Navy releases Voluntary Sea Duty Program update

From Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

MILLINGTON, Tenn. – Navy released additional guidance for the Voluntary Sea Duty Program (VSDP) which provides incentives to Sailors who extend at sea or return to sea duty early officials said, July 13.

"This program allows Sailors and their families to stay in their same duty location or relocate to a duty location of their choice," said Capt. Kent Miller, director, Enlisted Distribution Division, Navy Personnel Command (NPC). "Applicants may also be eligible to defer Perform- to-Serve (PTS), providing an opportunity to enhance their record with operational duty."

VSDP was announced in January to support the Navy's war-fighting mission of operating forward and maintaining readiness. The program encourages highly trained and motivated Sailors to voluntarily extend their enlistment in their current sea duty billet beyond their prescribed sea tour, to terminate shore duty and accept new orders to a sea duty billet or to accept back-to-back sea duty orders beyond their prescribed sea/shore flow. The sea duty assignment may be on board ships, squadrons, or other qualified sea duty assignments.

NAVADMIN 205/12 clarifies 15 items from the initial message. Among the updates;

- Sailors in the PTS eligibility window who wish to apply for VSDP must have their VSDP application submitted for consideration no later than the last day of the month, two months prior to their final PTS application.
- VSDP orders will not be cancelled for Sailors who subsequently receive a PTS quota after VSDP orders have been negotiated.
- Sailors on shore duty must submit their VSDP request no later than 12 months prior to their projected rotation date.
- VSDP requests for Sailors who have completed less than 24 months on their current shore tour will be considered on a case-by-case basis based on orders requested and current command manning.
- Sailors serving overseas or in a DoD area tour can request to extend their current sea tour, curtail their current shore tour if they remain in the same geographical area, or request back-to-back sea duty in any area of their choice with a valid billet. Consecutive Overseas Tour requirements may apply.

U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Jennifer A. Villalovos

Volunteers will not be required to accept a billet they do not desire. Detailers will work with volunteers during two Career Management System/Interactive Detailing (CMS/ID) cycles to find desirable orders. If no match is found during this time period their VSDP application will expire and Sailors still desiring VSDP must reapply.

This program does not change eligibility or benefits for the Sea Duty Incentive Pay, which provides eligible Sailors an additional $500 to $1,000 a month for extending their sea tour or returning to sea duty early. Sailors may take advantage of both programs concurrently. Requests will be accepted until Sep. 30. All 1306/7 requests should be forwarded to NPC via the chain of command.

Sailors interested in applying for VSDP should read NAVDMINs 043/12 and 205/12 for complete details and talk with their chain of command.

***BIPV** Cont. from pg. 1*

Examples of skits performed were about inappropriate advances, touching, talking, date rape, physical abuse, stalking, alcohol, and always includes people who either witness or know about the harassment and have the ability to do something about the situation.

During the show, statistics are repeated like one in four women will experience harassment at some time in their lives.

The production progresses from an opening act that is light and funny and goes through the more serious topics and ends with one of the members taking positive action for one of the victims.

In May of last year, the U.S. Navy expressed interest in the production and asked Thompson and his group to start presenting their production to service members. The service members in the crowd are, on average, about the same age as the college students the production was developed for initially. Thompson said that a few changes are made to orientate the production to a military audience; some settings are on base and some of the cast wear a uniform while on stage.

Cast members of the No Zebras, No Excuses production from Central Michigan College act out a party scene involving spiking a drink and date rape to CFAY service members in the Fleet Theater, July 17. The set of skits and lectures emphasizes each individual's responsibility to stand up and prevent or respond to acts of harassment, specifically sexual harassment.

"Working with Navy I see change," said Thompson. "The Navy recognizes when they have a problem, they are upfront about it, and they are trying to do the right thing. I know that there are people that were here today that will get it, they will go out and if they see a situation, they are going to do the right thing. Flat out guarantee it, all of our research shows that. They will go out and help that one in four [women] or one in eight men."

After the play ends, the cast welcomes audience members up to the stage to talk. Many of the crowd members came forward with either questions or testimonies of their own.

"I think that the one thing that makes us feel confident that we are getting the message across is those people who come up and express that they are thinking about it or that they know someone who has been affected and now they will not be bystanders in the future," said Heather Kozar, one of the cast. "The other thing is the one in four statistic, that really seems to ground people and make them understand how important this is for them and the people in their lives."

Another central theme was the repeated question "What will you do?" The production gave several examples of appropriate responses for people to take when they see or know about harassment.

"We can't stand by and let these things happen, ever," said Master at Arms 1st Class Ted Mitchell, CFAY Security who was at the production. "It hurts the Sailor who was the victim, it hurts command that loses the Sailor, and it hurts the Navy who has to deal with the situation. These things hurt everybody and we should do all we can to make sure they don't happen."

The No Zebras production will visit a few other military bases before traveling back to the states to give their presentation to college students that will start fall semester soon.