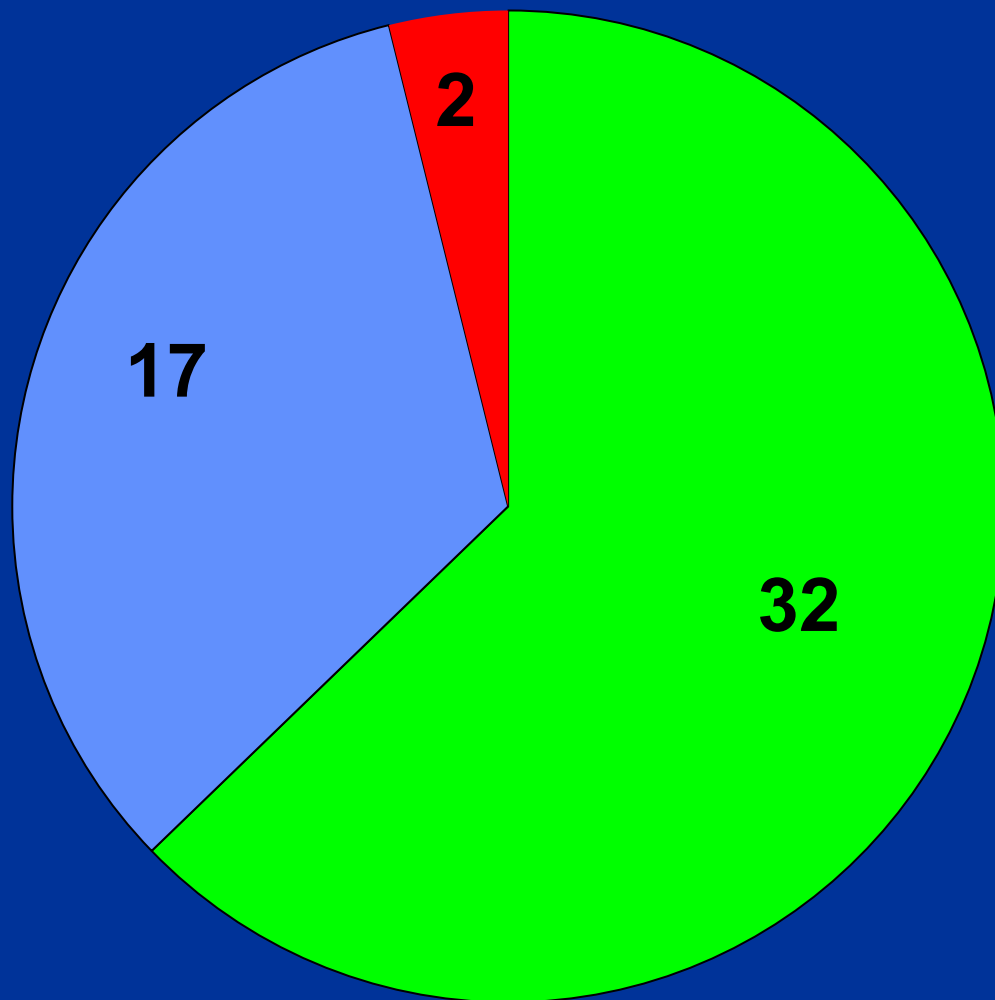




NHF Take-Off Mishaps Injuries



No Fatalities



■ Uninjured

■ Minor

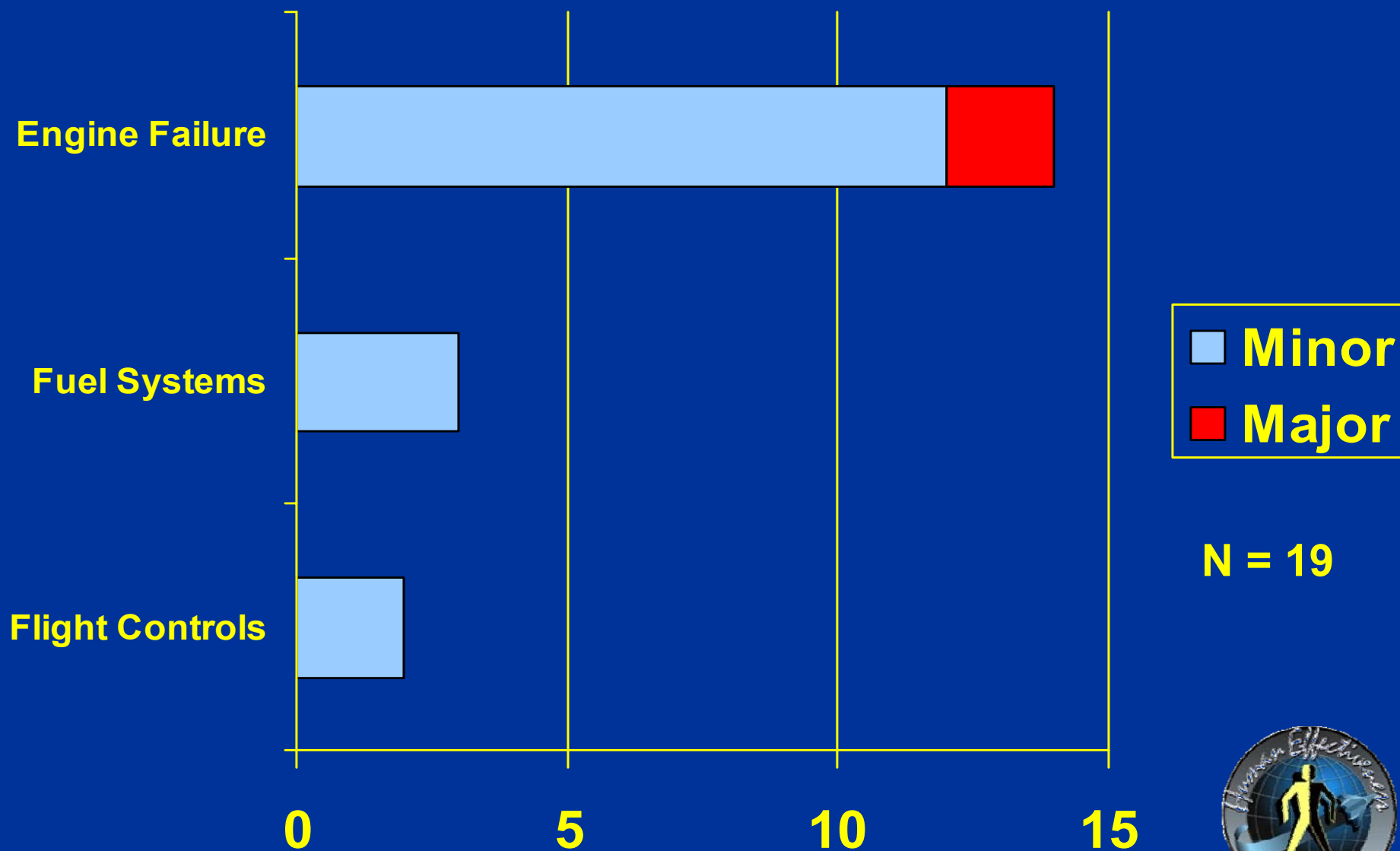
■ Major

N = 51



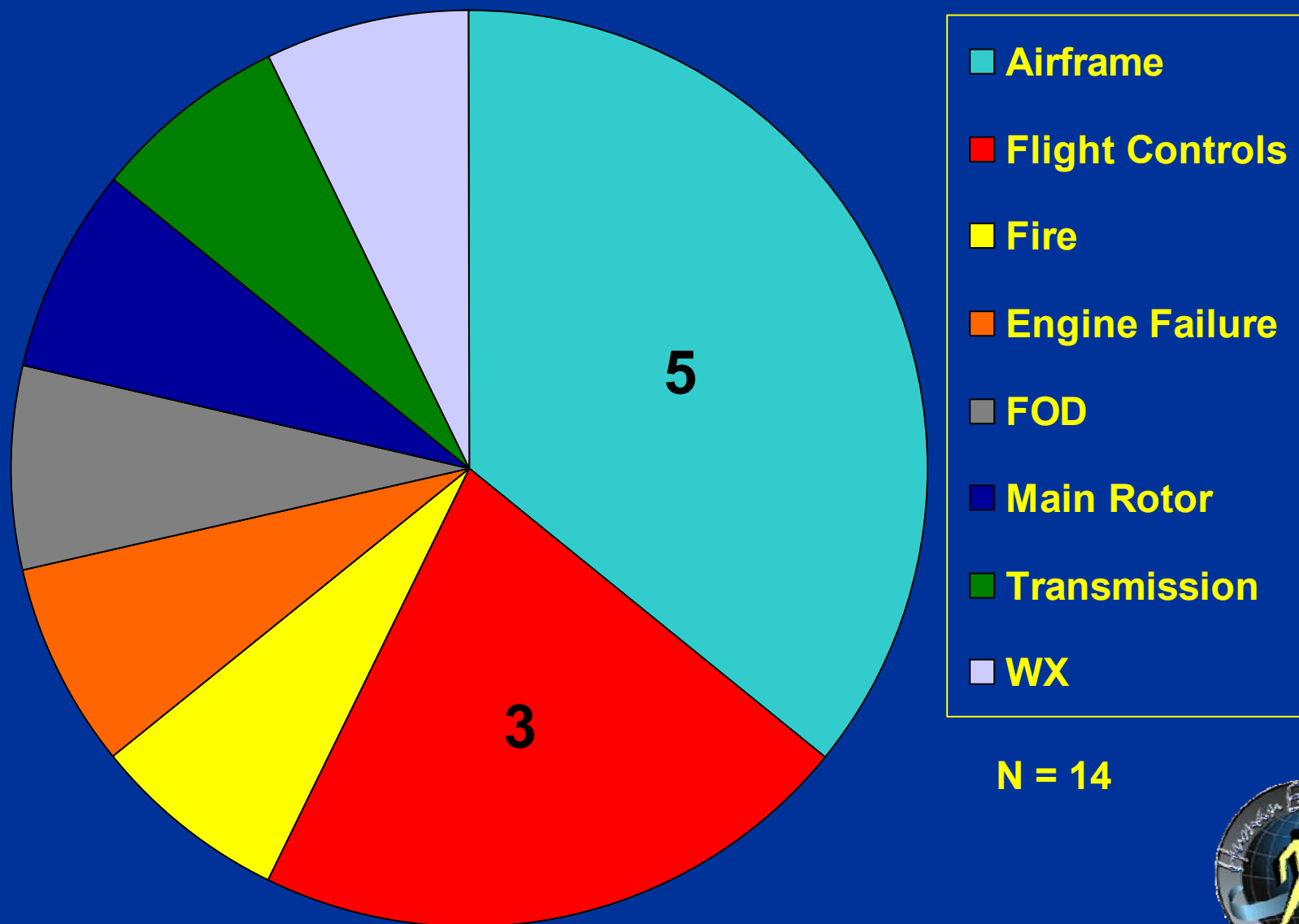


NHF Take-Off Fatalities & Injuries by Malfunction Category





NHF Ground Mishaps Malfunction Categories

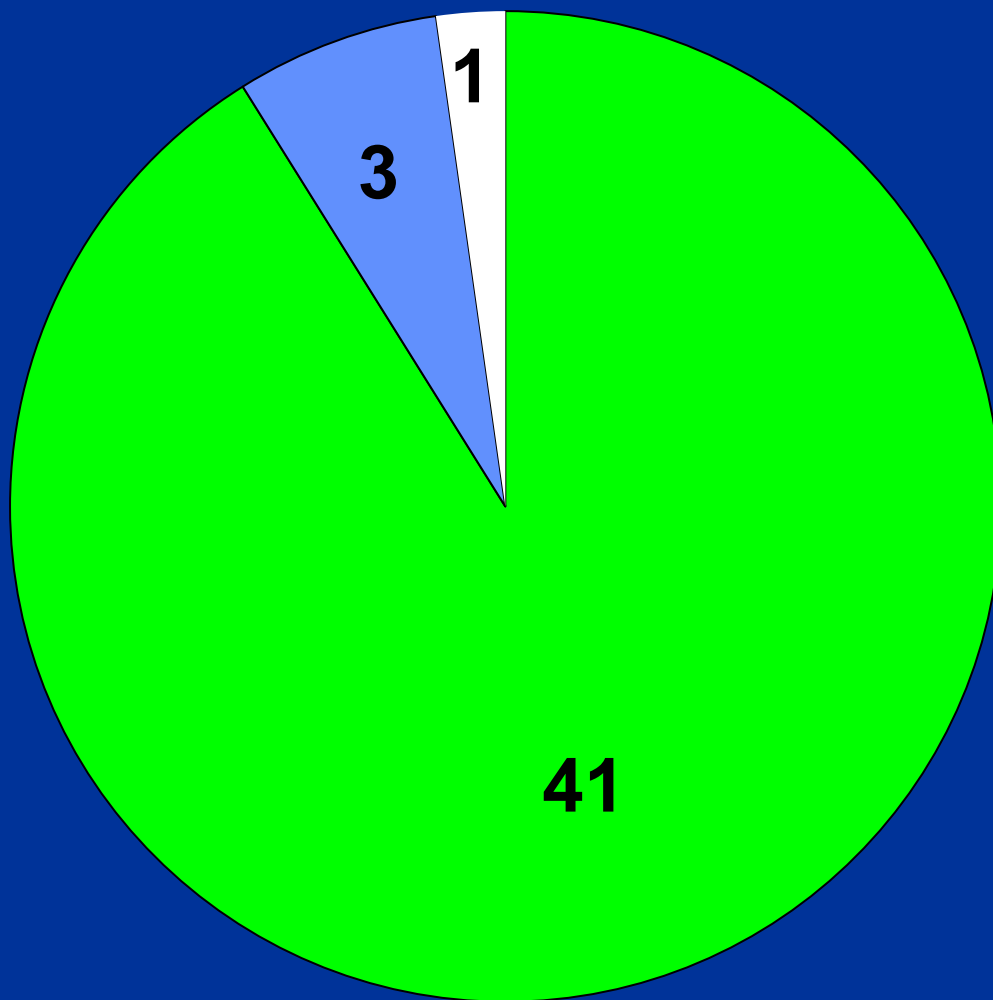


N = 14





NHF Ground Mishap Fatalities & Injuries



■ Uninjured

■ Minor

■ Fatal

N = 45



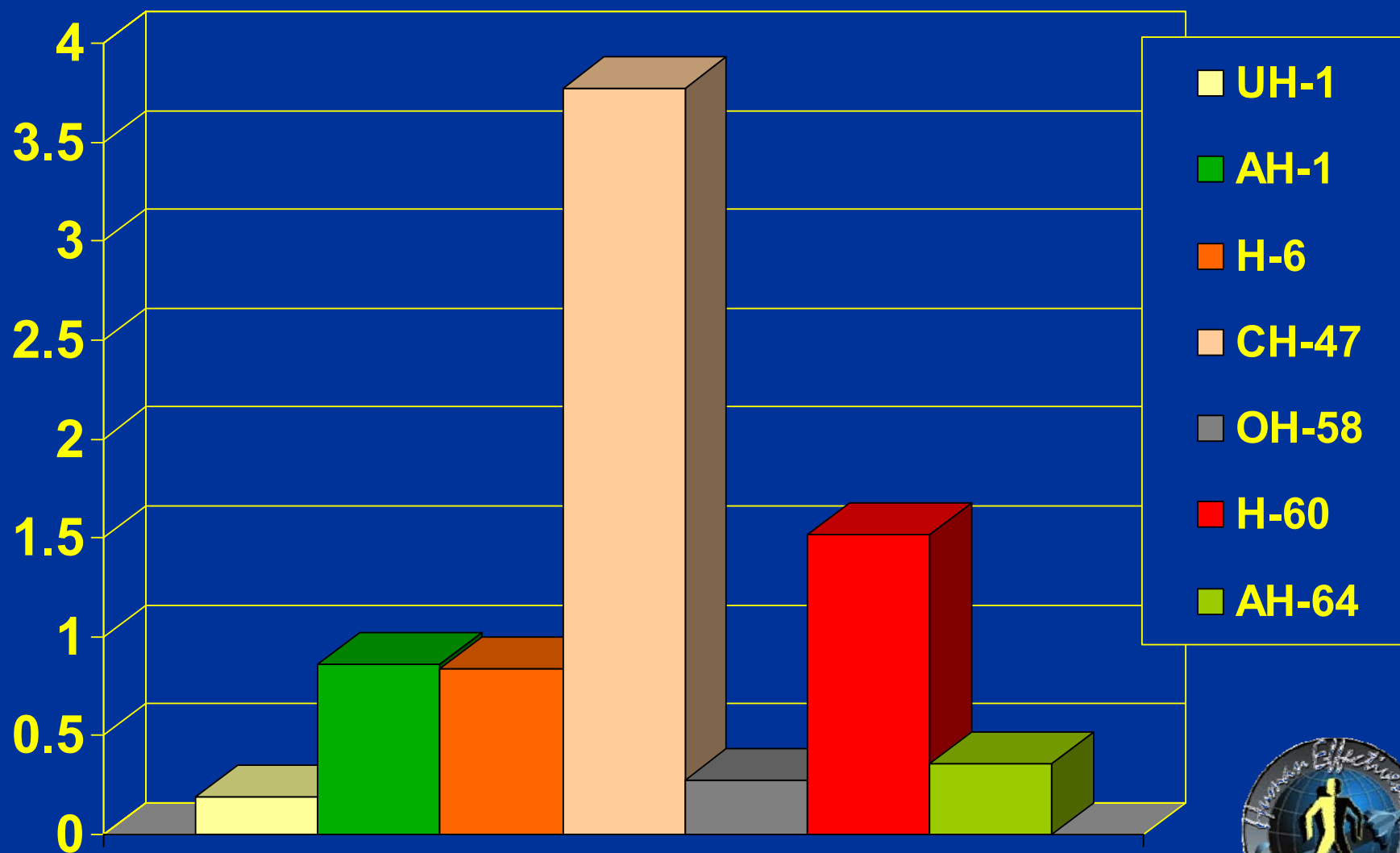


Non-Human Factor Deaths & Injuries



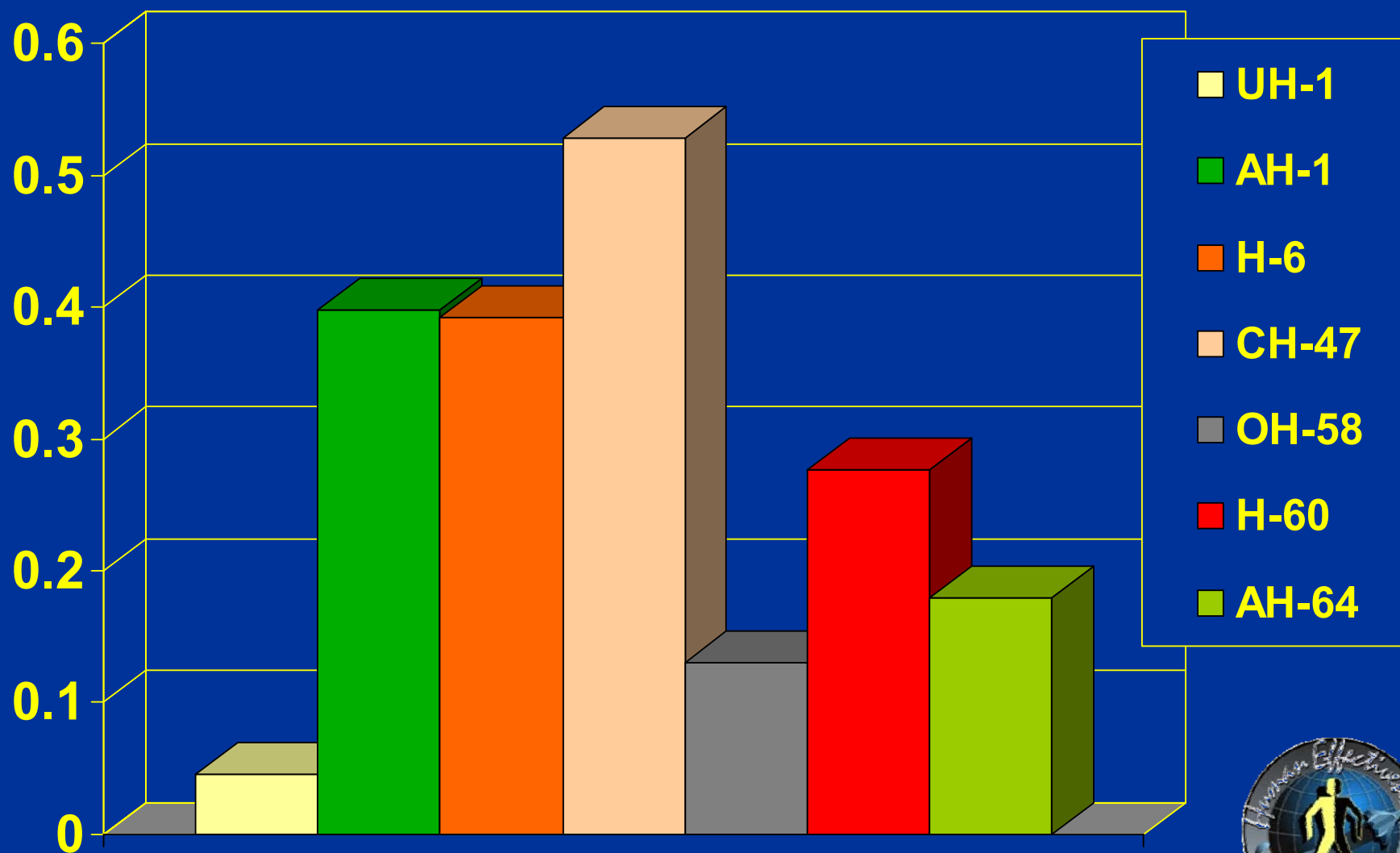


NHF Fatality Rates/100KHrs by MDS



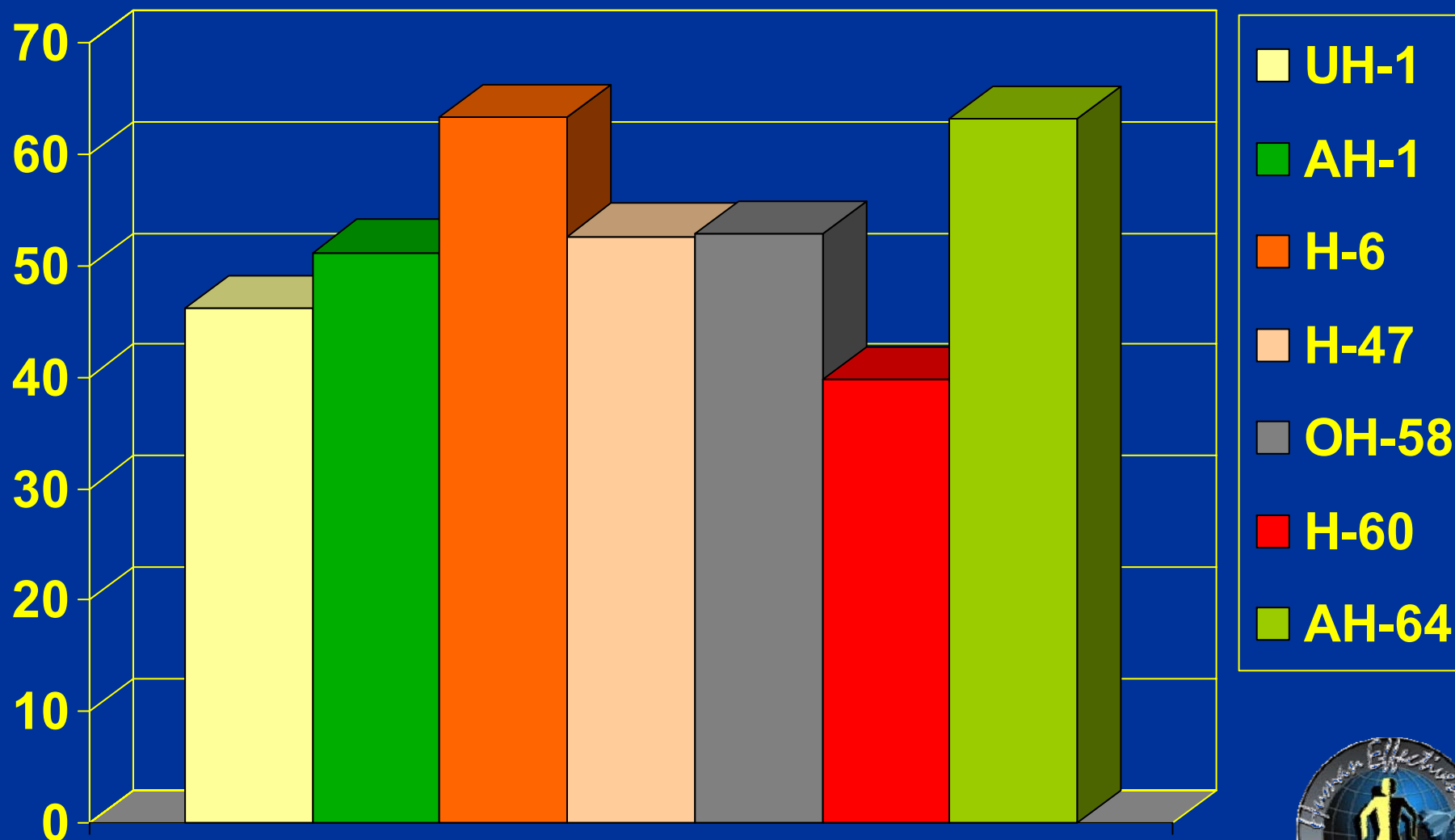


NHF Fatality Rates/100K Hours Adjusted for average personnel on board



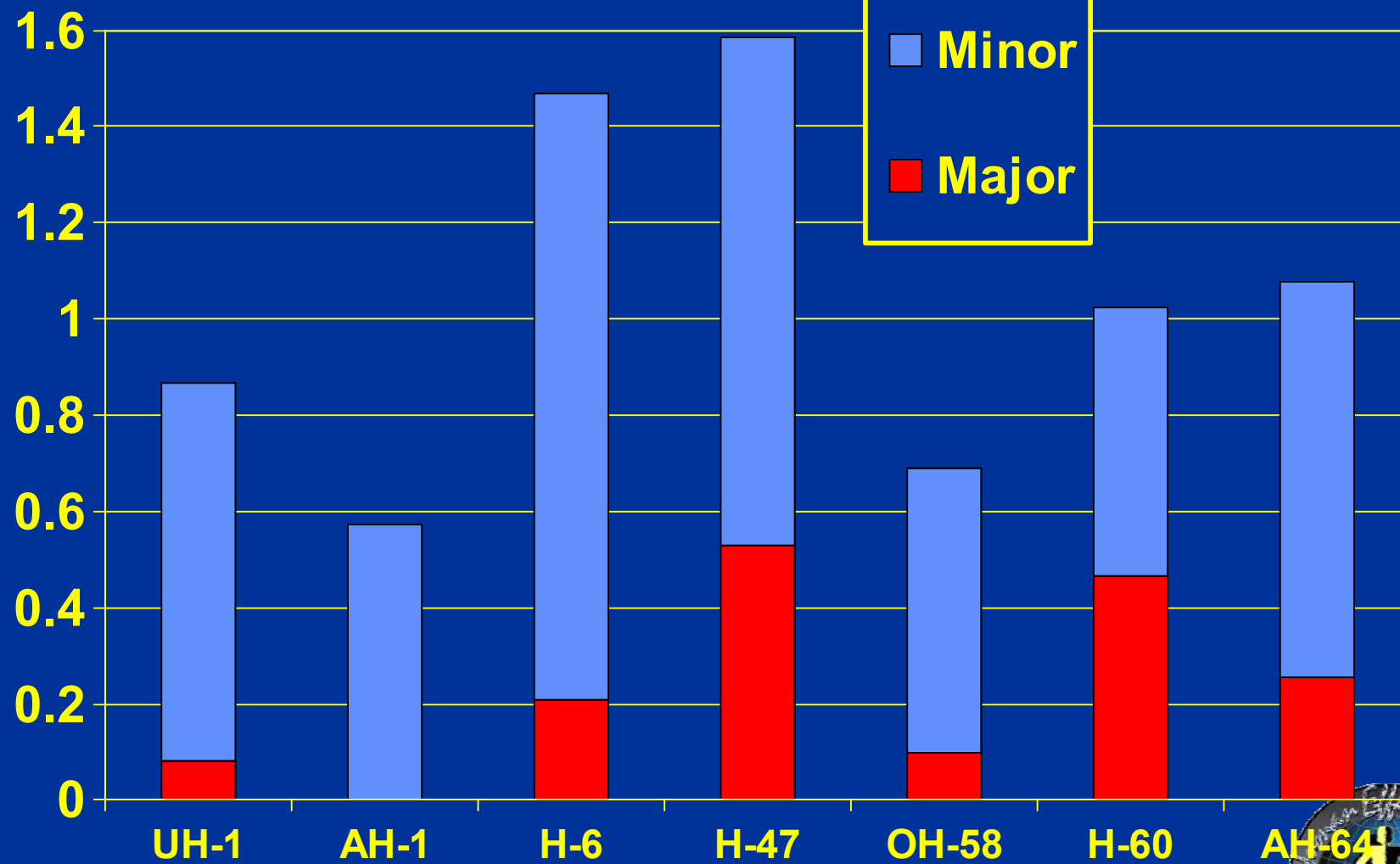


NHF Mishap Protection Factor



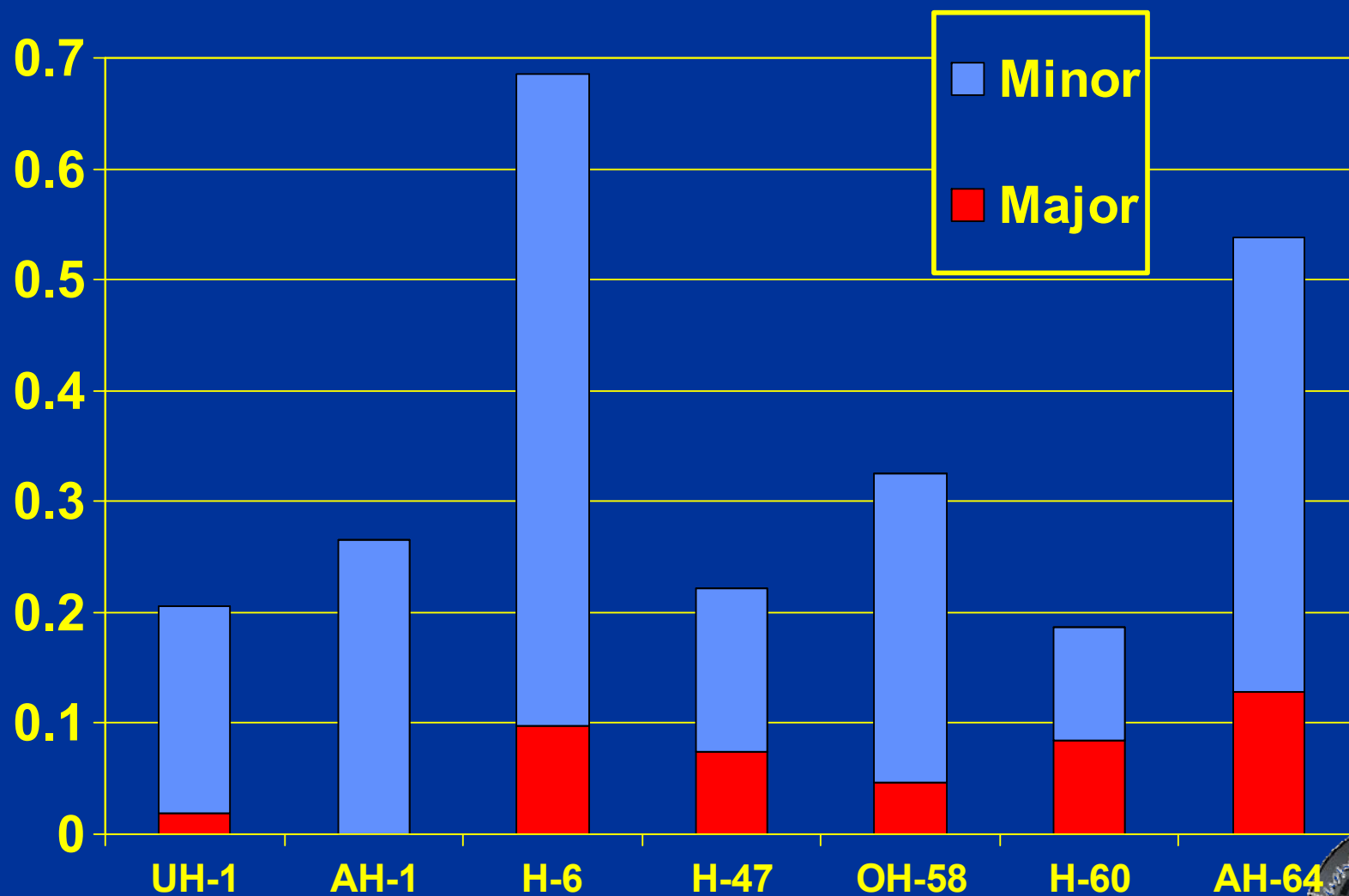


NHF Injury Rates/100K Hours by MDS



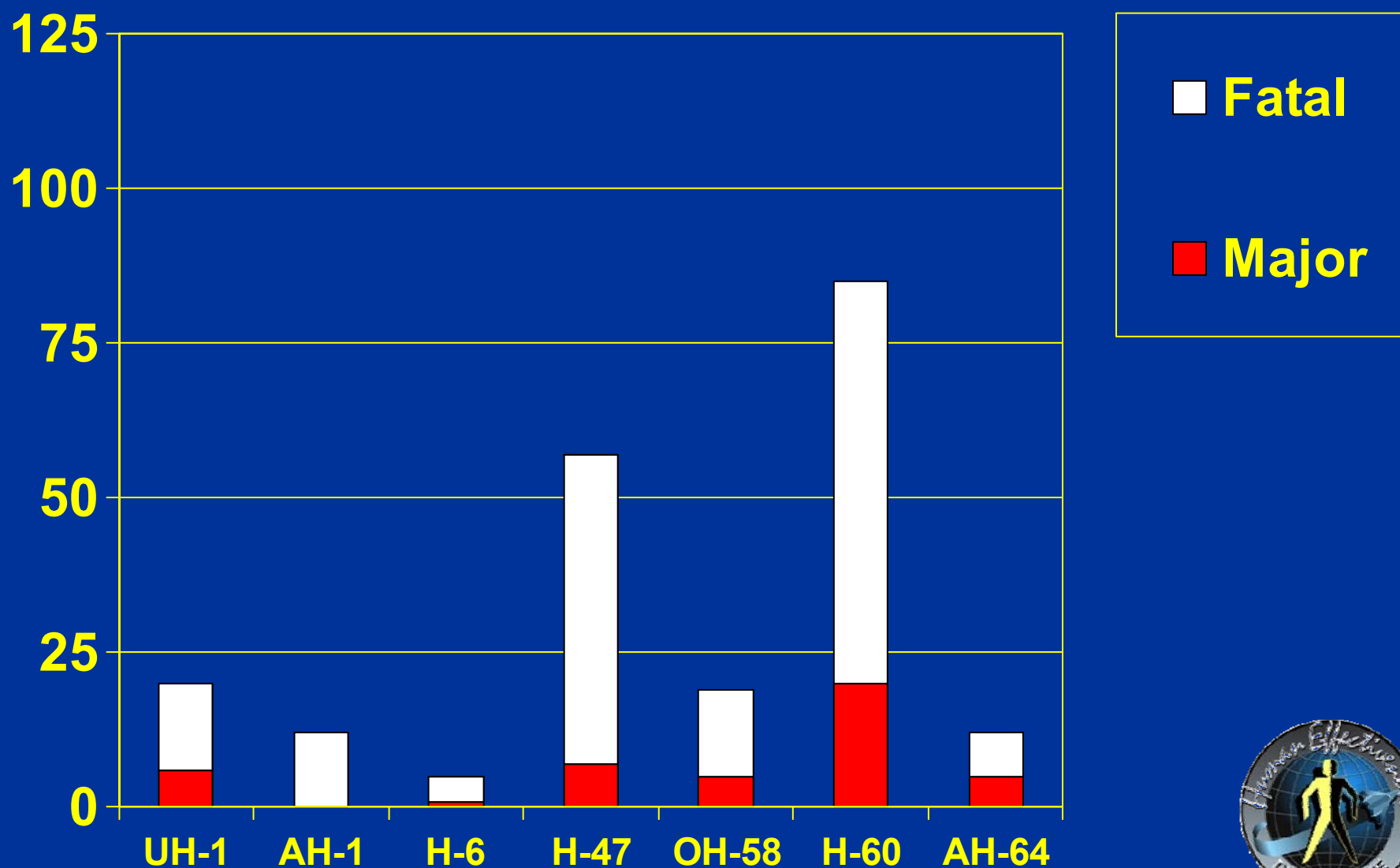


NHF Injury Rates/100K Hours Adjusted for average personnel on board



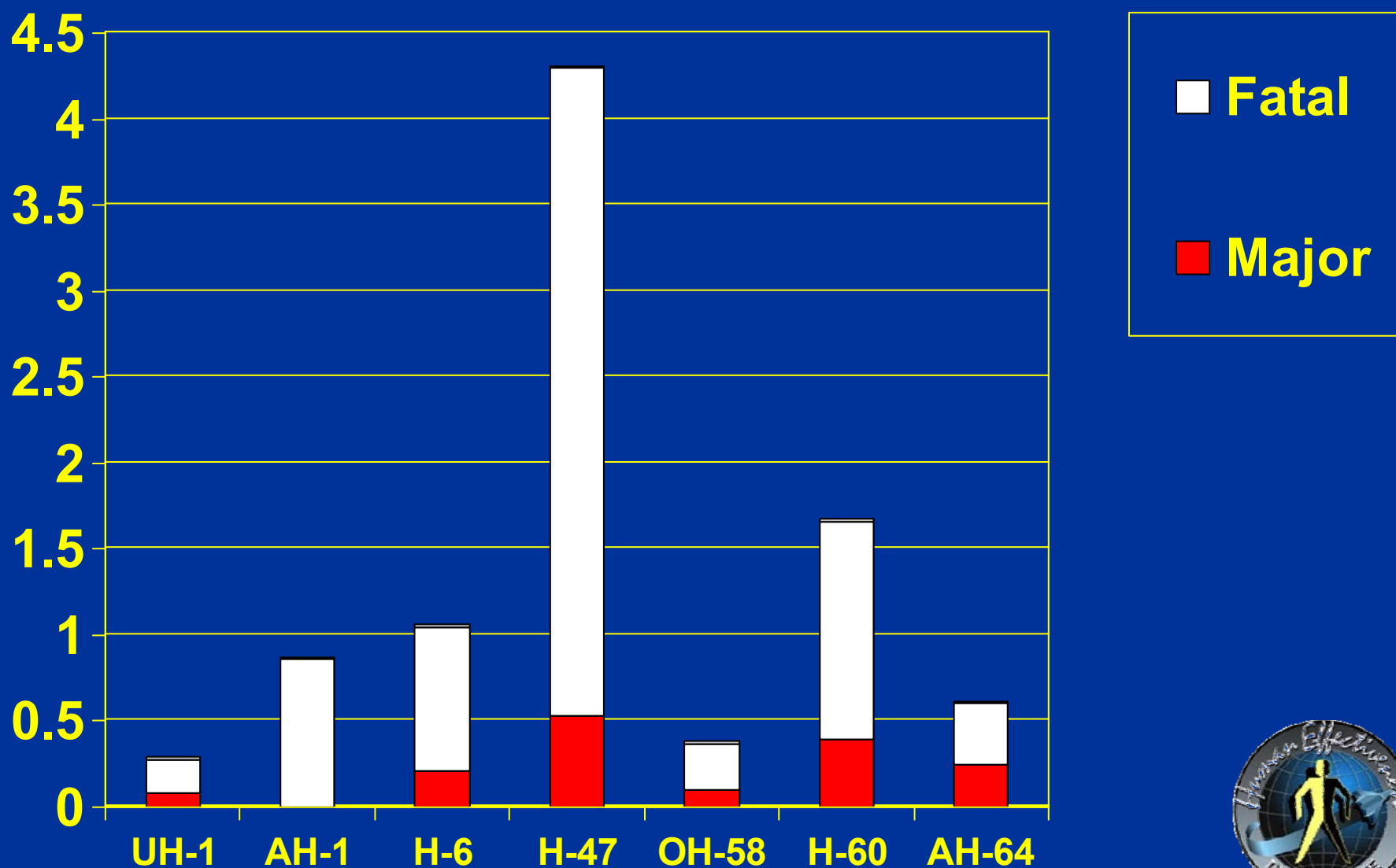


NHF Fatalities & Major Injuries by MDS



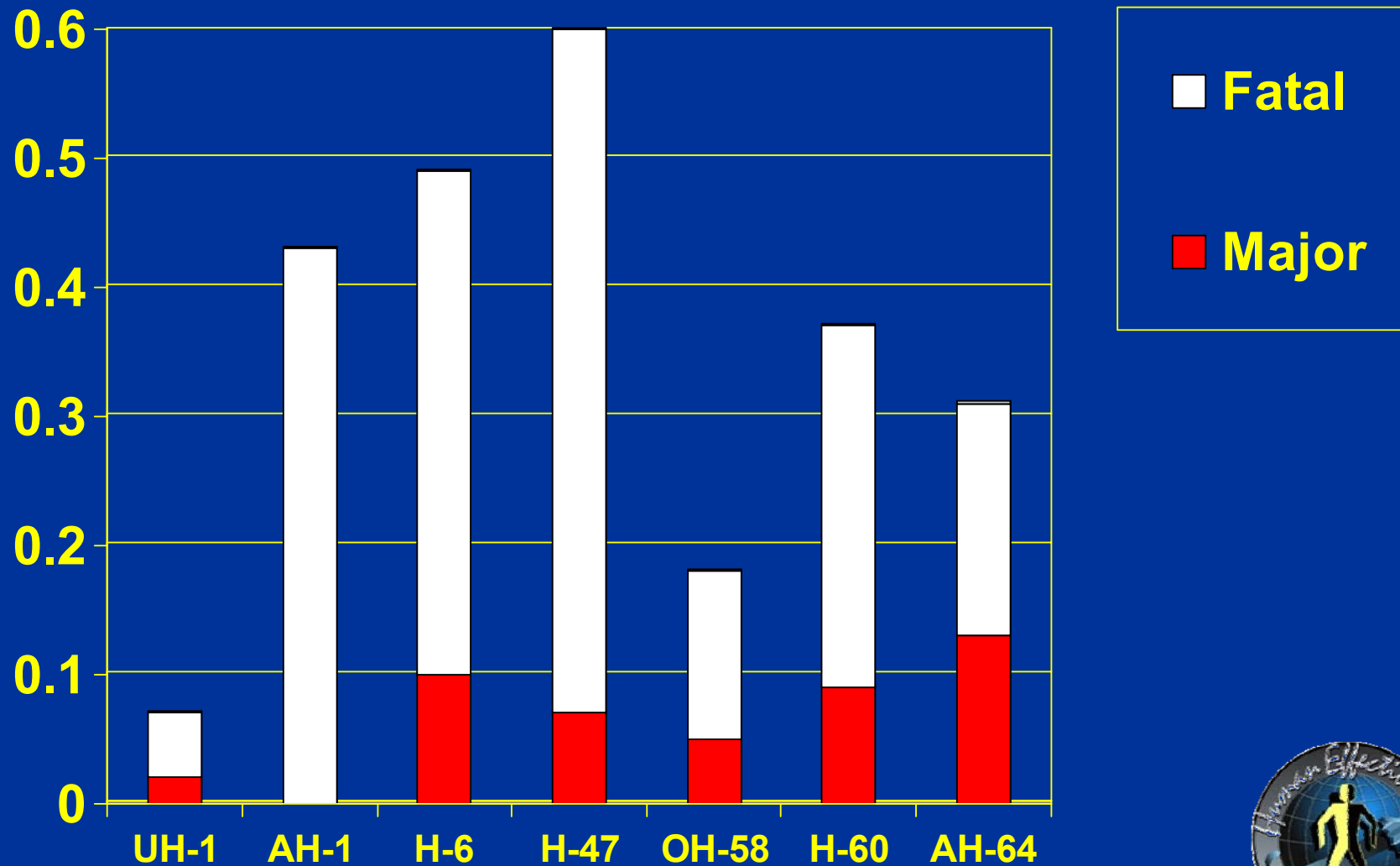


NHF Fatality & Injury Rates by MDS/100K Hours



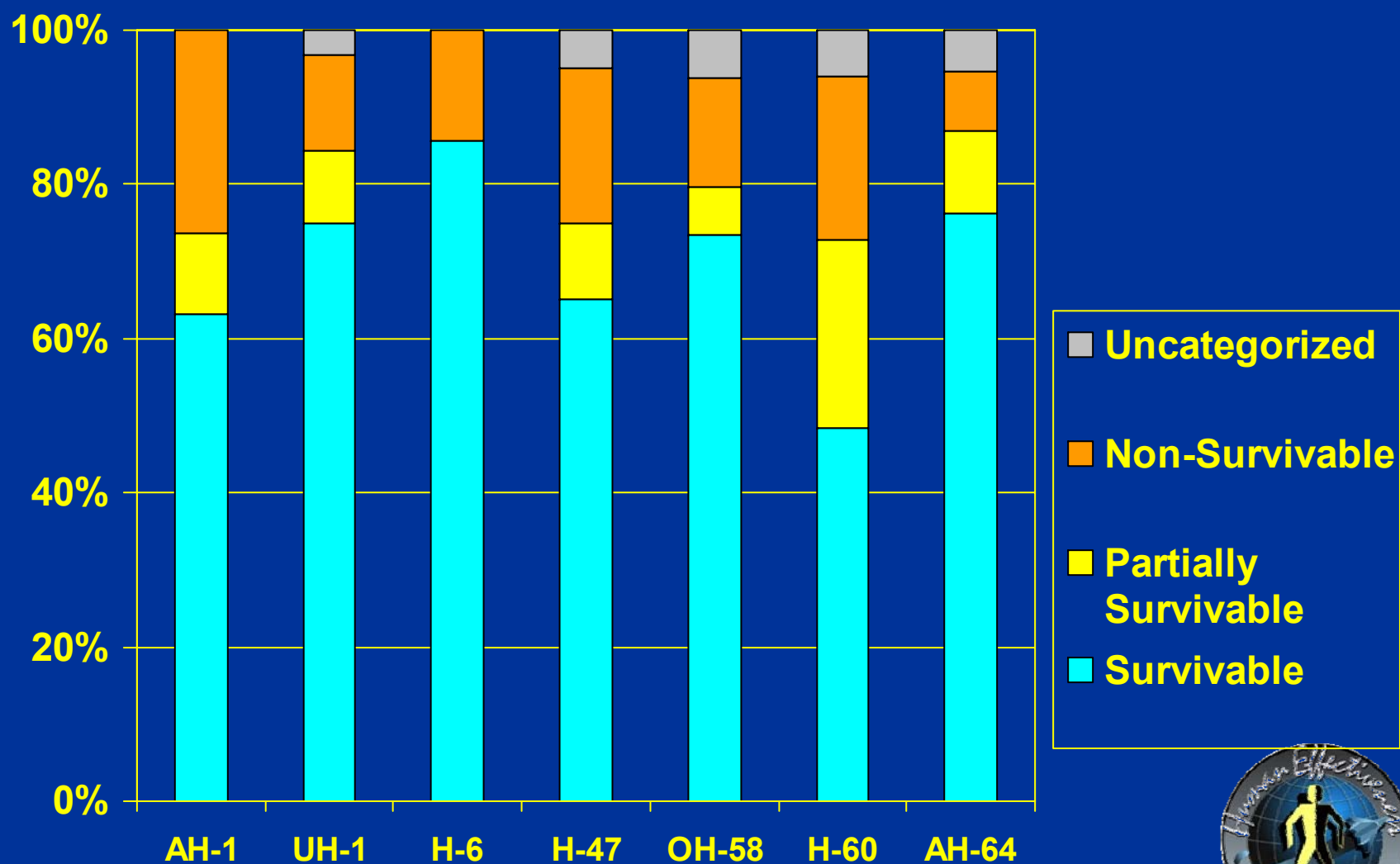


NHF Fatality & Injury Rates by MDS/100K Hours - Adjusted



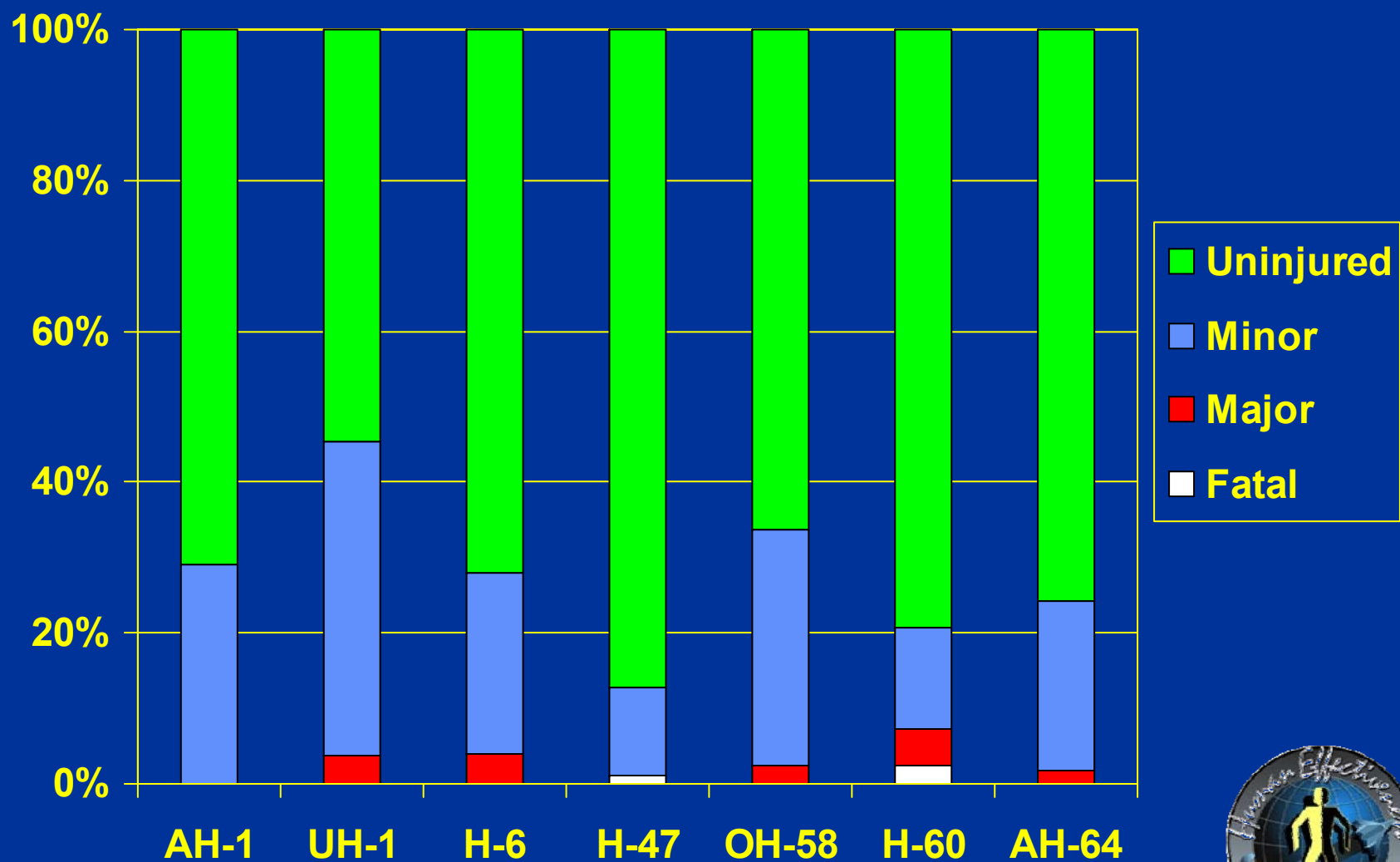


Percent Survivable Mishaps



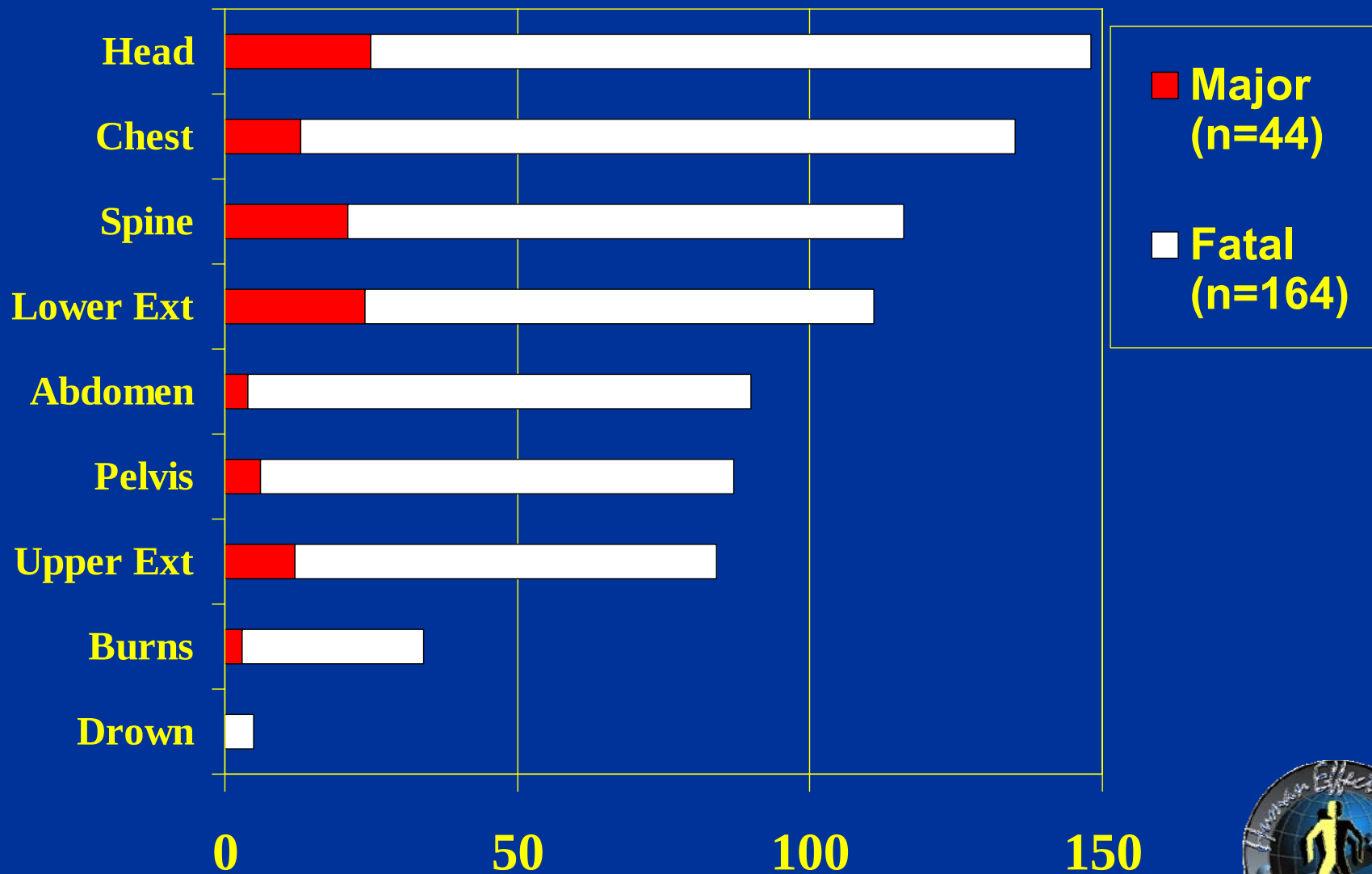


Percent Injuries in Survivable Mishaps





Army Rotary Wing Non-Human Factor Mishap Fatalities & Injuries





Pilot Fatality and Injury Location



PILOT Injuries n=409	Fatal	Major	Minor	Total
Head	60	14	39	113 (27.6%)
Chest	60	5	13	78 (19.1%)
Abdomen	43	2	3	48 (11.7%)
Pelvis	36	1	5	42 (10.3%)
Upper Ext	35	8	23	66 (16.1%)
Lower Ext	41	14	47	102 (24.9%)
Spine	45	17	35	97 (23.7%)

Pilot injuries were most often to the head,
lower extremity, and spine in NHF mishaps





Pilot Fatality and Injury Location



PILOTS (N = 409)	Fatal (N=69)	Non-Fatal (N=340)	Percent Fatal
Head	60 (87.0%)	53	53.1%
Chest	60 (87.0%)	18	76.9%
Abdomen	43 (62.3%)	5	89.6%
Pelvis	36 (52.2%)	6	85.7%
Upper Ext.	35 (50.7%)	31	53.0%
Lower Ext.	41 (59.4%)	61	40.2%
Spine	45 (65.2%)	52	46.4%

Percent of pilots with a given injury location who died





Non-Pilot Injury Location



Non-PILOT Injuries n=315	Fatal	Major	Minor	Total
Head	63	11	17	91 (28.9%)
Chest	62	8	5	75 (23.8%)
Abdomen	43	2	0	45 (14.3%)
Pelvis	45	5	5	55 (17.5%)
Upper Ext	37	4	13	54 (17.1%)
Lower Ext	46	10	20	76 (24.1%)
Spine	50	4	19	73 (23.2%)

Non-Pilot injuries were most often to the head,
lower extremity, chest, and spine in NHF mishaps





Non-pilot Fatality and Injury Patterns, by Location



Crew & PAX	Fatal (N=95)	Non-Fatal (N=220)	Percent Fatal
Head	63 (66.3%)	28	69.2%
Chest	62 (65.3%)	13	82.7%
Abdomen	43 (45.3%)	2	95.6%
Pelvis	45 (47.4%)	10	81.8%
Upper Ext.	37 (38.9%)	17	68.5%
Lower Ext.	46 (48.4%)	30	60.5%
Spine	50 (52.6%)	23	68.5%





Paired Pilot vs. Passenger & Crew

U.S. Army Rotary Wing Non-Human Factor Mishap Fatalities & Injuries



MISHAPS N = 207	PILOTS N = 409		PAX & CREW N = 315		$\Delta\%$
	#	%	#	%	
NOT INJURED	218	53.3	132	41.9	-11.4 RR = .77 (p<.0011)
MINOR INJURY	99	24.2	67	21.3	-2.9 RR = .89 (p<.388)
MAJOR INJURY	23	5.6	21	6.7	+1.04 RR = 1.2 (P<.538)
FATAL	69	16.9	95	30.2	+13.3 RR = 1.75 (P<.00006)



Emergency Locator Transmitters

U.S. Army Rotary Wing Non-Human Factor Mishaps



MISHAPS N = 207	Fatal Mishap N = 49		Non-Fatal Mishap N = 158	
	#	%	#	%
No ELT Installed or ELT not armed	8	25.6	4	3.2
ELT Installed	41	74.4	154	96.8





Summary & Recommendations





Summary

- NHF mishaps affect all MDS approximately equally
- Most NHF mishaps, injuries, and fatalities occur during cruise flight (High V^2)
- Most NHF cruise mishaps are due to engine failure or weather
- Engine failure is common to all phases of flight but is uniquely NOT the greatest problem with regards to injury during landing
- Head injury is associated with the greatest risk of fatality
- Non-pilot crew members and passengers have greater frequencies of more severe injuries than pilots
- Lack of an installed and armed ELT is highly associated with fatal mishaps





Safety Technology Recommendations



- **Require all personnel aboard helicopters to wear helmets at all times**
- **Provide real time, satellite datalink weather to all helicopter pilots**
- **Improve crashworthiness, flail and Gz protection of non-pilot seating to mitigate disproportionately high injury and death rates compared to pilots**
- **Improve the ability of rear compartment crew to remain in crashworthy seating below ETL**
- **Eliminate the need to use harnesses in place of crashworthy seating**
- **Emergency Locator Transmitters should be installed and armed on all aircraft**
- **Design emergency procedures to minimize V²**

