



Bottom Line: Up Front

Edition 04-11

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://navynavstress.com/>

See page 10 for more links of interest

Shipmates,

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As we bring this year to an end, I want to thank you for all that you do every day for our great Navy team and our nation. With the coming holidays, continued high Op-Tempo and ongoing force management initiatives, Navy families may be facing higher than normal stress issues. We are all, Sailors and loved ones, affected by stress in different ways. Operational Stress Control is a part of our daily routine designed to help us navigate through stress.

There are days when stress plays a large role in our regular routines. Some stress is good because it can keep us alert and on task. But too much stress can hurt you, your family, your command and our Navy.

Because stress affects everyone, it's important we look out for each other and recognize indicators that the stress may be overwhelming. When you notice signs like cutting corners, irritability, trouble sleeping, etc., talk to a Shipmate, friend, family member or someone else you trust. If you see signs of more serious stress, get help immediately from your Chain of Command, Chaplain or medical provider. No person is alone ... we are a collective Navy team.

Be proactive about managing stress levels. Trying to wait it out simply won't work. Not addressing stress early-on leads to injuries and illness, which affects our abilities to function properly. Drop any stigma about seeking help. We must get rid of that barrier because lives depend on it.

I hope all of you have an opportunity to enjoy some time off with family and friends through the holidays. You deserve it!

HOOYAH!
MCPON

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

What's Hot

BLUF: It may be your ACT that saves a life.

Suicide Prevention is not about numbers. Every person lost to suicide is someone's family member and we take that very seriously. The Navy is focusing its efforts on providing leaders and Sailors tools to help save lives and experience life to its fullest.

We want Navy personnel to have the support network, health care, and skills to get through trying times and be able to move on and thrive as a psychologically healthy, resilient, and mission-effective force. We aim to build a culture where all leaders recognize that getting timely support for our Sailors and their families is a key to ensuring military readiness.

For some Sailors, suicide prevention is more than just a training topic because sadly, they know someone who was lost to suicide. Sailors from pay grades E-1 to O-10 are critical players in the suicide prevention process, something that begins with the chain of command, with coworkers, and with friends of the Sailor experiencing negative thoughts. Struggling Sailors have increasingly received the help they need because a caring Shipmate has intervened. Don't underestimate your power to make a positive difference in someone's life. It's true that acts of appreciation or understanding have helped someone considering suicide change their mind.

The Navy recognizes that long before thoughts of suicide occur, we have opportunities to build resilience, intervene early when risk factors are present, and create the connections that help sustain us during challenging times.

Suicide is the third leading cause of death in the Navy, and one Sailor lost to suicide is too many. Sailor-to-Sailor intervention is what Shipmates do as they work together on a day-to-day basis. Shipmates as well as family members are the first line of defense when it comes to recognizing when something's wrong, and know the best way to talk about it. In sum ... ACT:

- **Ask** what is bothering the person and press them to overcome any reluctance to talk about it. Don't judge.
- **Care** - listen, offer hope. Suicidal feelings are temporary, depression can be treated.
- **Treat** - Take action, get assistance, and follow up. Take the person to get help. Do not leave them alone until help is available. Take action.

For more Suicide Prevention information, visit:

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

Key Tips to Manage the Holiday Season

BLUF: Forward-thinking will help you navigate a safe and stress-free holiday.

While holidays are usually joyful times, they can also be stressful as families and friends gather together, often for the only time in a year. Some feel pressured to cram a year's worth of living into a few short days of intense celebration which might lead to excessive behavior on several fronts - financial irresponsibility, stress and safety. Here are some tips to help get you through a happy and safe holiday season:

- Take advantage of leave periods and relax for a few days by doing something you enjoy.
- Plan your own holiday if you or a loved one will be away during the regular holidays. Celebrate early or pick a day; nothing says the celebration has to be on a specific day.
- Be a good listener. Being around family can be fun and exciting, but it can also be stressful. Give the gift of good company and learn new ways to appreciate the family you have.
- Keep to a shopping budget. When it comes to holiday gift-giving, find creative ways to save money. Sometimes cooking a favorite dish or relieving someone from chores or care can be much appreciated presents.
- Exercise your body and mind. Make time to get in your daily run, stretch those tight muscles, practice your breathing, and make time to read.
- Celebrate in moderation and find ways other than alcohol to relax. Alcohol abuse during the holidays accounts for many problems that weaken our Navy, including legal issues associated with DUIs, sexual assault, highway deaths, suicide, domestic violence, and many others.
- Serve plenty of non-alcoholic beverages at parties and remember; you are responsible for your guests. The Naval Safety Center's Fall Safety Campaign ended Nov. 30 with ZERO reported alcohol-related fatalities. Let's keep this great trend alive through the winter holidays.
- Travel with wisdom. Last year we lost one Sailor on the road during the winter holidays - down from two in 2009; however, personal motor vehicle mishaps continue to be the leading off-duty risk for Sailors and their families.
- Remember SAFE: Speed, Alcohol, Fatigue and Ejection (seatbelts). These four factors cause the vast majority of traffic fatalities and they are all within your control! So is preventing distraction. Focus on the road!
- Use the Travel Risk Planning System (TRiPS), found on [Navy Knowledge Online \(NKO\)](#), to plan your trip and manage risk. The online self-assessment helps drivers recognize their own risky behaviors and attitudes and offers ways to reduce risk. Nearly 300,000 Sailors have traveled after completing TRiPS assessments, and none have been involved in a fatal motor vehicle mishap.
- Traffic jams are a fact of life near the holidays so build extra time into your driving schedule. Also consider beginning your trip early in the day. Accidents are statistically less likely to happen during daylight hours. Fatigue is also a big factor when driving at night or after a long day at work. Coffee is no substitute for sleep! Take breaks every two hours to stretch your legs and rest your eyes.

SPICE

BLUF: Stop ... "Spice" is illegal!

Leaders must continue to emphasize Zero Tolerance when it comes to using "Spice." "Spice" is illegal and Sailors who use it will be separated, lose benefits and let down the Navy team. The synthetic chemicals found in "Spice" are potent, unregulated and have unknown effects. Because the compounds and chemicals in "Spice" are continuously changing, users do not know what they are really putting into their bodies.

Did you know?

- "Spice" is 5-200 times more potent than THC in marijuana.
- "Spice" causes elevated blood pressure, tremor, seizures, vomiting, abdominal pain and more.
- Several reported episodes of heart damage have been reported with "Spice" use.
- "Spice" causes psychotic symptoms, hallucinations and paranoid behavior.
- "Spice" is found to cause loss of consciousness.
- Don't know what's in "Spice" = Russian Roulette

Numerous Sailors have recently been identified as users of "Spice" in violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and will be held fully accountable as a result. In FY11, nearly 400 Sailors were processed for separation because they made a choice to use synthetic cannabinoids. In several instances, Sailors made the choice to use these drugs in group settings, many times because of peer pressure or influence of alcohol. In all cases though, one thing is clear: Sailors who get caught using these substances go home under other than honorable conditions and suffer substantial losses to their veterans' benefits.

Navy Medicine has launched a new informational video and posters identifying the health dangers associated with the use of "Spice" and other designer drugs at <http://www.med.navy.mil/Pages/Spice.aspx>.

Other "Spice" information can be found at the National Institute on Drug Addiction web page at <http://www.nida.nih.gov/INFOFACTS/SPICE.HTML> and the Drug Enforcement Administration at <http://www.justice.gov/dea/>.

Updated Special Duty Assignment Pay

BLUF: Taking on difficult jobs pay\$.

A Navy message was released Nov. 22 announcing revisions for Special Duty Assignment Pay (SDAP). [NAVADMIN 356/11](#) lists updated SDAP levels for active-duty and Reserve component full-time support and qualified selected Reserve Sailors on active duty. Increases to existing SDAP levels are effective immediately and reductions are effective 60 days from the release of the NAVADMIN.

Sailors whose SDAP will be eliminated will receive half of their previous SDAP entitlement for 12 months, or until the Sailor completes the tour, whichever comes first.

The SDAP program is an incentive pay ranging from \$75 to \$450 a month used to entice qualified Sailors to serve in designated billets that are considered extremely difficult or entail arduous duty. Program levels change to reflect the current environment associated with each billet and to sustain adequate manning levels.

In order to qualify for SDAP, Sailors must be assigned to and working in a valid billet on the Command Manpower Authorization Listing. This billet must be authorized by the Bureau of Naval Personnel as a special duty assignment billet. Commands holding SDAP billets are required to complete an annual recertification. To learn more about SDAP, read [OPNAVINST 1160.6B](#) and talk to the Command Career Counselor.

Enlisted Supervisor Retention Pay Restructured

BLUF: Pay incentives still available for highly qualified Sailors.

Beginning Jan. 1, the Navy will restructure the Enlisted Supervisor Retention Pay (ESRP) policy to provide incentive for senior enlisted Sailors to serve as a submarine engineering department master chief (EDMC), CVN leading chief petty officer (LCPO) or reactor department master chief (RDMC). [NAVADMIN 308/11](#), released Oct. 14, provides ESRP to qualified Sailors with 10 to 23 years of service by restructuring Zones C and D to create Zones 1, 2 and 3. The ESRP program is a dynamic force management tool modeled after the Selective Reenlistment Bonus and is designed to retain senior nuclear supervisors. Complete eligibility requirements, reenlistment procedures and pay formula are contained in [NAVADMIN 308/11](#) at www.npc.navy.mil.

Enlisted Retention Board Transition Resources

BLUF: The one-stop-shop for ERB Transition Assistance information is at your fingertips.

Navy Personnel Command created a handbook that serves as a guide to both Sailors transitioning out of the Navy and their commands. The ERB Transition Handbook can be found on the NPC web site's ERB [Transition page](#).

The Handbook differentiates between benefits and privileges for involuntarily separated Sailors, and those who separate voluntarily, providing the real gouge on what Sailors are entitled to. Also included in the handbook are the new benefits available to those Sailors not selected for retention on Active Duty. These additional benefits are meant to ease the transition for Sailors affected by the ERB. It includes transition assistance, TRICARE, Involuntary Separation Pay, civilian DOD job opportunities, and much more. This is an invaluable compendium of "go to" sites to help Sailors assimilate back into civilian life.

Along the same lines of retirement, our transitioning Shipmates need to spend time BEFORE separation to carefully prepare for civilian life. This handbook will aid in the process. Whether retiring or separating, coach your Sailors to get them positioned for life after the Navy.

Additionally, a robust set of Frequently Asked Questions is available which cover many of the same subjects in an easy-to-read format.

If you have a question not covered by either of these resources, call the NPC Customer Service Center at 1-866-U-ASK-NPC or email them at CSCMailbox@navy.mil.

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>

Standardized Pre-separation Checklist

BLUF: You can ensure a smoother transition with this checklist.

To ensure Sailors fully understand their eligibility and how to access transition services and benefits, the Navy adopted a standardized pre-separation checklist which is available online. Making the move from uniform to the civilian sector is an important transition which demands a Sailor's full attention in order to be successful. These standardized checklists will ensure Sailors have a thorough understanding and access to the full range of benefits available to them, no matter where they are in the world.

[NAVADMIN 300/11](#) guides Navy Career Counselors and separating Sailors to the Web sites where they can download the new versions of pre-separation counseling checklist for active component service members (DD Form 2648) and pre-separation counseling checklist for Reserve Component service members released from active duty (DD Form 2648-1). Counselors can find the forms, which became mandatory Oct. 1, 2011, at www.dmdc.osd.mil/tap.

Third Classes Can Now Assist Financial Specialists

BLUF: Navy is expanding helpful financial knowledge.

A new pilot program from Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) has been launched to increase the level of financial knowledge and training to Sailors at the E-4 level. Third Class Petty Officers who want to be assistants to their Command Financial Specialist (CFS) may submit their request for formal training through their local Fleet and Family Support Center's (FFSC) Personal Financial Management (PFM) counselors.

Studies indicate 18-23 year old Sailors make many of their financial decisions through recommendations of peers. Command Financial Specialist E-4 (CFS-E4) trained Sailors can mentor and influence fellow junior Sailors on financial investments and guidance.

More information about qualifications and applications may be found through NPC and [NAVADMIN 318/11](#).

Physical Readiness Control Officer Program

BLUF: PRCOs will assist subordinate commands with their PFA program.

The newly established Physical Readiness Control Officer (PRCO) program will serve as a vital link between command fitness leaders and Navy Physical Readiness Program coordinators. Per [NAVADMIN 203/11](#), Echelon III commanders must now appoint a PRCO to liaison with OPNAV and provide assistance to subordinate commands on physical readiness program policy and compliance and also ensure Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) compliance reporting semi-annually.

The new collateral duty PRCO position and changes to the Physical Readiness Program took effect in July when the Navy announced the revision of [OPNAVINST 6110.1J](#) in [NAVADMIN 203/11](#). It was the first major revision to the physical readiness program since 2005. NPC officials hosted training for the first group of PRCOs in September. During training, the PRCOs went through everything that CFLs learn during the five-day CFL certification course. They learned all the major components of policy, frequently asked questions received at headquarters, everything about the PRIMS 2011 and also what their role and responsibilities are as a PRCO.

For a full explanation of physical readiness program changes, read [NAVADMIN 203/11](#) or [OPNAVINST 6110.1J](#). You can also visit the Navy Physical Readiness web page on the Navy Personnel Command website at www.npc.navy.mil.

Interested in the Selected Reserve?

BLUF: You should check to see what's available.

Before submitting for a SELRES quota in FleetRIDE/Perform-to-Serve, check the manning levels of each rate and rank to see if there is an opening. Separating Sailors should not expect to automatically be awarded a SELRES Quota. Check the manning level in your rating before choosing "In-rate only." Go to the Enlisted Community Managers page and click on SELRES to navigate to their site and open an excel document that shows every SELRES rating.

The EFM Module is Available Online at NFAAS Website

BLUF: It's up to you to make sure your loved ones are accounted for during emergencies.

Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (NFAAS) has been a very important tool this year with all the recent disasters impacting Sailors such as Hurricane Irene, earthquakes in Japan, wildfires in TX, flooding in the Midwest and Northeast, and tornadoes in MS and AL. Created after Katrina, NFAAS allows families to account for their safety and fill out a needs assessment if they are without housing, need financial assistance or other help.

Here's the bottom line: Get on NFAAS now and register BEFORE an emergency happens. Log-on to NFAAS at <https://navyfamily.navy.mil> to verify your address and contact information. Make changes when anything changes in your life - just like with your Page 2 and other critical paperwork. NFAAS will be used following a catastrophic incident. Additionally, remember that updating NFAAS does NOT update NSIPS, you must still update NSIPS separately.

[NAVADMIN 275/11](#) requires that all personnel update/verify their personal information semi-annually no later than 1 October and 1 April of each year. Verify your information TODAY!

Shift Colors is Out

BLUF: Crossing over to the digital age is saving money.

Whether you're planning retirement anytime soon or in the future ... the Navy's retiree publication, *Shift Colors*, is a valuable resource.

The fall edition was sent to more than 600,000 retirees' mailboxes. Due to the high cost of mailing (more than \$400,000 per issue), it will be 'online only' for future editions. This is the same for *All Hands Magazine*, which has published its final printed edition.

One of the major benefits of online viewing is that anyone, even pre-retirees can read it at anytime. *Shift Colors* contains valuable checklists for your estate planning and for VA benefits as well as law changes affecting retirees.

Shift Colors is available on the NPC web site at:
<http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/reference/publications/shiftcolors/Pages/default.aspx>

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

Navy Knowledge Online Advancement Center Page:
<https://wwwa.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

Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System: <https://navyfamily.navy.mil>

Navy Medicine Synthetic Drugs and Your Health: <http://www.med.navy.mil/Pages/Spice.aspx>

National Institute on Drug Addiction: <http://www.nida.nih.gov/INFOFACTS/SPICE.HTML>

Drug Enforcement Administration: <http://www.justice.gov/dea/>

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>

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>