ATGWP embarks *George Washington*, verifies combat readiness

By MC2 James Kimber, *USS George Washington* Media Department

USS George Washington (GW) (CVN 73) Sailors began a weeklong limited training evaluation with Afloat Training Group (ATG) Western Pacific Detachment Yokosuka March 9.

The ATG limited training team (LTT), invited by the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier, arrived to help ensure damage control training is still operating at the ship's high standards.

"We hope to learn from ATG any areas that may need more focus or attention in order to meet fleetwide standards necessary to fulfilling our role as the Navy's forward-deployed aircraft carrier," said Lt. Cmdr. Stephen Sims, *GW* damage control assistant.

"We're evaluating the damage control watchstanders in the repair locker — how they respond to simulated scenarios as well as their damage control knowledge," said Damage Controlman 1st Class (SW) Osbert Forde, an ATG instructor. "Additionally, we're observing and evaluating the ship's Damage Control Training Team (DCTT) and ensuring they are effectively interacting with and guiding the junior Sailors."

One of the most important aspects of running damage control drills and general quarters simulations is to train on proper communications, so the watchstanders' responses are as close to automatic as possible, he continued.

"Without effective communications, command and control cannot effectively manage a casualty or provide assistance, and training is the key to making effective communications second nature to all watchstanders," Sims added. "When an actual casualty occurs, there isn't time to train or to learn how to communicate; it must be automatic, and training is the key to that."

Sims said this is especially important for *GW* Sailors, who serve as part of the forward-deployed naval forces.

"As the Navy's forward-deployed aircraft carrier, there is no question that the damage control organization must be ready for any situation," said Sims. "It is crucial for the ship's survivability, and to be able to meet any tasking we may receive from a higher authority. *GW* has to be ready to deploy safely and be able to conduct sustained flight operations to meet mission requirements."

(Center) DC1 Harold Chalmers trains Sailors during a general quarters drill aboard the aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (*GW*) (CVN 73) March 10. The drill was the first evaluation *GW* participated in with Afloat Training Group.
U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Christopher S. Harte

Deadline for creating electronic service records approaches

By MCC(SW) Maria Yager,
Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

As of March 19, more than 128,000 Sailors have established a self-service electronic service record (ESR) account as the April target date approaches.

The chief of naval personnel released a NAVADMIN Feb. 5 announcing the requirement for all active duty and Reserve personnel to establish and maintain a self-service ESR account within 60 days.

"Having a self-service account is necessary for updating emergency contact information. Self-service accounts contain other important features, such as enabling Sailors to directly submit PCS (permanent change of station) travel claims upon PCS transfer, update race, ethnicity and religion information, and view all other ESR service record information," said Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. Mark Ferguson in NAVADMIN 043/09.

The requirement date for Sailors serving at sea and without connectivity to establish an ESR is 60 days upon return to homeport.

The Navy first implemented the ESR in 2006. The ESR provides individual Sailors, Personnel Support Activity Detachments (PSD) and personnel offices holding service records with secure, worldwide Internet access to personnel, training, and awards data. Navy Operational Support Centers and customer commands of PSD can also use the system.

"Eventually, the enlisted field service record will be phased out and we will use only these electronic systems, so it's important for all Sailors to establish an ESR account," said Dwight Stanton, military personnel records manager at Navy Personnel Command.

Self-service accounts can be created at https://nsips.nmci.navy.mil or on the Navy Standard Integrated Personnel System (NSIPS) ESR server on board ship.

Commanding officers, executive officers and command master chiefs can obtain command-level, view-only access by completing the NSIPS/ESR system authorization request and contacting their local NSIPS area manager. This access provides the user view-only capability for all ESR accounts within their unit identification codes.

All commands responsible for service record entries are required to initiate updates in NSIPS ESR, however official military personnel file requirements remain unchanged.

NSIPS ESR is the data entry point for electronic service record maintenance. Sailors are responsible for the accuracy of their ESR and must contact the servicing personnel office if any information is incorrect.

For more information read NAVADMIN 043/09 at www.npc.navy.mil.

Practice makes perfect

U.S. 7th Fleet Band member MUSN Josh Haney plays the bass guitar during band practice aboard CFAY March 9. Created in 1943 with the establishment of the U.S. 7th Fleet, the band has performed for literally millions throughout the Western Pacific.
U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Charles Oki