Navy Warfighting Organization Hitting Stride, Developing New Maritime Strategy



Aircraft fly in formation over the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Keenan Daniels

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Navy's new organization for warfighting development (N7) is now fully organized for its role in developing strategy and warfighters, its director said, and has joined with the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Coast Guard to develop a new maritime strategy.

The deputy chief of naval operations (DCNO) for warfighting development, Vice Adm. Stuart Munsch, said that N7 is making progress in fulfilling its roles and is hitting its stride and, in conjunction with the Marine Corps and Coast Guard, expects to field the new maritime strategy by late summer or early fall.

"Our North Star is warfighting advantage," Munsch said during a June 5 teleconference with reporters, noting the Navy's focus on the current climate of Great Power Competition and the need to outpace increasingly sophisticated adversaries, renewing a focus on sea control.

The Navy directive addressing the organizational changes defined the role of N7 "with ensuring the Navy's warfighting advantage in order to deter, dissuade and deny or defeat adversaries by engaging in three broad, interrelated lines of effort: warfighter development, warfare development and warfighter corps development. It further established that CNO N7's mission and functions will be supported by a digital platform to enhance its ability to achieve a warfighting edge for the Navy."

The N7 now has four divisions: director, warfighter development; director, warfare development; director, strategic warfighting innovation cell; and director, warfare integration.

N7 is responsible for developing the strategic framework for the Navy, looking forward at longer range than N3/5, the DCNO for operations, plans and strategy, which focuses on the short term. N7 has now absorbed the functions and billets of the now disestablished Strategy Division, Naval Strategy Panel, and some billets from the Naval Warfare Group from N3/5. The Naval Analytics Office also now is aligned within N7.

Munsch said that N7 is to identify the key operational problems facing the Navy and to develop solutions.

N7 also is responsible for force employment and force development, working with the Joint Chiefs of Staff to develop the Joint Warfighting Concept and an influencing the DCNO for warfare systems (N9) with the characteristics of the capabilities needed to implement strategy.

Munsch also said his office has the role of adapting the Navy to changing circumstances, instilling adaptability into the institutional behavior of the Navy, and instilling a lifelong habit of learning to enable that adaptability.

To enhance that learning, Munsch said that the Naval War College, Naval Postgraduate School and U.S. Naval Academy are now under the N7 umbrella, having been shifted from the chief of naval personnel (N1) organization.

Also now aligned within N7 are certain billets from the Resource Management Division and Total Force Manpower, Training, and Education Requirements Division from the N1 organization.

The admiral said that N7 will craft a wargaming schedule for the War College that will be the “most advanced and

significant war gaming we’ve done since the 1930s.”

He was referring to the innovative wargaming by the Navy in the inter-war period in which the Navy developed many of the concepts that enabled the Navy to achieve victory in World War II.

Vice Adm. Lisa M. Franchetti, commander of the U.S. 6th Fleet, has been confirmed to succeed Munsch as the head of N7 this summer.