George Washington Sailors stay on top of warfare qualifications

By MC1(SW) Tal Reeve,
***USS George Washington* Public Affairs**

YOKOSUKA, Japan - The aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) (*GW*) completed, "Warfare Days," an incentive in which Sailors can earn their enlisted warfare qualifications, while underway.

Every weekend, while *GW* was at sea, members of the crew met in the mess decks and hangar bays to take part in the ship's "warfare days." During this time, enlisted Sailors could work on their Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS) or Enlisted Air Warfare Specialist (EAWS) qualifications.

"These programs really help Sailors get a broad understanding of all the departments," said Senior Chief Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) (AW/SW) Glen Newbins of Denver, Colo., *GW* warfare program coordinator. "They learn how every department works together as one team; they learn how every one plays a vital role in the mission of the ship."

The ESWS program began in 1978 to recognize the qualifications and hard work of Sailors while aboard surface ships. During the programs inception it was mandatory for all second class petty officers and above. It has since become available to all hands.

"The more qualified Sailors are; the more experienced they are, the more valuable they are to their ship and the Navy," said *GW* Command Master Chief (AW/SW) Martin King.

Aboard *GW*, Sailors have 30 months to complete the qualifications after they sign up for the program. "But really it should take only 4-6 months," added Newbins.

For Machinist Mate Fireman (SW) Joshua Pearson from Vernon, Conn., it took less than a month to earn his EAWS pin.

"I studied a lot," Pearson said. "While standing trash watch for five hours a day, every day, I had plenty of time to crack open my books."

During the previous "Warfare Day" aboard the aircraft carrier, Pearson passed both the test and the board, only missing three questions out of the 60 the warfare qualification board asked.

The process for earning a pin involves first getting a warfare specific professional qualifications standard (PQS) book. This is completed by frequenting specific departments and proving your knowledge to the experts within. Sailors then have to pass a 200-question test related to the program and prove themselves in a review board with several departmental representatives.

"I get a real feeling of personal pride when I see these guys complete their qualifications. I remember when I went through the program back in the day," said Newbins. "I want these guys to get that same feeling I had."

"I feel like there's nothing to worry about now that both of my pins are complete," Pearson said. "I'm definitely going to help my shipmates with their pins now. If I can do it, so can they."

GW holds "Warfare Days" every weekend while at sea and will continue to do so until all hands are qualified.

"It's not about a pin on the uniform or a pennant on a flag; it's about having highly qualified Sailors aboard *George Washington*," said King. "Personal, professional qualifications should always be in the forefront of every Sailor's mind."

ABE3 Carlee Udischas, from Chicago, stands in line during a "Warfare Day" to get signatures for her PQS book aboard the aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73). Warfare days provide Sailors with the training to become enlisted surface and enlisted aviation warfare specialists.
U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Cheng S. Yang

Enlisted Early Transition Program extended to Sept. 30, 2013

By MC1(AW) LaTunya Howard,
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MILLINGTON, Tenn. - With the release of Naval Administrative Message NAVADMIN 142/11, April 22, the Navy has extended the Enlisted Early Transition Program (EETP) to Sept. 30, 2013.

Due to the Navy's unprecedented retention and successful recruitment, Sailors are being offered a voluntary early separation option.

"Our end strength and our over manning in certain ratings was a consideration for the extension of this program," said Mike Dawson, head enlisted community manager, Navy Personnel Command. "Our community managers have also received a lot of feedback from Sailors and the fleet that they would apply for an early-out if they were eligible."

EETP differs from the Early Career Transition Program (ECTP) which allows Sailors to transition into the Selective Reserve (SELRES) prior to their End of Active Obligated Service (EAOS) by submitting a request three to 15 months in advance. EETP allows Sailors to request early separation up to 24 months prior to their scheduled EAOS or extended EAOS.

"The ECTP is a program that regardless of the time a Sailor has left on his EAOS, he or she can transition to SELRES," said Dawson. "Technically, a Sailor could have just signed a six-year contract and decide today that they want to complete the remainder of their commitment in SELRES. EETP, on the other hand, is an early-out."

Qualified Sailors may submit their request for early separation to Commander Navy Personnel Command (COMNAVPERSCOM) via their commanding officer (CO). A CO has final disapproval authority under this program and should not forward a request that cannot be supported. COMNAVPERSCOM has final approval authority for requests with positive CO endorsement.

Military Personnel Manual MILPERSMAN 1910-102 requirement for "separation by reason" does not apply to this program. Sailors are not required to state a reason for making the request since this is a voluntary program.

Approval for Sailors with critical Navy Enlisted Classifications (NEC) will be based on individual community requirements.

Early separation requests will not be approved for Sailors:

- In nuclear ratings;
- In receipt of permanent change of station orders;
- Identified to fill or currently serving on a global war on terrorism/overseas contingency operation, or individual augmentee assignment whose rotation date would be affected;
- In the National Call to Service Program;
- In any sea warfare combat program;
- Sailors serving in a rating and, or holding an NEC listed in any enlistment bonus, Selective Re-enlistment Bonus, or similar special and incentive pay program in effect at anytime within the fiscal year of the request or separation;
- Assigned to a Department of Defense area tour and have not completed the tour requirement, including overseas tour extension incentive program for which a benefit has been received; or
- Who are retirement eligible.

"Sailors who are no longer interested in staying in the Navy are highly encouraged to apply," said Dawson.

For more information on the EETP read NAVADMIN 142/11, call the NPC Customer Service Center at 1-866-U-ASK-NPC (1-866-827-5672) or send an e-mail to cscmailbox@navy.mil.