
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

News Release #57-15

May 14, 2015

Contact: Ed Barker

850.452.5845
(DSN) 922.4858
(FAX) 850.452.4900

CNATT Detachment Whiting provides advanced aviation ordnance expertise for the fleet

MILTON, Fla. – From a standard classroom to computer simulations, and even a simple sandbox – the staff at the Center for Naval Air Technical Training (CNATT) Detachment at Naval Air Station (NAS) Whiting uses blended training techniques to meet fleet training requirements for Aviation Ordnance Officers.

When the Aviation Ordnance Officer Career Progression (AOOCP) level I class graduates May 22, 20 senior ordnance experts will be poised to join aviation units around the world.

Lt. Cmdr. Kevin Bittle, officer in charge of CNATT Det. Whiting, said that the ordnance officers the detachment graduates are vital to fleet operations.

"Before aviation-capable Navy and Marine Corps units can deploy, they require highly-trained and skilled aviation ordnance officers and senior enlisted personnel. These warriors receive a good portion of that training from the curriculum and instruction provided by AOOCP."

The ordnance career progression curriculum includes three course levels, providing advanced aviation ordnance training for Marine Corps and Navy

senior enlisted and officer ordnance personnel. Level I training is six weeks long and Levels II and III are each two weeks long.

Level I training includes a basic introduction into the movement of munitions and the ordnance responsibilities of an Aviation Ordnance Officer, and is six weeks long. As part of a career progression of training, the course builds upon previous acquired skills. The continuum of training continues as Level II deals with explosive safety inspections (ESI) and Level III includes a logistics war game.

“Throughout the different levels of AOOCP, there are a number of classroom exercises and hands-on labs,” said Marine Maj. Ken Aikey, AOOCP course director. A tabletop exercise uses a “sandbox” to challenge the Sailors and Marines to show their knowledge of safety and mission elements.

“During one sandbox exercise, the students are assigned an installation and must design a safe area for ordnance,” explained Aikey. “Students are given props and draw in the sand to simulate runways, buildings and roadways. Other labs include computer modeling of ship’s spaces, cargo and munitions and it’s the students’ job to arrange the cargo in an efficient and safe manner.”

During the Level II AOOCP course, the students complete an ESI on board NAS Whiting Field, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. or NAS Pensacola, Fla. This course targets officers and senior enlisted who are at their mid-career point, and is also available for selected Department of Defense civilian employees who work in an ordnance related field. The training continuum continues when ordnance experts in their upper career points attend the Level III course.

According to CNATT Instructor Chief Warrant Officer Five Michael Lavoie, the combined sharing of experiences between students is an important component of the advanced ordnance courses.

"We can have anywhere from 250-350 years of experience in a classroom and you always learn at least one thing you never knew," said Lavoie. "Being able to talk about ordnance, equipment, personnel and maintenance issues with all of the students and instructors contributing, helps create a more vivid picture of aviation ordnance responsibilities."

Chief Warrant Officer Two Chett Huff, a Level I student headed to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 146 at NAS Lemoore, Calif. echoed the advantages of corporate knowledge in the classroom.

"Somebody is going to have a story that's going to correlate with the lesson being taught – a 'don't do this because I did' type of story," said Huff. "The course helps capture the complete picture."

Throughput for all three AOOCP courses is 200 students annually. Typically, six Level I, four Level II and two Level III courses are held per year.

CNATT Det. Whiting Field provides formal technical training for the United States Naval personnel as well as foreign officers and enlisted personnel in the maintenance of aircraft, aircraft systems and associated equipment. Courses taught include AOOCP Levels I-III and Aircraft Maintenance Officer (AMO) long, and short courses.

For more information on CNATT Whiting, visit:

http://www.netc.navy.mil/centers/cnatt/cnatt_det_whiting_field/

-USN-

Story by Lt. j.g. Andrew DeGarmo, Naval Education and Training Command

Public Affairs