Fleet Rating Experts Critical to Advancement Exams

By: Patti Gibson, Naval Education and Training Professional Development Center (NETPDC) Public Affairs

PENSACOLA, Fla. (NNS) -- Active-duty Navy chief petty officers (CPO) interested in shaping the future of their rating are needed to serve as Subject Matter Experts (SME) for upcoming Advancement Examination Readiness Review (AERR) panels.

NAVADMIN 025/19, released Jan. 31, announced the AERR schedule for April to June 2019. Selected AERR panel members will work as fleet SMEs for their respective rating to develop future E4 - E7 rating advancement exams.

Navy CPOs (E7 - E9) on active duty, Full Time Support (FTS), and Reservists on Active Duty for Special Work (ADSW) are encouraged to take part in the process by reaching out to their respective Type Commander (TYCOM) for application information.

“Fleet rating experts bring critical knowledge and experience to the AERRs, as that’s what ensures relevance in our exams by identifying Sailors with the rating knowledge needed for advancement,” said Naval Education and Training Professional Development Center (NETPDC) Command Master Chief Gregory Prichard. “The Navy has a lot of confidence in enlisted exams due to the hands-on involvement by the chiefs’ mess. AERRs are considered a career highlight because of the direct impact this work has on each rating.”

AERRs vary in length between one-to-two weeks and exam readiness reviews are held throughout the year, with each specific rating being reviewed on an annual basis. The reviews are held at NETPDC at Saufley Field in Pensacola, Fla. AERR participants receive Temporary Duty Travel (TDY) orders from their parent command, funded by NETPDC.

To view the annual AERR schedule, locate a specific rating recruitment and selection point of contact (POC), log into MyNavy Portal my.navy.mil, and search under Professional Resources/Navy Advancement Center/AERR. TYCOM POCs are listed and specific AERR eligibility requirements are provided on the page.

NAVADMIN 025/19 provides additional information and a listing of upcoming rating conferences scheduled for the next six months.
Whiting Field News

Citadel Shield/Solid Curtain 2019: A Firsthand Experience of the Training Exercises at NAS Whiting Field

By Ensign Chase Dowell, NAS Whiting Field Public Affairs

Many base personnel may be aware of exercises that are happening on an installation, but most may not know the effort and detail that goes into keeping the Navy as safe as possible with these training events. Recently, I was involved with some of those exercises at Naval Air Station Whiting Field (NASWF) and want to share my firsthand experience to build awareness about what happens during an exercise and the importance of security on base.

Exercise Citadel Shield/Solid Curtain 2019 (CS/SC19) is an annual, two-part anti-terrorism force protection (ATFP) exercise conducted by Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command (USFFC) and Commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) on all CONUS Navy installations. The purpose of CS/SC19 is to ensure that the Navy is ready to respond to changing and dynamic threats at all times. It is their responsibility to ensure the safety of our personnel, equipment and facilities, as well as to partner with law enforcement to assist in protecting our installations.

I played the role of a victim severely injured by the incident on the second floor, just outside of the commanding officer’s office. The active shooter simulation began on the first floor, exploring the halls and leaving ‘victims’ in his path. He also took a hostage and barricaded himself inside one of the offices.

While the active shooter was making his way through the hallways, the Navy Wide Area Alert Network (WAAN) broadcasted across base the emergency situation, alerting all personnel to stay in their rooms and avoid building 1401. Simultaneously, the WAAN broadcasted on all NMCI computers.

Within minutes, the sound of sirens surrounded building 1401 and security personnel started clearing the first floor. Victims who were found received medical attention after the area was clear. Unfortunately for the victims on the second floor, including myself, medical attention was more difficult because the incident was still underway. Those who could not walk were only able to attempt to take cover in a nearby room as security kept their focus on a simulated barricaded room.

Radio chatter displayed the effective communication of all security personnel while a negotiator made his way to the building. Police tried to gather information during the standoff between the active shooter and police, and the victims were taken for medical attention after all the other rooms had been cleared. Minutes after, the suspect surrendered himself without harming any other people in the area.

From having the personal experience of listening and observing how these active shooter training exercises are performed, I have an even greater respect for what our law enforcement has to be prepare for in these devastating situations. No one expects an event like this to occur during their lifetime, but law enforcement is prepared to react at a moment’s notice.

The teamwork with local and base police gives the community a chance to work together and build on each other’s strengths. The personnel participating in this training event were given no information prior to it occurring. This makes the exercise even more realistic and prompts the first responders to use their years of training to make the right decisions during drastic, life dependent situations.
Navy’s Newest Outlying Landing Field open for Training Operations

By Julie Ziegenhorn, NAS Whiting Field Public Affairs

Following a historic land exchange agreement between the U.S. Navy and Escambia County, the Navy’s newest outlying landing field opened for helicopter training operations after years of collaboration and hard work.

To commemorate the completion of the field and the exchange of property, NAS Whiting Field held a ribbon cutting with representatives from the Navy, Escambia and Santa Rosa counties on January 30th.

Escambia County handed over the keys to Navy outlying landing field Site X in Santa Rosa County, thus opening the site for operations. The Navy ceased operations Jan. 29 at NOLF Site 8 in Escambia County after nearly 8 decades of training aviators at the site.

“This has been a great journey with all the collaboration that has gone on between the different stakeholders and the community. It’s great to literally watch this [effort] come in for a landing now and come to fruition,” said Matt Coughlin, Assistant County Administrator, Escambia County.

Following initial discussions and coordination between the two parties a number of years ago, the President signed the National Defense Authorization Act in 2015, authorizing the land exchange. In 2016, the land exchange agreement was formalized with the intention to transfer the property at Site 8 to the county, in exchange for a suitable landing field to replace Site 8.

Construction began in 2016, with Naval Facilities Southeast Region in Jacksonville, Navy Installations Command and Whiting Field coordinating with Escambia County project managers to ensure requirements for the training mission at NAS Whiting Field were met.

NAS Whiting Field commanding officer, Capt. Paul Bowdich commented, “we’re very excited that this unique land exchange project has come to fruition. The tremendous partnership we enjoy with Escambia County, Santa Rosa County and all the hard work from our NAV-FAC Southeast partners, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy Jim Balocki, Navy Region Southeast partners and our team here at Whiting Field have resulted in a fantastic new outlying landing field that will help Training Air Wing Five here continue to train the world’s finest aviators.”

During the ribbon cutting event, Rear Adm. Bette Bolivar, Commander, Navy Region Southeast, called the land exchange a “landmark event” that showcases the achievements possible when “our military installations and our communities work hand-in-hand.”

“Never before has a fully functional and vital military airfield been exchanged for a newly constructed airfield that meets the same capabilities and training requirements. This is a monumental achievement to have brought this ambitious plan to fruition,” the admiral commented.

NAS Whiting Field trains all of the Navy, Coast Guard and Marine Corps helicopter pilots, as well as a number of international students each year.

“Hundreds of student helicopter pilots start right here,
every year, and they’ll go on to do great things for our nation. And they’ll be better and more skilled pilots all due to the enhanced training this site will bring to our student aviators… We thank the leadership of Escambia County for their hard work and diligence in constructing this outlying field that the Navy is pleased to accept today,” the admiral said.

Representing the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Energy, Installations, and Environment, Mr. Jim Omans, Real Estate director said that the “exchange of NOLF Site 8 is the best example to date of unlocking real estate value. It is truly a win-win for the Navy and the community. We receive modern, state of the art facilities that support naval aviation readiness today, tomorrow, the foreseeable future. The community can create new jobs, increase its tax base, and improve the quality of life for its residents by redeveloping Site 8. This is truly the definition of a win-win.”

The new outlying field, Site X, located in Jay, FL, is approximately 600 acres that affords helicopter students with land features so they can learn skills to advance as pilots in future helicopter platforms.

Site X has two pinnacles, earth platforms that provide students with tactical practice landing on a small raised surface. It also boasts a confined area landing feature that provides aviators practice in landing in tight areas surrounded by a wall of trees.

In addition, the runways and grass features give students and instructors the ability to fly a number of landing and flight techniques as they advance in their instruction.

Training Air Wing Five Commodore, Col. Dave Morris, U.S. Marine Corps, leads the aviation training at NAS Whiting Field and said, “one hundred percent of all Navy, Coast Guard and Marine Corps helicopter pilots train right here at NAS Whiting Field. This new outlying field provides our students aviators an outstanding platform to practice more options for tactical training and to hone their flying skills.

Additionally, the location of the new field is about half the distance as compared to Site 8, so it automatically makes us more efficient and effective. This field is an example of the community’s tremendous involvement in supporting the training of our future aviators. We couldn’t ask for better partners than we have in Escambia and Santa Rosa County.”

Santa Rosa County commissioner Don Salter participated in the event recognizing the beginning of operations at NOLF Site X. He unveiled the new name Santa Rosa County has bestowed on the road adjacent to the field as Major Stephen W. Pless Medal of Honor Way. Pless was a U.S. Marine Corps major who received the Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism and outstanding flying skills during the Vietnam War. Salter said it’s an honor to recognize a great American hero by naming this new field’s road after Major Pless.
Final Flight at Site 8 Prior to Closing Operations

Final flight operation at Site 8: NASWF Commanding Officer Capt. Paul Bowdich completed the final flight operation at Site 8 on Jan, 29. Capt. Bowdich met with fire crew and participated in colors for the last time before departing in the TH-57 helicopter. Site 8 was replaced with Site X, the new Outlying Landing Field for helicopter training.

(Photos by Lt.j.g. Ashley Koenig, NAS Whiting Field Public Affairs Office)
The Pensacola Council of the Navy League presented the 2019 Margaret Flowers Civic Award to NAS Whiting Field Petty Officer 1st Class Brian Clark at a luncheon Feb. 21.

The award recognizes military members who contributed countless hours of volunteer time to local religious, civic, educational, fraternal and other service organizations, and whose work “greatly enhances the quality of life” in the communities in which they live and serve.

Clark is the NAS Whiting Field volunteer program coordinator, volunteering at 96 community service events, and giving back more than 533 hours with organizations such as Meals on Wheels, the Shepard House, and local Milton schools. As volunteer coordinator, he organized activities for 600 people from Whiting Field who participated in 69 different community events. Through his efforts, eight new community service partnerships were formed with the installation. Clark is an Aviation Boatswains Mate (Handling) at NAS Whiting Field, where he supports Navy outlying landing field operations for the aviation training mission.

Twenty-two award nominees from local military units and bases including NAS Pensacola, Naval Air Technical Training Center, Information Warfare Training Command at Corry Station, NAS Whiting Field, Marine Aviation Training Support Group 23, Naval Hospital Pensacola, U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Dauntless, and the Air Force’s 479th Flying Training Group, among others, were honored at the luncheon that is held on Military Recognition Day each year in February.

“Petty Officer 1st Class Brian Clark epitomizes what it means to give back to the community. His leadership with the volunteer program here at NAS Whiting Field is exemplary, and the Sailors who give their time back to the community, the local schools and charitable organizations make a tremendously positive impact in our local area. We’re very proud that Petty Officer Clark was recognized with the Margaret Flowers Civic Award—well-deserved!” said Commanding Officer of NAS Whiting Field, Capt. Paul Bowdich.

Representatives from the state of Florida were also present at the luncheon, and presented Clark with various accolades for his contributions, including letters from Senator Marco Rubio, Senator Rick Scott, and Congressman Matt Gaetz. Clark’s efforts will be noted in Monday’s Congressional record, according the Gaetz’ representative, Adam Griffin.

“What an honor to be recognized on behalf of the Margaret Flowers Civic Award and Pensacola Navy League. This was a high honor and privilege to be recognized, but this was definitely a team effort,” Clark commented.

Also nominated from NAS Whiting Field for their outstanding volunteer efforts were: Hospitalman Seaman Monsoor Kyemtore, Naval Branch Health Clinic; Naval Aircrewman Petty Officer 1st Class Keithon Lee, Helicopter Training Squadron Eight, Training Air Wing Five; and Naval Aircrewman Petty Officer 2nd Class Cody Webb, Helicopter Training Squadron Twenty-Eight, Training Air Wing Five.

“Ms. Margaret Flowers paved the way for community service in Escambia and Santa Rosa counties, and we all definitely strive to follow in her footsteps,” Clark went on to say.

The award is named in honor of Margaret Flowers, a career civil service employee who was present at the luncheon. Her long and devoted record of service to the Navy and the community embody the true “esprit de corps of community and social involvement,” according to Pensacola Navy League representatives.
The Florida Department of Environmental Protection presented the 2018 Plant Operations Excellence Award in the small community category to the Naval Air Station Whiting Field Public Works department on Feb. 12 at Northwest Florida College. This is the seventh consecutive year NAS Whiting Field received the recognition.

“The driving factor in the award was the partnership between the environmental division, which is responsible for monitoring water quality compliance to ensure it’s safe, and the operations plant,” said Jeff Kissler, NAS Whiting Field Installation Environmental Program Director.

The operations plant is run by the installation contracting company, Electronic Meteorology Laboratory, LLC (EML), which is responsible for the treatment maintenance of the plant. Aaron Mitchell, physical scientist with NAS Whiting Field Public Works department said, “The successful partnership was due to the quick notification and response on any issues. They were proactive and very responsive.” Additionally, Mitchell noted that in 2018, “the department had no issues with drinking water monthly operating reports that were sent to the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) by the 10th of every month, and were well below or within reportable levels.”

DEP selects winners based on excellence in operation, maintenance, innovative treatment, waste reduction, pollution prevention, recycling, or special achievements. The specific district, Northwest District in which the competition was based, runs from Escambia County to Jefferson County, and is one of six Florida districts. DEP regulates any community that serves 25 or more people for at least 60 days of the year, and small community water systems consist of systems that serve less than 3,000 people. The department is awarding a total of 18 facilities, including 10 domestic wastewater facilities and eight drinking water facilities statewide.

The NAS Whiting Field Public Works Department provided many initiatives that led to the recognition, including awareness training to inbound students to educate them on the importance of reduction of water use. Based on the water reduction training, installation staff members have made efforts to reduce water consumption with no mission impact to include discontinuing wash racks, facility upgrades and increasing the use of reusable containers.

“On behalf of DEP and the state of Florida, I am proud to recognize Bay County Water Treatment Plant, Destin Water User Inc., and Naval Air Station Whiting Field for their commitment to operational excellence,” said Shawn Hamilton, Director of DEP’s Northwest District.

The Public Works team onboard NAS Whiting Field has earned several environmental awards recently to include: the Chief of Naval Operations Environmental Award for Environmental Quality for a Non-Industrial Installation; Community Service Environmental Stewardship award medium shore honorable mention; and the Secretary of the Navy 2018 Energy Excellence Award Navy Small shore category.

“This most recent recognition from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, 2018 Plant Operations Excellence Award in the small community category, is a testament to the hard work and dedication our Public Works department and EML contractor show each and every day in support of our mission here at Whiting. Congratulations Public Works, this is well-deserved,” said NAS Whiting Field Commanding Officer, Capt. Paul Bowdich.
**Hoisting the Cup:** Navy Branch Health Clinic NASW wins the Captain’s Cup, a trophy that goes to the command with the most points during leagues/tournaments throughout the year. (Photo by Lt. j.g. Ashley Koenig, NAS Whiting Field Public Affairs Office)

**Investing and protecting:** Naval Air Station Whiting Field Fleet and Family Support Center hosts an “Investing and Avoiding Fraud Workshop” on Feb. 25. (Photo by Ensign Zachary Saylors, NAS Whiting Field Public Affairs Office)

**Hot off the press:** NAS Whiting Field Commanding Officer, Capt. Paul Bowdich holds a mock press conference after a training event during Citadel Shield/Solid Curtain. (Photo by Lt. j.g. Ashley Koenig, NAS Whiting Field Public Affairs Office)

**Outstanding contributions:** Petty Officer 1st Class Brian Clark (center) receives the Margaret Flowers Civic Award trophy from the Pensacola Council Navy League in a luncheon Feb. 21. Supporting him was NAS Whiting Field Command Master Chief Chris Leonard. (Photo by Julie Ziegenhorn, NAS Whiting Field Public Affairs Officer)

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Contacting Base Security in Emergency and Non-emergency situations:

For an EMERGENCY on base, at Whiting Pines Housing, at Whiting Park, or at any of our outlying airfields, please dial 9-1-1 and identify that you are on base to the operator.

For a NON-EMERGENCY, please dial 904-542-8681

To reach the NAS Whiting Field Security Department Administrative Staff during normal working hours:
- Antiterrorism Officer: 850-623-7387
- Physical Security: 850-623-7433/7349
- Security Administration: 850-623-7694
- Visitor Control Center (Pass & Tag): 850-623-7205
Congratulations to TRAWING-5 Wingers

TOP ROW: Lt. Col. Gregory R. Curtis, USMC, CO HT-28; Ens Thomas J. Wilson, USN, HT-28; Ens Thomas J. Pecor, USN, HT-28; Lt. j.g. Jacob C. Pitkin, USCG, HT-18; Ens David A. Wert, USN, HT-18; 1st Lt. Dakota T. Ritz, USMC, HT-18; Col David C. Morris, USMC, Commodore TW5
MIDDLE ROW: Cmdr Kenneth M. Kerr, USN, CO HT-18; 1st Lt. Kyler S. Fricke, USMCMC, HT-18; 1st Lt. Jared B. Luebbers, USMC, HT-18; 1st Lt. Erik A. Shinkle, USMC, HT-8; Lt. j.g. Peter Y. Fulton, USN, HT-28; Capt. Timothy McGuire, USCG (Ret.), T-6B Simulator Instructor, NAS Whiting Field

(Top Row: February 08)

BOTTOM ROW: Cdr. Jessica R. Parker, USN, CO HT-8; Ens Michael T. Maxwell, USN, HT-28; Lt. j.g. Brittany D. Pierce, USN, HT-8; Ens Haruku J. Earney, USN, HT-18; Lt. j.g. Samantha R. Healey, USN, HT-28; Lt. j.g. Justin L. Rioux, USN, HT-8; Capt. James L. Vandiver, USN ret. (guest speaker)

(February 22)