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FM COMNAVSURFOR SAN DIEGO CA

TO ALNAVSURFOR

INFO COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI

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COMNAVSURFPAC SAN DIEGO CA

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MSGID/GENADMIN,USMTF,2008/COMNAVSURFOR SAN DIEGO CA/0950/MAY 13// SUBJ/CIRCADIAN WATCHBILL// POC/LCDR BRIAN SCOPA/N71/UCNSL/NORFOLK, VA/757-836-3124 /BRIAN.SCOPA(AT)NAVY.MIL// GENTEXT/REMARKS/ 1. THIS IS A JOINT CNSP/CNSL MESSAGE INTENDED TO FURTHER THE DISCUSSION, INNOVATION, AND CONSIDERATION FOR SHIPBOARD WATCH ROTATION REQUIREMENTS AND DAILY ROUTINES THAT MAXIMIZE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR WATCHSTANDERS.

2. WE EXPECT OUR SAILORS TO OPERATE AND MAINTAIN COMPLEX EQUIPMENT, IN CHALLENGING ENVIRONMENTS, VITAL TO SHIP OPERATIONS. WHILE WE INVEST TREMENDOUS TIME AND EFFORT IN MAINTAINING THIS EQUIPMENT, WE MUST ALSO INVEST IN THE HEALTH, WELL-BEING, AND SAFETY OF OUR SAILORS. ONE WAY OF ACHIEVING THIS IS TO CREATE A PREDICTABLE WATCH ROTATION THAT RECOGNIZES THE HUMAN CIRCADIAN RHYTHM AND SUPPORTS A STABLE AND REPEATABLE PATTERN.

3. THE HUMAN BODY NEEDS SLEEP. RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT 22 HOURS WITHOUT SLEEP RESULTS IN A DEGREE OF IMPAIRMENT EQUIVALENT TO A BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT OF 0.08 - LEGALLY DRUNK. YOU WOULD NOT OPERATE YOUR CAR UNDER THESE CONDITIONS; NEITHER SHOULD WE ASK OUR CREWS TO OPERATE SHIPBOARD SYSTEMS OR NAVIGATE IN A SIMILAR MENTAL AND PHYSICAL STATE. THIS EFFECT IS EXACERBATED BY A WATCH ROTATION THAT RESULTS IN INCONSISTENT SLEEP PATTERNS AND INTERRUPTIONS. AFLOAT MISHAP REPORTS OFTEN CITE WATCHSTANDER FATIGUE AS A CONTRIBUTING, OFTEN CAUSAL, FACTOR IN COLLISIONS, GROUNDINGS, AND OTHER UNFORTUNATE EVENTS AT SEA. A KEY FACTOR IN BREAKING THIS CYCLE MAY BE THE INSTITUTION OF A CIRCADIAN WATCH ROTATION IN YOUR SHIP. THE AVIATION COMMUNITY HAS LONG EMBRACED THE CONCEPT OF CREW REST AS A FOUNDATION FOR SAFE OPERATIONS - IT HAS A PLACE IN THE SURFACE FORCE AS WELL.

4. THE BASIS OF OUR CIRCADIAN RHYTHM IS THE 24 HOUR DAY. WE TAKE IT FOR GRANTED WHILE ON SHORE DUTY AND GENERALLY IGNORE IT AT SEA.

WATCH ROTATIONS THAT SUPPORT THIS APPROACH ARE VARIED AND HAVE SPECIFIC ADVANTAGES AND DRAWBACKS. WHILE 3 SECTIONS CAN SUPPORT A 4 ON, 8 OFF ROTATION, TIME FOR SLEEP IS LIMITED AND MINOR INTERRUPTIONS CAN HAVE DRASTIC EFFECTS. FOUR SECTIONS IN A 3 ON, 9 OFF ROTATION HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF SHORTER WATCHES (GREATER FOCUS, LESS HEAT STRESS CONCERNS), BUT HAS THE DISADVANTAGE OF MORE FREQUENT WATCH TURNOVER. ANOTHER OPTION IN 4 SECTIONS IS 6 ON, 18 OFF (ONE DRAWBACK IS THE LENGTH OF THE WATCH, BUT IT HAS THE ADVANTAGE OF ONLY ONE WATCH PER DAY). SOME SHIPS HAVE ACHIEVED 5 SECTIONS AND USED A 5 ON, 20 OFF ROTATION. WHAT THESE ROTATIONS ALL HAVE IN COMMON IS A REPETITIVE WATCH SCHEDULE THAT ALLOWS THE BODY TO ESTABLISH A SLEEP PATTERN RESULTING IN ADEQUATE REST - EQUATING TO GREATER ALERTNESS ON WATCH. OTHER ADVANTAGES INCLUDE A PREDICTABLE SCHEDULE FOR ADMIN, PT, TRAINING/DRILLS OR STUDY.

5. EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT THIS APPROACH CANNOT BE JUST A WATCHBILL. BEST PRACTICES INCLUDE ADJUSTING MEAL HOURS, ALLOWING LATE (OR EARLY) SLEEPERS FOR MID-WATCH PERSONNEL, AND HOLDING MOST MEETINGS AND BRIEFS DURING THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY (E.G., BETWEEN 0900 AND 1500). MANAGEMENT OF THE TIME BETWEEN WATCHES IS KEY TO ALLOW WATCHSTANDERS SUFFICIENT TIME TO CONDUCT PMS, ATTEND TRAINING, AND PERFORM OTHER DUTIES DURING ONE OFF PERIOD AND USE THE OTHER FOR SLEEP, PT, OR PERSONAL TIME. MAINTAINING THE ROTATION FOR A 7 TO 14 DAY PERIOD, RESULTS IN MORE STABILITY FOR YOUR SAILORS. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS ARE SPECIAL EVOLUTIONS (I.E., UNREP, VBSS, WELL-DECK

OPS) WHICH MAY MERIT DESIGNATION OF BLUE/GOLD TEAMS OR OTHER TAILORED WATCH OR STATION BILLS.

6. YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO REVIEW INFORMATION WITH REGARD TO THE CIRCADIAN WATCHBILL AND THE MERITS TO ITS APPROACH ON THE SURFORWEB

AT: HTTPS:\WWW.SURFOR.NAVY.MIL\SITES\SAFETY SITECOLLECTIONDOCUMENTS\CIRCADIAN%20RHYTHM.ASPX.

USERS WITHOUT A SURFORWEB ACCOUNT CAN REQUEST AN ACCOUNT AT:

HTTPS:\APPS.SURFOR.NAVY.MIL\PRIVREG.

7. WHILE THIS MESSAGE DOES NOT ADDRESS ALL POSSIBLE CHALLENGES OR SOLUTIONS, WE SOLICIT AND WELCOME YOUR FEEDBACK ON THIS NEW APPROACH TO WATCH ROTATIONS. PLEASE DIRECT YOUR QUESTIONS, FEEDBACK, AND OWN BEST PRACTICES TO THE MESSAGE POC. STAY SAFE.// BT

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