

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
UNTIL RELEASED BY THE  
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**STATEMENT OF  
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AND  
DEPUTY CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
(MANPOWER, PERSONNEL, TRAINING & EDUCATION)  
BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL  
OF THE  
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
ON  
ACTIVE, GUARD, RESERVE AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL PROGRAMS  
IN THE FY14 DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
AND FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM**

**APRIL 24, 2013**

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Chairman Gillibrand, Ranking Member Graham, and distinguished members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today to review Navy manpower, personnel, training, education and family support programs and priorities for fiscal year 2014.

These are clearly challenging times for all of us. With budget concerns continuing and the pressures of increased OPTEMPO we are asking Sailors to do more than ever before. Navy has had to make tough and sometimes unpopular decisions; however, we remain committed to supporting Sailors and their families through this challenging time. While we have planned for, and are executing, prudent reductions; the majority of the impacts will not take effect until this summer. My primary concern is the potential for a slowdown in training and impacts on recruiting our future force, resulting in reduced manning and quality of our deployable forces. Our sequestration planning specifically attempted to avoid training and recruiting impacts; however, the depth and prevalence of reductions, increase the probability of an unintended training slowdown and challenge in accessing quality recruits.

## **II. A READY AND CAPABLE GLOBAL NAVY**

In the past year, since assuming duties as Chief of Naval Personnel and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Manpower, Personnel, Training and Education), I have had the opportunity to observe and assess where the Navy is and where it needs to go within the manpower, personnel, training and education domain. Navy is America's away team – relevant and in demand – for

peace keeping duties and power projection. As we expand America's focus in the Pacific Theater, Navy assumes an increasingly critical role in the Defense Strategic Guidance. As we work to achieve the Chief of Naval Operations' tenets of Warfighting First, Operate Forward and Be Ready, I have established as my three strategic priorities, Responsive Force Management, Effective Personnel Readiness and Sound Organizational Management.

**Responsive Force Management:** We must maintain forward progress to properly man the fleet with trained and experienced Sailors. This begins with attracting the most qualified youth of America to serve in the Navy by demonstrating the many opportunities and rewards associated with naval service, and appealing to their pride in our Nation, commitment to its ideals, and devotion to protecting its freedoms. It continues with providing world-class training and education opportunities to prepare them to excel in maritime-centric jobs in an increasingly technical fleet comprised of fewer and less manpower-intensive platforms and weapon systems.

**Effective Personnel Readiness:** We must capitalize on investments in Sailors, both officer and enlisted, by providing the incentives needed to retain the best and to achieve and sustain optimum fleet readiness. Compensation remains an important part of our incentives system but is only a part of what we must do to preserve the world's best all-volunteer force. We must continue to offer the best training available and provide opportunities for off-duty education to enhance the force and help our people meet their education goals. Highly educated Sailors are our best performers and tend to stay in the Navy making them key to Navy's success. We must continue to build resiliency among Sailors and their families. We ask much of our men

and women in uniform and those who support them at home. We owe them the tools to help them endure and thrive in challenging environments and under demanding circumstances.

**Sound Organizational Alignment:** The fleet is our primary customer and we must ensure that every decision and action supports the needs of the fleet and its Sailors. Shortly after assuming the helm as Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Greenert issued direction to optimally position his headquarters staff to meet the demand signals provided by fleet and combatant commanders. We continue to evaluate our effectiveness in delivering what the fleet requires and to ensure that we align ourselves to be on time and within budget. We must ensure effective coordination and communications among major headquarter organizations, fleet and shore commands, and our support organizations, to deliver the best possible services to Sailors and their families in all areas of Navy manpower, personnel, training and education.

In addition to these three strategic priorities, my primary mission objectives are to effectively *Stabilize*, *Balance* and *Distribute* the force. Since the mid-1990s, Navy end strength has trended downward, consistent with manpower needs dictated by a decreasing force structure and, more recently, withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan. However, beginning in FY2013, we began a period of slow growth to stabilize the force, increase manning at sea, improve sea/shore flow and increase the Navy's Cyber capabilities. As we worked to determine the proper force size, we conducted a requirements-based process to properly balance the force in size, seniority, and skill mix, and to enhance capabilities to better distribute qualified personnel to the right places at the right time. This set the stage for long-term force stabilization while maintaining effective personnel readiness.

To stabilize, balance, and distribute the force, it is essential that Sailors are *assignable, deployable, and distributable*. Given the demands placed on our people over the past decade, including the stresses of war and high operational tempo, we have placed unprecedented emphasis on force resiliency. Fit and resilient Sailors are critical to Navy readiness. We must continue to bolster Navy families to meet the demands we place on them; the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sailor initiatives provide the priority and resources necessary to permit Sailors to achieve excellence while instilling confidence through our unwavering commitment to them and their families. It is imperative that we continue to commit resources toward programs that build force resiliency.

### **III. RESPONSIVE FORCE MANAGEMENT**

Responsive Force Management strategic priorities are focused on end strength, compensation, fleet manning, retention, recruiting, and training throughput.

**Stabilize End Strength:** The President's fiscal year 2014 budget request supports active end strength of 323,600, and selected reserve end strength of 59,100. The request seeks \$27.8 billion in Military Personnel, Navy (MPN) appropriations, and \$1.8 billion in related Operation and Maintenance, Navy (O&MN), appropriations. The request includes \$1.9 billion for Reserve Personnel, Navy (RPN) and \$24.9 million in related Operation and Maintenance, Navy Reserve (O&MNR) appropriations.

Navy has invested in additional strength to help reduce manning gaps at sea, while concurrently restoring targeted shore billets to provide adequate shore rotational assignments for Sailors in sea-intensive ratings, and at regional maintenance centers and afloat training groups. These additional billets will not only help improve sea/shore flow, they will develop additional trained Sailors with advanced maintenance skills while on shore duty, who will return to sea better prepared to make an immediate technical contribution to their commands. In the near-term, we are also increasing strength among junior officers in the surface and submarine warfare communities to meet future department head requirements. Our budget request appropriately balances risk, preserves capabilities to meet current fleet and joint requirements, fosters growth in emerging mission areas, and provides vital support to Sailors and Navy families, as we carefully monitor personnel and fleet readiness. We are also applying and adjusting force management tools to retain the right skills, pay grade, and experience-mix necessary to provide mission-ready naval forces. End strength continues to grow across the Future Years Defense Program until it stabilizes at approximately 326,100 in fiscal year 2018.

We are carefully managing reduction of over 3,000 positions from the Reserve billet base, to 59,100 end strength. These adjustments align the Selected Reserve with post Operation Enduring Freedom requirements, reconfiguration of the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, and the new Defense Strategy, while retaining capabilities vital to fulfilling the Reserve Component role in Navy's Total Force mission. By calibrating accessions, offering increased active duty augmentation and recall opportunities, and allowing for natural attrition, the Navy Reserve will accomplish this reduction within strength and fiscal controls. In the long term, however, the Navy Reserve force will grow to approximately 60,000, and the Reserve mission-

set is increased to include shipyard maintenance augmentation, unmanned aerial vehicle support, maritime operations center augmentation and additional intelligence, cyber and information dominance.

**Effective Force Management:** Perform to Serve (PTS) remains our primary force-management tool to maintain balance across all enlisted ratings by ensuring that we have the right number of enlisted Sailors in each rating at the right experience level. Through PTS, which uses performance criteria within individual ratings and length of service cells to ensure long-term sustainment of experience, we have made significant progress toward achieving balance across all enlisted ratings, reducing the number of overmanned ratings from 35 in 2011, to just 9 today.

Improved rating balance has resulted in more reenlistment approvals. In 2011, approximately 60 percent of PTS requests were approved, while just one year later 80 to 90 percent were approved, and advancement opportunity increased. PTS also allows Sailors not selected for retention in their current rating to consider, as alternatives to leaving the Navy, converting to a new rating or transitioning into the Navy Reserve.

**Compensation:** Compensation is a critical force-management tool. As we look for cost saving measures, we strive to ensure that we will not disadvantage Sailors; rather we will look to preserve the strength of the All Volunteer Force and ensure fiscal sustainability of our pay and benefits programs. Special and Incentive (S&I) pays provide flexible compensation incentives to address specific manning needs or other force management issues not efficiently addressed through basic pay increases alone. Navy judiciously applies S&I pays, such as Enlistment

Bonuses, Selective Reenlistment Bonuses and Critical Skills Retention Bonuses, to recruit and retain Sailors in key occupation specialties or critical skill areas. S&I pays are also provided as compensation for onerous or hazardous duty assignments or conditions, and for maintaining proficiency in specific skills important to national security.

**Recruiting:** Navy has worked hard to achieve strong recruiting success over the past five years by attracting the nation's best and brightest for America's Navy. Our recruiting brand, "America's Navy - A Global Force for Good", captures CNO's priorities while appealing to our 17-24 year-old recruiting market. In FY2012 and FY2013-to-date, Navy achieved accession goals for officers in the active component, and for enlisted in both the active and reserve components. We continue to do well recruiting into priority ratings in the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program (NNPP) and Navy Special Warfare/Special Operations (NSW/SPECOPS). Additionally, we attained the highest quality future Sailors in history, with 99 percent of accessions entering as high school diploma graduates, and 90.2 percent of accessions scoring in the upper 50th percentile on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB).

Navy Recruiting leading indicators forecast that our recruiting mission will become increasingly challenging. While the quality of accessions rose between FY2009 and FY2012, accession quality has begun trending downward, and is expected to close-out the year with approximately 85 percent of accessions scoring in the upper 50<sup>th</sup> percentile on the ASVAB. While still well above DoD and Navy minimum standards, this trend is a source of concern as we continue our efforts to recruit the best America has to offer. Additionally, each month, Navy is meeting enlistment contracting goals later in the month. The impact of sequestration on



recruiting resources, particularly marketing and advertising, will further increase our recruiting challenges.

Navy achieved most active component officer recruiting goals in FY2012, but experienced a shortfall in attaining direct accession physicians, which was offset by success in recruiting within student medical officer programs. We were also successful in recruiting officers into the priority NNPP and NSW/SPECOPS mission areas. Success in officer program recruiting was further reflected by the highest ever quality and number of diversity applicants into the NROTC Program.

For the Reserve Component, Navy faced challenges again this past year with recruiting for the General Officer unrestricted line communities (e.g., surface, submarine, and aviation warfare) primarily because of high active duty retention rates. In recent years, we have also had challenges in recruiting specialized medical professionals for the Reserve Component (e.g., surgeons, anesthesiologists) due to high active duty retention, stiff competition from the civilian healthcare community, and perceived risk to civilian medical practices due to frequent mobilizations.

FY2014 is projected to be more challenging for both officer and enlisted recruiting.. Consequently, we will balance recruiter manning, accession bonuses, and the marketing and advertising budget, to continue to aggressively attack challenging areas, such as healthcare specialties, and maintain focus on priority recruiting mission areas. The FY2014 budget requests \$269 million for recruiting programs, including accession incentives, advertising, and support for

active and reserve recruiters Despite the improving economic forecast, our budget request ensures that the recruiting force remains appropriately sized and resourced for success.

**Selection and Classification Programs:** Effective selection and classification programs are the foundation of Navy efforts to properly man the fleet to current and future requirements in this dynamic environment. We are using state-of-the-art technology and processes to hire recruits into jobs optimally suited to their abilities and interests. This same technology is used to identify Sailors for lateral conversion into mission critical career fields. These programs have had a significant impact on reducing training losses, increasing retention and increasing promotion opportunity.

**Fleet Manning:** Navy manpower has decreased by more than 50,000 Sailors since 2004, through a combination of reduced force structure and reduced manning aboard individual ships and aircraft, causing an imbalance between sea and shore billets and between ratings. As a result of efforts that began in FY2012 to improve fleet manning by moving approximately 6,000 billets from shore to sea, fleet manning is projected to improve throughout the remainder of the fiscal year while gaps at sea decrease from about 11,600 to 7,800. We also project that by the end of the fiscal year, nearly 95 percent of all enlisted billets at sea will be manned, with close to 90 percent filled by the right Sailor with the proper seniority and appropriate skill level and training.

Through various force management tools, including special and incentive pays applied to critical skills, voluntary/involuntary distribution, funding the Individuals Account and shore billets for sea intensive ratings, Reserve to Active augmentation, and Active Duty Definite

Recall Program for Reserve Enlisted, we are shaping Sailor behavior to attain optimum fleet manning. Selective application of these tools is helping retain Sailors in undermanned skills, but requires continuous assessment and regular adjustments to account for changing economic conditions. Ultimately, we must ensure that gaps at sea are filled by the right Sailor, with the right skills at the right time.

**Retention:** Navy aggregate enlisted retention continues to be strong compared to last year, with increased retention in all zones. However, retention in select areas is challenging and our current key focus is on first term Sailors. Four years ago, we reduced accessions so that we could retain more career Sailors. Consequently, as these cohort groups enter their reenlistment windows, we now need a greater percentage of first term Sailors to reenlist. As we monitor personnel and fleet readiness, with a focus on increasing sea duty manning, we are applying force management tools, where appropriate, to retain the right skills across pay grades. Our new and existing policies encourage Sailors to commit earlier to stay for longer periods, affording increasing predictability of future personnel readiness. We recently updated reenlistment bonuses to target junior enlisted personnel to attain first term retention goals in FY2013, and sustain a healthy force into the future.

To position Navy to meet future mission requirements, we must balance the force by recruiting and retaining officers in the right mix of specialties. Officer inventory shortfalls remain in several critical communities. Offering precise targeted incentive pays and bonuses is essential to maintaining and improving manning in these mission-essential specialties.

#### IV. EFFECTIVE PERSONNEL READINESS

The Effective Personnel Readiness strategic priorities focus on matching Sailors with jobs for which they are well-suited; and on Sailor quality of life, training, education and family support.

**21st Century Sailor and Marine Initiative:** In March 2012, the Secretary of the Navy announced the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sailor and Marine initiative. To maximize Sailor personal readiness, we designed objectives and policies to maintain the resiliency of the force and to hone the most combat effective force in the history of the Department of the Navy. Our aim is to prepare Sailors and their families to face life's challenges through a myriad of programs focused on creating a balanced lifestyle, on and off-duty, while specifically addressing the needs of wounded warriors through our Navy Safe Harbor Program.

- *Health of the Force.* Navy's assessment of the overall health of the force is good, morale remains high and work satisfaction increased over the last 12 years. Our Sailors are choosing to remain in the Navy; aggregate retention remains strong, though some areas continue to prove challenging. The 2012 Quality of Life Survey and Behavioral Health quick polls revealed positive feedback with standard of living/income and job satisfaction, while concern was expressed about manning shortages, long work hours and high operational tempo. As deployment lengths and schedules change, based on world events, we must monitor the impact on Sailors and their families and understand the underlying factors that may distract from our

operational goals. We expect the assessment of the health of the force to remain strong; however, there are areas that require significant continued focus and efforts, specifically prevention of suicides and sexual assaults. Additionally, we remain committed to providing quality care and robust programs through our wounded warrior Safe Harbor program.

- *Suicide Prevention and Operational Stress Control.* Suicide prevention extends beyond specific program efforts and strives to create an open environment that reduces barriers and encourages Sailors to seek help. Navy's suicide prevention strategy concentrates on moving prevention as far left of the potential event as possible through effective execution of five lines of effort: Education and Awareness, Prevention and Intervention, Sailor Care and Transformational Growth, Physical, Mental and Spiritual Fitness, and Assessment. Navy focuses on building personal resilience, promoting peer-to-peer support, enhancing family relationships, enabling intervention up-and-down the chain of command, and fostering a command climate in which help-seeking behaviors enable sustained personal resilience. Our robust programs include:
  - Navy's Operational Stress Control (OSC) Program;
  - Reserve Psychological Health Outreach Program (RPHOP);
  - Navy Mobile Care Teams;
  - Deployment Health Assessments;
  - Returning Warrior Workshops;
  - Project FOCUS (Families Overcoming Under Stress);

- Coalition of Sailors Against Destructive Decisions (CSADD); and
- Crisis Intervention and Response.

Navy leadership is determined to prevent suicides in our force; the loss of even one life to suicide is a one too many.

- *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR).* Sexual assault rates in the Navy remain unacceptable; we are committed to achieving a steady reduction in the incidence of sexual assault to eradicate this abhorrent crime from our ranks. Our lines of effort to combat sexual assault are: Education and Awareness, Prevention and Intervention, Victim Advocacy and Resiliency, Investigation and Accountability and Assessment. Navy has focused proactively on prevention programs, expanded a successful model instituted at Recruit Training Command, focused on individual unit climates and instituted enhanced victim care, prosecution measures and reporting procedures. We will continue to aggressively promote and foster a culturally aware and informed Navy; respectful of all, intolerant of sexual assault, and supported by a synergistic program of prevention, advocacy and accountability.
- *Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention.* Navy's "zero tolerance" drug abuse policy is comprised of three key elements: detection, deterrence, and prevention. Navy Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention (NADAP) is a comprehensive, science-based program consisting of Sailor education, prevention awareness, advocacy, trend analysis/threat assessment, and intervention. This past year, NADAP achieved tangible goals in reducing the number of positive urinalysis and alcohol-related

incidents and increasing Navy leadership awareness of prevention programs. In 2012, Navy incorporated testing for synthetic drugs, including spice and bath salts. The testing regimen is robust and flexible enough to adjust testing protocols to the dynamic synthetic drug market through a collaborative arrangement with intelligence resources that track market changes. Initial indications are that this is having the desired deterrent effect on synthetic drug use. We recently implemented use of hand-held Alcohol Detection Devices (ADD) as an education and awareness tool to provide Sailors and commands the ability to readily identify the impact of alcohol-use decisions.

- *Family Support.* Navy recognizes that military service presents unique challenges and opportunities for Sailors and their families. Family support programs assist commanding officers and Navy families in managing the demands of military life in concert with a healthy family life. Fleet and Family Support Centers provide services that include deployment support, crisis response, and career support and retention programs. Navy leadership is committed to investing and increasing resources for Sailor and Family Readiness Programs, including:
  - sexual assault prevention and response;
  - alcohol awareness and deglamorization;
  - drug detection and abuse prevention;
  - Navy Safe Harbor wounded warrior support;
  - suicide prevention and resiliency;
  - casualty assistance and funeral support;

- child care; and
- Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

We are working to minimize the impacts of Sequestration on Sailor and Family Readiness programs to avoid adverse affects on the people each of them supports.

Navy's budget request adds \$18 million to support full implementation of the VOW Act and Veterans Employment Initiative (VEI). We are also implementing a re-designed Transition Assistance program, entitled "Transition GPS" (Goals, Plans, Succeed)), which includes delivery of legally mandated requirements, such as Pre-Separation Counseling, Department of Labor (DOL) Employment Workshop and a Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Benefits briefing. Transitioning Sailors will also have the option of participating in a series of two-day tailored instructional tracks within the transition GPS curriculum:

- a higher education track, for those pursuing a college degree;
- a technical training track, for those seeking job-ready skills and industry-recognized credentials in shorter-term training programs; and
- an entrepreneurship track for those desiring to start a business.

The design of all of fleet and family support programs is to help families be resilient, well-informed, and adaptable.

**Training and Education:** Our most critical obligation in the continuum of training is providing Sailors with the most relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities as quickly as possible to achieve optimal knowledge transfer and make best use of finite resources. This means using our



established end-to-end curriculum content development-and-revision process to identify the most cost-effective solutions to deliver training without sacrificing quality. As new weapon systems and platforms are introduced, we must ensure that innovative techniques, such as interactive multimedia, simulators, and avatars, are applied when appropriate.

Navy has developed a plan to improve timeliness, relevance, and comprehensiveness of technical training. Modularized training optimizes the initial training pipeline and provides continuous training opportunities as Sailors progress through their first tours. This approach creates flexibility in the pipeline and allows Sailors to report sooner to their first duty station, armed with the necessary skills to have an immediate positive impact. Strategically distributing training delivery, so that Sailors receive only the instruction necessary to perform their immediate duties, minimizes time between instruction and utilization, thereby, reducing knowledge-and-skill decay associated with current delays. Pilot programs evaluate the modularized training concept to ensure training quality remains high along the continuum.

- *Asymmetric Advantage:* There is an inherent premise that asymmetric warfare must deal with unknowns. The ability of our maritime forces to respond quickly to crises and eliminate threats is a direct result of exemplary training. Technical expertise gained through a variety of initial and advanced skills training gives Sailors the ability to evaluate what needs to be done to fight and win. Navy's leadership training, mentoring, and coaching, contribute directly to development of a Sailor's critical thinking skills, willingness to accept prudent risks, and ability to adjust rapidly based on situational assessment.

The discipline, technical expertise and esprit de corps that enable us to win in combat also enable us to adapt to, and accomplish, other complex missions, such as humanitarian relief efforts at home and abroad. New technologies, combined with proven learning strategies, continue to drive cost-effective improvements in training. Intelligent tutoring systems and learning strategies leveraging simulation, virtual worlds, and emerging technologies, allow us to maximize training efficiency while improving training effectiveness and timeliness of delivery, ensuring our asymmetric edge is maintained.

- *Nationally Recognized:* In addition to meeting fleet performance requirements, initial skills training provided to new accessions has been consistently recognized by leading industry and training organizations for innovations that improve workplace learning. Over the past two years, our training commands were recognized by the prestigious American Society for Training and Development, with three “Excellence in Practice” awards and three citations. For the last four years, Navy has ranked as one of the country’s top training organizations on *Training Magazine’s “Top 125”* list. The high quality of training provided to our force is also demonstrated through thousands of college credit hours recommended by the American Council on Education, which supports our efforts to compete for the best talent in the Nation.

Additionally, our training programs are internationally recognized. We provide training and education to foreign service members and civilians from over 160

nations in support of the DoD Guidance for the Employment of Forces and the Maritime Strategy, for deeper partnerships, building partner nation capacity; and improving joint, allied and coalition interoperability. On any given day, over 1,270 international military students train at over 150 schools and activities in the United States and participate in a wide-range of training activities in foreign countries. In fiscal year 2012, we finalized training arrangements for U.S. grant programs, such as the International Military Education and Training Program, Counter Terrorism Fellowship Program and African Partnership Station.

- *Transformative Training and Technology.* Traditional Navy war-fighting communities (e.g., surface, aviation, and submarine) and the recently reconstituted expeditionary community, rely increasingly on simulators to conduct training. Simulators are among the most significant improvements in our training programs. As fidelity and access to simulator technology increase, prevalence of this technology is building at Navy schoolhouses, training commands and in the fleet. Investment in simulator training increases training capacity, effectiveness, and efficiency and reduces wear on platforms and operational equipment; thereby, minimizing operation maintenance and replacement costs. Simulators used for the expeditionary community are currently resourced through Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding. Accordingly, we have requested an additional \$3.3 million to facilitate shifting funding for this vital simulator training into the baseline budget.

- *Joint and Professional Military Education.* Naval War College (NWC) and Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) continue to deliver core mission functions that provide critical support to the maritime strategy. Both are central to Navy's strategic investment in Navy- and DoD-relevant education to develop a resilient, knowledgeable and adaptable force. With implementation of Enlisted Professional Military Education (EPME) in 2008, which includes Joint Professional Military Education (JPME), Navy has a progressive continuum of Navy-specific PME coupled with JPME, from pay grade E-1 through O-9.
  
- *Voluntary Education/Tuition Assistance (TA).* Navy remains steadfast in our commitment to sustain the Tuition Assistance (TA) Program. The Chief of Naval Operations has assured Sailors that TA will remain intact and available. We have made no changes to the program and continue to provide 100 percent funding up to the established caps for eligible Sailors. While ongoing fiscal pressure will necessitate continued scrutiny of all investments, our goal is to ensure that we can continue meeting current obligations and fulfilling the educational goals of every Sailor who desires to enroll. Our course completion rate is well over 90 percent, which we attribute in part to the exceptional support Sailors receive from trained Navy education counselors. Each Sailor, working with a qualified counselor, must develop an appropriate educational plan, which the counselor must approve before TA funding can be authorized and classes begin. Counselors ensure that Sailors are prepared for the academic requirements associated with each Sailor's approved plan and help them streamline an attainable degree completion process.

- *Credentialing and Licensure.* Navy Credentialing Opportunities Online (COOL) funds over 17,000 credentials each year for approximately 7,500 individuals. Every Navy occupation has at least one professional credential available, with more than 1,800 civilian certifications now funded. Additionally, the Navy Credentialing Program Office actively participates in the President's Education, Training, and Credentialing Strategic Working Group, in supporting the Presidential Call for a Career-Ready military by maximizing service member certifications in critical civilian job fields.
  
- *Language, Regional Expertise and Culture (LREC).* Navy's LREC program builds capability by incentivizing language, regional, and culture learning through relevant, cost-effective education and training products structured to meet operational requirements while leveraging proven, existing resources. The program incorporates regional and cultural content in Navy Professional Military Education (NPME), provides language acquisition and sustainment training to Cryptologic Language Analysts (CTIs) and Foreign Area Officers (FAOs), and makes non-resident language instruction available to Sailors who require it. To encourage language learning for Naval Special Warfare commands, expeditionary units, and Afghanistan-Pakistan Hands, Navy expanded its Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus (FLPB) program to incentivize language skills at the proficiency levels specifically required for the operational readiness of those forces. Navy LREC also provided products and services to more than 110,000 Sailors and Coastguardsmen in 2013. In response to

the Defense Strategic Guidance of January 2012, Navy has developed an Asia-Pacific Hands Pilot, which leverages existing educational resources to provide enhanced regional knowledge to select officers ordered to assignments in the Pacific Command Area of Operations.

## **CONCLUSION**

The President's FY2014 budget request resources critical programs that will continue to support Navy manpower, personnel, training, and education priorities of: Responsive Force Management, Effective Personnel Readiness, and Sound Organizational Alignment, while maintaining a ready and capable global Navy. I look forward to working with you as we continue to shape the Navy to meet current and emerging requirements, while confronting the challenges that lie ahead. On behalf of the men and women of the United States Navy, and their families, thank you for your leadership, commitment and unwavering support.