

Surface Force Standardizes Experience Thresholds for Watchstanders

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As part of the Surface Warfare Community's effort to best develop, assess, and sustain watchstander proficiency, Commander, Naval Surface Forces, Vice Adm. Brown signed the new Surface Warfare Watchstander Proficiency Requirements Instruction, Nov. 13.

The instruction establishes the minimum requirements for watchstanders to attain qualification and maintain proficiency in the roles of Tactical Action Officer (TAO), Officer of the Deck (OOD), Combat Information Center Watch Officer (CICWO), Engineering Officer of the Watch (EOOW), Junior Officer of the Deck (JOOD), Conning Officer (CONN), and Combat Systems Officer of the Watch (CSOOW).



170816-N-FP878-018 ROTA, Spain (Aug. 16, 2017) Cmdr. Timothy Moore, commanding officer of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Donald Cook (DDG 75), mans the bridge while the ship returns to Rota, Spain, for a scheduled maintenance period. Donald Cook is forward-deployed to Rota, Spain, conducting a patrol in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Theron J. Godbold/Released)

The guidance supports the Navy's objective to reinvigorate an assessment culture by providing ships' commanding officers with clear parameters to track watchstanding proficiency requirements for the stations identified.

181125-N-JI086-098 MEDITERRANEAN SEA (Nov. 25, 2018) Lt. TJ Goss stands watch in the combat information center aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Donald Cook (DDG 75), Nov. 25, 2018. Donald Cook, forward-deployed to Rota, Spain, is on its eighth patrol in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations in support of U.S. national security interests in Europe and Africa. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Ford Williams/Released)

This is a positive step toward consistently producing high quality watchstanders and represents the ongoing innovation and improvement required to continue to control the sea and own the fight.

130526-N-KB052-163 PHILIPPINE SEA (May 26, 2013) Lt. John Mantone uses an alidade in the pilot house of the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Shiloh (CG 67). Shiloh is assigned to Commander, Task Force 70 and is forward deployed to Yokosuka to support security and stability of the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class N. Ross Taylor/Released)

The instruction standardizes the path of accountability for maritime professionals across the Surface Fleet by defining the minimum watchstanding proficiency requirements onboard Commander, Naval Surface Forces (CNSF) ships after initial qualification process and establishes minimum requalification policies for qualified watchstanders to maintain and regain qualification after a lapse of proficiency.

Along with setting the time and periodicity requirements for each shipboard watchstation qualification and requalification, the instruction provides the required formal classroom courses for each qualification.

181201-N-UX013-1058 SUEZ CANAL (Dec. 1, 2018) Sailors aboard the Arleigh-Burke class guided-missile destroyer USS Jason Dunham (DDG 109) stand watch on the forecastle as the ship transits the Suez Canal. Jason Dunham is deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations in support of naval operations to ensure maritime stability and security in the Central Region, connecting the Mediterranean and the Pacific through the western Indian Ocean and three strategic choke points. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jonathan Clay/Released)

Building watchstander proficiency and maintaining high standards of performance is paramount to overall Surface Force readiness. The ability of watchstanders of all ranks and rates to perform as experienced watchstanders is a core skill of our profession. The new Surface Warfare Watchstander Proficiency Requirements Instruction, which is effective immediately, sets the foundation for maintaining the best, fastest, toughest and smartest Naval Surface Force.

Professional development of our Surface Warriors is a priority to drive toward a culture of excellence and deliver the Navy the Nation Needs. It is fully understood within the Surface Fleet that every commanding officer must prepare their ship, their crew and themselves for combat at anytime and anywhere.

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