

Distance Support for Fleet Forces

Providing business information technology afloat and 24/7/365 customer support to the Fleet.



The Navy's Distance Support (DS) capability¹ is managed by the Sea Warrior Program (PMW 240) and combines people, processes, and technologies into a collaborative Fleet support infrastructure without geographic boundaries. Distance Support remotely provides reactive, proactive, and predictive support to Sailors and afloat commands in logistics, maintenance and modernization, supply, manpower, personnel, training and education (MPTE), medical, and chaplaincy support.

Major Components of Distance Support

Technology and connectivity are improving how today's afloat force is served by Distance Support capabilities, of which the three major components are:

- NAVY 311
- Navy Information Application Product Suite
- Enterprise Customer Relationship Management.

NAVY 311

The NAVY 311 service is at the core of the Navy's Distance Support capability and provides the Fleet forces with a single entry point to assist with problem resolution. The NAVY 311 service maintains an accurate global source of support network to provide Fleet assistance in:

- Ship systems: (e.g., hull, mechanical and electrical (HM&E) and weapons systems)
- Quality of life: (e.g., medical and chaplain care)
- Personnel: (e.g., career, manpower, training, etc.)
- Supply / logistics: (e.g., technical data, warranty service, ship maintenance scheduling, etc.).

NAVY 311 operates as a services-oriented call center, providing resolution to any question from the Fleet. The call center is staffed with a team of professionals having the requisite knowledge of the Navy's complex technical, logistical, and mechanical support needs. Additionally, the call center professionals have significant military and operational experience.

Navy Information Application Product Suite (NIAPS)

The primary obstacle to Internet access at sea is limited bandwidth, which is the quantity of data that can be transmitted during a fixed period of time. The Navy Information Application Product Suite (NIAPS) addresses this issue by hosting critical applications and data locally on internal shipboard

Hands Across the Water

An Electronic Technician (ET3) from the USS MAHAN (DDG 72) identifies two separate circuit card assembly (CCA) faults. The ship's force replaces the CCAs with onboard Maintenance Assistance Modules (MAMs), yet both CCAs continue to fail, and the ship's force is unable to identify the cause.

Via email, the ET3 requests support from GDSC, who documents the issue, records customer and problem data, and assigns a support request to Mid-Atlantic Regional Maintenance Center (MARMC) Detachment Naples, Italy.

With MARMC Det Naples' assistance, the ship's force of the USS MAHAN determines that the SA-2112 secure voice switch has a faulty power supply and orders a replacement unit.

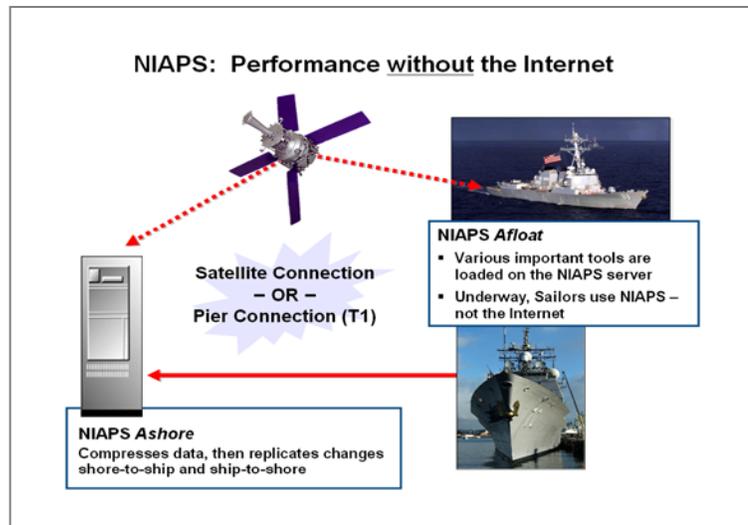
¹ CNO Memorandum on Distance Support dated 22 March 2007: Maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of shore support and facilitate shore infrastructure reduction through knowledge management, technology, organizational alignment, process standardization and optimal balance of centralization and decentralization.

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networks. NIAPS comprises over 40 applications and databases launched from a single Distance Support (DS) portal. NIAPS runs applications specifically tailored to individual afloat units for training, career management, maintenance, technical drawings, logistics, human resources, as well as morale and welfare support, all of which are produced by over 20 different Navy functional organizations. Keeping these applications operationally available is a daunting challenge that falls to a key individual on each ship, the NIAPS System Administrator (SYSAD).

NIAPS is important to the Fleet because it's faster and less expensive than external bandwidth and satellite time. Currently 232 platforms use NIAPS on both classified and unclassified networks.

NIAPS uses bandwidth more efficiently by "replicating" (i.e., exchanging) data between ship and shore servers when Internet connectivity is available. Thus, NIAPS enables Sailors to continue using applications in a disconnected environment.



Enterprise Customer Relationship Management (eCRM)

The enterprise CRM (eCRM) component of Distance Support is the backbone of NAVY 311, providing key applications, shared data, resolution tracking, and ad hoc support capabilities. The primary focus of the eCRM is the consolidation of all Navy support request data into a single, robust, enterprise system that can aggregate information and bring support visibility to key command personnel. Distance Support eCRM metrics allow all commands and sources of support participating in the Shared Data Environment (SDE) to gain insight into performance, volumetric, and functional areas associated with documented support requests.

Together, the eCRM and SDE yield a considerable base of episodic data (millions of records) from which Knowledge Management (KM) technologies can harvest decision-enabling information. In this way, the Navy DS approach is holistic; it captures and stores data from across the spectrum of the Defense Readiness Reporting System – Navy (DRRS-N) categories to identify and mitigate factors contributing to readiness shortfalls. The SDE integrates selective data from authoritative Navy sources so that a problem or issue is well defined. In total, DS KM initiatives are improving both the effectiveness and efficiency of shore support resources through a more analytical use of information.

The Sea Warrior Program (PMW 240) manages a complex portfolio of information technology (IT) systems to support Navy human resource management, criminal justice, Fleet support, afloat business applications, Navy and DoD portfolio management, DON administration, and joint aviation aircraft scheduling. The PMW 240 Program is part of the Navy Program Executive Office for Enterprise Information Systems (PEO EIS) which develops, acquires, fields, and sustains Enterprise Network, Business, and Fleet Support IT Systems for the warfighters of the Navy and Marine Corps.

For more information contact:

Public Affairs Office
E: PMW-240_PAO@navy.mil
T: (703) 604-0192



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