



## @USNPEOPLE WEEKLY WIRE

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- Message from the Chief of Chaplains: Know Your Part, Do Your Part to Eliminate Sexual Assault on Navy Live: [\[LINK\]](#)
- U.S. Navy Command Culture Builds Respect and Trust to Lead the Way in Sexual Assault Prevention [\[LINK\]](#)

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## 1.) White and blue crackerjacks moving forward/ 20 APRIL 15

NAVY TIMES, Lance M. Bacon

The good news: Officials have the money for the long-awaited reboot of dress whites and dress blues.

The bad news: The money isn't available until 2016.

Money problems and a decision to roll-out new women's jumper-style dress blues in tandem with the men's have delayed the roll-out by a year for service dress blues; service dress whites will be delayed for two years.

Men and women, E-6 and below, will be able to buy the service dress blues at the Navy Exchange in early 2016, said Capt. Janet Bristol, head of the Uniform Matters Office. The uniforms are likely to be issued to recruits beginning Oct. 1, 2016, the start of fiscal year 2017. Funding for the crackerjack whites is earmarked for fiscal 2017.

"We are definitely going forward with it," she said in a recent interview. "We are still formalizing some of our final decisions on the timing and rollout schedule, but the funding is in place, the uniforms will be coming and I think the sailors will enjoy the new features."

The dress blues sport sure-to-be popular updates like a front zipper on the trousers that renders the 13 buttons purely decorative, and a side zipper on the blouse. The dress whites are set for the largest redesign in decades and will have tailored cuffs and piping that matches the blues. But not all changes are being well-received: Many female sailors complain that the "Dixie cup" is easily stained by makeup and doesn't fit hair buns.

Many male sailors said they are eager to check out some of the new features, but not eager to cough up the money to buy a new uniform; a current set costs \$87.54.

The cost of the updated threads has not been determined, though Bristol said the new blues "will be a little bit more expensive than the current uniform because of the piping and zippers." The new crackerjacks will start as an optional uniform for sailors and then at some as yet undetermined date become required. That introductory phase can stretch as long as three years, and a longer transition would place less burden on the production schedule, Bristol said.

On the other hand, leadership can expedite the requirement, which is a real possibility. The push for women to adopt the crackerjack style-jumper and the "Dixie cup" have been driven by Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, who wants more uniformity in the ranks.

The male uniform designs were approved in May 2012 after eight years of tests and trials, but the cash-strapped service didn't have the funds for implementation. Officials kept the effort alive by launching a redesign of the female dress blues. About 30 women donned "Dixie cups" and crackerjacks for an initial three-week wear test in May 2014. Modifications were made based on their feedback, and about 275 women in Norfolk-area bases conducted a three-month wear test from November to January.

The plan is to roll out the male and female SDBs together in 2016. Offering them first at the Navy Exchange allows the Defense Logistics Agency to enter production at a slow and steady pace, and then ramp up for the start of recruit issue later in the year, Bristol said.

'Worth the wait'

The new side zippers will drive up the cost of the blouse but have been a huge hit. Taking off the blouse — an effort reminiscent of Houdini wrestling his way out of a straightjacket — is now done with ease thanks to the side zipper. The trousers also have a front zipper flanked by two pockets. The 13 buttons remain as a decorative element.

Women are testing a front and side trouser zipper. Bristol said most women have preferred the side zipper. Navy Times has spoken with more than a dozen women who go took part in the two wear tests, and their preferences have been split down the middle.

Many women dislike the "Dixie cup" as compared with the bucket-style cover they currently wear. The majority of wearers give it a thumbs-down for a variety of reasons. Operations Specialist 3rd Class (SW/AW) Jasmica Harvey said she respects the women who fought long for equality in military service, but that recognition should not come at the expense of their contribution as females.

"I look too much like one of the guys," the seven-year sailor said. "I understand the desire for uniformity, but something should make [us] stand out as females. The combination cover would be much better for this uniform."

Air Traffic Controller Airman Maria Rios-Castaneda said the combination cover is better because it's dark brim hides the makeup stains that can be seen on the white sailor hat after only one wear. While it is washable, wearers wonder if the stains will fully come out of the white cloth. Other sailors said the "Dixie cup" does not fit right with hair buns.

The uniform is another story. Air Traffic Controller 2nd Class (AW) Cheryl Ehrenfeld has a unique perspective on the fit of the service dress blues. As a member of the honor guard for seven months, she and other women wore the male uniform in the winter.

"It wasn't near as comfortable as this," she said. In addition to the "vast improvement" provided by the zippers (she prefers the zipper in the front of the trousers), the female version is form-fitting. That is an improvement over initial tests, in which women found the uniform uncomfortable. Designers made "minor pattern adjustments" from those initial surveys, Bristol said.

Those changes made a difference, sailors observed.

"This uniform is very comfortable. More comfortable than the blazer that we had," Harvey said. "I don't like looking like a stewardess in the current uniform, but I definitely like this," she said, referring to the jumper-style top.

Women sailors currently wear a white shirt and black tie underneath a suit-style coat, instead of a jumper.

The new whites will mirror the blues in appearance: They feature a yoke around the chest and black piping on the back bib and along the tailored cuffs at the end of the sleeves. Two stars rest in the back bib's corners.

Female wear testers said they've gotten mostly positive feedback while wearing their prototype uniforms, especially among women. The wear testers have had to endure the occasional joke, and even a harsh look or two. More than one tester has been asked why she was wearing the male uniform.

"There are some design features the fleet is going to enjoy," Bristol said. In addition to the side zipper, she continued, "The piping looks very sharp and will add layer of pride. It's going to be worth the wait."

## **2.) E-8 selection rate drops, but its more even across ratings/ 21 APRIL 15**

NAVY TIMES, Mark D. Faram

The fiscal year 2016 E-8 selection board convened Monday with a slate of quotas that will allow them to select 1,456 of 12,741 eligible chiefs for a senior chief's star.

Those numbers drop the advancement shot to 11.4 percent from last year's 12 percent opportunity. It's the second year in a row the shot at advancing dropped for what is statistically the hardest enlisted rank to make.

But the opportunity to advance is still good and still above the 10-year average of 11.2 percent.

"As manning levels stabilized, advancement opportunity for our E-7s going before the E-8 board remains near the 10-year average," Fleet Master Chief (AW/SW) April Beldo told Navy Times April 21. "As [the chief of naval personnel] and I have shared during CPO mess engagements, some ratings show swings as they respond to fleet manning needs, but overall we have seen a stabilization of opportunity and expect to remain close to the average for the foreseeable future."

Putting on senior chief, through the years, has been statistically the toughest rate to achieve. Historic percentages show it annually has the lowest percentage of advancement in the enlisted paygrades.

In all, this year's opportunity has evened out across the board. That's because 47 of the 88 ratings at this level are advancing at or above the Navy-wide 11.43 average, up from 32 last year.

This cut the numbers of below average ratings to 41, down from 56 last year.

Quotas increased by 11, but overall advancement dropped since there are 731 more eligible chiefs competing for those slots.

The good news is every rating and competitive group will advance at least one chief to senior chief, officials say.

Of note is the Navy diver rating, where there are 142 chiefs split between two competitive groups — Group 1 are those qualified as master divers, while Group 2 members hold lesser, first class diving qualifications. For those with the master diver qualification, there are quotas for nine to advance, but only two qualified chiefs to fill those billets, so both will advance. With 100 percent opportunity, this group tops the list.

But their diving counterparts with lesser qualifications aren't so lucky. They have the worst shot at advancing this year as there are only two quotas and 142 eligible candidates — just a 1.4 percent shot at moving up.

This year's other milestone is that those selected this year will be the last year-group of senior chiefs to be "grandfathered" under the old, optional Senior Enlisted Academy Program. Starting with next year's board, all those selected will have to complete the SEA within three years in order to be eligible to advance to master chief.

## **3.) A Sailor's Experience with Career Intermission Program/ 23 APRIL 15 [\[LINK\]](#)**

NAVY LIVE, Lt. Michael Fonbuena

The Career Intermission Program, which originally began as a small-scale pilot, has afforded me the opportunity to seek out an advanced degree at a prestigious university of my choosing while also allowing me the ability to continue my career in the naval service. Overall, I have had an extremely positive experience with CIP and feel

that the Navy should strongly advertise this program to junior officers as an alternative means of obtaining graduate education.

As I was midway through my shore tour, I found myself debating a question which many junior officers often find themselves debating: Should I stay in or should I get out? There are many factors which weigh in to such a decision: financial, professional, family, etc. For me, however, the most important factor was the ability to obtain a quality graduate education that aligned with both my academic and professional interests. After researching the options available to me through the Navy, I became extremely discouraged by the lack of diversity in educational opportunities. (To be fair, I was not ready to sign JCSRB at the end of my second sea tour which limited my opportunities, but I feel that can be said of many junior officers who need to experience a shore tour before they are ready to make such a critical decision.)

The only option which truly aligned with my interests was the Pol-Mil Master's Program. However, the timing was not likely to work as it would put me at department head school past the seven and a half year mark; also there is only one applicant accepted to a two-year Master's program each year. One applicant – this is a huge disservice to the Naval Officer Corps. Needless to say, I was discouraged at the opportunities available to me.

Then, I discovered CIP after many hours of online searching, and it immediately peaked my interest. The main draw was the ability to continue my career as a department head while also being afforded the opportunity to obtain a Master's degree of my choosing at an institution of my choosing.

Overall, I have had an extremely positive experience while participating in this program. I have been able to see what life outside of the military is like, I have been re-invigorated by the educational opportunities which have been presented to me, and I feel I have gained many valuable skills which are not traditionally gained in Navy graduate programs and will serve both myself and the Navy well in the long run. Below are some thoughts on CIP:

Positives:

- Ability to obtain the degree I desired at a university of my choosing
- Obtained diverse skills which will be valuable to myself and the Navy in the long run
- Allowed to use Post 9/11 GI Bill and retained medical/dental benefits
- Eliminates timing issues regarding career progression

Negatives:

- Stipend not substantial enough to make sufficient impact in day-to-day life
- Program not well known to service members
- Unable to collect YCS 6 JCSRB payment due to program restrictions

Suggestions:

- Heavily advertise CIP to junior officers, particularly as an alternative vehicle to obtain graduate education
- Increase the monthly stipend to approximately 1/5 of base pay to create a larger incentive for participation in CIP
- Develop partnerships with academic institutions to help junior officers get accepted to top-tier Master's programs while participating in CIP
- Remove the restriction that do not allow participants to receive CSRB; at minimum, make it so junior officers could retroactively receive any payments they otherwise would be ineligible for because of the existing clause making it ineligible for individuals to participate in CIP while under CSRB. This might make sense in some context, but not for junior officers, who should be primary target group of CIP
- Work to place members in a position applicable to the Master's Degree they obtain during CIP – for example, if someone goes to Wharton to obtain their M.B.A., place them in a financial position at the Pentagon immediately upon return to active duty; if a person goes to Harvard Kennedy School to obtain their M.P.P., place them in an OLA or Pol-Mil billet. This will not only leverage the ideas obtained during their studies but also advance the service member professionally and validate them academically.

This has been an extremely valuable program, and I feel that it should be largely expanded from its current scope. It provides the Navy the opportunity to tap into a segment of junior officers who would be extremely valuable to the Navy long-term but might otherwise separate due to a lack of educational opportunities. I would further recommend the Navy conduct an extensive survey in order to discover what percentage of junior officers across all levels would be encouraged to stay if given the chance to participate in CIP and what would encourage their participation.

#### **4.) Officials: Progress seen in Navy sex assault reporting/ 20APRIL 15**

NAVY TIMES, Meghann Myers

For this year's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Awareness Month, the Navy is asking sailors to help eliminate sexual assault by stepping up to protect themselves and their shipmates.

The Navy is out to dispel myths about what sexual assault is and who it affects, while encouraging sailors to treat each other with respect in general, the Navy's top sexual assault prevention officer told Navy Times.

"Know that having sex with someone without their consent is sexual assault," Rear Adm. Rick Snyder, head of the 21st Century Sailor Office, said in an April 16 phone interview. "You've got to know your part in not being an alleged offender."

And likewise, he added, potential survivors should know that if they haven't given consent, they can come forward.

"You need to know that these activities that happen to you, that you may not have thought were sexual assault, may in fact be sexual assault, and we need you to come forward so that we can get you the help you need and we can hold the offenders appropriately accountable," he said.

Sexual Assault Awareness Month is marked by community events like picnics and 5K runs, Snyder said, but the idea is to restart the conversation each year so that it continues in the following months.

"The more often we have the discussion, the more normal it will seem as something that we talk about," he said.

Statistics from the chief of naval personnel's office show that the Navy had a 10 percent jump in reported sexual assault from fiscal year 2013 to 2014.

It's a significant increase, Snyder said, but it's considerably less than the 53 percent increase between 2012 and 2013.

His focus is on closing the gap between official reports and total incidents of unwanted sexual contact.

Extrapolated results from a 2014 survey by the RAND Corporation estimated 5,600 instances of unwanted sexual contact, which is sharply down from 10,600 in fiscal year 2012.

"The surveys are showing us that the prevalence has come down, and clearly the number of reports have gone up," Snyder said. "It indicates we've made some progress, the effort we put forward the past several years has paid off."

Those numbers mean that about one out of three women didn't report the assaults, which is up from one in six in 2012.

Additionally, half of those 5,600 victims are male, Snyder said, and only one in 12 of them is reporting.

"We need to continue to address that as an issue, to make sure that we understand for males, the definition of sexual assault is the same," he said. "Whether it happens as part of hazing or something else, it's sexual assault."

There are services for those who choose not report, like the Defense Department's Safe Help Line and civilian organizations, but Snyder said his office wants more survivors to report.

One of the biggest barriers to reporting, survivors have said, is the invasive legal process and the low number of prosecutions that result from it.

Snyder acknowledged that the Naval Criminal Investigative Service and the judge advocate corps have some work to do in handling sexual assault cases, and that meetings are going on with representatives from the victims' legal counsel to improve the process.

"Whether it's the timing of interviews, the content of interviews," he said. "NCIS wants to do a thorough and complete investigation, victim's legal counsel wants best interests of victim. They're working together to find a common ground."

While the Navy is taking steps to better support survivors and prevent assault in the first place, they're not looking into more strident measures, like so-called "enthusiastic consent" laws that are now in effect on California college campuses.

The laws raise the threshold for sexual assault from the commonly used standard of, "Did she say no?" to put the responsibility on the other party to assure that she says an enthusiastic 'yes.'

In 2014, a private sexual assault training course called "Can I Kiss You?" visited several bases to promote the idea of asking for permission, but Snyder said the Navy isn't looking into making that a regulation.

"I would broaden that discussion into one of treating one another with dignity and respect," he said. "And that would encompass that, if you are going to have some sort of sexual interaction or relationship, that it's done with dignity and respect on both sides."

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