

NEWSLETTER

December 2015

Edition 1

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Christmas Message from NCHQ

2015 - has been another busy year and we at Navy Command HQ would like to thank you all for your hard work and commitment during these times of austerity and uncertainty. We would like to welcome back those of you from HMS RICHMOND AND HMS LANCASTER who have recently returned from lengthy deployments; we hope that you are now enjoying some well earned leave with family and friends. Whilst the rest of us are eagerly looking forward to our own Christmas Leave, we should spare some thoughts for those that are away from their loved ones this Christmas: HMS DEFENDER and HMS ST ALBANS currently conducting Military Tasks around the Globe. Merry Christmas to all UW personnel, safe seas to those of you that are deployed, lets hope for more in contact time in 2016!

Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015

Prime Minister David Cameron - announced the governments SDSR for 2015 and although you will have heard all the intricate details from internal messaging and the media, you are probably left wondering what it actually means to you in the UW Branch. As the PM stated it is all about Future Force 2025 which will deter threats, protect our people and allies and improve our ability to respond to crises. This is all based on the conclusion that risks and threats faced by the UK have increased in scale, diversity and complexity since 2010. You only have to read news articles to see what they mean. Russia's behaviour has changed there is a bigger threat from cyber attack, The Middle East and North Africa are unstable and

international terrorism is growing at a pace; we need to adapt our forces to meet these threats head on. For the Royal navy this means a continuing Nuclear Deterrent, 2 new Aircraft Carriers, a fleet of 19 Frigates and Destroyers (including 8 x Type 26 ASW Frigates to replace our ageing Type 23s). The Nuclear Deterrent and Aircraft Carriers Task Groups will always need ASW protection; we in the UW Branch will play a key part in that through our specialist ability to operate complex sonars and underwater weapon systems alongside our Merlin, P8 Poseidon and Submariner counterparts. Exciting times lie ahead for the UW Branch, are you ready for the challenge of Future Force 2025?



Work hard, Relax easier, Live the American dream, Serve the Queen, Track submarines!

Little of the UW Branch is aware that NOPF (Naval Ocean Processing Facility) exists. The Armed Forces assign a small number of UW general service, submariners, RAF personnel and their families the privilege and opportunity to live in Virginia Beach, USA.

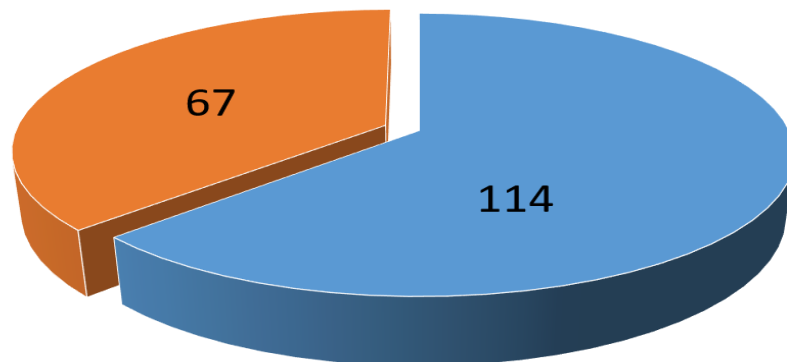
With a busy operational tempo NOPF allows all operators the ability and confidence to track and monitor allied submarines, hostile submarines, naval surface vessels and aircraft on a day to day basis. All UK personnel are intently aware of a greater picture with regards to ASW management of resources for homeland theatre commanders. During the assignment to NOPF Dam Neck you will gain increased knowledge on Oceanographical theory, acoustic data dissemination, worldwide theatre operations and parametric data at levels far beyond your current position. Couple this skill and knowledge with the multi-national, bi-service operations and you will have the opportunity to rapidly enhance your career progression.

NOPF currently has a 96% promotion rate at junior level. NOPF operates on a watch system foundation, (0600-1400 / 1400-2200 / 2200-0600) in layman's terms 5 days on 4 days off. During your downtime the world is your oyster with regards to traveling and culture. America is a brilliant and historical country to explore and maximize your education of a colonial past. Accommodation remains the best the forces has to offer, housing is based on family size and individual circumstances. Most housing comes with communal access to swimming pools, backyards and BBQ pits. With private military beaches, tax free shopping and numerous subsidized vacation opportunities, a three year draft still remains a brilliant reward for your accrued service at sea. If any persons require any more information on lifestyle, work and home balance then please don't hesitate to contact PO (UW) Underdown on DII. The procedure for joining NOPF is lengthy, but if you are organized and committed the benefits far out way the short term inconvenience - PO(UW) Pants Underdown

PO (UW) Pants Underdown
NOPF Dam Neck
Virginia Beach, USA

Where are all of our Leading Hands

LS(UW) Plot



■ UW Liability

■ Actual Numbers

The stark reality of how many Leading hands we actually have versus our UW liability is indicated above. Shortages within the branch as a whole are akin to those in other Warfare Branches however our shortage of Leading Hands is the most severe. This issue is fully recognised, is understood and is briefed to 2SL on a monthly basis. Cdr Moore, Warfare Branch Manager places recovery of the LS (UW) as one of his highest priorities. In short the UW branch is still struggling to recover from SDSR 2010 which imposed a reduction in Gains to Trained Strength (GTS), which means that the recruitment taps were closed or reduced in capacity for a while; we also had redundancies imposed on our AB(UW) cadre during the same period of belt tightening which reduced the numbers available for promotion up. As a result, many of our remaining Leading Hands have been pushed from pillar to post to fill the gaps left behind, causing dissatisfaction and ultimately increased Voluntary Outflow; which reduces their strength further.

In addition to the Leading Hand issue there are a few other factors that are not helping. Typically on average an AB (UW) is being promoted to LH at 8-9 years length of Service when the large majority

of them are achieving OPS for AB1 at 2 years length of Service, this is a lot slower than other branches!

At last years LS(UW) selection promotion board only 14 AB1s were selected with only 20 candidates presented to the board for consideration. This was far too low considering the pool that is currently out there (90 ABs). The questions we should ask ourselves here are: why are our AB's not good enough for promotion? Why are we taking nearly 9 years to get them promoted when we have such a big hole in our Leading Hand Cadre?

Requirement

Key to the recovery of our LS(UW) in theory is simple: We have to Select-Train-Promote our way out of the deficit and, as we are a bottom fed organisation there is a requirement to grow our ABs quicker than we are currently doing. Under the Select-Train-Promote Branch Management AB to LH process we should be looking to promote 1 out of 2 AB1s in less than 5 years Length of Service. Whilst these statistics may surprise some of you it should be no surprise that the large majority of our ABs are VO'ing at the 4-5 year mark, when in fact, they should, under this construct be entering their next level of career based training.

What can you do to help?

Experience shows that promotion inside 5 years should be perfectly achievable (given that a War AB reaches OPS within 1-2 years) with the only other Naval Service requirements being that they have drawn, (but not necessarily completed) their CBRNDC task book and are in date RNFT.

Clearly the other major promotion pre-requisite is that a rating is afforded higher than a Developing in their SJAR. Developing is a perfectly acceptable state in a ratings career but will prevent that ratings portfolio from being presented to the promotion board.

Our aim has to be to invest in our ABs and to reduce that 8-9 year milestone to ensure that the promotion board is continually 'fed' enough suitable candidates to be considered for promotion. The Divisional System is pivotal in supporting this initiative. A large majority of you will be 2RO for our ABs. We are not suggesting that we afford every single AB UW) an A-OPG and an Exceptional recommend for promotion but we are asking that you look at all of your eligible AB1's and ensure that their competencies are recorded correctly in JPA. In order for a rating to be presented to a promotion board they should:

- **Be in date RNFT at Common Reporting Date (CRD).**
- **Recommended Higher than Developing.**
- **TX is after ratings CPD.**
- **CBRNDC Task book issued but not necessarily completed by CRD.**

NEM

Under the New Engagement Model ABs recruited post 1 Apr 15 join with an Engagement Status 1 extending to 12 years Length of Service. During which time they must

have been selected for LH to progress to Engagement Stage 2, extending to 20 years Length of Service. This 'encourages' those ABs to be promoted or the consequence is TX at 12 years.

Warfare Branch Initiatives

So whilst we have explained the problem it is important for you to know that NCHQ, MWS and West Battery are also looking at initiatives that will help us as a branch to recover in the long term:

Introduction of the Warfare Branch Training Pipeline (Apr 16) will mean an end to the TEM training construct, resulting in less churn and an immediate impact to a platforms OC, when a rating joins fully trained and streamed UW as AB2.

GTS has increased to 48 with investigations ongoing to raise this number further.

2 further AB (UW) foundation courses have been added to the current Training pipeline which means another 28 AB(UW) s will be streamed UW this TY bringing the AB broadly into balance Apr 16.

MWS training capacities for LS(UW) have been increased which allow the UW TE to train a maximum of 24 students per year. Again investigations are ongoing to increase this number further.

Fast Track promotion that could see our ABs substantively promoted to LH in 3 years and PO in a subsequent 3 years.

Future ASW Manning Concept (FAMC) Investigations are under way into how we will man the Type 26 for ASW operations using specialist Mission Teams. A proof of concept trial will take place in 2016 during Exercise Deep Blue and if this trial proves successful we may bring the concept forward into the Type 23. Keep an eye out for further information regarding this exciting new manning concept.

FAMC - 'A better way to man ships for ASW'

Promotion to CPO(UW)

We would like to congratulate the following Petty Officers for their extremely well deserved selection for Chief Petty Officer in the September promotion signal; our next generation of CHOPS S and WSQ, now light those fires and get the beers in!

PO(UW) Stu Flack
PO(UW) Rocky Hudson
PO(UW) Bernie Manning
PO(UW) Smoketh Coleman
PO(UW) Taff Edmunds
PO(UW) Robbie Doyle
PO(UW) Stu Cuttle
PO(UW) Billy Nourse
PO(UW) Dale Rutherford

Caption Competition:

There will be a prize for the person that emails me the best caption for these photos:



It's your SJAR, make sure that JPA reflects YOU!

The timely and accurate input of data into JPA is crucial to the success of the promotions process and unit Commanders are requested to take action to ensure that promotion eligibility data is correctly entered on JPA. Where data presented on JPA is inaccurate, and as a consequence a rating who would otherwise be eligible for consideration for promotion by a Selection Board is not considered, that data must be corrected and administrative action taken to redress the issue.

SJAR Completion

The following comments reflect the type of unhelpful SJAR Comments/Career Aspirations seen recently by promotion boards:

"I have a new baby and need to be in Portsmouth" (every year for 10 years)

"Paint the living room before the cricket starts"

"I will do anything to be promoted"

"Raleigh so I can take my horse"

"I am only prepared to serve in the West Country"

"Faslane because it has a better TV picture"

"Intentionally blank"

"LFS to China"

"To organise the Annual Bonfire Night"

"Have never been able to live RA" (lives nowhere near a military base)

"To move in to the top pit in 3Hz Mess"

"Driving job in New York"

"Pay off my overdraft"

The bottom line is, if you want to be promoted make sure that JPA reflects your career aspirations and objectives, blank boxes are as helpful as the comments above and show that you are too lazy to be interested in your own career development!

Promotion Criteria

The following is taken from BR 3 and is a quick reference to what is required for promotion. The BR should always be consulted for official guidance and advice should be sought from Divisional or Career Management staff in the first instance.

It is an individual ratings responsibility to ensure that JPA correctly reflects all competencies achieved by their Common Reporting Date (CRD). Individuals are advised to check the relevant branch flowcharts at Chapter 77 Annex A of BR 3 or contact the Ratings' Promotion Section for advice. Divisional Officers are to conduct routine checks accordingly. Ratings must satisfy the criteria in BR3 para 6703 and will not be presented to Promotion Selection Boards if JPA records do not reflect attainment of the qualifications/competencies where applicable. The following is a summary of pre selection requirements for the Warfare Branch:

a. Professional Knowledge:
Passed Professional Qualifying course in the rate to be selected from along with any primary employment TEMs. For example a rating must have completed a Leading Rates Professional Qualifying Course to be considered for PO.

b. Educational Qualifications:
Must be educationally qualified for the appropriate selection, e.g. QELH, QEPO, in accordance with BR 3 Chapter 96 Section 6.

c. Seniority:
For promotion to CPO and above, individuals must normally have a minimum of 36 months' seniority in the rate from which to be selected 12 months prior to the Common Promotion Date (CPD).

d. Promotion:
Recommendation. To be considered for promotion, ratings must have been awarded 'Exceptional', 'High' or 'Yes' recommendation for 'Promotion - 1 Rank Up' on SJAR by final RO, an award of 'Developing' will result in individuals not being presented to a promotion board. The Ratings Promotion Section will conduct a search on First, Second and Third Reporting Officers' recommendations for 'Promotion

– 1 Rank Up' to identify which candidates are eligible. Reporting Officers must appreciate that the Recommendations matrix provides for assessments on 'suitability' for promotion regardless of eligibility, ensuring promotion potential assessments are based purely on 'merit'. Qualified ratings who do not wish to be considered for promotion are to sign a statement to that effect on their Appraisal Report. Where an otherwise fully eligible candidate receives an SJAR assessment of 'Insufficient Knowledge' in their latest report, presentation before the next Board will be determined by the Ratings Promotion Section using the previous report recommendation

e. Leadership Training:
Must have successfully completed the relevant Leadership Course for their current rate. For example, a rating must have completed a LRLC to be considered for PO and an SRLC to be considered for CPO. Details should be recorded on JPA as competency 'Miscellaneous|Leading Rates Leadership Course (RNLA 102)|Navy|' and 'Miscellaneous|Senior Rates Leadership Course (RNLA 103)|Navy|' or similar.

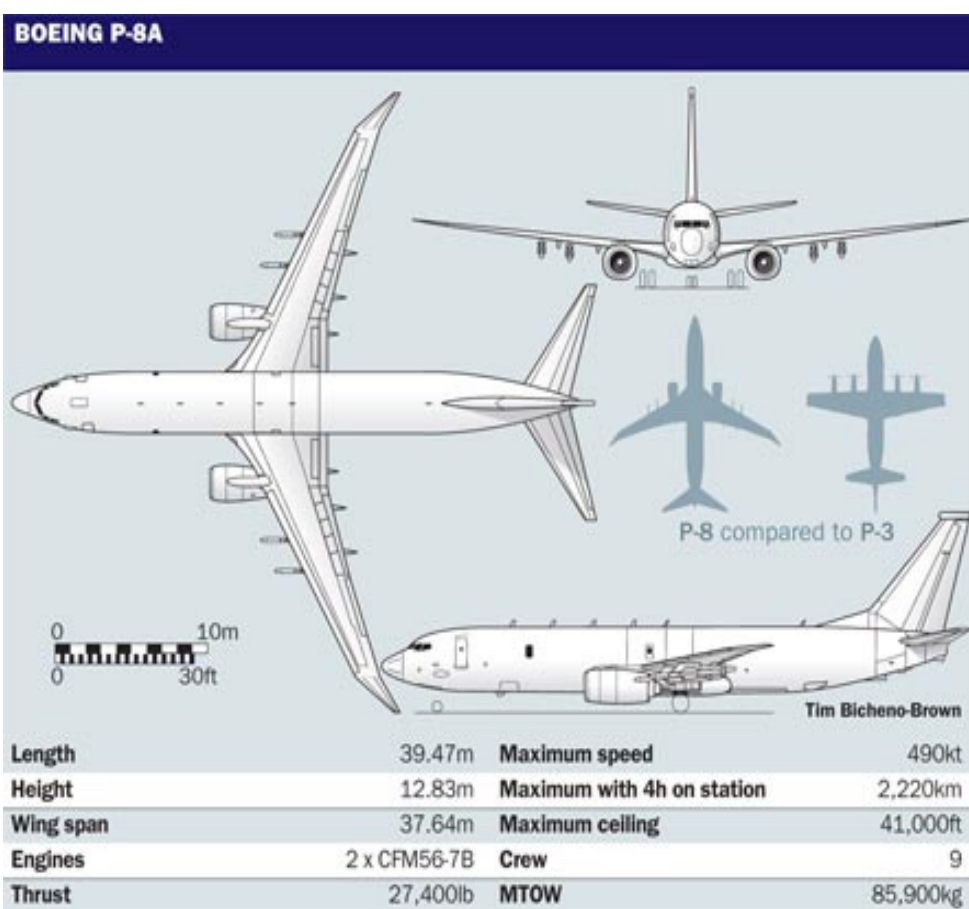
f. Notice:
Must not be serving out their notice of discharge as of right.

g. Engagement.
Must be serving on an Engagement Stage 1 and 2, Full Career or Open Engagement (OE1), or an Engagement Stage 3, Extended Career or Second Open Engagement (2OE) that expires after the CPD in question.

h. Royal Naval Fitness Test:
Must be in-date RNFT or hold an approved waiver, with details recorded as JPA competency 'CMS/Fitness Test/Navy' on the appropriate CRD and CPD.

i. Operational Performance Statement (OPS) Check.
Must be in date Annual OPS check and recorded as 'CMS|Annual OPS Check AB1|Navy|' or 'CMS|Annual OPS Check LH|Navy|' in the current rate to be selected from.

j. CBRNDC Task Book.
A pre-selection requirement for LH is to have the CBRNDC TB issued, however it is a pre-promotion requirement for LH and should be recorded as JPA competence.



United Kingdom to procure 9 x P8 Poseidon Multi Mission Aircraft

You will have heard that the UK government has authorised the procurement of 9 x P8 Multi Mission Aircraft (MMA) to bridge the gap in its ASW capability (since the demise of Nimrod MRA4). Based in Lossiemouth, these extremely agile aircraft will be capable of 4 hour missions that could cover upto 1200 Nautical Miles at speeds upto 490 knots. Highly versatile and capable this US built aircraft based on the 737 commercial airliner, will also be capable of ASUW, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance missions. Electronics and weapons systems will be similar to those in the American aircraft but of interest to us will be the acoustic analysis station that will be manned on ASW missions. (This could open up avenues for RN sonar personnel in the future!) The aircraft has 2 carousels what will be used to launch sonar buoys and a weapons bay that can carry torpedoes or anti surface missiles. The 737 commercial airliner has an upper ceiling of 41000 ft but it often flies lower due to the air being too thin at higher altitudes and the engines need good oxygen to make them operate.

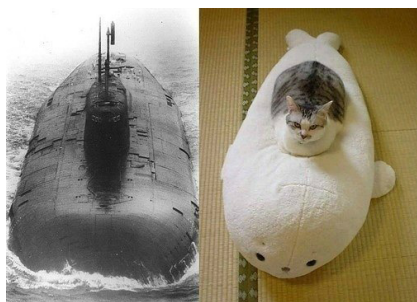
Considering that the P8 MMA will be expected to fly at low altitudes during ASW Missions, I have a question for you:

If the P8 wants to fly low and slow, without falling out of the sky, which part of its wings would it extend? (A clue, they make the wings bigger).

There will be a prize for the first person to email or phone in this answer, contact details on the last page!



A Christmas Recognition Quiz see if you can name all of them:



Advertisement

- Do you want your UW team to be showcased in future newsletters? (serious or funny articles/photographs that show what your team does or has been doing)
- Do you have any good survival tips for fellow UW Branch personnel or good ideas that may benefit us all?
- Would you like to see anything in particular in these newsletters?
- If the answer to any of these questions is YES then please contact the editor:

Telephone: 93832 5351 or
email: NAVY SHIPS-ASW WO1

Answers from Ed1

1. 2 x Victor 3s on a ship
2. ASDIC sonar
3. Chronoscope
4. Borai Class Submarine
5. Hedgehog ASW weapon system
6. Rosemary Bank (been there!)
7. MTLS firing of stingray torpedo
8. 2050 Bow Dome on the jetty