Post-9/11 GI Bill transferability requires obligated service

By Wm. Cullen James, Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

It's early summer and the air conditioners are struggling to keep up with the demand and people's thoughts start turning to… college?

For those Sailors with children approaching college age, about to start higher learning or with spouses with college aspirations, now is the time to ensure your Post-9/11 GI Bill transferability is properly set up.

Qualified active-duty and reserve Sailors may elect to transfer benefits to a spouse or children, with some or all benefits allocated to those named.

"We still have a lot of Sailors whose transferability requests are being rejected because they don't have the four years of obligated service remaining," said Kathy Wardlaw, U.S. Navy GI Bill program manager.

The Navy announced the transferability process in Naval Administrative Message NAVADMIN 203/09. Basically, it states that transferability requires two additional years for Sailors eligible for retirement between Aug. 1, 2010 and July 31, 2011, or three additional years for those with 20 years service between Aug. 1, 2011 and July 31, 2012. Otherwise, Sailors generally must have served at least six years in the armed forces and agree to an additional four years. See the NAVADMIN for exceptions.

"Before submitting their transferability requests, their obligation requirement must be reflected in their Electronic Service Record (ESR)," said Wardlaw, "or the request will be rejected until corrected." Sailors can review their ESR at https://nsips.nmci.navy.mil/. In addition to the ESR, the Defense Eligibility Enrollment System (DEERS) is used to validate a family member's eligibility for transfer.

For enlisted, personnel that means having sufficient obligated service prior to their End of Active Obligated Service. For officers, it means they must have an Administrative Remarks entry (Page 13) in their ESR agreeing to serve four more years from the date their transferability request is submitted.

After obligating service, Sailors must elect the transferability option while still serving.

"Sailors can allocate any percentage of their benefit to their spouse and children and change it any time, but if they don't elect the benefit while serving, they won't be able to go back and do it," said Wardlaw.

Family members must be in DEERS and eligible for benefits in DEERS before a Sailor can request transferability. This means those dual-military members whose children are reflecting under only one sponsor's record, must be reflected under both sponsors. For example, to establish a child as a family member under both military parents, the child should be enrolled in DEERS under one parent for benefits, and under the other parent as a child drawing benefits from another military sponsor.

For those Sailors with children approaching college age, about to start higher learning or with spouses with college aspirations, now is the time to ensure your Post-9/11 GI Bill transferability is properly set up. For more information, visit the Navy Personnel Command Post-9/11 GI Bill website at www.npc.navy.mil/CareerInfo/Education/GIBill/ or visit the Department of Veterans Affairs Post-9/11 GI Bill website at www.gibill.va.gov.

Your Navy career counselor is one valuable source of information and is an important piece in the service obligation requirement. For more information, visit the Navy Personnel Command Post-9/11 GI Bill website at www.npc.navy.mil/CareerInfo/Education/GIBill/ or visit the Department of Veterans Affairs Post-9/11 GI Bill website at www.gibill.va.gov.

Military Personnel Manual changes put focus on performance

By Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

The Navy has changed its Military Personnel Manual regarding enlisted performance, conduct, Detachment for Cause (DFC) and separations June 25.

The changes were based on inputs from commanders and commanding officers (COs). Announced in Naval Administrative Message NAVADMIN 210/10, the changes impact articles 1910-156, 1616-010 and 1616-040.

"These changes announced in NAVADMIN 210/10 are there to ensure the Navy's best and brightest Sailors are able to continue to advance while giving commanding officers the tools needed to counsel, guide and, if need be, separate those who do not meet the Navy's expected performance standards," said Rich Mason, Navy Personnel Command (NPC) deputy assistant commander for Career Progression.

The changes in article 1910-156 give commanders and COs the ability to separate Sailors for unsatisfactory performance and those who cannot carry out their assigned duties. Reasons provided include: an overall 2.49 cumulative Performance Mark Average for two consecutive evaluations; promotion recommendation of less than "Promotable" with no improvement in two cycles; performance-related loss of Navy Enlisted Classification code for non-medical reasons; Sailors who don't complete formal training required via Perform to Serve; and Sailors who cannot carry or handle weapons in the performance of their duties because of legal issues.

Article 1616-010 deals with DFC of enlisted personnel and changes here align those procedures with those for officers. The previous version allowed for the first flag officer in the chain of command to approve a DFC for enlisted personnel, but this amended version changes the approval authority to the commander of NPC.

"The enlisted DFC process now mirrors the officer process in every way," said Capt. Leo Falardeau, NPC assistant commander for Career Progression. "We did this to ensure that enlisted personnel are receiving appropriate, documented counseling and have the opportunity for their case to be reviewed by a higher authority."

Changes to article 1616-040 aligns the enlisted misconduct reporting process of civilian and military disciplinary incidents involving first class petty officers or chief petty officers (E-6/7/8/9) with the officer misconduct reporting process. It makes mandatory the reporting of civilian and military disciplinary incidents and incidents that might receive widespread public interest for E-6 through E-9 to NPC. According to Mason, such incidents include, but are not limited to, the assault of a civilian, sexual abuse and murder.

USS Cowpens leaves SRF-JRMC dry dock

By Lt. j.g. Maxwell Schmidt,
***USS Cowpens* Public Affairs**

The guided-missile cruiser *USS Cowpens* (CG 63) exited dry dock 6 at Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka July 7, after replacing the blades and other components on board the ship.

Cowpens entered the dry dock June 9 to repair a non-metallic grinding noise on the port shaft, which was discovered at the end of a selective repair availability in May.

Ship Repair Facility-Japan Regional Maintenance Center (SRF-JRMC) Yokosuka, removed the blades from each of the two propellers and conducted repairs in the strut bearings.

"The ship is at a level of material readiness that it has not achieved in a long time," said Capt. Robert Marin, *Cowpens* commanding officer. "The ship and the crew are ready to get back to operating at sea."

During the dry dock period, *Cowpens* also conducted a standardized pier side maintenance and restoration (SPMR), a $1.2 million periodic overhaul on both 5-inch gun mounts.

The repairs made are instrumental in *Cowpens* certification to perform in naval surface fire support (NSFS) missions.