Assessing Workloads to Provide Balance, Retain Sailors

We have all heard the old adage, “choose your rate, choose your fate”. Our work is definitely not a one size fits all situation, and that is most noticeable at sea. As we have known for years, but now have research to validate, some ratings have greater workload demands while in-port than at sea, and vice versa. Last year, Navy conducted a study aboard in-port DDGs to measure and compare Sailor workloads across all assigned ratings. We found that while the total ship’s workload in-port is less than underway, mainly due to fewer watch requirements, we were also able to evaluate and identify particular ratings whose work actually increased once in-port. Based on the findings, Navy added an additional nine manpower requirements to selected ratings assessed to work greater than 54 hours per in-port week. This study was a crucial first step in starting the in-port workload studies a-board ships to prevent our Sailors from doing more than required.

What is the Navy doing to fix this?

More importantly, what does this mean for you? New Navy policy is being implemented to require the completion of in-port ship workload studies across all ship classes. The results of the studies will ensure our manpower requirements match the in-port workload carried out by our Sailors. This year we will conduct an in-port work study of Forward Deployed-Japan CGs and DDGs. Additionally, Navy is now conducting an Operational Afloat Workweek study to better identify how Sailors spend their time during a deployed underway week and what is appropriate for safe and effective operations. This effort, along with the in-port studies, will ensure that the Navy provides an accurate manpower demand signal reflective of the work we ask of our Sailors to perform. This summer, LPD-17 is the first ship to include a simultaneous (afloat and in-port) assessment. More to follow!

Check Out the New Family Leave Program

Navy updated their family leave policy to align with the Department of Defense Military Parental Leave Program in NAVADMIN 151/18.

Instead of three separate polices covering maternity and paternity leave, there are now three forms of non-chargeable leave following the birth or adoption of a child: maternity convalescent leave, primary caregiver leave and secondary caregiver leave. Maternity convalescent leave is six weeks and primary caregiver leave are each six weeks (42 days), and secondary caregiver leave is now two weeks (14 days).

Navy’s parental leave program supports Sailor 2025’s goal of removing obstacles that negatively influence a Sailor’s decision to Stay Navy when they are looking to start or raise a family. For more details, read NAVADMIN 151/18 at www.npc.navy.mil.

Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Pride Month

During the month of June, the Navy joins the nation in observing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month. For more information about LGBT Pride Month, visit http://www.deomi.org/human-relations/special-observances.cfm.

MyNavy Portal Redesign

Get ready for an updated MyNavy Portal (MNP) this month! Every page has been completely redesigned for a cleaner, more modern look and feel. The upgrade will provide significant performance enhancements across the entire portal. Here are some of the changes you will see:

- Redesigned MNP home screen.
- New images for Career & Life Event (CLE) icons
- Improved MNP search function.
- Pages load faster with overall performance improvement.
- You can now fill out and submit the Physical Activity Risk Factor Questionnaire (PARFQ) right in MNP.

Check out the updated MNP at https://my.navy.mil.

COMING SOON

Be on the Lookout for these Personnel Announcements:

- Full Time Support Aviation Department Head Bonus
- Full Time Support Aviation Command Bonus
- Joint Professional Military Education for Senior Enlisted Leaders
- Jan. 2019 Navy-Wide Advancement Exam (Cycle 242)
- Rating Modernization Update
PACT PROFILE
BUSH SAILOR FINDS OPPORTUNITY

As part of Sailor 2025’s efforts to modernization personnel systems to retain top talent, Navy updated the Professional Apprenticeship Career Track Program (PACT) program in May 2018.

In a recent Sailor to Sailor Podcast, MC2 Kirk Putnam with USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) public affairs, spoke with SN Matthew Jackson, of Virginia Beach, VA, who joined the Navy in March 2016. Jackson talked about his Navy experiences from joining to reporting to his first ship as part of the PACT program and his selection for rating designation.

Jackson took full advantage of the unique apprenticeship opportunity as an undesignated seaman to experience work in multiple departments and divisions, before completing his application for rating designation. As a PACT seaman, he had the opportunity to, “work on the deckplates with the other boatswain’s mates, mooring the ship, getting underway, standing watch and driving the ship.”

Could you describe the PACT process? “Initially you come onboard your command, you work with whichever department you have been assigned to, at a minimum of one year. We had to be onboard Bush for one year before we were allowed to put in (rating applications) through C-WAY (Career Waypoints)“ said Jackson. From there, PACT Sailors can see which ratings are available, based on ASVAB scores and Navy-wide rating availability in a given month. “The rate you want might not be there that month, but the next month it might show up,” said Jackson.

What are your thoughts about gaining your designation through PACT, as opposed to the traditional path? “You really do get to see what’s going on. I saw a lot as an undesignated seaman that I don’t think I would have seen if I came in off the bat as a (hospital) corpsman,” said Jackson.

What are the benefits of the PACT process for Sailors? “[You] get to see a lot of the Fleet, especially if you are on a shipboard command. I think that is the biggest benefit. Standing watch for deck department, I got to see how the OSs (Operations Specialists) work and how the QMs (Quartermasters) work. I went TAD (temporary assignment duty) to security, so I got to experience how the MAs (Master at Arms) work. You get to see what the MCs (Mass Communications) do, as you are looking at the (ship’s) weekly newspaper. You have a lot of information to go on when you are ready to put in [for your rating designation].”

Do you think there is any stigma against the PACT program or Sailors who received their rating designation through PACT? “[I got picked up [for hospital corpsman] through C-WAY as an undesignated seaman. I don’t necessarily think there is a stigma against being undesignated. Really, it’s all about you, if you can prove why you deserve a rate. You work hard. You show that you are trying to put that effort into it and that you are not letting the fact that you are undesignated put you down.”

Now that you have your rating designation, do you plan on making the Navy a career? “I had planned on making it a career anyway, whether that was picking up a rate that I didn’t necessarily want and trying to commission as an officer, or if I did enjoy that rate and I wanted to stay and make a full career out of that,” said Jackson.

By receiving the rating designation he had his eye on even before joining the Navy, Jackson said he plans to remain in the Navy as an enlisted Sailor or to apply for officer programs in the medical field. For more information about Sailor 2025, visit http://www.navy.mil/local/cnp/mpstratdesign.asp.

Eating Healthier and Feeling Healthier

Dietitians Now Available to Commands

We’ve got some great news! Registered dietitians are now available for temporary additional duty (TAD) to operational and ashore commands. Getting a dietitian TAD to a command is simple – the commanding officer just has to submit the request. Dietitians will provide nutrition education on performance nutrition, healthy eating habits, hydration, and safe dietary supplement use. They will also be available to collaborate with food service officers and culinary staff on menu development and nutrition programs. Look for the NAVADMIN at www.npc.navy.mil. For more on Navy Nutrition, check out http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/21st_Century_Sailor/navynutrition/Pages/default2.aspx.

—Connecting with the Fleet—
"Will I lose my clearance if I seek mental health treatment?"

Standard Form (SF86) “Questionnaire for National Security Positions” is used to determine if an individual is eligible for a security clearance. One of the reasons Sailors may choose to not to seek help for their mental health is out of fear that they could lose their clearance if they report mental health treatment.

So what are the FACTS?

FACT: Less than 1% security clearance denials and revocations involve psychological health concerns.

FACT: Reaching out for help to promote your personal wellness and recovery may have a positive impact on your security clearance eligibility.

FACT: Not all psychological health treatment is required to be reported when answering SF86. This includes counseling related to a combat deployment, marital or family concerns (not related to violence by the service member), grief counseling, and counseling related to being a victim of sexual assault.

FACT: Any psychological health care you report when answering SF86 is protected by your privacy rights. A security investigator can only initially ask a health care provider if you are coping with a concern that could impair your judgement or reliability to safeguard classified information. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, mental illnesses are among the most common health conditions in the U.S. More than 50 percent of Americans will be diagnosed with a mental illness or disorder at some point in life, with one in five experiencing a mental illness in a given year. Learn to recognize symptoms of mental health distress in friends and loved ones. Those who need help are often the last to notice. Signs of distress include: drinking more heavily than usual, agitation or anger, withdrawing from family and friends, difficulty concentrating, sadness or depression.

Ultimately, you are part of the Navy team—and if you are not functioning at 100% because you are avoiding help, you owe it to yourself, your family, your shipmates, and your Navy to reach out. We are here for you! Mental health treatment is proven to work, and recovery is possible. To tap into mental health resources, talk to your primary care manager.

Seeking help is a sign of strength, and help is always available.

Need someone to talk to right now?
https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/

Want to learn about building resilience?

For confidential, 24/7 support, contact the Military Crisis Line at 800-273-8255 (Press 1).

Mid-point for Blended Retirement System Enrollment

There’s just over six months remaining in the BRS enrollment period! Sailors must have opted into the BRS and requested continuation pay before they reach 12 years of service to receive mid-career continuation pay. To find BRS mid-career continuation pay rates for 2019 go to http://www.public.navy.mil/buers-npc/support/21st_Century_Sailor/readiness/Pages/Personal-Financial-Management.aspx. You can get more information on BRS and the opt-in process at http://www.public.navy.mil/buers-npc/support/21st_Century_Sailor/readiness/Pages/Personal-Financial-Management.aspx.

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The Navy has launched a new pilot program to select high-performing enlisted Sailors for temporary advancement into critical Fleet leadership billets.

The FY-19 Enlisted Advancement-to-Vacancy Selection Board is a Sailor 2025 rating modernization initiative designed to select Sailors for positions of greater responsibility, and to help the Navy better align senior enlisted leaders to commands that need them the most.

Similar to the officer temporary promotion process for surface and submarine chief engineers, the program will incentivize high-performing volunteers to fill challenging, priority billets in exchange for temporary advancement. Sailors will still need to be selected during the normal advancement cycle in order for the advancement to be permanent.

This pilot program will be limited to critical E8 and E9 billets only. Based on the outcome of the pilot, we expect to expand this program to other enlisted paygrades.

For more information, including board eligibility and the application process, check out NAVADMIN 144/18 at www.npc.navy.mil.

June is PTSD Awareness Month

If you’ve ever directly or indirectly experienced a shocking or life-threatening event—from a car accident or operational mishap, to sexual assault or combat exposure—you may recall a few of your body’s reactions. Your muscles may have tensed and you may have started breathing rapidly, preparing to protect yourself or escape to avoid harm. Or you may have felt physically unable to move or react; temporarily paralyzed. This reflexive response is known as “fight, flight or freeze.” It is the brain’s pre-programmed way of preparing the body for perceived or actual threats—or temporarily impairing its ability to react to the threat—and is a normal frontline reaction to extreme stress. Once the threat has passed, the body can naturally return to its optimal state, rebalancing functions that were briefly intensified or suppressed.

While the body can self-regulate, some reactions may linger for a short time afterward, such as feeling nervous or overly cautious when a situation reminds you of the traumatic experience. These reactions—which may temporarily impair behavior or function—are known as post-traumatic stress. In many cases, post-traumatic stress symptoms will subside naturally within a few days or weeks following the traumatic experience. Speaking with a chaplain, harnessing the support of friends and family, as well as maintaining a balanced diet and fitness regimen can help ease post-traumatic stress symptoms and promote recovery. Practicing self-care can also help build resilience after a traumatic experience. You can also try journal writing as a tool to promote calmness while expressing feelings, worries and concerns.

Anyone can be at risk of developing injuries and illnesses from stress. Reactions vary by individual and are influenced by several factors, from genetics and neurobiology, to available social support and positive coping skills. For some, these experiences may lead to development of more lasting and serious psychological health impacts, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

PTSD is a clinically-diagnosable stress illness where certain symptoms persist over an extended period of time and severely interfere with daily function. The National Center for PTSD and the National Center for Telehealth & Technology (T2) have developed a mobile app available for Apple and Android devices, designed to assist service members, veterans and civilians who may be experiencing PTSD symptoms.

Whether navigating daily stress, post-traumatic stress or PTSD, remember that it’s okay to speak up when you’re down. The more you are able to talk about your experiences, the less power the intrusive memories will have over you. Seeking the help of a qualified professional can help you understand your symptoms, build new coping skills and return to living a full, productive and meaningful life.

For more information on PTSD, visit the National Center for PTSD. For immediate help, call the Military Crisis Line at 1-800-273-TALK (Press 1).