



@USNPEOPLE WEEKLY WIRE

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DEFENSE.GOV Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter

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

1.) Message from Secretary Ashton Carter to all Department of Defense Personnel/ 17 FEB 15 [LINK](#)

As Written by Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter, Washington, D.C.

To all Department of Defense personnel:

I am honored to become your Secretary of Defense. I am proud to lead men and women who devote their lives to the highest calling – the defense of our nation. And I am grateful to follow in the footsteps of Secretary Hagel, one of our nation’s most honorable and conscientious public servants.

We live in challenging times – times that demand leadership and focus. And starting today, I will be calling on each and every one of you to help carry out three top priorities.

Our first priority is helping the President make the best possible national security decisions for protecting our country – and then implementing those decisions with our department’s long-admired excellence.

We confront a turbulent and dangerous world: continuing turmoil in the Middle East and North Africa, and the malignant and savage terrorism emanating from it; an ongoing conflict in Afghanistan; a reversion to archaic security thinking in parts of Europe; tensions in the Asia-Pacific; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and intensifying threats in cyberspace.

In addressing these challenges, I have pledged to provide the President my most candid strategic advice. I will count on your experience and expertise as I formulate that advice. I will also ensure the President receives candid professional military advice.

But as we tackle the many threats to our national security, we must never lose sight of our nation’s enduring strengths – or of the opportunities to make a brighter future and better world for our children. The United States remains the strongest and most resilient nation on earth. Because of you, we have the finest fighting force the world has ever known. We have friends and allies in every corner of the world, while our adversaries have few. We have long possessed the world’s most dynamic and innovative economy. And our values, principles, and leadership continue to inspire hope and progress around the world.

Safeguarding America’s security and global leadership will depend on another of my main priorities: ensuring the strength and health of you who make up the greatest fighting force the world has ever known – our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, civilians, and contractors all around the world.

I will do that by focusing on the well-being, safety, and dignity of each of you and your families. I will ensure your training and equipment are as superb as you are. And I pledge to make decisions about sending you into harm’s way with the greatest reflection and utmost care – because this is my highest responsibility as Secretary of Defense.

Honoring all these commitments also requires us to focus on building the force of the future, which is my third priority.

We must steer through the turmoil of sequestration, which imposes wasteful uncertainty and risk to our nation’s defense. We must balance all parts of our defense budget so that we continue to attract the best people – people like you; so that there are enough of you to defend our interests around the world; and so that you are always well-equipped and well-trained to execute your critical mission.

To win support from our fellow citizens for the resources we need, we must show that we can make better use of every taxpayer dollar. That means a leaner organization, less overhead, and reforming our business and acquisition practices.

It also means embracing the future – and embracing change.

We must be open to change in order to operate effectively in an increasingly dynamic world; to keep pace with advances in technology; and to attract new generations of talented and dedicated Americans to our calling.

I first arrived at the Pentagon more than three decades ago, and have had the privilege of serving 11 Secretaries of Defense in Democratic and Republican administrations. I took the oath of office this morning because I love our country and am devoted to you who defend it. And I am committed to our fundamental mission: the defense of our nation.

I look forward to leading and serving alongside you at this extraordinary moment in our nation's history.

May God bless you and your families, and may God bless America.

2.) Low Promotion Rates for Navy Pilots Yield Changes to Process/ 17 FEB 15 [\[LINK\]](#)

MILITARY.COM, Kris Osborn

The Navy has made some changes to its officer promotion board process following complaints and criticisms that the most recent board disproportionately failed to promote aviators from lieutenant to lieutenant commander -- compared with promotions of submariners and surface warfare officers.

The service is working to ensure they identify the right number of vacancies for lieutenant commander positions and solidify the number of billets available, said Cmdr. Chris Servello, spokesman for the Chief of Naval Personnel.

"The concerns made us want to look closely at the process and see what things could be done to better the process. It is important to the Navy that we have the right selectivity," Servello said. "You want to meet the warfighting requirements for each individual community. We believe in the process but just like with anything, over time there are adjustments you need to make."

Concerns emerged following the 2015 Navy Lieutenant Commander Line Promotion Selection Board which resulted in a 92 percent promotion rate for surface warfare officers and a 95 percent rate for submariners – while pilots were only promoted at a rate of 56 percent and 49 percent for Naval Flight Officers, according to numbers provided by the Navy.

Overall, the Navy has roughly 8,000 surface warfare officers in the service, 3,700 submariners and approximately 10,000 naval aviators including naval flight officers and pilots, according to the Navy. Among aviators, 321 lieutenants were selected for promotion out of a total of 571 available applicants, Servello added.

The result of last May's promotion board, announced in July of last year, troubled a number of aviators who felt their performance and qualifications were not properly recognized.

"There were aviators that went before the board and did not make the quality cut. There was concern among some aviators and other people that when you looked at their records they had met the quality level -- and

there was a large amount of anecdotal evidence that said some of our top folks did not make it this time," Servello explained.

As a result, Servello said the Navy was working to make sure the promotion selection boards were made up of captain-level members and had the right composition.

The Navy scrubbed the number of billets available and worked to make sure that the Navy's so-called community briefs clearly explain the requirements and requisite milestones needed for various career paths, Servello added.

The changes will go into effect for the upcoming May selection board which will identify officers for promotion next year, he added.

While the Navy has taken steps to improve the effectiveness and accuracy of its promotion board practices, there are certain circumstances which contribute to the reasons why aviators may have been promoted at a lower percentage, Servello said.

One of the factors is that aviators have longer training periods than submariners and surface warfare officers, a phenomenon which means many of them have more years to go when it comes to paying back time to the Navy for their education and training, Servello said. As a result, large numbers of submariners and surface warfare officers with shorter training cycles have already had the opportunity to self-select out of the service.

This dynamic changes the applicant pool and means that a higher percentage of those seeking promotion have already decided upon a longer-term Navy career, something which may not be the case with aviators being considered for promotion, Servello added.

Also, the longer training track for aviators means that surface warfare officers and submariners have more fitness reports or assessment checkpoints along the way where they are evaluated by superiors. This leads to a situation wherein aviators are being judged on a smaller body of work when compared with their surface and submarine counterparts.

However, the Navy plans to promote a higher percentage of lieutenants in the upcoming selection board. The average promotion of lieutenants over the last two years has been right around 70 percent, Servello said.

"Next year will be 80 percent to get some of those that we missed. The ultimate goal of each of our boards is to select the best and fully qualified regardless of whether they are a submariner, aviator or surface warfare officer. We feel like these adjustments we strengthened the standards for selecting the best and most fully qualified officers," Servello said.

3.) Five Things You Need to Know about Retaliation/ 13 FEB 15 [\[LINK\]](#)

By 21st Century Sailor Office

The issue of retaliation, especially towards victims of sexual assault, has been in the news lately. Retaliation is a destructive behavior, and you can play a role in preventing and reporting it.

Here are five things you need to know about retaliation:

1. Retaliation is harmful action against someone for something they did or said. It includes ostracism and is often described as professional or social. Retaliation is a violation of the UCMJ.

2. Professional retaliation against a Sailor could be loss of privileges, a denied promotion or training, or being transferred to a less favorable job. If you or someone you know is assigned extra watches, or denied chances to qualify for a warfare pin because they reported a crime or other violation, it's your duty to let someone know so it can be stopped and those responsible held appropriately accountable.

3. Social retaliation, or ostracism, means excluding someone from social acceptance, or denying privilege of friendship just because they reported or intend to report a crime. Retaliation amongst peers can be just as damaging to someone as professional retaliation.

4. Social media can be a common platform for social retaliation. Commands and Sailors should be aware that in the online world, messages and comments can discourage reporting of a crime and ostracize those who have already stepped forward. Social media posts should be treated just the same as if the message was publicly announced on the mess decks. If you wouldn't say it in person in public then you shouldn't be posting it on social media.

5. From recruits, to junior petty officers, to commanding officers, training is being updated to ensure retaliation is better recognized and discussed in order to work towards eliminating it in the Fleet. But you don't have to attend a class to put a stop to this problem. You can act now. Every command, and everyone in it, must work to assess its climate to ensure there is an environment that allows for Sailors to do the right thing without fear of retaliation.

Retaliation against anyone, in any form, is prohibited. We must stop the harm that retaliation brings to a Sailor, a command and our Navy. It's your job to report offenses that come under your observation. It's your job to treat all of those who report a crime with honor and respect. It's your job to report retaliation when it occurs, and you can do that through your chain of command, through a trusted mentor, or through the inspector general hotline at 1-800-522-3451 or visit the Secretary of the Navy website: <http://www.secnav.navy.mil/ig>.

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In being a deckplate leader one has to stop talking as much as they did as a junior sailor. In many if not most instances the junior sailor is the one that is doing the end-point task required of the mission. Whether that is sweeping the deck, performing maintenance, or standing watch they are the one who is on station doing the physical actions required—their duty. In performing their duty it is incumbent upon them to report the varying degrees of success they achieved to their leaders so that an accurate depiction of reality is understood, so that the next decisions can be made by leadership. Deckplate leadership is the first point of contact with reality, the first link in the chain of command to understand whether the P-way is clean, that all hands are present and accounted for, that the engines are being properly maintained and capable of performing missions.

As a junior sailor I was asked if I had accomplished the duties I was assigned, and I would relate the 'why' I had varying degrees of success. My chain of command always had questions for me, always had a reason for me to say more. As well, my personality is such that I want to say more than less, and to opine on things I had little experience to accurately speak towards. What resulted from this tacit training was that, as I had my first few

instances of having service members serving in my charge, I wanted to talk more to them than I did to hear from them. This is not to say that there were no conversations that were had, or that I would constantly tell them they were wrong. Rather, it is that based on the experience I did have doing the tasks (usually mundane) assigned to them I would extrapolate from what they attempted to relate to me and assume I knew reality rather than probe for more information from them and make sure I understood what they were relating to me.

A leader has to be humble, not assume they can extrapolate answers from what their sailors say to them. When they talk to their sailors they have to know how to ask the right questions, they have to know how to lead their sailors to relating the correct details and information, leaders have to know how to teach their sailors to talk to leadership and inform leadership's decision making process. All this starts with being a quiet, humble, servant-leader. You won't hear what is being said to you if you're not being quiet, without humility there is hubris, as the first link in the chain of command you are leading your sailors and serving the chain of command—you are a vital conduit through which decision makers base their decisions on.

Of course, there is an additional dimension beyond the direct performance of duty for a leader to understand. And again, humility in terms of "think more of others" means to me that I have to know my sailors: who that sailor is; what their abilities, strengths and weaknesses are; and the challenges each sailor faces in their personal life that can affect their ability to do their duty. This abstract dimension informs my decision making in terms of what duties are assigned to a sailor to most effectively accomplish the division's mission. A sailor facing issues in their personal life will perform their duty differently than a sailor who does not have similar issues, a sailor who is not motivated performs less well than one who is—I have to know the 'why' behind it all.

A leader serves their sailors in that the Navy is ripe with tasks sailors cannot accomplish successfully on their own. Look no further than administrative paperwork and you'll find that everything that a sailor might want to do with their career requires explaining/mentoring the details of what they're interested in, informing them of what paperwork must be done, how to access the programs and databases required, double checking that all supporting documentation is being provided and that the paperwork is accurately filled-out, and certainly that the paperwork is forwarded up the chain of command and onto Naval Personnel Command, and that the sailor is kept informed of the progress of their paperwork. As a leader and especially a deckplate leader, one is leading that effort and serving their sailor by informing them of the process as it progresses.

There are a very few broad things (with a lot of details behind them) a leader must do to effectively lead. As we develop as leaders most of the lessons to learn are subtle, and to an extent we must unlearn what we were accustomed to as junior sailors. MCPON's thoughts at WEST highlighted for me notions I was only starting to grasp at, but now have a deeper appreciation for. "People first" because leading people is the hard part, and leading them effectively ensures the mission is accomplished.

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