# *George Washington* completes sea trails, begins summer patrol

**By MCSA Erin Devenberg and MC2 William Pittman, *USS George Washington* Public Affairs**

*George Washington* Carrier Strike Group (*GW*CSG), centered around the Navy's only full-time forward-deployed aircraft carrier, *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) (*GW*), returned to sea June 12, to begin their summer patrol after the carrier completed sea trails June 5.

"Sea trials are where we put the past six months of maintenance to the test," said *GW* Commanding Officer Capt. David Lausman.

Since December of last year, the crew of *GW* completed approximately 20,000 maintenance jobs totaling more than 500,000 man hours of work.

"Sea trials validate work has been completed properly and that systems are fully operational to meet mission requirements," said Lt. Cmdr. Andrew Serveas, *GW* nuclear power limited duty officer.

On the flight deck and in the hangar bay, the ship's Countermeasure Wash Down Systems was tested. With a mixture of sea water and Aqueous Film Forming Foam, the Countermeasure Wash Down System is used to remove chemical, radiological and biological contaminants from the surface of the ship in the event of an attack.

"The sea trial period is mostly for topside work; combat systems, aircraft catapults, recovery systems and damage control systems," said Serveas.

Among the many systems checked was the ship's arresting gear for incoming aircraft. If it's not operating properly, the result could be disastrous. But just as important as equipment, the crew also got additional training during sea trials.

"We have to anticipate the weight of an aircraft when it lands so that we can set the arresting gear for each aircraft's own weight," said Interior Communication Electrician Fireman Suzy Laughing from Ganado, Ariz. "It's to ensure the right amount of pressure as the aircraft lands to prevent any damage to the plane or injury to the crew."

**Sailors join a working party to scrub down the flight deck of the aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) (*GW*) with a mixture of sea water and Aqueous Film Forming Foam, during a test of the ship's counter measure washdown system. *GW* returned to sea June 12 to begin its summer patrol after completeing sea trails June 5.**

**U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Adam K. Thomas**

"We are returning to sea with numerous upgrades to our capability, but it's our crew, the men and women who serve aboard this mighty warship; they are our real secret weapon. They are what make *George Washington* special," said Lausman. "After a six-month-long maintenance period, *George Washington* is an [increasingly] modern, state-of-the-art arship. I am excited to return to sea and work in international waters with our regional partners."

In addition to *GW*, the *GW*CSG consists of 7th Fleet's Carrier Air Wing 5, Destroyer Squadron 15, guided-missile destroyers *USS Curtis Wilbur* (DDG 54), *USS Fitzgerald* (DDG 62), *USS John S. McCain* (DDG 56), *USS Lassen* (DDG 82), *USS McCampbell* (DDG 85), *USS Mustin* (DDG 89) and *USS Stethem* (DDG 63). Also included in the strike group are guided-missile cruisers *USS Cowpens* (CG 63) and *USS Shiloh* (CG 67).

Carrier Air Wing 5 is composed of Strike Fighter Squadron 27, Strike Fighter Squadron 102 Strike Fighter Squadron 115, Strike Fighter Squadron 195, Electronic Attack Squadron 136, Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron 115, Fleet Logistics Support Squadron 30 Detachment 5 and Helicopter Anti-submarine Squadron 14.

More than 5,500 Sailors are currently stationed aboard the aircraft carrier.

The mission of *GW* is to ensure security and stability in the Western Pacific and to be in position to work with our allies and regional partners to respond to any crisis across the operational spectrum as directed.

# Reserve options available to Sailors not approved for PTS quota

**By MC3 Andrea Smithluedke, Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs**

MILLINGTON, Tenn. - The Navy Career Transition Office (CTO) is referring Sailors to the Navy Reserve as an option if not approved for an active duty Perform-to-Serve (PTS) quota.

"If an enlisted Sailor is disapproved for an active duty Perform-to-Serve quota, they can request a Selected Reserve (SELRES) quota through their command career counselor," said Lt. Cmdr. Michael H. Suarez, Career Transition Office assistant division director. "If the Sailor is approved, then CTO will process them into the Navy Reserve."

According to Naval Administrative Message NAVADMIN 352/10, the PTS with SELRES option allows active duty Sailors, including full-time support (FTS) Reserve Sailors, to apply for SELRES quotas up to 12 months prior to their end of active obligated service (EAOS) date.

"Sailors must have an approved PTS quota before the CTO is able to assist them," said Suarez. "If they're not approved for a SELRES quota, it's probably because they're applying for an overmanned community or rating. The Sailor should then consider conversion options."

Sailors approved for a SELRES quota can view potential Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) drill locations in the area they plan to live using Career Management System/ Interactive Detailing (CMS/ID).

Another option for active duty Sailors wishing to remain affiliated with the Navy is the Early Career Transition Program (ECTP). The program allows both active duty and FTS Sailors to transition into the SELRES more than 90 days prior to their EAOS. Sailors may submit requests up to 15 months prior, but no later than three months prior to their desired transition date (not EAOS). For example, a Sailor's EAOS is three years and six months away and he desires to transition to the SELRES six months from now. He is eligible to apply for ECTP even though his transition will be three years prior to EAOS.

According to NAVADMIN 088/11, Sailors with at least two years of service are eligible to transfer into the SELRES through ECTP.

"ECTP provides Sailors an early transition opportunity to continue their naval service and pursue educational or personal goals," said Senior Chief Personnel Specialist (AW) Robert Ferrari, SELRES enlisted community management technical advisor. "The program further allows us to match active component ratings with reserve component needs."

ECTP differs from the Enlisted Early Transition Program which allows Sailors to request an early separation up to 24 months prior to their scheduled EAOS date. If approved for ECTP, a Sailor's career counselor should contact the CTO for transition assistance guidance. Benefits of reserve affiliation can include:

- Mobilization deferment - Sailors who transition immediately into the SELRES qualify for a two-year deferment from individual mobilization;
- Sailors could be eligible for an affiliation bonus, however, they will be required to repay any unearned portion of any current active component bonus or incentive;
- Continued exchange and commissary privileges;
- Use of Navy Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities;
- GI Bill benefits;
- Free medical coverage for 180 days immediately following EAOS separation. Sailors are then eligible for coverage under TRICARE Reserve Select, which offers low-cost premiums to individuals and families.

For questions concerning reserve affiliation or the CTO, Sailors should visit the Navy Personnel Command (NPC) website www.npc.navy.mil, call the NPC Customer Service Center at 1-866-U-ASK-NPC, or send an e-mail to cscmailbox@navy.mil.