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SWOS Hosts 2014 Board of Visitors

NEWPORT, R.I. – Surface Warfare Officers School (SWOS) hosted its annual Board of Visitors (BOV) June 3-5, seeking flag-level guidance to shape curriculum and policy to govern the surface warfare Center of Excellence at the school.

Lt. Damon McCullar, SWOS Fleet Division Officer Training instructor served as this year's BOV coordinator.

"The BOV looks each year at a discrete element of the surface training continuum, seeking to validate existing training requirements, identify new ones, and to shape future community investments in training," said McCullar. "The focus of this year's BOV was navigation, seamanship, and shiphandling."

The three-day BOV process begins with the meeting of an advisory group. This O5/O6-level group meets for two days and is comprised of the SWOS directors as well as representatives from the Navy Operations (OPNAV) staff, the surface type commanders, Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA), the U.S. Naval Academy and a host of community stakeholders.

Subjects for discussion included the navigation training continuum, littoral combat ship training requirements, and enlisted navigation improvements.

BOV day three began with a brief of the advisory group's findings to the flag-level principals group, which included both of the surface type commanders, the directors of surface and expeditionary warfare (OPNAV N95 and N96), the commander, Naval Education and Training Command, the president of the Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) and two Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) flag officers.

Vice Adm. Tom Copeman, commander, Naval Surface Forces, chaired this year's BOV.

"Surface warriors are aware of the value of maintaining the highest professional standards and SWOS' Board of Visitors adds tremendous insight based on their collective years of experience," said Copeman. "Their efforts while at SWOS will pay both immediate and long-term benefits to the fleet."

According to McCullar, after extensive discussion of the Advisory Group's findings, the Principals Group achieves consensus on the action items for follow-up. These actions may prompt immediate changes to existing training, or may initiate policy and programmatic actions to shape future training budgets. In sum, the BOV helps to align the surface community investment strategy for training.

Capt. Dave Welch, SWOS commanding officer, was pleased to host the event.

"Having recently assumed command of SWOS, I have been deeply impressed by the Board of Visitors process," Welch said. "It provides a vehicle to take fleet input on training issues vital to our vocation, receive guidance and insight from community leadership, and press ahead with

curricula changes and budget issues that allow our professional school houses to maintain currency.”

For more information about Surface Warfare Officers School, visit <https://www.netc.navy.mil/centers/swos/>.

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