



Bottom Line: Up Front

Edition 01-12

This document is for information purposes and is designed to ensure that all personnel are aware of the many issues/changes that occur in our Navy. Although not inclusive, it is a great venue to share our best practices. If you have information, programs or best practices that you would like to share Navy-wide, send them via your applicable ISIC or Force Master Chief for inclusion. Thanks for your support and feedback.

MCPON RECOMMENDS:

<http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/boards/ERB/Pages/TransitionInfo.aspx>

See page 10 for more links of interest

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Shipmates,

I hope you were able to safely enjoy the holidays and have returned to work refreshed and ready to have a great 2012. For me, my new year has started off busy, but certainly enjoyable.

I had the privilege of speaking about the current and future state of our Navy at the 24th Surface Navy Association Symposium. I also spoke to the Northern VA Navy League Council and had the opportunity to help recognize the Coast Guardsman of the Quarter for USCG Station Washington for his outstanding service and dedication.

And as you know, I love spending time with our great Sailors! I joined the CNO on a visit to our Sailors aboard USS Enterprise while they were operating in the Atlantic Ocean, and a few days later, met with the crew of USS Theodore Roosevelt during their Mentorship Day. Despite being in the shipyard, the TR team is a motivated group and I enjoyed speaking to them on the importance of having a mentor (something we should all have) and CPO 365. Most recently, I traveled with the CNO to see our Sailors at AUTECH in Andros Island, Bahamas, before heading up to Boston where I spent some time with our fine warriors stationed aboard Navy's oldest commissioned warship, USS Constitution.

As you may be aware, our Navy is gearing up for a major campaign to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 ... but did you know Constitution played a vital role during that war? If you're not familiar with how the War of 1812 shaped both our country and its high regard for sea power, I encourage you to read up on it. I'm convinced you'll be as enthusiastic about giving it the proper recognition as our senior leaders are. I also urge you to actively participate in the upcoming commemoration festivities for the War of 1812. Visit www.ourflagwasstillthere.org/ for more information on the War of 1812 and for a list of planned festivities.

I look forward to a productive and exciting 2012 with you!

HOOYAH!
MCPON

Visit MCPON's Facebook page at:
<https://www.facebook.com/MCPON?ref=ts>

What's Hot

BLUF: Transition assistance available from Navy Personnel Command.

We know PTS and ERB have been difficult for our Sailors and their families. For those asked to separate, a great amount of transition support and assistance is in place to help Sailors succeed in their future endeavors.

Do not miss the opportunity to attend the various Transition Assistance Career Forums, seminars, and Fleet Engagement Team visits across Fleet concentration areas. These forums will bring human resource personnel from partnering commands that can review resumes, provide general assistance with job searches and answer questions about opportunities and careers at participating commands. For the Transition Assistance [Calendar of Events](#) and additional information, please visit the NPC Transition Assistance page in the Hot Links section, bottom left, of the Navy Personnel Command homepage at www.npc.navy.mil.

A new transition assistance handbook is available on the Navy Personnel Command web site. The downloadable handbook provides Sailors with a centralized listing of transition services and benefits available to Sailors leaving the Navy. Sailors can visit the Enlisted Retention Board web page on the NPC website where they can view and [download the handbook](#) in a portable document format.

Sailors seeking to begin a second career can access an online job bank geared to connect veterans with employers who desire the skills veterans bring to the work force. The Veterans' Job Bank provides a central resource for veterans to access jobs available specifically for prior military people. The job bank is available at www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov.

The "Shipmates to Workmates" (STW) program seeks to aid transitioning Sailors in competing for job opportunities at partnering commands. The program provides information about available career opportunities and actively assists Sailors with job applications and resumes. Commands are encouraged to steer separating Sailors, command career counselors, and transition assistance coordinators to the STW website and to facilitate Sailor participation.

The STW program consists of the following three pillars:

- 1: STW Informational Web site: <http://jobs.navair.navy.mil/sm2wm/>
- 2: STW connection to Vet's Employment Counselors
Sailors can utilize the STW website to ask for assistance via e-mail or call a STW advocate, (202) 781-0444; DSN 326-0444. Phones manned on workdays 0800 EST to 1700 EST.
- 3: Shipmates to Workmates Career Forums.

NAVADMIN 030/12 - Changes to High Year Tenure

BLUF: Advance in a timely-manner to avoid high-year tenure anxiety.

[NAVADMIN 030/12](#) discusses changes to the high year tenure (HYT) policy and the merging of the active and reserve policy into one Total Force policy to take effect July 1, 2012.

E-2 Sailors will now reach HYT at 4 years vice 6. HYT for E-3 Sailors will be 5 years, down from 6, regardless of whether or not they have Passed Not Advanced for Navy-Wide Advancement Exam and have had a minimum of six opportunities for advancement before reaching HYT. HYT policy for E-4 through E-9 has not changed.

The new policy directs separation within 180 days of RIR when the HYT date for the reduced pay grade is before a member's EAOS. Sailors may remain longer with a HYT waiver or if their rate is reinstated, and this change will not affect Sailors who have reached sanctuary, 18 years of cumulative active duty. Sailors who have been granted a HYT waiver for a specific assignment and cannot fulfill their commitment will have their HYT waiver cancelled and will have to separate, transfer to the Reserve, or retire. Nuclear rated Sailors will be managed separately by their community manager. Involuntary separation pay may be available to Sailors who meet the requirements outlined in [OPNAVINST 1900.4](#).

Selective Reenlistment Bonus

BLUF: Learn critical skills now and get paid at reenlistment time.

The Navy released an updated Selective Reenlistment Bonus (SRB) award plan Jan. 6 in [NAVADMIN 013/12](#).

SRBs reward those Sailors who attain special training in skills most critical to current needs and mission requirements. The Navy has 91 specific critical skills that use SRB to help meet critical skill needs. The SRB program provides a needed incentive to our top performing Sailors with critical skill sets. Enlisted Community Managers continuously monitor the health of their community and make recommendations to leadership, as required, to maintain acceptable manning levels.

This update includes reductions for eight skills, elimination of four skills, award level increases for 31 skills, and the addition of 11 skills to the list.

For updates to SRB eligible ratings and skills, visit:

<http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/career/enlistedcareeradmin/pages/srb.aspx>

Involuntary Separation Pay and Reserve Affiliation

BLUF: Carefully review the NAVADMIN to understand the benefits.

[NAVADMIN 036/12](#) reminds Sailors of the eligibility and reserve affiliation requirements for receipt of Involuntary Separation Pay (ISP).

All Sailors who apply for ISP must obligate in the Ready Reserve for a minimum of three years past their initial military service obligation. The Ready Reserve has two branches, the Selected Reserve (SELRES) and Individual Ready Reserve (IRR).

The Navy wishes to afford every Sailor an opportunity to transition to the Navy Reserve. Involuntarily separated Sailors, E3-E6, can apply for a SELRES quota via Perform-to-Serve/Fleet RIDE. If a SELRES quota is not available, Sailors must request to affiliate with the IRR.

ERB-separating Sailors who do not affiliate or do not wish to affiliate in the SELRES must affiliate with the IRR to receive ISP. This must be accomplished prior to separation to ensure payment of this benefit.

Sailors can learn more by contacting the NPC Career Transition Office (CTO) via email CTO.enlisted@navy.mil, calling the Navy Personnel Command Customer Service Center at 1-866-U-ASK-NPC or emailing CSCMailbox@navy.mil.

Voluntary Sea Duty Program

BLUF: Take advantage of this opportunity for professionally rewarding benefits.

[NAVADMIN 043/12](#) announced the Voluntary Sea Duty Program (VSDP) to further support CNO's Sailing Directions: warfighting first, operate forward and be ready. This is a short-term opportunity and requests will be accepted until Sept. 30, 2012.

VSDP provides incentives to Sailors to voluntarily extend their enlistment in their current sea duty billet beyond their prescribed sea tour, to terminate shore duty early and accept new orders to a sea duty billet, or to accept back-to-back sea duty orders beyond normal sea/shore flow limits.

Benefits include: increases to monthly career sea pay, geographical choice, PTS deferment, and improved competitiveness for selection boards. Volunteers will not be required to accept a billet they do not desire. The Detailers will work with volunteers during two CMS/ID cycles to find desirable orders. If no match is found during this time period, Sailors can reapply. For more information, see the NAVADMIN.

Sailors to Test in March, Study Now!

BLUF: Study to comprehend ... Execute on your comprehension to succeed.

Advancing on time can protect Sailors from the keen competition in PTS. Sailors should be counseled on the importance of preparing for the Navy-Wide Advancement Exam. Preparing for the advancement exam can feel overwhelming, but there is no quick way for you to prepare for the exam and expect to score well. Coach Sailors to not wait until the last minute to gather materials and start studying. Use the [Plain Talk for Sailors guide](#) to help Sailors develop a study plan to maximize their efforts and most efficiently use the time they have to dedicate toward preparing for the exam cycle.

Also, refer to the [How and What to Study Q&A](#) for more information. Make this topic a part of each Sailor's Career Development Board.

NAVADMIN 029/12 - New Tuition Assistance Policy

BLUF: If used properly, tuition assistance remains an impressive and effective tool to reduce or eliminate off-duty education costs.

Navy leadership remains committed to providing opportunities and financial assistance to Sailors as they pursue their educational goals. However, the need for greater quality control of courses taken by our service members and the fiscal pressure to reduce spending across the DoD requires implementation of additional policy change. Changes include:

- A future requirement for institutions to have a signed memorandum of agreement with DoD in order to qualify for TA.
- TA is no longer being authorized for new program starts above master's degree level.
- Each academic institution is required to have a signed DoD Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) NLT April 1, 2012, and only those institutions that have a signed DoD MOU will be authorized to submit TA funding vouchers for payment.
- Sailors who meet all the requirements for TA and submit a command approved request prior to April 1 for courses that begin between April 1 and May 1 will be approved for TA regardless of their institution's DoD MOU status. However, if the request is after April 1, TA will be authorized only if their institution has a signed the DoD MOU.
- NCPACE courses are not affected by the DoD MOU requirement.
- An alphabetical list of institutions that have signed the DoD MOU can be found at: www.dodmou.com/. Click on the "participating institutions" tab.

The combined cap for tuition and fees remains at \$250 per semester hour for up to 16 semester hours of course work a year. For more information, see the [NAVADMIN](#), and the Navy College web site <https://www.navycollege.navy.mil/>.

Get Involved With Negotiating Orders

BLUF: Know and understand your negotiating windows on CMS/ID to control your future billet fate.

An application phase opens each month allowing enlisted Sailors in their permanent change-of-station (PCS) orders negotiation window to review and research jobs advertised in the Career Management System/Interactive Detailing (CMS/ID) and consider available career and training options. CMS/ID provides Sailors an opportunity to have a say in selecting their next assignment. Proven sustained superior performance in difficult and challenging joint and in-service assignments is traditionally an important factor in enlisted selection boards.

Proactive Sailors know their projected rotation date (PRD) and their negotiating window. Sailors can use the Detailing Countdown Guide to assist in the steps for career management. This user aid is located in the Sailor Career Toolbox, in the NPC quick links section, on the NPC website.

Other related user aids are located on the NPC website and NKO portal. Sailors may log in to CMS/ID anytime after the detailer selection phase to see if they have been selected for orders.

For more information talk with your command career counselor, visit www.npc.navy.mil and click on the Career Management System link (in the NPC quick link section), contact the NPC Customer Service Center at 1-866-U-ASK-NPC or submit e-mails to cscmailbox@navy.mil.

Deployment Health Assessments

BLUF: Deployment Health Assessments are REQUIRED.

[OPNAVINST 6100.3](#) requires Sailors returning from certain qualifying deployments to complete a Post-Deployment Health Assessment (PDHA) within 30 days of return and a Post-Deployment Health Re-Assessment (PDHRA) within 90-180 days of return.

These assessments are the Navy's best opportunity to detect and ensure proper treatment for the physical and psychological injuries which our Sailors may have sustained during deployments. Qualifying deployments include expeditionary deployments to ashore locations with no military treatment facility (MTF) or operations with exposure to health threats such as Operation Unified Response and Operation Tomadachi.

Current Navy and Fleet PDHA and PDHRA compliance rates are unacceptably low and have remained stagnant over the last year.

NAVADMIN 028/12 - Member-Designated Benefits

BLUF: Review this NAVADMIN before making any beneficiary decisions.

The Department of Defense has identified 15 benefits where members may designate beneficiaries of their choosing. These benefit programs allow service members (SM) to designate anyone to receive the benefits afforded subject to the limitations noted in the NAVADMIN:

- Service members' group life insurance (SGLI)
- Post-Vietnam-Era veterans' educational assistance program (VEAP)
- Basic educational assistance
- Death gratuity beneficiary
- Final settlement of accounts
- Wounded Warrior Act designated caregiver
- Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)
- Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)
- Casualty notification
- Escorts for dependents of deceased or missing members:
- Designation of persons having interest in status of a missing member:
- Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI)
- Person eligible to receive effects (PERE) of deceased persons
- Travel and transportation allowance for yellow ribbon reintegration program events
- Person authorized to direct disposition (PADD) of the remains of a decedent:

Members are encouraged to update their beneficiaries whenever they have a change in status to avoid the undesired consequences of providing a benefit to an individual with whom they have discontinued an association.

Any SM whose last will and testament contains trust language should see a legal assistance office before making any changes to their SGLI/Page 2 as this situation has the potential to create confusion as to the intended beneficiary or beneficiaries.

A comprehensive listing of all benefits can be found in the [Navy Pay and Benefits guide](http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/career/payandbenefits/pages/default2.aspx), it is the first link located on the NPC pay and benefits webpage, <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/career/payandbenefits/pages/default2.aspx>.

Wear Rules for Navy Working Uniform Expanded

BLUF: Know and understand all uniform wear rules, represent your Navy properly.

[NAVADMIN 366/11](#) announced expanded wear and updated policies for the Navy Working Uniform (NWU) Type I, II and III. At all CONUS, Hawaii and Guam commands, NWU wear was authorized for commuting and all normal tasks, such as stops at child care centers, gas stations, off-base shopping, banking, at the DMV, and dining before, during and after the workday. Since NWUs are not a liberty uniform, consumption of alcohol while off-base in the NWUs is not permitted. Area or regional commanders may further restrict this policy within their geographic limits.

The NWU Type I, II and III are not authorized for the following National Capitol Region locations: inside the Pentagon, the National Mall area bounded by Capitol Hill, surrounding senate and house staff offices, the White House and executive office building, State Department, and all monuments and memorials. Slides depicting NCR prohibited areas can be found at the [Navy Uniform Matters web site](#).

NWUs are not authorized for wear on commercial travel such as airlines, railways, or buses in the continental U.S. However, they may be worn on military and government-contracted flights between military airfield installations, as well as commuter transportation such as city and commuter buses, subways and ferries. The uniforms may also be worn at the Pentagon Metro and Pentagon commuter slug lines. [NAVADMIN 259/11](#) wear rules for these uniforms outside of the continental U.S. remain in effect.

No-Cost Training and Certifications

BLUF: Take advantage of Microsoft's limited no-cost vouchers for training and certifications in five communities.

The Department of Labor has announced a new partnership with Microsoft Corp. to provide veterans with vouchers for no-cost training and certifications that can lead to important industry-recognized credentials. The voucher program will serve veterans in five communities with the highest number of returning post-9/11 era veterans: Seattle, WA; San Diego, CA, Houston, TX; Northern Virginia; and Jacksonville, FL. Each area will receive 1,000 vouchers per year for two years, totaling 10,000 vouchers. Microsoft will also provide in-person support to ensure veterans and their spouses are successful in their training and certifications. The local workforce areas will help connect the veterans and their spouses to potential employers in their area.

Additional information about this and other initiatives, including specific locations where the vouchers will be distributed, is available at the Department of Labor VETS website at <http://www.dol.gov/vets/>

2012 Election Year Guidance and Voting Assistance

BLUF: Participating in the democratic process properly is important.

Throughout the Fleet, Navy leaders support participation in the democratic process by:

- Supporting the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) by publishing factual information about registration and voting laws, with special emphasis on absentee voting requirements.
- Training and equipping voting assistance officers at every level of command, ensuring expeditious processing of balloting material and proper postmarking and date-stamping of absentee ballots.
- By taking all necessary steps to prevent fraud and to protect voters against any coercion.

Remember, all personnel, including reservists, when acting in their official capacity, shall not:

- Wear military uniforms at political campaign or election events.
- Associate the Navy with any partisan political campaign or election, candidate, cause, or issue.
- Distribute political campaign or election literature while in uniform, or while on a military installation.
- Engage in public commentary, including speeches and written submissions offered for publication, concerning political campaigns or elections without prior clearance.
- Respond directly to inquiries from political campaign organizations. All inquiries shall be forwarded to a Public Affairs Officer, who will respond with public information unless the request is from elected officials.

Voting assistance resources are available by telephone at (800) 438-8683, (703) 588-1584, DSN 425-1584, by e-mail: vote@fvap.ncr.gov, or online at <http://www.fvap.gov>. For more guidance, see [DoD Directive 1344.10](#) and [NAVADMIN 382/11](#) or your Command Voting Assistance Officer.

Digital Library Services

BLUF: NKO is an excellent resource for more than just mandatory training.

Did you know that the Navy operates a digital library available 24/7/365? Accessed through [NKO](#), the library provides: Ebooks and Audio Books; Practice ASVAB, CLEP, DANTEs, College Entrance Tests; Tutoring services; Financial Information; Foreign Language Learning; E-books for kids (books read aloud to young children on the computer); And much more!

Active duty, reserve, retired Sailors or dependents with NKO accounts can access the library by logging in to NKO, and clicking on the Reference Tab. Once there, all of the E-Library subject page links are located on the left side of the page. Go explore the library today!

Links of Interest

The appearance of external links in this document does not constitute official endorsement on behalf of the MCPON, U.S. Navy or Department of Defense.

NPC's ERB web page: <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/boards/ERB/Pages/default2.aspx>

Transition info page: <http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/boards/ERB/Pages/TransitionInfo.aspx>

Transition Assistance Program (TAP): www.dmdc.osd.mil/tap

War of 1812: www.ourflagwasstillthere.org/

Navy Knowledge Online Advancement Center Page:
<https://www.nko.navy.mil/portal/careermanagement/navyadvancementcenter>

Navy Operational Stress Control: <http://navynavstress.com/>

Suicide Prevention: http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/suicide_prevention/Pages/default.aspx

Shift Colors:
<http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/reference/publications/shiftcolors/Pages/default.aspx>

DEERS/RAPIDS Locator: <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/appj/site?execution=e1s1>

Personnel Locator for all services: Joint Enterprise Directory Services:
<https://jeds.gds.disa.mil/jeds/search.action>

TRICARE Online: <https://www.tricareonline.com/portal/page/portal/TricareOnline/Portal>

To request a retirement letter from MCPON's office:

The link below is to NPC's web site where you can request a retirement letter from MCPON. Please allow eight weeks for process and delivery.

<http://www.public.navy.mil/BUPERS-NPC/CAREER/CAREERCOUNSELING/Pages/FLTRESRetirementSBP.aspx>