

Edition II

LINK

Perspective

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Career Magazine for the Navy Professional



The First Word...

COMMANDER, NAVY PERSONNEL COMMAND



Shipmates,

It was my honor to assume command of the Navy Personnel Command on Oct. 1, and in doing so, relieve our new Chief of Naval Personnel, Vice Adm. Gerry Hoewing. Admiral Hoewing was the architect of countless improvements in the personnel arena and we were all the beneficiaries of the efforts he led, and will continue to lead.

I report here from the fleet. As Commander of the John F. Kennedy Battle Group, I was ever aware of the tremendous support we were receiving from Millington. Detailers — who in years past were thought to be difficult to reach — rode helicopters and RHIB's between my ships in the Arabian Gulf to meet with their constituents as advocates for career progression.

MWR programs that had always provided enjoyable diversions from combat operations were accelerated in response to our increased tasking during our on-going war on terrorism.

Promotions, reenlistment bonuses, rating conversions, retention counseling, and countless other programs kept our Sailors' careers moving forward, while a variety of family support programs, that are the envy of other employers, allowed these Sailors to concentrate on the mission at hand.

But as impressed as I was with the support of Navy Personnel Command before, I now realize that this command provides so much more service to the fleet than I was ever aware. Having flown and sailed in the fleet for many years as a "customer" of NPC, I now find myself with a wonderful opportunity to serve the fleet from Millington. And I certainly look forward to the exciting challenge of meeting your requirements.

I urge you to contact us with your personnel needs, and with your ideas for improving existing programs or implementing new ones. Visit www.staynavy.navy.mil or call 1-866-U-ASK-NPC with your questions, comments and critiques.

NPC is staffed with very talented people who wear the uniform that says "I came from the fleet, I serve the fleet, and I'm going back to the fleet." They wear civilian clothes after years of wearing the uniform, and will never forget what it means to be on the front lines. And they are career civil servants who have dedicated themselves to a life of service, and provide tremendous support to our Navy and our nation. I look forward to working with them and with each of you.

Tomaszewski
S. J. Tomaszewski
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy

Inside...

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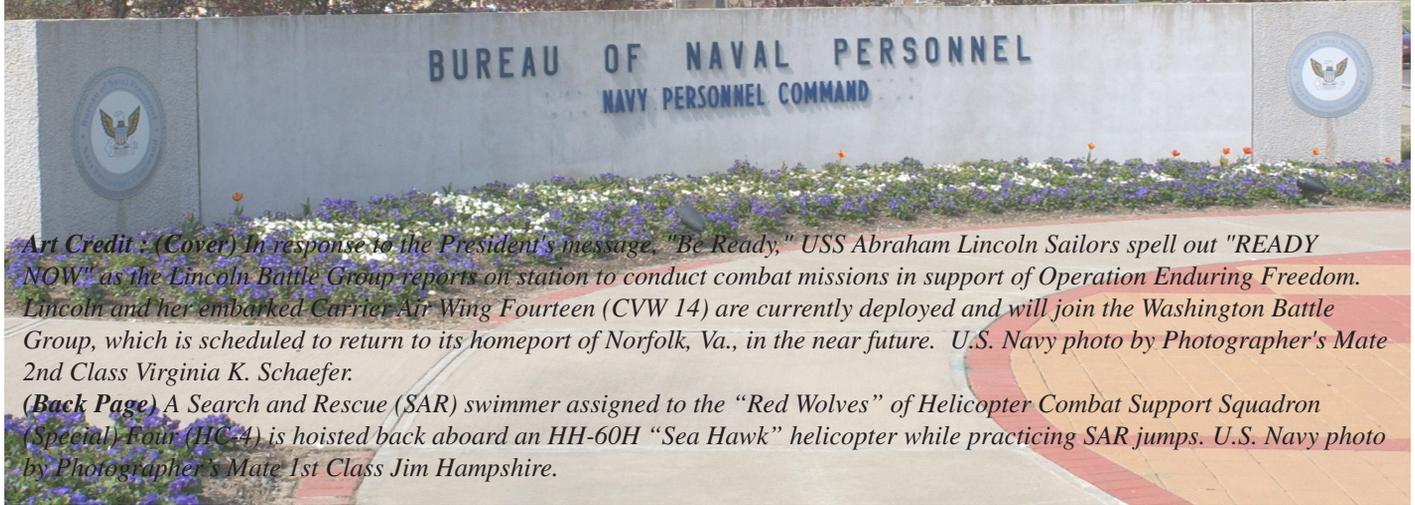
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Art Credit : (Cover) In response to the President's message, "Be Ready," USS Abraham Lincoln Sailors spell out "READY NOW" as the Lincoln Battle Group reports on station to conduct combat missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Lincoln and her embarked Carrier Air Wing Fourteen (CVW 14) are currently deployed and will join the Washington Battle Group, which is scheduled to return to its homeport of Norfolk, Va., in the near future. U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Virginia K. Schaefer.

(Back Page) A Search and Rescue (SAR) swimmer assigned to the "Red Wolves" of Helicopter Combat Support Squadron (Special) Four (HC-4) is hoisted back aboard an HH-60H "Sea Hawk" helicopter while practicing SAR jumps. U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 1st Class Jim Hampshire.

Link-Perspective is the career bulletin of the Navy professional. Its mission is to provide all Navy officers information regarding key personnel policy changes, reassignment trends, and emerging developments within their areas of expertise to enhance their professional development. *Link-Perspective* is approved for official dissemination of professional information of interest to the Department of Defense and to appropriate professionally related communities. This information does not necessarily reflect the official Navy position and does not supersede information in other official Navy publications. Unless otherwise noted, articles in *Link-Perspective* may be reprinted and disseminated without permission. Please give appropriate credit.

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The *Link-Perspective* office is located in Room A107, Jamie Whitten Bldg. 791, Millington, TN.

Before you move, take a *virtual* trip to Personal Property

SMARTWebMove is an online program that eligible Navy service members and their families can use to arrange routine basic moves from their current duty station to a new duty station or homeport within the Continental United States (CONUS). You can access the program 24-hours a day, seven days a week from home, work, on board ship... anywhere you have internet access.

Who is eligible?

SMARTWebMove eligibility is based on member's orders and the location of their household goods. Some restrictions apply regarding types of property that can be moved via a **SMARTWebMove** application...mobile homes, boats, etc. **SMARTWebMove** is designed to service routine moves and basic entitlements based on Permanent Change of Station (PCS) orders. Currently, it services Sailors and their families who have PCS orders to a new duty station, homeport, home of selection or home of record within the Continental United States (CONUS). It does not yet service Personally Procured Moves (formerly DITY) and POV shipments. **SMARTWebMove** is being implemented at all Navy Personal Property Shipping Offices (PPSO) within CONUS by the end of FY 02 and may be available at your command now. Future plans call for roll out to OCONUS fleet concentration Navy PPSOs in FY03.

Benefits of using **SMARTWebMove**

The customer is in control. Access 24-hours a day, seven days a week eliminates the need to schedule an appointment and visit a Personal Property Office (PPO) to set up a move.

A User ID allows easy access. Customers can enter and exit the program and work on the application as often as they want until final submission.

Service members receive custom entitlements counseling based on orders and the Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR) that can be reviewed at their convenience.

There's less paperwork. The customer can arrange up to three (3) shipments with a single application.

Help is at your fingertips. The help system can be accessed on every page. It con-

tains information on entitlements, move-related tips and how-to's for using **SMARTWebMove**.

High touch and high tech. The move application is automatically sent to the correct PPO for review by staff. Customers are contacted via e-mail to let them know the status of their application and to provide information on the final approved move ar-



rangements.

To arrange your household goods move online, you will need to have the following items readily available:

- Your PCS orders.
- Proof of Dependents (page 2 from your service record).
- (Agent Only) - Current original Power of Attorney.
- An e-mail address for the member or applicant that will be in effect until the move date.

SMARTWebMove features make online entitlements counseling and move planning fast and simple:

- Radio Buttons and Checkboxes for easy input.
- AutoFill feature fills in repeat information for you.
- Easy Edit allows you to make as many changes as you need until final submission.
- AutoSave feature automatically saves data as you go.
- Status Bar records what's completed.
- Multi-session Access allows you to exit the program and log back in later as often as needed to complete your application.

Your Navy Household Goods Entitlement and **SMART WebMove**

New users start **SMARTWebMove** by answering a short questionnaire about their orders and moving plans to determine their

eligibility to use the program. **SMARTWebMove** is designed to service basic station-to-station moves. If you are eligible to use the program, you will be given a summary of your full Navy entitlement and the options that are available in **SMARTWebMove**. If you are not eligible for the program, just contact Personal Property for an appointment. Your Navy entitlement does not change.

System Security

SMARTWebMove meets stringent Federal security standards. Your move information is protected with some of the same safeguards used by banks and credit cards companies.

- Safe data storage on a secure server.
- Password protected so only you can access your record.
- PkI-certified server encrypts your data and protects your personal information from unauthorized use.

How to use **SMARTWebMove**

It's easy to arrange your online move using **SMARTWebMove**. Here are the steps:

- Log on to **SMARTWebMove**. (www.smartwebmove.navsupsup.navy.mil)
- Set up your user account.
- Enter pick-up and delivery information and your preferred move date.
- Review online entitlement information. Submit your application.
- Send your orders and other support documents (if required).
- A Personal Property Office counselor will retrieve your application and contact you by e-mail about your move. Once the move is booked, you will be contacted with your approved pickup date and the name of the moving company.
- Be there on move day!

To access **SMART WebMove**, go to www.smartwebmove.navsupsup.navy.mil

SMARTWebMove is a "one-touch" service sponsored by the Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP).

Navy supports new parents through the Fleet and Family Support Center

by Fleet and Family Support Center
Public Affairs

If you ever ask someone their opinion of Petty Officer 2nd Class Marissa Miller and her 1-year-old special-needs daughter, Maya, you will always get the same response: "They are beautiful together."

That is what Donna Barker says, and she should know.

Barker is a family support worker with the New Parent Support (NPS) program at the Fleet and Family Support Center (FFSC) in Ingleside, Texas. She has been meeting with Miller since before Maya was born, repeatedly driving the 45 minutes from Ingleside to Miller's home in Corpus Christi, Texas, to help her with every aspect of child-birth and child-rearing.

Through NPS and the home visitation service, Miller has earned Barker's friendship and respect.

"She was doing well before the program," Barker said. "But with the continued support that she gets, she is just doing a great job as a mother."

As a single mother, Miller manages to perform her Naval duties while taking care of a special-needs daughter who already has suffered through three surgeries to correct a congenital obstruction of the anal opening that was impacting her bowel control. This occurs in about one of every 5,000 infants.

But to hear it from Miller, Barker is the real hero.

"Donna Barker is the sweetest person

I've ever come across," said Miller, 24, originally from Baltimore. "She helped me through Maya's surgeries and can make me laugh when I really need to. She really shows me the good side of life."

Barker understands how important the NPS program is for new mothers. She used the program herself when she was having a child.

"I was using the home visitation services when my husband was stationed in Hawaii, so when we moved to Ingleside, the first thing I did was become involved with the FFSC there," Barker, 30, said. "I had such a good experience in all of the NPS programs that when I moved to another base, I wanted to give something back to the program that had helped me so much. So I started working there."

NPS is a voluntary educational program providing many different kinds of support for new parents. The core component of the NPS is the home visitation program for clients who are in need of intensive support and education. Home visitation is a long-term program that can last from the beginning of pregnancy to 5 years of age.

"We try to help them bond and interact with their child, especially in the first year of life," said Ann Bates, director of Ingleside New Parent Support. "The goal is to enhance the child's independence so active duty members can focus more on their jobs, rather than always worrying about what is happening at home."

The NPS program provides information to parents about how to promote healthy growth and development for their infant or toddler, and helps new families adapt to the mobile military lifestyle.

Classes and playgroups cover a wide range of topics including: prenatal care, healthy pregnancy/healthy baby classes, infant and toddler stimulus groups and painless discipline.

"The beauty of the program is that the Navy has given us the flexibility to tailor it to meet the needs of each family," Bates said.

Like all FFSC programs, NPS is a cost-free, military benefit available to all service

members and their families.

"The NPS in Ingleside, where I work, sees about 400 to 600 families a year," said Bates. She said that some families have grown attached to the caring staff. "We may have one or two families who come in twice a week just to visit us."

Miller is involved in another Navy service called the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP). This program is mandatory for active duty service members who have family members with chronic illness or incapacity, mental illness or learning disabilities.

EFMP ensures that Families will not be deployed or relocated anywhere that does not have adequate care for their special needs child. FFSCs provide information and referral about local community services and support groups available to families enrolled in EFMP.

For Sailors like Miller, the NPS and EFMP are two benefits that she would hate to live without.

"These programs have made my time in the military a lot easier," Miller said. "It would be hard, dealing with Maya on my own. The programs have given me more knowledge, and I feel like I have more to look forward to with my child."

The FFSC provides operational, mobility and counseling support to service members and their families, helping them adapt to military life. FFSC services are a free benefit to all military personnel, including activated Reservists, retirees and Department of Defense civilians in overseas locations.

NPS is available at most, but not all, of the 67 FFSC delivery sites worldwide. Centers that do not offer NPS will refer families to comparable community programs.

For more information on FFSC programs like NPS and EFMP, or to locate the nearest Center, visit FFSC on the Web at www.persnet.navy.mil/pers66. Or call The Center's 24-hour information and referral hotline at (800) FSC-LINE.

For more Chief of Naval Personnel news, visit the custom CNP Navy NewsStand Web page at www.news.navy.mil/local/cnp.



Submit Address Changes On-line at
www.persnet.navy.mil/periodicals/link-perspective/Link-Perspective.htm

Make a smooth transition to your next command with Sponsor Assignment Aid

by Center For Career Development
Public Affairs



The Navy's leader in career information and interactive customer service, the StayNAVY Website, recently launched Sponsor Assignment Aid, a two-way communications tool intended to help commands communicate with newly-reporting Sailors and Officers.

The Sponsor Assignment Aid was originally the focus of Great Lakes Service School Command in an effort to establish initial communications between the gaining command and the new Sailor.

"Service School Command implemented

an awesome tool designed to put the Sailor's needs first by helping them establish contact with their new command," said Lt. j.g. Bill Danzi, a spokesman with the Center for Career Development. "The new online resource provided by the StayNAVY Website is designed to support all active duty Sailors and officers and make their transition process between duty stations a smooth one."

All active-duty members who are in receipt of orders can utilize the Sponsor Assignment Aid to request a sponsor and communicate directly with their gaining command. Once the member enters his/her information online, they will receive a tracking number which helps monitor the request. The gaining command will then be asked to provide their command sponsor coordina-

tor contact information to the member.

The Web-based tool supports all Sailors and officers by providing a 24-hour-a-day Internet communications link between them and their future command.

The platform for this tool is the StayNAVY Website. Since its launch in March 2001, the StayNAVY website has attracted over 2.2 million visitors, including active, reserve and retired Sailors and Officers and their families.

To access the Sponsor Assignment Aid, go to the link, "Request a Sponsor" at www.staynavy.navy.mil.

For more news from the Center for Career Development, go to the CCD custom Navy NewsStand Web page at www.news.navy.mil/local/ccd.

Citizen Sailors and civilian employers: know your rights

by Lt. j.g. Sean M. Spicer, Naval Information Bureau Det
206 Public Affairs

After the attacks of September 11, 2001, more than 85,000 Reservists were recalled to active duty, including more than 10,000 naval personnel. Most had orders for up to a year but would leave not knowing if they would be away the full year or be back home in months.

Now, eleven months later, many of these Reservist are being demobilized and heading home as military requirements have changed. They are welcomed back by families and friends but many are left wondering how their employers will receive their return.

Although many employers look favorably on military service and even encourage it, there are plenty who find it burdensome to have an employee who spends time away from the job.

Recalls during times war may not occur often, but almost every Reservist has had to face their employer at one point to discuss fulfilling their military requirements. Aside for active duty call-ups, time off for monthly drills and annual training can be worrisome for employees and employers.

Yet, many Reservists, including those who have served for several years, are unaware of their legal rights when it comes to their civilian employment and military service. In order to alleviate concerns, many Reserve Centers have incorporated seminars on this subject into their indoctrination classes.

Naval Reserve Capt. Sam Wright of the Juge Advocate General Corps (JAGC), who often speaks at indoctrinations, is one of the leading experts in the area of service members' employment rights.

Wright says he often encounters seasoned Sailors who are unaware of their legal rights, just as many employers do not understand their legal obligation.

During Wright's presentation, he focuses on the law that protects service members, the Uniformed Services Employment and

Reemployment Act (USERRA), which was enacted into law in 1994. It updated a 1940's law, the Veterans Re-Employment Rights Acts, which gives Reservists who leave their civilian jobs certain rights to both perform their military service and ensure their civilian job upon completion of their military service.

During a recent indoctrination at Naval Air Facility Washington, Capt. Wright spoke to a group of 30 Naval Reservists, which spanned from non-prior service to senior officers who had recently left active duty.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Keith Fykes, who until recently helped coordinate NAF Washington's INDOC classes, said Wright's speech is something that all indoctrination classes should hear. "This is an excellent lecture especially for new Reservists. More than 80 percent of the people probably were surprised at the rights they have."

Fykes added that with the recent mobilizations of Reservists, it is important for Sailors and their families to know their rights.

Wright said that many employers and even some Reservists are under the false impression that USERRA only covers Reservists who are called to active duty during time of war. However, the law extends to all service, voluntary or involuntary, monthly drills, annual training and active duty for special work (ADSW).

USERRA ensures that service members are promptly reinstated in their civilian jobs and are treated for seniority and pension purposes as if they had never left. Additionally, it prohibits discrimination against those who are serving and those who have served. Just as a potential employer is barred from asking a young woman if she intends on having children, USERRA provides that employers cannot discriminate because of an employee's intent to either join or stay in military service.

Many U.S. Department of Labor regulations governing employment practices only apply at thresholds determined by the number of employees, but with USERRA there is no threshold. Whether the company is a Fortune 500 company with thousands of employees

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Citizen...

continued from page 6

ees or a small business with two employees, USERRA is applicable. The law even extends to those who work in areas like construction and are employed through what is referred to as a "hiring hall" or similar operation.

While USERRA guarantees an employee's job will be waiting for them when they return from service, it does not mean their civilian employer will pay them during their absence. The federal government, many states and a growing list of businesses provide for 15 days of paid leave to those that serve but many companies, large and small, require employees to go on unpaid leave while serving.

USERRA offers a great deal of protection for those who chose to serve in the Reserves but there are some basic eligibility requirements that must be met.

First, the person must hold a position of employment and must leave that position for military service. Second, they must give either written or oral notice to the employer. Although it is not required to "ask permission" or give advance notice, Capt. Wright suggested that working with your employer to provide for a smooth transition is a good way to promote healthy employer-employee relations.

Last, they must be released from service under honorable conditions and not serve more than five years before returning to work. When the employee returns it must be done in a "timely" fashion after being released from service.

If the length of service was less than 31 days (annual training, monthly drill, etc.) you must report back for the next full day of work. The law does provide that you have eight hours of rest after you have safely returned back to home.

For example, a Reservist on a drill weekend who ends their Sunday drill at 1600 hours but has to drive home seven hours arriving back home at 2300 hours, has eight hours from that time to report back to work. In this instance though, if the Reservist worked an early morning shift, they would not be required to report, but it is equally important to note that while the employer must abide by the law, they do not have to pay employees for shifts or days not worked.

If the service was between 31 and 180

days, you must return to work within 14 days. And for those who serve more than 180 days, they must report back within 90 days. In any case where the service is more than 31 days, the employer has a right to see documentation. None of these requirements prevent the employee from returning early if it is agreeable to the employer. The employer must make "prompt" reinstatement but this does not necessarily mean the day after they are informed you are returning. They do have an opportunity to make the appropriate adjustments within a reasonable amount of time.

There are of course some exceptions when employers are not required to re-employ a person. For example, a company that has downsized from 1,000 to 100 employees while the service member was gone, can deny re-employment if they can prove that the position was cut or discontinued on a basis other than seniority. In these rare cases, the burden of proof is on the employer. Em-

ferent location.

USERRA also protects returning service members from being fired upon their return from active duty. If the active duty service is less than 31 days, there is no specific protection. But if the service was more than 31 days but less than 180 days, you are protected for 180 days against arbitrary dismissal except for just cause. If the service extends beyond 180 days (up to the five year limit), the law protects you for one year against unreasonable dismissal.

The Veterans' Employment and Training Service in the U.S. Department of Labor, which oversees and investigates complaints and violations, handle enforcement of USERRA. A list of agents who can initiate and investigation can be found on the agency's Web site at www.dol.gov/dol.vets.

Additionally, an organization within the Department of Defense called the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (www.esgr.org or 1-800-336-4590) works with employers and Reservists to both resolve disputes and promote a stronger relationship between employers and the military.

Captain Wright has published numerous articles on the subject of employment rights which can be found on the Web site of the Reserve Officers Association, www.roa.org.

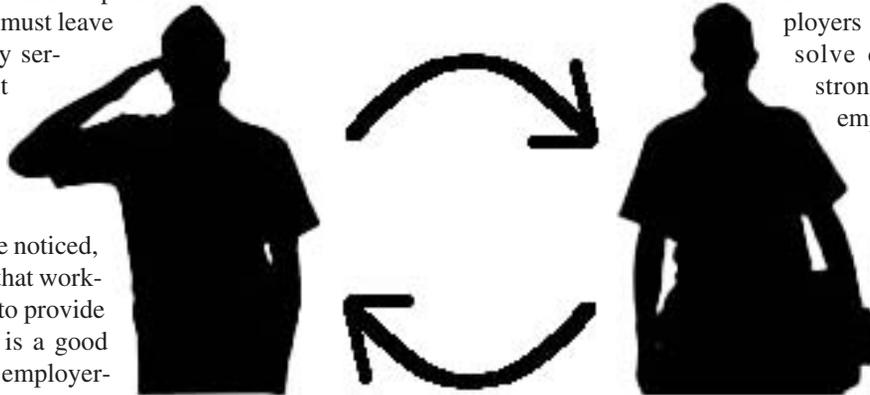
After hearing Capt.

Wright's presentation, everyone agreed it gave them a clearer understanding of their rights.

Jennifer Perkins, a non-prior service enlistee from Willington, Del., said she knew her civilian employer had to legally allow her to serve but was pleasantly surprised to hear Wright describe all of the available rights. "Knowing about these rights makes it more likely for people to serve and that their job will be there when they get back," she said.

Lt. Cmdr Mike Christman, a helicopter pilot who served 10 years on active duty and three in the Reserves, believes that after the attacks of last September 11, many more people will want to serve. Knowing they can do so and keep their civilian job makes it easier. "You can satisfy your patriotic duty and be assured you have your job when it is over," he said.

For more news about the Naval Reserve Force, visit their custom Navy NewsStand page at www.news.navy.mil/local/nrf.



ployers cannot fill the position and then claim it is no longer available.

After returning from active service, USERRA provides many entitlements. The most important benefit is that employers must make appropriate training available upon return.

Another major aspect of the law is that employers must treat employees who are serving as if they never left in terms of seniority, pension and status. If the company operates at all on a seniority system, then employees are entitled to pay raises, benefits and promotions that would have been received had they never left.

If military service was less than 91 days, employees are entitled to the exact same job upon returning. But if it was more than 91 days, employers can put the employee in a job that is equal in status but different from the exact one previously held. Interestingly, the law also treats location as an aspect of status, meaning that they cannot unreasonably offer the "same position" but in a dif-

Escape with the Armed Forces Vacation Club

by Journalist 2nd Class Elizabeth St. John, Navy District
Washington Public Affairs

Dreaming of unwinding and escaping from life's everyday worries? Having visions of lying on a white sandy beach enveloped by the sun and the gentle sound of lapping waves?

Who wouldn't like this kind of picture postcard vacation? But affording it is another issue. A weekend getaway is more affordable, but that's not really enough time to lose the worries of the world.

But don't despair; members of the Armed Forces and DoD affiliated personnel have a reason to celebrate.

The Armed Forces Vacation Club offers seven-day stays at resorts around the world for only \$249. Resorts from such varied locales as California, New York, Mexico and Europe make their excess inventory available to the club. Because the program operates on a space available basis, most resorts have units available during the off-seasons. Units also become available on a short-term basis.

The program began as a test in 1999 in Washington, D.C. to measure the interest in off-season vacations. Having proved very popular, the program expanded to include all of the United States and Europe. On Jan. 21, 2000, the program began including resorts around the world and also began granting eligibility to anyone affiliated with DoD and all seven Uniformed Services.

"This is a pretty good program. Unfortunately, not many people take advantage of it. There are great opportunities to vacation in places like Orlando, Fla., for example, in November and December," said Nathaniel Roach, NDW MWR recreation assistant.

The club also offers vacation opportunities at high-demand resorts and during peak seasons, but these are more limited than space

available units.

Making reservations with the club is a simple and quick process:

- Search the Web site and choose a destination.
- Call the toll-free reservation line.
- First-time callers will receive an account number, which will be used to make future reservations.
- Have a credit card number ready to provide to the club representative.



The Armed Forces Vacation Club takes reservations from two to 360 days in advance. Prospective vacationers have 24 hours to cancel their reservation, providing the reservation is at least 14 days in advance.

A written confirmation is mailed after 24 hours. When making the reservation, the representative asks for an installation number, which is available on the reservation Web site. Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) will receive a rebate for each reservation made.

Booking a vacation through the Armed Forces Vacation Club doesn't require paying any dues, attending timeshare presentations

or filling out any forms.

"I've received positive feedback. One couple planned their honeymoon through the club. You just can't beat the price, even with the small increase," Roach stated.

Between the beach, mountains, numerous golf courses and big city nightlife, the club offers something for just about everyone.

For more information about the Armed Forces Vacation Club, visit their Web site at www.afvclub.com.

For more news about Naval District Washington, visit their custom Navy NewsStand page at, www.news.navy.mil/local/ndw.

Overseas Screening Requirements

Congratulations! You've just negotiated orders with your detailer to that perfect overseas assignment you've always wanted. Keep in mind that overseas duty is full of many exciting rewards as well as various challenges. In order to make sure that you're ready to meet those challenges, you and your family must undergo a Suitability for Overseas Assignment Screening. The responsibility for determining suitability for overseas service rests with the Commanding Officer of the transferring command. Details regarding the Overseas Screening process are found in chapter 4 of the Officer or Enlisted Transfer Manual (OTM/ETM).

The screening is mandatory and is used to determine if the member or family member(s) possess any attributes that might require medical care or other support not available at the overseas duty location. In addition to the primary concern of taking care of sailors and their families, another goal of the overseas screening process is to avoid the unplanned expenditure of PCS funds and gapped billets resulting from an early return. Commanding Officers are responsible for providing an update message to COMNAVPERSCOM Millington TN and the gaining command within 15 calendar days of receipt of orders. This message must state the member is either found suitable, unsuitable, or that screening is underway and more time is needed to complete

the process. If the screening process requires more time, a status message must be sent every thirty days thereafter or until a final determination is made. The screening process is a vital part of every overseas transfer, so making sure it is accomplished in a timely manner is of the utmost importance. Contact your local your Admin/Personnel office and make sure your screening is on track today. For further assistance please visit our website at www.persnet.navy.mil/pers451 or contact the Overseas Screening Policy Manager at COMM: (901) 874-4142, DSN: 882-4142, email: p451c3@persnet.navy.mil.

*PNC(AW) Lloyd Kimble
P451C3*

Advice Line Available to Discuss EO, Sexual Harassment Issues

The Navy's Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Advice Line provides assistance to active duty and reserve Navy and Marine Corp personnel and Department of the Navy civilians. The Advice Line is staffed from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (CST), Monday through Friday, except for federal holidays. Voice mail is available to record messages for anyone calling outside of normal operating hours.

The purpose of the Advice Line is to provide an avenue to confidentially ask questions and obtain advice about equal opportunity, discrimination, and sexual harassment issues.

Callers may receive guidance on a variety of equal opportunity issues, including training, complaint procedures and resolution, applicable instructions, and referral to appropriate resources. Personnel answering the Advice Line are trained to provide quality advice on equal opportunity issues. Although advice is given for individual complaints, this is not a forum for reporting or

investigating equal opportunity or sexual harassment complaints.

The Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Advice Line was established in response to a recom-
m e n -



d a -
tion by
the Standing
Committee for
Military and Civilian
Women in the Department
of the Navy. The line opened in December 1992 solely as the Sexual Harassment Advice Line. In 1994, the Advice Line was formally expanded to address other equal op-

portunity issues. Since its inception, the Advice Line has received more than 5,300 phone calls and e-mail inquiries.

Questions or concerns about equal opportunity, discrimination or sexual harassment may also be addressed via the Advice Line e-mail service at eo/sh.advice.line@persnet.navy.mil.

The Advice Line telephone numbers are toll free 1-800-253-0931, commercial (901) 874-2507, or DSN 882-2507. Collect calls are accepted from callers overseas. The Advice Line is sponsored by the Navy Equal Opportunity Office (PERS-00H), Navy Personnel Command, in Millington, Tennessee. Posters advertising the Advice Line may be ordered via the Navy Equal Opportunity Office website at www.persnet.navy.mil/pers00h. Click on "posters and publications" and follow the instructions.

For more information on the Advice Line, contact LCDR Deborah Brown at (901) 874-4283.

Weekend Part-time NPS & Robert H. Smith School of Business Learn as You Earn - Defense Focused MBA

The Graduate School of Business & Public Policy at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) and the Robert H. Smith School of Business, University of Maryland are accepting applications for the DEFENSE focused Master of Business Administration (MBA).

The combined MBA program begins Fall 2003 and is open to Department of Defense (DoD) civilians and military officers from all branches of the armed forces. This program provides students with core management and leadership skills in key business areas such as e-commerce, finance, supply chain management, strategy, and marketing, as well as a unique understanding of business operations within the federal government and the U.S. Department of Defense.

Faculty from both the Naval Postgraduate School's Graduate School of Business and the Robert H. Smith School of Business faculty teach the 54 credit hour program. All courses are held every other Saturday in the Ronald Reagan Center in Washington, D.C. Prospective students are en-

couraged to apply by April 1, 2003 and have completed the GMAT exam. Applications will be reviewed by both NPS Graduate School of Business & Public Policy and the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business. The degree awarded to students who successfully complete the program will be a combined MBA degree, granted by the Robert H. Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland and the Naval Postgraduate School.

About the Naval Postgraduate School

The mission of the Naval Postgraduate School is to enhance U.S. national security through graduate and executive education programs focusing on the unique needs of military leaders, with research and advanced studies directed toward the needs of the Navy and DoD. "Our goals are to increase the combat effectiveness of the armed forces of the U.S. and its allies, and to contribute to fundamental scientific, engineering, policy, and operational advances that support the Navy, DoD, and other national se-

curity establishments," said NPS Superintendent Rear Adm. David R. Ellison. Additional information is available at www.nps.navy.mil.

About the School

The Robert H. Smith School of Business is a nationally recognized leader in management education and research for the digital economy. The school offers cross-functional study options in its seven academic departments, which include accounting; decision and information technologies; entrepreneurship; finance; logistics, business and public policy; management and organization; and marketing. More information about the Robert H. Smith School of Business can be found at www.rhsmith.umd.edu/partmba/NPS.htm.

Becky Jones
Naval Postgraduate School
Email: bdjones@nps.navy.mil
Phone: 831-656-2755

SWO mentorship now extends to reserves

Senior Naval Reserve Surface Warfare leaders have created a groundbreaking career initiative for Naval Reserve Surface Warfare Officers (NR SWO). The new Naval Reserve Surface Warfare Mentoring Program will provide career guidance and leadership advice by partnering senior Surface Warfare Officer (SWO) mentors with junior SWOs interested in a fulfilling and successful career as a reserve officer. Look for announcements at drill sites nationwide in early FY-03 with information on how to participate in the program or become a mentor.

"This program seeks to create and formalize a structure to pass relevant information and personal guidance from the senior SWO leadership to the junior SWO personnel," said RADM Bob Clark, Commander of Naval Reserve Readiness Command Mid-Atlantic. "The goal is for all to have an equal opportunity for this information and guidance." Granted, there may be variations by one geographic region to another or from one specialty area within the SWO community to another, but they will be addressed within the program and normalized over time.

Under the initial direction of the NR SWO Flag Officers, a national group of the most senior SWO Captains (O-6) was formed with representatives from each of the nine Readiness Commands to develop and guide the program from concept to ex-

ecution. This group of O-6's under Flag Sponsorship formed the initial Board of Directors to chart the continuation of the program's course. This implementation group met in June 2002 in Newport, RI, home of Surface Warfare Officer's School, to baseline the approach and to distribute near-term actions required of the Regional Representatives. This group met again in Millington, TN, in September 2002 to provide mid-course guidance based on any issues identified during the start-up period. In the interim, the communications process is being initiated.

"It has long been acknowledged that there is no formal approach to mentoring our SWO-designated officers through their careers," RADM Clark said. "Some SWO officers are fortunate enough to serve with seniors who take the time to forge relationships and provide guidance and advice concerning promotion and job responsibilities. Others, though equally capable and deserving, are left to fend for themselves."

According to RADM Clark, the goal is to give "all NR SWO's a better sense of how their Navy career should progress, what milestones they should attain at various levels, and then to give them the tools to make appropriate career decisions for themselves." He added, "NR Surface Warfare Officers serve in a wide and diverse range of billets, including afloat, staff and hard-

ware units. They support their Active Component Gaining Commands in a myriad of ways from direct local contributory support to remote project tasks. All NR SWO Officers, but Junior Officers in particular, will now be afforded with several tools to manage their careers to maintain their own proficiency which will contribute to their own and to the Navy's overall benefit."

The program involves a wide range of measures, keying on communications. Greater efforts will be undertaken to communicate with officers leaving active duty, advising them of the exciting possibilities of continuing their career as a reserve officer. Full utilization of the Internet will also be employed to communicate within the community, including a web page and a quarterly newsletter. The core of the program, however, will be Regional and local Reserve Centers, where members of the NR SWO Mentoring Program will be available to all SWO's for career advice.

Senior SWO officers interested in becoming a Mentor for Junior Officers should contact one of the Regional Coordinators listed below or one of the local Reserve Center Coordinators, which were promulgated during August 2002 at Reserve Centers. If your Unit performs the majority of direct support at the Gaining Command, the local Coordinators will adjust as necessary.

SWO Mentor Program Point of Contacts Board of Directors - October 2002

Region	Name	Email	Phone
National	RADM Bob Clark (Flag Sponsor)	Clarkrm123@aol.com	(202)-433-3822
National	CAPT Tom Rathbone National Coordinator	Rathbotm@oneonta.edu	(607)-436-3224
National	CAPT Tim Taylor Asst National Coordinator	Taylor.navy@att.net	(201)-400-2779
NE	CAPT Tim Taylor Regional Coordinator	Talyor.navy@att.net	(201)-400-2779
NE	CAPT John McNamara Asst Regional Coordinator	jmcnamara@capecod.net	(508)-247-2214
NE	CAPT Sonny Masso Asst Regional Coordinator	Emasso@anteon.com	(703)-675-2087
NC	CAPT Leonard Wales Regional Coordinator	Len.wales@fairfaxcounty.gov	(703)-324-4087
NC	CAPT Bill Bittman Asst Regional Coordinator	bittmanW@cnrf.nola.navy.mil	(612)-713-3720
NW	CAPT Ron Kim Regional Coordinator	Kimr006@hawaii.rr.com	(808) 473-8000 x 3204
NW	CAPT Alan Ahlberg Asst Regional Coordinator	ahlbergak@msn.com	(508)-648-6332
MA	CAPT John Edwardsen Regional Coordinator	John.edwardsen@intervoice-brite.com	(407)-357-1547
MA	CAPT Bill Couch Asst Regional Coordinator	william.s.couch@us.pwcglobal.com	(410)-296-3624
MA	CAPT Ed McAnaney Asst. Regional Coordinator	Usnr cdr05@aol.com	(860)-668-2000
MS	CAPT Phil Altizer Regional Coordinator	paltizer@bellsouth.net	(901)-385-1820
MS	TBD Asst. Regional Coordinator		
MW	CAPT George K. Busse Regional Coordinator	Gkb@wmblair.com	(312)-364-8444
MW	CAPT Anthony Giancattarino Asst Regional Coordinator	Anthony.giancattarino@exeloncorp.com	(630)-657-2186
SE	CAPT John P. Kaiser Regional Coordinator	Jpkaiser@mactec.com	(407)-522-7570
SE	CAPT Rob Ehrhardt Asst Regional Coordinator	rob.ehrhardt@corning.com	(386)-424-1330
S	CAPT Mike Cook Regional Coordinator	MikeLCook1@aol.com	(940)-234-1321
S	CAPT Mike Bernard Asst Regional Coordinator	bernardm@cnrf.navy.mil	(817)-782-6601
SW	CAPT Bruce McGalliard Regional Coordinator	Mcgalliardbe@efdswnavfac.navy.mil	(619)-532-2076
SW	CAPT Richard Hayes Asst Regional Coordinator	hayes5rus@aol.com	(805)-205-2110

New Navy website provides another tool for career management

by JO2 Jd Walter, Task Force EXCEL Public Affairs Office

The Navy's Revolution in Training is creating new educational tools and opportunities for Sailors throughout the Fleet. Now, Navy education and training is also creating a new way for Sailors to manage their careers via the Internet. The Navy Knowledge Online (NKO), the knowledge management portal, gives Sailors instant access to all training and educational information related to their occupational field.

Knowledge management is the gathering of organizational processes, systems, methodologies, visions, and resources into a centralized location. For Sailors, the knowledge management portal will identify career paths, milestones, and educational tools and opportunities. For the Navy, this will result in greater operational efficiency and eliminate organizational redundancies.



To develop the portal, the Navy has teamed with Appian, a provider of large scale software solutions.

"We wanted to provide every Sailor with a personalized gateway to the Navy's knowledge base for all professional and personal development," said Rear Adm. Kevin Moran, commander Naval Personnel Development Command/director, Task Force for Excellence through Commitment to Education and Learning. "We selected Appian based on their track record."

The faceplate of the portal will be individualized Web pages that Sailors can cus-

tomize. This portable Web page will be assigned to Sailors during boot camp and will remain accessible throughout their Navy careers. The portal will give Sailors access to the most relevant and up to date career information as easy as point, click, and learn.

"This is going to give Sailors access to what is most important to them, the information required to excel, both professionally and personally," said Moran. "And it is going to allow them to take maximum advantage of the tools and opportunities available to them, no matter where they are stationed or deployed."

To learn more about the development of the knowledge management portal, visit www.excel.navy.mil. To visit NKO visit www.nko.navy.mil

Feedback from the FY03 Seaman-to-Admiral 21 board

The following correspondence represents one board member's observations from the FY03 Seaman-to-Admiral 21 (STA-21) Board. It is intended to provide additional insight for COs, supervisors, and applicants as they compile and submit STA-21 packages for future boards. Some recommendations may appear to state the obvious, but are provided as a result of packages encountered during the board. 1,438 sailors applied for selection in the FY03 board, including 14 Intelligence Officer applicants. Selection results should come out in a NAVADMIN by mid-Oct. STA-21 program details are available in references (a) and (b).

Commanding Officer Endorsement

This is probably the most important document in the package, it needs to be clear and make a strong impact in the opening lines. Important points to consider or to communicate to the board include:

- Keep recommendations clear, concise, and incontrovertible.
- Don't hide your strong recommendation in the last paragraph.
- If the applicant is not ready for commissioning, tell the board.
- Don't make board members read between the lines of neutral verbiage.
- Consider screening applicant out at the command level with appropriate feedback.
- Ensure the CO endorsement reflects the intended strength of support.
- Stating "Forwarded" sends an unmistakable (neutral or negative) message.
- "Forwarded, with my strongest personal recommendation" sends another.
- Provide breakouts of both total applicants submitted from your command and of those competing for a specific program option (e.g., Intelligence Officer).
- Let the board know if there is little difference between your #1 and #2 applicants.

- Speak to your desire to have the applicant back as a member of your wardroom.
- Highlight leadership experience – especially for junior sailors whose evals may not yet reflect this important trait (can also include high school experience).

Personal statement

This is the one part of the entire application package over which the applicant has total control – make it count!

- Keep it concise.
- Ensure it meets content requirements provided in the STA-21 instruction.
- Emphasize personal strengths, goals, and motivations. Discuss how they will influence future contributions in applicant's specific designator choice. This requires knowledge of the STA-21 program and specifics about the officer program desired.
- Avoid a "me-centric" focus (i.e., acceptance into the program clearly benefits the individual, but also provides a foundation to improve leadership opportunity, share enlisted experience with future shipmates, have a broader impact on the Navy, etc.).
- Highlight high school and non-Navy leadership positions and experiences that don't come out in other parts of the package.
- Have a mentor review the statement - misspellings, typos, and grammatical errors detract from the package.

Evaluations

- Gaps are unacceptable, ensure continuity or provide an explanation to the board.
- Include recommendations for commissioning programs where appropriate.
- Rank top "must promotes" – breakout in a large group can still come across as a positive.

see 'Feedback,' page 12

Feedback...

continued from page 11

Transcripts

- Good or bad, all are required.
- Better to include the good/bad/ugly and explain poor performance.
- Demonstrate improvement via off-duty education where possible, especially for those who fared poorly in high school/early collegiate experience.

Officer interviews

- Carry a lot of weight with the board.
- More credence was given to comments since most grades were two-blocked to the left.

- Sheets marked with all "10s" with no amplifying comments were not useful.
- Interviewer comments regarding willingness to serve with the applicant, potential as an officer, and relative ranking against previous applicants for commissioning programs are particularly helpful.
- If the applicant is not ready for commissioning, tell the board – don't make board members read between the lines of neutral verbiage.

Letters of Recommendation

Take to time to include letters of recommendation from former supervisors, CO, etc.

Particularly favorable were letters from

Chief Petty Officers currently in the chain of command, CMCs, and others with close knowledge of the applicant's performance.

Miscellaneous

- Include letters/certificates to support unique qualifications or achievements not documented elsewhere (e.g., OOD In port, Conning Officer, etc.).
- PRT score counts – speaks to initiative and the "whole person" concept.
- Applicant should ensure the package is complete and professional looking.
- Explain any negative marks/comments (e.g., poor transcripts, 2.0 mark in Military Bearing due to a failed PRT, NJP, etc.) in the personal statement or CO endorsement letter.

CWO5 provides new opportunities for the Navy's technical elite

by Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

The rank of Chief Warrant Officer 5 (CWO5) is now a reality in the Navy, a move that provides the Navy with an opportunity to grow a more technical force to meet the demands of today's more technical Navy.

By law the total number of authorized CWO5 billets may not exceed five percent of the total number of CWO billets. The Navy expects to phase in 84 CWO5 billets over the next five years beginning with the FY04 promotion cycle. No additional billets will be created as a result of this implementation, as the CWO5 positions will be drawn from the current warrant officer billet base.

"Chief warrant officers are the foremost technical experts in the Navy," said Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. Gerry Hoewing. "Keeping these highly skilled, talented leaders serving longer helps the Navy increase its talent pool and provides this dedicated community more opportunity to serve."

The implementation aligns Navy CWOs serving in joint duty billets with their service counterparts. Also, CWO5 provides senior leaders the authority commensurate with the responsibilities they have in certain key assignments.

Retaining these highly trained, educated and experienced of-

ficers at the very time that they are poised to make valuable contributions to the Navy underscores the need for CWO5.

"The original idea of the CWO Program was to retain us for 30 years," said CWO4 William Bailey, training and operations of-

The Navy expects to phase in 84 CWO5 billets over the next five years beginning with the FY04 promotion cycle. No additional billets will be created as a result of this implementation, as the CWO5 positions will be drawn from the current warrant officer billet base.

ficer, Naval Construction Training Center, Gulfport, Miss. "Currently, CWO4's have topped out by their 20 or 22 year mark. Promotion to CWO5 is great incentive to stay for 30 years."

The bottom line to adding CWO5 is providing technical experience and leadership at a time when the Navy needs these skills and attributes

most. It will enhance combat readiness in the Fleet as well as be a boost to the entire CWO community.

"CWO5s will be used to provide enhanced training, technical expertise and operational experience for sea duty billets," said Cmdr. John Fahling, limited duty and warrant officer community manager for the chief of naval personnel. "Their extraordinary technical leadership and experience will be a great asset to the Fleet."

Refer to NAVADMIN 337/02 for more details on CWO5 implementation, available on the Web at www.bupers.navy.mil, under Messages.



Submit Address Changes On-line at
www.persnet.navy.mil/periodicals/link-perspective/Link-Perspective.htm

Career Management for Enlisted Navy Professionals

Over the past two years our Navy has been able to dramatically improve enlisted retention, reversing a trend that threatened our readiness in the late 1990's. For example, in 1999 our Zone A retention was 48.8 percent, over eight percent below CNO's goal of 57 percent. At the end of August 2002, FY02 Zone A retention was 60.9 percent, exceeding the goal by nearly four percent. Zone B retention is also above goal and Zone C is only slightly below goal, signifying great improvement over the past several years' statistics (figure 1). Also significant is the reduction in attrition over the same period (figure 2). How did this happen? The answer is that Navy leaders, from work center supervisors on the deck plates to four-star admirals, have responded to the CNO's call for "covenant leadership" of their subordinates and have effected a cultural change in the Navy to a "culture of retention." Additionally, there have been several policy initiatives that combine input from the fleet and good business practices to aid Navy leaders in creating a positive retention environment within their commands. In order to sustain the positive trends of the past three years, we must all continue to maintain a steady strain effort. To provide your retention team with some retention tools, this article will describe some "best practices" for command retention teams and will summarize some of the Navy policy initiatives geared towards promoting retention and fighting attrition.

Life Cycle of the Sailor

If we look at the "life cycle" of a Sailor from the moment of recruitment through separation or retirement, there are several iterative functions that form "best practices" providing Sailors with professional counseling and personal direction towards career satisfaction. These practices help commands create an environment that is conducive to retaining the best Sailors in our Navy. Adherence to these practices is especially vital

to successful accomplishment of command team detailing under Project SAIL. Figure 3 below shows this cycle. As you can see from the arrows, the inner part of the cycle repeats with each tour of duty.

02 for more information). Commands should also ensure, to the greatest extent possible within current security restrictions, that Sailors accession the command web site can communicate with a designated contact within about two mouse clicks of the home page.

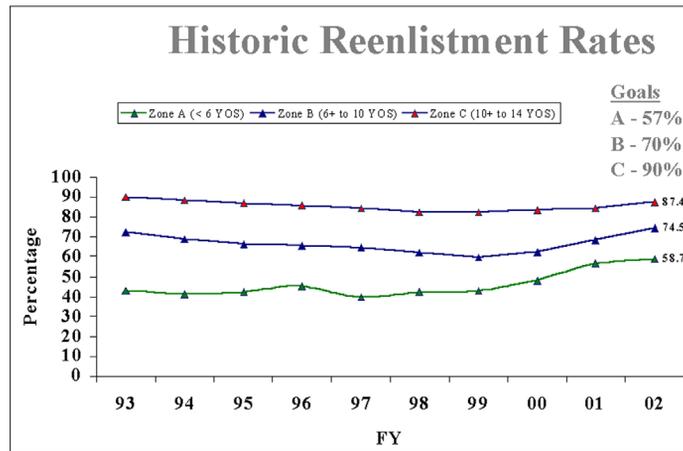
Many of you have seen the video "The First 72 hours" which illustrates how important the first few days aboard a Sailor's first command are in shaping the success of his or her tour. Commands should have a process in place to welcome Sailors aboard, ensuring that they start their tour of duty on the right foot. Many commands have a designated "greeter" in each duty section who is assigned to make sure that

Sailors reporting aboard are welcomed properly, giving them the first impression that their new command is happy to have them and is concerned about their well being. A meaningful initial orientation program and rigorous command indoctrination program will also make a big difference in shaping a new Sailor's expectations for a successful tour. Visible CO, XO and Command Master Chief participation makes a big difference in the strength of indoctrination programs. Don't forget spouses while planning your command's indoctrination program – they play an important role in career decisions and the more spouses understand the command's mission, the more supportive they will be. Assign each newly reported Sailor to a mentor who is career oriented, a "team player" and has substantial experience. That mentor will help relieve some of the anxiety a younger Sailor has about their new command and may help identify potential problems before they get out of control.

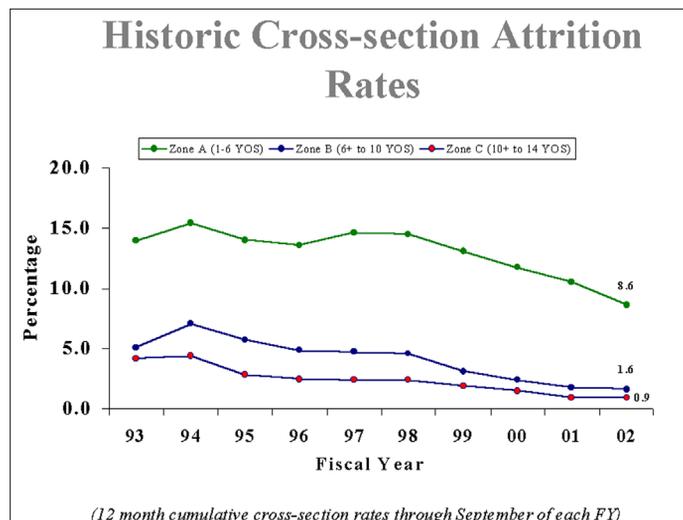
Each newly reported Sailor should have a Career Development Board (CDB) in their first two weeks aboard. This CDB is

a first step towards aligning the Sailor's expectations for their tour as well as establishing career and personal goals. This initial CDB is especially critical for GENDETS, the group with the highest attrition figures.

Steady Strain. CNO's guidance is for



Early engagement. Integral to a good start for each tour, and critical for the first tour, is sponsor assignment by the gaining command. A well run sponsor program is the backbone of early engagement. As soon as a command receives orders, communication with the new Sailor should be initiated. In those cases where Sailors receive orders shortly before leaving a command, as is often the case with students at training commands, Sailors should be able to easily contact their future command to request a sponsor to aid in their transition. This process, called "reverse sponsorship," may be



accomplished using the Reverse Sponsor Aid on the StayNavy.navy.mil website. All commands should ensure that they have provided NPC's Center for Career Development with a designated point of contact to receive information on incoming Sailors via this web-based aid (see NAVADMIN 247/

all Sailors to have a career plan. Periodic CDBs throughout a Sailor's tour will help to identify his/her needs and personal growth goals for use in developing and refining a career plan. Topics of discussion should include: in-rate training plans; an advancement timeline; qualification goals; and continuing education goals. Many Sailors enter the Navy seeking an opportunity to further their education. Although it is not realistic that they will have time to earn a four year degree during their first enlistment, they should be made aware of both the broad range of educational opportunities available to Navy personnel and the opportunity to receive college credit for professional training and experience performing their Navy job. As part of the new Command Team Detailing process under Project SAIL, a CDB is required at the 12 month mark before a Sailor's PRD in order to discuss career decisions and future assignment possibilities. Information critical to the next assignment gained during that CDB is then passed to the Command Team Coordinator at NPC. Clearly, those commands rigorously conducting periodic CDBs for their Sailors will be able to communicate an individual's need much better to NPC.

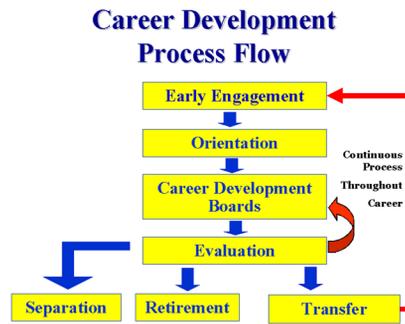
Easy access to career information for all Sailors in your command will add to the quality of the iterative CDBs. Consider a dedicated computer terminal for Sailors to conduct career research (see list of web sites at the end of this article). If bandwidth is an issue, the "StayNavy.navy.mil" web site's content is now part of the quarterly BUPERS CD distributed to all Navy commands so current career information can still be easily accessed. Retention teams should also consider scheduling periodic "Career Days" when presentations on the latest personnel policies and career development initiatives are given to peer group audiences in the command.

To support fleet retention and career development efforts, teams from NPC periodically visit installations Navy-wide to provide customer oriented career information and professional training in a coordinated and focused visit called a Career Decision Fair. The NPC team, coordinated with local host commands by the Center for Career Development, includes detailers, personnel policy experts, and civilian transition professionals. Career Decision Fair schedules include a wide range of briefings on all aspects of professional and personal development as well as the opportunity for Sailors to talk face-to-face with a detailer for their rating group. Over the past two years, these NPC teams have made contact with tens of thousands of Sailors, giving them tools they need to make informed career decisions. There have been hundreds of documented "saves" during these fairs when Sailors who have previously stated their intention to separate from the Navy decide to reenlist. Check the schedule on the StayNavy.navy.mil website and plan to maximize your commands participation.

Transition. Everyone's tour at your command eventually reaches an end, whether the Sailor is staying in the Navy and transferring to another command or is separating at the end of obligated service. The command retention team needs to strive to ensure career decisions that individuals make as they approach the end of their tour are informed ones. The retention team and the individual's chain of command need to be engaged in evaluation of the Sailor's plan for the future. In the case of Sailors considering separation from the Navy, retention teams need to discuss their strategy to ensure the individual gives the option of reenlistment full consideration. Things to consider when dealing with Sailors approaching

PRD or EAOS:

- When do CO, XO and/or Command Master Chief make direct contact with the Sailor? Have all options open to the Sailor been discussed during CDBs (commissioning programs, rating conversions, etc.)?
- Are there NAVETS in the crew who are available to talk to the Sailor about their experiences in the civilian world and why they returned to active duty.
- Has the individual attended TAP yet?
 - Has he/she fully considered joining the Naval Reserve?
 - If the Sailor ultimately decides to separate and is a top performer, consider making contact six months after separation to check on how their "plan" worked out. They may be missing the camaraderie they enjoyed in the Navy, or may have found that pay/compensation and job security aren't as good as they appeared to be. Keep the door to the Navy cracked.



Don't take the top performers who decide to stay Navy for granted. Recognize their professionalism. For top quality Sailors transferring to another command, consider sending the gaining command a letter or e-mail to tell the CO or CMC that they are getting a top notch Sailor.

Tools for the Command Retention Team

There are many tools available from NPC to help your Command Retention Team, including:

- **StayNavy.navy.mil web site.** NPC's online "magazine" with the latest news on personnel policies and information for Navy leaders, career counselors, officer and enlisted personnel making career decisions, and Navy families.
- **NPC's bupers.navy.mil web site.** Contains news from all codes within the NPC staff including detailers, contact information, and access to the latest Navy personnel policy announcements.
- **NPC Customer Service Center.** This initiative provides Sailors and their families with around the clock access to timely and accurate responses to their questions not directly related to distribution. The Customer Service Center may be reached by dialing 1-866-UASKNPC between 0700 and 1900 Central time. Customer service reps will answer questions using a searchable database with answers to over 1500 questions provided by subject matter experts. If the customer service rep is unable to immediately provide an answer to the caller's question, a service request will be generated and the question will be referred to a subject matter expert. The service request will not be closed until the customer is satisfied with the quality of the answer. The Customer Service Center is also accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week via the StayNavy.navy.mil web site. In fact, each active duty Sailor has a personal "homepage" assigned to them as part of this effort through which they may track service requests and access the searchable knowledge base.

Take advantage of these tools and be sure to provide feedback on their quality. The Command Retention Checklist on page 16 is

included to help your team ensure that you take full advantage of all of the tools the Navy has to offer.

The Way Ahead

The Navy is experiencing an unprecedented period of personnel policy and distribution process improvement. Never before has the Navy been more of an “employer of choice.” Initiatives of the past two years have worked to restore a bond of faith among Sailors in the personnel and distribution system, as reflected in our numbers. Nearly all of those initiatives came about as the result of input from the fleet. Key among those:

- **Project SAIL** – the radical transition to a Sailor-centric enlisted distribution system is underway. Using the latest technology to focus on our number one customer, the Sailor, a longer lead time before PRD/EAOS for assignments is now in place. Integral to this new process is the interaction between the Sailor’s command and NPC via a Command Team Coordinator on the NPC staff. See NAVADMIN 070/02 for more details.
- **Base Pay Increases** – the January 2002 pay raise was the biggest in over 20 years, with a minimum of 4.5 percent increase in base pay for all service members. Some Sailors saw bigger pay raises as the result of efforts to properly shape our force for the 21st century. There will be a 4.1 percent minimum pay raise for each Sailor effective 1 Jan 03.
- **Career Sea Pay Reform** – All Sailors who are on sea duty now receive sea pay. This includes E-1-E-3 and O-1-O2 personnel with less than three years of sea duty who did not previously receive sea

pay. This initiative places emphasis on the fact that ours is a seagoing service.

- **Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)** – All active duty personnel now have the opportunity to put money aside for retirement in a tax deferred savings plan, structured much like 401(K) plans in the private sector. This program allows those who do not plan to stay in the Navy until they are “vested” at 20 years of service, and eligible for our defined benefit retirement pension, an opportunity to save for retirement. TSP also provides career Sailors the opportunity to save up to 8 percent of their base pay and 100 percent of allowances in order to supplement their retirement. See NAVADMIN 344/02 for more details.
- **BAH Increases** – Situations where BAH was covering less than 80 percent of housing expenses were common less than two years ago. In order to reduce “out of pocket” housing expenses, there were substantial increases in BAH in most geographical areas in January 2002. We will see similar increases in BAH through FY05.
- **TRICARE for Life** – Those who stay Navy through retirement now will enjoy substantially better medical benefits than previously offered under Medicare. As life expectancies increase, no one should underestimate the value of this increased benefit.
- **Increased MWR Opportunities & Support** – Never has there been a period with greater emphasis on improving quality of life through robust MWR programs. Both single Sailor and Navy families are the focus of today’s MWR programs. In fact , Navy MWR sponsored Career Decision Fair spouse events providing door prizes, catering

and child care for attendees.

- **Fleet and Family Service Centers (FFSC)** – A wide variety of services that would cost service members money are available free of charge from your local FFSC. These include spouse employment counseling and financial counseling.
- **United through Reading (UTR)** – A partnership between NPC and the Family Literacy Foundation makes it possible for Sailors on deployment to read to their children on videotapes which are sent home to families. This initiative has proven itself as a morale booster for deployed units.

The near future promises even greater improvement of the “quality of service” each Sailor experiences. However, in order to maintain the quality force required to man the technologically sophisticated Navy of the 21st century, a continued dialogue between fleet leaders and NPC is required. We must all endeavor to maintain our focus on Sailors and we need to avoid complacency now that our retention goals are starting to be realized. You are an important part of the ongoing NPC transformation. Daily interaction with Sailors in your command makes you a primary source of information to form personnel policy that meets the needs of Sailors and makes sense for the Navy as a business.

We at NPC are standing by to assist fleet leaders as they develop their young Sailors into Navy professionals. As you do your part in the “Battle for Talent,” make use of the resources cited in this article. If you need more information, please don’t hesitate to contact the staff of the Center for Career Development via the StayNavy.navy.mil web site. **“Mission First, Sailors Always”**

Command Retention Team Checklist for Success

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establish strategy with CO/XO/CMC/CCC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Review of command retention status <input type="checkbox"/> When do you call detailers? <input type="checkbox"/> Formalize CMC/CCC Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> CCC works directly for CMC <input type="checkbox"/> Adequate resources for CCC <input type="checkbox"/> Establish Sponsor/Check-in Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for first 72 hours <input type="checkbox"/> Web site facilitates “Reverse Sponsor” program <input type="checkbox"/> Strong Indoctrination Program <input type="checkbox"/> Establish Career Development Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> CDB during first two weeks aboard <input type="checkbox"/> Mentor (“Sea Daddy”) Program <input type="checkbox"/> GENDETS closely tracked | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Defined and acknowledged qualification goals <input type="checkbox"/> Aggressive Warfare Qualification Program <input type="checkbox"/> Establish procedures for Retention Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Maximize participation in CDFs <input type="checkbox"/> Use www.staynavy.navy.mil web site <input type="checkbox"/> Retention Team meetings <input type="checkbox"/> TAP participation well in advance of EAOS <input type="checkbox"/> Strong communication with families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Periodic e-mails to spouse group <input type="checkbox"/> Periodic letters to families (spouses and parents) <input type="checkbox"/> Web site “family friendly” <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-deployment briefings <input type="checkbox"/> United Through Reading |
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