# VCNO Moran: Surface Warriors Need Better Simulators, More Training from COs

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy's surface warriors need more and better simulators to hone their skills, the vice chief of naval operations said April 16, also noting that crews would benefit from more attention from their commanding officers.

"Commanding officers need more time to train their crews," VCNO Adm. Bill Moran said, speaking at an event of the U.S. Naval Institute and the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington think tank, and sponsored by Huntington Ingalls Industries.

"More freeplay," Moran said.

Moran, the nominee to become the next and 32nd chief of naval operations, was responding to a question about the results of the Navy's investigations and reviews of the 2017 collision of the destroyers USS Fitzgerald and USS John S. McCain.

The Navy has adopted 111 recommendations, Moran said, and has been implementing them at a pace such that would not "crush the fleet." The recommendations are being implemented in three tiers of priority: safety, effectiveness and excellence – moving from a culture of just meeting the standards to exceeding the standards.

Moran, a P-3 pilot, said the Navy needed to "build better simulators," noting his concern that the quality of the simulators used in the surface warfare community "were well below what I am used to in the aviation community."

"We [also] don't have the capacity I think the fleet needs,"

he said.

He cited the littoral combat ship community for the good quality of its training simulators and said that “we should have that for every ship class in the Navy.”

“That, to me, will make the biggest difference over time,” he said.

The Navy is building two new structures to house ship simulators in the fleet concentrations of Norfolk, Virginia, and San Diego. The Navy has had in place the NSST (navigation, seamanship and shiphandling trainer) for more than a decade.

Moran stressed that even with excellent simulation, Sailors need “some seawater under your legs.” He praised the measures taken by the Navy’s commander of surface forces, Vice Adm. Rich Brown, to restructure the career path of junior surface warfare officers to give them more time at sea earlier in their careers.

He said that COs can give more time to training their crews by getting maintenance and schedules under control. The Navy has reduced the number of required inspections – knocking out some 60, he said – to free up crews for developing warfighting skills.