USS George Washington 'Pri-Fly' maintains eyes on deck

By MC3 (SW/AW) Marcus D. Mince, *USS George Washington* Public Affairs

PACIFIC OCEAN – Young men and women rush into position to await the next round of sorties, as steam shoots aircraft from the catapults of *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) June 10. These, however, are not the only Sailors to control operations on the flight deck.

ABH3 Daniel Brown tracks aircraft on the flight deck in the primary fly tower aboard the aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73). The coordination of the launch and recovery of multi-million dollar aircraft from *George Washington* is the responsibility of Air Department's V-5 division, which mans primary flight control. U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Justin E. Yarborough

The coordination of the launch and recovery of multi-million dollar aircraft from the flight deck of the U.S. Navy's forward-deployed aircraft carrier is the responsibility of Air Department's V-5 division. The V-5 team mans primary flight control (Pri-Fly) around the clock at sea and in foreign ports.

Pri-Fly, located on the highest level of the aircraft carrier's tower, provides watch standers a panoramic view of flight operations. Its primary mission is to ensure that embarked Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5's aircraft are safely launched and recovered.

Pry-Fly is manned by multiple watch standers, including: land/launch record keeper, status board keeper, Integrated Shipboard Information System (ISIS) operator, forward and aft spotters, Landing Signal Officer (LSO) platform spotter, tower operator, and tower supervisor.

"The forward and aft spotters ensure the right aircraft is on the catapult prior to flying off," said Aviation Boatswains Mate (Handling) Airman Shawn Smith, a Pri-Fly watch stander from Charleston, SC. "The status board keeper maintains a hard copy of the time and type of aircraft that fly off of each catapult, as well as the time that each aircraft is recovered. ISIS is the computer-based input of everything that flies on and off of the carrier. The LSO reports the type of aircraft coming in for landing after getting visual confirmation from the flight deck, and the tower operator and supervisor oversee all equipment and personnel within the work space."

Cmdr. Keith Henry, "Air Boss", the head of the Air Department, and Cmdr. Robert Soderholm, "Mini Boss", are responsible for all Pri-Fly operations.

"'Air Boss' and 'Mini Boss' can only do so much during flight operations…they can't see everything that goes on," said Smith. "We assist the 'Boss' with keeping as many eyes on deck as possible."

Required qualifications to stand watch in Pri-Fly range from flight deck familiarization all the way up to tower supervisor. This ensures that each watch stander has the required knowledge and is properly trained on all aspects of flight operations.

V-5 is just one of the divisions to stand watch in Pri-Fly. Air department's V-2 division also provides personnel who are responsible for monitoring aircraft landing gear and the Visual Landing Aid (VLA).

In addition to standing watch in Pri-Fly, V-5 personnel are also responsible for all of the administrative needs of the entire air department.

U.S. Navy Standardizes command qualifications

From Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert, approved an instruction governing the Navy Command Qualification Program June 4, setting the standards for the qualifying and screening of Navy commanding officers.

Naval Operations (OPNAV) Instruction 1412.14 guides officer communities on formally establishing a written command qualification program and how to formally screen prospective officers for command.

Prior to the release of this instruction, command qualifications were left to the individual officer communities. Following an internal review of the different programs, leadership determined common threads needed for effective command which could be highlighted during a standardized screening and qualification process.

"This program will strengthen the caliber of our leaders and provide for a more ready, capable fleet by ensuring we select the right people for command by adhering to clear, consistent professional qualification standards. This process recognizes each community's unique professional standards, while reinforcing the necessarily high expectations we hold for those in command Navy-wide," explained Adm. John Harvey, commander, U.S. Fleet Forces.

While the instruction primarily provides guidance to community leaders and mandates standards, it also contains some requirements and expectations for prospective commanders.

During Command Leadership School (CLS), which is now mandatory, candidates will complete a written examination that covers specific professional knowledge requirements and participate in a 360 degrees assessment of their strengths and weaknesses with the help of certified counselors.

Capt. Michael Slotsky, commanding officer of CLS, explained how the students will be impacted by this training.

"Prospective commanding officers will now demonstrate and reflect in writing how they will apply tenets of good leadership, bedrock principles of authority-responsibility-accountability and Navy Regulations as they prepare for command. Individual student's self-awareness and leader development will also be enhanced through the 360 assessment and coaching they will receive," said Slotsky.

The new instruction also tasks affected officer communities to develop and prescribe a set of professional qualification and oral board standards that reflect the needs of their communities.

Once an officer from their community has achieved the knowledge standards required, demonstrates mastery of the required skills, and sits an oral board with officers in command, community leaders will ensure their candidates receive a formal review by an administrative board.

Responsibility will no longer end at the change of command for the out-going commander according to the new instruction.

Commanding officers being relieved by their executive officer as part of a community's "fleet up" program will be required to certify, in writing, their executive officer is ready for the demands unique to their command.

This letter will be reviewed by their immediate superior in command, who will endorse the certification to the type commander or community leader prior to the executive officer assuming command.

Speaking to the benefits these changes will have for the Fleet, Vice Adm. Richard Hunt, commander, Naval Surface Forces said, "This program puts rigor back into the qualifications and requirements needed so we have our best leaders in command."

To learn more about the standards and requirements for command contained in OPNAV Instruction 1412.14, visit the Navy Personnel Command website at www.npc.navy.mil.

Overexertion is the third leading cause of unintentional injuries in the United States. Ergonomics involves designing the job environment to fit the person and is important to take into consideration at work, but also while working on projects at home. Ergonomic conditions are disorders of the soft tissues and are often caused by factors such as:

- **Overexertion while lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, reaching or stretching.**
- **Sitting or standing too long in one position**
- **Repetitive motions.**

It's important to:

- **Keep your back straight and bend your knees when lifting.**
- **Stretch and warm up before lifting.**
- **Get help to carry heavy, bulky or large loads.**