

Continuing Focus on Energy Culture Change, Phase II & Compatibility

WELCOME TO THE winter 2013 issue of *Currents*. As I write these words, I've been serving as Director of the Chief of Naval Operations Energy and Environmental Readiness Division (N45) for about three months. I'm excited to lead N45, as I believe our role of developing policy and programming resources to support the Fleet is a vital function. I have an environmental engineering background, and am passionate about the environment and our many exciting initiatives to shape how we think about and use energy.

Prior to coming here, I had several years working for the Naval Facilities Engineering Command both in command and staff positions. I also served as Assistant Chief of Staff for Installations and Environment at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, helping them to manage their facilities and environmental challenges. My operational experience has been with the Naval Construction Force (Seabees), including deployments in support of the Marine Corps and Army in Desert Shield and Kosovo. During those deployments I quickly came to understand the importance of ensuring that our expeditionary and other ground forces had the fuel they needed to meet their mission, and the many challenges associated with delivering that fuel.

I became aware of Task Force Energy soon after it stood up in 2009. I thought it was a brilliant idea to establish this group to focus our energy efforts and initiatives on the goal of reducing consumption and providing alternative options to conventional fossil fuels with the real intent of increasing warfighting and combat capability (more time on station and reduced resupply). I now have the privilege and responsibility to guide our strategy for maintaining momentum on these important initiatives, despite the high likelihood of diminishing resources being available in the near future to accomplish them. It's the right thing to do to avoid burning unnecessary gallons of fuel, stay on station longer, fly more missions, and ultimately save lives. Our senior leadership understands this and remains focused on it, but one of the major challenges continues to be influencing and changing our culture change down to the deckplate level. We cannot afford to simply think of energy as a readily available resource to power our equipment. We need to understand how we use energy, seek innovative ideas on how to reduce that consumption, and ensure that our energy saving approaches are widely

understood and accepted/used day-to-day across the Navy. Great ideas come from those that operate and use our systems every day, so please keep those innovative ideas flowing. As we drive toward culture change, I remain committed to working with the systems

commands to get energy efficiency initiatives into the hands of the Fleet as quickly as possible.

Along these lines, in September the Naval Sea Systems Command awarded a multi-year contract to back-fit destroyers with hybrid electric drive propulsion beginning in fiscal year 2015. This required extensive coordination with the fleets to ensure that key technical specifications could be met and that the timeframe for installing the systems will be achievable. These retrofitted platforms could save an average of 21,000 gallons of fuel per year, which would reduce fuel costs and enable these ships to travel further between refuelings. At the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, a new class of students will graduate this fall with two-year energy masters degrees. With vital skills in designing and executing policies that take energy into account as a capability while meeting acquisition and operational requirements, these graduates will be qualified for specially coded jobs within the Navy.

A major effort for this office was coordinating the Naval Energy Forum on 17 October. As a newcomer, I was thankful the N45 staff had been through the intensive process of planning it before and really knew the ropes. I found the various panels on topics such as international, industry, acquisition and expeditionary aspects of energy highly informative, and appreciated the chance to hear perspectives from Secretary Mabus, Sharon Burke (Assistant Secretary of Defense for Operational Energy Plans and Programs), and other top Navy and Marine Corps leaders. It was a very successful day—for more details, check out the Naval Energy Forum summary article on page 32 of this issue.





For the first time in six years, we in N45 also brought together subject matter experts and leaders in the natural resources, environmental planning, and marine species protection areas for a training workshop in Norfolk on 18-19 September, attended by over 300 professionals from across the Navy. Members of the compatibility and readiness sustainment community, including community plans and liaison officers, radar experts, and range managers also participated. We were fortunate to have the Honorable Roger Natsuhara, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment, as our keynote speaker. Participant feedback indicates the workshop was valuable for getting people up to speed on recent changes to policy and new technical requirements, sharing lessons learned, and developing consistent approaches to address emerging challenges.

Navy-wide, one of the most far-reaching initiatives in which we're engaged right now is our Phase II at-sea environmental planning. Phase II consolidates areas from 17 environmental impact statements (EIS), developed in Phase I, into five more comprehensive EIS documents. At-sea training, testing and research activities are included, and potential impacts on marine mammals from these activities is being analyzed more consistently with the aid of the Navy Acoustic Effects Model (NAEMO), a mathematical model developed by the Naval Undersea Warfare Center Newport with insights from other Navy and independent scientists and engineers.

unique training and operational capabilities. For those locations with minimal development nearby, surrounding areas are becoming prime opportunities for renewable energy projects. The Navy generally supports these initiatives, but needs to ensure they don't impact our mission. My staff continues to work closely with the Department of Defense (DoD) Siting Clearinghouse, Secretariat and Commander Navy Installations staff, developers, technical experts, and potentially affected bases to this end. As a recent example, the ceremonial signing of an agreement for South Texas took place 27 November at Naval Air Station (NAS) Kingsville. This was the culmination of two years of negotiations with E. On Climate and Renewables North America (a wind farm developer), Navy and DoD, in which the company agreed to provide funding for technical mitigation measures and related studies, participate in a Navy-led compatibility working group, and curtail wind farm operations under certain conditions if needed to preserve radar capability at NAS Kingsville and NAS Corpus Christi. This approach may serve as a model for future agreements.

With only a short time here on the job, I have been absolutely impressed with the knowledge of the staff here at N45. Largely behind the scenes, this team handles an incredible workload in support of policy areas vital to the Navy and the Fleet. The staff members are not only tech-

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In Phase II news, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will likely publish the proposed rules for the Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing (AFTT) and the Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing (HSTT) EISs in the Federal Register in January 2013. That will begin a 45-day period for public comments. NMFS will consider those comments in developing the AFTT and HSTT final rules, and the Navy will address any applicable comments in the final EISs. While this represents great progress, we still have much work to do to get the new permits in place prior to our existing permits expiring in January 2014.

On the compatibility and readiness sustainment front, we have installations and facilities around the U.S. with

nically skilled, but also passionate about their jobs. They have built excellent relationships with the Secretariat staff, the other N-codes, the fleets and the systems commands, and that makes the team all the more effective.

I look forward to working with more of the talented staff here and many of you, the readers of *Currents*, as I continue getting up to speed and helping the organization steam forward on these complex issues. Thank you for your interest in and continued support of the Navy's energy and environmental initiatives. ⚓

Rear Admiral Kevin R. Slates

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