Navy Performance Evaluation System instruction updated

From Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs Office

MILLINGTON, Tenn. - An update to the Bureau of Naval Personnel (BUPERS) Performance Evaluation System instruction BUPERSINST 1610.10C was released April 21 by Navy Personnel Command (NPC).

The update cancels BUPERSINST 1610.10B and incorporates several Naval Administrative Messages (NAVADMINs) affecting performance evaluations and fitness reports.

"The changes cover new E-5 promotion recommendation rules, Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) documentation requirements, a new billet sub-category for performance reports, details on reserve component unit reporting responsibilities, elimination of references to the enlisted field service record and several other items," said James Price, director, NPC Performance Evaluation Division.

One update incorporates new distribution rules for E-5 promotion recommendations announced in NAVADMIN 286/10, requiring the number of 'Early Promote' and 'Must Promote' recommendations not to exceed 60 percent of the E-5 group. In addition, the 'Must Promote' recommendation may be increased by one for each 'Early Promote' quota not used. The 'Early Promote' recommendation limit of 20 percent has not changed in the new instruction.

NAVFIT98A Version 29 software was rolled out to the fleet incorporating the new rules. Workstations on the unclassified Navy-Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI) automatically received this new version. For non-NMCI users, the upgrade is available for download from the Navy Personnel Command (NPC) website.

Service members should verify they are using Version 29 by checking 'About NAVFIT98A' under the help tab in NAVFIT98A, which will display 'Version 2.2.0.29.'

Another update in BUPERSINST 1610.10C details new requirements announced in NAVADMIN 193/10 for documenting PFA results in performance evaluations. For performance reports with an end date of Aug. 1, 2010, or later, commands must now enter a one-letter PFA code in block 20 for each cycle completed during the reporting period.

In accordance with NAVADMIN 215/10, a new billet subcategory was added. The code 'INDIV AUG' in block 21 of the performance report is now available for Individual Augmentee Manpower Management, Global War on Terrorism Support Assignment and Overseas Contingency Operation Support Assignment participants.

For reserve Sailors, the fourth chapter of the new instruction enables authorized mobilization unit commanding officers to write concurrent reports for Cross Assigned In (CAI) personnel, while the training unit commanding officer (CAI regular drill unit) retains regular reporting responsibilities.

These are a few of the updates published in BUPERSINST 1610.10C. To see more, review the instruction posted on the Navy Personnel Command website at http://www.npc.navy.mil/CareerInfo/PerformanceEvaluation/.

NAVFIT98A version 29 and an updated user guide is available at http://www.npc.navy.mil/CareerInfo/PerformanceEvaluation/SoftwareForms/.

Those with questions should call the NPC Customer Service Center toll-free at (866) 827-5672 or e-mail them at CSCMailbox@navy.mil.

The editor asks:

Did you know, you are entitled to a free copy of your credit report? Credit reports contain information about your payment history on loans, charge accounts and credit cards. You can request a copy of your credit report by contacting one of the three major credit reporting companies Equifax, Experian and TransUnion, or by visiting the website www.annualcreditreport.com.

This is the only authorized online source for you to get a free credit report under federal law. You can get a free report from each of the three national credit reporting companies every 12 months.

Some other sites claim to offer "free" credit reports, but may charge you for another product if you accept a "free" report. If you feel the information in your credit history is inaccurate, the responsibility to correct any errors rests with you.

Unbreakable Marine

By Sgt. Mark Fayloga, Marines Magazine

SOUTHERN SHORSURAK, Afghanistan – Cpl. Matt Garst should be dead. Few people survive stepping on an improvised explosive device (IED). Even fewer walk away the same day after directly absorbing the force of the blast, but Garst did just that.

A squad leader with 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, Garst was leading his squad on a patrol in Southern Shorsurak, Afghanistan, to establish a vehicle checkpoint in support of Operation New Dawn.

> ***"My first thought was, 'Oh [shoot], I just hit an IED.' Then I thought, 'Well I'm standing. That's good.'"*** **– Cpl. Matt Garst, U.S. Marine Corps, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, Southern Shorsurak, Afghanistan.**

The men were four miles from Company L's newly established observation post when they approached an abandoned compound close to where they needed to set up their checkpoint. It would serve well as an operating base — a place for the squad to set up communications and rotate Marines in and out of. But first, it had to be secured.

As they swept the area with a metal detector, the IED registered no warning on the device. The bomb was buried too deep and its metallic signature too weak. Two men walked over it without detonating it.

At six feet, two inches tall and 260 pounds with all his gear on, Garst is easily the heaviest man in his squad by 30 or 40 pounds — just enough extra weight to trigger the IED buried deep in hard-packed soil.

Lance Cpl. Edgar Jones, a combat engineer with the squad, found a pressure plate inside the compound and hollered to Garst, asking what he should do with it. Garst turned around to answer the Marine and stepped on the bomb.

"I can just barely remember the boom," Garst said. "I remember the start of a loud noise and then I blacked out."

Since Garst's improbable run-in with the IED, his tale has spread through the rest of the battalion, and as often happens in combat units, the story mutates, becoming more and more extraordinary: He held onto his rifle the whole time… He actually landed on his feet… He remained unmoved, absorbing the impact like he was muffling a fart in a crowded elevator…

What really happened even eludes Garst. All went black after the earth uppercut him. When he came to, he was standing on his feet holding his weapon, turning to see the remnants of the blast and wondering why his squad had a look on their faces as if they'd seen a ghost.

Marines in Company L think Garst is the luckiest guy in the battalion, and while that may seem a fair assessment, it was the enemy's shoddy work that left Garst standing. The three liters of homemade explosive only partially detonated.

Marines who witnessed the event from inside the compound caught glimpses of Garst's feet flailing through the air just above the other side of the building's eight-foot walls. The explosion knocked him at least 15-feet away where he landed on his limp head and shoulders before immediately standing back up.

"My first thought was, 'Oh [shoot], I just hit an IED,'" he said. "Then I thought, 'Well I'm standing. That's good.'"

Cpl. Matt Garst, squad leader, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, stood on his own free will immediately after triggering an anti-personnel IED directly beneath his feet, which sent him tumbling six feet up and 15 feet through the air before landing on his limp head and shoulders during a patrol of his company's newly established observation post in Southern Shorsurak, Afghanistan.

U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Mark Fayloga

Garst's squad stared at him in disbelief. The square-jawed Marine has a tendency to be short tempered, and the realization that the blast was meant to kill him spiked his adrenaline and anger.

"It pissed me off," he said. He directed his men to establish a security perimeter while letting them know in his own way that he was OK.

"[What are you looking at?]" he said. "Get on the cordon!"

Garst quickly radioed back to base, calling an explosive ordnance disposal team and quick reaction force.

"I called them and said, 'Hey, I just got blown up. Get ready,'" he said. "The guy thought I was joking at first. 'You got blown up? You're not calling me. Get out of here.'"

Once EOD cleared the area, Garst led his squad the four miles back to their observation post — just hours after being ragdolled by an IED blast.

"I wasn't going to let anybody else take my squad back after they'd been there for me," he said. "That's my job."

The next day Garst awoke with a pounding headache and was as sore as he'd ever been in his life. "Just getting up from trying to sleep was painful," he said.

But he saw no reason being sore should slow him down. He popped some ibuprofen and after a day of rest, Garst was back out on patrol, showing his Marines and the enemy that just like his resolve – Cpl. Matt Garst is unbreakable.