

Current Readiness & Enterprise AIRSpeed Newsletter



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Rear Adm. Goodwin: A final review and a farewell

It has been a tremendous privilege to have served Naval Aviation as both Commander, Naval Air Forces, U. S. Atlantic Fleet (AIRLANT) and with the Naval Aviation Enterprise's (NAE) Current Readiness Cross Functional Team (CFT).

As I turn command of AIRLANT over to Rear Admiral Richard O'Hanlon and hand him the reins to the Current Readiness CFT, I'd like

to highlight a few of the significant accomplishments we have made over the past two years.

At the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 06, the readiness of a little less than half of the aircraft in the Naval Aviation inventory were affected by NAE processes. As we welcomed Chief of Naval Air Training and Marine Corps Aviation into the NAE, the readiness of more than 80 percent of our aircraft are now positively influenced by the



Rear Adm.
Bill Goodwin

NAE process and plans are in place to increase that number to greater than 95 percent by the end of FY 09.

The results have been striking. In spite of some significant aircraft material condition challenges, we achieved a reduction in the aircraft

(Achievements continued on Page 2)

FY 08 Overview

- Naval Aviation's aircraft availability gap decreased from 7.5 percent to 6.3 percent, a gain of three aircraft per month.
- The CH-53D Type/Model/Series (T/M/S) aircraft availability gap was reduced from 28.4 percent to 11.1 percent; the EA-6B community saw its gap decrease from 11.4 percent to zero.
- A 20 percent gap reduction was achieved in 52 percent of the T/M/Ss.
- Cost-wise production efforts reduced the number of out of reporting aircraft by 25 percent and reduced the number of Issue Priority Group 1 (high priority parts requests) backorders by six percent and overall backorders by 15 percent.
- A \$75 million cost-avoidance was achieved aboard aircraft carriers Fleet-wide by using standardized business rules.
- The NAE Qualified Proficient Technician gap was reduced by seven percent, with the most

(Sidebar continued on Page 2)

In this issue:

1. [Rear Adm. Goodwin: A final review and a farewell](#)
Rear Adm. Goodwin recaps Current Readiness' FY08 successes in his before leaving AIRLANT (Page 1)
2. [CFLSW's QPT numbers increase three-fold; airframe readiness on track](#)
VR community sees significant increase in QPTs (Page 2)
3. [A look at the V-22 in two different venues – on land and at sea](#) (Page 3)
Maintenance on the Marine Corps' newest airframe gets a closer look during "Boots-on-the-Ground" (AIRSpeed, artisans and equipment improve readiness at MCAS New River)
Two Enterprises and a ship (*USS Bataan* is first L-class ship to deploy with the V-22)
4. [Collaboration builds readiness for carrier force](#) (Page 4)
Carrier Readiness Team joins forces with two other initiatives.
5. [Growing our workforce](#) (Page 5)
Dreams of flight can come true for enlisted (A story of two pilots who were among the first to enter the Flying CWO program)
Measuring up to a dream (Ens. Daniels recounts her journey through the first stages of the pilot training pipeline)
6. [NAE T/M/S Master Schedule](#) (Link)
7. [Links of interest](#) (Page 9)

(Achievements continued from Page 1)

Ready for Tasking deficit on the Navy side by approximately 10 percent per year. I anticipate the Marines will also realize deficit reductions as they fully integrate into the Enterprise.

Additionally, we stemmed the growth of the cost per flight hour in the flying hour program. Prior to FY05, the average cost per hour was growing by eight percent per year. Since FY05, the cost per hour has remained stable with almost no growth.

What does this mean to you in the fleet? First, you have the funding to fly the flight hours you need to meet the mission.

Second, you have the right aircraft in the right place at the right time in the right configuration to fly those flight hours.

These same NAE processes are being applied to aircraft carriers. We expect to see similar positive results in

the near future.

When I say “we,” I mean the thousands of us in the NAE. Each and every one of you has fully embraced the concepts and contributed to the successes of the Current Readiness CFT and the greater NAE.

I am confident that as direct contributors, under the leadership of Rear Adm. Richard O’Hanlon and his Marine partner Brig. Gen. Jon Davis, you will ensure continued achievements and successes for Current Readiness. Each and every one of you contributes

to the success of the Enterprise. Keep up the good work--safely, professionally, and on time.

Rear Adm. Bill Goodwin was relieved as Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic Fleet, in mid-January to become the assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Next Generation Enterprise Network System Program Office. For more information on NGEN, go to [Navy.mil](http://www.navy.mil) and read Chief of Naval Operations Names Next Generation Enterprise Network Chief (http://www.navy.mil/search/display.asp?story_id=41219). ■

(Sidebar continued from Page 1)

significant gap reductions in the Patrol Squadron (VP) community (26 percent) the Fleet Logistics Support Squadron community (VR) (26 percent), and the Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron Elec-

tronic Attack VQ(T) (21 percent).

- The Naval Enlisted Aircrew production gap was reduced from negative 26 percent to negative seven percent – a 73 percent gap closure. ■

CFLSW’s QPT numbers increase three-fold; airframe readiness on track

By Capt. Ted Tedmon, Commander, Fleet Logistics Support Wing

Improvements in its workforce and the high rate of aircraft readiness were highlighted during Fleet Logistics Support Wing’s (VR) Current Readiness brief to the Naval Aviation Enterprise Air Board in October.

VR saw a 189 percent increase in the number of qualified proficient

technicians (QPT) within the last 12 months despite significant deficits in overall maintenance manning numbers; the number continues to trend upwards despite a manpower-poor environment, showing the strength and efficiency of the training process in VR squadrons.

Solid aircraft readiness numbers also were achieved throughout the year by the large jet aircraft platforms. VR maintenance teams produced 91 percent of required jet transport assets, including 100 percent of required C-40s.

VR leadership was tasked to work with Marine Corps reserve elements to explore the most efficient options for transition to newer C-130 aircraft, which may help the Fleet Logistics Wing progress towards the “fleet of the future.” The reconfiguration of CFLSW into a leaner, more capable fleet will greatly benefit the entire Navy.

VR continues to benefit from the increased awareness and visibility of the community within the NAE as it lends support for initiatives to improve readiness. The community will continue to use the Enterprise concept to identify, attack, and resolve any issues that result in inefficient operations, while maximizing the value of the fleet logistics program to the Navy as a whole. ■

VR at a glance

With more than 4,500 active and selected reservists assigned to its 15 squadrons and seven permanent detachments, Fleet Logistics Support Wing (VR) is the largest air wing in the Navy. The wing provides the rapid-response and around-the-globe coverage that today’s Navy requires from an air logistics operation and is assigned tasking by five operational scheduling agencies responsible for receiving, validating, and prioritizing lift requests from the fleet and arranging those requests into airlift missions. Wing assets maintain a continuous presence in three busy OCONUS theaters, providing even greater rapid-response capabilities to U.S. forces serving on the “tip of the spear.”

VR also operates three executive transport units, which receive their tasking from the offices of the highest ranking Navy and Marine Corps officials. These units are “on-call” to meet the unique travel requirements resident in the positions of the required users.

A look at the V-22 in two different venues – on land and at sea

Two Boots-on-the-Ground/Boots-on-the-Deck tours held within 11 days of each other provided Naval Aviation Enterprise leadership the opportunity to compare and contrast the challenges faced by V-22 maintainers ashore and afloat. The events not only underscored the need for communication among senior leadership and junior Marines, but among maintainers assigned to different venues.

Maintenance on the Marine Corps' newest airframe gets a closer look during "Boots-on-the-Ground"

By Jacquelyn Millham, Current Readiness/Enterprise AIRSpeed Public Affairs

All it took was just a question – why couldn't Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron (MALS) 26 fix the propeller rotor blade for a V-22 "Osprey?"

That piece of gear for the newest airframe in Marine Aviation had a beyond capability of maintenance (BCM) rate of 100 percent and was a considerable expense. With the addition of an artisan and the positioning of materials, repairs could be performed locally.

"We asked NAVAIR (Naval Air Systems Command) if we could repair certain items on the V-22 by submitting a TAR (Technical Assist Request) and we were given the O.K.," said Staff Sgt. Kim Haines, Jr., rotor dynamics branch staff non-commissioned officer-in-charge.

With that go-ahead and armed with continuous process improvement tools, MALS-26 increased their maintenance capabilities for the V-22. The propeller rotor blade's ready for issue (RFI) rate rose to 85 percent; The remaining 15 percent will be realized once repair capability for root end bushings is obtained. (A bushing is a cylindrical metal sleeve inserted into a machine part for reducing the effect of friction on moving parts or for decreasing the diameter of a hole.)

"Our goal is to have a future state of 100 percent repair capability for the V-22," he said.

The reduction in BCM was one of several successes and initiatives touted by Marine Air Group (MAG) 26 and MAG-29 during "Boots-on-the-Ground" at Marine Corps Air Station New River on Nov. 20. Lt. Gen. George Trautman, Deputy Commandant for Aviation; Maj. General Cornell Wilson, Deputy Commander, U. S. Marine Corps Forces Command; Maj. Gen. James Flock, Commanding General, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing; Rear Adm. Steven Eastburg, Com-

Two Enterprises and a ship

"Boots-on-the-Deck" aboard USS Bataan spurs joint NAE and SWE action

By Jacquelyn Millham, Current Readiness/Enterprise AIRSpeed Public Affairs

More than two years ago, *USS Bonhomme Richard* (LHD 6) hosted the first "Boots-on-the-Deck" aboard an L-class ship and highlighted the need for a "seamless" Navy Enterprise. The second L-class ship to host the event, *USS Bataan* (LDH 5), again brought to the forefront the need for Naval personnel at all levels to engage in enterprise behavior.

With discussions on off-loading excess equipment, training and manpower, portions of the Dec. 2 visit were just like the ones previously held aboard aircraft carriers and at intermediate maintenance activities. But the focus of Boots-on-the-Deck aboard *Bataan* was different in part because in a few months she would be the first L-class ship to deploy with the V-22 "Osprey" and encounter the challenges associated

(Bataan continued on Page 6)



Marine Corps Air Station New River maintainers talk with Naval Aviation Enterprise representatives, including Lt. Gen. George Trautman (far right), about their continuous process improvement activities. Photo by MCAS New River Public Affairs.

mander, Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division and Assistant Commander for Research and Engineering, Naval Air Systems Command; Rear Adm. Mark Guadagnini, Chief of Naval Air Training; and representatives from Naval Air System Command, Naval Inventory Control Point, and contractors attended the event.

The integration of artisans has also produced a net cost avoidance of \$4.8 million – a return on investment of 25:1.

- Other successes include:
 - Lowering the turnaround time (TAT) for the V-22's pitch control link from more than three days to 10 hours

by reorganizing Support Equipment;

(New River continued on Page 7)

Collaboration builds readiness for carrier force

Three teams meet to grow and foster the lines of communication

By the NAE Carrier Readiness Team

In an effort to further improve aircraft carrier maintenance availabilities, the Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE) Carrier Readiness Team (CRT) has joined forces with Carrier Team One (CT1) and the Carrier Planning Activity (CPA).

CT1 is a cross-functional team (CFT) that improves carrier shipyard maintenance processes by facilitating key planning and execution activities and by performing more maintenance and modernization for the dollar. This Naval Sea Systems Command-led initiative, which was formed over a decade ago, uses knowledge management as one of its toolsets to integrate people and processes and to increase performance.

(Knowledge management refers to practices used by organizations to identify, create, represent, distribute and enable adoption of insights, experiences and operationally-relevant information; the transference of knowledge is often conducted through group problem-solving and enabled by information technology.)

CRT, CT1 and CPA representatives met at CT1's semi-annual face-to-face meeting in San Diego in November 2008. The agenda included key discussions and briefings involving a large cross section of representatives from both carrier maintenance and ships' operations communities, with the focus on knowledge sharing of carrier maintenance successes, challenges and issues while maintaining continuous improvement. The result

was a renewed commitment to alignment and collaboration between key stakeholders involved in the process of maintaining a combat-ready aircraft carrier fleet.

Key stakeholders included personnel from across the carrier maintenance community who actively participate in CT1, CPA, and the CRT. Each



USS Nimitz (CVN 68) (pictured above) will be the first aircraft carrier to undergo Afloat Strike Team AIRSpeed implementation and will host the second "Boots-on-the-Deck" tour of FY09 in February. The Carrier Readiness Team, Carrier Team One and the Carrier Planning Activity have formally established a way forward to address issues associated with ships' maintenance availabilities. Photo from Navy NewsStand.

of these teams is integral to achieving the objectives of the NAE's Strategic Plan as well as its vision to efficiently deliver the right force with the right readiness at the right time...today and in the future.

Different phases, one life cycle

CT1 provides unique value by focusing on improving cross-organizational processes within the industrial maintenance arena that fall outside the purview of organic organizations. Since 1997, CT1 has been a catalyst for carrier maintenance improvement efforts and has coordinated a variety

of maintenance improvements in such areas as: availability planning; work control and integration; and improving propulsion plant material condition management.

CT1 continues today to transition the carrier maintenance culture toward continuous learning by emphasizing a process review focus, knowledge sharing and effective use of lessons learned. Their motto is "One Team, Improving Availabilities... and we can prove it!"

The CPA became a division of the Program Executive Officer (PEO) Carriers, In-Service Aircraft Carriers Program Office (PMS 312) in 2007 and provides primary centralized aircraft carrier life-cycle management for maintenance and modernization planning while being responsive to immediate and surge requirements.

Its roles and responsibilities have evolved significantly since it was first established in 1998 as the Carrier Planning Office, a department within Supervisors of Shipbuilding

(SUPSHIP) Newport News. In 2004, a charter and name change caused a re-focus on carrier life cycle planning resulting in significant progress being made in maintenance planning process improvements, life cycle cost avoidance, and the development and execution of 50-year life cycle strategies for the Navy's nuclear aircraft carrier fleet.

The NAE's CRT was formed to engage, influence, and drive enterprise behavior among key stakeholders to define and achieve aircraft carrier readiness standards and efficiently

(CRT continued on Page 7)

Growing our workforce

A key principle in marketing states that it is harder and more expensive to attract new customers than it is to keep old ones. The same is true of an organization's employees. The following stories are just two examples of how the Navy provides advancement opportunities to its workforce and why it is an employer of choice.

Dreams of flight can come true for enlisted

By Jacquelyn Millham, Current Readiness/Enterprise AIRSpeed Public Affairs

For some, becoming a pilot is the ultimate achievement in aviation, even more so when it comes to flying military aircraft. Few will ever have the opportunity to take the controls of a multi-million dollar weapons system and hone his or her warfighting skills or engage the enemy.

Measuring up to a dream

By Jacquelyn Millham, Current Readiness/Enterprise AIRSpeed Public Affairs

As a child, Ensign Jennifer Daniels would climb on the roof of her uncle's house in south Tampa, Fla., near MacDill Air Force Base. She wanted to be closer to the airplanes as the pilots performed aerobatics during air shows. To her, flying was exciting, intimidating, and demanding – the pilots seemed superhuman. And it kindled a dream of flying within her.

While she excelled in high school and could have been accepted to some of the top universities, Daniels felt she needed to go beyond the four walls of a school and try her hand at life. Remembering the excitement she felt on her uncle's roof, she talked to a recruiter during her senior year about becoming a pilot.

"He told me that all pilots had to be officers, and all officers had to have college degrees. I told him that I had no interest in college at that time, so he suggested I consider enlisting and doing my best, then applying for a commissioning program later," she said.

Daniel's Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery and Nuclear Field Qualification Test scores qualified her to become a nuclear machinist's mate. To her, the job description – operating, repairing, and maintaining the propulsion components of nuclear-powered submarines and aircraft carriers – sounded perfect. "So I told him, 'Sign me up!'" she said.

After completing boot camp in 2000, she attended Nuclear Power School and the Nuclear Power Training Unit. Because of her performance, Daniels was selected for an additional rate school to become an engineering laboratory technician which would qualify her to monitor and correct reactor chemistry, as well as ensure radiological controls and safety.

(Daniels continued on Page 8)

But CWO2 Brandon Jacobson and CWO2 Keith Miltner are two former enlisted Sailors who got that opportunity through the Navy's Flying Chief Warrant Officer Program.

The Flying Chief Warrant Officer program trains Sailors E-5 through E-7 as pilots and commissions them as warrant officers to fly the P-3C, EP-3E, E-6B, or one of the current H-53 or H-60 helicopter variants. Jacobson and Miltner, who received their wings during the summer of 2007, were members of the first group of 14 candidates selected for the program in 2006. They started training on the P-3 Orion in December 2008.

From fixing to flying

Neither Jacobson nor Miltner enlisted in the Navy with an intention to fly. Miltner was an avionics technician petty officer 2nd class assigned to Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VR) 46 at Naval Air Station Atlanta maintaining C-9Bs before entering the program. It was only then that he realized that he wanted to fly. After earning a bachelor's degree from Bowling Green State University in August 2005, he began researching options that would enable him to become an officer.

"Being a naval aviator struck me as the ultimate pinnacle of leadership," said Miltner. "While working on C9s, I was intrigued by what they do and was inspired by the officers around me at VR 46."

Aware of Miltner's goals and acting on his belief in growing Sailors, ADCS Robert Bottom, who worked in Miltner's chain of command at VR 46, encouraged him and others to apply for the program in January 2006. Miltner said that the program seemed to be a great fit.

"I thought that this was the perfect opportunity to serve my country," he said.

Jacobson never intended to fly when he enlisted but always had a childhood dream of flying. "I thought that the pilots on the ship had the greatest job in the world. Pilots always seemed to be a professional group that I wanted to be a part of. The freedom that flying affords would make anyone want to do it," he said.

A mass e-mail he received while stationed at Fleet Readiness Center Southwest as an aviation electronics technician 1st class spurred Jacobson into action.

"I never imagined that I would be selected to this program, but I put in the package anyway because it seemed like an amazing opportunity," he said.

Making the transition

Seven years of enlisted experience made Jacobson more aware of his role as an officer and a leader. The

(CWO continued on Page 9)

(Bataan continued from Page 3)

with operating and maintaining that airframe at sea.

Lt. Gen. George Trautman, Deputy Commandant for Aviation; Rear Adm. Raymond Berube, Commander, Naval Inventory Control Point; Rear Adm. (sel.) Sinclair Harris, Deputy Director, Expeditionary Warfare Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations; and representatives from Naval Air Systems Command, Surface Warfare Enterprise (SWE) and contractors attended the event.

During Boots-on-the-Deck, ship's leadership explained that as they were preparing for V-22, they were presented with a myriad of logistical challenges.

For example, the V-22 has a significantly larger footprint than the CH-46 "Sea Knight" it is replacing. Its Aviation Consolidated Allowance List (AVCAL) requires new support equipment that takes up more space. Because of the constraints aboard ship, a storage overflow mezzanine was retrofitted in the hangar deck.

Supply personnel designed and rearranged AVCAL storage areas for non-essential items throughout the ship for the V-22 and for other airframes to ensure quick access to critical and frequently used supplies and equipment.

Bataan personnel also increased the required minimum distance from the aircraft to the ship's bulkhead from 18 inches to 36 inches. Simulations aboard *USS Fort McHenry* (LSD 43) and *USS Whidbey Island*

(LSD 41) which were held to determine the load plans for the ship, requirements for aviation operations, and required deck handler and spot-



Petty Officer Hemmings (with microphone) answers a question on excess support equipment posed by AZC Christopher Moriarty (left), Maintenance and Supply Integration Performance Improvement Branch team member, as Rear Adm. (sel.) Sinclair Harris, Deputy Director, Expeditionary Warfare Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, (center); Maj. General Cornell Wilson, Deputy Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command; and Lt. Gen. George Trautman, Deputy Commandant for Aviation (right), listen to his response. Moriarty also asked Hemmings to apply his expertise to look for improvements in Support Equipment processes and submit Technical Publication Deficiency Reports and Naval Aviation Maintenance Program policy changes. Photo by *USS Bataan* Public Affairs.

ting training, revealed this was necessary to comply with fire lane requirements.

Ship's personnel also learned more about the strength of the V-22's downwash on other airframes during mixed flight operations. *Bataan* now requires a separation of one "spot" between airframes and securing them with chains while on deck.

But *Bataan* still faces other logistical challenges. For example, ordnance has many of the same Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) testing issues that the aircraft carriers did. They are required to move the tail kit from its magazine storage facility to

the deck mess for testing, and then return it back to the magazine for storage.

A new ordnance policy, which was issued last summer, now allows testing to be performed in the weapons magazine aboard aircraft carriers. *Bataan* leadership said that they would inquire about implementing the policy on L-class ships. (For more information on the change in testing policy, go to <http://www.cnaf.navy.mil/cr/default.asp?PressReleaseID=53813>)

Berthing for contractors, the number of Sea Operational Detachment Marines needed onboard to support the V-22 and bringing AIRSpeed and its toolsets to *Bataan* were also discussed.

L-class ships are Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) assets. While NAVSEA is an extended member of the Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE) and a member of the SWE, many L-class issues require a higher-level of coordination.

Recognizing this, NAE and SWE leadership held an initial meeting in mid-December to research and explore solutions to improve readiness aboard L-class ships. A barrier removal team (BRT) recently was created to identify and mitigate *Bataan's* readiness barriers. The solutions developed by the BRT may be used on other L-class ships as they prepare to deploy new airframes, such as the Joint Strike Fighter.

To read the article about Boots-on-the-Deck aboard *Bonhomme Richard*, go to: <http://www.cnaf.navy.mil/cr/content.asp?AttachmentID=209#seamless>. ■

(New River continued from Page 3)

- Decreasing transaction errors in Avionics Production Control by 85 percent;
- Eliminating Production Control and Readiness' discrepancies on RFI engines that are sent abroad;
- Reducing the number of critical items in the Electrical/Instruments Branch by 58 percent without changing its supply buffer;
- Reducing Radar/Electronic Countermeasures work center's maintenance time to reliably replenish (TRR) from 119 hours to 5.3 hours
- by improving supervision and cross-training Marines;
- Reducing Packaging, Packing and Preservation's carcass bill from more than \$5.5 million to less than \$2.8 million.
- Cost avoiding more than \$1 million related to the maintenance of cowanda tubes in the weld shop by adding an artisan in the work center. (Cowanda tubes vent hot air away from the V-22's engine)
- The availability of replacement items for component repair;
- Training on the airframe;
- Limited intermediate-level maintenance repair capabilities;
- Obsolescence of parts for support equipment (such as tow tractors);
- Procuring a precision CNC cutting system for the CDD bonding straps (Once this is acquired, the improved accuracy will reduce the gear's TRR to one to two days). ■

Challenges that lay ahead include:

(CRT continued from Page 4)

contribute to delivering naval air power at the right time today and in the future, with definable risk.

The CRT aims to efficiently achieve the readiness required of the aircraft carrier fleet and drive results with integrated metrics to enable good resourcing decisions. Its three components are the Life Cycle Management Team (LCMT), the Operational Process Improvement & Standardization Team, and the Training & People Readiness Team. Together these groups provide a framework to influence enterprise behavior in multiple stakeholder organizations and use a holistic aircraft carrier approach to deliver readiness by ensuring that:

- The right people are in the right positions
- The crew is fully-trained for the mission
- The equipment necessary for the mission is fully-operational

The CRT's LCMT, while relying on CT1's shipyard availability focus, also addresses readiness problem areas in top mission critical equipment and influences both short and long-term solutions implemented by key stakeholders in the process. The CRT's Cost Wise Readiness Team, with considerable input and support from both CT1 and CPA, identifies and implements cost savings and avoidances initiatives associated with carrier maintenance. A number of personnel involved with the CT1 and CPA also are on the CRT's sub-teams.

The interface and alignment of the goals and objectives of the CRT, CT1 and CPA are essential to success in achieving the NAE objective of effectively managing life cycle costs to sustain the current force and afford new capabilities. Using the collaborative principles which are the cornerstones of warfare enterprise behavior, lines of communication and cooperation between the teams are continuing to grow.

Aligning and validating efforts

"Focus, alignment and communications are essential

as our relationships mature," stated Capt. Frank Simei, PEO Carrier's In-Service Aircraft Carrier Programs Manager (PMS 312) and co-lead of the Carrier Readiness Team, during the conference.

Capt. Dan Seiganthaler, Commander Naval Air Force Carrier Maintenance Officer (CNAF N43) and chairman of CT1's Executive Steering Committee, agreed that the holistic look at readiness by the CRT should help validate and advocate CT1's success in shipyard efficiency and maintenance schedule adherence.

"Feedback by the CRT on readiness requirements and issues should enable CT1 and CPA to continue to positively influence the availability for operations of our aircraft carrier fleet due to the many process improvements identified and implemented," Seiganthaler stated.

The governance structure of the NAE is constituted to maximize collaboration to focus on all aspects of carrier and equipment readiness. "This is a great opportunity to effectively use the superb staffs supporting these teams to enable each to have the right focus on all aspects of carrier readiness and make a difference in life cycle support," said Capt. Kevin Terry, Director Ship Material at Naval Air Forces Atlantic (CNAL N43), during the conference.

As the NAE and the CRT continue to mature and readiness metrics become more focused on warfighting capabilities, the equipment pillar of carrier readiness will be more reliant on the alignment and collaboration of every aspect of carrier maintenance and life cycle management.

"The CRT functions to influence the carrier community to meet the readiness required of our aircraft carrier fleet and drive results and decisions with integrated metrics," said Capt. Ted Carter, Commanding Officer of *USS Carl Vinson* (CVN 70) and CRT lead.

Through communication, collaboration and cooperation, which are the essence of enterprise behavior, these three entities have formed a strong foundation on which to build readiness for the Navy's carrier force. ■

(Daniels continued from Page 5)

Completing all of the training took a year-and-a-half and at the end she was looking forward to putting her skills to work on an aircraft carrier. (Only males can be assigned to submarines.) But Daniels soon found herself back in the classroom – as a staff instructor.

Although Daniels enjoyed teaching, dreams of flying kept resurfacing.

When she heard about the Seaman-to-Admiral-21 (STA-21) Program, she was compelled to apply. Almost four years after enlisting in the Navy, she was accepted into the program to become a pilot.

Daniels went to the Naval Science Institute in Newport, R.I., for eight weeks, and then began college at the University of Texas in the spring of 2004. She earned a bachelor's degree with a double major in government and sociology, and was commissioned through the University of Texas' Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (UT-NROTC) in the fall of 2006.

Initially, Daniels was not happy about the prospect of sitting in a classroom for several more years. She wanted to fly and kept that goal in front of her. But the experience turned out to be a valuable one.

"I met countless high-caliber people, including other prior-enlisted officer candidates, 19-year-old midshipmen, and civilian classmates," she said. "Those encounters brought the exhilarating realization that their perspectives are as vital as mine. I learned leadership from Eagle Scouts and 18-year-old sports team captains. I had the opportunity to teach future officers about the perspectives of older, seasoned Sailors who have three times my experience. I had exchanges with government majors who were critical of the war in Iraq and with sociology majors on the topic of sexism in the Navy.

"Spending three years at a civilian school and in a ROTC unit humbled and changed me in ways I'm not sure anything else could have. I became an ensign and a very different person than when I was as a petty officer. I came away with respect for the college experience, and I am absolutely honored to be an officer. Ironically,

the easiest thing about becoming an officer was the only thing that was actually required: Getting the degree!" said Daniels.

But Daniels encountered one more barrier to becoming a pilot – the day before starting the ground school phase of flight school, Daniels was informed that she was anthropometrically disqualified from flight.

"When student pilots undergo a flight physical, it includes measurements not only of your height from head

to toe, but also of various other lengths: from your heel to knee, knee to tailbone, chair to eye level, shoulder to fingertips," she said. "Each of these lengths has an acceptable range, which is designed to ensure you fit into the aircraft, can reach all of the buttons and switches needed for operation, and could eject safely if need be.

"My sitting height was measured within standards on the

flight physical that qualified me for the program, but when I reported to Pensacola, my follow-up physical measured it a tenth of an inch too short," said Daniels.

At that time, the measurement standards were being re-evaluated and leadership took an interest in her situation. She was granted a waiver and was enrolled in the program. She completed flight school and got her wings of gold in August of 2008.

Daniels is currently stationed at the Fleet Replacement Squadron VP-30 at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla., as a P-3 Orion pilot. "Flying, especially with a crew, is the coolest thing ever- the only things that even begin to compare are rugby and motorcycles," she said.

"I can't express my gratitude for the life and opportunities the Navy has afforded me," she said. "And I can't wait to finally put all of this training to good use in the fleet!"

But achieving her dreams has made Daniels more than simply a pilot for the Navy. She is now an inspiration for children who look to the skies and dream of flight – just like she did on her uncle's roof nearly 15 years ago. ■



Pictured above: A P-3C Orion. The P-3C Orion will remain in service until 2019 and be replaced by the P-8A Poseidon - an anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance aircraft. Initial operational capability for the Poseidon is scheduled for fiscal year 2013. For more information on the P-3C Orion, go to <http://www.cnaf.navy.mil/cr/main.asp?ItemID=1307>. Photo from *Navy NewsStand*.

(CWO continued from Page 5)

hardest part, he said, was going from one peer group to another. "The relationship with all of my friends that I worked with before had to be changed to a much more professional relationship. Also, I was now being held to a higher level of personal standards. I am always looked up to by the enlisted Sailors.

"The easiest part was assuming this new level of responsibility and sharing my knowledge with those who are also wanting to make changes and advance their careers," said Jacobson.

"I appreciate the experiences that I am afforded each day," he said.

Miltner said that while his three years as an enlisted maintainer and his familiarity with aircraft initially made flight school a little easier, the skill sets needed to be a pilot were not something carried over from his experience. "The most challenging part of flight school is learning and retaining lots of information in a short period of time. That is merely the nature of



flight school. You get used to it very quickly," he said.

Advice: Pursue advancement

Jacobson and Miltner said that Sailors should take advantage of the opportunities offered by the Navy.

"Go for it. Don't be dissuaded by either having low Aviation Selection Test Battery scores or thinking

that you don't have the knowledge necessary to do well on the exam. There are many reference books available to teach yourself the necessary knowledge," said Miltner.

"We are going to be allowed to fulfill a role that most of today's pilots would love to have," said Jacobson. "We're a part of a new program that could shape the future of naval aviation. If you want to fly and want to be an officer, this is hands down one of the best programs the Navy offers to enlisted Sailors," he said.

"The greatest reward I've had so far was putting on my Naval Aviator wings. I know that I have one fantastic job," said Miltner. ■

Program eligibility and requirements

The Flying CWO Program is open to enlisted Sailors E-5 to E-7 who physically qualify for aviation duty in accordance with the Navy Manual of Medicine. Candidates must be commissioned by their 27th birthday, have an associate degree and be eligible for a secret clearance. Interested Sailors who are over the age of 27 may submit an age waiver, but must meet all other requirements. Once selected, they will be commissioned as chief warrant officers 2 and sent to flight school where they will learn to fly the P-3C, EP-3E, E-6B, or one of the current H-53 or H-60 helicopter variants. Sailors from sea, air, land combat command, special warfare combatant crew member, explosive ordnance disposal, diver, nuclear and master-at-arms communities are not eligible for the program. The next board is scheduled for July 2009. For more information on the Flying CWO Program, go to: www.npc.navy.mil/officer/aviation/flying+cwo+program.htm.

Links of interest

1. Fleet Readiness Center Southwest Almanac January/February 2009 issue
This issue highlights the work of FRC Southwest's test flight line and features a photo essay that celebrates its 90-year history as the "Birthplace of Naval Aviation."
<https://extra.cnaf.navy.mil/content.asp?ContentID=CE9B2B96-1AA4-4AF1-A1ED-76A3EC7&Type=0&Extension=.pdf>
2. FRC Southwest's Hornet production line was used as the setting for a Commander, Navy Recruiting Command (CNRC) video production that will target Hispanic officer recruitment.
<http://www.cnaf.navy.mil/cr/default.asp?PressReleaseID=53847>
3. DoN Green Belt class schedules
<https://www.fleetforces.navy.mil/comnavairfor/N42/N422/AIRSpeed/Pages/default.aspx>
4. NAVAIR AIRSpeed January Snapshots
<http://www.cnaf.navy.mil/airspeed/content.aspx?AttachmentID=531>