

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

**STATEMENT OF  
RICK D. WEST  
MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OF THE NAVY  
(SUBMARINE WARFARE/SURFACE WARFARE)  
BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY CONSTRUCTION,  
VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES  
OF THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
ON  
FEBRUARY 16, 2012**

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# Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy

## MCPON (SS/SW) Rick D. West



Master Chief Rick West became the 12<sup>th</sup> Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy on Dec. 12, 2008.

West was born in Rising Fawn, Ga. He graduated from Northwest Georgia High School in 1981 and immediately entered the U.S. Navy.

West received recruit training and Quartermaster training at Orlando, Fla., followed by Enlisted Submarine School at Groton, Conn. His first duty assignment was aboard *USS Ethan Allen* (SSN 608) where he completed Submarine Qualifications. Other assignments include *USS Thomas Edison* (SSN 610), *USS Sea Devil* (SSN 664), Commander Naval Activities United Kingdom (COMNAVACTUK), *USS Tecumseh* (SSBN 628)(Blue), and COMSUBPAC Staff (TRE Team).

West was assigned as Chief of the Boat aboard the San Diego based Fast Attack Submarine, *USS Portsmouth* (SSN 707), completing two Western Pacific deployments and earning two Battle Efficiency “E” awards.

West served as Command Master Chief in Submarine Squadron ELEVEN. Upon completion of his tour at COMSUBRON ELEVEN, he was selected as Force Master Chief (FORCM), attended the Senior Enlisted Academy in Newport, R.I., and served as Force Master Chief, Submarine Force U.S. Pacific Fleet (COMSUBPAC) from Jan. 2001 to Jan. 2004.

West then reported to *USS Preble* (DDG 88) in San Diego, Calif., where he completed a deployment to the Arabian Gulf and qualified as Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist.

West was then selected to serve as Pacific Fleet, Fleet Master Chief from Feb. 2005 to June 2007.

Prior to being selected to be MCPON, he served as the 14th Fleet Master Chief for Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command from June 2007 to Dec. 2008.

West's personal awards include the Legion of Merit (two awards), Meritorious Service Medal (three awards), Navy Commendation Medal (four awards), Navy Achievement Medal (two awards), Enlisted Surface Warfare Insignia, Enlisted Submarine Insignia, and SSBN Deterrent Patrol Pin.

Chairman Culberson, Ranking Member Bishop, and distinguished members of this subcommittee, as the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, I am honored and humbled to have the privilege to represent more than 427,000 active and reserve Sailors who comprise the finest Total Force in the history of the United States Navy.

Our men and women are tremendously dedicated to our Nation and our Navy: They make many sacrifices. We owe it to our Sailors and their families to ensure they are safe, healthy, well-compensated, and well-educated. We also owe it to them to make sure they are properly organized, trained and equipped to face the threats, challenges and the uncertainty of today and the future.

### **Your Navy**

While our Nation and Navy are at a turning point after a decade of war, the challenges we face remain unpredictable and diverse, perhaps more than ever. What happens on the world's waterways is critical to defending the homeland, to national security objectives around the globe and to peace and prosperity.

Despite budget constraints, the world's oceans and waterways are not getting smaller. We must remain ready, at all times, to answer the Nation's call as we have done successfully for more than 236 years. To accomplish this we will employ the tenets promulgated in Chief of Naval Operations's Sailing Directions:

- Warfighting First - be ready to fight and win today, while building the ability to win tomorrow.
- Operate Forward - provide offshore options to deter, influence and win in an era of uncertainty.
- Be Ready - harness the teamwork, talent and imagination of our diverse force to be ready to fight and responsibly employ our resources.

During the past year, I have traveled extensively around the world to visit, listen, learn and speak with Sailors and their families. I have observed, firsthand, their tremendous work and sacrifices, and I am constantly amazed and truly awed by their outstanding capabilities and resiliency as they serve with distinction on ships, squadrons, submarines, and ashore. No matter where they are in the world, or what they do for our great Navy, everything they do contributes to our nation's Maritime Strategy. Today's Sailors are the best ever, performing their missions with distinction and professionalism. I am very proud to be their shipmate.

### **Engaged in the Global Arena**

America's Navy is a global force for good, on station around the world, around the clock, building partnerships through maritime security cooperation and spanning our core capabilities of forward presence, deterrence, power projection, sea control, maritime security, humanitarian assistance, and disaster response.

We have a busy, engaged Navy. On any given day, nearly 50,000 Sailors, including over 4,000 mobilized Reserve Sailors, and 40 percent of our ships are underway or deployed globally. Our submarines are cruising the depths of the world's oceans, our AEGIS cruisers and destroyers are protecting allies from ballistic missile attack, fighting pirates and catching drug smugglers. Our expeditionary units are building new and enduring partnerships around the world. Our Sailors, led by SEALs, EOD, Seabees and Hospital Corpsmen, are fighting to defeat Al-Qaeda and the Taliban, and participating in the development of host-nation government and military capacity.

In addition to our traditional maritime mission, Navy's contribution in support of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) has been a vital component of our national effort to secure a safer world. Individual Augmentees (IAs) are an integral part of Navy's ongoing support of OCO. More than 100,000 Navy IAs have served in support of OCO since 9/11. There are currently approximately 28,000 Sailors in the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Area of Responsibility (AOR) supporting Navy, Joint Force, and Combatant Commander requirements, 12,000 of whom are serving ashore.

Navy is currently providing support to more than 8,100 requirements, nearly half of which are critical missions, such as, cargo handling, airlift support, and Naval Mobile Construction. Navy also performs missions for which no standard, mission-ready capability exists, including detainee operations in Guantanamo Bay and Afghanistan, medical support to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, in Germany.

The primary challenges of achieving mission proficiency and unit cohesion are accomplished through training. All IAs attend Navy Mobilization Processing Site/ Expeditionary Combat Readiness Center (NMPS/ECRC) for five days for medical, administration and uniform issue. They also process through NMPS during post-deployment. IAs deploying to CENTCOM AOR receive additional training at Navy Individual Augmentee Combat Training (NIACT), or an equivalent extended combat skills curriculum depending on the requirement, for skills in shooting and driving, final medical record review, and weapon issue. Additional mission specific training may be required as dictated by the capability indicated through the Request for Forces (RFF) process.

IAs departing the theater out-process through the Warrior Transition Center, in Kuwait, to decompress and transition from a war zone to a more traditional existence in a non-threatening environment. Through the Warrior Transition Program accredited professionals, including two chaplains and two psychiatric registered nurses, facilitate small-group discussions focused on a variety of topics including; combat and operational stress control services, reintegration training and final in-theater administrative support.

IAs are encouraged to attend Returning Warrior Workshops (RWWs) following deployment to participate in group discussions about their experiences. RWWs are a two-day weekend program, conducted quarterly in each Navy Reserve Region across the country, designed to support reintegration, resilience and growth of returning Sailors and their families following demobilization.

In Fiscal Year 2011, 20 Navy Reserve RWWs were held in various locations around the country. Since their establishment, RWWs have provided first-rate support to more than 10,000 Sailors and family members, by identifying problems, encouraging members to talk about their experiences, directing family members to resources, improving the mobilization/demobilization process, and honoring the sacrifice and service of returning warriors and their loved ones. Twenty RWWs are planned during Fiscal Year 2012.

### **End Strength**

Our Sailors are the most valuable assets we have in ensuring our maritime, air and cyberspace dominance, and in supporting OCO. Today's leaner Navy remains the preeminent global maritime combat power.

As we developed our Fiscal Year 2013 budget request; we worked to appropriately balance risk while preserving our capacity to meet current fleet and joint requirements, foster growth in emerging mission areas, and provide vital support for Sailors and Navy families. The Fiscal Year 2013 budget request supports active end strength of 322,700 and Selected Reserve end strength of 62,500. Our request meets critical manning challenges of our operational units by increasing manpower at sea and reducing manpower at shore infrastructure.

While transition is manageable, it will challenge our ability to maintain sea-shore flow, for some Sailors, and to sustain manning levels across the force, in the near-term, as we execute these billet shifts. In Fiscal Year 2012, Navy placed end strength previously funded by the OCO

appropriation into our baseline program. We are also projecting further reduction of IA demand as we withdraw from Afghanistan.

## **Recruiting**

We continue to succeed in our goal of recruiting the best and brightest young men and women our nation has to offer. Although just 25 percent of America's population between the ages of 17 and 24 is recruitable, we continue to attract some of the most talented youth in America while maintaining our traditionally high recruit-quality standards. Navy Recruiting Command achieved all enlisted sub-goals, including total female, nuclear field, and Naval Special Warfare/Special Operations. For new contract quality in Fiscal Year 2011, we attained 98.7 percent High School Diploma Graduates, with 88.2 percent scoring 50 or higher on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). Navy expects to continue in fiscal year 2012, the strong recruiting success we have enjoyed over the past four years. Nuclear Field and Special Warfare/Special Operator rating groups remain top enlisted recruiting priorities.

Quality of Life is the foundation of our recruiting and retention efforts. Providing those who volunteer to serve with the best equipment, training and education is a fundamental responsibility. We begin developing Sailors in basic training and offer a career-long training continuum to enhance their personal and professional development. We look forward to working with you to ensure we continue to provide the tools needed to recruit and retain the right Sailor, with the right skills, at the right time, in order to meet current and future mission requirements.

## **Retention**

Navy continues to retain Sailors at historically high levels. When I joined the Navy in 1981, first-term retention was approximately 40 percent. Today, we retain approximately 65 percent of first-term Sailors. Multiple policies and programs such as improved mentoring, leadership focus on reducing common dissatisfiers, specialized incentives, alternate career options, and life/work balance strategies contribute to increased retention in specific pay grades and skill sets. Overall attrition remains low at 4.42 percent.

Officer and enlisted inventory shortfalls remain in several critical specialties in which operational tempo is high or in which pay disparities exist between military and the private sector. Targeted special pays have a strong impact on reenlistments. Selective Reenlistment Bonuses (SRBs), in particular, are essential to retaining personnel in critical skills, such as the Nuclear Field, Information Dominance, and Special Warfare and select ratings that provide direct support to OCO. We continue to use SRB and quality-of-life initiatives to address these shortages, and we appreciate your continuing support for these important incentives. We must continue to recruit, train, equip and retain the Sailors of tomorrow. We have the ability to transition Sailors from active duty to the reserve and back again through numerous Continuum of Service initiatives that enhance the Sailors contribution and balance family life with naval service.

## **Enlisted Retention Board**

As a result of high retention and historically low attrition contributing to over-manning in certain skill sets, Navy found it necessary to conduct a focused Enlisted Retention Board (ERB) in August 2011 to meet end strength targets and to afford top-performing Sailors the opportunity to for continued active service. This helps balance the force profile while improving advancement opportunity for Sailors retained on active duty.

The Board was charged with selecting fully-qualified Sailors, based on experience, range of Navy Enlisted Classifications (NEC), performance indicators, potential for future service, and available quotas developed to achieve future force balance across the Navy. The ERB reviewed roughly 16,000 records and identified approximately 3,000 Sailors for separation from active duty. We know ERB has been difficult for Sailors identified for separation and their families and we are committed to providing the best transition assistance and support services possible. In addition to the wide range of benefits already afforded to Sailors who separate, Navy is providing several enhanced transition assistance benefits to ERB-separating Sailors. These transition services, aimed at helping ERB separating Sailors succeed in the civilian job market, include personal consultation, career assessment, and resume development coaching, as well as the "Shipmates to Workmates" program, which seeks to actively assist separating Sailors find and compete for jobs at partnering Navy commands, and to provide Sailors with a "one-stop shop" for transition resources and information on applying for federal jobs. Finally, these Sailors are afforded an opportunity to affiliate in the Selected Reserve based on billet availability.

Commanders and Officers-in-Charge directed to ensure they personally notified each Sailor of their ERB retention status and the specific benefits available to them.

### **Temporary Early Retirement Authority**

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012, signed into law on December 31, 2011, reenacted authority for Secretaries of the Military Departments to offer voluntary early retirement to service members with at least 15 but less than 20 years of service, to assist in force management during a period of reducing end strength. While the authority to offer early retirement was not available when the ERB was being developed and executed, we are now offering it to eligible ERB-affected Sailors.

### **Navy Reserve Force**

Since 1915, Navy Reservists have played an integral part in service to our nation. From World War I to World War II, through Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm, to 9/11 and OCO, Navy Reserve members have continually stepped up, supported and defended our nation against enemies, foreign and domestic. Since 9/11, our Navy Reserve has filled more than 69,000 mobilization requirements, making up slightly two-thirds of the IA force. As of October 2011, more than 7,000 Navy Selected Reserve Sailors are providing global operational support. Our Navy Reserve Warriors continually prove they are more than capable of meeting any challenge and conducting any mission, anytime, anywhere.

As I travel the world to meet and talk with Sailors, I am amazed at the integration that has taken shape over the years between our Active and Reserve Components. We are one Force working side-by-side in all corners of the world; a Total Force integrated and executing the Navy's mission wherever and whenever called.

Even though we have always had an operational Navy Reserve, we have relied heavily on our strategic reserve force in order to meet various naval and joint military missions since the terrorist attacks on 9/11. Our Sailor's Creed begins with "I am a United States Sailor" and that is exactly what I see when I travel throughout our Navy - active and reserve Sailors from all walks of life working together as a single team, one family, one Navy.

### **Learning and Development**

Education and training are strategic investments, enabling us to develop a highly-skilled force to meet the demands of the CNO's Sailing Directions and the Joint Force. Our Fiscal Year 2012 education and training budget of \$1.5B supports increased investment in curricula, training technology, and instructors for critical mission areas such as missile defense, cyber, and anti-submarine warfare.

Navy offers college-focused incentives, including the Navy College Program for Afloat College Education and tuition assistance (TA). We are committed to the professional development of our Sailors, while continuing to develop management controls to stay within our budget and remain aligned with the other Services. The Virtual Education Center (VEC)

established to support the Voluntary Education Program has been extremely successful providing centralized management of TA requests, Sailors' academic transcripts, and virtual counseling. The VEC reduces paperwork and processing time while increasing accessibility to educational opportunities for our Sailors.

Demand for credentialing exams continues to be very high, demonstrating the great value Sailors place on gaining professional recognition for their training and experience. In Fiscal Year 2011, Navy funded 19,762 certification exams, a 43 percent increase over Fiscal Year 2010. The Navy Credentialing Opportunities Online (COOL) website experienced 497,002 visits, a 65 percent increase over Fiscal Year 2010, and 30,460,627 hits, an 11 percent increase. Sailors in all 83 ratings have applied for voluntary credentialing exam funding, and of those Sailors who completed their voluntary certification exams (via Navy COOL funding) 94.2 percent passed. This is much higher than the national average pass rate of 75-85 percent, and represents a positive return on investment. In 2011, Navy COOL and Navy's Credentialing Program was awarded "Best Workforce Development Program" by Human Capital Management Defense awards, and Navy COOL was also recognized through *Training Magazine's* Top 125 Award for the second consecutive year.

In Fiscal Year 2012, the Navy Credentialing Office will grant time-in-service waivers to 3,000 Sailors affected by the Fiscal Year 2012 Enlisted Retention Board, allowing Sailors with less than one year remaining in service to receive credentialing exam funding. The Navy Credentialing Office is working on several recommendations from the President's Employment Initiatives DoD/Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Employment Task Force. These

include establishing a central listing of certification/licensing agencies that recognize military training and experience, establishing a process for recognizing certification/licensing agencies that consider/accept military training and experience, and developing a process to make military Programs of Instruction visible to credentialing organizations. Work has also begun to develop Navy COOL pages to display credentialing opportunities for Navy's 198,000+ civilian employees and provide a greater resource across the entire Navy workforce. Lastly, in early 2011 Navy's Credentials Program Office developed and demonstrated a functioning "mock USMC COOL website."

To develop strategically-minded and critical thinking leaders adept in naval and joint warfare, Navy has developed a progressive continuum of professional military education for members E-1 to O-9. In addition to the opportunity for officers to participate in professional military education from the renowned Naval War College and other service colleges, junior enlisted personnel are able to pursue professional military education through distance learning while senior enlisted personnel are afforded the opportunity to attend the Senior Enlisted Academy (SEA), which graduated 436 Senior Enlisted Sailors from its Resident Course (six week) in Fiscal Year 2011.

### **Sailor and Family Readiness**

The quality of life we provide for Sailors and their families is a distinct determining factor in how long many of our Sailors will serve. We certainly could not do our jobs and would not be where we are today without the love and support of our families.

The sacrifices our Sailors, and families make throughout a typical career are enormous. Yet, they continue to reenlist, not just as individuals but as a family. From hectic schedules to lengthy separations to frequent zip code changes, life in today's military presents unique challenges. We are deeply committed to providing every Sailor and Navy family with the best possible quality of life as they serve our Nation. As we continually improve Navy community support programs and services, we will become more agile and capable of meeting the needs of both married and single Sailors, while keeping pace with a smaller overall force.

We are fortunate that our all-volunteer military is successful. Sailors choose public service for a number of reasons with patriotism, dedication and commitment at the top. They also recognize the opportunities. We thank Congress for the historical support of pay and benefit increases and quality of life initiatives. Steady gains in these areas have allowed us to retain skilled Sailors and develop them into the enlisted leaders of the future.

We cannot, however, rest on past success. The civilian job market searches for the same smart, motivated and dedicated people. We must keep pace with pay, allowances, housing, support programs and educational opportunities. And in this time of war, we must continue to make care a top priority for our wounded service members.

Deployments are an integral part of Navy life. We have been deploying our forces during time of both peace and conflict since we formed our great Navy, but it is important not to underestimate or take for granted the incredible strain that a long deployment imposes on our Sailors and their families. Multiple deployments, frequent relocations and the stresses associated

with being part of a military family all impact the overall readiness of the unit, the readiness of the individual Sailor and the readiness of their family.

### **Family Support Programs**

We have great resources to empower Navy families, providing our Sailors with the peace of mind that their families are being supported so they can focus on the job at hand. Fleet and Family Support Centers offer a number of personnel and family support programs to reduce life stressors through Deployment Readiness, Crisis Response and Career Support and Retention.

Deployment Readiness services include deployment support to military members and their families when the member deploys as part of a unit or individually, ombudsmen support/coordination, mobilization, repatriation of noncombatant evacuees, life skills education (e.g., stress and anger management, suicide prevention, couples communication, parenting education), and the legislatively mandated Relocation Assistance Program. Family Readiness Groups (FRG) are another integral component in our efforts to facilitate effective relationships between family members and commands, and to better prepare both groups for the challenges associated with deployment. Comprised of family members, Sailors, and civilians associated with the command and its personnel, FRGs support the flow of information, provide practical tools for adjusting to Navy deployments and separations, and serve as a link between the command and Sailors' families. FRGs help plan, coordinate and conduct informational, care-taking, morale-building and social activities to enhance preparedness, command mission readiness, and increase the resiliency and well-being of Sailors and their families.

Crisis Response provides non-medical clinical counseling and non-medical case management for special needs families, emergency preparedness and response, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (i.e., prevention/education, 24/7 victim advocacy response at all locations, sexual assault case management and victim care coordination). The legislatively mandated and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) funded Family Advocacy Program, includes family abuse prevention education; clinical assessment and intervention; domestic abuse victim advocacy, and home visitation services for at-risk expectant and new parents. Career Support and Retention includes the Family Employment Readiness Program, Personal Financial Management, and Transition Assistance Program.

Navy offers quality services to prepare families for the absence of their loved ones and to promote healthy and resilient families. We make every effort to reach service members and families no matter how remote their location through webinars, monthly electronic newsletters and deployment preparedness handbooks. Keeping our Navy families informed about resources available to them to mitigate the strain of deployment and provide support is instrumental to their peace of mind while waiting for their Sailor to return from a year-long assignment in the Middle East or an extended deployment safeguarding our seas.

Through resources such as Afterdeployment.org, Military OneSource, Navy.mil and various other web sites, our Sailors and their families are more informed today about the resources available to them than they have ever been in the history of our Navy. Another success in communication has been the use of smart phone applications such as 'Navy Life' and 'Navy IA' as well as social media web sites such as Facebook and Twitter to connect with Sailors and

families. Both CNO and I are committed to using social media because it is another opportunity to connect with our Sailors Navy-wide and a great tool in our outreach efforts for getting information out in a timely manner to our entire Navy family.

Our families have sacrificed so much as they have supported their Sailors and our great Navy. We are the greatest Navy in the world and a big part of that is our Sailors being ready and able to focus on the mission and their individual jobs because they have the confidence that our Navy is supporting their families.

### **Child and Youth Programs**

In today's military, many of our Sailors have working spouses or have the responsibility of being single parents who depend heavily on our military child and youth system of care, which includes Child Development Centers (CDC), to provide quality child care. Due to frequent relocations and the length of deployments, many of our Sailors do not have the option, like civilian families, to rely on family members and friends to assist with taking care of their children when they are away.

Child and youth programs deliver services that meet mission requirements and reinforce strong military families through activities that promote cognitive, social, emotional and physical development of children ages infant through twelfth grade. The Navy child care system serves infants to 12 years through traditional CDCs; Child Development Group Homes that offer care 24/7; Child Development Homes where care is provided by military spouses monitored by Navy

Child and Youth Program inspectors; School-Age Care Centers; Youth Centers; and contracted care off-base. Programs are nationally accredited and DoD certified. Navy provides Youth Sponsorship programs that offer pre-arrival, arrival, and pre-departure services to assist youth relocating to and from the installation. Navy School Liaison Officers support transition needs of school-aged children and families by facilitating communication with local school authorities on the impacts of a military lifestyle on children. School Liaison Officers also provide families with information and referral services for local school and education issues.

Child Care programs continue to be mission-essential for our Sailors and families to helping reduce the conflict between their responsibilities as parents and their mission as Sailors. An important facet that stands out in the quality of our child care programs is the continuity of service from location to location as we operate a standardized world-wide program. Sailors and their children can count on the same quality of care regardless of location. Additionally, our programs are among the most affordable. Commercial programs charge parent fees based on the age of the child while our programs base fees on total family income. This model is critical to the economic viability of our families. Children under the age of three are the most costly to care for due to the lower child-to-staff ratios, and typically our most junior enlisted families have children in this age group.

At the end of this year, we will complete our expansion of approximately 7,000 new child care spaces and meeting OSD guidance to provide 80 percent of potential need for child care spaces. Navy now has 54,000 total spaces for children ages infant to twelfth grade, including

19,000 spaces at CDCs. With the construction of these spaces, we reduced the waiting time for child care to three months or less Navy-wide with first priority given to single parents.

Our continuing expansion initiatives are not only meeting the needs of our families living on or near our installations, but also those living and working throughout the United States, including Reserve members. Our contract programs “Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood” and “Mission Youth Outreach” provide subsidized child and youth services from commercial programs that meet community quality standards. We continue to work with communities, assisting them with raising the quality of their standards.

### **Infrastructure**

The Navy is committed to ensuring our Sailors and their families have quality housing in which to live and raise families. We believe our people deserve well-built and well-maintained housing. Thanks to this committee’s support, through military construction and housing privatization, we are providing quality homes for our families faster than ever before.

### **Homeport Ashore and Bachelor Housing**

Investment in our Homeport Ashore program continues to provide superior off-ship housing to junior Sailors who would normally live aboard ships. This effort marks the most dramatic quality of life improvement initiative for our single Sailors that I have seen over the course of my career. Still, one of my biggest quality of life concerns is that we have

approximately 5,400 single Sailors, E-1 to E-4 with less than four years of service living aboard ship while in their homeport. Moving our single Sailors off ships remains a priority and requires us to assign Sailors in 55 square feet of space per person in some places. Our Sailors are very thankful for this initiative and know that we will continue to work to meet this requirement.

Starting in Fiscal Year 2012, the Navy will revise our Unaccompanied Housing (UH) assignment policy and design standards. Our junior Sailors will be assigned sleeping rooms with no more than two sharing a bath. In addition, all new UH construction will use a “market style” design which is a two-bedroom, two-bath with a living space and kitchen area.

Our Bachelor Housing supports Navy readiness by providing permanent party personnel, student, and mobilized Sailors with suitable, affordable, and safe environments in community, privatized, or Navy-owned housing worldwide. We are focused on completing Homeport Ashore by 2016 by providing 5,200 spaces and achieving 90 percent adequate (Q1/Q2) UH by 2022. The Navy currently owns 22,332 inadequate (Q3/Q4) UH units, which represents 58 percent of the government-owned UH inventory. Approximately 36,500 Sailors live in these units.

### **Family Housing**

Family housing supports Navy readiness by providing Sailors and their families the opportunity for suitable, affordable, safe environments in community, privatized or Navy-owned housing. We have privatized approximately 97 percent of the homes in CONUS and Hawaii

inventory. The privatization of the remaining 870 homes in the Northwest is scheduled for the end of 2013. The privatization of the remaining 226 homes in the Southwest is scheduled for the end of 2017. When our Public Private Venture (PPV) transition is complete, the Navy will own less than 100 homes in CONUS and Hawaii, but will retain ownership and management of all foreign assets. For our Navy-owned family housing units approximately 3,500 are classified as inadequate (Q3/Q4). We have programmed funding to reduce the inadequate family housing inventory from 36 percent to ten percent by 2017.

Quality of life *does* affect retention and recruiting. PPV and Homeport Ashore are examples of initiatives that have had a direct impact on the retention, morale and the quality of life of our men and women. Young Americans deciding whether the Navy is right for them look at quality of life initiatives as indicators of the Navy's commitment to Sailors and families. Thanks to the support of this committee and members of Congress, we have improved the housing available to our Sailors through PPV. Sailors cite the PPV initiative as one of the most effective quality of life improvements in recent years, and our Navy is aggressively working with all of its PPV contractors to enhance their support of Navy families, and to clearly communicate the specific intricacies and expectations of this mutually beneficial relationship to all stakeholders.

### **Continuum of Care**

Health care is one of our top recruiting and retention tools for our Sailors, and I frequently hear just how important access to health care is for them and their family members.

Navy Medicine continues to focus on developing an economic and quality-centric strategy for the delivery of top-quality health care to our beneficiaries and the recruitment and retention of providers in critical specialties, allowing the fulfillment of the wartime mission while sustaining the benefit here at home.

Just as we improve the process in which we provide for the needs of our severely injured, we must apply the same level of attention to those who return from deployments whose medical needs may not be immediately apparent. Mental health among our returning Sailors and the ability to identify Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) have improved over the past year, but we must also be able to provide care that results from the psychological toll that multiple deployments have on our Sailors and their families.

The unpredictability that comes with surge deployments and non-traditional missions is having an effect on our Navy children. During town hall meetings, family members have expressed concern in ensuring that availability of mental health professionals and counselors meets the demand that this strain has imposed on families. Providing for the emotional and mental well-being of our families, especially our children, is an area that we continue to improve.

### **Medical Home Port**

Medical Home Port (MHP) was implemented throughout Navy Medicine in 2010 as a new model of health care delivery in primary care. Care delivered in the MHP model includes, but is not limited to, readiness, prevention, wellness, behavioral health, and disease management.

MHP increases access to care, improves clinical quality and patient outcomes, enhances patient satisfaction, promotes a healthier and fit force, and focuses on appropriate utilization of healthcare services, resulting in a reduction of overall healthcare costs. Implementation is in progress for all facilities and on-site training has been conducted for three-fourths of Navy facilities with the remaining training to be completed by April 2012. Full transformation to the MHP model and realization of anticipated benefits will take at least two to four years.

### **Combat Casualty Care**

Combat casualty care is provided by Navy medical personnel assigned to and serving with Marine Corps units, in Expeditionary Medical Facilities, aboard casualty receiving/treatment ships and hospital ships, and in military and Veteran Affairs (VA) hospitals. Recent advances in force protection, battlefield medicine, combat and operation stress control, medical evacuation, and family support programs have led to significantly improved survival rates, healthier family functioning and enhanced operational effectiveness.

The Navy continues to provide support to Sailors and their families through a variety of programs that increase medical and non-medical assistance to wounded, ill and injured service members utilizing a comprehensive approach designed to optimize their recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration. Navy case management is the link that connects resources and services which allow injured service members to reach their optimum goals in healthcare. Case management provides the critical support service members need during this challenging time in their lives.

Case management will continue to be at the forefront of providing optimal care to our service members with war-related injuries.

### **Psychological Health**

More than a decade of continuous combat operations has resulted in a growing population of service members with developing psychological health needs. Navy Medicine's Psychological Health (PH) program supports the prevention, diagnosis, mitigation, treatment, and rehabilitation of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other mental health conditions, and includes planning for the seamless transition of service members throughout the recovery and reintegration process. Navy Medicine has increased the size of the mental health work force to support the readiness and health needs of Sailors and Marines throughout the deployment cycle as well the needs of their families.

Navy's efforts to decrease stigma with increased active leadership support and Operational Stress Control (OSC) training throughout the Fleet have received positive feedback. Mental health stigma rates of Sailors decreased in 2010. Navy is fostering a culture that promotes resilience and wellness, and that empowers leaders to ensure the health and readiness of service members and their families.

## **Families Overcoming Under Stress**

Families Overcoming Under Stress (FOCUS) is a family-centered resiliency psychological health program that uses evidenced-based interventions to enhance understanding psychological health and developmental outcomes for highly stressed children and families. In Fiscal Year 2011, FOCUS implemented health applications through a virtual reality version of the program for remote and isolated families, as well as a web-based enhanced interactive application of the program. Additional adaptations include FOCUS for couples, FOCUS for Wounded Warriors, and FOCUS for early childhood interventions.

## **Reserve Psychological Health Outreach**

The Reserve Psychological Health Outreach Program (PHOP) serves both Marine Corps and the Navy Reserve to provide a safety net and improves the overall psychological health of reservists and their families. Embedded PHOP teams of licensed mental health professionals provides psychological health outreach and education/training, and information/referrals to local resources for issues related to employment, finances, psychological health, family support, and child care. PHOP was initiated in 2008 for the Navy Reserve and expanded in 2009 to include the Marine Corps Reserve; there are 11 teams dispersed throughout the country, with a total of 55 team members. During Fiscal Year 2011, 1,645 Navy and Marine Corps Reservists were referred for PHOP services and 1,205 became clients. PHOP teams made 449 visits to Reserve units and 129 visits to NMPS sites in Norfolk, VA and San Diego, CA to provide training and conduct psychological health screenings. They provided briefings to 56,677 reservists and their

family members, and successfully contacted and provided support to 3,645 recently demobilized reservists.

### **Safe Harbor**

The Navy's Safe Harbor Program is the Navy's lead organization for providing the highest quality non-medical care to all seriously wounded, ill and injured Sailors, Coast Guardsmen and their families. Non-medical care management support includes, but is not limited to, support services for Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)/PTSD, pay/personnel issues, invitational travel orders, lodging/housing adaptation, child/youth programs, transportation needs, legal/guardianship issues, education/training benefits, commissary/exchange access and respite care. Safe Harbor enrollment includes combat-related wounds or injuries, shipboard accidents, off duty accidents, and serious medical and psychological conditions, such as cancer and severe PTSD.

Using a holistic approach, Navy Safe Harbor offers a lifetime of individually tailored assistance designed to optimize the success of a Sailor's or Coast Guardsmen's recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration activities. Safe Harbor has grown from nine personnel supporting 145 Sailors and families at six locations to 43 personnel serving a case load of more than 1,570 wounded, ill or injured service members at 15 locations. Our goal is to return Sailors and Coast Guardsmen to duty and when not possible, work collaboratively with federal and non-governmental agencies, including the VA and state and local organizations, to ensure their successful reintegration back into their communities.

Safe Harbor hosted the Navy's first ever Wounded Warrior Family Symposium to receive direct feedback from spouses and family members about their experiences and lessons learned through the recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration process. The program has expanded its outreach/awareness efforts to include hosting the first ever Pentagon Open House, launching a website, and releasing more than 40 news stories. In May 2011, Safe Harbor assisted in fielding a team of 35 Navy and Coast Guard members to participate in the Second Annual Warrior Games; 27 individual medals were awarded to enrollees.

Safe Harbor has worked closely with the Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Regiment to leverage some of the capability of this program. We continue to look for innovative ways to meet the needs of our severely injured Sailors and their families.

### **Suicide Prevention**

Our efforts to stem the tide of suicide within our ranks continue unabated through a multi-faceted approach of communication, training and command support, designed to foster resilience and promote psychological health among Sailors. In Calendar Year 2011, 51 active duty and 7 Reserve Sailors completed suicide. Sadly, this reflected a net increase from the previous two years; 46 active and 4 Reserve suicides occurred in 2009; and 39 active and 6 Reserve suicides occurred in 2010.

We continue in our pursuit of developing and enhancing programs designed to mitigate suicide risk factors and improve the resilience among our Sailors. With the goal of reducing

individual stress and bolstering resilience, these programs focus on substance abuse prevention, financial management, positive family relationships, physical readiness, and family support. We are increasing our understanding of the issues surrounding suicide to ensure that our policies, training programs, interventions, and communication efforts are meeting their intended objectives.

Long before thoughts of suicide occur, we have opportunities to build resilience, intervene early when risk factors are present, and create connections that help sustain us in times of challenge. Most of these efforts fall within our broader family readiness and health promotion activities. All suicide prevention is ultimately local, so our program works to equip and empower local action. Increasing numbers of shipmates, leaders, and family members are noting warning signs and reaching out to Sailors to get them the help they need.

Navy has expanded surveillance and analysis for Navy active and reserve suicide deaths and attempts; supports command prevention and stress control programs with printed resource and interactive training materials; provides training world-wide to suicide prevention coordinators and first responders; and is a partner in DoD, VA and other cooperative efforts. All Navy web sites have the 'Life is Worth Living' logo that links to the VA crisis line which includes a confidential chat option.

Navy's approach to suicide has evolved; we are more engaged in resilience building and tailored suicide prevention training-and-intervention. We have established two Mobile Training Teams, based in Norfolk and San Diego, to accelerate delivery to the fleet of command resilience

(Operational Stress Control) and suicide prevention training. In a 2011 Behavior Health Quick Poll, more than 84 percent of Sailors correctly explained Navy's clarion call to "ACT" – Ask, Care, and Treat. ACT works. Reports of Sailors' getting help increased from 1,526 in 2010 to 1,906 in 2011.

### **Sexual Assault Prevention and Response**

The Navy's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) program seeks to implement a top-down, leadership-driven effort to eliminate sexual assaults, to support sexual assault victims and to produce a maritime culture where gender respect permeates our commands. The program is built on zero-tolerance for this behavior and accountability to those who perpetrate sexual assault.

The majority of sexual assaults are service member-on-service member and it is incomprehensible that a Sailor would commit such a horrible crime against another shipmate. It undermines teamwork, morale, unit cohesion, and operational readiness. It is imperative that all Sailors understand and trust Navy's commitment to prevent, respond to, and prosecute sexual assaults. A victim's trust contributes to their willingness and desire to participate in the legal process, which is crucial to appropriate adjudication of perpetrators.

Navy's four strategic pillars for eliminating sexual assault are education and awareness, prevention and intervention, victim care and resiliency, and investigation and adjudication of all perpetrators, regardless of rank.

Tailored SAPR training rolling out this year to all Officers and Chief Petty Officers will focus on leadership's role in setting the correct tone and climate to prevent and eliminate sexual assaults. All new Sailors will receive bystander intervention training, and all Sailors will receive tailored sexual assault training this year. Judge Advocate Generals and investigators receive enhanced sexual assault training.

The highest risk group for victims over the past several years remains E-1 to E-4, ages 20 to 24, with most incidents occurring during the weekends. In recognition of the link between sexual assault and alcohol, Navy is enhancing our anti-alcohol campaign, to include awareness of how sexual assault perpetrators use alcohol as the weapon of choice.

Navy is committed to providing premiere care to all victims. We actively promote the use of the DoD Safe Helpline which provides support to victims via phone, chat or text and 24/7 accessibility to local Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARC) and Victim Advocates who ensure victims are supported throughout the process to recovery.

While there is no proven protocol for reducing sexual assaults, Navy remains committed to assessing and revising our SAPR program with the goal of eliminating this crime from our force.

## **CPO 365**

Chief Petty Officer 365 (CPO 365) was introduced in 2011 as a year-round, steady-state professional development program focused on instilling the character, integrity and inherent responsibility associated with senior enlisted leadership, as well as reinforcing adherence to the Navy core values of honor, courage and commitment. Through this process, Chief Petty Officers systemically engage in two-way interaction with non-commissioned officers and junior officers to provide perspective on the most relevant organizational readiness issues and to prepare all parties for the myriad challenges they will likely encounter in future career roles. Because it fosters productive relationships and offers situational awareness on current programs available to assist Sailors in many diverse circumstances, CPO 365 has been well-received by our forces and demonstrated that effective communication remains key to successfully confronting emerging issues.

## **Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions**

The Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions (CSADD) provides military members of all branches with the best prevention and intervention tools to deal with issues of substance abuse, reckless driving, and other destructive decisions, while maintaining good order and discipline. CSADD assists Sailors in making life decisions to maintain positive lifestyles, in keeping with the Navy's core values. It guides Sailors away from making poor and destructive decisions, by providing them with positive and dynamic training, and to shows them how to

make timely positive decisions by putting their training to use in moments of high stress and intense peer pressure.

## **Conclusion**

America's Navy is a global force for good, on station around the world and around the clock, deterring aggression, keeping the sea lanes open for free trade, projecting power and maritime security, and delivering humanitarian assistance and disaster response where needed. Sailors are the key element in our future Navy total force. Navy families share our burdens and our sacrifices. Courageous, strong and deeply devoted to our country, they endure challenges of multiple deployments and moves, spend holidays and life milestones apart and juggle everyday tasks, while a spouse, parent, son, or daughter is in harm's way. They honor the service of their loved ones and the memories of those lost. We must continue to provide a quality of life commensurate with the sacrifices our Sailors and families make. We must ensure Sailors are safe, healthy, well-compensated, well-trained and well-educated. Sailor and family support programs and initiatives must continue to evolve as the needs of our families change.

We have the best Navy we have ever fielded and we will continue that trend into the future. We will work the challenges and accomplish the mission. Our Sailors know that Navy leadership and the Congress have their best interests at heart. As I complete my 32-year career, I would like to take one last opportunity, on behalf of the men and women of the United States Navy and the families who faithfully support them, to thank you for your unwavering support.