CNO Franchetti and MCPON Honea Visit NSWC Panama City Division



CNO Adm. Lisa Franchetti addresses attendees at an all hands call at Naval Support Activity Panama City, Fla. (Eddie Green)

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PANAMA CITY, Florida – Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Lisa Franchetti and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy

(MCPON) James Honea visited Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division (NSWC PCD), Oct. 24.

Franchetti and Honea's visit provided the opportunity for them to see firsthand how NSWC PCD, one of the Navy's premiere research, development, test and evaluation laboratories, supports the fleet through capabilities including mine warfare, expeditionary warfare, robotics, autonomous systems, and naval special warfare.

"It was really exciting to see all the amazing work that is going on all around here. I got to walk around and talk with many [people from this workforce], the commands here and the service members," said Franchetti. "I'm very excited about the future. It is a very bright future thanks to all the great work that you're doing here today and have been doing for quite some time."

Franchetti and Honea spent the first part of their visit engaging with sailors and civilians, while learning more about capabilities to ensure wartime readiness.

"NSWC PCD continues to meet mission readiness by ensuring alignment to the CNO's Navigation Plan, which poises our Navy to enhance the Navy's long-term advantage," said Capt. David Back, NSWC PCD commanding officer. "It is an honor to host the CNO and MCPON."

Dr. Peter Adair, SES, NSWC PCD technical director, emphasized the significance of getting NSWC PCD's capabilities to the fleet rapidly.

"Taking sailors and marines out of harm's way and reducing the operational timeline is imperative. Unmanned technologies are how we are going to get there," said Adair. "It is our role to ensure the fleet has the capabilities they need for today, tomorrow and the Navy after next."

The visit concluded with a CNO and MCPON-led All Hands Call with sailors and civilians across Naval Support Activity Panama City.

The warfighter is the Navy's asymmetric advantage. Franchetti's Navigation Plan 2024 America's Warfighting Navy outlines the need to build our unmatched warfighting teams—active and reserve Sailors, with Navy civilians—through a relentless focus on training and learning.

"When I am asked 'who is the warfighter' many groups of people come to mind. There are our sailors, on the frontline, but there are also those in the behind the scenes that contribute significantly to Project 33 and to the Navy getting real, getting better," said Franchetti during her All-Hands address. "I am incredibly grateful for the hard work each of you put into ensuring our mission not only advances operationally, but processes continue to improve so we can support the frontline more efficiently and safely."

Fourteen individuals were recognized for their significant contributions to the Navy, including 13 sailor recognitions for achievements.

CNO and MCPON presented a Meritorious Civilian Service Award to Andrea Perles, leader in mine warfare for the U.S. Navy. NSWC PCD also announced Hospital Corpsman Second Class Nicholas Harburckak from Chambers, Neb., as the Junior Sailor of the Year and Aviation Ordnanceman First Class Kevin Rodriguez from Smithfield, Va., as the Sailor of the Year at this installation.

The visit provided Franchetti and Honea with a richer understanding of NSWC PCD's mission to support the America's Warfighting Navy.

“It is your efforts, your dedication, and your expertise that provides us with the capabilities and enablement of manned and unmanned vessels in the fleet,” said Honea. “Whether you are wearing a uniform or intricately in the behind the scenes, the work you do matters.”

This was Franchetti and Honea’s first visit to NSWC PCD as Chief of Naval Operations and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy.