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News Release #60-15

May 21, 2015

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## **2015 SWOS Board of Visitors Focused on Material Readiness, Engineering Training**

NEWPORT, R.I. – The staff of the Surface Warfare Officers School (SWOS) hosted its annual Board of Visitors (BoV) event May 5-7, with a specific focus on material readiness and engineering training.

The SWOS BoV is a recurring forum designed to review SWOS curricula and ensure training wholeness and effectiveness, and to maintain alignment with the vision of Navy Surface Warfare leadership.

According to SWOS Commanding Officer Capt. David Welch, an additional benefit of conducting the BoV annually is the identification of important funding issues for consideration by the Surface and Expeditionary Warfare Training Committee (SEWTC).

“SWOS recently updated our strategic five-year plan for 2014-2019,” said Welch. “Restoring engineering wholeness remains a key component and our number one goal in the plan.”

Welch added that the BoV process is very important to SWOS and the entire Surface Warfare community.

“This event provided us an opportunity to showcase how far we’ve come, as well as capture feedback from key stakeholders including waterfront

leaders," said Welch. "It allowed us to take a fix and adjust our plan to meet the goals of the surface community's leadership to restore engineering training and improve readiness."

Welch explained that, starting with delivery of the Fleet Review Plan in February of 2010, there has been considerable effort by surface warfare leadership to address material problems and increase readiness.

"One of the most important initiatives to address the challenges of surface readiness was the establishment of the SEWTC, first convened in August 2010," said Welch. "Under the sponsorship of the Chief of Naval Operations Surface Warfare and Expeditionary Warfare Directorates, Commander Naval Surface Forces (SURFOR) and Commander Naval Surface Force U.S. Atlantic Fleet (SURFLANT), the SEWTC was chartered to address the training and manpower underpinnings of readiness."

Concurrent with establishment of the SEWTC, Naval Education and Training Command (NETC) directed SWOS to conduct an engineering training wholeness review to identify shortfalls and make recommendations to close those shortfalls.

According to Welch, from the wholeness review, SWOS developed a Five-Year Enlisted Engineering Training Restoration Plan that, with SEWTC support, would progressively address major engineering training issues over several years to rebuild engineering skills in the surface force.

"As the final year of that five-year investment plan approaches, SWOS wanted to consult all stakeholders to ensure that major shortfalls and issues were appropriately addressed," added Welch. "This year's Board of Visitors accomplished that task."

This year's board was conducted in phases. The first phase consisted of a series of four separate waterfront and fleet engagements conducted throughout March. They focused on apprentice and journeyman level training, as well as officer and master level training. The board also looked at waterfront training programs such as damage control, firefighting, and chemical, biological and radiological training, all of which generated a wide-ranging list of 86 issues.

The second phase of the board was conducted during the first week of May in Newport, R. I. This is where the issues were reviewed, binned, and prioritized by an advisory group consisting of 20 Navy captains representing key stakeholders from the type commanders, afloat training groups, afloat major commanders, the Navy Personnel Command, the Board of Inspection and Survey, Regional Maintenance Command, Naval Sea Systems Command, and the Center for Surface Combat Systems.

"The SWOS BoV process is very much aligned with the SEWTC," said Welch. "Some of the major issues identified by the BoV are already in budget plans. Other issues will be further developed and submitted to the SEWTC in the fall of 2015 for consideration in Program Objective Memorandum 2018 (POM-18)."

The Board of Visitors capstone event included a brief of the high priority issues to the Navy's surface community leadership.

"The BoV sends a powerful, positive message to the warfighters, trainers and maintainers on the commitment SWOS has in equipping our Sailors to competently and confidently drive our ships, fight our ships and steam the plants," said Dan Spagone, the intermediate-level maintenance director for the Norfolk Regional Maintenance Center, who also participated in the board.

For more information about Surface Warfare Officers School, visit <https://www.netc.navy.mil/centers/swos> or “Like” SWOS on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SWOSCOLCOM>

To learn more about the Naval Education and Training Command, visit <https://www.netc.navy.mil> .

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