

Facing Furlough—With the Long View in Mind

WELCOME TO THE summer 2013 issue of *Currents*. Amid the heat and humidity here in Washington, DC, we're working through tough budgeting issues—as are other federal agencies—while continuing to press forward on matters of great concern for Navy readiness. Happily, I do have some progress to report, so I'll touch briefly on furlough impacts and then describe energy and environmental efforts that have been a focal point over the past few months.

There's no doubt that the civilian furlough has been a hurdle, as our organization depends on a highly skilled, largely civilian workforce. We're currently into our fourth furlough week, and while it has caused some challenges, I've frankly been very impressed with the professionalism of the team as we've worked to overcome those challenges. There have been times when having key members of the team out of the office has forced us to reprioritize meetings and adjust schedules to manage impacts. As difficult as furlough and related budget issues are for our people and programs in the short term, it's important to maintain a "long view" perspective.

With that in mind, we continue working hard to influence Navy-wide culture regarding energy consumption and the need for increased efficiency in our platforms, systems, and facilities. An example of the type of culture change that sets the bar for transforming behavior Navy-wide is safety. Over the past 30 years, safety has become a top priority for our Sailors and workforce, and is addressed in nearly all aspects of Navy training. We are working to incorporate this same level of Navy-wide awareness for energy. In the future, new recruits at boot camp and new officers at officer candidate school or officer indoctrination school should learn the basics of why energy should be a priority, and then later learn about energy conservation and efficiency topics more specific to their jobs. For example, a surface warfare officer would be exposed to smart voyage planning technology, energy-efficient plant operations, and other approaches that could conserve fuel when mission requirements make it feasible to do so.

We've begun energy education initiatives for senior Navy executives and flag officers. On July 14–19, the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) hosted the first Secretary of the

Navy (SECNAV) Energy Executive Education seminar in Monterey, CA. The Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics (N4), our Navy Energy Coordination Office, and the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy worked



closely with NPS to develop the curriculum. The seminar's overarching purpose was to increase awareness of energy as both a capability and a vulnerability. We'll be interested in participants' feedback, and are planning a second offering in September.

This past June, the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) hosted a tabletop exercise highlighting vulnerabilities we might face delivering fuel to the fleet in an operational environment. Participants included representatives from OPNAV N41 (Supply, Ordnance and Logistics), OPNAV N42 (Strategic Mobility and Combat Logistics), and my office. We will incorporate lessons learned from the DLA exercise into a logistics war game we're scheduling in the November timeframe. This exercise will center on the theme of "fighting hurt," a focus area for N4, and will explore vulnerabilities from fuel and other logistics supply chain items such as ordnance. It will challenge the assumption that these supplies will be delivered when and wherever needed, highlighting significant risks to our operations if those logistics chains are disrupted.

In our at-sea environmental planning, the Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing and Hawaii-Southern California Training and Testing efforts remain a top priority. We anticipate releasing final Environmental Impact Statements at the end of August and remain on track for new Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act authorizations to be issued by January 2014, ensuring continuation of vital training and testing activities in these areas.

Additionally, two scientific papers were released in July, summarizing preliminary results of Navy-funded studies in

which 17 blue whales and two beaked whales were tracked using passive listening systems and digital data tags (temporarily attached to the animals) to study reactions to simulated sonar and other sounds. The results varied, but suggested that some animals reacted to the sounds—and some didn’t—based on the types of activities they were engaged in during the exposures.

In the July 8–12 timeframe, a Navy-funded research team worked with the USS Dewey (DDG-105) to conduct the first-ever controlled exposure experiment using our real-time tactical mid-frequency active sonar as the sound source. A second controlled exposure experiment took place with USS Cape St. George (CG-71) from July 28–30. The team tagged six marine mammals (two blue whales, two Risso’s dolphins, a fin whale, and a Cuvier’s beaked whale) off Southern California and conducted a series of successful sound exposures. Data from these studies and other research will be considered as part of our ongoing adaptive management process with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Annually since 1994, we have recognized winners of the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Environmental Awards in a ceremony in Washington, DC. This year due to fiscal challenges, we considered canceling the ceremony. However, Admiral Greenert wanted to ensure that the winners were recognized for their outstanding achievements, so we conducted the event via video teleconference on July 11. Winners dialed in from 15 locations around the U.S. and overseas for a “virtual” ceremony with CNO, Vice Admiral Cullom (N4), and myself. Participants at the Pentagon included John Conger (Acting Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installations and Environment); Roger Natsuhara (Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment); Don Schregardus (Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Environment); Ralph Cantral, Director of the Coastal America Partnership and Senior Advisor to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and Allison Schutes, Trash Free Seas Coordinator for the Ocean Conservancy. In addition to saving significant travel dollars, the event was still effective in enabling the CNO to personally thank each of the winning teams for their efforts. For more information about the awards, please see this issue’s cover story on page 6.

In the area of readiness sustainment and compatibility, we continue to work with the Department of Defense

(DoD) Siting Clearinghouse, SECNAV staff, the Fleets, and Chief of Naval Installations Command (CNIC) to review proposed renewable energy development projects to reduce the potential for interference with the

Navy mission. One project under review is a proposed wind farm offshore of Oahu, where we have a key training area. We’ve been meeting with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, DoD and Navy stakeholders to identify alternate areas around Oahu that could accommodate future wind energy development that would not interfere with critical Navy and Marine Corps training.

We are also in the process of revising the 2007 CNO encroachment management program instruction (11010.40) to reflect issues that have intensified over the six years since the instruction was released, including mission compatibility of buildings and other types of development; renewable energy impacts; foreign investment around our facilities and training areas; and other emerging encroachment issues. Because these will be major revisions, we’re incorporating additional opportunities for key stakeholders (CNIC, the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, and the Fleets) to provide input before finalizing.

Finally, we are taking steps to help communities, private industry, and government entities access information to assist them in making decisions about siting renewable energy projects. We have launched a new page at <http://greenfleet.dodlive.mil/rsc/>, where we’re posting maps that show compatible standoff distances from Navy facilities and related contact information. We’ll be adding new content to that page in the coming months, so check it periodically for updates.

I hope our Navy team, and the many federal and non-federal professionals with whom we interface and who are affected by the furlough, will maintain the positive mindset I’ve seen to date and continue to focus on the long view. Thank you for your interest in and continued support of the Navy’s energy and environmental initiatives. ⚓

Rear Admiral Kevin R. Slates

Director, Chief of Naval Operations Energy and Environmental Readiness Division

