

At the 40th Reunion, the Pensacola flood of 2014 prevented RADM Brian Brown (CNMOC) from joining us to present the current status of the METOC Community. Larry Warrenfeltz presented the admiral's Power Point presentation at the second general membership meeting. There were three questions posed that were forwarded to Admiral Brown following the reunion.

1. With the added capabilities and abilities that the 2014 AG needs to possess, can you describe the AG training continuum through a career?

RADM Brown: The AG training continuum remains structurally similar to our historical path - AG-A School, now 13 weeks, and AG-C School, now 31 weeks.

We've adjusted A-School to focus less on basic observing (now only performed primarily at sea) and analysis (completed primarily by computers) and focused more on apprentice level battlespace forecasting (physics/thermodynamics/applications). We still emphasize the atmosphere due to time scales and severity of safety impacts, but try to give a broader battlespace perspective. A few of our AG-A School graduates are assigned initially to USAF Operational Weather Squadrons (OWS) at Hickam AFB, HI and Kapaun AFB, GE to jointly support aviation and resource protection missions OCONUS. These AGs align to the current USAF entry level courses to plug into the OWS training pipeline, focusing them on rapid qualification as apprentice weather forecasters. Overall, we have seen an increase in the time investment in A-School.

C-School likewise has been honed to more of a complete battlespace awareness course. The front end still relies on "education" - physics, mathematics - vice "training", and modules include deep dives in meteorology (emphasis due to time scales and severity of safety impacts), oceanography, and tactical applications across warfare areas. The time allotted for this course does not allow for complete training of graduates to qualify in every scientific discipline, but it does give them the sound understanding of the scientific principles and develops the critical thinking skills they need to resolve any complex battlespace problem. To further develop our Sailors, we augment their formal training with just-in-time training provided through our Professional Development Center and its subordinate detachments (located in Fleet concentration areas). The PDC and PDDs cover a number of instructional courses to prepare our folks to deploy forward and to operate more effectively in our 24/7 watchfloors. PDC also provides new officer accession training and training for our reserves.

2. As the big decks are now serviced by deployable teams, rather than a ship's company contingent, how do you handle the logistics of consumables and shipboard METOC equipment?

RADM Brown: With the onset of technology and the digital age, our teams generally only travel with laptops. We have decommissioned the MRS program, so balloons, helium and radiosondes are a thing of the past. All CVN/LHA/LHD have the SMQ-11

Satellite Receiver installed in the OA division spaces, and requisite drops for our portable Navy Integrated Tactical Environmental System (NITES) are also maintained in those spaces. We do maintain a few Automated Weather Observing Systems for field use primarily in the expeditionary realm. We have very little in terms of consumables outside of paper and blank CDs.

3. Are there any AG billets that involve flying (like the old hurricane hunters and ice observers)?

RADM Brown: Technically, we do not maintain any specific billets requiring flying in either the AG or 1800 billet base. However, AGs and 1800s assigned to Naval Oceanography ASW Detachments assigned to augment P-3 Orion/P-8 Poseidon operations, do have an opportunity to earn their Aviation Observer/Flight Meteorologist pins.