Navy makes preparing for selection boards easier with "WERR"

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A new program announced by Navy Personnel Command (NPC) Jan. 14 makes reviewing records and preparing for selection boards easier by providing online access to their official military personnel file (OMPF).

Web Enabled Record Review (WERR), announced in NAVADMIN 011/09, allows Sailors to review documents in their OMPF, which are the same documents reviewed by selection board members when considering candidates for officer advancement, selection for chief, senior chief and master chief and other selection boards.

"There's no substitute for empowering Sailors with the benefits of personalized access to their official military personnel file," said Jim Laudermilk, head, Military Personnel Records Management and Policy at NPC.

Sailors can now access their WERR through Bupers on Line (BOL) at https://www.bol.navy.mil. All active duty and selected Reserve personnel with a BOL account and a CAC-enabled computer with appropriate certificates can now view their OMPF online by selecting the WERR option on the BOL main menu page. This application also allows Sailors to download and print service-record documents for personal and professional use.

"[It is] very impressive, user friendly, and offers easy access. I was extremely pleased with the availability of my personnel files in WERR and my ability to access and print copies of the things that I needed," said Lt. Cmdr. Ricky Small, assigned to NPC.

Since WERR mirrors what is uploaded to the Electronic Military Personnel Records System, recently submitted documents may not yet appear in the record. If documents have been sent to NPC within the past 12 months, there is no need to resend them. They are still being processed.

"The projected goal of WERR tool is to empower Sailors. Offering almost instantaneous viewing of service-record documents and providing the opportunity to notify NPC of official corrections online improves records management for the entire Navy and ensures records are selection-board ready." said Dwight Stanton, director, Military Personnel Records Management Division.

ABHC Edward Rodrigues is presented his chief petty officer (CPO) combination cover by DCC Rick Mora during a CPO pinning ceremony Sept. 16. A new program announced by NPC Jan. 14 makes reviewing records and preparing for selection boards easier by providing online access to their official military personnel file.
U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Charles Oki

WERR is an improvement because it eliminates the wait Sailors previously faced.

"There are unnecessary time-lags caused by waiting days or weeks to receive the CD version of the OMPF in regular mail," he added.

MCPON West discusses Navy working uniform, force shaping

Story and photo by MC1(EXW) Jennifer A. Villalovos, MCPON Public Affairs

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Rick West visited the Senior Enlisted Academy (SEA) Jan. 14, his first trip to Newport since taking office Dec. 12.

MCPON Rick D. West visited the Senior Enlisted Academy at Naval Station Newport Jan. 14. Some of the topics discussed were the new Navy working uniform, force shaping and warfare programs.

West started the day by joining SEA Class 143 for a morning physical training session then talked to the students about issues he will be focusing on, including force shaping.

"In the next several months I'm going to be working to determine the best means to ensure those of you working the hardest on behalf of our Sailors have strong opportunities to advance," said West.

West emphasized quality over quantity and said the time had come to determine who the performers are. He said the Navy's end strength was close to the intended level and greater focus will now be on different means to ensure excellence across the chief petty officer community.

"That means force shaping or molding at the senior enlisted level."

West said there are too many "hard chargers" not getting promoted from the senior enlisted level down to the youngest petty officers, and that he expects opportunities for them to open up as the senior ranks thin from the top down.

Aside from addressing the SEA students, West also spoke with officers attending the Prospective CO (commanding officer) and XO (executive officer) course, as well as the Surface Warfare Officer School (SWOS). The most common topic of discussion among the three groups was the Navy Working Uniform (NWU) and the guidelines for wearing it. West stressed how important it is that Sailors know how to properly wear the NWU, especially since this uniform change is the most drastic in recent memory.

"Chief petty officers must be the ones who train our Sailors to wear the NWU and to demonstrate to us all the way it should be worn," he said. "This new uniform is going to represent who we are as United States Sailors."

West said he has received negative feedback about the restrictions currently in place which prohibit wear of the NWU off base, then explained the reasoning behind the deliberate approach. He said it was critical that Sailors learn how to wear the uniform before unveiling it to the American public in our schools and communities.

MCPON stressed that if Sailors want the policy changed, it's up to them to prove they're ready.

"When the force and fleet master chiefs come back to me and say our Sailors know how to wear the NWU, then I will go to the chief of naval operations (CNO) and ask him to re-visit the policy on manner of wear. I have no problem with that."

West also discussed a standardized Disciplinary Review Board process called the Standards and Conduct Board. Recently approved for expanded use as a pilot, the instruction is scheduled to be available for fleet use soon. As part of the program, chiefs will have the opportunity to mentor and counsel Sailors proactively instead of in reaction to a problem.

"It puts the power back in the chiefs mess."

That power, West said, will also rest with the Sailors, themselves. One key element of the Standards and Conduct Board is the opportunity for personnel to choose for "voluntary diversion" to correct the deficiency. In that case, each Sailor will work with the board to determine a means to correct potential problem areas.

More information regarding the standard and conduct board will be disseminated via Navy message this spring.