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MCPON visits Sailors at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam

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The master chief petty officer of the Navy (MCPON) visited with Sailors assigned to various commands in the Pearl Harbor area Aug 16-17. While at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH), MCPON (SS/SW) Rick D. West toured USS Chafee (DDG 90), USS Chosin (CG 65) and USS Pasadena (SSN 752), and held an all-hands call at Sharkey Theater.

“It feels great to be out here in Hawaii and having the opportunity to talk to all of you,” West said during the all-hands call. “I’m not here to talk to you for an hour and answer one question. I’m here to answer your questions and let you voice your concerns about what is currently going on in today’s Navy.”

One of the more popular questions that West received was about the new Navy working uniform (NWU) Type III.

“Right now the Navy is currently conducting a conformance test phase with the NWU type III,” West said. “So far, we have received nothing but positive comments about this uniform. If all goes according to plan, we should expect to see this uniform in the fleet late next year.”

West also talked about allowing women to serve aboard submarines. “The first women to enter the submarine force are currently in the pipeline making preparations to serve on ballistic-missile and guided-missile

submarines,” West noted. “We will start with having women officers aboard the submarines and then see how we can expand it to enlisted women.”

Another hot topic for West was about Sailors earning qualifications for their warfare pins.

“Warfare qualifications are about ship, shipmate and self,” West said. “Whenever I see a warfare pin on a Sailor’s chest, I automatically know that Sailor knows what they’re doing.”

“These qualifications are becoming ever more important, especially with our new-class ships like the littoral combat ship. Sailors need to achieve their warfare pins and have that knowledge in order for these ships to be manned,” West said.

At the conclusion of the all-hands call, West thanked the Sailors in attendance for their commitment and service to the Navy.

“I want to thank each and every one of you for the job that you do,” West said. “You are the reason why our country’s Navy is successful.”

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