LEADING THE UNDERSEA ENTERPRISE INTO THE FUTURE
Much has been written about the growing dependence on Special Operations Forces (SOF) and the unique capabilities we bring to the fight. While we will always excel in our core competencies—special reconnaissance (SRR), direct action (DA), counter terrorism (CT), guerrilla warfare, and Foreign Internal Defense/Security Force Assistance (FID/SFA)—prioritization of these competencies will change from day to day, year to year, to decade to decade, depending on what our nation needs at the time. Over the past ten years, we have been engaged in the DA mission set at levels SOF has not seen since the Vietnam War. However, steadily over this same time frame, we have moved back toward a FID/SFA environment. The DA mission gave our nation the space needed to execute a FID/SFA strategy and is enabling our partners in the fight to take on a lead. This was exactly the plan.

In this long-term, global fight we will not win by solely “shooting” our way to success. To enable success, our senior leaders correctly stress the need for a more persistent presence, building stronger relationships and bettering our understanding of not only the geographic terrain, but also the human terrain. These are the cornerstones of a successful FID/SFA strategy. We must evolve and apply what has been our legacy to our future; we must forge a path that will lead us to success. This is a tall order when so much is already asked of us; however, we must answer this challenge.

In this Ethos issue, the unclassified version of my Commander’s Guidance to NSW leadership and the Force. The intent is to give you and your families an idea of what I believe we are going and what I believe is important. Unfortunately, some aspects of NSW cannot be covered here because of classification requirements; those of you who log on to SRRP.net have access to the complete guidance. The future is unknown but as always, we will do what our country needs us to do. You can be sure that because of NSW’s character, courage, warrior ethos and problem solving determination, the nation will depend on NSW to do those things that are most difficult—HE MUST ALWAYS BE PREPARED TO DO THOSE THINGS THAT OTHERS CANNOT DO!

There is a terrific update on the realignment of our undersea capabilities in Hawaii. The missions that SEAL Delivery Vehicle Team One (SDVT-1) is doing are simply amazing; unfortunately, you won’t be able to read about that in this publication because of our classification. However, if you knew what they were doing, the feeling that would come to you immediately would be “PRIDE.”

Commander’s Guidance

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From both all-hands calls and spouse calls, there have been numerous questions about our foreign language program. For good information on the development of our program, see the two examples of where we are realigning and shifting to reinvest in communications to us in his published guidance for 2011, his VTC and All Hand calls with the NSW HQ and our components, the SOCOM/Navy Talks, and in the SOF posture statement he delivered to the Senate Armed Service Committee earlier this year. It is a terrific article that everyone in the NSW family should read.

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Lastly, our Family Support Program and its new initiatives are highlighted as well as the merging of two very essential non-profit support programs—the NSW Foundation and the Navy SEAL Warrior Fund. These two organizations are joined forces to become the Navy SEAL Foundation whose members are poised and ready to provide our community with an even more robust support system than before. To the Foundation—thank you for your generous and continued support.

The thing I like most about being a part of NSW is that I get to go to work with heroes every day! To each and every one of you, a most sincere “Thank You”!
As I look back on 38 years of service in the Naval Special Warfare and joint special operations communities, I am struck by my good fortune to have lived, worked and fought with such a high quality force. You are truly remarkable in your physical toughness, creativity, tenacity, spirit and courage.

As always, our real capability will depend on the quality of our people—descendants of Draper Kauffman and Phil Bucklew—frogmen are renowned for their innovativeness, agility and audacity. You have better training and better equipment than ever before, but mostly you have first-rate operators, supporters, leaders. They have done more than we could have ever expected, and deserve our continuing support for our next generation of surface and sub-surface craft.

The value of Special Operations Forces and specifically of Naval Special Warfare comes from our high level of skills and our non-traditional methods of applying them. The bedrock of our success is the quality of our people—descendants of Draper Kauffman and Phil Bucklew—frogmen are renowned for their innovativeness, agility and audacity.

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In late January, the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Adm. Gary Roughhead and Commander, U. S. Special Operations Command, Adm. Eric T. Olson, along with 54 other flag officers, met during the SOCOM/NAVY Talks to discuss current issues and critical strategy, identify and resolve interoperability issues, and ensure that Navy and SOF can build a better partnership in the future.

The main purpose of this meeting is to ensure that issues are elevated to the point where you have the senior officer in the Navy and the senior officer in special operations saying we need to sit down and figure out some big picture items,” said Cmde. Kent Van Horn, strategy and concepts for WARCOM. “They discuss issues that are important and need to be resolved.”

One of the many issues brought to the table was sea-based support to SOF. Leaders discussed potential requirements and equipment that would be needed once SOF are aboard a ship and how communication between the two organizations can be improved.

Leadership also discussed the undersea program and how purchasing commercial submersibles is difficult because most are constructed in other countries. The U.S. government is currently prohibited from buying foreign manufactured vessels. A possible solution of submitting waivers was forwarded to the Secretary of Defense, who ultimately will decide DoD’s options in developing its future SOF undersea mobility capability.

“If I take anything from these talks, it’s that these are big issues; these are the folks who want to go to Congress and change laws,” said Capt. Richard Sisk, NSW’s assistant chief of staff for plans, assessments and strategy. “These are the folks that want to change the direction of SOF and the Navy, and how they work together.”

% Months before the talks take place, groups representing both the CNO and SOCOM commander start compiling lists of topics to be discussed. Those lists are scrubbed to determine what items make their way into the leadership dialogue. Ultimately, Olson makes the final call on topics of discussion for NSW.

“The talks are not a place to air issues that we should be working out at the staff level,” said Sisk. “If it is preventing you from doing your job, meaning, giving the person in the field the capability to do what he needs to do to complete the mission; those are the types of issues worth bringing up.”

According to Sisk, Rear Adm. Edward Winters, commander, Naval Special Warfare Command, had the chance to tell the NSW story and brought along five operators who recently completed deployments to illustrate NSW concerns.

“I think this was a very successful way of presenting,” said Sisk. “It also allowed the flag level leadership to ask the operators about what has been going on and help educate them a bit about some of the issues.”

At the conclusion of the daylong talks, action items were assigned and deadlines set to be redressed at next year’s talks, which are already on the schedule for the spring of 2012. If you would like to see what items were discussed, they are available to SOF personnel on the NSW portal.
NSW OPERATORS WILL GET THE JOB DONE BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY, EVEN IF IT MEANS DIVING INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE DEEP BLUE SEA. HERE, THESE AMPHIBIOUS WARRIORS AND THE PEOPLE WHO STAND BEHIND THEM, WILL TAKE YOU ON A JOURNEY AND GIVE YOU A GLIMPSE OF THEIR LIFE ON THE JOB AND THE FUTURE OF NSW UNDERSEA COMMANDS.
The Relocation Timeline

The consolidation of SDV Teams ONE and TWO occurred as planned and on schedule. The NSWG-3 headquarters move to Hawaii is currently scheduled to be complete in 2013, however that is dependent on a FY13 Military Construction Corporation (MILCON) project. At this point the Group Headquarters move won’t be fully executed until FY14.

In the mean time, many of NSWG-3 billets will migrate from San Diego to Hawaii over the next several years. As service members rotate from Group THREE at their normal projected rotation date, their new billets will receive orders to Hawaii. In other words, the Group THREE move will happen over time. The NSWG-3 flag pole is expected to shift sometime in FY14.

The SDV school and other undersea related courses are run by the Naval Special Warfare Group 3 (NSWG-3) Logistics Support Unit (LOGSU-3), and the Naval Special Warfare Center Advanced Training Command’s (ATC) undersea training detachment will all be co-located in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

Future Platforms / ASDS vs JMMS

While it is unfortunate that the Advanced SEAL Delivery System (ASDS) was lost due to a battery fire, a new, lower-risk strategy is in place that incorporates a fleet of both wet- and dry submersibles. The budget previously allocated did not support a viable Joint Multi Mission Submersible (JMMS) program, which was basically a replacement for the ASDS capability. Fortunately, commercial industry has made progress in the development of dry submersibles. In fact, NSW has been using commercial logistics as a low-cost means to potentially reduce technical and financial risk until a next dry submersible is developed.

Instead of investing in a platform that requires cutting edge design, and a technically high-risk venture, WARCOM believes it makes more sense to develop a fleet of vehicles that industry can produce within a budget and on schedule that meets operational requirements. While some operational capabilities may be sacrificed in the near term, most of capabilities will be obtained and significantly increase our operational flexibility, while reducing both risk and cost.

Dry Combat Submersible – Mediums (slightly larger craft with greater endurance and payload). Obviously by having a multitude of platforms, you gain the flexibility to have platforms deployed in different theaters or on different host platforms at any given time.

SDV Teams provide a multitude of SOF missions. By shifting the expertise, resources, training, and infrastructures of these commands to Hawaii, NSW-G3 would be able to optimize resources and build a single “center of excellence.”

Establishing a command to handle supply, maintenance and other logistics necessary for future mission success:...
SEALs are called on for a variety of unconventional warfare missions, and although they are capable of reaching targets by completing long-range swims, sometimes mission urgency, distances involved, equipment weight factors or the need for stealth requires a different insertion method. In these situations, SEAL Delivery Vehicles (SDVs) are used. SDVs transport SEALs and their gear underwater to points near the shore, where SEALs then leave the vehicle and swim to the target area. SDVs are wet submersibles, which mean they transport SEALs and their gear in fully flooded compartments, exposing SEALs to the harsh undersea environment. SDVs are propelled by an all-electrical propulsion sub-system, powered by batteries. While in transit, SDVs can also provide life support elements for SEALs allowing them to plug into an onboard air source when required.

Understanding what an SDV does and how it operates is one thing, but actually conducting an SDV mission is another. Mental fortitude is not a buzzword in SDV operator circles; it is a way of life. Those who suffer from claustrophobia need not apply. Space is very limited within an SDV. Once the SDV is deployed, SDV operators may be submerged for many hours during the submerged transit. Mastering neutral buoyancy takes dozens of repeated checks. Neutral buoyancy is vital to keep depth control during the submerged transit. The SDV is on tether and is in the process of being winched down and secured to the cradle. The host platform is capable of conducting duel shelter operations. NDs watch as the SDV launches off the dry deck shelter mounted on the back of the USS Philadelphia. The dry deck shelter is used to house and launch the team’s SEAL Delivery Vehicles (SDV) while the sub is underway. The SDVs transport Navy SEALs from their submerged host submarine to targets while remaining underwater and undetected.

Prior to launch, an SDV crew will conduct final equipment and systems checks. Neutral buoyancy takes dozens of repeated checks. Neutral buoyancy is vital to keep depth control during the submerged transit. As the SDV reaches its target area, operators exit the SDV and swim the rest of the way to the target. Since SEALs leave the SDV to complete missions, they must be ready to accomplish any task. SDV SEALs are more than masters of the operational submersible world; they also maintain the tactical warfare fighting skills required on land.

After reaching the objective area and completing the mission, the mission is far from complete. The SDV pilot and navigator still face the daunting task of returning to sea and exfiltrating the area. In most cases, when the exfiltration phase of a mission commences, operators have been deprived of sleep and endured an already long, extremely cold and exhausting evolution. The men’s bodies are numb from hours of exposure to the ocean’s wrath. Fingers and hands retain minimal dexterity and feeling, while feet receive little circulation due to hours in a seated position and minimal movement. Some operators describe it as “temporary hell,” but in the same breath, they will tell you that they do nothing less than “whatever it takes” to complete the mission. To understand the mental toughness required, one must experience it. Suffice it to say, by the time the team is ready to return, each operator has developed a gut-burning desire to complete the mission.

When an SDV crew is well in the extraction window, they are overcome by mental back flips and smiles in anticipation of a successful mission’s end. Words seem inadequate to describe the jubilation an SDV operator experiences after a rendezvous with their extraction platform.

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Ask anyone at SEAL Delivery Vehicle Team ONE (SDVT-1) what they like about being there and you will hear the same answer – “It’s all about the challenge. Like other NSW operators, SEALS assigned to SDVT-1 conduct dangerous missions, long workups before deployments and do whatever it takes to carry out the commander’s intent. Being at the SDV team is very similar to being on a traditional team but with a particular focus on the core underwater skill. Being an SDV operator requires a unique level of maturity and trust required to take on missions in support of our nation’s highest defense priorities.

Prior to the end of the Cold War, the U.S. undersea mission was one of strategic deterrence. With new and emerging threats from rogue states and terrorist elements, the evolving face of war began to require something much different. In response, Naval Special Warfare sought improvements in its undersea capabilities to meet these emerging threats.

“SEAL Delivery Vehicle Team ONE has a very unique function within the Naval Special Warfare community,” said the executive officer (XO) of SDVT-1. “Our specific mission set focuses on executing global operations within the maritime environment. Much like our brothers within Naval Special Warfare Group’s ONE and TWO, we execute a core unit level training (ULT) period followed by several months of undersea mission specific profiles. The SDVT-1 SEALS are trained to meet the expectations placed on them with the highest levels of trust.

“The success of SDV missions depends on many factors, most importantly, training and preparation. One aspect of NSW’s undersea enterprise is that it requires maritime skills sets in addition to those of SEALS operating on the ground. Typically, SEALS will rotate through ULI in roughly six months and get qualified in a variety of combat skills. Previously, if they opted for a stint at an SDV team they were required to get trained and qualified in very different skill sets. The feeling of many operators was, “Why go to an SDV team? I want to remain competitive and keep myself qualified.”

Now, SEALS going to SDVT-1 have similar training requirements seen throughout NSW. It is expected that all SEALS will excel within the core skills in addition to the unique capabilities associated with working out of an SDV. Environmental conditions during missions and training remain very challenging; however, state-of-the-art equipment used today has vastly improved underwater conditions for operators.

“Even though we have made great improvements in gear and training, there are still very physically and mentally challenging times that are associated with SDV training and operations,” said the XO. “The command is gratified at the commitment of these guys every single day.”

“You can feel like you’re going from hypoxic to hyperthermic 10 times in a night,” said an SO1 who is a waterside trainer with TRADET-3. “From freezing in the water to baking in a dry suit, you’ve got to be tough to manage it.”

Each platoon is assigned four maintenance technicians who are responsible for the performance of the craft. The four technicians make up the support team which is critical to maintaining all aspects of the SDV and ensuring mission success every time. They are charged with the pivotal role of ensuring the SDV is prepared and the vehicle launches and returns, without issue. “Our technicians take great pride in making sure the SEALS get back safe. They know that their attention to detail determines if a mission is completed safely.”

Regardless of how or why SEALS get stationed at SDV Team ONE, they stay for the unique challenge.

“I’m staying because the caliber of people I work with every day is unbelievable,” said SO1. “I take comfort in knowing that the guys I go out with will do what it takes to overcome any challenges we may encounter. It’s hard and it’s rewarding.”

MC1 Andre Mitchell

The CHALLENGES OF SDV OPERATORS

They come from Mississippi from more than 55 partner nations. It’s a unique student body comprised of international students, Sailors from various militaries, military leaders, and the primary point of contact for the international military students undergoing courses at the U.S. military installations. They are still very physically and mentally challenging times that are immeasurable,” Melara said. “Instead of having to go to the United Nations in New York, the U.N. comes to my office every day.”

“The knowledge I learn from an array of cultures and countries is invaluable,” said the executive officer of SDVT-1. “Our specific mission set focuses on identifying issues and providing solutions.”

Melara feels the IMSO staff has one of the most challenging and rewarding jobs in the military. The IMSO is responsible for the performance of the craft. The four technicians are responsible for the performance of the craft. The four technicians make up the support team which is critical to maintaining all aspects of the SDV and ensuring mission success every time. They are charged with the pivotal role of ensuring the SDV is prepared and the vehicle launches and returns, without issue. “Our technicians take great pride in making sure the SEALS get back safe. They know that their attention to detail determines if a mission is completed safely.”

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Extension a Welcoming Hand

International Military Student Officer, Francisco Melara, is recognized for his work with foreign military students

They come to Mississippi from more than 55 partner nations. It’s a unique student body comprised of international students, Sailors from various militaries, military leaders, and the primary point of contact for the international military students undergoing courses at the U.S. military installations. Melara was selected by NAVSCIATTS to serve as the first International Military Student Officer (IMO) in 2006.

“FRANCISCO MELARA, NAVSCIATTS international military student officer (IMO), is one of those staff members whose tireless commitment to the task at hand is appreciated. He maintains contact with visiting international students from the moment they arrive, until the day he sees them off on their journey home. Melara’s ability to effectively explain the rules of student life, help students adjust to the American culture and deal with issues that come up during their training has earned him recognition as the Navy’s IMO of the Year.”

Francisco Melara, 2010 IMO of the Year award recipient, talks with a group of foreign students and other guests during a recent graduation event at NAVSCIATTS.

They are called upon to accomplish tasks unlike any others in the military. The IMO serves as host, administrator, choreographer and diplomat, as well as the official U.S. government representative and the primary point of contact for the international military students undergoing courses at U.S. military installations.

“Such contributions are invaluable to the success of each new training cycle and with as many as 500 students each year, this requires an incredible amount of individual effort and attention to detail,” said Cmdr. Bill Mahoney, NAVSCIATTS commanding officer.

Melara agrees and understands that value.

“As an IMO, I must be prepared to put in long hours and be ready to immediately and effectively react to any emergency or other situation as it happens, no matter what time of day or night it is,” he said.

Melara has a long list of duties and responsibilities, all equally important to facilitate a student’s needs. He must coordinate all incoming requests from U.S. military liaison officers and provide solutions needed to execute logistical support as needed. He routinely coordinates housing, medical and financial services as part of his daily activities.

In addition, Melara also provides operational awareness briefings and cross-communication resources to training teams and other instructors assigned to NAVSCIATTS to brief the students.

Melara is also responsible for ensuring that each student attending a course at NAVSCIATTS has the opportunity to participate in the Field Studies Program (FSP), the objective of which is to assist students in acquiring an understanding of U.S. society, institutions and goals, in conjunction with their training experiences.

“The cultural experiences that the students have in their interaction with the staff and through FSP involve some of the most important work we do,” he said. “Ultimately, these are experiences and memories of America that will last a lifetime.”

Francisco Melara, 2010 IMO of the Year award recipient, talks with a group of foreign students and other guests during a recent graduation event at NAVSCIATTS.

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Lack of Cultural Expertise: Language Skills: An Obstacle for Success Then and Now

- THEN AND NOW - although challenges in Iraq and Afghanistan have certainly brought the importance of language and cultural competency to the forefront, the lack of service member proficiency in critically needed foreign languages is not a new problem. In fact, in World War II, the U.S found itself hamstrung by the lack of Japanese, Italian and German speakers. The Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Armed Services Committee used two vivid examples at its first hearing describing the contrasting World War II experiences of Sen. Daniel Inouye of Hawaii and Pfc. Guy Gabaldon. These incidents dramatically demonstrate how foreign language skills or lack thereof can impact ground force operations. Gabaldon, with some knowledge of the Japanese language, was able to single-handedly persuade more than 1,500 Japanese soldiers to surrender in Saipan. On the other hand, Inouye’s inability to speak or understand German, led to tragedy when he killed a German soldier who appeared to be reaching for a weapon, only later to learn the soldier was reaching inside his coat for photos of his family. Inouye recalled that experience and said it haunts him to this day.

Transformation Roadmap

In March 2009, Adm. Eric Olson, commander, USSOCOM mandated a dramatic increase in SOF language, regional expertise, and cultural awareness (LREC). The intent of his directive is clear. SOF must “maintain a basic level of linguistic ability appropriate for a globally employed force, while achieving a high-level of skill by a relatively small number of people in language-specific to regions of current and certain future employment,” Olson said. Since issuing this order, a new section of training has been added to NSW training pipelines of SEAL and SWCC Qualification Training (SOF/CQT), adding to an operator’s diverse skill set.

“The complexity of today’s and tomorrow’s strategic environments requires that our (SOF) operators maintain not only the highest levels of war fighting expertise, but also cultural knowledge and diplomacy skills,” Olson said in a posture statement to the House Armed Services Committee. “We are developing 3-D operators, members of a multi-dimensional force prepared to lay the groundwork in the myriad diplomatic, development, and defense activities that contribute to our Government’s pursuit of our vital national interest.”

On SWCC, the program currently supports the more than 12,000 SOF and SOF support personnel deployed in more than 75 countries across the globe. It is critical that SWC deployers can effectively communicate with partner forces and local populations with cultural sensitivity, rather than relying solely on interpreters, whose effectiveness depends on many things including English fluency, intellectual intelligence, technical ability, reliability and loyalty.

“You’re trusting them, even when you’re downrange. It’s the only way we’re getting anything done,” said an operational SEAL, adding that trust critical when relying on interpreters with no in-house language skill. “If he’s telling the truth, you’re good to go. But if he is not, you would not know until it is too late.”

To build its own language capability, NSW is working proactively to expand language and cultural skills across the force. A concentrated 12-week language course for new operators is being added to the SOF and CQT training cycles and veteran operators of the SEAL and SWCC community will be sent to rigorous language and cultural training through universities on each coast.

The goal of the in-house training class is to get operators communicating at a 1/1 level of proficiency. This is the baseline of language capability, where an operator will be able to speak and listen in very simple terms. In more difficult dialects like Arabic, Farsi and Chinese, speaking proficiency may only reach a “zero plus” ranking. In such cases, operators are asked questions or make statements with reasonable accuracy but only with memorized words or formulas. Easier to learn languages like Spanish, French and Tagalog may yield a “zero plus” level, meaning the speaker possesses an elementary speaking proficiency. They conduct themselves in a polite manner, are able to use language alone and ask questions for simple topics within a limited level of experience and are able to understand basic questions and speak back at a slower speed or repetition to aid in understanding. The NSW program emphasizes practical speech and in an operational context; it is an element to developing effective leadership and command.

“This is what we would like to call a cultural change within the force,” said Dr. Carl Czech, force education/LREC officer. “The requirement for having a language skill-set is not just as important as having a sniper ability.”

After the 12-week language course, NSW Advanced Training Command graduates report to their permanent commands. This temporary duty effectively lengthens the basic training pipeline, but has minimum or no impact on Inter-Deployment Training Cycles (IDTC).

“LREC will help us enhance our operational effectiveness for regional expertise, but it is important for SEALs and SWCC not to just understand or have a degree of fluency, but apply it at the battlefield,” said Cmdr. Alexander Mackenzie, commanding officer of Support Activity 1. “This is what we would like to call a cultural change within the force.”

“The hardest part of the this transition to language training is not going to be the initial training, but it is going to be customizing the courses to fit and ensuring that the operator is sustaining the skill set once the course is complete,” Czech said. “We are putting this program into the classroom. We are putting it on the sensors and instructors. We need everyone across the force to recognize the value of it.”

“Operators attaining proficiency in languages are eligible for additional pay benefits as incentive,” Czech said. “Although bonuses from $50 to $1,500 may be available, the real payoff is in missions accomplished.”

The courses were language intensive, but the insight into the cultural aspects of the Middle Eastern way of life, thinking and beliefs was invaluable,” said Lt. j.g. Christopher Sanchez of Support Activity 1. “I really enjoyed the class because it was one-on-one for three-months and during the fourth month, two other guys joined me. The course was a military-outlined class which focused on the colloquial aspect, for instance, what it would be like on the street and not on the reading and writing aspect of it.”

A West Coast-based SEAL officer recently completed an Arabic language and cultural course off-site and said the training will be a great asset for him and his team during upcoming deployments.

“The course was language intensive, but the insight into the cultural aspects of the Middle Eastern was invaluable,” said Lt. j.g. Carl Czech.

Although extra pay is motivation to maintain additional skill sets like language, many people in the community believe that strong language and cultural knowledge could contribute to saving the lives of SOF and SOF personnel.

“Operators attaining proficiency in languages are eligible for additional pay benefits as incentive,” Czech said. “Although bonuses from $50 to $1,500 may be available, the real payoff is in missions well accomplished.”

“I think one of the primary motivators for the SEAL-SWCC guys is to be able to know the language rather than being chosen for them,” added Sanchez. “I think it makes learning the language easier and allows the guys to have a sense of ownership of it.”

NSW continues its work to develop a robust, competent and adaptive language and cultural understanding course of study for the Force, especially at the tactical level, to remain at the forefront of special operations and fill gaps left by lack of formal training.
Commander’s Guidance

After ten years of war, NSW is approaching a transition point—tactically, operationally and strategically. Today’s environment is vastly different from what we faced a decade ago, and tomorrow’s environment will certainly change as significantly. We are an extremely agile and adaptable force. As evidenced by our storied past, we look ahead and adapt quickly in order to meet challenges to our nation’s security. To remain relevant, the Force must understand and adapt to the future operational environment and be prepared to undertake tasks that others cannot—the hardest jobs in the most difficult and ambiguous environments, nuanced tasks in uncertain geopolitical situations, and strategically important, national-level missions.

Our warrior ethos and combat skills are coded into the DNA of our Force; while these among NSW’s greatest strengths, as a force we must not grow complacent by relying solely on our tactical prowess. In fact, while these are among NSW’s greatest strengths, as a force we must not grow complacent by relying solely on our tactical prowess. In fact, while we are unarguably winning the tactical fight, we must strive to get even better.

Our nature is self-criticism: Are the tactics we’re applying against the current enemy commensurate with those needed to fight a professional and technologically advanced military or terrorist organization? We have to be prepared to fight tomorrow’s enemy at the same time we are executing against today’s. It’s been said long ago, “We do not rise to the level of our expectations. We fail to the level of our training.” (Archilochus—7th century BC Greek writer and warrior.) Some things don’t change, and what was true then is true now.

The global strategic environment is dynamic, increasingly challenging and, therefore, well-suited for the capabilities and adaptability of NSW.

To meet these challenges, NSW developed four strategic pillars: (1) Win the fight in Iraq and Afghanistan, (2) Prevent and deter future conflict, (3) Prepare for future conflict, and (4) Evolve and sustain the Force. These pillars are consistent with our National Defense Strategy and U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) guidance; it is imperative NSW strategic planning supports and upholds each.

We must recognize the unique maritime and land capabilities SEALS, Special Warfare Combatant- Craft (SWCC) Crewmen, and supporting personnel possess, identify capabilities and capacities that must be developed and expanded, and postulate where and how these capabilities will most likely be used. This Commander’s Guidance charts that course.

Win the Fight in Iraq and Afghanistan

During 2011, we will dramatically downsize our efforts in Iraq. We have enabled success through training and partnering with our Iraqi counterparts. We will build upon this successful strategy as we shift the majority of our focus and efforts to Afghanistan. Our drawdown in Iraq will be offset by the increase in forces we deploy to Afghanistan. Afghanistan is a different campaign strategy and regional environment—one where we will see more population engagement and a rougher terrain—than we had in Iraq. To succeed, we will need to build upon our training, our operational mindset and our support structure. So far, we have performed exceedingly well in this environment, and we will continue to do so.

Prevent and Deter Future Conflict

As the majority of our Force will soon be committed in Afghanistan, we must continue to anticipate contingency operations in other regions—particularly in today’s rapidly changing world where stability is being tested on a daily basis. Our experience throughout our history has shown that we must influence and shape future environments to prevent future conflict. We cannot do this alone. Aiding a partner nation in increasing its ability to bring security to its territory and region is our best means to prevent large-scale crises that may require a large U.S. intervention. To do so will require NSW to combine our efforts with other SOF organizations, General Purpose Forces, U.S. interagency elements and foreign counterparts to implement a “whole of government” approach.

Our leadership has directed SOF to engage in the long-term, unseen struggles around the world. With the execution of NSW-21, the relevance of an entire SEAL Team has increased dramatically as the “NSW Teams” became engaged in operations. However, we lost much of our theater/ regional expertise when the geographic priorities of each NSW Squadron were changed to support the increased global requirements placed on the squadrons. This theater/ regional expertise must be rebuilt—it is vital in all our mission sets. Whether it is the Direct Action (DA) mission or the Foreign Internal Defense / Security Force Assistance (FID/SFA) mission, Language, Regional Expertise, Cultural (LREC) expertise will be essential to mission success.

Additionally, the long-term, persistent engagement strategy, using repeat deployments to the same locations is the most critical element to sustain our Force with all the pressures that they deal with—at work and at home. Two questions that I deal with every day: How do I evolve the Force during the next five years to increase the numbers of SEALs and the systems they need to accomplish their missions. We are expanding the Force during the next five years to increase the numbers of SEALs and combat support and combat service support personnel to help decrease the strain on all our people and provide enabling technical capabilities to support our missions.

Prepare for Future Conflict

Our persistent engagement, working with our partners around the world, will mitigate the potential for conflict. However, history tells us that conflict will persist and rise again in the future. Even after operations in Iraq and Afghanistan end, our Nation has many potential—and actual—adversaries who are conspiring to enrobe our power, attack our values and way of life, and deny the US and its leader for freedom. We will prepare for future conflict in a variety of scenarios and contingencies.

The turmoil in North Africa and the Middle East is an example of how difficult it is to forecast when or where crises will arise. If we stay forward, engaged, knowledgeable, and combat-ready, we will be better prepared and ready to fight.

We are developing now the capabilities we will need in the future. We are modernizing our equipment and upgrading our critical surface and underwater capabilities. We will be able to provide tailored Find, Fix, Exploit and Analyze (F2EA) support to our operations in politically and culturally sensitive environments. These activities will build upon our core expertise as special operations warriors and facilitate our continued ability to be the Nation’s “global scouts.”

Sustain and Evolve the Force

The demand signal for NSW and other SOF operators and support personnel continues to outpace our growth. I do not expect this to change anytime soon. Two questions that I deal with every day: How do I evolve the forces to be relevant in countering tomorrow’s challenges? And, how do I sustain our Force with all the pressures that they deal with—at work and at home? We must develop our partner networks (joint, combined and Interagency), seek and maintain pervasive regional access and, through strong relationships, pressure violent extremists and in some cases, criminals, across geography by working to set the conditions required for partner-nation security forces to defeat violent extremist organizations and render their networks ineffective in influencing the populace. As Gen. Stanley McChrystal often states, “IT TAKES A NETWORK TO DEFEAT A NETWORK.”

To this end, we are establishing a new major command, Naval Special Warfare Group Ten (NSWG-10). It will provide focused leadership and direction for our Support Activity Squadrons and our Mission Support Center. NSWG-10 will improve NSW’s capability to provide tailored First Fix, First Fight (PFEA) support that the NSWRONs have become so reliant upon, as well as specialized requirements for other joint, interagency, and combined elements. NSWG-10 will lead the way in persistent engagement.

Our strategy cannot be executed without focused support for our warriors and their families. We expect greatness of our warriors, but can do so only when a foundation of information, accessibility, networking and empowerment is available to the entire NSW family. We will help our families deal with challenges arising from our unique, warrior lifestyle, and maintain responsive family support programs. We will stay committed to family resiliency and helping our families prevail on the home front … this is an imperative that directly impacts mission accomplishment.

Today’s SOF is better funded and equipped than ever before. This will not change. However, the demands on our forces are as high as they have ever been. We have a long list of legacy missions and capabilities that are obsolete, with low or no demand or relevancy now or going forward. We will continue to equip the Force for success while being good stewards of taxpayers’ money.

“OUR DRAWDOWN IN IRAQ WILL BE OFFSET BY THE INCREASE IN FORCES WE DEPLOY TO AFGHANISTAN ... WE WILL SEE MORE POPULATION ENGAGEMENT AND A ROUGHER TERRAIN.”

To meet the challenges we face, now and in the future, we must continue to evolve the Force. We must understand operating environments that are different in geography, history and culture, politics and threats. We must elevate the importance of strategy development and strategic planning to shape and prepare for uncertain operational and fiscal environments. To help in developing our future direction, we must understand global trends and assess our future operational requirements centering on NSW’s core competencies and must continue to remain as the best of the best in NSW—this cannot be overemphasized. NSW’s Center for SEAL and SWCC is currently focused on identifying key characteristics that ensure success in the people we recruit for the future. At the same time, our training pipeline is better than it has ever been and it will continue to improve. It must meet today and tomorrow’s sophisticated and deadly threats. NSW personnel must have political, cultural understanding, a problem-solving mindset and a warrior ethos. We will evolve the Force through continuous training, expanded education opportunities, and learning from real-world experience. We must continue to emphasize strategic human resources and expand education, mentorship and leadership development throughout the Force. We will build strong partnerships and integrate our forces more seamlessly to build joint, combined, interagency teams.

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Our enemies continue to adapt and will become more deadly than those we face today. Indirect approaches not only help prevent and deter but also prepare us for future threats. NSW will undertake the following specific actions to meet and counter this threat:

- **Training and Education**
  - Develop the Force and build the Network to defeat the enemy's network: Indirect approaches not only help prevent and deter but also prepare us for future threats. NSW will undertake the following specific actions to meet and counter this threat:
    - **NSW-unique, undersea, strategic capabilities.**
    - **NSW must continue to shape and influence operating environments through both kinetic and non-kinetic expertise.**
    - **NSW will maintain its Direct Action and Special Reconnaissance (SR) prowess while at the same time, increase its capacity to conduct FID, SFA, and Unconventional Warfare (UW).**
    - **NSW must continue to shape and influence operating environments through both kinetic and non-kinetic expertise.**
    - **NSW will maintain its Direct Action and Special Reconnaissance (SR) prowess while at the same time, increase its capacity to conduct FID, SFA, and Unconventional Warfare (UW).**

**In Closing ...**

NSW must continue to shape and influence operating environments through both kinetic and non-kinetic expertise. NSW will maintain its Direct Action and Special Reconnaissance (SR) prowess while at the same time, increase its capacity to conduct FID, SFA, and Unconventional Warfare (UW). We must always remain the PREMIER MARITIME SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCE, ready to transit and fight on the planet's most unforgiving environment, the sea – NO ONE ELSE CAN DO THIS.

Persistent operations and activities conducted by disaggregated forces will become the norm. Those disaggregated forces may include only NSW personnel but will just as often be made up of a joint, combined, interagency team. We must be prepared to lead those teams when appropriate. Increasingly, operations will be by, with, and through foreign and U.S. partners.

The mere mention of the word “sniper” conjures up images of a stealthy, assassin-like lone gunman who moves about like a shadow, undetected by his enemy prey. You’ve seen it in war movies; when the moment is just right and a target is framed nicely in the cross hairs of his weapon ... click. A silent and deadly kill shot is delivered on target, a key enemy soldier goes down and his death has the adversary squad reeling in fear and uncertainty. Like clockwork, a force multiplying sniper with the right training, tools and tact gets the job done under the most daunting and extraordinary of circumstances.

**Rear Adm. Edward G. Winters**

NYM Students train at the Naval remote training facility in Niland, Calif., concentrating on tactics, mission planning, facilitation and demolition.
Michael Sandino, an Iraq war veteran and sniper, if he thought he was a killer or assassin, he would scotch the idea. His efforts are focused on the teammates’ lives, not on those of enemies that he takes. The mission precedes all, including his identity. Sandino is an alias used by one West-Coast based SEAL team sniper to protect his identity and future missions. At the same time the alias allows him and reinforcing techniques to minimize the human stress response and to optimize their mindset and ultimately, their performance. Some of these mental training techniques entail focus and concentration, visualization, breathing and heart rate control, compartmentalization and emotional control.

Mental management also includes emotional control, which is paramount in suppressing Buck Fever, or the nervous excitement felt by an inexperienced hunter as he approaches his game. ‘What we do is give the guy so many scenarios, that by the time it becomes real, his body doesn’t know the difference between the thousand hours he spends in training, to this one second in time where he actually pulls the trigger on a live target,” Shea said. “So with more training and more experience, the Buck Fever decreases.”

Sniper training also demands versatility. SEAL snipers learn a great deal about technology and must be trained to expertly use different weapons systems. “We have a different feel for what we want our snipers to do,” Shea says. “The Army course is a two gun course, the Marine Corps course is a one gun course. But we have a four gun course. The other service courses are eight weeks long. Our courses are 10 weeks long, to incorporate the different tactics that we’re trying to teach, plus the number of gun systems that they have to learn. They have to meet the Special Forces common qualification standards, and then exceed it, if you will, to get the guys up to a level where we want them.”

Once a sniper meets his qualification standards and passes all of his courses, he can receive more training from NSW Group 1 Training Detachment (TRADET), where advanced training in technology, land and urban warfare are available. “We’re a pretty dynamic cell,” said Chief Special Warfare Operator James Byrne, leading chief petty officer of NSW Group 1 TRADET sniper cell. “We tailor the training to the guys who are coming to TRADET.”

Byrne says that TRADET’s sniper cell also augments other TRADET departments, such as the land warfare department, by facilitating training scenarios that will help further enhance the SEAL sniper’s skills. “While a sniper’s skill set is vast, the one proficiency he has to take with him and apply to his everyday life is discipline. In the book “On Killing,” a study of techniques the military uses to overcome the powerfull excitement felt to kill and how killing affects soldiers, Lt. Col. Dave Grossman stated that no matter what, a sniper must always maintain his discipline, even while he’s at peace and there is no war. Sandino agrees with Grossman’s statement and recalls how he maintained vigilance and discipline after a monumental event in his operational career - the day he killed his first bad guy. “The first kill I had was actually on a machine gun, he reflected. “That day I continued to work and accomplish the dismantling of an insurgent network - the drive to take those guys down remained the same without having a significant effect on my self-discipline or focus.”

Self-discipline, mental management and training scenarios are the key to keep snipers like Sandino alive and have helped send bad guys to their graves. In recent years, the snipers has become revered as one of the most valuable battlefield specialists – and for good reason. Sandino and his peers are expert marksmen, intellectual, resourceful, patient and they practice common sense. The sniper is a master of his craft – both in training and on the field of battle, where his ability to make decisions must be quick and exact. His mental toughness and maturity help him manage the psychological toll associated with delivering effective killing. With growing concern from increased air strike civilian casualties in southern Afghanistan, snipers are playing an increasingly critical role there. Weighing collateral damage caused by air strikes and the cost-effectiveness of sniping, the stock of men like Sandino is on the rise.

MC2 Shanta Montiel

ETHOS
Keeping NSW Talking

Communication is the communal bond that holds together nations, corporations, families and military organizations. Communication technologies in the 21st century have yielded a host of tools and mediums for personal and professional interaction. Desktop publishing, e-mail, video teleconferencing, multimedia and Internet technologies, including the social media craze, have changed our business administration and family relationships, as well as personal and professional work habits. The world we live in is a vast landscape of evolving communication tools with a system of behind-the-scenes networks, consultants, helpdesk and technicians that are often forgotten until there’s a glitch in one of those systems.

Naval Special Warfare operators also benefit from advancing communication technologies used to transmit vital information on the battlefield and communicate with commanders in the near and families at home. Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) are used over the skies of Afghanistan to take surveillance photos and video. Internet connectivity and e-mail still reign as the method for sending memos to staff and letters home from remote locations, and radios are crucial communication tools used to maintain security on convoy and coordination between SEAL teams. For example, a sniper team on a photo image capture (PIC) mission takes digital photos of suspected insurgents. A member of the team transmits that image back to the Tactical Operations Center (TOC) for interpretation by intelligence analysts, who determine that the photo reveals more than 200 pounds, is set up first.

“Everything we use to communicate through the Internet is run by this system and they want it up as quickly as possible,” said Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Trista Ramsey. “We either have to set it up from scratch or we have to take whatever system they have out there and transfer it to a new system.” According to Ramsey, an MCT troop of approximately 20 SEALs will deploy together, but they are often distributed to support forces in different locations. On Ramsey’s first deployment supporting SEAL Team 3 in Iraq, she was assigned to the largest operational unit with five other MCT members. Other members deployed from MCT were distributed to different, smaller locations where they were working independently or with one other member of MCT. With Ramsey and five others working shifts 12 hours, they took only five days to get the main communication system fully operational and two weeks for all the communications to be up and functioning. While the Internet is still the reigning champion of electronic communication, it is only one portion of the responsibilities, capabilities and equipment the MCT inherits on the battlefield.

“Keeping NSW Talking” by IT2 Trista Ramsey

“MCT members assigned to the task unit location, or central control center, may inherit large systems from Army and Marine Corps teams. Each system is different, but thanks to technical expertise, MCTs are instructed to train quickly on how to troubleshoot and fix these systems. An MCT member assigned to a detachment, or smaller unit, may not inherit the large systems from other forces, but are often responsible for the radios and other communication equipment specific to respective units.

Thanks to technology tailored to supporting SOF missions and new equipment incorporated as quickly as communication methods evolve, the training pipeline to MCT is a continuous effort and constantly growing. MCT technicians are not only responsible for keeping up with new technology, they also maintain the rest of the communication systems used and needed for a task unit.

“We get as much training as possible before we deploy, but it’s almost impossible to learn about all of it,” says Ramsey. “We learn a lot of the equipment on the job. You can train on the equipment here, but it’s not until you are on the battlefield in a real life situation that you learn everything.”

“If it has a communication flavor to it, from a radio to a computer asset, then we, being who we are, become the proxy owner,” said Ramirez. “We quickly get smart on how to get technical support to it and how to troubleshoot it and get it back online. Out in the field it becomes quite challenging.”

MCTs are primarily comprised of electronic technicians and information systems technicians who dictate responsibilities and expertise are expected to overlap through training and on the job experiences. Deploying team members are divided into troops, similar to arrangements found in SEAL teams, which is why they are temporarily assigned for the duration of their unit level training (ULL) and deployment.

After returning from a deployment, the command does its best to keep teams intact and continuity in place.

“We try to keep those SEALs in the troops together so they can get ready for their next deployment and still be cohesive,” said Senior Chief Information Systems Technician David Ross, MCT 1’s senior enlisted leader. Since 1977, NSW has employed a small group of enlisted communicators to deploy with operators, but the demand has increased since 2001. In 2007, the transition and expansion of these small teams extended to their own commands, where they work directly for the NSW departments of Groups 1 and 2.

Although a small group within the modest numbers of the NSW command, members of MCT know and see the large impact they make on NSW operations.

“While deployed, we really get to see how much we impact the teams and how much of an asset we really are,” said Ramsey. “They really rely on us for communications, whether it is networking, e-mail, Internet or radios in a convoy. On deployment we get to see how our job is so important to the overall asset of NSW.”

“Keeping NSW Talking” by MC2 Dominique Lasco

“I often rely on us for communications, whether it is networking, e-mail, or radios in a convoy.”

Photo by MC2 Dominique Lasco

IT2 Jennifer Turnbull conducts a communications check in the Naval Special Warfare Operations Center (NSWOC) while at the communications course held at Camp Moreno.
You may have heard people use the phrase “eagle eye,” referring to somebody who sees well and for good reason - eagles have exceptional eyesight. An eagle’s eye is almost as large as a human’s, but its sharpness is at least four times that of a person with perfect vision. The eagle can identify its prey moving from almost a mile away, meaning an eagle flying at an altitude of 1,000 feet over open country could spot a rabbit over an area of almost three square miles from a fixed position.

Like its feathered namesake, NSW’s state-of-the art Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) ScanEagle can silently scour the skies over Afghanistan for nearly 20 hours at a time, providing operators on the ground with real-time intelligence imagery. ScanEagle on the ground with real-time imagery. ScanEagle currently employs an infrared (IR) camera, the E6000, which produces a very hazy image of operations after dark. The muddied nighttime images it produces make it difficult to differentiate a car from a building, requiring the ScanEagle to fly at riskier, lower altitudes to capture usable imagery. According to ScanEagle manufacturer Insitu’s website, once the E6000 is switched out and the after-dark version is installed, it will provide pictures of the same quality as ScanEagle’s electro-optic daylight imagery.

“We have a greater capability in the battlefield,” said Chief Aviation Structural Mechanic Travis Bramwell, operations leading chief petty officer, Naval Special Warfare Support Activity 1 (SUPACT 1). While improved capabilities are quickly noticed and appreciated, so is the concern and need for proper operating and preservation instruction on this new and important system.

“We want to be sure operators know how to install the camera,” said Gardner. “They also need to know how to maintain it and operate it.”

SUPACT 1 has developed and implemented a week-long Mission Qualification Training course that is offered at Camp Roberts, Calif. Staff and students have learned that launching and landing the UAS with the new camera system on board is a new skill set that requires practice.

“You have to take into account that it’s now a bit heavier,” said Bramwell. “You need a larger launcher to get it into the air and when it lands, it lands higher up on the wire.”

Operational learning curves aside, Naval Special Warfare commands have seen or heard about the improved capabilities of NightEagle and want to add it to their respective arsenal of war fighting tools. As with any integration effort, the rollout process is dependent on outside factors.

“It’s going to take us a little time to get everyone outfitted due to the contracting and manufacturing process,” said Gardner. “We’re starting with a small number of deliveries and as we go through them, we will increase the numbers for breakage and damage. We have this capability and now everyone wants one; we can’t get them fast enough.”

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ETHOS

President Barack Obama recently said support for military families is a moral obligation and matter of national security.

“Our armed forces have done everything they’ve been asked to do,” Obama said at a White House event where he announced a plan to coordinate assistance among 16 federal agencies. “As a grateful nation, we must do our part.”

Adm. Michael Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said he has never witnessed a conflict like current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan that demand so much of its people. The current operational pace, he believes, requires that the armed forces develop programs that build resiliency in military families, so families are able to support their loved ones who are making multiple deployments overseas for contingency operations.

Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Gary Roughead, attended the grand opening of Naval Station North Island’s Child Development Center in September and praised this kind of quality-of-life initiatives for military families—or, as he refers to the families, “those who serve with us.”

NSW Commander, Rear Adm. Edward Winters, believes that our community owes a great deal to what he calls “the power behind the families—or, as he refers to the families, “those who serve with us.”

Another important initiative is the new NSW family website which launched in April serves as an enhanced tool families can use to communicate with leadership, build support within the community and the spouses appreciate that.”

The Spouse All-Call meetings are expected to continue biannually as a way to keep lines of communication open between NSW leadership and the families.

Among the family support core resources that will be available across the NSW community -- its combat veterans and their families -- by providing tragedy assistance, bereavement resources conducting health, education and welfare programs and sponsoring command and seasonal family events and activities. It’s important that everyone knows this newly formed foundation encompasses the best of both organizations,” said Tim Phillips, board member and legal counsel for the Navy SEAL Foundation. “It seemed only fitting that the name includes not only a portion of each organization, but clearly identifies to our donors and the nation exactly what this foundation is all about.”

According to Brendan Rogers, president of the board of directors of the Navy SEAL Warrior Fund and retired Rear Adm. Tom Richards, chairman of the board of directors of the NSW Foundation, bringing together the two organizations was a “natural extension” of their long-standing and close relationship. Both organizations were formed to support military families.
Career Management System supports NSW operators

They actually went and showed us where to find the tools to manage our careers instead of just telling us it’s out there somewhere. I think it is great for the younger guys, so they can update and fix any errors in their ESR and OMPF before they go up for Chief.

“NSW, humans are our weapon system — nothing is more important. We interact directly with the community and human resource professionals, taking care of our operators, both personally and professionally,” said Capt. Chris Lindsay, commanding officer of the Center for SEAL and SWCC (CENSEALSWCC).

CENSEALSWCC has provided proactive career management support since it was first established in 2005. The group’s experienced staff of civilians and retired and active duty operators first worked to establish the Special Warfare Operator (SO) and Special Warfare Boat Operator (SB) ratings; now they provide more comprehensive support, beyond just advanced education opportunities and helping to ensure the communities’ top performers advance.

“Our staff does a great job of assisting operators so they can focus on the things they need to do to be successful at the teams,” said Lindsay.

In order to ensure that personnel understand how to maximize the benefits of the Alternative Final Multiple Score (AFMS), NSW’s new promotion system that relies on data in an operator’s Electronic Service Record (ESR), CENSEALSWCC deploys teams worldwide to conduct “road show” briefs.

These presentations familiarize operators not only with advancement and records management support, but all the tools, services and benefits available to them to further their careers.

“The team’s goals are to train and educate personnel on the full capabilities of the ESR and explain not only why it’s important, but demonstrate how to use the ESR and other available tools to manage their careers,” said Jerry Moy, CENSEALSWCC’s knowledge manager.

Special Warfare Operator 1st Class Wilfred Hernandez, an East Coast-based SEAL, who attended a brief in December, said that he thought the career development portion was the most useful.

“They actually went and showed us where to find the tools to manage our careers instead of just telling us it’s out there somewhere,” said Hernandez. “I think it is great for the younger guys, so they can update and fix any errors in their ESR and OMPF (Official Military Personnel File) before they go up for Chief. My only complaint is that I wish I had gotten this information when I first arrived at the team, so I could have been more proactive about managing my career.”

When Chief Special Warfare Boat Operator Zach Riley, assigned to NSW’s Basic Training Command, was preparing his record for the Chief’s advancement, he used the AFMS worksheet to identify missing pieces of his record.

“One of the things was missing, CENSEALSWCC sat down and helped walk me through the process to ensure my record was updated,” he said. “It was an easy, painless process for getting my record in order.”

While the worksheets are designed for time-in-rate eligible E-6s, anyone can use them as a framework to check their record and ensure they get full credit towards advancement when the time comes.

One element of an operator’s record that often contains errors is the Sailor/ Marine American Council on Education Registry Transcript (SMART), which translates one’s military occupational experience and training into corresponding college credits while also tracking traditional college classes.

While Navy College is responsible for overall educational opportunities, CENSEALSWCC’s Laura Silver provides individualized support to operators. As an educational program specialist and retired master chief, Silver ensures their SMART transcript is up-to-date and error free. She then assists personnel in identifying long term goals, choosing a degree that is right for them and taking advantage of tuition assistance available to them.

Chief Special Warfare Operator John Hudika, assigned to a West Coast-based SEAL Team, who already had his associate’s degree, knew he wanted to get an accredited bachelors degree from a better school.

Sitting down with Silver, they designed a roadmap to help him achieve his individual goals. “Laura took the time to listen to my needs and review my record to find a list of schools that would accept the credits I had already earned so I could earn my degree faster,” Hudika said. “With her help, I should complete my degree during my next tour.”

“We provide individualized support for NSW personnel, whether they are new to the teams, getting ready to retire, or just ready to earn a degree,” Silver said. “Ultimately, we just want to help people be successful and take full advantage of all their benefits.”

To ensure operators anywhere in the world can get the support they need, CENSEALSWCC maintains active portals on SAPRN and Navy Knowledge Online (NKO) where information concerning advancement, AFMS, career management and advanced education can be found.

“We post everything on the portal so operators anywhere in the world can have access to our services,” said SAPRN portal administrator Chief Information Systems Technician Jose Alices. “We check it daily so if you have a particular question, just post a comment and we’ll get you in touch with someone who can help.”

Even with its broader mission, CENSEALSWCC remains the go-to place for operators looking to proactively manage their careers and personal development, determining options for advanced education or learning about changes that affect the SO and SB ratings and officer career paths.

Q: Is your SMART transcript up to date?

A: The Center for SEAL and SWCC is standing by to answer all of these questions, and more.

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In order to ensure that personnel understand how to maximize the benefits of the Alternative Final Multiple Score (AFMS), NSW’s new promotion system that relies on data in an operator’s Electronic Service Record (ESR), CENSEALSWCC deploys teams worldwide to conduct “road show” briefs.

These presentations familiarize operators not only with advancement and records management support, but all the tools, services and benefits available to them to further their careers.

“The team’s goals are to train and educate personnel on the full capabilities of the ESR and explain not only why it’s important, but demonstrate how to use the ESR and other available tools to manage their careers,” said Jerry Moy, CENSEALSWCC’s knowledge manager.

Special Warfare Operator 1st Class Wilfred Hernandez, an East Coast-based SEAL, who attended a brief in December, said that he thought the career development portion was the most useful.

“They actually went and showed us where to find the tools to manage our careers instead of just telling us it’s out there somewhere,” said Hernandez. “I think it is great for the younger guys, so they can update and fix any errors in their ESR and OMPF (Official Military Personnel File) before they go up for Chief. My only complaint is that I wish I had gotten this information when I first arrived at the team, so I could have been more proactive about managing my career.”

When Chief Special Warfare Boat Operator Zach Riley, assigned to NSW’s Basic Training Command, was preparing his record for the Chief’s advancement, he used the AFMS worksheet to identify missing pieces of his record.

“One of the things was missing, CENSEALSWCC sat down and helped walk me through the process to ensure my record was updated,” he said. “It was an easy, painless process for getting my record in order.”

While the worksheets are designed for time-in-rate eligible E-6s, anyone can use them as a framework to check their record and ensure they get full credit towards advancement when the time comes.

One element of an operator’s record that often contains errors is the Sailor/ Marine American Council on Education Registry Transcript (SMART), which translates one’s military occupational experience and training into corresponding college credits while also tracking traditional college classes.

While Navy College is responsible for overall educational opportunities, CENSEALSWCC’s Laura Silver provides individualized support to operators. As an educational program specialist and retired master chief, Silver ensures their SMART transcript is up-to-date and error free. She then assists personnel in identifying long term goals, choosing a degree that is right for them and taking advantage of tuition assistance available to them.

Chief Special Warfare Operator John Hudika, assigned to a West Coast-based SEAL Team, who already had his associate’s degree, knew he wanted to get an accredited bachelors degree from a better school.

Sitting down with Silver, they designed a roadmap to help him achieve his individual goals. “Laura took the time to listen to my needs and review my record to find a list of schools that would accept the credits I had already earned so I could earn my degree faster,” Hudika said. “With her help, I should complete my degree during my next tour.”

“We provide individualized support for NSW personnel, whether they are new to the teams, getting ready to retire, or just ready to earn a degree,” Silver said. “Ultimately, we just want to help people be successful and take full advantage of all their benefits.”

To ensure operators anywhere in the world can get the support they need, CENSEALSWCC maintains active portals on SAPRN and Navy Knowledge Online (NKO) where information concerning advancement, AFMS, career management and advanced education can be found.

“We post everything on the portal so operators anywhere in the world can have access to our services,” said SAPRN portal administrator Chief Information Systems Technician Jose Alices. “We check it daily so if you have a particular question, just post a comment and we’ll get you in touch with someone who can help.”

Even with its broader mission, CENSEALSWCC remains the go-to place for operators looking to proactively manage their careers and personal development, determining options for advanced education or learning about changes that affect the SO and SB ratings and officer career paths.

Five Navy websites vital to your career

1. mypay.dafos.mil
   Use this website to check your LES and LES notes, manage your Thrift Savings Plan, modify your tax exemptions, or manage your travel pay.

2. nko.navy.mil
   You can manage your career progression, prepare for the next advancement exam, and find an old shipmate. You can also update your resume, and take tests to qualify for Officer’s Candidate School.

3. navalny.com
   Take a look at your service record, awards, and Navy career. And don’t even THINK about checking out on leave without visiting this site.

4. courses.netc.navy.mil/navycollege.navy.mil
   Take courses that pertain to your rating, or basic seamanship at courses.netc.navy.mil. Use the Navy college web site to register for certification classes, or pay for school.
Q: WiFiM (What's in it for me?)
A: Greater than yourself!

WiFiM – pronounced wifi-m – is a simple little acronym with so many different applications. It can be used to pejoratively describe a selfish approach to any endeavor, or it can be a question we ask ourselves about whether a challenge is worth the effort in credibility, resources and time that it demands. In a leadership context, it can be the question we help our subordinates answer for themselves, to help them better understand the task at hand. The more I’ve thought about the WiFiM question, the broader I see the scope of its implications.

I was first introduced to the WiFiM acronym when I was discussing with a friend how we teach business ethics at the University of San Diego. She told me she uses WiFiM as a starting point in her business ethics class. I was initially a bit put off by this approach, but she reminded me that teachers should meet their students where they are.

I’ve come to realize that this may also be a useful point of departure in leading and inspiring our troops.

The military has traditionally relied on carrot and stick responses to the WiFiM question: “We may not be able to make you do anything, but we can certainly make you wish you had.” Answering the WiFiM question by appealing to cost-benefit calculations of fear of punishment or anticipation of fun, excitement or money can certainly be effective, but then the Why in the WIIFM question for ourselves – based on who we are, what we value and who we want to be. Get the job done or go home? Stay in or get out? Take this job or another job? Some of these things may not be difficult to decide. The difficult part can be determining whether we can do them well.

What one truly values and whether one measures value over the short or long term are the fundamental issues behind the WiFiM question. For leaders who are trying to motivate subordinates, they must assume that their subordinates answer that question, and help them define for themselves, their values and their long term best interests.

The use of specific strategies to answer the WiFiM question helps to turn out great evals so his men get promoted; the E-9 who volunteers for the 2nd Class who missed the party to fix the weapons; the Chief who stays late watching someone you mentored get promoted or put into a great job; the SPECWAR operators know that there is more to their service and profession than the stall, the yucks, the good times and satisfaction of tracking down the enemy. The training is hard and the deployments may be even harder, especially if one has a wife and family. When tired, stressed or worn out, the WiFiM question can be challenging. The excitement, challenge, companionship and prestige of being a SEAL or SWCC operator and fighting in the GWOT - is that all there is? Ok, I’ve got that shirt. Now what WiFiM? To answer it, one has to wrestle with the larger goals in one’s life.

When faced with a big decision, each of us has to answer that WiFiM question for ourselves – based on who we are, what we value and who we want to be. Get the job done or go home? Stay in or get out? Take this job or that job? Sometimes when faced with a choice, both paths may serve you well. And sometimes HOW you do what you do matters as much as WHAT you do. Sometimes the answer to WiFiM may be: Another opportunity to do the best I can at whatever challenge this path throws my way – and to serve others, and thereby myself, honorably.

The purpose of answering the WiFiM question is to help our subordinates answer that question and help them define for themselves, their values and their long-term best interests. When talking to BUD/S classes, Master Chief William Guild used to draw the distinction between the WiFiM question one gets from a really good party and the pleasure of having a senior officer pin the Trident on one’s chest when graduating from STQ. The party feels good for a little while, the Trident for a lifetime. He then goes on to make the point by asking these young men graduating from STQ. The party feels good for a little while, the Trident for the pleasure of having a senior officer pin the Trident on one’s chest when turning out great evals so his men get promoted; the E-9 who volunteers for staff duty to ensure the men are taken care of; the hero who sacrifices his life so that others may live.

What’s in It For Me? To feel good about what I’ve done, I’ve served my shipmates, my unit, my community and my nation. The pleasure of knowing I’ve done my part to make my Team, my Navy and my country better (and not worse) for having been a part of it. And not just for what I could get out of it, but for what I could give. The satisfaction of having a reputation as someone who can always be counted on to do my best, the satisfaction of knowing I’ve lived well, that WiFiM.

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The satisfaction of using your talents well in the service of something greater than yourself, even when you are not in the line of fire, that’s big WiFiM – at least for the people we want in the Teams. The pleasure of watching someone you mentored get promoted or put into a great job; the 2nd Class who missed the party to fix the weapons; the Chief who stays late turning out great evals so his men get promoted; the E-9 who volunteers for staff duty to ensure the men are taken care of; the hero who sacrifices his life so that others may live.

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Bob Schultz retired after spending 30 years as a NSW officer. He is currently the Director of the Master of Science in Global Leadership School of Business Administration at the University of San Diego.
Since the beginning of time, soldiers have returned with war trophies and souvenirs, hard-earned payment for their efforts on the battlefield and a significant reflection of being victorious warriors. Fittingly, the word “trophy” is derived from the Greek tropaion, which comes from the verb tropeo, meaning “to rout.”

In ancient Greece, military victories were immediately celebrated on the field of battle, by triumphantly parading captured weaponry and flags of fallen enemies and then fashioning them into a warrior mural as an offering to the gods. Sculptors would craft a detailed description of the victorious battle and place it with the war trophy, so the facts or highlights of the conquest would not be forgotten.

The ancient Roman approach to commemorating victory was less immediate and more self-serving. Rather than laying tribute to the gods on the hallowed grounds of a victorious battle, the Romans commissioned their artists and laborers to construct special columns and arches within the city for all to see. The crumbling remnants of some of these huge stone memorials still pocked the outskirts of Rome.

Genghis Khan’s ruthless 13th century conquests yielded enough riches for him to be considered the most powerful and richest ruler of his time. The Khan proudly quoted as saying, “The greatest happiness was to vanquish, devastate and rob one’s enemies.” In two decades, his Mongolian army conquered and pillaged Persia, Asia Minor, Korea, South East India, Indonesia and China. While Khan collected jeweled weapons from China, gold from Samark, the hub of central Asia’s Islamic scholars, priceless religious artifacts from Russian Orthodox churches and hundreds of nations within his subjugated, his army’s pay was subordinated by war booty. Needless to say, after the Mongolian army rolled through a town or country, there wasn’t much life or currency remaining.

During the Napoleonic Wars of the 1800s, Napoleon, Bonaparte and the French army looted conquered areas in Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Austria and Spain, robbing them of enormous amounts of artwork, scientific objects, books and manuscripts. These trophy possessions were proudly and pompously put on display at the Louvre and France’s Museum of Natural History. For example, shortly after the French defeat at Waterloo in 1815, these national treasures were repatriated to their countries of origin.

Excluding modern wars, where it was uncommon for American warriors to return home with souvenirs and mementos of their victories abroad, including enemy weapons and flags. In fact, after World Wars I and II, and the Treaty of Versailles and Potsdam Agreement, respectively, the removal of large amounts of property from Germany as reparations for being responsible for both wars and all of the associated loss. The U.S. government brought home an arms inventory numbering in the millions of war trophy items ranging from entire fleets to rank insignia badges, which were distributed to military leaders for research and to state governors for Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and American Legion use. While the Vietnam War divided our country and was very unsual, even for the American service members fighting in Vietnam, war souvenirs were brought home from the battlefield. For some soldiers, the trophies were a way to show that they were there, they experienced battle and most importantly, they survived the harrowing experience.
WORLD CHAMPION

Pro Surfer

Tom Carroll

reads

Ethos