## NAVAL RESILIENCE



### THE ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOR, 7 December 1941

# RESILIENCE LESSONS FROM THE ATTACK ON PEARL HARBOR

Japanese naval aviation conducted a devastating attack on the American naval base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii on Sunday 7 December 1941, causing significant destruction to the U.S. Pacific Fleet. The measures taken by the Americans following the attack, however, converted this defeat into a remarkable case of resilience. This transformation can be analyzed through the resilience model developed by Maritime Strategy Research.



NH 50930 Pearl Harbor Attack. Naval History and Heritage Command.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The attack on Pearl Harbor came as a surprise for the American Navy and was a resounding tactical success for the Japanese. At the time of the strike, the United States and Japan were not at war and the naval base at Pearl Harbor was not prepared to counter this air attack.

As a consequence of this audacious attack the Americans suffered significant losses, including 2,403 death, 18 ships sunk or damaged, and 159 planes destroyed.



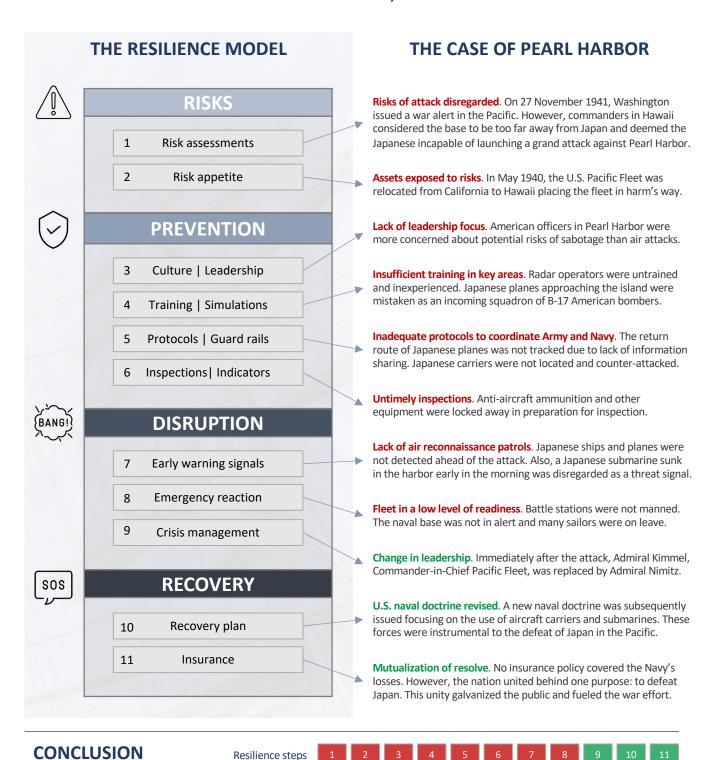
#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

André Fournier is a naval historian and risk management practitioner with more than 25 years of experience. He is also a risk researcher and believes that naval history provides lessons of risk management that are replicable to modern-day business situations.

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The American losses suffered at Pearl Harbor are largely explained by failures encountered in the initial 8 steps of the resilience model. However, in the aftermath of the attack, the Americans took decisive actions that addressed the final 3 steps of the model to reverse the situation and ultimately won the war against Japan. Pearl Harbor well

Resilience steps

demonstrates that long-term resilience is achievable through taking appropriate necessary resilience measures, despite initial aggregation of missteps and failures.