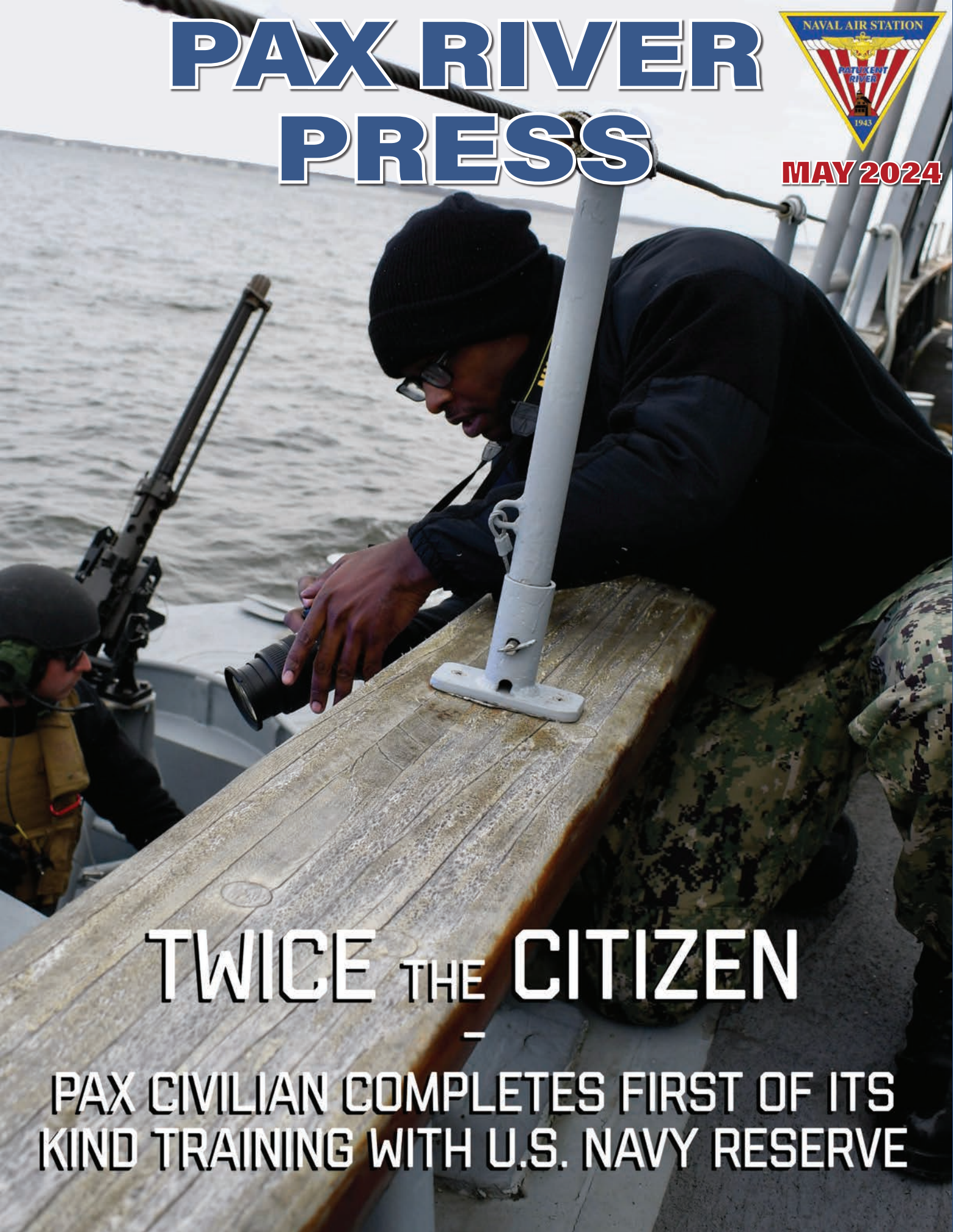


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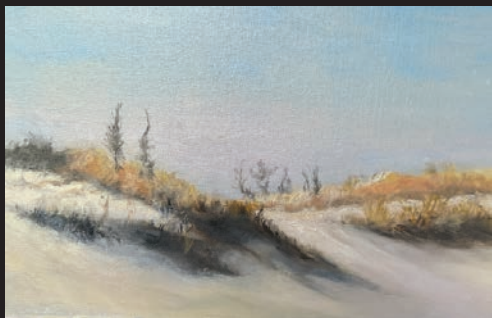


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Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Maurice Brown of the Navy Reserve Chief of Information Office (NR-CHINFO) unit performs Operational Task Visual Information (OPTASK VI) training aboard a U.S. Naval Academy Yard Patrol craft. (U.S. Navy photo by MCC Patrick Gordon)

Pax River Reservist Takes Part in First of its Kind OPTASK VI Training

From NAS Patuxent River Public Affairs

On a brisk March morning a small craft barrels down on a Navy vessel making its way off shore. The small craft is like many used by our nation's adversaries, and sharp-eyed Mass Communications Specialists (MCs) are some of the first to see it.

"VIPER Team Gold! Contact, Port Side," yells a Chief to his Sailors, all armed with cameras and at the ready as the small craft inches menacingly closer to the vessel until it rocks upon connecting hull-to-hull.

Camera shutters snap rapidly, capturing photos and video of the incident before the craft breaks to starboard and away. Just as quickly the MCs are down ladder wells to workstations to fire off product of the maritime harassment to their public affairs officer in the hope of quickly — and

accurately — telling the U.S. Navy's side of the story.

But this incident did not happen in the South China Sea or the Straights of Hormuz. Rather, it was off the shores of Annapolis, Maryland; the vessels a U.S. Naval Academy Yard Patrol (YP) Boat and a small craft part of Navy Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron EIGHT (MSRON 8). And the VIPER Team consisted of Reservists primarily from the Navy Office of Information-Reserve Component (NR-CHINFO) training for the first time in Operational Task Visual Information (OPTASK VI), among them MC3 Maurice Brown.

The training is a different kind of work that Brown is used to in his day-to-life at NAS Patuxent River, where he works with the Air Anti-Submarine Warfare Systems Program Office (PMA-264) sonobuoy program in manufacturing and quality.

But it does demonstrate his commitment to the Navy as a citizen-Sailor.

“My Reserve and civilian duties have hardly any overlap; [manufacturing and quality] is mostly contract and policy enforcement,” said Brown. “The two positions do help me keep motivated, though. As a DoD employee, I support the fleet by ensuring equipment and munitions are able to consistently meet the needs of any Navy Sailor



Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Maurice Brown of the Navy Reserve Chief of Information Office (NR-CHINFO) unit performs Operational Task Visual Information (OPTASK VI) training aboard U.S. Naval Academy Yard Patrol craft. OPTASK VI is a no-fail mission designed to capture and document unsafe, unprofessional, or nefarious activities at sea, on land, and in the air. (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Jayme Bresnahan)

who has to use them. As a Reservist, specifically as an MC, I get to interact with the warfighters at every level. I get their feedback in real time and get to see what we on the civilian side are doing right and where we can improve.”

And as a Reservist, Brown understands that just as any Sailor relies on their equipment to work correctly when they need it to, so too do Sailors need the proper skills before their called upon to use them. OPTASK VI is a no-fail mission designed to capture and document unsafe, unprofessional, or nefarious activities at sea, on land, and in the air. In order to counter propaganda and disinformation, video and still photos must show facts and context of such encounters, be cleared for public release, and disseminated within a tight window. Unlike Ship’s Nautical or Otherwise Photographic Interpretation and Examination (SNOOPIE), OPTASK VI’s purpose is to visually document an incident for potential public release.

The unit-level training was the brainchild of Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Jayme Bresnahan, a prior active duty Operations Specialist and member of the NR-CHINFO unit. Having seen the impact of OPTASK-VI on the Navy as a whole, she thought the unique resources available in the Mid-Atlantic provided a perfect opportunity for impactful training for Reservists.

“OPTASK VI stood out to me as something we really need to know how to do when we’re asked to step in, and so I asked if we could hold training on it,” said Bresnahan. “Originally it started as an idea to hold a day of training, but leadership encouraged then idea to grow bigger than just that.”

Empowered by her chain of command to create a multi-week exercise, Bresnahan set to work creating a comprehensive training plan, incorporating the Naval Academy and MSRON 8 as part of Train the Force efforts to prepare the Reserve MCs for mobilization and war fighting assignments.

Originally planned as a joint training with the Academy Midshipmen for the summer of 2024, that timetable moved significantly the left when it was discovered that MSRON 8 would be doing pre-deployment activities with their boats in the kind of encounters OPTASK VI was designed to capture. Undeterred by the shorter timeframe to prepare, Bresnahan and the unit Chiefs met with



Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Maurice Brown, center, and Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Jayme Bresnahan of the Navy Reserve Chief of Information Office (NR-CHINFO) unit perform Operational Task Visual Information (OPTASK VI) training aboard a U.S. Naval Academy Yard Patrol craft. OPTASK VI is a no-fail mission designed to capture and document unsafe, unprofessional, or nefarious activities at sea, on land, and in the air.

Brown works with Air Anti-Submarine Warfare Systems Program Office (PMA-264) sonobuoy program in manufacturing and quality as a DoD civilian at NAS Patuxent River. (U.S. Navy photo by MCC Patrick Gordon)

senior enlisted representatives of the Academy YP squadron and the MSRON.

With that, Brown, Bresnahan, and six other Reserve Sailors from CHINFO, Navy Office of Community Outreach, and U.S. Fifth Fleet were on the YP deck plates, capturing video and stills of the MSRON 8 craft simulating unsafe and unprofessional interactions between vessels in a maritime environment. In addition to the hands-on training, NR-CHINFO was able to coordinate with Chief Mass Communications Specialist Kory Alsberry, formerly assigned to Afloat Training Group West, to give classroom training to the Reservists on the same standards and procedures of OPTASK VI given to their active duty counterparts. In the end, the Navy

Reservists received sign-offs on OPTASK VI and MC Personnel Qualification Standards and were able to expose 19 Naval Academy Midshipmen to the training and responsibilities surface warfare officers have with regards to OPTASK VI.

“Our job as MCs in the Reserve provides us with a unique opportunity to train regularly compared to other seafaring rates,” said Bresnahan of her drive to create this training plan. “I thought our job is too fun not to get out there and do it every chance we get. So, I thought about war fighting readiness and how we can train to be ready when its our time.”

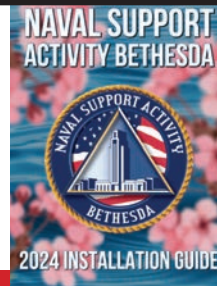
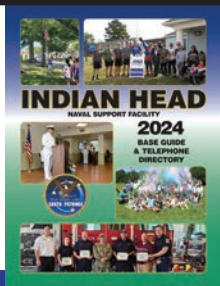
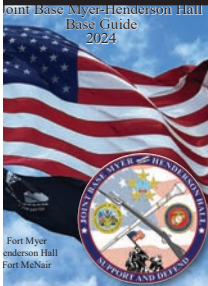
To learn more about the Navy’s OPTASK VI program, visit www.allhands.navy.mil/Media/OPTASK-VI/.



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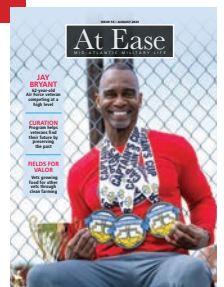


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The Enquirer-Gazette



Navy and Air Force fighters to train as a joint force in NAWCAD's Joint Simulation Environment

From NAWCAD Public Affairs

Navy and Air Force fighter pilots will begin training as a joint force at the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD)'s Joint Simulation Environment (JSE) starting in 2024.

NAWCAD installed a division of four U.S. Air Force F-22 Raptor cockpits into the Navy's premier simulation test and training facility alongside its division of eight F-35 Lightning cockpits in January.

"When America is engaged in conflict, the DOD will bring joint capability to bear from every service across all domains," said NAWCAD Commander Rear Adm. John Dougherty IV. "We've replicated this ability in the Joint Simulation Environment, a force multiplier helping aviators deter aggression and—if necessary—prevail in conflict."

The new addition of fifth-generation fighter simulators

brings Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and allied partners into the hyper-realistic digital range that consists of cockpits, domed simulators with 4K projectors, and aircraft software to enable pilots to fly wartime scenarios in a near-exact virtual environment. Tactical groups training in NAWCAD's JSE fly more sorties over one week than they do over a year on open-air ranges.

"Open-air ranges are extremely constrained with safety limitations that prevent warfighters from training like they'd fight," said NAWCAD JSE Director Blaine Summers. "The JSE is where fifth-gen fighters train to hone their tactics and fight like their lives depend on it."

Developed by Navy engineers and industry partners, NAWCAD's JSE is a powerful training and test facility designed to adapt and grow, utilizing hardware and software from actual DOD aircraft, weapons, and other defense systems. The JSE has all the equipment and



A pilot tests a U.S. Air Force F-22 Raptor cockpit simulator headed for installation in the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division's Joint Simulation Environment. The Navy installed a division of four Raptor cockpits alongside a division of eight F-35 Lightning cockpits in its advanced tactical trainer so Navy and Air Force fighter pilots can train as a joint force starting in 2024. (U.S. Navy photo by Terri Thomas)

experts needed to keep the facility running smoothly from its cockpits, to its software and simulators, to its mission debriefing rooms where pilots get feedback on their performance during training.

In this highly realistic digital range, aviators experience the consequences of their mistakes, including mission failure, loss of systems, and even loss of life. The JSE enables pilots to learn those hard lessons, immediately adjust, fly again, and continue the learning process to become a highly capable tactical aviator.

The JSE was initially designed to support F-35 Lightning's operational testing as there was no way to safely and adequately represent real-world conflict on an open-air range. Today, the DOD is scaling the Navy's technology for additional digital range facilities supporting programs like F-35, F-22, and E-2D. In addition, the DOD has made training in the

JSE a formal part of the Navy's Strike Fighter Tactics Instructor Program—commonly known as TOPGUN.

Over the next year, NAWCAD will incorporate additional test and training cockpits including the F/A-18 Hornet, EA-18 Growler, and E-2 platforms to train fighters for future flight lines. The warfare center will also deploy its second training system onboard a Navy carrier, USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72).

The Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division employs more than 17,000 military, civilian and contract personnel. It operates test ranges, laboratories and aircraft in support of test, evaluation, research, development and sustainment of everything flown by the Navy and Marine Corps. Based in Patuxent River, Maryland, the command also has major sites in St. Inigoes, Maryland, Lakehurst, New Jersey, and Orlando, Florida.

Bickerstaff Earns Meritorious Service Medal

From NAVAIR Public Affairs

Capt. Beau Massenburg, Naval Air Traffic Management Systems Program Office (PMA-213) program manager, left, presents Lt. Cmdr. Shea Bickerstaff with a Meritorious Service Medal, Jan. 29, for his achievements as the Air Traffic Control Fleet Liaison March 2021 to January 2024. During his assignment, Bickerstaff assisted both PMA-213 and NAWCAD WOLF with the development, fielding and sustainment of nearly every system the program office supports. Some of his accomplishments include technical support and oversight for the testing and fielding of the first shipboard air traffic control radar since the 1960's, the SPN-50; Joint Precision Approach and Landing System initial operational capability and full operational capability milestones; Carrier Air Traffic Control Center Certification and Precision Approach and Landing System on USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78); testing of the Marine Air Traffic Control and Landing System surveillance radar system input to the Standard Terminal Automated Replacement System; and spearheading training for Director, Naval Airspace and Air Traffic Control Standards and Evaluation Agency to all Navy and Marine Corps shore-based air traffic controllers on the FAA initiative regarding Consolidated Wake Turbulence and Aircraft ReCategorization.





U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Benjamin Orloff, assigned to the "Blue Blasters" of Strike Fighter Squadron 34, conducts a supersonic pass in an F/A-18E Super Hornet during a training exercise in the Atlantic Ocean, Aug. 23, 2019. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Cameron Stoner)

New contract award to deliver 17 new Block III Super Hornet aircraft and critical technical data for the fleet

From PMA 265 Public Affairs

The U.S. Navy awarded The Boeing Company a \$1.3 billion contract March 19 for the purchase of 17 F/A-18 Super Hornets and delivery of a technical data package vital to the sustainment of the platform.

"The technical data package was a crucial part of this negotiation; it is necessary for naval aviation's operational readiness and post-production sustainment," said Rear Adm. John Lemmon, Program Executive Officer for Tactical Aircraft Programs. "The Super Hornet remains a predominant aircraft in the carrier air wing and will continue to provide significant combat capability into the 2040s."

The Navy received appropriated funds from Congress to purchase these Super Hornets to help mitigate the

strike fighter shortfall. The award is an Unfinitized Contract Action with the intent to definitize within the next few months.

"I am very proud of our team; their mission-focused mindset, data-driven approach and persistence resulted in an agreement that will greatly benefit the sustainment of the Super Hornet and Growler aircraft well into the future," said Capt. Michael Burks, Program Manager for the F/A-18 and EA-18G Program Office. "It is our job to ensure our warfighters have all the necessary resources to defend our nation and return home safely."

Delivery of the new Super Hornets is scheduled to begin in the winter of 2026, with final delivery no later than spring 2027.

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From ‘Doc’ to Doctor: Pax River Corpsman Earns PhD



From NAS Patuxent River Public Affairs

Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Quinton Dotson is a very busy man at NAS Patuxent River. Most days you can find him in Building 409, though he's rarely alone.

In his position as Command Climate Specialist, Dotson is sought out by NAS PAX River commanding officer, senior enlisted leaders, and even junior Sailors for guidance on all aspects of equal opportunity policy and execution. He provides analysis and recommendations regarding all informal, formal, and anonymous harassment and prohibited discrimination complaints to the command while adhering to, and informing of, all changes in the OPNAVINST 5354.1H. In addition, he provides CMEO program oversight, assist visits and training to the command and subordinate commands across the region as requested or required. He also interprets the unit's climate status through the Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Survey using statistical quantitative data to detect, identify, and

understand risks/strengths within command. And he helps improve the organization's health and performance, evaluates the effectiveness of initiatives and programs, predicts and drives organizational outcomes.

He also just earned his PhD in Research Psychology. "I have always been that person to ask the 'Why?' and 'How?' questions," said Dotson on what drove him to earn his advanced degree. "I started my academic journey with a simple goal – understanding how to be good at being human. This led me to pursue an Associate degree in Human Biology. Intrigued by the impact of society on behavior, I furthered my exploration with a Bachelor's in Sociology. As my curiosity about the mind deepened, I felt called to obtain my Master's in Psychology. During these years, I realized that my commitment to the field was rooted in a genuine curiosity about the human mind and a belief in the transformative power of research, so I made the deliberate choice to pursue a Ph.D. in Research Psychology."

Dotson began the arduous task of earning his doctorate through undergrad studies in the field of psychology, gaining Associate of Science in Human Biology, Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, a Master of Science in Psychology degrees along the way.

“My Research interest are General Psychology, Positive Psychology, Transpersonal Psychology, Intervention Therapeutic Potential, Serotonergic Research, Generic Qualitative Inquiry, Qualitative Studies, Quantitative Studies, PTSD, and Emotional Wellbeing,” added Dotson, whose dissertation explored emotional wellbeing of study participants who had previously used the psychoactive Ayahuasca. “Framed within the theoretical underpinnings of Maslow’s Extended Hierarchy of Needs Theory, my dissertation considered the spiritual dimensions of participants’ experiences, thereby offering a comprehensive understanding of their overall wellbeing.”

While earning a degree of any kind, let alone a PhD, can be difficult, it can be doubly so when you have a full time commitment as an active duty Sailor in the U.S. Navy. But for those in similar positions, Dotson says that making the time to earn an education pays dividends.

“I have been a Hospital Corpsman for 17 years and have been lucky enough to experience shipboard operations, Afghanistan deployments, program management, and have led anywhere from 2- 200 Sailors at one time,” said Dotson. “During my time as an enlisted Sailor, I have earned three warfare devices from three different communities – Seabee Combat Warfare, Surface Warfare, and Air Warfare. An just like earning a qualification on top of your regular duties, one of the biggest challenges is just finding the time to dedicate to it. However, you will find that it is possible to make time for what is a priority to you. If you make school a priority then you will find time to chip away at it and eventually, over time, be able to obtain an advanced



degree. It goes by so quick and the only really hard part is getting started. Make no mistake, of all the benefits that are available to you this is one that is so underutilized, but you deserve it nonetheless. My advice is to just do it, put yourself first, give yourself permission to be successful, and grab what you deserve.”

He already has plans for his new credentials. He intends to commission as a naval research psychologist, and bring his skills back to the Sailors.

“My journey from human biology to sociology and psychology reflects a continuous quest to understand the intricate layers of human behavior,” said Dotson. “As I have dedicated myself to this pursuit, I am eager to contribute my skills and passion to further the mission of the Navy and its unique research initiatives. I am particularly intrigued by the prospect of exploring the psychological dynamics within naval environments, addressing challenges specific to this context, and developing strategies to optimize the mental and emotional readiness of personnel.”

Dotson added that he credits his nearly two decades in the Navy and his exposure to a range of different personnel and communities at sea and ashore with his ability to collaborate and with and strengthen teams, which he hopes to continue as an officer.

“I am genuinely excited about the possibility of contributing to the resilience, performance, and well-being of naval personnel through cutting-edge psychological research,” said Dotson. “The prospect of being part of the Navy’s commitment to excellence is both an honor and a challenge that I am ready to embrace wholeheartedly. I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to bring my skills, dedication, and passion to the esteemed team of professionals we call Naval Research Psychologists.”

To learn more about academic programs in the U.S. Navy, visit the Navy College website at www.navycollege.navy.mil.





Naval Undergraduate Flight Training Systems Program Office Conducts Change of Command

From PMA 273 Public Affairs

Capt. Duane Whitmer relieved Capt. Holly Shoger as the Naval Undergraduate Flight Training Systems Program Office (PMA-273) program manager during a change of command ceremony in California, Maryland, on Thursday, March 7.

PMA-273 develops and oversees diverse and carrier-capable naval flight training systems for student pilots and undergraduate military flight officers to acquire mission-critical aviation skills for current and future missions of the U.S. Navy. Shoger assumed command of the office in March 2020.

“It has been a tremendous honor to serve as PMA-273’s program manager for the past four years,” said Shoger. “The program’s exceptionally dedicated team has made this tour both memorable and rewarding. We learned to work together while quarantined at the height of the

pandemic; we overcame obstacles when aircraft needed repairs; and we developed new aircraft to train the next generation of flight officers.”

During Shoger’s tenure, the program office laid the groundwork to replace many of its aging aircraft systems. The team delivered the first TH-73A Advanced Helicopter Training System (AHTS) in 2021, which will replace the TH-57B and TH-57C rotary aircraft. The first AHTS instructor pilots earned their wings in 2023. Also in 2023, the program office awarded a contract for the development of the T-54A Multi-Engine Training System to replace the T-44C aircraft. In January 2023, the Navy released a request for information regarding the program office’s next-generation training aircraft, the Undergraduate Jet Training System, which will replace the T-45.

“Capt. Shoger led the program office through several important milestones in the advancement of Naval

flight training,” said Whitmer. “I am thrilled to take the reins and lead this ‘can-do’ team through the next round of milestones as we develop and sustain aircraft systems that will be used across commands to train pilots into the future.”

Whitmer joins PMA-273 after serving as executive assistant for Commander, Naval Air Systems Command, since March 2023. He graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 2000 with a Bachelor of Science in aerospace engineering and was designated a Naval Aviator in 2002. He has over 2,000 flight hours in a multitude of rotary and fixed wing aircraft.



Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft Program Office holds change of command

From PMA 290 Public Affairs

The Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft Program Office (PMA-290) welcomed a new program manager on March 21 when Capt. Erik Thomas relieved Capt. Eric Gardner during a change of command ceremony at Naval Air Station Patuxent River. Since March 2020, Capt. Gardner led the PMA-290 workforce, comprised of more than 1,000 military, civilian and contractor team members, to deliver and sustain multiple aircraft platforms and products for the U.S. Navy and 17 allied partners. During his tenure, the program office supported P-8A Poseidon, Special Mission Aircraft (P-3C Orion, EP-3E ARIES II, P-3C Special Project Aircraft), Distributed Maritime Operations (Minotaur Family of Services and Common Signals Intelligence systems), a cooperative program with the Royal Australian Air Force and multiple foreign military sales cases spanning all stages of the product lifecycle including development, testing, fielding, sustainment, and sundown.

“It is because of your steadfast leadership and commitment to the success of this program that it has remained reliable and ready for our fleet and our nation,” Kurtz said during the ceremony.



Captain Erik Thomas, new PMA-290 program manager shakes hands with Mr. Gary Kurtz, program executive officer, Air ASW, Assault, and Special Mission Programs.

Thomas, a PMA-290 alumnus who previously served as the military director for foreign military sales, took the helm as PMA-290 program manager in a traditional change of command pass down. Among his many career accomplishments, he served as the P-8A integrated test team's mission systems project officer where he became the first naval flight officer to operate and test the P-8A aircraft. He later served as the operations officer on the inaugural P-8A deployment. Prior to reporting to PMA-290 for this assignment, Thomas worked in the Advanced Sensor Technologies program office, commanded Scientific Development Squadron One (VXS-1) and served as the deputy program manager for the Persistent Maritime Unmanned Aircraft Systems Program (PMA-262).

"Captain Thomas, your diverse experience with the P-8 aircraft and its mission makes you an exceptional fit for

this role. I'm confident that you will continue to build on the foundation left by your predecessors to deliver necessary capabilities to our U.S. and international partners," said Kurtz.

Thomas addressed the audience of past and present program staff, international, government, industry partners, along with friends and family.

"I am excited to remain under the umbrella of the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance family of systems," said Thomas. "To say I am passionate for our mission and its success is an understatement. Every tour I have done over the last 24 years has been directly part of or in support of maritime patrol and I look forward to continuing that effort for four more years."

PMA-290 manages the acquisition, development, support and delivery of the Navy's Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft.

VUQ 10 Holds Its First Change of Command Ceremony

**By MC1 Juel Foster
VX-1 Public Affairs**

Unmanned Carrier-Launched Multi-Role Squadron (VUQ) 10 held its first change of command ceremony at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland, Feb. 22, 2024.

Cmdr. Emily Mooren, who has served as the squadron's executive officer since 2022, relieved Capt. Andrew Gastrell as commanding officer of VUQ-10. Capt. Matthew Ventimiglia served as the guest speaker of the event.

VUQ-10 is the fleet replacement squadron for the MQ-25 Stingray, the Navy's first carrier-based unmanned aircraft. The squadron's mission is to man, train and equip personnel to operate the MQ-25 in the fleet.

"The MQ-25 system is designed to change the carrier air wing at its core and change the way the Navy fights, increasing the lethality of the air wing and carrier strike group," said Mooren. "We get to be at the forefront of making all of this happen, changing naval aviation and better equipping our Navy to combat global powers that threaten us and our allies."

The MQ-25 concept was initiated in 2016 by former Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson. On Oct. 1, 2022, the Navy established VUQ-10 with Gastrell as its first commanding officer.

"The most important factor to the success of MQ-25 is sitting behind you and amongst you," said Gastrell. "These fine Americans are going to pilot and maintain the Stingray and the MQ-25 control station. This professionalism is going to create that trust and bond that we've talked about, which is required to go into harm's way when the risk is high."

As his final act as commanding officer, Gastrell presented Navy and Marine Corps Achievement medals to two VUQ-10 Sailors. Afterward, he delivered his parting remarks.

"This isn't a Teams meeting," said Gastrell. "It's not a burnout chart, and we're not talking about story points. This is an MQ-25 fleet change of command with Sailors standing by to get their hands dirty, and I'm super proud of all of the "Pathfinders" [of VUQ-10]."

After officially taking command, Mooren addressed the crowd for the first time as commanding officer.

"VUQ-10 is the first fleet replacement squadron," said Mooren. "We train AVPs [air vehicle pilots] to be proficient, safe and tactical pilots. Over the next year, we will focus on tightening our core skills and building a solid foundation not just for VUQ-10 but the whole of the VUQ community."

VUQ-10 is currently located at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, but the squadron's ultimate home is Naval Base Ventura County Point Mugu, California.



Cmdr. Emily Mooren, commanding officer of Unmanned Carrier-Launched Multi-Role Squadron (VUQ) 10, delivers a speech at the squadron's change of command ceremony at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland, Feb. 22. VUQ-10 was established on Oct. 1, 2022 at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland and is the Fleet Replacement Squadron (FRS) for the MQ-25 Stingray, the Navy's first carrier-based unmanned aircraft. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Anaid Balmes)



Capt. Matthew Ventimiglia presents an award to Capt. Andrew Gastrell, outgoing commanding officer of Unmanned Carrier-Launched Multi-Role Squadron (VUQ) 10, during the squadron's change of command ceremony at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland, Feb. 22. VUQ-10 was established on Oct. 1, 2022 at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland and is the Fleet Replacement Squadron (FRS) for the MQ-25 Stingray, the Navy's first carrier-based unmanned aircraft. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Anaid Balmes)



The U.S. Navy delivered the first P-8A Poseidon aircraft to be modified with Increment 3 Block 2 capabilities to Boeing on March 27. Modifications expected to be complete in late 2025.

U.S. Navy delivers first P-8A Poseidon aircraft for Increment 3 Block 2 modifications

From PMA-290 Public Affairs

The U.S. Navy delivered the first P-8A Poseidon aircraft to be modified with Increment 3 Block 2 capabilities to Boeing on March 27, enabling the fleet to be outfitted with the full anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare (ASuW), and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities outlined in the P-8A program's evolutionary acquisition strategy.

The P-8A is the Department of Defense's only long-range full-spectrum ASW, cue-to-kill platform, with substantial armed ASuW and networked ISR capabilities. Increment 3 Block 2 provides a significant

upgrade to the P-8A airframe and avionics systems, and includes new airframe racks, radomes, antennas, sensors, and wiring. The modification incorporates a new combat systems suite with an improved computer processing and higher security architecture capability, a wide band satellite communication system, an ASW signals intelligence capability, a track management system, and additional communications and acoustics systems to enhance search, detection and targeting capabilities.

"Increment 3 Block 2 brings the capability that the P-8A was made for. These modifications will allow

aircrews to search, locate and track the most advanced submarines in the world, enabling the fleet to pace the threat with the required capability and capacity to win the fight,” said Capt. Erik Thomas, program manager for the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft program office, PMA-290. “This delivery demonstrates the PMA-290 team’s outstanding work ethic, professionalism and dedication to the fleet.”

Increment 3 Block 2 related modifications will begin at Boeing’s Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul hangar at Cecil Airport in Jacksonville, Florida. The first fleet aircraft modification is expected to be complete in January 2025.

“P-8A Increment 3 is the next step in the spiral evolution of Poseidon. By design, and through the efforts of NAVAIR and industry teaming, Increment 3 Block 2 represents the baseline configuration the Navy needs to

address tomorrow’s high-end threat,” said Rear Adm. Adam Kijek, Commander, Patrol and Reconnaissance Group/Patrol and Reconnaissance Group Pacific.

In response to evolving threats around the world, future P-8A modifications will be implemented via a sequence of rapid capability insertion efforts that build upon this new Increment 3 Block 2 baseline.

As of March 2024, U.S. Navy fleet squadrons have taken delivery of 119 P-8A aircraft. P-8A active duty and reserve squadron transition training is complete for all 14 fleet squadrons and one fleet replacement squadron. In addition, the P-8A fleet has flown for more than 503,783 flight hours and recorded more than 440,558 landings. PMA-290 manages the acquisition, development, support and delivery of the U.S. Navy’s maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft.

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A CMV-22B Osprey from the "Titans" of Fleet Logistics Multi-Mission Squadron (VRM) 30 lands on the flight deck of Nimitz-class nuclear aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70). This evolution marked the first time the Navy's CMV-22B Ospreys have landed on a carrier. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Aaron T. Smith)

NAVAIR returns V-22 Osprey to flight status From NAVAIR Public Affairs

From NAVAIR Public Affairs

Effective March 8, 2024 at 7 a.m. EST, Naval Air Systems Command is issuing a flight clearance for the V-22 Osprey thereby lifting the grounding. This decision follows a meticulous and data-driven approach prioritizing the safety of our aircrews.

A U.S. Air Force investigation began following the tragic loss of eight Airmen during the November 29, 2023, mishap off Yakushima, Japan. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of the fallen.

In response to the preliminary investigation indicating a materiel failure of a V-22 component, the V-22 grounding was initiated on December 6, 2023. The grounding provided time for a thorough review of the mishap and formulation of risk mitigation controls to assist with safely returning the V-22 to flight operations.

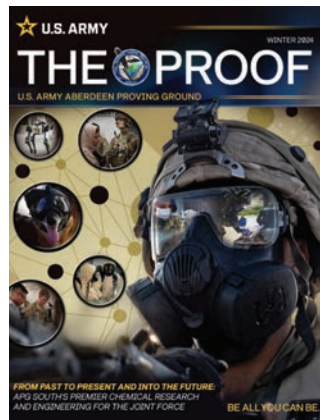
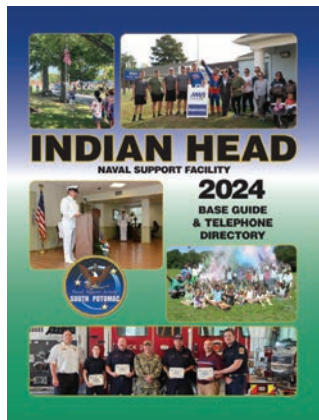
In concert with the ongoing investigation, NAVAIR has diligently worked with the USAF-led investigation to identify the materiel failure that led to the mishap.

Close coordination among key senior leaders across the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, and U.S. Air Force has been paramount in formulating the comprehensive review and return to flight plan, and this collaboration will continue.

Maintenance and procedural changes have been implemented to address the materiel failure that allow for a safe return to flight. The U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, and U.S. Air Force will each execute their return to flight plans according to service specific guidelines.

NAVAIR remains committed to transparency and safety regarding all V-22 operations. The V-22 plays an integral role in supporting our Nation's defense and returning these vital assets to flight is critical to supporting our nation's interests. NAVAIR continuously monitors data and trends from all aircraft platforms, so service members are provided the safest, most reliable aircraft possible.

The safety of our pilots, aircrew and surrounding communities remains of paramount importance.



DC MILITARY

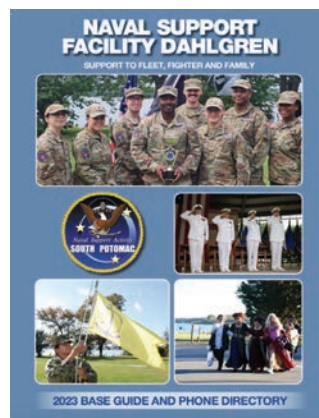
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