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## **NAVSEA leader tells officers 'maintenance is key to success'**

NEWPORT, R.I. – The Surface Warfare Officers School (SWOS) hosted Vice Adm. William Hilarides, commander, Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA), Aug. 8 when he addresses a class of prospective executive and commanding officers.

During his remarks, the admiral explained the role of NAVSEA in the fleet.

"We manage a budget of approximately \$40 billion", he said. "We have a wide variety of programs, but the bulk of our funds are spent building, sustaining, and modernizing the surface fleet."

The admiral then discussed the current position the Navy finds itself in – that of maintaining its technical competency from the deckplates up.

"The resilience of our Navy in combat rests in the technical competence of its officers, chief petty officers, and enlisted Sailors," he said. "And it starts with maintenance. Get a mirror and ask yourself: Do we really know our systems? How well are we taking care of them? You should look for opportunities to make your crew do maintenance they are uncomfortable with. Don't let them just do the easy stuff."

“How will you know if yours is a successful ship? When INSURV {Board of Inspection and Survey} is an easy day for you,” he said. “Because that means that you have a good maintenance program.”

Hilarides closed his remarks with a final order.

“Take care of those ships and Sailors,” he said “Be ready for war – we never know where or when it is coming, so be ready at all times.”

According to SWOS Executive Officer Cmdr. Michael Ray, flag-level involvement in the training and preparation of future leaders is important.

“The SWOS curriculum offers these officers exposure to a wide range of relevant fleet topics, but some of the most valuable knowledge our future fleet leaders gain is from our flag-level visitors,” Ray said. “Vice Adm. Hilarides observes – on a daily basis – the material and modernization challenges that await these officers in the fleet. His observations will be incredibly useful to them as they prepare for demanding shipboard leadership roles.”

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

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