

Distance Support / NIAPS Newsletter



April, 2014

Message From the Navy's Distance Support Assistant Program Manager

Hello Shipmates, I am CDR Ray Acevedo, the Assistant Program Manager (APM) for Distance Support and Fleet Liaison assigned to the Sea Warrior Program Management Office within the Program Executive Office for Enterprise Information Systems (PEO EIS PMW 240).

Over the last two quarters we have worked, amidst challenging budgetary constraints, to keep Distance Support as stable and functional as possible for the Fleet. We are now well on our way in developing the next major release of NIAPS, NIAPS 3.0, currently scheduled for a 2015 Fleet release. Additionally, we also anticipate releasing two other minor-point releases (2.4.4 and 2.4.5) over the next year and a half that will serve to improve the NIAPS experience for the Sailors.

Some examples of new applications that are in the queue to join NIAPS in version 3.0 include Reliability Engineering Data Integration (REDI) and TDMIS Shipboard Library System (TSLs). While functionality to the user will remain largely similar in

the upcoming NIAPS 3.0 release, NIAPS System Administrators (SYSADMINS) can expect enhanced system management tools.

We are also well on our way in transitioning to consolidated data centers. This will reduce costs and also increase the reliability and availability of NIAPS and its suite of applications. That means less downtime and better connectivity for the Fleet.

In other good news, NAVY 311 is continuing to grow in its depth of support as more systems turn to NAVY 311 to provide their first line of help-desk support. NAVY 311 is the Sailor's single point of entry to access help desk support across the Navy. If you, or your family, have a non-tactical question, we'll get you an answer.

The target audience for this newsletter is COs, XOs, DHs, COMMOs, TRAINOs, ADMINOs/PERSOs, CCCs, and NIAPS SYSADMINS. Of course, please feel free to distribute to any in your organization who might find it useful. We look forward to serving the operational needs of our Fleet! We are here for you, Shipmates!

Contact Information:

APM: CDR Ray Acevedo
(703) 604-5236
rafael.a.acevedo@navy.mil

DAPM: Ms. Sarah Seymour
(407) 380-4803
sarah.seymour@navy.mil

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NAVY 311 Highlights

1. The Port Engineer from NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY BAHRAIN e-mailed NAVY 311 for assistance concerning 3 Patrol Craft (PCs). The customer reported that PC2 (USS Tempest), PC7 (USS Squall) and PC12 (USS Thunderbolt) arrived with CENTRIXS enclaves specific to Northern and Southern America and they do not function in 5th Fleet. The customer was looking to get in touch with the ISEA as PC7 and PC12 both have INSURV in September. The INSURV team would want to see these systems demonstrated unless we can get them removed. NAVY 311 routed the request to the TACNET Helpdesk. The TACNET Helpdesk provided instructions for properly configuring the systems so that they would operate in the 5th Fleet AOR. **Time to resolution: 87.93 hours** (Continued on Page 2)





NAVY 311 Highlights (continued)

2. An ET2 aboard USS GERMANTOWN (LSD 42) sent an e-mail to NAVY 311 concerning a problem with the monitor for the ship's Definity telephone system. The monitor, made by Lucent, no longer works. The ET2 could not locate the part number in FEDLOG and the manufacturer of the Definity telephone system had no information on the monitor. The monitor is customized for the Definity system and cannot be replaced by a generic computer monitor. NAVY 311 found the monitor's manufacturer who responded that these monitors are individually made according to the specs for the P/N and include a warranty. The manufacturer provided a cost quote for replacement of the monitor. **Time to resolution: 50.2 hours**

3. An IT1 stationed with the EXPEDITIONARY MED FACILITY KANDAHAR AFGHANISTAN sent an e-mail to NAVY 311 asking for help with TMIP-M. "I have 4 users who require TMIP and AHLTA access," he wrote. "Our TMIP administrator is on R & R so we have been instructed to submit requests to this help desk." NAVY 311 forwarded his request to the TMIP Help Desk SPAWARSCEN NORFOLK VA, where technicians arranged to contact the unit via DCO Connect and provide the necessary training in account creation. **Time to resolution: 144.68 hours**

Whether you're at sea, in port, on duty or liberty, NAVY 311 is available 24/7 via phone, e-mail, web, text, chat and more—and no topic is off limits.



- Telephone: 1-855-NAVY-311 (1-855-628-9311)
- DSN: 510-NAVY-311 (510-628-9311)
- E-mail: Navy311@navy.mil / Navy311@navy.smil.mil
- Web: www.Navy311.navy.mil or www.Navy311.navy.smil.mil
- PLAD: NAVY THREE ONE ONE NORFOLK VA
- Text: type "Navy311@navy.mil" into the "TO" line of text message
- Chat: via NAVY 311 website

NIAPS 3.0

The Distance Support/NIAPS Team has recently begun development of NIAPS 3.0. The currently deployed NIAPS 2.X faces multiple sustainment issues due to aging COTS (Commercial off the Shelf) software components. NIAPS 3.0 is a software refresh and not a complete redesign effort, although users will appreciate the upgrade for its improved usability, enhancements, security, and information assurance posture. This will give NIAPS 3.0 an expected lifetime of 7 years once introduced to the Fleet and will provide a stable framework for the future in support of Manpower, Personnel, Training, Education, Maintenance, Supply, Logistics, and various other software applications and content in support of the Fleet and its mission.

NIAPS 3.0 will upgrade the dated core framework, such as the operating system (OS), SQL, .NET, etc. The primary technology leap will be going from a 32-bit computing environment to a 64-bit computing environment utilizing Windows Server 2012 in conjunction with Microsoft SQL-2012.

Other updated items will be an enhanced DS_Update/Transmit. CHIT (Content Health Indicator Tool) will be replaced by CONFIGMON (Configuration Monitor). A new NIAPS home page will be used to access applications and content as SharePoint will not be available or supported on this version.

NIAPS 3.0 will be an overall improvement and is expected to operate in a very similar fashion to the previous version of NIAPS causing little to no disruption or learning curve to the normal end user of the product or particular applications. NIAPS SYSADMINs will need to reacquaint themselves with some of the newer user interfaces, features, and enhancements, and will be aided by CBT (computer based training) and the NIAPS Fleet Support Team. Any additional issues will be addressed via the standard format of requesting a trouble ticket via NAVY 311.

As mentioned earlier, NIAPS 3.0 is currently under development and the application owners are striving to integrate their applications into the new framework at a rapid pace to introduce to the Fleet by mid-2015. AIT installations on 64-bit hardware and CANES platforms will be conducted during normally scheduled availabilities starting mid-year 2015 and will continue forward until the Fleet has been upgraded.

In closing, we hope you are as excited as we are. The Distance Support/NIAPS Team expects this to be the best, most refined version of NIAPS delivered to the Fleet in support of the Sailor, enhancing your day-to-day job and making it less tedious by leveraging the latest in information technology.





NIAPS 2.4.4

The NIAPS 2.4.4 release will include the Retail Operations Manager (ROM3) web application. This will allow the ROM program office (NAVSUP) to replace the ROM2 systems and peripherals with updated hardware and software. NIAPS 2.4.4 has been through ISNS and CANES interoperability testing and will be fielded via a software push after the test reports are released. Each ship will be scheduled to receive the software push in late Spring after the NIAPS program office coordinates the push with the respective TYCOM. After a successful software push, the ROM3 team will visit each unit to update the various hardware pieces and activate the ROM3 web application.

NIAPS 2.4.5

NIAPS 2.4.5 is scheduled to include REDI, Transaction Online Processing System (TOPS) Afloat, EdgeService, TDMIS Shipboard Library System (TSLs), Fuels Manager Defense (FMD), a ROM3 update, a Food Service Management (FSM) update, a SKED application update, and a NavyCOOL update. Additionally, the CACP application will be in this release and is targeted to the DDG-1000 network.

The TOPS Afloat application will allow Sailors at sea to submit TOPS transactions which will then be queued up and sent ashore via NIAPS replication. EdgeService allows the NIAPS server to replicate NGA nautical chart data for use by afloat units. TSLs allows shipboard personnel to maintain and track their inventory of technical manuals. FMD will allow afloat units to track their fuel usage and synchronize reports with the shore systems. There are also functionality updates coming for ROM3 (released in NIAPS 2.4.4), FSM3, SKED, and the NavyCOOL website hosted on NIAPS is being updated with fresh content. Expect installations to begin in early FY15.

NIAPS Best Practices

1. NIAPS SYSADMINs should perform daily system checks as defined by policy.
2. Command should establish and monitor the *niaps@(hull#).navy.mil* distribution list.
3. Add NIAPS replication status to Eight O'clock Reports to ensure Command visibility of NIAPS status.
4. Understand that the Navy e-Learning (NeL) Project Director generates a weekly NeL report that documents the number of courses completed via NIAPS. The report, which documents monthly totals over the course of a fiscal year, includes every ship with NIAPS installed.

5. Verify your watchbill assigns an IT with NIAPS familiarity to each watch/duty section.
6. Designate Primary and Alternate NIAPS and NSIPS System Administrators and ensure proper training.
7. Ensure NIAPS Backup Checks are signed for on weekly 3M reports.
8. Use Navy 311 for issues that cannot be resolved by ship's force.

NIAPS 2.4 Computer Based Training

NIAPS 2.4 CBT is under development and will be online in NeL soon; it is an overview of how the NIAPS SYSADMIN can confidently manage the NIAPS system. Until the NIAPS 2.4 CBT is on NeL, NIAPS SYSADMINs should complete the following NeL course: "NIAPS 2.3 System Administrator Training" (NAVSEA-A-150-1800.2). This covers all the basics and will still show how to maintain the system and keep full functionality available to all NIAPS users.

Top NIAPS Issues & Troubleshooting

Replication issues are the most commonly encountered problems with NIAPS. NIAPS SYSADMINs will need to contact Navy 311 to help resolve the issue. To streamline troubleshooting, NIAPS SYSADMINs should have the answers to the following three questions ready:

1. Using Internet Explorer in NIAPS, can you connect to "<https://update.distancesupport.navy.mil>"? If you can't connect, what error do you get when you try to connect?
2. Can you connect to the XXX-YYY (i.e. DDG-101) remote site in the Tumbleweed Secure Transport application (found in the start menu)?
3. Open Iora publisher. Right click your outbound publication, and click "make new amendment." You'll have to click "Ok" and "Next" a couple times, to get the wizard to accept the defaults and progress. Does Iora Publisher make a new amendment successfully, or does it error out?

NIAPS uses its own unique Organizational Unit in Active Directory, and its own Group Policy. If the NIAPS Group Policy is changed or deleted, or if the NIAPS server account is moved within Activity Directory, users will lose connectivity to their applications. If ships perform a LAN refresh, the NIAPS Group Policy will need to be rebuilt. NIAPS SYSADMINs can put a ticket in with Navy 311 to request instructions for this action.





Computer Security Inspection and Compliance Program (CSICP) Update

The new CSICP schedule message has come out and your ship is on it. How do you get the NIAPS suite ready for the inspection? Here are some DOs and DON'Ts in preparing for the inspection:

- DON'T – Don't install unauthorized software. If you are unsure if an application is authorized, use the USFF Base-line Allowance Control (BAC) that identifies the approved software inventory for shipboard use.
- DON'T – For NIAPS SYSADMINS, don't use NIAPS as a workstation (i.e., e-mail, instant chat, web browsing). These activities introduce serious risks, especially by system administrators.
- DO – Be responsive to the Information Assurance team. We are here to help! ****The Information Assurance team will be contacting the ship at least one month prior to scheduled inspection. Please work with the specialist to ensure patches are up to date.****
- DO – Be sure your scans are REGULARLY uploaded into DISA's VRAM system. At the Program Management Office level, we can download those reports and determine if your NIAPS suite has any issues. The Information Assurance team regularly reviews these scans to ensure compliance.
- DO – NIAPS patches itself, so be sure your NIAPS suite is fully up to date by doing a manual DS_Update and restart weekly per the NIAPS System Administration Guide (SAG).
- DO – If your ship gets a notification that an upgrade is available for NIAPS, do it! These upgrades are tested and proven to make sure your system is stable, and the upgrades usually fix a security issue.
- DO – Ensure Backups are being conducted per the NIAPS SAG.
- DO – Reboot the NIAPS Server weekly.

NIAPS SYSADMIN Best Practices

Taking care of the NIAPS SYSADMIN daily duties is a short but very rewarding occurrence for your NIAPS system. Here is a

list of best practices for NIAPS SYSADMINS to keep the NIAPS suite of applications running smoothly:

- Inform shipboard stakeholders (TRAINO, CCC, ADMIN, etc.) of outages or delays in data replication that affect crew access to, or use of, Navy Career Tools and other NIAPS applications.
- In order to receive the latest updates to NIAPS, NIAPS SYSADMINS are encouraged to run the DS Update program once daily by double clicking on your desktop icon. The DS Update program synchronizes data on the shore and ship. The DS Update program is easy to use and functions much like the Windows Update application produced by Microsoft. This will enable you to download lower priority updates (Amendments) that are smaller in size when underway and keep a good view of what larger updates you need to concentrate on when you are hooked to a shore connection. If you see issues with your manual DS_Update, it will let you catch issues with the 6 daily automatic updates that run in the background for the higher priority updates.
- While you are observing the daily DS_Update, make a quick visual scan of your NIAPS system (legacy servers only). Look for dirty fan covers and check for the proper display of your status/warning lights. This could let you catch issues before they become catastrophic.
- Have a schedule setup to perform and verify the Daily, Weekly, Monthly, and Quarterly backups as laid out in the SAG. If you cannot locate your SAG, go to the below URL and burn the NIAPS 2.4 System Administrators Guide (**EE610-J2-SAG-010.pdf**) to a disk. `\\<NIAPS_Server>\Inbound_Data\Software_Updates\All_NIAPS\NIAPS_Training\System_Manuals\`
- Maintain a log of NIAPS issues and corrective actions to assist in future problem identification and troubleshooting efforts.
- Check for the installation of unapproved software or devices that may void the accreditation or increase the risk posture of the NIAPS system. (NETWARCOM 061140ZAUG09)
- Ensure NIAPS servers have sufficient free disk space on all drives.

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.

This newsletter is prepared by the PMW 240 Distance Support and Enterprise Change Management teams. The editorial content of this newsletter is edited and approved by the Public Affairs Office of the Sea Warrior Program.

For more information contact:

Corporate Operations Office

E: PMW-240_Operations@navy.mil

T: (703) 604-3585

www.seawarrior.navy.mil

