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SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

STATEMENT OF
VICE ADMIRAL ROBIN R. BRAUN, U.S. NAVY
CHIEF OF NAVY RESERVE
BEFORE THE
SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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United States Navy Biography

Vice Admiral Robin R. Braun CHIEF OF NAVY RESERVE COMMANDER, NAVY RESERVE FORCE

Vice Adm. Robin Braun is the daughter of a career naval aviator. Born in Pensacola, Florida, she is a graduate of Northern Arizona University and was commissioned in 1980. Designated a naval aviator in February 1981, her first assignment was to Training Squadron (VT) 31, NAS Corpus Christi, Texas, where she served as an instructor pilot in the T-44 aircraft.

In 1983, Braun was assigned to Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron (VQ) 3, NAS Barbers Point, Hawaii, serving as a mission commander, aircraft commander, and instructor pilot in the EC-130Q aircraft. Subsequent squadron tours include Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VR) 61, NAS Whidbey Island, Wash., and VR-51, NAS Glenview, Illinois. Staff assignments include naval intern on the Joint Staff (J3), aviation detailer at Navy Personnel Command, and chief of staff, CNO Operations and Plans supporting OPNAV N3/N5.



Braun served as commanding officer of VR-48, NAF Washington, D.C. During her tour, the squadron was awarded the Battle Efficiency Award and Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Safety Award.

Subsequent command tours include: Navy Air Logistics Office (NALO); Navy Reserve Carrier Strike Group 10 supporting the USS *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) and Joint Task Force Katrina; and Tactical Support Center 0793 supporting Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 5.

Flag assignments include deputy commander, Navy Recruiting Command; director, Total Force Management for the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information Dominance (OPNAV N2/N6), and deputy director, European Plans and Operations Center (ECJ-3), Stuttgart, Germany.

Braun became the chief of Navy Reserve on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations in Washington, D.C., August 13, 2012.

Braun has accumulated over 5,800 flight hours in Navy aircraft. Her awards include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit (three awards), Meritorious Service Medal (four awards), the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (two awards), and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (three awards).

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Cochran, Vice Chairman Durbin, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee; thank you for the opportunity to present an update on the United States Navy Reserve. This year, as we celebrate the Centennial of the Navy Reserve, I am especially honored to represent more than 58,840 skilled and dedicated Reserve Sailors and Navy Civilians, as well as their families. From every state and territory, our Citizen Sailors have mobilized over 73,000 times in every theater of operations since 2001. This includes 2,947 personnel who deployed last year to support operations around the globe. On behalf of the entire Navy Reserve, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for your continued support.

The Navy Reserve is more operationally engaged and integrated today than we have been in decades. Our contributions to the Total Force have proven critical to supporting the Navy's strategic plan to meet the nation's security needs as determined by the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG) and the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). The QDR calls for the Joint Force to "rebalance" in four areas, one of which is, "rebalancing capability, capacity and readiness..." The Navy Reserve specifically assists the Navy in this effort through our operational capabilities, flexible and timely surge capacity, and unique force structure. Full integration of these elements and capabilities provides the Navy and Joint Force flexible and reliable strategic depth and on-demand capabilities that are, "Ready now, Anytime, Anywhere."

A CENTURY OF SERVICE

The Navy Reserve was established by Congress in 1915, and for 100 years Reserve Sailors have answered the Nation's call to duty, serving in every U.S. conflict and national emergency. Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Navy Reserve Sailors have been mobilized on shore and at sea, delivering security both at home and abroad, and providing tens of thousands of "boots on the ground" in places like Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan, and the Horn of Africa. Although today's Navy Reserve is dramatically smaller than the days when we made up 84% of the Navy's WWII force, we are more deeply integrated, operationally focused and combat proven than we have been in decades.

March 3, 2015 marked the Centennial of the Navy Reserve, providing a tremendous opportunity to recognize the contributions made by Navy Reserve Sailors over the past century. This year, at commemoration events across the country, we are highlighting how Citizen Sailors have responded during key times in our Nation's history, and how they still stand ready to serve. We look to the future and see a Navy Reserve, "Ready then, Ready now, Ready always!"

OPERATIONALLY ENGAGED

Over the past year, the Navy responded to Combatant Commander (CCDR) requirements with tailored force packages of Reserve units and personnel. Reserve Component (RC) solutions met the full range of support required, from Navy core missions to CCDR ad-hoc requirements.

Our force structure provided integration options ranging from the mobilization of an entire unit to the activation of a single Individual Augmentee (IA) Sailor. In support of their strategic surge roles, non-mobilized Sailors maintained their readiness through training and operational support to the Fleet. This model delivers increased flexibility and depth to the Total Force, and the experience gained by Reserve Sailors through mobilizations and operational support enhances the Navy Reserve's interoperability with the Active Component (AC) and the Joint Force.

The newly published revision of *A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower* states the following:

“To ensure our active and reserve Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen—as well as civilians—remain our greatest asymmetric advantage; we will...Optimize the total force mix by strategically employing the Selected Reserve, managing differentiated talents to create more adaptive and agile warriors, and expanding Service opportunities to a wider population in support of peacetime operations and to provide essential surge capacity.”¹

In line with this vision, we are engaging with Resource Sponsors to operationalize more of our RC to support steady-state operations and provide essential surge capacity.

As we reflect on the accomplishments of 2014, the Navy is already moving toward this vision. Last year the Navy Reserve was heavily engaged with deployments by Navy Mobile Construction Battalions (NMCB), Cargo Handling Battalions, Coastal Riverine units, Maritime Patrol squadron detachments, and Special Operations Force (SOF) capabilities delivered by both Reserve helicopter squadrons and RC SEAL Team units. Reserve Sailors filled 75% of the Navy's total IA requirements, enabling AC Sailors to fill critical at-sea billet vacancies. Reserve Sailors also provided direct support to CCDR and Fleet operations and exercises including RIMPAC, COBRA GOLD, and URGENT PROVIDER, comprehensively delivering greater than two million man-days of operational support.

In 2014, the Navy Reserve's flexibility facilitated assumption of the High Value Unit (HVU) escort mission from the Coast Guard at Groton, CT. Navy Expeditionary Combat Command's (NECC) Reserve Coastal Riverine Squadrons surged to meet this new requirement. By leveraging RC Sailors' experience gained through deployments in support of OCO missions, Navy Reserve Sailors will assume full mission responsibility for escorts in the ports of Hampton Roads, Mayport, Puget Sound and San Diego by the end of FY16. This Total Force solution enables Navy's AC units to remain on their established operational deployment schedule.

SEAL Teams 17 and 18 are Navy Reserve units that provide SOF capabilities to CCDRs by deploying SEAL, Special Warfare Combatant Craft (SWCC) and combat service support personnel. The manner in which Naval Special Warfare (NSW) employs their RC Sailors is carefully considered and designed to deliver strategic benefits. They leverage the maturity, continuity, and experience offered by RC Sailors to generate long term region-specific expertise and cultural understanding and to cultivate a network of partners. NSW has also been drawing

¹ CS21 Revision - A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower

on their Reserve Sailors with specialized civilian experience to develop Unmanned Aerial System elements which provide vital augmentation to critical SOF missions.

Through ongoing mission analysis of the Navy Total Force Integration Strategy, U.S. Fleet Cyber Command has developed a Reserve Cyber Mission Force Integration Strategy that leverages our Reserve Sailors' skill sets and expertise to maximize the Reserve Component's support to the full spectrum of cyber mission areas. Within this strategy, the growth of 298 Reserve billets from FY15 through FY18 will be individually aligned to Active Component Cyber Mission Force teams and the Joint Force Headquarters-Cyber. Accordingly, the Joint Force Headquarters-Cyber and each Navy-sourced team will maximize its assigned Reserve Sailors' particular expertise and skill sets to augment each team's mission capabilities. As our Reserve Cyber Mission billets come online and are manned over the next few years, we will continue to assess our integration strategy to take advantage of RC Sailors' military and civilian expertise.

Commanders in the field have noted that the civilian professional expertise of Reserve Sailors enhances their military capability. As one Joint Task Force Commander recently noted, "The background and contemporary industry knowledge members of the Navy Reserve bring to my organization cannot be understated – they bring a unique set of skills which consistently results in a better solution or product when they work side by side with their active duty counterparts, government civilians and contractors." It is the unique combination of civilian and military experience and skills provided by Reserve Sailors that can offer the diversity of thought and insights which regularly generate innovation and act as a force multiplier.

NAVY RESERVE FORCE READINESS

The Navy Reserve focuses on providing Sailors who are available for mobilization at a moment's notice. Reserve Personnel, Navy (RPN) funding is essential to providing trained and ready Sailors to support the Navy, Marine Corps, and the Joint Force. On any given day, approximately 90% of eligible Sailors are mobilization ready. It is important to understand that mobilization readiness involves more than just training our Sailors for their jobs; it also includes ensuring our Sailors' resilience through medical, physical, spiritual and family readiness. In addition to RPN, these programs are supported with Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funding.

Personnel Readiness

Discretionary RPN funding in PB-16 is the primary means with which we generate readiness and provide operational support to the Fleet and CCDRs. A unique advantage of these funds is the immediacy with which they can be allocated to provide timely manpower and capabilities to support emergent requirements anywhere they are needed. As historical execution rates show, every dollar of RPN contributes to operational support, and I thank the committee for its continued support of discretionary RPN funding.

In addition to providing operational support for CCDRs, OCO ADT funds are used to provide RC Sailors with essential mobilization training. OCO funds also support critical resilience programs delivered via the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP) to help RC service members and their families before, during, and after deployments. YRRP programs promote awareness and understanding of available resources to address unique challenges faced by Navy Reserve Sailors, especially as they reintegrate into their communities, families, and civilian jobs after mobilization. Reserve specific programs like these are necessary because, in many cases, our Sailors reside far from military installations where support services are traditionally provided. We are focused on building a culture where asking for help is encouraged and looked upon as a sign of strength. These programs are vital in providing the continuum of care for our Sailors.

Equipping the Navy Reserve

Almost fifteen years of increased operational tempo have taken a toll on a significant portion of the aircraft and other equipment our Sailors operate. In order to safely accomplish our assigned missions and seamlessly integrate with the AC, the Navy Reserve depends on modern and reliable hardware. As noted in DoD's FY16 National Guard and Reserve Equipment Report, the Navy Reserve's top equipping challenges "continue to be aircraft procurement."²

Aircraft recapitalization is absolutely our number one equipping priority. It is critical for the Navy Reserve's ongoing operational support to the Naval Aviation Enterprise, and my staff has been working closely with the Active Component Resource Sponsors to address the Navy Reserve's future resourcing concerns.

Fiscal constraints have created an environment where we must be increasingly focused on extending the life of every piece of infrastructure and hardware; however, each has a finite lifespan and we accept increasing risk as we approach that limit. Even when we are able to extend the life of legacy equipment such as F/A-18A+ and P-3C aircraft, we cannot overcome the resulting interoperability barriers and maintenance issues associated with extended service.

The Navy Reserve's Tactical Support Wing (TSW), comprised of five Reserve squadrons, provides adversary training to the Fleet and assists in Fleet Replacement pilot production. Two of these squadrons, VFA-204 and VFC-12, fly F/A-18A+ aircraft as the Navy's strategic reserve of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) tactical aircraft. They maintain their readiness by filling a fleet operational support role of providing dedicated adversary support, also known as "Red Air", for Fleet Replacement Squadrons and deploying CVWs. Effective air-to-air training requires a skilled Red Air opponent and the TSW provides the Navy's recognized experts at adversary flying.

VFA-204, home-based in New Orleans, and VFC-12, home-based in Virginia Beach, are operating legacy F/A-18A+ Hornets that are nearing the end of their service life. As a group, the aircraft assigned to VFA-204 and VFC-12 are the oldest Hornets in the Navy, resulting in

² FY16 DoD National Guard and Reserve Equipment Report

increased maintenance challenges. Reserve leadership is working with the Active Component to ensure our Reserve VFA community remains viable in the future.

Our Electronic Attack Squadron, VAQ-209, completed its transition from the EA-6B to the EA-18G Growler and was certified 'Safe for Flight' in May 2014. VAQ-209 has been deploying with the legacy EA-6B as part of Navy's expeditionary Airborne Electronic Attack deployments since 1995. They are scheduled to deploy with their new electronic attack aircraft in FY 2016.

The Navy's strategic depth in the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft (MPRA) community consists of two squadrons, VP-62 and VP-69, both of which operate legacy P-3C Orion aircraft. These units, based in Jacksonville, FL, and Whidbey Island, WA, have been instrumental in filling operational gaps in both deployed and homeland defense roles as the AC MPRA community transitions to the P-8A aircraft. By incorporating Reserve VP Squadrons into the deployment cycle, the Active VP squadrons will be fully transitioned to the new P-8A by FY 2019.

Within the Fleet Logistics Support Wing, we will accept delivery of two C-40A cargo aircraft in FY-15, bringing our total inventory to 14 aircraft and a 15th C-40A will be delivered in FY-17. This will allow the Navy to continue fleet reconstitution following the 2014 divestiture of the inefficient and costly C-9B legacy aircraft. Navy Reserve C-40A cargo and passenger aircraft are classified as Navy Unique Fleet Essential Aircraft (NUFEA). As NUFEA they are critical supporting elements to all facets of Navy's deployed operations and are a prime enabler of Navy's support to CCDR requirements. The NUFEA C-40A program places the Fleet closer to realizing a more capable and cost-effective lift capability.

Following the direction and expectations communicated by the defense appropriations subcommittees, the Navy Reserve used prior National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriations (NGREA) to meet readiness and operational requirements. For example, the Navy Reserve invested in four new fully-equipped MK VI Patrol boats for our San Diego and Little Creek RC Coastal Riverine Force; we have invested in sustaining the fleet of F-5 adversary aircraft based at NAS Fallon and NAS Key West; and we have modernized and purchased new communications equipment for RC Sailors in Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC). I thank you for these funds that support our Nation's Citizen Sailors as they accomplish their mission.

FACILITIES

The Navy Reserve operates six region headquarters (Reserve Component Commands), two Joint Reserve Bases (JRBs) and 123 Navy Operational Support Centers (NOSCs). These facilities serve Navy Reserve Sailors and are located in all 50 states as well as Puerto Rico and Guam. Our NOSCs reside on and off DoD installations as both Navy-only and Joint facilities. These facilities are a mix of stand-alone NOSCs, Navy-Marine Corps Reserve Centers (NMCRC) and Joint Armed Forces Reserve Centers (AFRC).

We have made the best use of available military construction and facilities sustainment funding to provide the safe and modernized environment our Sailors need to maintain training and readiness. Where able, we have partnered with other service components to relocate NOSCs onto military installations to leverage existing infrastructure and share force protection efforts, such as the re-location of NOSC Pittsburgh, onto a USAF Reserve base. We have also partnered with other service components to establish tenancy in Joint Reserve facilities as we did with NOSC New Castle which now shares a facility with the Delaware National Guard. PB-16 supports the relocation of an additional stand-alone NOSC onto a DoD installation. In response to force structure adjustments and our commitment to gaining efficiencies across the Reserve Force, our Military Construction, Navy Reserve (MCNR) projects have enabled us to build modern, energy-efficient, and technologically current facilities.

As a part of the Navy's Energy Program for Security and Independence, the Navy Reserve continues to seek opportunities to gain energy efficiencies through modernization and new construction. For example, in Fiscal Year 2014 we funded seven collaborative energy-saving projects that will generate ongoing annual savings.

Our plans prioritize vacating obsolete buildings, such as the one currently occupied by NOSC Des Moines, a converted 1906 Cavalry barn listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In 2013, we partnered with the Marine Corps Reserve to construct a new Navy-Marine Corps Reserve Center. NOSC Des Moines is scheduled to transition into the new facility in 2017. Additionally, our plans also support the modernization and construction of two Joint Reserve Intelligence Centers (JRICs). These facilities are "hubs" of intelligence expertise that facilitate direct support to forward deployed warfighters and are a critical piece of the Joint Intelligence Program.

Each year we direct our Facilities Sustainment, Repair and Modernization funds to address the highest priority modernization and repair projects. As can be expected with facilities located in every climate across the country, unforeseen events can trump planned projects when we are faced with major repairs that result from destructive weather events or deterioration issues. In any given year we are only able to address a portion of our total facilities sustainment requirement. Adequate facilities are necessary to keep Navy Reserve Sailors ready to mobilize and deploy forward. Your support represents an essential investment in the future health and readiness of the Navy Reserve's Citizen Sailors.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Navy Reserve Sailors are the face of the Navy in communities throughout the Nation. As they interact with the American public on a daily basis, they showcase the pride and professionalism of the U.S. Navy while supporting civic, educational, and community events.

Through the Secretary of Defense's Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) program, Guard and Reserve units conduct training missions that also support projects for underserved communities. During FY-15, Navy Reserve Sailors will help construct roads and buildings at the

YMCA of the Rockies in Granby, Colorado; develop infrastructure for housing developments in the Fort Belknap Indian Community near Harlem, Montana; and provide medical, dental and optometry services in Sikeston, Missouri; Binghamton, New York; and Tuskegee, Alabama. The IRT program is a synergistic approach to meeting operational readiness training requirements while executing valuable community service projects.

Navy Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officers (NEPLOs) maintain strategic positions from which they respond to crises on a local, state or national level. NEPLOs plan and deliver integrated Navy support to civil authorities when domestic disasters occur. They are a cadre of senior RC officers who are trained to determine how Navy assets can best fulfill emergency response needs. As they train regularly with emergency response personnel and National Guard units, they develop working relationships which ensure timely access to federal support. NEPLOs expedite responses when delays could result in greater damage to property or loss of life. In 2014, NEPLOs coordinated assistance for flooding in Colorado, a chemical spill in West Virginia, wildfires in California and Washington, severe winter storms in Pennsylvania, mudslides in Washington, and tropical storms in Hawaii. This Navy capability is maintained solely in the RC due to its part-time force structure requirement.

Reserve Sailors also have the solemn duty of delivering funeral honors on behalf of a grateful Nation to American veterans across the country. NOSC presence in every state makes this support possible. Our Sailors execute this mission flawlessly with humility and compassion, often driving many hours to deliver these services. They are the deceased family's final reminder of the proud military service and sacrifice given by their loved one. Last year the Navy Reserve fulfilled 64% of the Navy's funeral honors requests, serving at 35,308 funerals for Navy veterans.

HEALTH OF THE FORCE

End Strength

Although today's Navy Reserve is 34% smaller than it was in 2000, the PB-16 requested Navy Reserve end strength of 57,400 is based on continuous efforts to optimize Reserve force structure and utilization. Today's force mix is the result of deliberate consideration of multiple factors including cost, accessibility, responsiveness, flexibility, capability and capacity. Thorough analysis shows that maintaining capacity in the RC provides reversibility, reducing the cost and time associated with reconstitution; and, augmenting AC units with Reserve Sailors provides strategic depth and surge capacity without the cost burden associated with full-time end strength.

Each mission area has a different optimal AC/RC force mix. No single force mix solution can be applied across all of the diverse communities and enterprises within the Navy due to each having distinctive requirements. Additionally, emerging threats as well as technological and fiscal environments impact the optimal AC/RC mix. Regardless, the keys to success in each community and enterprise are the same – deliberate consideration of force mix beginning at

concept development, and the application of a common cost assessment mechanism that accounts for the total life cycle cost of all personnel – active, reserve and civilian.

Recruiting and Retention

Due to high retention and ongoing end strength reductions, the Navy Reserve was only able to accept 25% of applications from separating AC Sailors interested in a transition to the RC in 2014 (642 of 2,560). As Navy Reserve end strength stabilizes in FY 2016, we expect opportunities to increase. To further increase these transition opportunities, we have an ongoing effort to expand Continuum of Service (CoS) options that enables transitioning AC Sailors to bring their valued experience to the Reserve Force. Simultaneously, we are advertising opportunities for RC Sailors in specific ratings and year groups to transition to undermanned AC ratings in either a temporary or permanent capacity. Last year 291 RC Sailors permanently transferred to the AC. These CoS options enable the Navy to retain targeted skills and experience while supporting the needs of our Sailors.

The Navy Reserve employs a focused bonus strategy to selectively target the specific skills and experience needed by the Navy. Selective Reenlistment Bonuses, affiliation bonuses and enlistment bonuses are used to improve retention and recruitment of Enlisted Sailors in these specialties. Officer accession and affiliation bonuses and special pays are used to maintain or increase manning levels by targeting undermanned pay grades in critical and undermanned skill sets.

There are two specific communities that present a persistent challenge to meeting recruiting goals – Unrestricted Line (URL) officers and medical officers. During FY-14, Navy was only able to attain 87% of RC URL recruiting goals and only 67% of the RC medical officer recruiting goals. The challenge in meeting the URL goal is rooted in the single recruiting pool – officers transitioning from the AC – and high AC URL retention has limited the number of officers available to transition into the RC. As a result, URL affiliation bonuses are offered to officers from the EOD, SEAL, Surface, Submarine, and Aviation communities. Additionally, the Navy Reserve is authorized to use a limited Critical Skills Retention Bonus for Naval Special Warfare (SEAL) officers in an effort to reduce attrition in that community.

Accessing Health Care Professionals, specifically medical officers, remains an even more significant recruiting challenge. Past Congressional action authorized Navy Reserve to expend resources to attract and retain these officers for critically undermanned wartime specialties. These incentives are still necessary and are used to partially overcome challenges that include impacts of mobilizations on civilian medical practices and significant income loss during military service.

Resilience Programs

The Navy Reserve continues to lead the way in quality mental health care for our service members. Post Deployment Health Assessment (PDHA) compliance and periodic re-assessments (PDHRA) for demobilizing Sailors are elements of the continuum of care that

function as mechanisms through which Reserve Sailors can access reliable and quality mental health care. The medical foundation set forth by the PDHA/PDHRA will also be continually reassessed via the Mental Health Assessment (MHA) portion of the annual Periodic Health Assessment (PHA). The symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) or other related mental health conditions often do not manifest themselves immediately. This requires our leaders as well as every Sailor and their families to be ever vigilant and responsive to changes in Sailors' behavior and performance after mobilization.

Balancing the demands of military service, family obligations, and a civilian career can be challenging and stressful. It is common for military families to experience stress before, during and after deployment. Family readiness impacts Sailor readiness, so building resiliency and support for families is essential to a Sailor's ability to focus on their mission.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program remains the cornerstone of the Navy Reserve's deployment readiness and reintegration training programs. The need for this continuum of care will extend well beyond the return of last combat mobilized Sailor. A key program within the YRRP is the Returning Warrior Workshop, which focuses on the reintegration process for service members and their spouse/family member, and helps identify Sailors in need of follow-on care.

Navy Reserve's Psychological Health Outreach Program (PHOP) ensures remotely located Reserve Sailors have access to appropriate psychological health care services. PHOP counselors provide Operational Stress Control (OSC) briefings to Reserve Sailors across the nation. In 2014, PHOP counselors completed 355 NOSC and Navy Mobilization Processing Site visits, completing 2,637 Behavioral Health Screenings (BHS) and over 30,000 individual contacts. Additionally, they served as facilitators at 14 RWWs to help identify Sailors or families in need of support. This year's implementation of Resiliency Check-ins (RCI) allowed PHOP counselors to provide one-on-one behavioral health assessments that include on-the-spot initial and follow-up referrals when needed. This removes any perceived stigma to seeking help and is a proven way to ensure Sailors receive the mental health care they need. Referrals to non-medical counseling support military families with a variety of common concerns that can occur within the military lifestyle including anger, loss, grief, separation, and stress reactions to deployment cycles/reintegration.

Prevention Programs

The Navy Reserve is committed to eradicating suicide and sexual assault from our ranks. Prevention through education, awareness and training continues to gain increased traction across the Force in both of these areas.

The Navy Reserve is concerned about the increase in suicides from 2013 to 2014 and is focused more than ever on stress navigation and resilience-building tools to empower our Sailors to thrive, not just survive. Navy Resilience and Suicide Prevention Programs promote community and focus on comprehensive wellness. The Navy Reserve is actively engaged in cross-functional teams charged with suicide prevention efforts and is assisting with the

development of the Defense Strategy on Suicide Prevention. Additionally, RC members have access to PHOP counselors 24/7/365. With an all-hands approach of “Every Sailor, every day” we are committed to ensuring every Shipmate knows they are valued, have resources available, and understand that asking for help is part of operating as a team and is a sign of strength.

The Navy Reserve fosters a climate that is intolerant of sexual assault and other unacceptable behaviors such as sexist language and behavior, hazing, and sexual harassment. Leaders at all levels continue to stress personal responsibility and accountability for decision-making and behavior. We promote a culture of treating all with dignity and respect while living by the Navy’s Core Values both on and off duty. To further our Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) efforts, we assigned a dedicated SAPR Officer at our Navy Reserve Force Headquarters to coordinate continued training and focus on eradicating sexual assault and destructive behaviors from our Force. This year, we continue to focus on Bystander Intervention Training which teaches Sailors intervention techniques to prevent destructive decisions, thereby empowering them to take action and stop behaviors not aligned with our Core Values and Navy Ethos.

The Navy Reserve has played an important role in the Victims' Legal Counsel (VLC) Program since it was established in August 2013. Reserve judge advocates have filled over one-third of the billets in the program since its inception, providing corporate knowledge that best supports victims of sexual assault. Reserve Sailors also initially manned 3 out of 5 Regional VLC Officer-in-Charge (OIC) positions. Many Reserve judge advocates have handled similar issues in the civilian sector and are uniquely qualified to provide leadership, litigation experience, and program policy development in support of sexual assault victims. A trusted VLC program encourages reporting by victims who will only step forward if they know their rights will be protected through the investigation and adjudication phases.

STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

As the Navy transforms to meet future demands as determined by the DSG and QDR, so too, will the Navy Reserve. In alignment with CNO’s guidance, we will continue to build on the operational proficiency we have gained to remain ready to respond to emerging missions. We are also expanding our ability to draw on the civilian skills of our highly diverse and multi-talented personnel, building an innovative team for the future.

As the maritime battle-space continues to evolve and technology expands at ever increasing rates, the Navy Reserve is being guided by five Strategic Imperatives:

First, we will keep pace with the Navy’s future capabilities, integrating with the newest platforms and missions. Navy Reserve Sailors will continue to play a critical role as part of the Total Force, with opportunities for careers using the latest technology, while supporting the newest platforms.

Second, we will maintain a ready force for tomorrow. We will remain operationally proficient, ensuring a ready, highly trained, and surge-capable Force. Ready Sailors enable the

Reserve Component to have a tremendous impact on Fleet and Combatant Commander operations around the globe. Our Force continues to aggressively seek opportunities to conduct and support missions with our Fleet and Joint commanders.

Third, we will broaden the manner in which we employ each Sailor's unique capabilities, leveraging their military and civilian skills in support of future requirements. Our Sailors have unique capabilities derived from a combination of military and diverse civilian skills. Whether a tradesman, first responder, executive, or licensed professional, the Navy has long benefitted from the civilian experiences of our Sailors. To harness this tremendous asset, we will catalogue the specific skills of our Sailors and look for opportunities to use them as a force multiplier.

Fourth, we are working to consolidate and modernize the systems used to enable and manage Sailor readiness, while ensuring security and improving Sailor access to those systems. With the distributed nature of the Reserve work force, utilizing a single secure log-in to access the various internet-based operational, training and management applications, and integrating mobile and cloud-based IT solutions will reduce the time and effort associated with meeting readiness and training requirements.

Fifth, we are examining initiatives to provide more flexible options for a career of service. Our people, Sailors and civilians alike, are what make our Navy Reserve strong. We are working to deliver expanded officer and enlisted professional development opportunities focused on enhancing leadership skills, character development, and reinforcing our Navy ethos. Critical to developing future leaders is our ability to access and retain high-performing, knowledgeable Sailors and civilians who are innovative and desire to continuously learn. To this end, we will expand Continuum of Service options to enable Sailors to more easily transition between the Active and Reserve Components, thereby increasing the agility of the Total Force.

CONCLUSION

As the Navy Reserve embarks upon our second century of service, we continue to be operationally engaged and ready to respond – where it matters, when it matters. As good stewards of our Nation's resources, we have sought and will continue to seek efficiencies while prioritizing mission effectiveness. PB-16 will sustain the Navy Reserve's preparedness to surge when and where needed. While concerns remain – the foremost being aviation recapitalization – we will continue to work in concert with the AC to optimize utilization of the Reserve Component through continued innovation, force mix modifications, and process improvements. As we consider future force mix and force structure, we will continue to look for opportunities to recapitalize, modernize and improve our equipment and facilities and, when necessary, mitigate the risks associated with extending their service life. The future Navy Reserve is a Force that keeps pace with warfighting capabilities and technology, while persistently identifying new ways to improve how we support and care for our Sailors and their families. On behalf of all the dedicated Citizen Sailors who serve our great Navy, I thank the members of the Committee for your support.