



Ethos

ISSUE 23
NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE

EXPEDITIONARY COMBAT SKILLS

NSW enablers head to Gulfport,
Miss., to learn combat fundamentals



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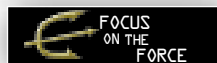
An ECS student prepares to begin a training evolution
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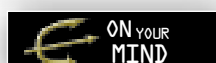


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One Team, One Fight!

A message from the Force Master Chief

I am Master Chief Mike Magaraci, your new Force Master Chief. It is an absolute honor to have a chance to write to a highly trained group of professionals, military and civilians alike! You are charged with a very unique mission that no else in the world can do; a mission that has critical strategic consequences for the security of our nation.

My primary mission is executing Rear Admiral Losey's guidance to take care of our Force and families; to protect our mission and credibility; and to continue always, to advance our warfighting capability.

More specifically, Rear Admiral Losey's priorities are to win the current fight and posture for the future fight; institutionalize resiliency in the Force and with our families; super enable our partner's capacities and capabilities so they can fight their own fights. Finally, we must continue to build the "best in class" maritime access and mobility platforms, capabilities, tactics, techniques and procedures.

In addition to executing the admiral's guidance, the NSW Master Chief community will be focused primarily on three areas. First, we will continue to evolve our Force, to stay relevant and ahead of our enemy's decision-making cycle. We must master anything and everything to do with executing operations from the maritime flank. We need to be able to do the things that no one else in the Special Operations Force can do...perfecting the "black from the sea" operational concept coming across the beach, with little to no footprint, to gain access to denied areas to do what we need to do to keep our country safe.

Second, we will be maximizing integration across the groups to unprecedented levels. This is the future of NSW, our Naval Special Warfare Groups coming together with their unique capabilities, seamlessly fusing all of our efforts and war fighting capability.

Third, and most importantly, we will be expending most of our organizational energy on the professional development of the Force. We have more PRODEV opportunities now in NSW than ever before. We've incorporated a week of PRODEV into our basic training pipeline. We have instructor qualification training to professionalize our instructor cadre. We've developed numerous in-house leadership courses-of-instruction for the different levels of Team, Platoon & Troop leadership. And don't forget that we have access to the Joint Special Operations University that provides joint leadership development opportunities for pay grades E-6 thru E-9,

where you will learn to lead in a joint environment from the tactical to strategic force development level.


No matter your rate, rank or specialty, you are ALL leaders in NSW and accountable for your actions. Therefore, we will be putting a great deal of emphasis on our first line leaders, maximizing peer-to-peer communications to give our enlisted leaders the tools and experiences they need to make better decisions sooner in their careers. In 2013 we saw an increased effort to confront sexual assault, suicide, alcohol and drug abuse and a variety of other issues. It falls on all of us to continue the improvements already made and keep the larger picture in mind. We need to challenge ourselves every day to be honorable human beings that work hard, stay humble, and take care of others.

I feel extremely fortunate, and uniquely qualified to be your enlisted advocate, both operator and enabler alike. I have served as a Sailor on a ship in the Fleet. I was a "Tech" at a SEAL Team prior to going to BUD/S. I have served in CMC positions on both coasts, served as a CMC of our major training command, and I've served in CMC positions in-and-outside of our national mission force. The bottom-line is that I represent all of you equally, because I am you.

And as one of you, I am very aware that our actions as individuals in our professional and private lives reflect on the entire Force for better or worse. Thirty plus years in NSW has showed me, that if you want to thrive as a person, a leader or an operator in the Naval Special Warfare community, you need to live by the following basic principles:

- Take care of yourself, your family and your Teammates
- Protect our mission and our credibility...always
- Own your actions in everything you do, every single one of you own stock in the Naval Special Warfare community
- Master your chosen field of endeavor; be competent at your specialty
- Build partners across organizations and around the globe... everywhere you go
- Be relentless against the enemy...always

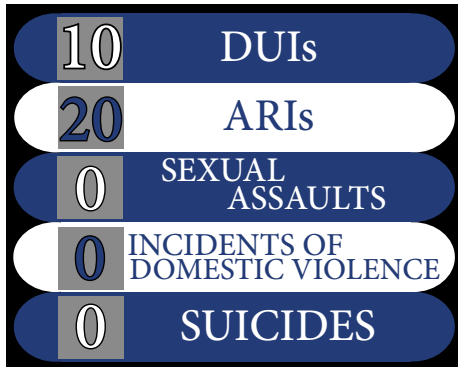
I am looking forward to working for all of you! At the center of all the activity in our community are our people. Our people, you, are our most important resource. Without you, there is no capability. We all stand here today for our way of life, for our families, for our country, and for our brothers.

One Team, One Fight! 

Master Chief Mike Magaraci,
Force Master Chief, Naval Special Warfare Command



NSW Force Incident Statistics Sept. - Nov. 2013



SOTF-SE Decommissions FOB Ripley

LOGAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan – On Oct. 1st, after more than three years at Tarin Kowt, Special Operations Task Force-Southeast (SOTF-SE) officially closed Forward Operating Base (FOB) Ripley with a decommissioning ceremony.

The SOTF-SE headquarters was moved from FOB Ripley to FOB Shank in Logar province. Moving a SOTF headquarters to a new location while simultaneously expanding a new location was not easy but the personnel of SOTF-SE proved more than up to the task.

Lt. Cmdr. Kellen Headlee, director of the SOTF-SE Supply Center, said, “You not only have to move materials from the old site to the new one, you also have to have a place to put them at the new site.”

A small contingent of Seabees remains at Ripley to complete the retrograde process and prepare the site for turnover to Combined Team Uruzgan. The CTU will turn the former FOB over to Provincial Response Company Uruzgan.

The PRCU is comprised of Afghan National Police partnered with International Security Assistance Force Special Operation Forces. Cmdr. Lewis Kasper, SOTF-SE chief staff officer, said, “The people left at Ripley put us way ahead of the schedule set by CTU. The PRCU guards are moving onto the site 15 days earlier than originally planned.”

To prepare for the headquarters shift to Camp McCloskey on FOB Shank, Seabees began to expand the camp in September. The Seabees had their work cut out for them as the number of personnel at Camp McCloskey was going to be doubled.

New office spaces, sanitary facilities and berthing had to be built which meant the need for building materials was great. The delays in getting lumber led the Seabees who were on-site to get creative to maintain their tight schedule.

“The Seabees had to scrounge for lumber,” said Headlee. “A lot of this camp is built from scraps they found around the base.”

In the span of approximately a month and a half, SOTF-SE closed one camp and expanded and moved to another.

The headquarters is fully operational and all personnel and equipment have successfully moved but camp construction and improvements are on-going.

Kasper said, “It’s easy to quantify the magnitude of the SOTF headquarters move but difficult to describe in a few sentences. We had very few hiccups considering we moved from one FOB to another, expanded the new FOB, transferred our network to a new system, and were able to continue operations seamlessly. It was an amazing feat on the part of the personnel of the SOTF headquarters.”

SOTF-SE will maintain a presence at Camp McCloskey until U.S. and coalition forces end their mission in Afghanistan in Oct. 2014.

*MC1 Les Long
SOTF-SE Combat Camera*

NSWC Hosts Suicide Prevention 5K Run

CORONADO, Calif. (NNS) -- Naval Special Warfare Command hosted its first Suicide Prevention 5K Run, Oct. 4.

Sailors and civilians participated in the event to raise awareness about the issue of suicide in the Navy in order to help Sailors affected by depression, operational stress and other suicide risk factors.

NSW has adopted the Navy’s theme of “Thrive in Your Community.” Sailors, civilian personnel, and family members are encouraged to work together at the individual, installation and command levels to help their shipmates if something is wrong.

“Suicide awareness events bring people together for a particular reason which will spark conversations of that nature. I believe it provides a safe forum to talk about a topic that makes some people uncomfortable,” said Legalman 1st Class (SW/AW) Sharon L. Renova.

Chief Cryptologic Technician (Networks) (EXW/SW) James Summers, who participated in and helped organize the run, said that prevention of suicide is an important topic to the Navy because

awareness of one other and being available to help out can prevent a problem from becoming a crisis.

The Navy provides a variety of resources pertaining to suicide prevention, including a 24/7 telephone help-line, websites on suicide prevention and operational stress management, and an online newsletter.

“Sailors should use operational stress control and not be afraid to seek help when times are difficult,” said Summers.

Deployments and combat can exacerbate depression and some people return from deployment with post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury.

However, statistics show that fewer than half of the service members who have committed suicide have deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, and only about 20 percent have been in combat.

There are many factors that contribute to suicide: finances, relationship problems, substance abuse and stress. People considering suicide often mention it to someone they know. It is important to listen and help the person, or help the person to get help.

A 2012 Department of Veterans Affairs study shows the number of suicides among veterans is around 22 deaths per day. Each suicide leaves behind grief-stricken family members and friends. It also has a negative effect on the Navy’s mission.

The Navy’s Fleet and Family Support Center is a good place to start to find resources Sailors can use to get help when needed.

MC2 Geneva G. Brier

ST-8 Celebrates 25 Years

Naval Special Warfare service members and families celebrated SEAL Team 8’s (ST-8) 25th anniversary with a series of events on Oct. 11.

The events included a monster mash race, lunch catered by the USO and a ended with a dinner celebration held at the Westin hotel in Town Center.

“Tonight is a night for team members past and present to celebrate who we are, where we are going, and also to recognize the heritage within NSW,” said Cmdr. Joseph Geary, commanding officer of ST-8 in remarks during dinner. “This is a night to recognize those who were here in 1988 through the 1990’s, when the towers fell in 2001, and when we went to Iraq and Afghanistan.”

ST-8 was commissioned on Oct. 1, 1988 and its geographic areas of concentration include the Caribbean, Africa and the Mediterranean.

“Since I left, Team 8 went on and

continued great work in Iraq, Afghanistan and then followed their roots right back to Africa where they had begun,” said Command Master Chief Kevin Vezina.

Although there have been changes in location and members during ST-8’s 25 years, many agree that the anniversary celebration was a great tool to bring everyone past and present together.

“The anniversary is a great opportunity for current members of the team to meet former members giving them the chance to see the bigger picture- that they are part of the history as one more link in the chain,” said Geary.

“I can tell you 25 years later SEAL Team 8 has not changed,” said Vezina. “Everybody we have is doing everything they can to get out there and do the mission. Team 8 has been kicking butt and doing that for years,” he said.

ST-8 deploys platoons with carrier battle groups (CVBGs) and amphibious ships in support of Second, Fifth and Sixth Fleet commanders.

*MC2 Meranda Keller
NSWG-2 Public Affairs*

NSW Trains JROTC Cadets

More than 50 Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) cadets had the opportunity to train with east coast based SEALs attached to Naval Special Warfare (NSW) on Oct. 24.

The cadets had the opportunity to run through the NSW small land based obstacle course on Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story which tests both the agility and physical stamina of those participating.

“You could tell the kids had a lot of fun but, were very intimidated by the first glance at the NSW small land o-course,” said Special Warfare Boat Operator 1st Class Joel

Williams who assisted the cadets through the course.

Many students found the course, which is primarily used to train combat units for battle, unsettling but despite that they pushed through.

“When you first see the course, it is very intimidating but, you just have to try it,” said junior cadet Etwynae Flamer. “It was a lot of fun and made me push myself more than I expected.” The cadets attend Paint Branch High School in Burtonsville, MD and are part of a unit comprised of 145 cadets in grades 9 through 12.

“More than 60 percent of the cadets at Paint Branch who stay with the program for three or four years choose to serve in some capacity in their chosen military branch,” said Joe DeCavage, senior naval science instructor.

The unit trains through classroom instruction, competition, and field trips to military installations nationwide.

According to DeCavage who is also a retired U.S. Navy commander, it is extremely important for the cadets to see active duty personnel at work to give them an appreciation for what our soldiers, Sailors and Marines do for our nation.

“I believe that having the opportunity to meet SEAL Scout Team personnel, active duty SEALs and SEAL candidates and use the special warfare confidence obstacle course is the highlight of our four day field trip to the tidewater area,” said DeCavage.

Many cadets expressed that the course not only built their confidence but also showed them what weaknesses they could improve upon.

“It was a lot of fun but very tiring,” said sophomore cadet Kenneth Cordon who was the first to cross the finish line. “After I completed the course I realized that I need to

work on my stamina.”

Paint Branch junior cadet Dazha Austin agreed, “The course gave me a lot more motivation but, I need to work on my upper body strength.”

The obstacle course training was not only a rewarding experience for the cadets but NSW personnel as well.

“It was a privilege to mentor these children with discipline and leadership. The kids demonstrated great teamwork throughout the course by physically helping the weaker individuals and cheering on the others,” said Williams.

The trip proved to be successful not only for the participants but the Paint Branch NJROTC program as well.

“The life lessons learned talk gave at the obstacle course was right on the mark and very well received,” said DeCavage. “I have spoken with our principal and she is most interested in hosting a SEAL Team challenge at Paint Branch in the near future. I don’t know how many future SEALs we have here at the Paint Branch NJROTC unit, but I do know that the impact our SEAL Team visit had upon the cadets was very, very positive.”

In addition to visiting NSW, the NJROTC cadets have also toured guided missile cruiser USS Normandy (CG 60), the fast attack submarine USS Helena (SSN 725), and aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77).

“When the cadets were asked what their favorite part of the trip was, the vast majority said their experience with special warfare personnel at Little Creek. My heartfelt thanks to all who contributed to the success of our visit,” said DeCavage.

*MC2 Desiree Green
NSWG-2 Public Affairs*



Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) cadets from Paint Branch High School in Burtonville, MD climb the Berlin Wall on the small land obstacle course during a Naval Special Warfare (NSW) field trip.



NSW Tests Capabilities During USS Ronald Reagan IDCERTEX

Navy SEALs, SWCC and NSW support personnel integrated with ships from the Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group during an independent deployer certification exercise (IDCERTEX) Nov. 8-14.

During the exercise, NSW personnel trained to increase cooperation between special operations forces and the fleet by collaborating with Sailors from USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), USS Kidd (DDG 100) and USS Howard (DDG 83).

Over the course of the week at sea, NSW personnel participated in a surface warfare exercise; a counter-piracy scenario; two helicopter visit, board search and seizure evolutions; a simulation of transiting a narrow strait; and a SEAL raid on a land target that employed a shipboard helicopter squadron.

"When [NSW] came on board, immediately we integrated," said Cmdr. David Zook, commanding officer of Howard. "About an hour after they arrived, we started discussions about an interoperable mission."

Central to the training was the unmanned aerial system Scan Eagle, which NSW routinely uses to gather intelligence and conduct surveillance and reconnaissance missions on land. During a nighttime surface warfare exercise, the NSW team demonstrated the UAS's ability to help surface commanders find and identify other ships at sea that might otherwise remain undetected. Similarly, Scan Eagle provided Navy crews aboard large ships with aerial views of movements of smaller craft during counter-piracy and HVBSS simulations.

"We started to see some capability that came along with the [NSW] team, and that was just phenomenal," Zook said. "It really enhanced our situational awareness and gave us a much broader perspective."

Scan Eagle can also fly ahead of a ship's


movements, increasing the ship's range of visibility.

"You get that long look to see what you're going into," said Cmdr. T.J. Zerr, executive officer of Kidd. "Most of the time when we're traveling into an area it takes us a couple hours to transit to the problem, so having that ability to get out there matters."

Though SEAL and SWCC teams are able to operate independently, the forward presence of the fleet and the communication abilities of large ships enhance NSW capabilities. In particular, small NSW teams are able to use ships as staging areas for missions to have advantages over enemies relying on more limited resources.

"The fleet can obviously deliver us further by using one of their platforms as an [afloat-forward staging base]," said a Navy SEAL officer involved in the training. "Their radar systems can pick up vessels a lot earlier than we would be able to, they provide fuel for aircraft [and] just increase our time on station tenfold."

NSW groups command, train, equip and deploy components of NSW squadrons to meet the exercise, contingency and wartime requirements of the regional combatant commanders, theater special operations commands and numbered fleets located around the world.

U.S. Third Fleet leads naval forces in the Eastern Pacific from the West Coast of North America to the international date line and provides the realistic, relevant training necessary for an effective global Navy. 

MC3 Paul Coover

Ft. Rosecrans Cemetery Hosts Wreaths Across America

SAN DIEGO – More than 1,100 service members, veterans and civilians went to Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery to lay approximately 3,000 wreaths on graves of fallen troops Dec. 14.

Volunteers participated in the 8th annual

event at Naval Base Point Loma, part of the 21st nationwide wreath laying ceremony. The ceremonies take place the second Saturday of December at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, Arlington National Cemetery, as well as veterans' cemeteries in all 50 states.


This year's keynote speaker was retired Lt. General Mick Kicklighter, chairman of the Department of Defense Vietnam Commiserative, who took a few moments to reflect on the fallen service members and merchant marines laid to rest in Fort Rosecrans.

"We remember the men and women who gave everything as well as their families who have sacrificed everything for our country, these men and women are the heroes of our nation, one nation under god with liberty and justice for all, said Kicklighter."

Kicklighter asked the service members and volunteers to take note of the names on the graves before placing the wreaths and to go home and research the name. He explained that your research will find that the name on the grave will belong to someone who was dedicated to their country and who is a true American hero.

He left the audience with a dedication to his fallen brothers and sisters.

"As you look around this cemetery you will quickly realize, freedom isn't free and that it in fact comes at a very high price," said Kicklighter. "As you look at the dates written on these dates you will see 18- and 19-year-old men and women. As you lay these wreaths remember them and what they have sacrificed for us and our great nation."

Wreaths Across America is a nonprofit organization founded by a Maine businessman, Morrill Worcester in 1992. The U.S. Senate has designated the second Saturday of December as National Wreaths Across America Day since 2008. 

MC2 Geneva G. Brier

REMEMBERING THE FALLEN

Chief Warrant Officer 3 (SEAL) Gary Garbers was born June 21, 1966 and died Aug. 24, 2013. He was raised in Livermore, Calif. and graduated from Livermore's Granada High School in 1984. He joined the Navy on May 1, 1985. Gary is survived by his wife Tracey and daughters Bridget and Heidi.

Never Forget



Sailors Honor Fallen Heroes

WREATHS ARE PLACED ON GRAVES DURING A SPECIAL CEREMONY



More than 1,100 service members, veterans and civilians participated in the 8th annual Wreaths Across America event at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery to lay approximately 3,000 wreaths on graves of fallen troops Dec. 14. Photos by MC2 Geneva G. Brier





The Insider Threat

With new technology comes new threats, and vigilance is key to maintaining our network security

As the world becomes increasingly interconnected technologically, threats are no longer purely physical – cyber security is also critical to national defense. While cyber threats come in countless forms, several of the most common can be countered with responsible computer use.

Software and applications on the network are tested before installation,” explained Steve Higgins, information assurance officer for Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command. “If someone installs an untested piece of software, it could generate malware that could potentially bring down the entire network.”

Malware is a broad term used to describe malicious software that can be used to disrupt computer operations, gather sensitive information or gain access to a private computer system. The most common malware encountered at CNSWC are viruses or Trojan horses, which appear harmless but can cause system harm when installed.

Recently, heightened awareness about cyber security issues has decreased some of the careless malware-related mistakes made by personnel in the past. In addition, improved cyber education has decreased the instances of other dangerous practices, such as connecting unauthorized devices to military computers or connecting classified devices to un-classified systems. The military has two completely separate networks; one for unclassified (NIPR) and one for secure or classified data (SIPR).

“These violations have lessened over the past few years,” Higgins wrote, “but when they do happen, the most common violations are for iPods and thumb drives. Very simply, anytime a person connects a SIPR computer to the NIPR (or vice versa) and powers up, you have a cross domain situation,” he continued. “Violations occur when the person logs in when connected improperly.”

Punishment for violations is left to individual commands, but the Department of Defense has enforced department-wide prohibitions of USB devices when an unauthorized thumb drive was inserted into a SIPR computer and subsequently launched a virus onto the network.

Beyond not downloading unauthorized software and not inserting devices into work computers, Higgins recommends several other easy steps to take to avoid compromising a network.

“Always use common sense,” he wrote. “Don’t fall for e-mails with attachments or embedded links that require you to perform actions or provide information with an “or else!” consequence. If a pop-up occurs that tells you that your system is infected, disregard [it]. Someone is trying to sell you something and may very well put malware on your system if you fall for their scheme. Every system must have anti-virus, a firewall and anti-spyware software installed. Ensure your system is set up for installation of security updates.”

Things to remember for work and personal computers:

Get Anti-Virus Software (even for your phone!)

This seems like a no brainer, but more than half of all American don’t have anti-virus software for their computers. Not having this (even for Apple users) greatly increases the chances of malware and viruses getting on your computer and being transferred to anything that might be plugged into your computer. Top anti-virus software manufacturers now offer multiple device licences that will help keep all your tech gadgets protected.

Think before you plug it in

ALL USB devices (iPods, chargers, thumb drives, etc.) are prohibited from being plugged into a DoD computer station.

Run Updates

While this is done for you at your command, running updates on your personal computer, smartphone and tablets will decrease the risk of your computer being hacked or getting a virus.

When in doubt, don’t open it

Malware comes in many forms but most often through email. If it looks suspicious, don’t open it.

Download = Bad

Websites often prompt users with messages stating software needs to be downloaded or updated in order to view the site correctly. Users are not allowed to download, install, or uninstall software because it changes the configuration of the computer. Keeping computers standardized is part of maintaining cyber security. Need a program? Put in a change request.



Personal Pers **OF THE 2013 GOVERNMENT FURLOUGH**

*F*or most Naval Special Warfare personnel, the start of the fourth week of September, 2013 seemed like a regular work week. Yet talks of the government shutdown looming on Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. were ongoing and would have serious implications for the command. On Sept. 27, the NSW chief of staff sent an announcement through e-mail with a message warning about the possibility of a furlough in the week ahead.

Over the weekend, when most people normally would have been enjoying their breaks, many were following national news networks busy covering stories about the budget talks.

On Sept. 30, John DeMasse, a federal employee, encountered a new reality about his employment and faced an unwelcome decision from lawmakers.

"Monday I came in to work and was informed the budget had not passed," said DeMasse, who is an information technology logistic manager in support of Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command. "We came in the following day, which was Tuesday, stayed for half a day, and conducted an orderly turnover. And basically we were furloughed until a bill was passed permitting federal workers to return to their jobs."

Of course, DeMasse was not alone. The furlough affected thousands. Guidance from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management for agencies and employees in the event of furloughs explains that there are two types of furloughs.

"An administrative furlough is a planned event by an agency which is designed to absorb reductions necessitated by downsizing, reduced funding, lack of work, or any budget situation other than a lapse in appropriations. Furloughs that would potentially result from sequestration would generally be considered administrative furloughs," the document read. "A shutdown furlough (also called an emergency furlough) occurs when there is a lapse in appropriations, and can occur at the beginning of a fiscal year, if no funds have been appropriated for that year, or upon expiration of a continuing resolution, if a new continuing resolution or appropriations law is not passed. In a shutdown furlough, an affected agency would have to shut down any activities funded by annual appropriations that are not excepted by law. Typically, an agency will have very little to no lead time to plan and implement a shutdown furlough."

U.S. Special Operations Command also published guidance for its employees as measures of preparation and information to deal with the inaction of the national government regarding federal work.

Federal workers have shared their experienced for coping with time off work.

Stella Nealy, who works as an NSW logistics system program manager for supply department, said she personally wasn't worried. Being retired military gave her a little less anxiety than those people who did not have prior military service.

"We were more concerned for others that we work with who are

pectives



not retired military like us, because we met people here who were in that position and they had a lot of anxiety, and so we prayed for them and with them,” she said. “For me furlough was an unwelcome break, but I took advantage of it,” Nealy said. “I was with my husband and I was able to spend time with him and able to have some down time.”

One of the things the couple did was research a better rate for their home mortgage to ascertain whether their combined income would still support payment of their other financial responsibilities, like car loans and other house utility bills.

“Worst case scenario, my mindset is to downsize my lifestyle to make sure the funding I did have could take care of my financial responsibility,” said Nealy. “So, I was not concerned about whether or not I am going to have a job or not, I felt my retirement pay check will help offset the funding that I would lose for having been placed on furlough.”

With all the time off work, employees took advantage of this unexpected free time for activities normally reserved for the weekends. News articles written after the furlough’s conclusion showed workers pursued home improvements and local entertainment.

“We got a solar panel installed that Wednesday,” Nealy said. “It was going to be installed anyway, which means we were going to have to take leave to be at home for the installation, so the furlough

“**ANYONE** who is affected by these furloughs should be staying on top of **CURRENT EVENTS**. Taking a cross country trip and **NOT BEING AWARE** of what may occur the next day **IS NOT ADVISABLE.**”

- John DeMasse,
Information technology logistic manager, CNSWC

prevented us from having to burn leave.”

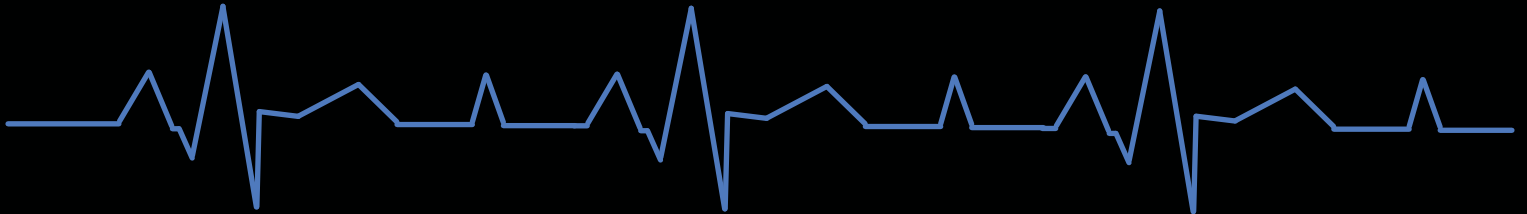
Since a decision from House lawmakers and the oval office was the determining factor for budget passage, which would in turn call everybody back to work, most people did not commit to a more open schedule or travel too far from work places.

“Anyone who is affected by these furloughs should be staying on top of current events,” said DeMasse. “Taking a cross country trip and not being aware of what may occur the next day is not advisable.”

MCC Geronimo Aquino

Dereliction of DUTY

NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE COMMAND RECOGNIZES THE IMPACT OF SLEEP DEPRIVATION AND IS MAKING STRIDES TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE



Naval Special Warfare (NSW) has recently become more aware of how crucial sleep is for special operators and enablers, and how it can affect the overall mission.

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 40 million Americans suffer from chronic, long term sleep disorders each year, resulting in more than \$16 billion in medical costs yearly. These numbers are alarming, but are even more troubling for special operators, whose missions often require long periods without sleep.

Special operators frequently work through the night, in different time zones and in stressful environments, and a lack of sleep could result in slower reaction time, falling asleep while standing watch and difficulty processing complex information.

“There is a prevalence [of sleep deprivation] in the military, especially special forces because of who we are, what we do and how we operate, said Cmdr. Eric G. Potterat Ph.D, Naval Special Warfare Command force psychologist.

Doctors have identified more than 70 sleep disorders, most of which can be managed effectively once they are correctly diagnosed.

The most common disorders are insomnia, sleep apnea, restless legs syndrome and narcolepsy.

The most prevalent sleep disorder in the NSW community is insomnia, which is defined as having trouble sleeping or waking up throughout the night.

One contributor to sleep problems for operators is time changes that occur with travel. Studies have shown seven to nine hours is recommended for ideal performance, and for every hour of time zone change it takes approximately one day to normalize the body’s normal rhythms. Therefore, if a service member is traveling from San Diego to Virginia, which has a three hour time difference, his or her body would need about three days to return to its normal state.

For operators, seven to nine hours of sleep is not realistic in a warzone, but a majority of operators are reporting five or less hours of sleep each night while deployed, with those habits continuing after they return home.

“We are deploying team guys in a 10 to 12 hour time zone difference, then having them work complete opposite hours to have the tactical advantage,” said Potterat. “Our brain has evolved over



Department of Defense



Mike Lawn



Seth Robson

“We need to start treating **SLEEP** as a **weapon**.”

- Cmdr. Eric G. Potterat Ph.D,
Naval Special Warfare Command force psychologist

the years and is programmed to sleep when it is dark. It is not far-fetched to assume -- and accurately so -- that there will be some major sleep issues with our guys who are overseas.”

Cognitive testing and testing of motor speed and vigilance revealed that 17 to 19 hours of sleep deprivation is equivalent to operating with .05 blood alcohol content and 21 to 24 hours of deprivation is comparable to a .08 BAC, which is the legal limit for operating a motor vehicle in the United States.

“We as leadership should be implementing training about the importance of sleep equally as much as the dangers of drinking,” said Potterat. “We should be valuing very good sleep for optimal performance, because it’s all about performance in this community.”

For the past year, the Navy Health Research Center has been conducting a sleep study for SEALs, which includes collecting data from operators pre and post deployment.

Cmdr. Paul Sargent, Naval Special

Warfare Group 1 psychologist, explained that they have tested approximately 50 SEALs, with a goal of 150. The researchers are transitioning their efforts to focus not just on the epidemiology of the problem but also to look at sleep-focused interventions in order to be able to use technology to come up with solutions.

Potterat said understanding why the sleep disorders are happening will allow quicker treatment and will decrease the likelihood of long-term problems.

“It’s important to try to treat the problem as early as possible,” Sargent said. “The longer sleep is a problem, the harder it is to fix, so treating the disorder early will create more successful outcomes.”

Although both researchers and professionals recommend incorporating more sleep into daily routines, not everyone agrees that it is as simple as that.

“Combat environments and deployments mandate long work hours to be effective,” wrote one Navy SEAL officer in an email. “Sleep is the first thing special forces stop doing in order to support mission success.

The irony is that a lack of sleep is known to degrade performance; but our ethos says mission first and self last -- brew up another cup of coffee!” Potterat, however, is adamant that sleeping more could help operators with mission accomplishment.

“We need to start treating sleep as a weapon,” said Potterat.

Through exams and testing, NSW psychiatrists discovered the average operator believes that during works-ups and deployment, it is acceptable to waken themselves with caffeine and then artificially fall asleep with sleep aids.

Caffeine is most often misused and mismanaged due to a lack of understanding of the drug’s effects. It is important to check how much caffeine is going into your body and when you are drinking it.

Another factor that can affect good sleep is the use of technology. Using cell phones, tablets and computers with light-emitting screens before going to sleep can directly relate to sleep disorders. The glare of your laptop, TV and phone enhances alertness and shifts circadian rhythms to a later hour,

Complications of Sleep Disorders

PSYCHOLOGICAL

- LOWERS PERFORMANCE
- SLOWED REACTION TIME
- RISK OF DEPRESSION
- RISK OF ANXIETY DISORDER

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

RISK OF HEART DISEASE


RISK OF DIABETES



“

We should be **valuing** very good sleep for **optimal performance**, because it's all about performance in this community. ”

- Cmdr. Eric G. Potterat Ph.D,
Naval Special Warfare Command Force Psychologist




making it more difficult to fall and stay asleep.

Along with the overuse of technology before bed, the misuse of caffeine and sleep aids, poor sleeping environments and routines are also causes and triggers for sleep disorders.

Yet there are natural techniques that can be used in order to optimize sleep. Professionals suggest a cool dark environment, suspension of any technology for several hours before going to bed

and minimum use of caffeine to optimize sleep quantity and quality.

Although sleep conditions and habits are not ideal when forward deployed, there are several ways to work towards improving them and the first step is awareness of the negative affect on your body and its performance. 

MC2 Geneva G. Brier

5 WAYS TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF SLEEP

1

ELIMINATE ELECTRONICS

2

USE CAFFEINE WITH CAUTION

3

TRY TO SLEEP IN A DARK ROOM

4

LOWER SLEEPING AREA BELOW 73°

5

REDUCE EXERCISE BEFORE SLEEPING





A Simple Tool

It's a simple tool, a compass. Its origins date back thousands of years, when it was first made of stone. It has evolved and been refined by many cultures, but the principle and purpose of the compass is the same: navigation. And this unembellished tool has a prominent place in the final stages of training for students hoping to join the Naval Special Warfare community as a special warfare combatant-craft crewman.

North: I am a Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewman; achieving excellence in maritime special operations.

What is now called the SWCC compass ceremony can be traced to 2005, when the special boat community became its own rate of special boat operators and the SWCC Creed and Code were written. Senior enlisted personnel in the community were invited to Stennis, Miss., to write the creed, but felt that something more was needed to make a lasting impact on newly-minted SBs.

“We felt like there was a need to find and present something that had a legacy effect,” said Pat Battles, deputy operations officer at Support Activity 1. Battles graduated in SWCC class 23 and was one of the senior enlisted men involved in the conception of the ceremony.

The choice to present a compass, rather than a KA-BAR knife as the Navy SEALs do, was meant to function not only as a representation of a SWCC tool but also as a symbol of how an SB should try to live his life.

“[The] compass is obviously a primary navigation tool for mariners,” said Battles. “The other part of it is that this is symbolic of your moral compass. It is not just a physical compass to point a quadrennial direction; it is also a symbol of how you act and what you do.”

The ceremony is also an introduction to the SWCC community. The students have made it through the physically grueling training and are welcomed by their instructors and seniors to the small community of special boat operators.

“Ultimately it’s a kind of rite of passage,” said Senior Chief Special Boat Operator Matt Pierce, crewman qualification training leading chief petty officer. “We want the new boat guys coming in to understand where we are going and where we have been in order to let them know that we are all one big team. To me it means they have been vetted by everybody. They have met the mark and now they are on the team with all the benefits and privileges of being a boat guy, but with the accountability and responsibility associated with that as well. So no more excuses. You are on the path now.”

The historical aspect of the ceremony is conducted in two parts. Similar to the SEAL KA-BAR knives, which are engraved with names of fallen teammates, each compass has the name of a Vietnam-era Sailor who served in early boat units. But the ceremony itself is held at the Vietnam Unit Memorial on Coronado, a memorial specifically made for those who served on boats.

“It’s a good tie to our heritage,” said Sam Brown, SWCC deputy operations officer and retired SWCC master chief. “That’s a great place to do that for the kids to look at the boats, see the wall and all the people on the wall, and it’s tragic what happened, how many people lost their lives during the Vietnam War. It recognizes that they are going into a community that very well could cost them their lives.”

On graduation morning, students gather with their instructors in front of the memorial. Boats used on the rivers of Vietnam, restored



Photo By MC1 Dominique Canales

a quiet professional, tried, tested, and dedicated to I am a disciplined, confident and highly motivated warrior.

and dressed in patriotic banners surround the students as they form into ranks. Veterans who care for the memorial watch from the benches or boats as the ceremony begins. The air is filled with a feeling of anticipation, triumph and reverence.

At each ceremony, a respected SWCC community member is invited to be the guest speaker. His words encourage and reiterate the community's past, the creed and symbolism behind the small compass the men are receiving.

"You will soon be handed a compass. One that has navigated many Sailors safely to and from battle on unforgiving seas. Engraved on your compass is a name; the of a teammate who has paid the ultimate sacrifice. This will tie you to our rich heritage. Uphold this man's honor. Earn it! The compass you receive today is symbolic of your moral compass and the four cardinal points on your compass can be related to the SWCC Creed which is scribed inside its cover:

North: I am a Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewman; a quiet professional, tried, tested, and dedicated to achieving excellence in maritime special operations. I am a disciplined, confident, and highly motivated warrior.

South: My honor and integrity are beyond reproach, my commitment unquestioned, and my word trusted. The American people depend on me to carry out my mission in a professional manner.

East: I maintain my craft, equipment, and myself at

the highest level of combat readiness. I set the standard and lead by example. I am responsible for my actions and accountable to my teammates. I challenge my brothers to perform as I expect them to challenge me.

West: I am ready for war. I will close and engage the enemy with the full combat power of my craft. My actions will be decisive yet measured. I will always complete the mission. I will never quit and will leave no one behind.

Use this compass often to ensure you maintain a sound moral heading. Steer a good course and success will come to you all."

The students' names are then called and they are presented with their compasses by their future commanding officers. The names of the fallen are engraved on the front and the SWCC Creed is inscribed inside the box that holds the compass to serve as a reminder and instrument to help navigate their futures.

MC1 Dominique Canales

Top right: Students and leadership assemble at the memorial before the ceremony. Bottom right: A Sailor receives his compass from his perspective commanding officer. Below: Compasses engraved with the names of early boat unit sailors wait to be presented before the compass ceremony.



Photo By MC1 Dominique Canales



Photo By MC1 Dominique Canales



Meet Jessica Long

NSW's Foreign Policy Advisor



Jessica Long is the foreign policy advisor (POLAD) for Naval Special Warfare. Her duties include keeping Rear Adm. Losey informed of relevant international issues affecting the community and educating members of the Force on global topics. She frequently briefs NSW members on interacting with foreign embassies, cultural sensitivities and the way U.S. governmental organizations work together in various areas of responsibility around the world.

Long was born in Chile, where her father was working with the U.S. State Department. Several years later, her mother joined the Foreign Service as well, and Long spent time in Iran, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland and Guatemala before attending Rice University in Texas. At Rice, she double-majored in French and behavioral studies, then earned a Masters of Divinity from Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis. During her time at Covenant, she took the U.S. Foreign Service exam, which led to her first assignment, in Israel. She has worked for the State Department in Israel; Afghanistan; Washington, D.C.; and Coronado, Calif., where she has served since 2012.

Long is scheduled to return to Washington in summer 2013. Below are her words as she prepares to depart NSW. Interview conducted Dec. 16, 2013.

IN HER OWN WORDS

“I THINK GROWING UP MOVING, you automatically develop the sense that what happens in the world matters.”

“THE THINGS THAT YOU RECOGNIZE THAT MATTER are the things that happen around you – that’s true for everybody, but the things that were around me kept changing.”

“PEOPLE SUFFER FOR ALL SORTS OF REASONS, but I’ve seen a lot of people suffer at the hands of their government, either because the government is actively doing terrible things like genocide or because the government passes horrific policies that destroy an economy or destroy human rights, or whatever. I thought, if there’s an opportunity to influence foreign governments and my own government to make decisions that are more just, more productive, then that’s appealing to me.”

“WE DON’T HAVE THE ABILITY to control natural disasters, but you should be able to influence governments.”

“I’VE HAD A LOT OF PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY TELL ME they were successful with an embassy their third or fourth deployment. My goal is to increase the chances that they’re successful their first or second deployment. If they understand better how things work, it’s easier to walk in and figure out how to operate effectively.”

“NSW AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT WANT THE SAME THING – they’re trying to figure out how we advance U.S. interests.”

“THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS TRYING to look at the whole range of issues – non-proliferation, economic issues, human rights issues, political issues, how countries help us on global issues – so they’re looking at a big range of things. The expertise of the GCC or the TSCOC commander or NSW bring can obviously address some of those.”

“PEOPLE IN AN EMBASSY ARE AWARE OF BIG-PICTURE PRIORITIES FROM WASHINGTON, they’re aware of host-government sensitivities, but they’re not necessarily going to have the on-the-ground, concrete expertise that somebody who’s been partnering with a unit in that country might have. So if they’re all in the same discussion together, they’re more likely to figure out the best way forward for the U.S.”

“THE ADMIRAL AND I HAVE BOTH COMMENTED on several occasions that some inherent tension is good. If you have the right communication and trust between relevant parties, you actually get to a better decision. Where an embassy might be pushing a certain direction and SOF or the military might be pushing a different direction, sometimes they’ll get to a better decision through compromise.”

“EVERY JOB IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE, you’re drinking from a fire hose. You get plucked and put into a new situation and you have to figure out what’s going on and how you advance U.S. interests in that context. The same was true here.”

“IT’S RARE to find a person here who speaks in words – everyone speaks in acronyms.”


“BECAUSE THE COMMAND DOES NOT HAVE ONE SPECIFIC AOR, it’s forced me to think more globally. It’s pushed me to reach out and learn about what’s going on all over the world.”

“ONE OF THE BIG PLUSSES OF WORKING HERE is seeing how much discipline is emphasized. I’ve seen a lot of militaries in a lot of countries that don’t have discipline, and that obviously affects them tactically, but if they’re undisciplined on something like human rights, that can be devastating for a country. To work with an organization that values judgment, discipline, those sorts of things – there’s a sense of, ‘Yes, this is the way it’s supposed to be.’”

“IT’S BEEN USEFUL FOR ME to spend time with people who are also trying to serve their country but are trying to do it in a really different way.”

“I THINK WHAT’S BEEN REFRESHING is the number of people here who don’t meet a stereotype. And I hope people would say the same thing if they worked at the State Department.”

“THE MOST FUN, for sure, is talking to the guys before they deploy.”

“I HOPE THAT THE COMMUNITY will continue to view me as a contact.” 

VICE ADM. HARWARD RETIRES

Photo by Jim Woods



Commander, Naval Special Warfare Command held a retirement ceremony for Vice Adm. Robert S. Harward, Nov. 1 at Naval Base Coronado. Most recently, Harward served as deputy commander, U.S. Central Command. Adm. William H. McRaven, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, and retired Gen. James Mattis, former commander of U.S. Central Command, both spoke at the ceremony and praised Harward's naval service.

"What was obvious from our very first meeting – and what remained Bob's greatest strength throughout his long career – was the intensity with which he pursued every single endeavor," McRaven said.

Mattis echoed those words.

"Few people come along in life whose friendship and judgment, their courage and their humor shines so brightly and influences us so greatly," Mattis said.

Harward enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1975 and received a fleet appointment to

the United States Naval Academy, where he earned his bachelor's degree in 1979. He qualified as a surface warfare officer aboard USS Scott (DDG 995) before attending Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUD/S) training and graduating as the "Honor Man" of BUD/S class 128.

Harward served with both East and West Coast SEAL teams as well as multiple international assignments. Outside the special warfare community, Harward served in the Executive Office of the President at



“THIS JOURNEY WOULDN’T HAVE BEEN ANYTHING WITHOUT EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.”

- Vice Adm. (Ret.) Robert S. Harward, during his retirement speech



MC2 Megan Anuci



MC2 Geneva G. Brier



MC2 Geneva G. Brier

the White House on the National Security Council as director of strategy and policy for combating terrorism. He commanded troops in both Iraq and Afghanistan after Sept. 11, 2011.

Harward's sendoff was as unconventional as his leadership style, which both McRaven and Mattis said contributed to his success as a SEAL officer. On the battlefield, Harward was known as a creative thinker willing to lead by example, and Harward's entrance to his retirement ceremony included a jump

with the Navy Leapfrog parachute team, which landed on the beach in front of his waiting guests.

"I've never seen an entrance quite like that," McRaven said.

For his part, Harwell took a moment during his speech to praise the two four-star officers.

"They're warriors, they're leaders, they're visionaries, and most important, they knew where they needed to be," Harward said.

But Harward reserved his final words for

the guests who attended the ceremony, many of whom were teammates and mentors.

"This journey wouldn't have been anything without each and every one of you," Harward told the crowd. "I learned from you every day, I wanted to be like you every day and I never wanted to fail you. So thank you and I hope I never do fail you."

MC3 Paul Coover

Stockdale Award Winners Credit Their Sailors at Ceremony



The Navy recognized a former SEAL Team leader and a former ballistic missile submarine commanding officer Dec. 4, as the year's top skippers — leaders who said the credit really belongs to their crews.

"It's extremely humbling to be awarded for something that, to me, was clearly about the outstanding people that I was fortunate enough to serve as their commanding officer," said Cmdr. Leif Mollo, the Fleet Forces Command recipient of the Vice Adm. James Bond Stockdale Award for leadership, who won for his time commanding SEAL Teams 4 and 8. "I hope that the members of SEAL Team 4, SEAL Team 8 and Naval Special Warfare community, many of them here today, feel that they have ownership of this because the recognition belongs to them."

Mollo and Cmdr. Rich Massie, the Pacific Fleet recipient, were honored at a ceremony in the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes before an audience of roughly 60 shipmates, family members and top Navy officials, among them previous Stockdale winners Chief of Naval

Operations Adm. Jon Greenert and Adm. John Richardson, the director of naval nuclear propulsion. Mollo is only the second SEAL to receive the award in its 33-year history.

Given annually to two O-5 commanding officers, the Stockdale award is widely regarded as the fleet's top leadership prize and is unique in that officers are nominated by other eligible COs. The annual ceremony is an opportunity for the Navy to showcase two of its best leaders, who this year were both Naval Academy graduates.

Massie helmed the Bangor, Wash.-based boomer Maine for an eventful three years. Massie led his crew on five strategic deterrent patrols, a time period that also included the gender integration of the sub force. Maine was one of the first four Ohio-class subs selected to receive a cadre of female submariners and Massie oversaw their integration and qualification on board the ship.

Massie set a climate for the female submariners and a female supply lieutenant to blend into the crew and get to work, said one former shipboard leader.



Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Jonathan Greenert presents the 2013 Vice Adm. James Bond Stockdale Leadership Awards to U.S. Pacific Fleet recipient Cmdr. Richard N. Massie, commanding officer of the USS Maine (SSBN 741 - Gold) and U.S. Fleet Forces Command recipient Cmdr. Leif E. Mollo, commanding officer of SEAL Team 4 from the Hall of Heroes at the Pentagon.



“It’s humbling to see the level of talent not only on the officer side, but on the enlisted side.”

- Cmdr. Leif E. Mollo,
SEAL Team 4 commanding officer

“His mantra throughout that entire process was treat everyone with dignity and respect,” recalled Lt. Cmdr. Eric Cole, who served as the sub’s executive officer for nearly two years, and who had come up from Millington, Tenn. to attend the ceremony. “We as a crew executed that flawlessly. All the officers and all the crew came together and it was, for lack of a better word, a non-event. The women came to work. They showed up and they did great.”

Cole described Massie as a family man and a leader who devoted time to mentoring his sailors and his junior officers.

The Maine’s blue and gold crews kept the sub underway a total of 349 days from January 2011, to March 2012, on deterrent missions and exercises and earned a Meritorious Unit Commendation — an award rarely given to individual boomers.

Massie, 43, is a 1993 academy graduate who is now the deputy commander of Submarine Squadron 19 in Silverdale, Wash. Massie had breakfast with the CNO and was joined at the ceremony by his wife, Melissa, his parents and his brother Kevin, an Air Force lieutenant colonel. Asked after the ceremony what it was like to win such a prestigious award, Massie said, “It’s incredibly humbling.”

‘Go fight’

Mollo, the SEAL leader, is a combat veteran who also has faced challenges. He led the Little Creek, Va.-based SEAL Team 8 for two years until he was unexpectedly ordered to take over SEAL Team 4 in December 2012, after the suicide of its then-commanding officer amid their deployment to Afghanistan.

“He brought a sense of calm and a sense of, ‘I’m not here to fix anything — I’m here to lead,’” said a chief warrant SEAL who served with Mollo in SEAL Team 4, and who asked to remain anonymous for privacy reasons. “He literally brought a sense of calm and a sense of, ‘You guys got it. Go fight. Go take it to the enemy.’”

Mollo, 43, is a 1992 academy grad who has spent his 21-year

career in the SEALs, receiving the Bronze Star Medal with combat ‘V’ device, the Combat Action Ribbon, the Bronze Star Medal twice, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal and other unit and campaign awards.

The SEAL warrant officer described Mollo as an inspiring leader known for his ability to “remain calm in chaos,” adding he is a “quiet guy initially but once you get to know him you know that he’s a very open, friendly and generous guy.” He also is ribbed by teammates for his guitar plucking and love for 1980s hair metal bands.

Because Mollo is one of the two SEALs to ever win this inspirational leadership award, it was a big day for the community. More than a dozen Trident warriors mugged for a group photo afterward with Mollo, including Rear Adm. Brian Losey, the head of Naval Special Warfare Command.

But even on a day where he was center-stage, Mollo repeatedly emphasized that it was not about him. He sees his success as grounded in a simple philosophy: Telling his team what he expects and then getting out of the way.

“It’s humbling to see the level of talent not only on the officer side, but on the enlisted side,” Mollo said of the SEALs after the ceremony in an interview. “These are all people who over the last 10 years have been combat tested multiple times. So when you’re leading leaders, I think it’s one of those things where if you allow them to do their job and you give left and right limits and then just allow them to run, they do fantastic work.

“It’s amazing what they do when you allow them to do their job and just kind of give the direction but then stand back, let ’em work,” he continued.

This story first appeared in Navy Times, an independent publication covering the U.S. Navy.



FOCUS
ON THE
FORCE

EXPEDITIONARY COMBAT SKILLS



At the Navy's Expeditionary Skills course in Gulfport, Miss., Sailors are taught the fundamentals of shooting, land navigation and first aid. For the first time, men and women headed to Naval Special Warfare commands around the world are joining in.

THEIR EYES GAVE THEM AWAY.

Dressed head to toe in mission-oriented protective posture gear designed to repel a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear attack, students stood still beneath a relentless afternoon sun. The temperature outside had long ago surpassed 90 degrees, but inside the suit it was much hotter than that. Rubber boots and gloves trapped perspiration; impermeable jackets and gloves prevented even the hint of a breeze from making its way to bodies whose core temperatures continued to rise. Students' breathing, too, was restricted by masks that filtered air through a canister filled with carbon. Through it all, the students maintained their composure, standing calmly by as instructors fitted this piece of clothing or that, or explained why certain items had to be donned before others to ensure the best seal and subsequent protection from invisible airborne poisons.

But as the heat inside the suits steadily rose and fresh air became an increasingly distant memory, eyes began to dart rapid-fire to water bottles lying on nearby grass, or to peers to check on others' composure. Students became wild-eyed in their desire to find a way to cool off, even as instructors continually offered quick assistance to anyone who felt close to succumbing to the weather. No one took the easy out. It was eerily quiet into the final few moments of wearing the gear, voices muffled by masks and filters. Finally the direction came to strip down to military uniforms, and with rapid exhalations, masks and hoods and rubber came flying off.

The effect was akin to an apocalyptic garage sale, with military gear intended for worst-case-scenario attacks spread across the open lawn. Most students had soaked through their uniforms; some even had sweat visibly seeping through leather boots. As the group gulped water, then tidied the area and cleaned and organized equipment for use by future classes, any student within earshot of an instructor telling a story about the hours he'd spent in the gear fighting a battle in the Middle East listened intently. After only a few minutes in the

getup in Mississippi, early signs of overheating were already visible. Even thinking about spending hours at a time in the protective apparel during a real fight was both humbling and daunting.

That mental click -- that moment the reality of combat's harshness sets in and is willingly accepted -- is one of the preeminent focuses at the Navy's Expeditionary Combat Skills course, or ECS. It's called the combat mindset, and its value to a warfighter is repeated daily during the month students spend in the class.

Much of the combat mindset has to do with psychologically changing gears from aiming at a paper target to understanding what it means to fire at a human one, but the foundation of the philosophy is broader than that. At its core, the combat mindset involves transitioning from a relaxed mental state to one that allows a Sailor to accept stress, elevate his or her level of aggression in action and place mission accomplishment above everything else. Even getting into MOPP gear on one of the most humid days of summer can help students make the switch. For new Sailors -- or Sailors new to expeditionary commands -- this is critical practice, and sometimes their final chance to hone military-specific mental skills before heading overseas.

At ECS, the stress students undergo is intentional. Indeed, instructors seek it out, find ways to apply it so students can feel its effects on their motor skills and decision making. The result, teachers hope, is a graduate prepared to survive real-world combat. Since the course began in January 2008, it has been one of the Navy's premier tools for creating battle-ready Sailors.

Dealing with fickle weather is just one part of the course's pressure, but it's also arguably the most unavoidable and symbolic of stressors. As anyone who's read a newspaper in the last decade knows, fighting doesn't always happen under cloudy skies and mellow temperatures, and many of the instructors at ECS are aware of this fact not because they read it but because they lived it: Two years of documented combat experience are required to even apply



ECS students learn lifesaving first aid skills.

MC3 Paul Coover



for a position to teach here.

So where instruction based on theoretical examples might suffice elsewhere, it won't in the cases of men and women preparing to head into harm's way. If there are no weather timeouts in a real fight, then students in ECS shoot right through the heat as well. The same theory applies to teaching nighttime navigation or learning to drag victims who might be weighed down by heavy body armor -- those lessons are replicated as authentically as possible, even as they require long days from instructors and fairly serious physical exertion from students.

Over four weeks in July and August, 60 Sailors gathered to form ECS class 13200. Among them, 30 came from Naval Special Warfare (NSW) commands on both coasts, part of the first group of NSW support personnel to be assigned to this course specifically because of their roles in special warfare missions around the world. Though Navy SEALs and SWCC are at the core of NSW, support personnel are almost always part of NSW missions as well. They work on communication and computer systems, gather intelligence, handle supply, build infrastructure and sometimes, fight. If anything is made clear at ECS, it is that on a battlefield, anyone may be called on to pull a trigger.

THE ORIGINS OF NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE date back to the Underwater Demolition Teams and Scouts and Raiders in

World War II, and since its inception, the specialized force has been inextricably linked to the Navy at large. The Navy's ships, aircraft, and support personnel are critical elements to most NSW missions, and they are employed to strategic effect. The current assistant training officer, a SEAL lieutenant commander, has spent more than two decades in the teams and can't remember a time he didn't lean on those outside the SEAL community for help with his own job.

"I can tell you that in the early '90s we had [storekeepers] handing out t-shirts," he says, "and we had [photographer's mates] helping teach photo classes and we had [enginemen] helping us maintain our engines. So we've always had institutional Navy as part of our support."

Their roles are just less visible, and one step removed from the SEALs on the sharp end of military missions.

"They're invaluable," the lieutenant commander says of enablers. "You can't train SEALs to run [local area networks], or to hold sick call every day and be proficient combat elements. So the fact that that guy can make your radio work, make your internet account work, help you refine intelligence, help keep your motors running, help move your stuff on time -- those are all critical elements to the military enterprise."

Integration with an NSW team does require a core set of skills beyond what's learned in boot camp, A-schools and the fleet Navy,



“You’re going to have the basic combat skills that you’re going to need to survive in a tactical environment.”

- Mark Smith,
ECS training director

though. Special Warfare Operators, or SOs (SEALs) and Special Boat Operators, or SBs (SWCCs) are the Navy’s only two true special warfare ratings, but in a combat zone SOs and SBs are rarely isolated from the enablers there to support the mission. As a result, NSW commanding officers have long sought training for the non-SEAL/SWCC personnel assigned to assist their operators. Until recently, what that training entailed was left to the commanding officer’s discretion at each group or even team. That sometimes created discrepancies between the training enablers at different commands received.

“We definitely want a standardized, well-trained and integrated force,” the lieutenant commander says. “We each have critical jobs to do. SEALs and SWCCs have their jobs and the supporting arms have theirs.”

In its search for that integration, NSW began looking to what other expeditionary commands were doing, and began evaluating ECS. They liked what they saw, and signed on to make NSW Sailors regular participants in the course. Though the logistics were sometimes complicated, the ECS philosophy wasn’t. And it fit right in with what NSW wanted for its enablers.

Says Mark Smith, the training director at ECS: “You’re going to have the basic combat skills that you’re going to need to survive in a tactical environment.”

That simple statement essentially drives all of the decisions being made about what students need to learn prior to expeditionary deployments. From that broad starting point, lesson plans with specific objectives were drafted and then refined; the organization of ECS is so tight now that each hour is scripted to ensure students are always progressing toward one or more combat-critical skills, which together allow that Sailor to accomplish the Navy’s aforementioned big-picture goal. In its current form, ECS is four weeks long and covers combat first-aid, land navigation, weapons handling and marksmanship with both the M9 and M4, and convoy fundamentals. A new class convenes each Monday for 48 weeks each year.

In some ways, the course would seem more in line with requirements for Army and Marine Corps personnel. Indeed, the predominant public perception about the Navy is that deployed Sailors fight exclusively from ships. Fighting from the sea will forever remain the service’s focus and specialty, but what’s less well known is that the Navy also ensures numerous commands are well-versed in air and ground warfare.

“We go everywhere,” said Intelligence Specialist 2nd Class Justine Anderson, an ECS student assigned to NSW Support Activity 2. “Blue water, brown water and land.”



ECS students learn lifesaving first aid skills.

ECS fills in the gaps for new Navy Sailors heading to expeditionary commands, as well as Sailors who've only ever seen the fleet or shore side of the service.

Yet even some of the NSW personnel with deployments already under their belts received a level of instruction at ECS they might not have gotten previously.

"Most people probably have not handled an M9 or M4 in this way," said Aircrew Survival Equipmentman 1st Class Sascha Lansen, "doing the transitions, doing the shooting and moving at targets that pop up at them."

Lansen, who is assigned to NSW's Logistics Support Unit 3, was already proficient with both weapons when he arrived at ECS. But the level of detail to which instructors teach in Gulfport keyed him into several small mistakes he was making. Fixing those, he said, will make him both safer and faster on a battlefield. When he was asked if he'll take lessons learned in Mississippi back with him to his command, he didn't hesitate.

"The way I was shooting, handling the weapon -- definitely."

"It's learning new methods and reinforcing old ones," says Intelligence Specialist 1st Class Chris Thomas, also assigned to Support Activity 2. "Any chance you get to have someone fine-tune your skills is good."

ON ONE OF THE FIRST DAYS of firing live weapons, the class loaded onto a bus headed for the range.

The early mornings dulled the volume of conversations, but the general mood was upbeat. M9s were strapped to thighs, waiting only for the loaded magazines that would transform them into battlefield tools. As Mississippi slid by, dripping green with rain and humidity,

Sailors napped, sang along to a Def Leppard song playing on the radio, laughed and quoted old movies. One cracked a cold can of espresso, luxury abandoned in favor of function.

True special warfare training this is not, as ECS is a far cry from the sleepless nights and unrelenting physical conditioning of SEAL and SWCC schools. But neither is ECS welcoming to the unprepared. Lightning can halt outdoor training, but that's about it. If it rains, you get wet. If your partner during the combat-carry exercise weighs twice what you do, you learn a lesson that in a real fight, casualties and rescuers aren't matched by weight. If sweat and sand cause blisters and chafing, well, a few band-aids will have to do.

At the range, students were organized into three groups of 20 and further broken down into teams of four or five to work with individual

"We definitely want a standardized, well-trained and integrated force."

- NSW training officer

instructors. The teaching was patient but firm. The school has never had a serious accident as a result of a negligent discharge, and an intense attention to detail is expected of everyone on the facility grounds. An intentional side effect of this focus is that almost everyone who attends the course improves in marksmanship.

That's not to say all students who come to ECS are natural shots, though. In one chuckle-inducing drill, a young Sailor squatted on her knees to shoot from behind a wooden barricade, but failed to realize that though her sights were trained on a target downrange, the barrel of her M9 was still hovering at barricade level. "Don't you shoot my barricade," an instructor hinted. Bang. Splinters flew away from the shooter. The instructor sighed. "You shot it anyway." He smiled, and later ribbed the Sailor good-naturedly into signing her name near the hole she'd left in the plywood for posterity.

The incident was more instructive than it appeared on the surface,

however. Whether a student is an expert shot upon arrival is of no consequence in Gulfport. In the case of the young Sailor, the instructor continued his patient mentoring, and by the end of the week, she qualified as a basic marksman with the pistol and earned the right to wear a ribbon on her uniform proving as much. Similar stories are repeated almost weekly.

AT THE END of the course, students have to prove they can shoot at night. The fundamentals of sight alignment, breathing, a stable stance -- none of that changes, and in theory, a shooter could operate the exact same way in darkness as he or she does in daylight and be similarly or even exactly as accurate. But only by experiencing something authentically can it begin to become familiar. That's how the night shoot got written into the ECS curriculum.


The training evolution's requirement for darkness demands a long day from the instructors, but no one debates its importance. After an early afternoon spent in the now-familiar rhythm of dry-fire, live-fire and rest and rehydration, students shed their kevlar and body armor and retreated into the shade of a nearby set of covered bleachers. As the sun set, students played cards, picked at a guitar someone had hauled along on the morning march to the armory, munched on pizza the class had ordered. Slowly, dusk began to settle. The cards were boxed, the guitar cased, the pizza stowed for leftovers or hastily finished.

Getting back into the mindset required to fire ammunition that's intended to kill is critical to range safety, and each Sailor had to find his or her own method in the two weeks of weapons training in Gulfport. At perhaps no other time was the shift as dramatic as the one that took place that night the sun went down and weapons were loaded, slung and holstered. With a somber quiet, the first group of shooters walked down to the firing line.

The range in Gulfport is nondescript, little more than an open rectangle of patchy grass, dirt and sand. Targets at the far end are about 100m from the first firing line. Others can be shot from as close as 3m, and the idea that students might one day be required to drop a threat who managed to get that close is sobering. On this night, students would be required to fire from a variety of distances, and with both rifles and pistols.

At the far edge of the range, a dirt berm rises from the flattened earth. Above that, a sheet of steel catches rounds fired over the berm. Barely visible, wild and empty land stretching for thousands of meters sits ready to absorb any bullet that makes it beyond the range's bounds. That night, it was the steel that was on display. In the darkness, the spark caused by a round hitting metal is suddenly vibrant. When 20 students fire at once, the effect is stunning.

On the firing line, students lay prone, weapons loaded, sights trained on targets. Their breath was calm, the sweat on their backs cool. As they waited, perhaps some considered the fact that they were at that moment but one step away from live combat, that the skills they were preparing to hone could one day save a life -- their own or another's. This could be the last time they fired a weapon at night before being called on to put the skill to the test in real combat. It's one of the military's longest-held beliefs: sometimes, peace can only be protected with force. The instructors at ECS are tasked with helping Sailors act on this principle, to be able to combat oppression and violence with resolve.

With the crackle of a microphone and the issuance of a simple order, the students took their final aim. They placed their fingers on their triggers. In a cacophonous unity, they shot radiant light into the darkness. 

MC3 Paul Coover

ECS BY THE NUMBERS

4 Weeks are spent at the the Expeditionary Combat Skills (ECS) Course, which covers basic first aid, land navigation, marksmanship and convoy fundamentals

2 Years of combat experience to be considered for a job as an ECS instructor

48 Number of ECS classes held each year

100 Percent of Sailors heading to expeditionary commands are required to attend ECS

66 Seats available in each ECS class

18 Students from class 13200 who qualified for the Navy's Expert Rifle Medal

0 Students from class 13200 who failed to qualify as Navy marksmen with both the standard service pistol and rifle

FEAR AND THE WARRIOR

The young warrior knows no fear; the elite fighter has an intimate relationship with it.



We often talk about a warrior's courage; we admire him for it and we celebrate it. But how does one talk about courage—how does one examine its potential and its limits—without also talking about fear? What is courage but doing what needs to be done in spite of one's fears? This essay considers the complex relationship between the elite, experienced warrior and his fear.

Young, bold and audacious warriors often try to deny their fear, seeing it as a form of weakness. They often idealize themselves and other bold warriors as knowing no fear. I fell into that trap when I was younger, but I see things differently now.

I've come to realize that elite warriors have an intimate relationship with fear. They don't deny their fear; rather, they seek it out as a catalyst to make themselves stronger, wiser, more resilient. They push themselves beyond the edge of their comfort zones in search of that next challenge, the next higher mountain, the next opportunity to see what they're made of. Each new challenge invariably involves confronting new anxieties and fears, which warriors must listen to, get to know and become intimate with in order to survive, perform at their best and ultimately succeed in their mission. Elite warriors are always developing and shaping their relationship with fear.

Elite warriors are wary of the audacious, the bold, the reckless who brazenly attack every obstacle. These bold, usually young warriors need experienced mentors to guide them and help them to survive until they too can become experienced and perhaps even elite. Elite warriors are ready to act when bold and dangerous action is required, but they also know that discretion is often the better part of valor.

SEALs and SWCCs are among those elite warriors whose missions require that they confront, learn to live with, and manage fear, anxiety and apprehension. To train for and succeed in the most challenging and unforgiving environments, they must make fear work for them, rather than hinder their performance.

Fear can inspire focused attention to detail and thorough preparation before a stressful event. Whether the challenge is public speaking, a night parachute jump or going into combat, all elite warriors have stories of success and even survival in unforgiving environments. After paying attention to that knot in their stomachs that inspired them to take extra precautions, warriors make all necessary preparations to perform at their best. Experienced warriors see red flags when there is no fear or anxiety in others before what should clearly be a stressful event.

Warriors (and especially elite warriors) have a relationship with fear that those who seek only safety, security, and comfort will never

know. The more elite the warrior, the more intimate and familiar he is with fear. And this fear is not merely personal - the warrior is most often part of a team. Within a team or military unit, the elite warrior's greatest fear is letting down his teammates.

Within elite warrior cultures, fear of shame or dishonor has always been stronger than fear of injury or death.

A warrior's fear often masquerades as performance anxiety. Will I meet the expectations and standards of my team and teammates? Will I be able to do my share or more if and when the "kaka" hits the fan? Have I done all that I can do to be as ready as I can be, or have I missed something? Might a mistake, a bad decision, or a momentary lapse in focus get one of my buddies killed or injured or result in mission failure? Will I dishonor myself and be ashamed in front of my teammates? These are the fears that confront a warrior in his quiet moments, especially at the early stages of his development, while he is still accumulating experience, gaining self-confidence and getting comfortable with his fear.

This intimate relationship with fear is not unique to elite military units; one finds it in any culture of men and women who work individually or in teams in challenging and unforgiving environments, to include rock climbers, mountaineers, big wave surfers, extreme skiers, competitive athletes and even the best entrepreneurs and business leaders. Author Jim Collins devotes a whole section of his most recent book, "Great by Choice," to what he calls "productive paranoia," explaining how the most successful business leaders anticipate chaos and bad luck. Productive paranoia keeps leaders focused on keeping themselves and their businesses as alert and ready as possible.

Elite warriors are not afraid to acknowledge their fear. Their relationship with their fear is like a good marriage - the warrior and his fear are indeed intimate and familiar with each other, and it is a very private relationship. Together they are more than the sum of their parts. The elite warrior's experience, judgment, and wisdom temper and manage his primal fears, while the warrior's fears focus his mind and energies, and tell him when to be careful and when to pay very close attention. The warrior's fear of failure, shame and dishonor and his fear of letting down his teammates helps inform good decisions that appropriately manage risk and achieve outcomes that serve the long term best interest of himself, his team and his nation.

Bob Shoultz

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AN OPEN LETTER TO SENIOR ENLISTED ADVISORS

DEVELOPING A SENSE OF HUMANITY

PART 3 OF A THREE-PART SERIES

The two previous editions of *Ethos* provided perspectives on a commander's expectations of his or her senior enlisted advisor (SEA) in terms of leadership and intellect. The topic for this third and final essay is the expectation for a solid sense of humanity.

Our most senior leaders in the DoD, including Adm. William McRaven, continue to reinforce the idea that warfare is fundamentally a human endeavor. For special operations forces (SOF), this is especially true. You know humans are messy but often the most powerful things on earth in both positive and negative ways. I used to joke that the best and worst decisions we ever make concern getting humans involved in anything. During my command of the joint special operations task force (JSOTF), an email back to my commander regarding a personnel issue went something like this: "Sir, it looks like X and Y are determined to convince me that humans themselves are the limiting factor in military operations."

Getting people right is tough. It requires a good grounding in humanity to make the best decisions about them. Humanity for our purposes is not about being nice, it is about understanding. Humanity is about empathy and discerning the impact of people and the impact on people regarding a given decision, action or endeavor. Humanity is about pursuing positive human outcomes, maximizing the value of our virtuous potential and minimizing the expression of our destructive natures. It is understanding that human behavior is driven by two basic impulses: an animal instinct to survive and a human desire to matter. Once you understand that, people get easy--well, people get easier. Humanity for SEAs is about human-centric leadership and the mindset that in people we can find our most precious resource, our most potent threat and our greatest opportunity. Your ability to get the people right is directly proportional to your measure of humanity.

People are our greatest asset. I know that in the platform-centric services like the Navy and Air Force, statements like that can become cliché. But it is true. I consider the simple appeal of command not in terms of ego reinforcement but as the opportunity to solve the nation's tough problems with talented people you care about. Taking care of our people is a primary duty of SEAs,


sometimes mentoring, sometimes directing, always with respect, dignity, and honor, because everyone matters. As the SEA you must understand how each Team member adds value to the mission and you must reinforce in that person the value of that contribution every day. I also expect you to reinforce in the minds of our Teammates that despite the fact that they are called to serve in demanding and dynamic circumstances - where fear and fatigue get no seat at the table - you see them as people every day.

I expect you to invest in humor. Team leadership should be a satisfying experience and most of the time just plain fun. Combat and the intense and dynamic operational lives we lead will rob you of your humanity if you let them. Humor can help keep us human. I also expect you to remember your role as a patriot and a citizen and to take care of the most precious thing your demanding jobs will ever put at risk: your family. I expect you to remember that every time you set to sea so goes a son, a father, a brother, a husband or a daughter, a mother, a sister or wife. Remembering all of that and leading by example is essential to a healthy command. Set that example of humanity for me; I will need your example. Maintain your humanity and help me hold my compass bearing on what is moral, legal and ethical. I will be there for you and I will rely on you as a trusted source of strength for me. It is lonely at the top, as they say, and I will return your investment in the well-being of my soul by exercising command with inspired leadership, foresight and thoughtfulness. Set that example of humanity for your Sailors, your Soldiers, your Airmen, and your Marines, they will respond in ways that out-scale our highest expectations.

So as you take up assignments in the Team compound or jointly out forward, I call on each of you to demonstrate the high standards of leadership, intellect and humanity our mission and our people require from our senior enlisted advisors. So that at sea, in the air, and on the shores around the globe we all might keep faith with the simple expectations of the American people:

The American people expect us to be tough.

They expect us to be good at our job.

They expect us to serve with honor. 

Capt. R. V. Gusentine



REMEMBERING THE FALLEN

THOSE WHO HAVE LEFT US, NEVER LEAVE COMPLETELY. THEY LIVE ON IN OUR HEARTS AND MEMORIES. WE WILL NEVER FORGET THE ONES WE'VE LOST. THEY ARE FOREVER OUR BROTHERS, SISTERS, MOTHERS, FATHERS AND FRIENDS.

Never forget