Advancement exam development conferences schedule announced

By Ed Barker, Naval Education and Training Command Public Affairs

Naval Education and Training Command announced the schedule for Advancement Examination Development Conferences (AEDC) July 30 for fiscal year 2010 and requested nominations of a subject matter expert (SME) for their respective ratings.

Detailed in NAVADMIN 227-09, the conferences are held at Naval Education and Training Professional Development and Technology Center (NETPDTC) on board Saufley Field in Pensacola, Fla.

Active duty chief petty officers (E-7 to E-9) are encouraged to volunteer for the appropriate AEDC to serve as an SME in their respective ratings. A temporarily assigned SME from fleet and shore-based commands will review and develop rating exam materials for the next cycles of advancement examinations.

"Participating in these advancement examination conferences gives you a direct input toward shaping your community," said Master Chief Electrician's Mate (SS) Jeromie Cook, NETPDTC command master chief. "Your knowledge provides the relevance and currency required to construct an exam that identifies a Sailor with the right skills to select for advancement. You will have a say in who your replacement will be."

The AEDC schedules for fiscal year 2010 are as follows:

• Oct. 18-31, 2009: Aviation Boatswain's Mate Fuel, Aviation Support Equipment Technician, Machinery Repairmen, Fire Control Technician, Cryptologic Technician Collection.

• Nov. 29–Dec. 12, 2009: Interior Communications Electrician, Aviation Boatswain's Mate Equipment.

• Jan. 24-Feb. 6, 2010: Culinary Specialist, Engineman, Construction Mechanic, Naval Air Crewman Operator.

• Jan. 31-Feb. 13, 2010: Naval Air Crewman Mechanical.

• Feb. 21 – March 6, 2010: Yeoman, Air Traffic Controller, Naval Air Crewman Tactical Helicopter, Quartermaster.

• March 7-20, 2010: Ship's Serviceman, Builder, Operations Specialist, Special Warfare Operator.

• March 21–April 3, 2010: Naval Air Crewman Avionics.

Nominations must be endorsed by the commanding officer or officer in charge as well as the command master chief, senior chief or chief of the boat for submission to NETPDTC. Six nominees will be selected for each rating scheduled during the AEDC.

Careful consideration should be given to the availability of a nominee to serve on an AEDC, including deployment schedules and upcoming temporary duty or change-of-station moves. Commanding officers and chiefs must understand that once selected, conference duty is not optional. Selected AEDC members will not be excused except in the most extreme cases.

NETPDTC will coordinate with respective rating learning centers and community managers to select the best nominees. Selections of an SME for the AEDC will be made 45 days prior to each conference and selectees will be notified by NETPDTC via e-mail. Temporarily Assigned Duty funding will be provided by NETPDTC.

For more information, read NAVADMIN 227-09. Application forms and additional requirements and information are available on the Navy Advancement Center Web site at https://www2.netc.navy.mil/advancement.

MCPON urges Sailors to look out for shipmates

By MCCS Bill Houlihan, MCPON Public Affairs

During a conversation with Sailors Aug. 5, the master chief petty officer of the Navy (MCPON) said that stress on the Navy family and operational stress control will be two significant points of emphasis for him for the rest of the summer.

"We have to look out for each other. I need everyone to be on the lookout for the signs of stress because too often our Sailors aren't going to seek help on their own," said MCPON (SS/SW) Rick D. West. "No one should feel they're in this by themselves."

West has been addressing stress control most of the summer. He says it's the Sailors who have concerns but don't share them with leaders and shipmates who worry him as much as those crew members who are referred for counseling or treatment.

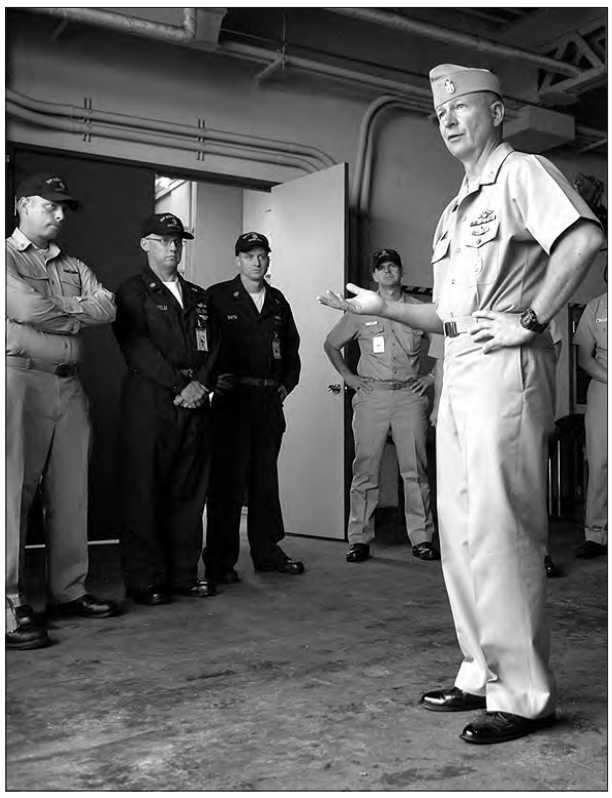
"As much as we know about it and as many tragedies we've had to endure, I'm betting there are still thousands of people across our Navy who need help but aren't asking for it," West said.

According to West, it is his intent to discuss the problem with every group of Sailors he speaks with and focus on breaking down the myth that admitting to a problem is a sign of weakness or can hurt a Sailor's career.

"That's the biggest problem as I see it," he said. "Too many of us feel that depression or suicidal ideation is a stigma, a character flaw that we're ashamed to admit. Well...none of us have good days every day."

West will be filming a video on operational stress control which should hit the fleet by the end of the summer. He said he would like to use that opportunity to discuss with Sailors of all ranks different approaches to recognizing and dealing with stress.

"From seaman to admiral, we have a shared responsibility to stay ahead of the curve," he said. "What does that mean? We train hard, stay fit and healthy, look out for each other. When you notice signs of stress in yourself or others – cutting corners, irritability, trouble sleeping – talk to a shipmate, friend, family member or someone else you trust. If you see the signs of more serious stress, get help immediately from your chain of command, chaplain or medical provider."



MCPON Rick West speaks with chief petty officers from SRF-JRMC during his visit to CFAY July 6. West has been addressing stress control to Sailors most of the summer and will be filming a video on the subject which should hit the fleet by the end of summer.
U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Jennifer A. Villalovos

Sailors join Australia city in homecoming

By MC2 Byron C. Linder,
Navy Public Affairs Support Element Japan

Sailors aboard the guided-missile destroyer *USS McCampbell* (DDG 85) joined thousands of citizens from Darwin, Australia to welcome home members of the Australian Army during a parade Aug. 8 while the ship was in port for a scheduled visit.

Members of the Australian Army's 1st Brigade returned to their home base in Northern Territory, Darwin after tours in Iraq, Afghanistan and Timor Leste.

"It's so important to get out and get involved with the community you're in," said Information Systems Technician 3rd Class Daniel Betancourt. "Something like this, where you've got a common military bond and a common mission, it's important to be seen showing support with everyone else. We've been doing a lot of cross-training with the Australian services, and you get to know them as people while you work together."

The parade began with the brigade's M1A1 Abrams tanks rolling down the street. *McCampbell* Sailors joined to salute a riderless horse which followed the tanks and symbolized the soldiers lost in support of the operations. Soldiers from individual battalions followed the horse, along with the brigade's Armored Cavalry Regiment's Australian Light Armored Vehicles.

Royal Australian Navy Warrant Officer Roderick Robertson, the Northern Territory's senior warrant officer, explained the significance of the publicly acknowledging the soldier's return.

"This is a way of saying 'thank you' to the families for their support. We were invited to come, and we're all here to support the Army and their return from their tour," Robertson said.