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Naval EOD School Gets SMART

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. (March 4, 2016) – The Naval School Explosive Ordnance Disposal (NAVSCOLEOD) graduated their latest group EOD technicians Mar. 4, and these students had a SMART advantage.

The Scalable Mobile Applications and Ready Training (SMART) initiative is a pilot training modernization effort at the school.

The SMART project was submitted and vetted through the Secretary of the Navy's Task Force Innovation (TFI) in 2015.

"The entire team at NAVSCOLEOD has embraced and executed a vision to improve learning through e-technology synchronization with the classroom; providing 24/7 mobile access to study materials for students inside and outside the classroom, and providing instructors automated tools to gather and assess student performance," said Capt. Jim Beene, Center for Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Diving, commanding officer. "The SMART initiative has cultivated a strong and productive organizational change which is directly aligned with "Ready Relevant Learning."

Through TFI's funding support, NAVSCOLEOD developed relevant instructional content and has issued eTablets to 100 percent of its students for the majority of the EOD course. This allows students to study after hours using practical technologies, including prototype quiz applications, references, and a wide scope of instructional how-to videos that were developed by NAVSCOLEOD.

"This after-hour's augmentation to traditional brick and mortar schoolhouse methods has solidified SMART's value and gained momentum for future evaluation, sustainment, and innovation," said Master Chief Michael Lentz, NAVSCOLEOD's Training Technology Development (TTD) lead. "I think in the back of everyone's minds they all knew it was the right way to go, that we were behind the times like so many, and despite many uncertainties, we charged forward."

Using SMART, students reported being more prepared for tests. The eTablets provide students a self-paced study and academic remediation tool after hours that reinforce the enabling objectives in all testable areas and skills such as detection, identification, render safe, and disposal of

conventional, chemical biological, nuclear, improvised explosive devices (C-IED), and other explosive hazards.

“Having the tablet at our fingertips, particularly the videos, helps us retain information, and reinforce information that we learned during the week, especially on the weekends,” said Ensign Tyler Mulloy, a student at NAVSCOLEOD.

With technical support from Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, NAVSCOLEOD is repurposing a portion of its tablets as eGradebooks (EGBs) for instructors. EGBs are electronic grade sheets that automate and standardize test grading throughout the school.

“This will increase the ability to analyze student performance commonalities over time and allow for instructions to be easily adjusted,” said Senior Chief Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician Bert Marley. “This supports consolidation of test administration materials, greater grading efficiencies, and dependable metrics analysis to target weak areas.”

The SMART pilot is scheduled to run through October 2016.

“Although we need more run time for greater statistical significance, we’ve seen fewer test failures and higher graduation rates through the school. I am proud of our joint team and amazed at the progress Sailors can make when provided the resources and reinforcement to innovate,” said Capt. Charles Andrews, NAVSCOLEOD commanding officer.

NAVSCOLEOD, located on Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. provides high-risk, specialized, basic and advanced EOD training to U.S. and 97 partner nation military and selected U.S. government personnel each year.

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