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1) Greenert: Forward Presence is Navy, Marine Corps Mandate / 25 MAR 14 [\[LINK\]](#)

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"As we conclude over a decade of wars and bring our ground forces home from extended stability operations, your naval forces will remain on watch," Greenert said.

2) CNP Testifies on Sailor and Family Readiness / 25 MAR 14 [\[LINK\]](#)

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3) MCPON's next moves: Uniform fixes, fleetwide tablets and more / 24 MAR 14 [\[LINK\]](#)

By Mark Faram, Navy Times

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4) CNP Answers Your Questions from World-Wide All Hands Call / 24 MAR 14 [\[LINK\]](#)

By Chief of Naval Personnel, Vice Adm. Bill Moran

We received an enormous response from the fleet, and as promised, here are answers to the questions we couldn't get to during our allotted time. We encourage you to keep sending us your feedback.

5) Study: Recent veterans are succeeding in college / 24 MAR 14 [\[LINK\]](#)

By Gregg Zoroya, USA Today

The research released by the Student Veterans of America service organization is the first in-depth look at how those who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan are performing in college. While analysts say results could be better, the numbers appear to refute reports — some in the media, some anecdotal — that most of these veterans are dropping out or failing in college.

About one in three of the veterans earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

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or find it online at www.navy.mil/cnp

1) Greenert: Forward Presence is Navy, Marine Corps Mandate / 25 MAR 14 [\[LINK\]](#)

By Claudette Roulo, American Forces Press Service

The Navy-Marine Corps team is united in fulfilling the mandate to be where it matters, when it matters, Navy Adm. Jonathan W. Greenert, the chief of naval operations, said March 25.

Marine Corps Commandant Gen. James F. Amos is "a great shipmate," the admiral added during a hearing of the House Appropriations Committee's defense subcommittee.

Interaction between the two services has never been better, Greenert said, noting that he is committed to continuing that momentum.

"Forward presence is our mandate," the admiral said. By operating from forward locations, the Navy and Marine Corps provide President Barack Obama with options to deal promptly with global contingencies, he explained.

"As we conclude over a decade of wars and bring our ground forces home from extended stability operations, your naval forces will remain on watch," Greenert said.

The Navy's efforts are focused in the Asia-Pacific region and the Arabian Gulf, he said, but the service continues to provide presence and response as needed in other theaters. "Now, with this forward presence, over the last year, we were able to influence and shape decisions of leaders in the Arabian Gulf, in Northeast Asia and the Levant," the admiral said.

To protect American interests and encourage regional leaders to make the right choices, the Navy patrolled off the shores of Libya, Egypt and Sudan, he continued. And, he said, naval forces relieved suffering and provided assistance and recovery in the Philippines in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan.

The Navy's forward presence dissuades aggression against the nation's allies in the East and the South China Seas, the admiral noted, and helps to deter piracy in the Horn of Africa.

"And we continue to support operations in Afghanistan while taking the fight to insurgents, terrorists and their supporting networks across the Middle East and Africa with our expeditionary and our special operations forces," he said.

The 2014 budget will enable the Navy to maintain an "acceptable" forward presence, Greenert said. There are sufficient funds to restore fleet training, maintenance and operations and recover a substantial part of the 2013 backlog, he noted.

Recognizing that budgetary constraints will continue through fiscal year 2015, the admiral said he set six priorities: sea-based strategic deterrence; forward presence; the capability and capacity to win decisively; readiness; asymmetric capabilities and maintaining technological edge; and sustaining a relevant industrial base.

"Using these priorities, we built a balanced portfolio of capabilities within the fiscal guidance provided," he told the committee.

The Navy will continue to combine rotational forces and forward-based and forward stationed forces to maximize its presence in the Asia-Pacific region and the Middle East, the admiral said.

The force still faces shortfalls in shore support, Greenert noted, and a facilities maintenance backlog that "will

erode the ability of our bases to support the fleet."

"We have slowed modernization in areas that are central to remain ahead of or keep pace with technologically advanced adversaries," he said. "Consequently, we face higher risk if confronted with a high-tech adversary, or if we attempt to conduct more than one multiphase major contingency simultaneously."

The prospect of returning to sequestration-level funding in 2016 is "troubling," Greenert said. "That would lead to a Navy that is just too small and lacking the advanced capabilities needed to execute the missions that the nation faces and that it expects of its Navy," he told the panel.

If defense funding reverted to the caps imposed in the 2010 Budget Control Act, he said, the Navy would be unable to execute at least four of the 10 primary missions articulated in the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance and the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review.

The Navy's ability to respond to contingencies would be dramatically reduced, Greenert said, and, in a global crisis, the nation's options and time to make decisions would be limited.

"We would be compelled to inactivate an aircraft carrier and an air wing," the admiral said. "Further, ... our modernization and our recapitalization would be dramatically reduced, threatening the readiness and threatening our industrial base."

Greenert noted that the Navy is on board with the effort to get the nation's fiscal house in order, but any budgetary solutions need to sustain readiness while building an affordable and relevant future force.

2) CNP Testifies on Sailor and Family Readiness / 25 MAR 14 [\[LINK\]](#)

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Elliott Fabrizio, Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

The Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP) testified before the House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee to provide a personnel overview and contextualize the people side of the president's proposed fiscal year 2015 (FY 15) budget, March 25.

Vice Adm. Bill Moran, CNP, testified on Capitol Hill alongside personnel representatives from the Department of Defense (DoD) and the other services.

In his opening statement provided for the record, CNP reminded the subcommittee that the capabilities of the men and women serving in the U.S. Navy are in high demand around the world, citing the Navy's recent contributions to the search for Malaysian Airlines Flight 370, two forward-deployed strike groups, and ongoing partnership operations in the Black Sea.

"Every day our Sailors are involved in essential missions around the globe involving power projection, deterrence, warfighting, antipiracy, humanitarian aid and disaster relief (HADR) and peacekeeping," said Moran. "As our presence in the Asia-Pacific Theater expands, we will fill an increasingly vital role in this important region of the world."

He cautioned that if sequestration continued, the Navy would face long-term consequences to combat readiness.

The Navy's budget submission prioritizes funding for forward presence and continues to make critical investments in people and future capabilities.

"As we took on this budget, certainly we understood the imperative of reducing national debt in order to increase national security," said Moran in his opening statement. "But, many of the levers we pulled last year to mitigate operational impacts were simply no longer available."

The proposed \$148 billion budget is a \$15 billion decrease from the level forecast in last year's budget submission and is a \$38 billion reduction over the Future Year Defense Plan from the FY14 Presidential Budget.

The tough choices made in the FY 15 budget maintain quality of service for Sailors, Moran said, adding that the focus is improving manning at sea, retaining the Navy's best and brightest and increasing the readiness of Sailors and their families.

"All of what American sea power means today, and what it might become, lies squarely upon the shoulders of the people who make it so," said Moran. "And those people stand directly at the center of the budget now before you."

3) MCPON's next moves: Uniform fixes, fleetwide tablets and more / 24 MAR 14 [\[LINK\]](#)

By Mark Faram, Navy Times

A year ago, a lot of people were mad at Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (AW/NAC) Mike Stevens. He ended the rite of chief's induction and ordered a more fitting and professional transition for the chosen petty officers first class entering chief's messes.

But the backlash has died down after the latest — and, by many accounts, still arduous — chiefs' season, and now Stevens is focused on other ways to update the fleet and to make sailors' jobs easier and lives better.

"I was very pleased with how CPO 365 went down after the changes I made in my first few months on the job," Stevens said in a March 19 interview with Navy Times reporters and editors, crediting the success to the mess: "They have put their arms around it. They have embraced it."

He's one of the leaders looking at ways to streamline the uniform process so new, better items get to the fleet sooner. He's mandated attending the Senior Enlisted Academy for those who want to make master chief. He's leading efforts to one day issue tablets to sailors.

And with more than two years left, there's plenty more he wants to tackle.

Stevens discussed his vision and priorities for the fleet in a wide-ranging sit-down interview with Navy Times, detailing his plans for uniform updates, chief training, tablet devices, re-up rules and more.

Uniform updates

One of the biggest uniform issues on the table is the move to put women in new dress uniforms and covers, ones that look like those worn by male sailors and officers.

This summer, female sailors will don the "Dixie cup," while female chiefs and officers will wear a newly-designed combination cover that resembles the version worn by men.

These wear tests are moving quickly, and prototype uniforms are expected to be tested as early as this summer in Norfolk, Va., sources tell Navy Times, though the timeline, details and commands that will test the new dress duds remain to be seen.

“Right now we’re looking at how we as a force, as a Navy, can be more uniform across the entire force,” Stevens said. “We’re not trying to make women look like men — what we’re trying to do is to put the Navy in a like uniform.”

The service needs to be careful not to make such changes “haphazardly,” Stevens said, taking time to ensure the uniforms are tailored properly and can “adjust and fit to all bodies and all body types.”

That’s not the only uniform change he’s watching, however.

Right now, the Navy is still issuing the poly-cotton coveralls to sailors in boot camp, uniforms they’ll have to set aside once they get to the fleet. They’ll get new flame-resistant jumpers to wear underway.

The fleet now limits the wear of these utility coveralls to non-shipboard activities. Navy Times asked Stevens if flame-resistant coveralls might soon replace the poly-cotton versions in the seabag.

“I have not talked to [the chief of naval personnel] about this,” he said. “But, looking at where we’re at, and at what we’re doing, I think that it would be a reasonable assumption to say that at some point, the current seabag-issued coverall becomes phased out and replaced by the fire-retardant coverall.”

But that could be more than a year or so away, and Stevens said he hasn’t looked into the cost comparison or begun to investigate the feasibility of a seabag switch.

“The biggest priority is making sure that our sailors are operating safely,” he said. “And so, I think that it’s reasonable to assume at some point that that coverall could replace the one that we have right now. ... That’s a conversation that I’d have to have with CNP.”

Nixing the Uniform Board

The Uniform Board’s days may be numbered.

In February, the Navy’s top personnel official said he was looking for ways to radically overhaul it, even blow it up, to create a smaller, streamlined group that can get uniforms to the fleet faster. As it stands, some uniforms can take forever to reach sailors, like the redesigned crackerjacks; it will take the better part of decade before sailors get their sets.

Stevens is a big player in this process and is consulting with Vice Adm. Bill Moran, the chief of naval personnel, on fixes to what many sailors see as a broken process.

“The end state is to be able to quickly deliver to the fleet the uniform needs of the Navy,” Stevens said. “We’ve got to make sure that it’s responsive, and that we don’t bog ourselves down unnecessarily — but, that we provide the right uniforms, that we provide safe uniform, and when they hit the fleet, they are well accepted by the fleet.”

Stevens said he and CNP are still working through how the new process could work, but Stevens believes a change is needed, as many uniforms are taking too long to develop and field.

“By the time you get the uniform out, it’s already, to some degree, outdated,” Stevens said of the current process. “So, if you want your uniforms to be relevant for the times that you serve, you have to be able to respond quickly.”

Chiefs' training

Stevens has gotten a lot of feedback after the latest CPO 365 season, as the year-round regimen for eligible first classes is known. There were a few issues, including one incident in which a dozen chiefs-select were [PT'd to the point of hospitalization](#), but by and large, he’s happy with the results.

“To a large extent, I was very pleased with how CPO 365 went down after the changes I made in my first few months on the job,” he said. “We certainly had a few lessons learned. And, I made some minor adjustments to the guidance as we move into this year. And I don’t anticipate really making any other changes.”

Stevens wants any further changes to come from the fleet — and chiefs’ messes that lead the training.

“I want our chiefs’ mess to be able to really get their arms around this and to become comfortable with it,” he said. “They have embraced it, they’re far more innovative in their approach than I could ever be — the continued success will rest on their shoulders.”

He says the idea behind the year-round CPO 365 is to offer petty officers striving to make chief continuous learning and leadership opportunities — something he says is a responsibility of chiefs Navy-wide.

He also insists that training be professional and “done so with dignity and respect.”

Still, Stevens has heard criticism from those up in arms in the fleet and retiree community who believe he softened the process.

Stevens disagrees and says it’s as challenging as it’s ever been.

“I’ve had a number of people write me or talk to me on the side, both new chiefs and folks who have been around for a long time,” Stevens said. “What they have shared with me is that in their opinion, nothing has been lost, and much has been gained.”

He says there’s not a “one size fits all” approach for the chief season training across the Navy — it’s too diverse a service. What his guidance does, Stevens said, is simply set the boundaries.

“MCPON guidance ... builds a fence,” he said. “I’m asking them to operate within that fenced line.”

Senior Enlisted Academy

Earlier this year, Stevens announced plans to make the Senior Enlisted Academy mandatory to compete for master chief — and he’s pushing hard to make that idea a reality.

Once you make chief, the Navy offers no further formal leadership education — and MCPON wants that changed. He’s reworking the curriculum to have nine weeks of distance education followed by two weeks of in-residence training at the academy in Newport, R.I.

Stevens has heard some in the fleet questioning this new requirement, but he remains committed to his plan.

“Anytime that you do something new there’s always some concern, there’s always some wondering if it’s going to work, and there’s even some pushback,” he said. “So, if we use that as a reason not to do anything, then we’d still be sailing around in wooden ships.

“I’m not afraid of change. I think that when you recognize that it’s the right thing to do, you have an obligation and responsibility to go forward.”

Re-up rules

Other services, which are facing drawdowns, recently tightened their re-enlistment rules. The Army bars those with sexual assault convictions from re-enlisting. The Coast Guard goes further, saying that substantial evidence of an assault is enough to prohibit a re-enlistment.

Navy Times asked Stevens if the Navy was considering or should consider similarly tightening re-up rules. Stevens said sex assault convictions are often grounds for discharging a sailor.

“When a person goes on trial, or goes to captain’s mast, and they’re found guilty of an offense, a sexual assault offense, I believe that especially now more than ever the level of accountability is extremely high, and in many cases, it’s determined that that person is not suited for military service anymore,” he said.

But he also said he’s not sure whether it’s legal to bar re-enlistments for those charged — but not convicted of — a sex offense.

“What I’m comfortable with is that leadership is looking at the best possible ways to hold convicted members accountable,” he said. “I’m sure that this will be an ongoing process — we’ll continue to review our legal process and systems, making sure that we protect the rights of the accused and protect the rights of those who were offended, and then hold the accused — if found guilty — accountable.”

Tablets on the deck plates

Stevens takes his iPad everywhere he goes and thinks it’s time sailors get armed with the handheld technology that has changed corporations and civilian life.

He plans to launch a “smart device” pilot at at Recruit Training Command Great Lakes, Ill., that would eliminate the paper and books sailors are issued today.

He’s working with Rear Adm. Dee Mewbourne, the head of Naval Service Training Command, who oversees most enlisted and officer accession training.

“They have a working group right now who is evaluating the use of a smart device. The goal is sometime later this year to get a smart device in the hands of two divisions [of recruits],” Stevens said.

The device — most likely some kind of tablet computer — would be issued with their seabag, he said.

“The plan is to download course material and other relevant information to the device, maybe some videos and those sorts of things,” Stevens said.

“They’ll take notes on it, they’ll take it to class with them — we’ve even talked about, and they’re working to have, the capability to have wireless within their ship, so that they can send emails home,” Stevens said.

The Navy is already working to teach sailors as soon as they enter the fleet “to be responsible on the Internet and hold them accountable in the fleet for this,” he said. “Where better to teach them responsible use of the network world than right there at RTC and then give them something that they can actually use?”

Stevens said he’s gotten some pushback. But he says this change is overdue.

“I think that if you’re going to operate in the 21st century, then you should leverage the technology that’s available,” he said.

“We just need to kind of walk through this very carefully, so that we get it as right as we possibly can.”

4) CNP Answers Your Questions from World-Wide All Hands Call / 24 MAR 14 [\[LINK\]](#)

By Vice Adm. Bill Moran, Chief of Naval Personnel

Earlier this month Fleet Master Chief April Beldo and I had the chance to talk to Sailors at our first digital all hands call. To those who participated and dialed in, thank you.

We received an enormous response from the fleet, and as promised, here are answers to the questions we couldn't get to during our allotted time. We encourage you to keep sending us your feedback.

First, I have one correction. During our all hands call, a Sailor from San Diego asked, "I read that the Good Conduct Award will no longer count for points on advancement exams?" To set the record straight, this is something we are still considering. We recognize that most Sailors competitive for advancement have this award, and removing its point value opens up space for high-performing Sailors to stand out. This of course calls into question the value of the Good Conduct Medal, since removal from consideration would in effect mean that all have received it. At this stage a decision on the matter has not been reached, but we will notify the Fleet if a change is made.

Below are the first ten questions from our all hands call, answered here for greater clarity:

Q1: Command Senior Chief (CSC) Rate - Gunner's Mate Senior Chief Asa Worcester asks: "When Fleet Master Chief Beldo and the leadership mess meet again later this year to discuss the Command Senior Chief rate, when do you think the implementation would happen? When the initiative was tabled last year, a lot of potential candidates decided not to apply."

A: For the CSC, timing dictated that other issues be addressed first. My highest priority is to fill critical gaps at sea, particularly in our E7 to E9 ranks. Once we stabilize mission readiness challenges, we will reassess implementation of a CSC rating.

Q2: Bahrain Imminent Danger Pay (IDP) - "Sir, I'm Chief Petty Officer Daniel Mennuto from Naval Support Activity Bahrain. My question for you is, since we are losing imminent danger pay, should Sailors anticipate losing the benefit of the Savings Deposit Program (SDP), Funded Environmental Morale Leave (FEML), and Rest

and Recuperation (R&R) Leave?"

A: The only benefit affected by the loss of IDP is IDP itself. Bahrain is not eligible for R&R since Bahrain is not a dependent restricted area. SDP will remain in place because it is based on being in a combat zone, and Bahrain will remain a combat zone until the President rescinds the Executive Order. FEML is not tied to either IDP or combat zone status. Bahrain remains a FEML location, but its recertification is overdue.

Q3: Imminent Danger Pay and Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) - "Sir, I'm Petty Officer 3rd Class Mark Brison stationed at Naval Support Activity Bahrain, and my question for you is, with Bahrain losing imminent danger pay and having no commissary, should Sailors here see an increase in COLA pay?"

A: IDP also does not influence COLA determinations. COLA helps maintain purchasing power to enable service members to purchase an equivalent amount of similar goods and services overseas as stateside. The availability of a commissary is taken into account when the Department of Defense calculates COLA, so that has already been considered in Bahrain's current COLA.

Q4. Family Separation Allowance (FSA) - "Hello sir, I'm Aviation Support Equipment Technician 1st Class Brauny Aguediaz from North Burgan, N. J., currently deployed aboard USS Bataan. My question is, do you see any changes in family separation pay, such as a pro-rated daily rate instead of 30 consecutive days?"

A: Nothing is currently in the works for changes to the criteria for receiving FSA. However, the ongoing Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission is reviewing all elements of pay. The Commission's study and recommendations could potentially result in changes to any pay or allowance.

Q5. Environmental Morale Leave (EML) - "Sir, I am Seaman Recruit French stationed at Diego Garcia. Is there any chance of getting EML leave for Sailors stationed aboard Diego Garcia?"

A: Environmental Morale Leave is already authorized on Diego Garcia. EML makes use of DOD-owned or controlled military airlift to further annual leave objectives. The Combatant Commander designates EML duty locations and destinations. This is chargeable leave.

Q6. Navy Reserves - Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Luis Rodriguez asked "Sir, I was just wondering what the future of the Navy Reserves is. Is it going to expand, is it going to shrink? Any comments on that would be greatly appreciated. Thank you."

A: On any given day nearly 25 percent of the Navy Reserve is providing operational support to the active component. So, the Navy Reserve is a critical element of our Nation's defense; however, it is difficult to predict the size of the Force as mission areas and requirements have a huge effect on such numbers.

Q7. Uniforms - "Hello sir, I'm Fire Controlman 2nd Class Samuel Johnson. I was wondering if you could tell me about a plan for the military to go to a standard uniform across all branches and if that may happen."

A: There are no plans in action to create a standard uniform for all services.

Q8. Uniforms - Seaman Black asks "Sir, I've heard scuttlebutt about a fleet-wide switch to a new Navy Working Uniform (NWU) or at least to the type 3's. Is this true, and if so what is the timeline?"

A: The NWU Type I is here to stay. In fact, this spring we will be testing a lightweight version of the NWU Type I for warmer climates. The NWU Type II and Type III will remain as issued items when serving in specific units only.

Q9. Uniforms - Another question from social media asks, "Are there any ideas on changing the enlisted male dress blue uniform, E1-E6?"

A: Yes, an improved male E1-E6 Service Dress Blue uniform has been approved for Fleet introduction and will replace the existing jumper-style Service Dress Blue for E1-E6 males. Design changes include a side zipper on the jumper and center front hidden trouser zipper to facilitate ease in donning and removing. The traditional 13 buttons are cosmetically attached and non-functional. The uniform introduction date is still being determined, but is expected to commence at Navy Recruit Training Command, Great Lakes no later than Oct. 1, 2016.

Q10. Natural Hair Grooming Regulations - Seaman Sallad Cyrstal and IC3 Shakeriya Johnson, wrote to ask "Are there any plans to update or review the grooming standards with regard to natural hair?"

A: Yes, we are currently reviewing grooming standards to more properly address these and other issues relating to female hair styles. Currently natural hair is authorized without a bun, but it still must conform to the 2-inch regulation

-CNP

5) Study: Recent veterans are succeeding in college / 24 MAR 14 [\[LINK\]](#)

Just over half of veterans who sought a higher education from 2002 through 2013 under the GI Bill completed schooling ranging from vocational training to post-graduate, according to an unprecedented review of nearly 800,000 college records to be released Monday.

The research released by the Student Veterans of America service organization is the first in-depth look at how those who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan are performing in college. While analysts say results could be better, the numbers appear to refute reports — some in the media, some anecdotal — that most of these veterans are dropping out or failing in college.

About one in three of the veterans earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

"I've heard it over the last few years about the disaster of these students. That it's terrible, (that) they're just flunking at huge rates," says Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth, a Purdue University professor and director of the Military Family Research Institute, who studied the report. "That's not right."

The completion rate for these veterans of 51.7% is lower than the four-year graduation rate for younger, non-veteran peers, which was 59% in 2011, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

"Looking at the obstacles and the issues that student vets have to deal with. ... I think we're doing quite well," says D. Wayne Robinson, a former Army command sergeant major and now president and CEO of Student Veterans of America.

The most sought-after undergraduate degrees by veterans were in business, social sciences, homeland security, law enforcement and firefighting, and computer and information services.

Researchers say veterans appear to be doing better than other so-called non-traditional students — those who delay attending college, enroll part-time or have children, factors common with many current veterans.

Curtis Coy, who oversees GI benefits as deputy undersecretary for economic opportunity for the Department of Veterans Affairs, says the results "clearly show that the investment the American taxpayer has made in (veterans') education is well worth it."

The study was a collaboration of Student Veterans of America, the VA and the National Student Clearinghouse, which compiles enrollment and graduation data.

Completion rates varied for veterans depending upon branch of service, and Robinson says this could be proof of the strain of war. The largely ground combat duty of Iraq and Afghanistan fell disproportionately on Army soldiers and Marines.

Air Force veterans had a higher academic completion rate of 67%, while Army veterans were at 47% and Marine veterans at 45%.

Comparisons with civilian graduation rates aren't precise.

Most colleges calculate graduation rates based on students who enroll in their institution and obtain a four-year undergraduate degree.

The veterans completion rate counted those who used GI Bill benefits to obtain a bachelor's or graduate degree, but also a vocational certificate or associate degree, even those who completed an on-the-job training course.

It also allowed more time — the full 10 years the records covered — for a veteran to complete an education and be counted.

Student Veterans spokesman Will Hubbard says the results show that these former servicemembers are persistent in pursuing higher education, even if it takes more than four years.

Counting completions this way, the report says, was out of consideration for the strain and vagaries of service — National Guard or reservists whose lives were interrupted by multiple deployments, or active-duty troops who needed time after war and the military to adjust to civilian life.

Comparisons with prior war generations also are difficult, the report says. Studies have shown that about half of those veterans eligible for the GI Bill after World War II obtained a training certificate or college education, as did about two-thirds of Vietnam veterans, according to a 1976 VA study.

The new study looked at a sample of the roughly 3.5 million veterans who used education benefits in 2002-2010 — 500,000 who used the Montgomery GI Bill, and another 500,000 who used a more generous post-9/11 benefit that became available in 2009 for the Iraq and Afghanistan War generation.

After excluding those still in school, researchers sifted 788,915 records representing one out of five veterans who used federal education benefits in the 2002-2010 time period. They tracked completion rates through 2013.

The Montgomery benefits, created in 1985 as a recruitment incentive, provide a monthly stipend and can be used any time up to 10 years after leaving the service. The post-9/11 GI Bill covers tuition, housing and books and is good any time up to 15 years. The government has spent \$34 billion on the new GI bill assisting veterans.

Among other findings, about 80% of the veterans chose public schools. Some 21% were women, in contrast with females making up only 15% of the military. About one in four veterans who enrolled were age 25-29.