Shipmates,

This month, we highlight the value of our Navy Reserve as a provider of On-Demand Expertise. Every day, Navy Reserve Sailors provide On-Demand Expertise to Navy, Marine Corps and Joint Forces worldwide—in fact, about 20,000 of our 65,000 Reserve Component Sailors are on some type of orders each week.

"Expertise" is the combination of knowledge, skills, and experience. Combined with our very capable ships, aircraft and submarines, the expertise of our Sailors gives our Navy the ability to carry out missions worldwide as we execute the Maritime Strategy.

This valuable expertise is expensive and time-consuming for the Navy to develop. It is the product of our Navy’s investment in all of us as part of the Navy Total Force. The Navy and the Nation realize a direct and tangible return on this investment every time a Sailor re-enters. We realize the same return when Sailors change lanes and continue serving in either the active or Reserve component of our Navy. It is far more cost-effective to retain this expertise than it is to generate it all over again!

Selected Reserve Sailors serve in the Navy part-time while maintaining full-time careers. They bring the Navy a wealth of civilian expertise, including industry-leading technology expertise, world-class business practices and an entrepreneurial mindset, and they bring their Navy training with their diverse work experience.

However, this unique combination of Navy and civilian expertise only matters if it can be delivered when and where needed—"On-Demand." To be of value, we must deliver a ready and accessible force!

Sometimes, "On-Demand" means with no notice—as seen in January 2010 when Navy Reserve Sailors delivered on-demand expertise in response to the earthquake in Haiti and this summer in response to the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Our ability to respond to short-fused requirements with this expertise than it is to generate it all over again!

"On-Demand" can also mean on a rotational or periodic basis. From Navy Expeditionary Combat Command units and aircraft squadrons serving in war zones, to teams of all sizes supporting exercises, operations and maintenance evaluations to individual Sailors serving as technicians, caregivers, watch standers or instructors, the Navy Reserve delivers exactly what the Navy needs, where and when the Navy needs it.

We are working to make it easier for Sailors to serve and for the Navy to access our talented force. Separate Navy and Navy Reserve pay systems are a barrier to a true continuum of service. The Future Pay and Personnel Solution, now in development, will eliminate this barrier for all Sailors. On-Demand Expertise to the Nation is exemplified in our Navy Reserve Force Motto: Ready Now. Anytime, Anywhere.

This expertise is truly awe-inspiring and a testament to the high personal readiness of each Reserve Sailor.

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Focus on Families

Family Readiness Conferences
Written by CYNTHIA MILLER, NAVY REGION NORTHWEST RESERVE COMPONENT COMMAND, WARRIOR/FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM SPECIALIST

At Northwest Reserve Component Command, we don’t simply ask for suggestions on how to better help Reservists and their families. We continuously work to solve any deficiencies and improve our services to them.

During our Returning Warrior Workshops, members repeatedly requested help for families preparing for long separations. Navy Operational Support Centers (NOSCs) have upgraded their assistance to Sailors and their family members. The NOSCs have an improved pre-deployment program to better prepare Reservists and their families for deployments, separations or emergencies.

What used to be known as “Family Preparedness Days,” has now become a more elaborate information-oriented event. Family Preparedness Days used to be viewed as a picnic day for the NOSC. Now, a Pre-deployment Family Readiness Conference (PDFRC) offers a full day of resources, information and access to experts. The experts are available to provide one-on-one assistance about benefits. NOSCs are still encouraged to have picnic days for their Reservists at any time.

As PDFRCs demonstrate, the Navy is the first resource that families can reach out to for assistance when a Sailor is deployed. The purpose of PDFRCs is to show everyone the wide range of support available and how easy it is to access. It also provides time for attendees to mingle and get to know each other for additional support. Families can attend the child-friendly event that includes lunch and berthing. The event is funded by the Office of the Secretary of Defense Yellow Ribbon Program.

The success of the event is a reflection of a NOSC’s ability to coordinate as many relevant resources as possible. Organizations typically send representatives from: Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, Operation Military Kids, TRICARE, Military OneSource, American Red Cross, police criminal and safety departments, Veterans Administration, Family Support Center, Concordia Dental Plan, Psychological Health Outreach Team, Navy League, and Military Family Life. NOSCs also provide information and assistance on career counseling, financial planning, employment rights, education, personnel support, and legal affairs information and services.

PDFRCs are a mandated event for the deploying military member. NOSCs encourage family participation and open PDFRCs to family members or a designated representative. Family and friends left behind must know how to take care of themselves and how to support their Sailors from home. A deployed Sailor will be more focused on the mission if they know their family is taken care of back home.

PDFRCs are offered yearly and even the most informed family learns something new from the event. Whether it is a program update, a change in benefits, or a new resource, attending a PDFRC helps us all help each other.
The Innovative Use
Of Navy Reservists

Written by Cmdr. STEPHEN P. FERRIS

In addition to the usual Navy Operational Support Center focused drills and annual training (AT) support of active duty commands, Navy Reservists can be used in a variety of innovative ways. Seabees can be used to build community homes and group shelters. Health care providers can extend care to various non-military personnel. Legal, personnel and supply ratings can provide administrative support to civic groups and agencies. Use of Reservists in a creative manner has the potential for a four-way win.

When these nontraditional activities are carefully selected and resourced, all parties can benefit. The creative use of Reservists gives the Navy increased public visibility and esteem. The unit and individual also gain in training and experience. Finally, the community or organization directly benefits from the services provided by the Reservists.

A Process for the Innovative Employment of Reservists

Unit leadership can use the following five-step process to decide how to include innovative assignments for their personnel. This process will ensure the right people are selected and the projects contribute to Navy readiness, and provide meaningful support to the recipients.

1. Identify and Evaluate Opportunity: What are the nonstandard opportunities that can benefit from Reserve involvement? Is it help with new school construction, flood clean-up, or staffing assistance at a clinic? Sometimes the opportunity will be widely publicized. More likely, leadership will need to seek it out. Leadership should evaluate the positives and negatives associated with Reserve involvement and make a decision on whether or not to commit.

2. Scale: What is the scale of the task? What needs to be done and what deliverables are expected? Leadership must be realistic regarding what the Sailors can provide and condition the expectations of the recipient.

3. Personnel Selection: After leadership decides to participate, personnel must be identified. It might be an opportunity for the entire unit or just for individuals with the necessary training or availability.

4. Resources: How will leadership resource the Reservists to accomplish their task? This could be a funding issue. Reservists are paid from many accounts. Leadership can blend AFIs, flex drills and other types of orders to allow Reservists to provide support. Leadership can also be creative in obtaining the equipment and supplies Reservists need to perform their duties.

5. Assess: Leadership should assess mission success. The success can be evaluated from several perspectives. Did readiness and Reserve capabilities increase as a result of this activity? The answer is tied to the training and experience gained by the Reservist from the assignment. When supporting community related service projects, the Navy can gain secondary effects on recruiting and retention from the positive publicity generated by the project. Did the community benefit from Reserve participation? Were the recipient’s expectations satisfied? Finally, what effect did the project have on the unit’s training schedule, morale, readiness and capabilities? This assessment should determine whether Reserve involvement should continue and if so, what the best configuration of that participation should be.

The Navy Reserve Foreign Language and Culture Pilot Program (FLCP) is now open to all ratings and designators. FLCP authorizes eligible selected Reservists a bonus payment for specified language and culture studies taken at accredited state colleges or universities. SELRES can get paid for taking a culture or language class. This allows them to acquire skills that can lead to foreign area specialization or language proficiency pay. Originally only for certain rates and designators, the program has recently been expanded to include all drilling Sailors.

The total bonus amount paid can’t exceed $5,000 in a fiscal year. The following award levels are authorized for all eligible sailors in a drill pay status if they qualify:

- **Bonus Amount**
  - $1,250 100-200 (or equivalent) level course in an eligible culture.
  - $1,500 300 and higher (or equivalent) level course in an eligible culture.
  - $2,000 100-200 (or equivalent) level course in an eligible language.
  - $2,500 300 and higher (or equivalent) level course in an eligible language.

With any incentive program, there are eligibility requirements. The requirements for FLCP are:

1. Courses must be at least three credit hours and participants must earn a grade of “C” or higher.
2. Courses must be completed at an accredited institution. Command career counselors (CCC) or education service officers (ESO) must validate accreditation at www.ed.gov.
3. Participants must maintain satisfactory drill participation during the course of study and the remainder of a service contract.
4. FLCP will not pay a bonus to SELRES taking classes in a language for which they are already receiving a bonus or pay. However, this does not prohibit them from receiving the bonus for a course in another language or a relevant culture course.

To apply for the bonus, submit the school’s course application and the Language Culture Bonus application (OPNAV 1500/55). You must also submit a copy of the course description from the school’s course catalog. Submit these items to your ESO or CCC within 60 days of registering for the course.

To receive the bonus, ensure the completed application is endorsed by your ESO and commanding officer. Submit along with your course transcript showing a grade of “C” or higher within 60 days of course completion.

For questions contact, your ESO, CCC or the CNRFC point of contact, Ms. Lisa Wade at 1-866-365-0007 or e-mail CNRFC_CIS50@navy.mil.

References and Links:
OPNAVINST 1550.11 provides program guidelines.
OPNAV 1500/55 is the application form for the program.
http://www.navyreserve.navy.mil/Pages/Culture.aspx - CNRFC N7 webpage with guidance on how to submit your application.
**Keeping Our Kids Safe Online**

Written by Lt. Cdr. Michael Leachman, Navy Reserve Force Information Assurance Manager

During the past two decades the Internet has changed the way we work and live. For many adults, the changes were subtle. It seemed innocent enough to create your first term paper on a computer, but suddenly, you were buying merchandise and banking online. For our kids, being online creates a whole new world. The World Wide Web offers children educational and personal experiences that were difficult to provide just a few years ago. In a number of ways, being online is rewarding and may increase a child’s school performance, if used effectively.

However, there are risks with Internet use and it’s important to understand the Internet can present unsafe situations. As a parent, I take a more analogous approach to its use. For instance, many parents would not allow their children to wander alone into an unknown place. The Internet is vast and largely unknown, so why let children explore this unknown by themselves? There are numerous risks associated with Internet use, but parental prudence can minimize risks and help ensure your children have a safe and rewarding experience online.

Kids love what the Internet offers. Most are interested in games, e-mail and today’s favorite – social networking sites. Therefore, if you know you care about their safety and because of that you reserve their Internet access.

Secondly, parents should get involved and stay informed. It is crucial you spend time with your children online. Whether you are at home, the community center or local library, you should be involved in their online life. This is the best insurance policy for safety online. As parents, stay informed. As the force information assurance manager, I equate this to information assurance. Most computers are preloaded with myriad of parental controls tools and there are other software options available for parents with tech savvy kids. Many parenting experts suggest locating a home computer in a family space. A computer in the living room or den is much more likely to be monitored than one located in a child’s bedroom.

**Provide Computer and Internet Mentorship**

Talk to your kids as well. Make sure they know your expectations of what sites are allowed, and just as important, what sites are off limits. During this discussion you may even consider requiring your children to provide you with passwords to e-mail accounts and social networking sites. As a parent, your children should know you care about their safety and because of that you reserve the right to check on their Internet activity.

Lastly, be proactive and become an advocate. We live in a world where Internet risks and vulnerabilities are exploited every day. Computers, networks and Internet users are targets for the unsavory. Your children are targets. Therefore, if you are surfing the Internet and come in contact with inappropriate information or content, report it to your Internet service provider (ISP). The Internet poses new challenges for parents and unlike radio or television, the Internet is interactive. Therefore, to ensure a safe and happy online experience for your children remember to get involved, stay informed and be proactive.

**If you feel like you are overpaying for some of your bills, there is a good chance you might be right. Whether it is auto insurance, cell phone or Internet, there is a good chance you can find a better deal elsewhere. Unfortunately, researching your financial options when it comes to your bills can be daunting, tedious and just plain boring. Even if dealing with the cable company is about as exciting as haggling for a used car, it is often a wise thing to do. Go into these challenges with a positive, research-driven approach, and you’ll come out financially stronger.**

**Identify the Problem and Propose a Solution**

A few months back, I noticed the bills from our cable, Internet, and telephone landline provider started to climb. I’ll call them “Company A.” These increases were not significant; just a few dollars with every bill. However, over the course of six months I started looking at the totals closely. Our bill had climbed 30 percent from the contract term we signed six months earlier!

At about this time “Company B” was in an advertising blitz that宣传片 was about calls. The offer was valid. When they said yes, I cancelled my old service and signed on with the new guys. A bit had climbed 30 percent from the contract term we signed six months earlier!

From their end, I received a lot of, “We really want to keep you. Let me check with my supervisor and see what we can do.” Minutes went by, with me on hold. After what seemed like eternity, the customer service rep came back with her verdict: “We can give you $7 off a month.” That’s when the conversation politely but quickly ended.

**Know Your Options and Pick the Best One for You**

In this case, the choice was simple. The best deal Company A offered me was pretty pitiful compared to the savings I could enjoy by switching. Since I had fulfilled my contract with Company A, there was no penalty to leave them. This is a small but critical detail consumers often overlook. When dealing with a service company, always find out the complete terms of the “promotion” offer. Once I had received the bottom line offer from my initial provider, I called Company B to confirm their special was still valid.

**A Little Bit of Research and Time Can Pay Large Dividends**

Switching to Company B has netted us about $40 a month in savings. In the course of a year, that’s almost $500. It took me about 90 minutes to research, comparison shop and sign on for a new service. That “job” paid me about $320 per hour! If you’re looking to save some money, take some time to research your expenses. You might be surprised at the money you can save for a couple of hours of work.
A New Fiscal Year Begins

Written by Chief Mass Communication Specialist KATHLEEN KELSO
NAVY RESERVE FORCE TRAVEL

A new fiscal year has begun and with that, change is in the air. The pot of travel money has been replenished, and instructions and notices have been updated. So it’s a great time to read the updated Navy Reserve Force Execution guidance and Order Processing and Transportation Arrangements for Navy Reservists instruction.

We have shared information this year on how to use the Defense Travel System (DTS) and where to find the training. However, this time we wanted to take a moment to introduce you to N33 Force Travel as a whole.

N33 FORCE TRAVEL - WHO WE ARE

Out of the 41 personnel in Force Travel (35 military and six civilians), 37 percent are Selected Reservists. So, more than a third of our staff have come to us with on-demand expertise. They have personal experience and understand the challenges and the successes you face when travelling. Force Travel understands there is a lot that goes into getting a Reservist the information needed to succeed.

Here’s how the N33 Force Travel team has been recognized for superior work performance from a variety of commands and civilian organizations. Approximately 85 percent of the staff is involved in community service and 80 percent is furthering their education. Force Travel was awarded the 2010 Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management & Comptroller) Team Award Financial Management Process Improvement for Echelon II and above. This team understands the meaning of service before self.

Here’s a “Answer the Call”

Last year, personnel worked seven days-a-week, extended office hours and literally answered thousands of phone calls. In fact, they answered 100,202 phone calls to provide assistance to members, units, NOSCs, and RCCs. Force Travel also assisted with processing 33,125 DTS authorizations and vouchers, approved 29,991 travel arrangements and authorized 7,835 waivers. It’s a busy office and everyone pitches in and works together as a team.

When the phones aren’t ringing, training becomes the priority. Training and cross-training is an ongoing process. Force Travel is dedicated to ensuring the NOSCs, RCCs and squadrons have the training necessary to cross the necessary steps to cross rate was significant. Also, I deployed to the Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in 2008.

Patrick Thompson
INTELLIGENCE SPECIALIST 2ND CLASS
Hometown: Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
NOSC: Miami, Fla.
Unit: Joint Intelligence Center, Central Command, Det. 02/74

Brief description of your Navy job: I analyze and interpret intelligence information, analyze photographs and prepare reports. I could tell you but I would have to kill you!

Brief description of your civilian job: Police officer.

What has been your greatest Navy achievement? I started out in the Navy Reserve in a different rating. So little pitch in and works together as a team.

LaTonga Coney
HOSPITAL CORPSMAN 2ND CLASS
Hometown: Dublin, Ga.
NOSC: New York City
Unit: Operational Health Support Unit (OHSU) Portsmouth Det A

Brief description of your Navy job: Navy Corpsman performing duties in the prevention and treatment of disease and injury and assist health care professionals in providing medical care to Navy personnel and their families.

Brief description of your civilian job: I am a contract specialist for the Veterans Administration. I manage and develop policies and procedures for work involving the procurement of supplies, services, leases, I also do research and development and evaluate contract price proposals.

What has been your greatest Navy achievement? Being selected NOSC New York City 2010 Sailor of the Quarter and OHSU region Sailor of the Quarter, and making boards to become a Navy officer all in the same month.

Who has been your biggest influence since joining the Navy? Lt. Cmdr. Alfreda Hobson has mentored me for years and has always offered sound advice, whether or not it is what I want to hear.

What do you enjoy most about the Navy? I learn something new every day in the Navy. Today is not going to be the same as yesterday!

Most interesting place visited since joining the Navy? I enjoyed the culture and people in Guam.

Current hobbies: Skating, bowling, hiking, and cooking.
Reserve chiefs assigned as a command chief, senior chief or master chief have a huge responsibility put on their shoulders. They have to possess general overall knowledge of a large number of programs, policies and procedures to guide their Reserve Sailors on any number of issues. Trying to get up to speed on all that information while on the job can be overwhelming. That is why the Reserve Force offers the Reserve Senior Enlisted Management (RSEM) course.

**TOPICS COVERED**

The RSEM course is a weeklong class providing command chiefs a brief overview of everything Navy Reserve. The class brings in a number of subject matter experts to review the basics of approximately 25-30 topics including:

- Navy ceremonies and protocol
- Programs
- Policies
- Legal affairs
- The enlisted performance evaluation system
- Command awards and recognition
- Command finances
- Advancement
- Manpower
- TRICARE and medical policies
- Uniform and core values

While the RSEM course isn’t an end all to all the knowledge available to the Reserve Force, it provides a good reference point to access that knowledge.

“...You won’t understand everything about all of the programs we cover,” said Chief Yeoman (AW) Christopher Reid, RSEM manager. “The course gives you a point of contact for those programs. It helps you build a network so you know where to direct Reservists on a number of different issues.”

Master Chief Aviation Electronics Technician (AW) Sean Fitzgibbon attended the most recent RSEM course in September 2010. “The course is good for the selected Reserve and the Navy Operational Support Centers,” said Fitzgibbon. “It’s geared toward those folks who aren’t around this information on a daily basis.”

**TO SIGN UP AND FOR MORE INFORMATION**

The quarterly course is available to any Reserve chief in a command senior enlisted position. Command chiefs are advised to sign up for the course within 90 days of their new position. Sign up is on a first come, first serve basis, so it is important for interested chiefs to actively pursue registration. Course schedule information is on the private side of the Navy Reserve website. Log onto http://www.navyreserve.navy.mil. Under the commands tab in the upper left hand corner, click “NRPDC” for the Navy Reserve Professional Development Center page. Under the “Enlisted” tab, click “RSEM” to find out the date of the next scheduled class.

The dates for the next courses are:

- November 15-19, 2010
- March 1-4, 2010
- June 20-24, 2010

“THIS SUPPLEMENTAL TRAINING WE PROVIDE AT THE JRTRX (JOINT RESERVE TRAINING AND READINESS EXERCISE) IS MISSION-CRITICAL FOR DLA DEPLOYERS,” LT. CMRD. ONOFRIO MARGIONI, JOINT RESERVE FORCE TRAINING EXERCISE PLANNER.
Readiness statistics for the Defense Logistics Agency’s (DLA) Joint Reserve Force are on the rise. This is thanks to the agency’s annual four-day joint reserve training and readiness exercise (JRTRX) held at Fort Eustis, Va.

This year’s iteration of JRTRX is the fourth annual for DLA’s Reserve force. About 150 DLA Reservists of all services participated.

“Our goal this year was a measurable increase in readiness,” said Army Reserve Lt. Col. Mark Asher. Asher served as the DLA Joint Reserve Force director of training and JRTRX director.

The exercise included such events as medical processing, physical fitness testing, and weapons qualifications. These are all items tracked by the military services that specifically reflect a Reservist’s eligibility to deploy. The schedule also included topics on every training plan, regardless of service branch.

The training emphasis aligned with the DLA director’s vision of an ever-evolving, high-performing, customer-focused and globally responsive workforce. The kind of work force would be capable of an ever-evolving, high-performing, customer-focused and globally responsive workforce. The kind of work force would be capable of being globally responsive includes readiness to deploy and support warfighters at home and abroad. For DLA Reservists, this means going from embassy to embassy, from forward operating bases in Iraq and Afghanistan to the battlefields of the future. The kind of work force would be capable of being globally responsive includes readiness to deploy and support warfighters at home and abroad. For DLA Reservists, this means going from embassy to embassy, from forward operating bases in Iraq and Afghanistan to the battlefields of the future.

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“Anonymous services – seriously – have become operational,” English said. “You are going to be recalled and deployed overseas. That’s what you signed up for in DLA.”

English urged the Reservists to put their game faces on as they participated in the exercise’s scenarios and training.

“The purpose of this exercise is to provide training to prepare you for mobilization. Take advantage of the opportunity and get into the mindset of: ‘I am deployed to Forward Operation Base JRTRX.’ Flip that switch. Get into that mindset,” English said.

The Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service (DRMS), based in Battle Creek, Mich., led a scenario-based exercise on the first day. The goal was to spotlight the DRMS mission in a contingency operation. The exercise started with an introduction to demilitarization policies and procedures and excess property disposal. Participants were instructed to imagine themselves at an Iraqi forward operating base, faced with a quantity of abandoned military property. They were then tasked with assessing the material and making the appropriate decision as to its disposition.

Army Reserve Capt. Mark Hampton said he found the emphasis on movement under fire to be particularly helpful.

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“We’re getting information about the specific jobs we’ll be doing in Iraq and Afghanistan – good training on what you would do downrange,” he remarked.

The second and third days of the exercise emphasized theater-specific individual readiness tasks (TSIRT). This phase included weapon familiarization and firing, field first aid, movement under fire, and improvised-explosive device awareness.

DLA Marine Reservists served as instructors and safety representatives at the M-9 and M-16 ranges. Participating Army Reservists achieved 100 percent qualification. Navy and Air Force Reservists had the opportunity to shoot the Army’s course for weapon familiarization.

The JRTRX also included a land navigation exercise, using a compass and map to locate specific points in a densely wooded area. Marine Corps Reserve Staff Sgt. Andre Joseph assisted with the land navigation course and the range firing for the exercise.

“If I was impressed,” Joseph said. “With the tools we gave them, [all participants] executed the land navigation and shot [their weapons] well.”

DLA Reservists also had their first opportunity to use Fort Eustis’s Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer (HEAT). Humvee rollover accidents account for numerous injuries in contingency operations. HEAT recreates the physical sensation of a rollover to train service members to respond quickly and safely exit the vehicle.

Another new addition, the Leadership Reaction Course, challenged teams of Reservists to accomplish highly physical tasks. These tasks included moving the team loaded with ammunition or a simulated wounded Soldier over a barrier. Participants said the tasks required teamwork, creativity, ingenuity and strength to accomplish.

“We did a good job of getting 150 people through three days of training that could have filled six days,” Asher said. “It was like a Rubik’s Cube with lots of moving parts. You twist it one way, and it affects everything else.”

The planning team faced numerous challenges coordinating with Reservists and various civilian and military agencies to make the exercise happen.

“We met our target,” said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Onofrio Margioni, Joint Reserve Force training exercise planner. Margioni is slated to be the JRTRX 2011 director. “Our Reservists won’t be ‘cold’ when they report to their pre-mobilization site for combat-skills training. This supplemental training we provide at the JRTRX is mission-critical for DLA deployers. It gives them the tools to allow them to be better prepared.”

Joseph, in his first joint billet, said the exercise was a prime opportunity to bring together individual strengths from each of the military services.

“Every service is different,” Joseph said. “The JRTRX provided a chance to bring the unit together – one team getting the mission completed.”

Navy Reserve Capt. Alison Weldon, assigned to DRMS, summed up: “It was just the right amount of time and detail. It was the right product to benefit our Reservists as they prepare for the deployment experience.”
As a result of Navy training and civilian employment/educational experiences, Reservists offer unquestionable skill and expertise in support of Navy missions and requirements. It is through these assets Navy Reservists provide the capability for on-demand support. Now, the Reserve Force finds itself in a position to become and remain among the most flexible and well-prepared unified forces of its size. It is through detailed planning and coordination throughout the entire chain of command that Reservists can flex their skills, expertise, and dedication to service in offering global operational support to active component (AC) commands. This is perhaps most evident in the Reserve Force’s execution of Annual Training (AT), which provides direct operational support for Navy missions, events, and exercises on a year-round basis. Two focus areas of Commander, Navy Reserve Forces Command (CNRFC) are:

1. AT is the primary vehicle for providing operational support.
2. Reservists provide operational support on a year-round basis.

AT for Operational Support

Although Reservists execute several other types of orders throughout the year, AT remains the Force’s preeminent funding source for providing direct operational support. This is due to the vital and vulnerable nature of AT funding.

Congress provides the Reserve with a dedicated amount of funding (AT dollars) to maintain a Ready Reserve. These AT dollars are provided to the Navy Reserve based on the total number of Reservists and based on a nominal 14 days a year requirement for each Reservist. This AT allotment is distributed to each of the six regional Reserve Force Commands based on the number of selected Reservists (SELRES) in each region. The challenge comes in ensuring every member has the opportunity to execute the 14 day AT requirement. According to CNRFC Deputy Commanding Officer, Liz Dunham, “Many Reservists actually go beyond this minimum training requirement.”

Is this great because people are doing more than they are required? In fact this is not great because this overage in support by some Reservists is directly linked to the fact other Reservists are not meeting their annual requirement. This can have a significant impact on future year budgets. More importantly, it could gravely affect the Reserve Force’s ability to provide much-needed operational support to the AC. Navy Reserve jobs could be lost, and the AC may struggle determining which missions will be met, and which ones will not.

When Reservists fail to execute 14 days of AT a fiscal year, the overall AT funding allotment falls under scrutiny at the congressional level. This means the AT allotment for subsequent fiscal years could be reduced. With reduced AT funding, SELRES may lose opportunities to receive critical training or to provide vital operational support to the AC. Although a typical set of AT orders is 14 days, needs of the Navy allow Operational Support Officers (OSOs) and CNRFC Force Operations to extend AT days beyond the nominal 14-day requirement. This helps to meet Navy requirements, while utilizing essential available AT funding to do so. However, this should not be the norm. CNRFC’s force execution guidance calls these instances exceptional. The decision to allot additional days to support exceptional requirements is contingent upon mission requirements and available funds. Does this mean I can’t do Active Duty Training (ADT) anymore? ADT is very much present, and it can have as big an impact as AT in many instances due to its flexibility. However, ADT is not a fixed amount of funding guaranteed as is AT. ADT should not be used as the primary funding source for training and operational support.

ADT funding is available and distributed to and managed by OSOs. The OSOs are directed not to use ADT until AT orders are at least scheduled in the Navy Reserve order writing system (NROWS). According to the Assistant AT Program Manager (PM) for CNRFC, “When AT commitments are scheduled in NROWS, Reservists can then apply for other opportunities that may be funded by ADT or additional drills.”

Reservists should care about commitments to the extent Reservists can help assure themselves a variety of opportunities for which they may be eligible to apply. “Commitment” occurs when AT orders are routed to the NOSC orders specialist. According to Dunham, when the orders specialist approves, saves and routes the orders, the funding will be committed. At that point, the Reservist is eligible to perform work using other funding types. They key here is the AT is planned and scheduled in NROWS.

Why does anyone else care about committed orders? The Force as a whole should care because this is the way unit Commanding Officers (COs) signal their intent to the chain of command. With orders committed in NROWS, units indicate a certain amount of money should be set aside to pay for the orders. This is extremely important, especially when the chain of command may be considering directing funds to other critical Navy needs based on low execution rates.

Year-round Operational Support

The Reserve Force provides year-round global operational support to the AC. This is quite a feat, and it hinges on dedication from the following:

- Dedication from Reserve leadership to provide clear and timely direction to the Force via clear-cut policies and Force strategies.
- Dedication from headquarters staff and regional chain of commands to always be available and ready to guide, train and equip Reservists.

Dedication, most importantly, from Reservists who are willing to sacrifice and honor their country through selfless service in carrying out their duties and obligations as members of the Navy Reserve.

As overseas contingency operations continue, the need for Reserve contributions is constant and year-round. The Navy Reserve is not a collection of individual Reservists who conduct training drills one weekend a month and two weeks a year. Today’s Navy Reserve is a 24/7 and 365 days a year ready, able, and willing assembly of the most selfless individuals this nation offers. All year long the expertise of Reservists is required and delivered to ensure the AC achieves critical objectives. To meet this demand, today’s Reservists rely heavily on their OSOs, unit COs/OICs, and NOSC or squadron COs to plan, coordinate and communicate on the Reservist’s behalf. What’s an OSO? Why is this OSO talking to my unit CO about me, or for me? While the answer to these questions may be clear to some, it is very likely many, if not most, are unaware of the Reserve Force’s “Link.”

OSOs, Unit COs/OICs, and NOSC (NRA) COs

“LEADERSHIP MUST BE IN FREQUENT COMMUNICATION WITH THE ACTIVE-DUTY COMMANDS WHERE THEIR RESERVISTS ARE ASSIGNED.” - CMDR. STEPHEN FERRIS

OSOs are liaisons between Reserve units and AC commands. They communicate AC requirements to unit COs, who then help match Reservists to the requirement through a detailed AT planning process. Unit COs must communicate their intentions to their respective NOSC COs, because the NOSC’s control AT funding for the units and Reservists. The NOSC staff is also responsible for the administrative support necessary to get Reservists where they need to be.

A well-balanced communication and planning process is what enables Reservists to provide timely and meaningful support.

Early planning is necessary to ensure Reservists contribute the necessary operational support to the AC, while also ensuring the Reserve Force is using its AT funds in a sensible and meaningful manner. According to Cmdr. Stephen Ferris, “[Unit] leadership must be in frequent communication with the AC about the NOSC orders they have assigned.” When unit leadership works closely with the OSO and NOSC, essential Navy needs are readily identified, communicated early, and carried out seamlessly. Due to this planning process and Reservists’ willingness to remain flexible and eager to serve, the Reserve Force is able to carry out unique and critical missions, beyond the level of routine.

The examples just scorch the surface in sampling the types of support Reservists provided in fiscal year 2010. In January, several Reserve Sailors provided on-demand expertise in computer security and system configurations for Special Operations Command Europe. Simultaneously, Reservists composed more than 30 percent of USNS Comfort’s command element.

Reservists participated in Operation Podium providing security support for the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. Several others from the same unit served as the Naval Ambush Liaison Element to Southern Command’s Air Component Commander in support of Operation Unified Response, Haiti relief effort.

Reservists from one Navy Casualty Unit studied DNA samples donated by Navy families in an effort to identify remains of recovered missing-in-action Sailors.

Late in the fiscal year, Reserve experts flew the MQ-9 Reaper unmanned aerial systems and provided contributory training for 26 AC aircrews in support of validating unmanned aircraft developments for use in a broad array of emerging missions.

When it comes to executing Navy Reserve orders, Reservists should plan AT first. This enables the Reserve Force as a whole to support scheduled and emergent requirements any time of the year.
This month’s Back to Basics focuses on the four MOPP (Mission Oriented Protective Posture) levels of readiness and their respective risk assessment levels. A step-by-step collective effort by all hands to increase the survivability and continue forward with its mission during a Chemical, Biological or Radiological (CBR) attack.

**Mission Oriented Protective Posture**

Written by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class GINO FLORES

**MOPP LEVEL 1**

*Attack Suspected*
- Individual protective equipment and medical supply are issued to personnel.
- Protective masks issued and fitted.
- Biological Protection
  - Protective measures same as chemical.
  - No medical supplies.
- Radiological Protection
  - Mask only.
  - Operational inspection of installed detection equipment monitoring systems.
- Chemical Protection
  - M40 protective mask.
  - Chemical Protective Over (CPO) garment suit.
  - Personnel decontamination kit, M-291.
  - Operational inspection of detection equipment and monitoring systems.
- Threat is assumed as “worst case scenario”.

**MOPP LEVEL 2**

*Attack Possible*
- Protective mask in carrier case and readily accessible.
- Pre-position CBR-Decontamination equipment.
- Operationally tested Countermeasure Wash Down System (CWDS).
- Operationally test alarms.
- Radiological only, issue dosimeters.
- Training.

**MOPP LEVEL 3**

**PURPOSE**
- Enhance the survivability of ship’s crew.
- Sustain shipboard operations critical to fulfilling the mission.
- Management tool which coordinates individual collective protection activities and shipboard systems into effective countermeasures.
- Provides for incremental preparations to defend against CBR attacks.
- Provides incremental application of increased protection to counter minimum to maximum levels of CBR environments.
- Implementation of MOPP levels must be the result of threat/risk assessment.

**MOPP LEVEL 4**

*Attack Imminent*
- Set Circle WILLIAM.
- Activate CMWDS continuously.
- Chemical/biological, secure jumper hood overhead and around mask.
- Don protective glove set.
- Radiological
  - Don battle dress.
  - Monitor radiation detection equipment.
Eyes on the Sky

Written by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class RON KUZLIK
Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class SHARAY BENNETT

When we access media for news we are treated to a litany of information about news, sports, and weather. Usually, the one that has the greatest immediate impact on our daily lives is the weather report. Depending on where you live, the local weather reporters (or “weather guessers”, as some like to say) are either revered or despised.

In the Navy Reserve, there are 158 aerographer’s mates, complimented by another 80 oceanographers, or special duty officers (Oceanography), commonly referred to as meteorology and oceanography (“METOC”) officers. They are the Navy’s experts, trained in the science of meteorology and physical oceanography.

Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Reserve Activity (NMORA) 2186 from Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) Norfolk, Va., is one of the various Reserve component units that augment the active component. They do this by providing weather forecasts and climatic and technical data to ships’ captains, pilots, navigators, and battle commanders.

The other NMORA commands are at San Diego, Calif.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Monterey, Calif.; Ft. Worth, Texas; Whidbey Island, Wash.; Earle, N.J.; Selfridge (Mt. Clemens), Mich.; and Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The NMORA headquarters unit is at the John C. Stennis Space Center in southern Mississippi. In addition, there is a hybrid Navy Oceanographic/Intelligence (NAVINTL) unit also located at Stennis.

According to the Commander, Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command (CNMOC), marine weather forecasting is vital to U.S. Navy operations and the overall safety of the fleet.

Weather observations can be taken using such traditional means as weather balloons launched from the ground or a ship. Observations can also by conducted by more sophisticated methods using aircraft and satellites.

Aerographer’s Mate 2nd Class Anthony Lucarelli transitioned to the Reserve component after an active-duty tour aboard the aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73). His civilian job is as a weather observer at Fleet Weather Center Norfolk at Naval Station Norfolk.

“We take temperature, pressure, winds, precipitation and atmospheric pressure every hour,” Lucarelli said. “ASOS (Automated Surface Observing System) then generates a report based on that data.”

ASOS uses the largest and most modern weather sensors to provide continuous observations throughout the year.

Technological advances like ASOS and computer forecasting and environmental satellite systems have improved CNMOC’s ability to provide timely and accurate forecasts. Detailed knowledge of the Earth’s atmosphere provides tactically important information for aircraft operations, weapons effectiveness, sensor performance, and mission planning.

“We provide support in all aspects of meteorology and oceanography,” Aerographer’s Mate 1st Class Terry Wamburn said. “This support includes flight briefings on conditions and forecasts for the departure airport, route of flight, and destination airport for pilots.”

“On the maritime side, we provide ship routing information, especially during tropical storms and hurricane season, as well as ice reports during winter.” To military personnel, CNMOC’s information is more than just a weather forecasting.

“The warfighter makes decisions with concern for the safety of his personnel and the effectiveness of his equipment. In some manner, the weather plays an important role in the decision-making process,” Senior Chief Aerographer’s Mate Tiffany Whitcomb said. “We provide environmental intelligence to optimize the success of the mission.”

A historical example of how weather affected tactical decision-making came during the D-day invasion during World War II. The invasion of the Normandy coast of France was launched in the early morning hours of June 6, 1944. Allied Expeditionary Force Supreme Commander, General Dwight D. Eisenhower had originally selected June 4, and then June 5, as the date for the invasion. Due to several extenuating weather events, the date was pushed back to June 6. A full moon was needed to illuminate navigation landmarks for pilots of aircraft, gliders, and landing craft. Also, the spring tide was needed to provide the deepest possible water to avoid German defensive obstacles in the surf.

Eisenhower’s chief meteorologist, Group Capt. J.M. Stagg, recommended June 6 as the date of the invasion. June 6 was the full moon. The days leading up to June 6 were obscured by strong winds, high seas and as low clouds that would make it difficult for aircraft pilots to find their targets.
There is no exception to the rule that all service members and their families experience permanent changes during and after separation, whether that separation is a peace-time deployment or an individual augmentation (IA) to a combat zone. Transitioning home and reintegrating back into a family unit and back to civilian life after a combat tour can be met with additional and unique challenges.

“Returning Warrior Workshops (RWW) are essential to post-deployment reintegration efforts,” Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Gary Roughead said.

The RWW empowers attendees by providing resources and training enabling them to help themselves and their families face challenges as they appear.

“Changing lives, strengthening families.”

The workshops are held in a luxurious and comfortable setting to promote relaxation and open sharing. Attendees do not wear uniforms and are told “rank does not apply.” They are grouped together in cruise-ship fashion. Every attendee is assigned to a table, and remain together throughout the weekend. Around each table, communication is on a first name basis and each person, warrior and spouse, shares their deployment stories with their group.

Alisha Pryor, a spouse attending RWW Houston, shared how her husband’s one-year IA, to Camp Bucca, Iraq in 2009 had been very difficult on her and her two children. Pryor said that changing the family routine upon his return had been equally trying. She was comforted by the sharing as well as “knowing that there are other families who were going through what I went through.”

Another benefit of the intimate group setting is the tendency to build lasting friendships based on mutual understanding and trust. Speaking of her new friends with whom she exchanged contact information, Pryor said, “I have families I would like to stay in contact with. I know we can continue to talk with each other and express what we went through, or what we are going through.”

RWWs are funded by the Department of Defense’s Yellow Ribbon Program and hosted by Navy regional Reserve Component Commands (RCCCs). The events were initially designed to accommodate the unique reintegration challenges faced by Navy Reservists and their families upon the warrior’s return home from a deployment or IA. The program has since evolved to include the Guard and Reserve components of each of the uniformed services and active component members on a space available basis.

Key among issues addressed is the returning warriors’ feeling of under appreciation.

Attendees said not being appreciated is common among service members who return alone from IAs and immediately resume their service and sacrifice to their country.

“Recognize and show appreciation for the warriors and their families for service and sacrifice to their country,” Rear Adm. David Stinson, deputy chief of chaplains for Reserve matters. Stinson was accompanied by his wife and participated in the workshop in its entirety, keeping his rank a secret until he arrived at the banquet in uniform.

On hand for RWW Houston was guest speaker, Rear Adm. David Stinson, commander, Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center, spoke at the RWW Savannah where he said family members left behind were “warfighters” as well.

“I want to acknowledge tonight, the shared sacrifice of those who went forward and those who remained in the rear,” Stinson said. “All in this room have given something in this great effort of our nation since September 11, 2001.” Adding, “no doubt, all of us have been changed in these struggles and sacrifice... and I thank you warriors and families for what you give.”

Rear Adm. John Miller, commander, Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center, spoke at the RWW Savannah where he said family members left behind were “warfighters” as well.

“ALL IN THIS ROOM HAVE GIVEN SOMETHING IN THIS GREAT EFFORT OF OUR NATION SINCE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001.” - REAR ADM. DAVID STINSON
“Some of you fought the good fight right here,” Miller said. “Because when your significant other was off fighting somewhere far away, you were here taking care of everything else, so when I look at you I see warriors and I want to thank you for your service.”

Rear Adm. Patricia E. Wolfe, commander, Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group and guest speaker at RWW Savannah’s Banquet of Honor July 24, 2010, said, “After my last deployment, it was the most difficult reintegration I had with my spouse and my family.” Wolfe added, “As we continue the healing process we need to honor our actions, and we need to honor the humanity in our actions.”

After the admiral’s remarks the warriors of RWWs Houston and Savannah were again surprised by another gesture of gratitude. Each of the warriors in attendance were presented with an intricately hand-sewn quilt by the Quilts of Valor Foundation. The foundation is a charitable organization created by Kathryn Roberts in 2003 to “cover” all wounded or injured service members touched by war.

In a statement on her foundation’s website, Roberts said, “Our service members have been touched by war, and now it is time for them to be touched by our comforting and healing war-time quilts. What makes the Quilt of Valor stand out is that this war-time quilt says without equivocation or hesitancy, thank you for your service, sacrifice and valor while standing in harms way for our country.” Though not guaranteed, due to availability and other issues, there is an attempt to secure quilts for all workshops.

“RETURNING WARRIOR WORKSHOPS ARE ESSENTIAL TO POST-DEPLOYMENT REINTEGRATION EFFORTS.” - CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, ADM. GARY ROUGHEAD.

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Linda Villalobos, who attended RWW Houston as a Navy spouse, was moved to tears during the quilt presentation and simultaneous playing of Lee Greenwood’s “God Bless the USA.” Afterward, as her husband was presented the quilt, she said she could feel “all the love people have for every individual that’s out there serving our country for our freedom.”

Four volunteer quilters represented the foundation at RWW Savannah. They agreed it was highly rewarding to provide a tangible representation of their thanks for the sacrifices made by today’s servicemembers.

According to Master-at-Arms 2nd Class Malcolm Pryor, one of the most beneficial aspects of RWWs is the opportunity to affect an improvement of the IA system. This happens during a brainstorming session called Improving the Process. The session is aimed at improving the deployment processes from selection to preparation, and the tours themselves from start to finish.

Pryor noted the importance of the workshops for junior Sailors and his plans to share that with his unit members.

“I will tell them it is very important to come to an RWW,” Pryor said. “It will help them learn coping mechanisms and learn how to handle issues they experience. They can have fun and some great food too.”
Aug. 10, 2010 wasn’t an ordinary day for a 12-year-old Kandahar, Afghanistan boy. It was the kind of day that changes lives.

The boy was working with his family that day somewhere in the Kandahar Province. His father grows wheat and almonds for home consumption and sale. Like any other day, he and his family were working hard to simply feed themselves and hopefully have enough left over to sell.

The boy was feeding wheat into a 25-horse-power threshing machine which is used to separate the grain from the hulls after it has been harvested. The wind blew his clothing, causing it to get caught in the thresher and within seconds his arms were pulled into the equipment. His father instantly struggled to pull him free, but even his immediate action wasn’t fast enough. Unable to free his son, he disengaged the machine by removing a pin and releasing the injured child’s arms. That day the threshing machine separated more than just grain. The 12-year-old’s flesh was removed from his hands and arms.

The family quickly contacted a U.S. Army patrol. A nine-line report (emergency information with location) was called in by the patrol. The boy was rushed by helicopter to a Role 3 medical facility. The facility was unable to provide the level of reconstructive care the child required. He was then transported to the Role 3 facility located at Kandahar Air Field (KAF). Role 3 facilities typically provide specialist diagnostic resources, specialist surgical and medical capabilities—the type of help this boy desperately needed.

The boy’s father indicated his son will continue to be a farmer after he has finished the healing process. It is common in Afghanistan for a boy to follow his father in a trade. Most of the time that trade is peaceful. When he deployed, Bittner figured he would work on the broken extremity corrective and reconstructive surgery.

“TO BE ABLE SAVE A CHILD THAT WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE DIED IS WHY WE BECOME SURGEONS. THIS IS WHAT MEDICINE IS ABOUT.”

Orthopedic surgeon, Capt. Donald Bittner, stationed with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 18, was working at the KAF Multinational Medical Unit. Bittner is a selected Reservist from Orange County, Calif., who is currently on deployment with the Seabees. He is an associate professor of surgery at the University of California-Irvine working at St. Jude Hospital. Bittner specializes in hand and upper-extremity corrective and reconstructive surgery.

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When he deployed, Bittner figured he would work on the broken hands, crushed feet and combat related injuries. Saving the arms of a child caught in harvesting equipment wasn’t something he planned for, but that didn’t mean he wasn’t ready. Bittner’s expertise was exactly what was needed for the boy.

Bittner continued to see his young patient.

“One day he tested the boy’s fine-motor skills by asking him to pinch a two dollar bill between his thumb and forefinger. With a smile he told his young patient that if he could do it he could keep the money. The boy indicated he would prefer Bittner’s watch. Nonetheless, the boy was able to pinch the money, Bittner said with a laugh.”

Bittner’s father indicated his son will continue to be a farmer after he has finished the healing process. It is common in Afghanistan for a boy to follow his father in a trade. Most of the time that trade is peaceful.

August 10 was a dramatic day for this boy’s parents. Despite the emergency, their son lived and is on his way to recovery.

It was also a good day for Bittner. He and the other medical professionals at the KAF medical facility made a difference in a land torn by 35 years of warfare.

“Winning hearts and minds can be done in many ways. Often it happens when a cultural custom is observed or simple words of greeting are exchanged. Service members across the board know these efforts are as critical to saving Afghans as taking the fight to the Taliban. However, there are days, when words aren’t enough and life saving becomes literal.”
Support for Sailors from Start to Finish

Written by Lt. Cdr. Brenda Steele
NAVY REGION SOUTHEAST COMPONENT COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

At the end of the summer, Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Delanie Williams deployed in support of operations at United States African Command (AFRICOM). She deployed with her entire Maritime Expeditionary Security Detachment 1 (MSRON-1) Det B unit out of Corpus Christi, Texas. Their job at AFRICOM is to protect Navy ships and their contracted vessels as they enter and leave port. Prior to deployment, Williams had to prepare herself for the new life she would lead. At the same time, she and the other members of MRSRN-1 had to make preparations for the welfare of family and loved ones.

Concern surrounding the type of support offered to Reserve Sailors and their families during a deployment is nothing new. Reservists and their families need to understand the types of support that’s available to them. In Williams’ situation, she will be separated from her husband and their three young sons for at least eight months.

Williams has been with MRSRN-1 Det B for more than two years. She has trained alongside many augmentees recently assigned to the unit to fill vacant billet positions. They participated in almost three months of evolutions prior to their deployment. This training teaches the augmentees their jobs while helping the long-standing unit members fine-tune their skills.

“One of the long-standing unit members, Chief Sonar Technician Gary Snowden has deployed more than once with the unit. One of the long-standing unit members, Chief Sonar Technician Gary Snowden has deployed more than once with the unit. They had to complete the required training to prepare the unit for its mission to Africa.

FLEET AND FAMILY SUPPORT

Sailor separations from family often begin in advance of deployment. Due to this, Navy Fleet and Family Support services are initiated early. If not already identified, a unit ombudsman is appointed before the deployment begins. An ombudsman is typically a spouse of one of the Sailors in the unit. They receive training so they can provide support and information to other unit spouses during the deployment.

Command individual augmentee coordinators (CIACs) at the Navy Operational Support Centers (NOSC) are tasked with looking after family members and any Sailors who aren’t deployed with a unit. CIACs, and family support personnel to offer help.

One of the CIACs, Aviation Electronics Technician 1st Class (AW) Sergio Morales, has been with the MRSRN-1 Det B for more than two years. He has trained alongside many augmentees recently assigned to the unit to fill vacant billet positions. They participated in almost three months of evolutions prior to their deployment. This training teaches the augmentees their jobs while helping the long-standing unit members fine-tune their skills.

“Many of the members are still learning crewman techniques to eventually earn qualifications on the boats,” said Williams. “During the pre-deployment training period, I was working my way up to becoming a boat engineer - the second in charge.”

One of the long-standing unit members, Chief Sonar Technician Gary Snowden has deployed more than once with the unit. The members who have recently joined us have come from several places in the Navy,” said Snowden. “They’re come from air wings, the fleet or they may even be a new Sailor. We’re here to provide the best training possible to the newer members, and to give everyone the right amount of support.”

With all this training, MRSRN-1 Det B Sailors spent a considerable amount of time away from their families even before they deployed. They had to complete the required training to prepare the unit for its mission to Africa.

SUPPORT: HOME AND AWAY

There are a number of other sources that reach out to Sailors and their families before, during, and after deployment. Among those are Family Support Centers, Judge Advocate offices, the Chaplain Corps, and outside contractors such as Navy OneSource. Even with all these sources, communication with deployed Sailors is a welcome commodity. Morales says he’ll occasionally talk to a deployed Sailor who is surprised and happy to get a CIAC call for the first time.

All NOSCs throughout the five Navy regions designate CIACs like Morales and Barr to provide these services for the Navy Reserve. In Texas, home to several NOSCs, MRSRN-1 Det B is just one of the many units that prepare for deployments. When Reservists mobilize individually the CIACs job is even more important because they don’t have the unit support structure.

Throughout the summer months, Texas NOSCs hosted a variety of events for Sailors both deploying and returning home. Every year, NOSCs designate at least one day to hold a pre-deployment family readiness conference (PDFRC). These are designed to address the many challenges families and Sailors face throughout the deployment period.

At the Harlingen, Texas PDFRC, members of the NOSC staff provided wills and power of attorney services for their Reserve Sailors. They also provided the service for MRSRN-1 Det B, who are based two hours north of Harlingen. The one-day event offered legal, medical, dental and TRICARE education, and veteran-related support services.

“Whether a Sailor is standing by to mobilize, or returning home, there is support for our Sailors and families,” said Lt. Cmdr. Curtis Young, Harlingen NOSC commanding officer.

Further north, on that same weekend, Sailors from Houston and other surrounding cities spent a weekend at a Returning Warrior Workshop (RWW). An RWW is designed to assist with deployment transitions and facilitate the reintegration of family through self discovery and realization. The workshops are hosted by the five Navy Regional Reserve Component Commands (RCCs).

Those who have deployed like MRSRN-1 Det B and the units throughout Texas have support available to them in many packages. For those who have remained behind, there are several ombudsmen, CIACs, and family support personnel to offer help.

“This job as a CIAC has truly broadened my train of thought when watching global affairs,” said Morales. “Since I’ve built a rapport with Sailors and family members, I can’t help but feel concerned for their welfare while they are deployed.”

As MRSRN-1 Det B continues their mission in Africa, the long separation from their family could take its toll throughout the months. With the support mechanisms put in place for Sailors and loved ones, hopefully peace of mind will set in as well. As her shipmates return home to reunite with their families in 2011, so too will Williams rejoin her three boys and husband. With the efforts of ombudsmen, CIACs, PDFRCs and RWVs, there will be no lone Sailor or family member in the Lone Star State.

“Whether a Sailor is standing by to mobilize, or returning home, there is support for our Sailors and families,” said Lt. Cmdr. Curtis Young, NOSC Harlingen Commanding Officer.

“We begin our calls to Sailors and their families before they leave the country. We’ve learned with time that several issues may have already arisen,” said Morales.

With help from Boatswain’s Mate 1st Class (SW) Jeffrey Barr, Morales provides service for approximately 70 individual augmentees (IA) and their families. That number is about to increase as two other Orlando units prepare to deploy.

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I remember the awe-striking misery that greeted me when I first arrived in Afghanistan. And I remember staring at the calendar, just dazed by the number of days, weeks and months that remained in my tour. How could I do it? How did ANYBODY get through this? Most questions, of course. But when faced with a situation like this, you find yourself asking these questions. And eventually, you get answers.

Somehow, I did get through it. The experience changed me in a number of ways, no doubt. Some good, some bad. It also taught me a lot about myself, and about others with whom I serve. Some good, some bad. There is so much I want to say, and so little space. Let me just tell you that packing up my stuff, and then staring at my empty room, and sitting there on my bed, alone, staring at it, tears running down my face. I wish I didn’t know that. I have never been as conscious of my own mortality as I was over there. I will never again go to a fireworks show. I sometimes talk to young service members about what it’s like in the combat zone. They can have it! But people are tougher, and I have never had such good friends in all my life. We talked, we laughed, we cursed and yelled, and sometimes we cried. But we were there for each other, regardless of the situation. I will never forget you guys. Stay in touch!

TENTS

In a combat zone, you are in uncharted territory. People. Those with whom I served ran the gamut from being the best I’ve known to the worst. Being in a combat zone and the arduous conditions that go with it certainly make the true self rise to the top in a person. Ultimately there is no place to hide your character. For some, that’s good news. Not so for others. Enough said.

I have the benefit of hindsight now, and can safely look back on my time in Afghanistan. And I remember staring at the calendar, just dazed by the number of days, weeks and months that remained in my tour. How could I do it? How did ANYBODY get through this? Most questions, of course. But when faced with a situation like this, you find yourself asking these questions. And eventually, you get answers.

Somehow, I did get through it. The experience changed me in a number of ways, no doubt. Some good, some bad. It also taught me a lot about myself, and about others with whom I serve. Some good, some bad. There is so much I want to say, and so little space. Let me just tell you that packing up my stuff, and then staring at my empty room, and sitting there on my bed, alone, staring at it, tears running down my face. I wish I didn’t know that. I have never been as conscious of my own mortality as I was over there. I will never again go to a fireworks show. I sometimes talk to young service members about what it’s like in the combat zone. They can have it! But people are tougher, and I have never had such good friends in all my life. We talked, we laughed, we cursed and yelled, and sometimes we cried. But we were there for each other, regardless of the situation. I will never forget you guys. Stay in touch!

1. People. Those with whom I served ran the gamut from being the best I’ve known to the worst. Being in a combat zone and the arduous conditions that go with it certainly make the true self rise to the top in a person. Ultimately there is no place to hide your character. For some, that’s good news. Not so for others. Enough said.

2. This ain’t the movies! There’s nothing romantic about death. Usually there are no telling last words, or a person cradled in a buddy’s arms as they expire. Dead is dead, and usually in Afghanistan it’s pretty gruesome and scary, regardless of a person’s status: coalition, civilian or even an enemy.

3. Fear sucks. While in Afghanistan, I was blown out of bed by an IED, my aircraft was shot by small arms fire and when we had to make an emergency landing I experienced numerous rocket and mortar attacks. One of those rockets landed very close to my tent, leaving a huge crater. Rockets hiss when they pass overhead. I wish I didn’t know that. I have never been as conscious of my own mortality as I was over there. I will never again go to a fireworks show. I sometimes talk to young service members about what it’s like in the combat zone. They can have it! But people are tougher, and I have never had such good friends in all my life. We talked, we laughed, we cursed and yelled, and sometimes we cried. But we were there for each other, regardless of the situation. I will never forget you guys. Stay in touch!

4. Don’t believe everything you read or watch. The media has a tendency to focus on those things that will sell a story. The focus isn’t always an accurate portrayal of a situation. Take their reports with a grain of salt! I try to avoid news stories about Afghanistan these days.

5. Afghanistan is boring. It can be, anyway. We whirled away the days sometimes by playing practical jokes on each other, or using Facebook as an outlet for our downtime. See Thing No. 1. The people make all the difference.

6. I miss my friends. Again, see Thing No. 1. Yeah, those conditions are tough. But people are tougher, and I have never had such good friends in all my life. We talked, we laughed, we cursed and yelled, and sometimes we cried. But we were there for each other, regardless of the situation. I will never forget you guys. Stay in touch!

7. The mail never stops! Mail runs every day in Afghanistan. And I remember staring at the calendar, just dazed by the number of days, weeks and months that remained in my tour. How could I do it? How did ANYBODY get through this? Most questions, of course. But when faced with a situation like this, you find yourself asking these questions. And eventually, you get answers.

10. People are people. This may seem repetitive, considering Thing No. 1, but I feel people are the single most important factor in what we are trying to do in Afghanistan. I served with people from many nations, and all branches of service. I even ran into a U.S. Coast Guard petty officer, who was long since retired, with clear eyes. With that vision, I would like to share my list of "10 Things I Think—I"...
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- Regional and Cultural Awareness
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- Sand Pebbles
- Shackleton’s Way: Leadership Lessons From the Great Antarctic Explorer
- Sheriff: America’s Defense of the New World Order
- Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference
- To the Shores of Tripoli: The Birth of the U.S. Navy and Marines
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- Kite Runner
- Life in Mr. Lincoln’s Navy
- Lincoln on Leadership
- Sailor’s History of the U.S. Navy
- Starship Troopers
- Time Management From the Inside Out: The Foolproof Plan for Taking Control of Your Schedule and Your Life
- Lone Survivor: The Eyewitness Account of Operation Redwing and the Lost Heroes of SEAL Team 10
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**SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

**PHOTO SUBMISSIONS**

Due Sift of the month, High-resolution 300 dpi photos. Set camera on the highest setting (T1F, F1.2) and use a telephoto lens or accurate support to ensure the story is about people receiving awards, show us what they do that garnered said award. Send us the original image. Do not link with a photographer or other image-editing software. We will edit it to fit into our page layout requirements. Include cutline identifying the subject and what they’re doing in the photo. Also credit the photographer.

**STORY SUBMISSIONS**

Due Sift of the month. Monthly columns: at least 600 words. More is okay, we’ll edit it. If the story is about people receiving awards, show us what they do that garnered said award. Send us the original image. Do not link with a photographer or other image-editing software. We will edit it to fit into our page layout requirements. Include cutline identifying the subject and what they’re doing in the photo. Also credit the photographer.
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