

When I wrote in my last Broadsheet article of the considerable progress that has been made to improve the quality of life on the personnel front, who could have predicted the unprecedented level of operational tempo that would be asked of our people this year. From the outset the Royal Navy was at the forefront and, as ever, rose admirably to the challenge. But as we work our people longer and harder, it is even more important we continue to build and develop improvements to the Terms and Conditions of Service of our people and their families, wherever they are serving.

Of course, the real business of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines is done in the front line and all our endeavours must be directed towards that, but a key element in any operation is the quality of our people and the training they receive. There is no doubt that individually our sailors and marines are superb – bright, capable, committed and enthusiastic. It is vitally important we maintain and build on this and then importantly keep them in the service.

We have plans for the future, clearly laid out in the Navy Strategic plan and the Naval Personnel Strategy, and it is important that these strategies can adapt to, and master, the ever changing environment. However, there are a number of crucial challenges we must tackle.

Achievement of Manning balance has remained frustratingly elusive and gapping levels and man power shortages, both afloat and ashore are an area of considerable concern. There have been

some improvements most notably Lynx Pilots and Observers, and at Able Rate, the advent of Squad Manning for the Warfare Branch in Oct 02 will have an immediate beneficial impact on front-line gapping. But there remain particular "hotspots" amongst Sea Harrier Pilots, Submarine Officers and Ratings, Medical Officers, Royal Marines, Engineers and Warfare Ratings. Resolving these manning issues is not simply about improving recruitment, retention or driving down the requirement for uniformed personnel - it is a combination of all three, and it is a tough job both acquiring and holding onto our people.

We must attract people from a shrinking recruitment pool, at a time when there is a buoyant economy and where the majority have little or no family ties to the Services. So, we are taking the Navy to its potential market and have put in place a number of initiatives to raise the Navy's profile and improve how we do our business. This includes taking a fresh look at our relationship with the Sea Cadet Corps, who play such an important part in keeping the Royal Navy in the public eye.

And we are seeing good results, recruiting in the last couple of years has been the best for a decade and we are achieving 97% of our recruiting targets. The number of young people from ethnic backgrounds joining the Royal Navy has also increased, albeit not yet enough, and we will maintain our efforts in this vital area, as we strive to reflect the society we defend and gain all the benefits of diversity.

These are very encouraging signs. The recruiters are doing well, our initial training Establishments are now full and losses during training are reducing. My attention is now firmly focussed on improving the Terms and Conditions of Service for our valued people because it is a significant factor that affects our ability to retain them and this year has seen some major quality of life improvements. The ability to measure Individual Harmony, through "Separated Service", will provide the means to accurately measure and tackle Individual turbulence. The Operational Welfare Package has been enhanced and is providing major improvements to the quality of life for those serving on the front line.

Ashore, improvements to Single Living Accommodation (SLA) remains one of our highest priorities and with a recent significant increase in funding, work is now on track to provide single en suite facilities to the majority of personnel. Last year also saw the completion of upgrades to Family Married Quarters in Portsmouth and Northwood and the start of a significant new build programme in Gosport. On the allowance front the RN continues to champion improvements to Single Married equity and this year has seen a significant uplift in "Get you Home (Stability Assistance)" Warrants. Alongside these enhancements it is also important to remember the Royal Naval Charitable organisations and the considerable contribution they make to the quality of life for our sailors. Last year the Sailor's Fund and Fleet Amenities funds paid over £800,000 in grants to ships and establishments for a variety of projects.

Meanwhile, implementation of the recommendations of the Defence Training Review has progressed on a broad front since the findings were announced in March 2001. Alongside this work, the Naval Recruiting and Training Agency's rationalisation of the training estate, has resulted in the creation of an Integrated Maritime Warfare School (IMWS). Established earlier this year, at HMS COLLINGWOOD, the word "integrated" is important, as the IMWS will encompass, for the first time, the totality of warfare and weapon engineering training for both Officers and Ratings. We have also made considerable progress in encouraging individual personnel to better themselves. The Learning Force Initiative has never had a higher profile, with National Vocational Qualifications, In service degrees and Modern Apprenticeships now in place and Chartered Institute of Professional Development

accreditation is being piloted for established career professionals from WO to Captain.

Alongside Personal Development, we are also working very hard to provide better Career Management for our sailors. A highly successful initiative has been the establishment of Regional Drafting and Career Advisors in each of the Base Ports and Au Stations who working alongside the Divisional System, offer individual career and drafting advice to balance the needs of the Service with those of our sailors and their families. These offices will be further enhanced as they evolve into Personnel Support Facilities at the waterfront, including training, education and recreational amenities.

But despite all these improvements, it is clear that our present manning regime and manpower structures are struggling to cope with the demands of a World Class 21st Century Navy. TOPMAST (Tomorrow's Personnel Management System) has been set in place by the Navy Board and aims to put this right by providing a flexible and responsive Manpower system that will deliver the Manpower Component of Operational Capability, whilst providing attractive, well managed career opportunities and, importantly, a better quality of life for our people and their families by reducing disturbance and providing a greater freedom of choice.

You will read more of TOPMAST later, but the radical approach it has taken underlines the very real need to realise the Strategic Defence Review's commitment to place our people and their families at the centre of all our plans. The priority of my Headquarters is to provide the Manpower component of sustainable Operational Capability today and for the foreseeable future - by Recruiting, Training and Retaining high quality Officers, Sailors and Royal Marines, who are ready, willing and able to meet the full range of Naval requirements at sea, on land and in the air from peacekeeping through to warfighting. The past year has seen a considerable progress on the personnel front, but we should not be complacent and must continue to evolve our policies to provide service conditions worthy of the 21st century. This is not change for change sake, but ensuring that the Royal Navy keeps pace with an increasingly variable modern world.

TopMast – Tomorrow's Personnel

Management System - is the vehicle for long-term strategic personnel management change in the Naval Service. It is a family of incremental projects which has short, medium and long-term goals that will affect all Naval Service personnel.

The Second Sea Lord, as the Principal Personnel Officer for the Royal Navy, set up the TopMast Programme and gave it the following Directive:

To review all aspects of Naval Service manpower to provide a flexible and responsive manpower system that will deliver the manpower component of Operational Capability while providing attractive employment and career progression for Naval personnel.

The Strategic Defence Review recognised a need to move people closer to the centre of Defence business; the TopMast Programme will do this within the Royal Navy. It is particularly important that we retain our people, who have been expensively and extensively trained and have gained valuable experience. To do this we believe that we need to better understand their individual needs and to increase their motivation to stay and progress. Overarching all of this, of course, is the need to maintain, and if possible enhance, Operational Capability.

So TopMast is a new approach to managing our future manpower systems that better meets the requirements of the Naval Service and recognises the needs of the individual.

The TopMast team formed up in September 2000,

and comprises a mix of Royal Navy and Royal Marines officers, Warrant Officers, Senior and Junior rates. Our challenge is to meet our operational demands AND provide a good quality of life for our people. We also need to tackle the inflexibilities

which our current stovepiping of trades and specialisations impose on our manpower deployment.

TopMast will change the culture of manpower management in the Royal Navy and, indeed, potentially beyond. It will affect everyone - changes brought about by TopMast will reach all ranks and all rates in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines. Some individuals will be affected in a shorter time-scale than others.

Traditionally we would have begun by looking at recent studies and initiatives and examined the lessons learned. We wanted to do more than tinker with current processes and procedures, and so Top Mast has taken a more strategic view of our manpower requirements and how best to meet them. We have taken a quantum leap into the future, to construct a strategic blueprint of the type of processes, organisation and infrastructure we will need to meet the long term future demands of the Navy.

We have used a number of sources including the Naval Strategic Plan which sets the direction of the Navy over the next 15 years and lays out the intended shape of the Fleet, the Future Navy Paper which presents the Strategic Concept, and the existing Naval Personnel Strategy. These recognise the need to develop a Versatile Maritime Force, able to contribute effectively during different types of conflict and to meet the Navy Board's goal of 'a world class navy, ready to fight and win'. Global reach and a suitably configured maritime force able to operate at different scales of effort are pre-requisites for success, as is the ability to change efficiently and effectively between different states of readiness. The enabling concept is Swing which has a number of key components. "Swing" requires adaptable platforms, trained to undertake a range of mission types which can be reconfigured to suit strategic, operational or tactical imperatives.

Our current manpower system, with its constraints and inflexibility, is not equipped for this concept. We need a system which can be described by words like versatile, adaptable, responsive, reactive, and flexible.

We have studied the comprehensive work carried out on demographic trends which tells us that we will be competing in an ever decreasing recruiting pool. To recruit and retain young people we must offer attractive career options, and we must look after them once they have joined. Young people today have very different aspirations and

expectations from those we had when we joined and we must be able to meet these needs or we will fail to recruit and retain the quality people we need.

This strategic blueprint is more than just a long term vision statement. It is the people component of the Future Navy strategic concept and also provides the vehicle to deliver the people pillar of the Naval Strategic Plan. It is the blueprint which sets the targets for the high level plan for the TopMast Programme.

From our strategic blueprint, the TOPMAST team has developed an incremental programme of projects to move us forward. We know that, to a greater or lesser extent, the current manpower management system is failing to deliver, and this is illustrated all too clearly by high levels of gapping, a rapid turn-around of personnel (known as 'churn') and high Operational tempo, all of which combine to place excessive pressure on too many people and their families. This damages Operational Capability, and our men and women in the front-line are over-stretched and over-stressed.

Until now the Navy has not been able to measure the effect of Operational tempo on individuals. The introduction of Separated Service has given the TopMast Programme the opportunity to de-latch unit Operational tempo from individual personnel tempo. Separated Service will introduce the mechanism for recording the time an individual spends either at sea, alongside in a ship, away on course, on leave or wherever. The measurement of Separated Service will, therefore, allow us to establish a process to guarantee a period of time in base area for each individual. This cannot be done with current manning levels in ships and submarines, without creating extensive gapping or changing the Operational tempo. To meet the current Operational tempo requirements of the Unit and the Personnel tempo needs of the individual will therefore require an enhanced manning regime for certain skill levels (ie more people than there are billets in the Scheme of Complement). This is the TopMast Squad System, which the Navy Board has directed should be introduced into the Surface and Submarine Flotillas for all Able Rates between October 2002 and April 2004.

The TopMast plan is that when an enhanced manning regime is required, ships will operate a squad system in a fashion similar to a top sports team. In simple terms, each operational unit will be

complemented with a higher number of people than there are billets to be filled. The precise number will be calculated so that a unit can always deploy with a full team whilst leaving some ashore to meet guaranteed harmony, leave, training and augmentation requirements.

The Squad System is, however, only one component part of the TopMast Programme. It will also include the minimum time ashore which would otherwise, under the current system, come from a shore draft. In order to achieve this greater stability and continuity in operational units there will be fewer dedicated shore drafts for Able Rates, time in base area will be achieved within the draft to operational units.

There will be no longer be a manning and training margin. People currently placed in the margin will now be contained within the manning regime and be the responsibility of the employer at the Waterfront. This will mean that there will be increased delegation to the Commanding Officer of the front line unit: no longer will the manpower be 'owned' by ZSL. The CO will deploy his Squad to ensure that his unit is fully manned and that individuals receive their guaranteed entitlement under Personnel Functional Standards. This will mean better use of our people and will align authority, responsibility and financial accountability for manpower.

Implementation of the TopMast Squad System needs more manpower in the front line, in which case we need a better handle on the requirement for uniform personnel ashore. Incorporating the former minimum time ashore into the TopMast Squad System means that jobs ashore will no longer need to be filled by uniformed personnel for the sole reason of delivering MTA. They will be filled by uniformed personnel only if the job has a direct link to OC, based on a set of core criteria established during the Strategic Defence Review.

The premise is, therefore, that the employment of military personnel should be demand led and based on the delivery, development and sustainability of Operational Capability by personnel who have Operational Capability experience, and not for harmony reasons.

Proposals for the introduction of similarly flexible manpower management systems for Able Rates in the Fleet Air Arm, and Marines, as well as exploring the scope for leading Rates are being considered by the Navy Board in Summer 2002.

Looking to the strategic element of the TopMast Programme, three Workstrands have been established to examine the development of the Navy's future manpower systems, to meet the Navy Board's aspirations for a Versatile Maritime Force in 2015 and beyond. This will encompass the manning of, amongst other units, the CVF, Future Surface Combatant, the Joint Carrier-Borne Aircraft, T45 and ASTUTE. These Workstrands are being lead by DCINCFLEET, COS2SL and ACNS and are avoiding a prescriptive approach in order to allow the exploration of the widest range of possibilities in order to

provide the competencies and skill sets required, as well as their underpinning manpower management structures and coherence with wider Defence plans. This work will encompass a broad range of stakeholder involvement and the results will be reported to the Navy Board in Spring 2003.

Regional Drafting and Career Advisers or RDCAs were established between May 2000 and May 2001 in Portsmouth, Devonport, Faslane, Culdrose and Yeovilton. A Warrant Officer and a senior Chief Petty Officer from various specialisations man each office. Offices are also planned for CTCRM and RAF Cottesmore Wittering in late 2002 and 2004 respectively. The Royal Marines office will support a single mobile Warrant Officer currently based at Whale Island.

The RDCAs are part of the Ratings' Career Management Organisation within the Naval Drafting Directorate (better known as Dralty) and their role is:

To provide career management, drafting advice and guidance to all ratings and to act as a link between ratings and the Naval Drafting Directorate on matters relating to drafting and career management.

Career Management is concerned with matching the aspirations and abilities of individuals with the manpower deployment requirements and priorities of the Service. It could be argued that the RN has been managing sailors' careers on these terms for centuries through the divisional system. However, it has not been until more recently that human resources and career management have assumed greater emphasis. In the wider world, the trend has been for employees to play a greater part in the management of their own careers according to their aspirations, and the employer's role has been to provide access to information, through various

media, to enable them to do so. This shift in emphasis has been recognised by the RN, and the RDCAs have been developed as one such medium.

In effect, they are an extension of the Naval Drafting Directorate into the front line or, literally, Drafty at the Waterfront. Manned by ratings and working for ratings, they offer impartial drafting and career management advice on a wide range of issues and not just when an individual may expect to be drafted to sea, although this is one of the most frequently asked questions. Designed to complement the divisional system, they do not actually draft ratings themselves. By far their greatest benefit is their accessibility. The offices in Portsmouth, Devonport and Faslane are adjacent to the waterfront and to unit administration centres in Culdrose and Yeovilton, so customers do not necessarily need an appointment to receive comprehensive, unhurried, personal and impartial guidance. The staff are pivotal to the continued popularity and success of the RDCAs and, in addition to their training with regard to drafting and promotion procedures, their experience is the most valuable commodity.

RDCAs represent a rich seam of advice and they are able to provide answers to most questions, from the routine, 'When will I be promoted to the more obscure', 'How can I transfer to the Canadian Navy?'. With over 12000 interviews conducted to date, the RDCAs are proving to be extremely popular and, when it comes to career management, today's self-motivated and ambitious ratings now expect nothing less.

Career management has always been a less than precise business - yet it underpins everything we do. Squaring the needs of the Service with the individual's professional aspirations and personal circumstances is akin to a game of 3-dimensional chess, and that is the task of the uniformed and civilian appointing team responsible for about 6,500 officers.

Career Management

What are the key factors? First, not enough people. Nothing new there, but the cuts in recruiting in the mid-90s meant that we live with the fact that not enough young officers stepped on to the escalator and we now have a shortage at the junior Lieutenant Commander level. We manage this by adjusting the length of appointments, by extensions of service and since 1996 by the use of Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) personnel, some 170-plus officers. It reflects our increasingly flexible approach to employment.

Secondly, there has been a major increase in the demand for new jobs to be filled at short notice which reflects the pace of organisational change across Defence.

Thirdly, at Captain level and above a significant number of jobs are now competed for between the 3 services and the Civil Service and this tends to be with less than 6 months notice. Lately, the augmentation requirements to meet our increased operational commitments in the wake of September 11 has added to the pressure. But the good news is that the Recruiters have been successful and junior officers are now join-

ing the trained strength in increasing numbers.

Promotion System

These are some of the constraints, but back to the chess game. We have an enviable reservoir of talented officers and fundamental to their career management and promotion is the quality of our appraisal process. The S206, of fond memory (or not!), has now been replaced by the In-Service Officers' Joint Appraisal Report (OJAR). Introducing it has been a major undertaking. Like the new/old S206 it is an IT based system and so the transition for the Naval Service has not been as great as for the Army. It has however required a great deal of hard work and ingenuity to bring it into service, but reports can now be e-mailed from sea, and such reports have been used by promotion boards for the first time this year.

Separate promotion boards are convened for each branch and rank, and the membership is drawn from across the Naval Service. Of the 3 members on each board, one is always from another branch to provide an independent voice. The promotion targets are set each year by Director Naval Manning, who takes into account the future branch requirement and planned and voluntary retirement rates.

Plenty to keep us occupied. But when the moves which the Appointer has thought out on the board have come to fruition, and the service requirement and the individual officer's aspirations have been met, then it is immensely satisfying. But then Snodgrass breaks his leg and .

You will probably by now be fairly familiar with the term Diversity being bandied around with increasing frequency these days. The Naval Service Equal Opportunities Policy and Action Plan 02/03 certainly introduce the notion of diversity and you may have heard the terms Equal Opportunities (EO) and Diversity being used together and interchangeably. If you are still grappling with the meaning of such terminology you are not alone. Some feel that the term diversity is academic and simply "old wine in new bottles". Others see Diversity as the panacea to improving performance of personnel, and thus business success. Those who recently read CIPD's "Personnel Management" magazine will be familiar with headlines such as "Diversity - the key to improving human capital - and competitive advantage". So "fab" or "fad" what will Diversity do for you? The Second Sea Lord sees Diversity as an opportunity that can assist him in delivering his mission to man the Naval Service, it is on his list of key factors. To him it means two things:

- Recruiting more people who meet our standards
- Retaining more people with the right qualities, and therefore getting a better return on our investment

This can be achieved simply by demonstrating fair play, by ensuring that everyone is treated with respect, and by taking a bit more time to get more out of every individual. However, 2SL does not

want the "D" word to be seen as just another initiative. Diversity in civilian terms is to do with maximising the value added by human resources. This is done by playing to an individual's strengths whilst also developing and improving areas which are weak. This requires each person to be managed individually for his or her personal needs (similar to the service provided by Appointers). The style of management respects the individual and ensures that they are treated fairly and with dignity. All these "new" ideas should already be covered under good leadership and the military ethos, and are very evident in a Divisional or Regimental system that is laut and caring. Diversity is not therefore a marginal policy for women and ethnic minorities, but the translation of the best practices of leadership and the military ethos. However, there is not too much cause for self-congratulation because it is clear in feedback and analysis from a range of tools (Continuous Attitude Survey, Notice Giving Survey, Complaints database Supportline) that not all our leaders have fully grasped what this means.

So what is the difference between EO and Diversity? EO is simply about compliance with legislation, for example the Race Relations Act states that discrimination against a person on grounds of race is illegal. The Naval Service EO policy identifies the specific minority categories against which unlawful discrimination shall not occur. Diversity policy says that if you treat all your people fairly and with respect, they will work harder and remain

genuine all-rounders. But no team performs well if one player feels excluded, or if some team members think that one member is not pulling their weight.

At its simplest therefore, Diversity merely confirms that people are different. Managing diversity turns that into a benefit by creating a working culture that respects and harnesses those differences. It moves beyond an equal opportunities policy that complies with the law, to one that encourages people from different backgrounds and cultures, and with different perspectives and abilities.

loyal. It recognises differences in people's abilities and needs, but believes that the sum of those abilities improves the performance of teams. That makes it more than worthwhile to work on overcoming individual weaknesses. EO policy says that some minorities have equal rights, i.e. to education, training, appointments etc. Diversity policy would say that notwithstanding those rights, all people have different needs, dealing with these makes the individual happier and more productive. EO policy gives minorities an opportunity to challenge inequality through the courts. Diversity policy is the leadership ethos that naturally inclines towards fairness for all, recognises inequality and tackles it wherever it occurs.

Diversity management is a positive activity and can be far reaching. It is about "flicking the right switches" to motivate an individual. It already happens in many units, but there is more work to be done. Harassment and bullying harm the victims of that behaviour, and it affects the attitudes and behaviour of all those who witness it, or hear it going on. A team is made up of people with different abilities and strengths, for example a football team needs strikers and defenders. There are few

advantage. So while EO is about ensuring that minorities are not treated less fairly than the majority, Diversity is about recognising that people are different, but that good management can help them to reach their full potential, making them more useful members of their own team.

Many of you will say that this is just good leadership and that good management and ensuring fair play is an integral part of the Service ethos. They would be absolutely right. We in the Armed Forces invented this sort of leadership, and it is only now that industry is picking up its benefits. But it does not just happen, and it takes a positive effort to continually evaluate our own attitudes and behaviour, and that of our sailors. Given the existing challenges facing the Armed Forces together with the scale and pace of change imposed by political, social, economic and technological developments, a culture that encourages creativity, that allows ideas to flourish, and in which individual ability is recognised and rewarded, is clearly an opportunity to be seized. So to our civilian friends Diversity is a new and delicious wine in smart bottles, to us it is a rather fine vintage that we have always had in the cellar but sometimes forgotten to drink.

The In-Service Operational Welfare Package (OWP) was implemented in April 2001 to significantly improve the level of welfare services available to deployed personnel.

Following a major review in 1999, it was recognised that the provision of adequate welfare support for personnel deployed on operations is a significant contributor to the maintenance of morale and the moral component of fighting power. The most significant element of the review was the change to the definition of 'operations', for welfare support purposes, to include all operations, maritime deployments expected to last 2 months or more outside UK waters, and other military deployments expected to

last 2 months or more outside North West Europe.

Whilst OWP policy is set by MOD SPPol, implementation of the package is the responsibility of the PIHQ J1 staff and Front Line Commands. For single Service operations or deployments, provision of OWP falls to the relevant Personnel staffs, for example Fleet N1 implements OWP for all personnel operating in the maritime environment. Whether a joint or single service operation, OWP services are provided through a number of different Service and civilian (contracted) organisations and agencies. J1 and N1 staff carry out an intelligent customer function

liaising with contract managers, project teams and programme staff to co-ordinate activity, and ensure timely delivery of OWP to front line units



time per week. Calls from sea are made via Mentor, Mini-M Initiator or Iridium phones as appropriate to the platform. Calls are however, subject to Uncon and Operational restrictions. In many countries, the Paradigm cards may also be used ashore during port visits, via an 0800 number.

b. Live-Blues both ways and Concessionary Parcel Rates. Entitled personnel have access to free blues and the BEPO Economy Parcel Service.

c. Publicly funded Newspapers/Magazines. Units select a package of newspapers and magazines, which are despatched from UK on a regular basis, via the BEPO mail system. Units may also allocate a proportion of their per capita allowance for local purchase, if visiting a location where large numbers of english newspapers are available.

d. Publicly funded books. Library books are provided to units by the Ships' Library's Officer on a monthly basis.

e. Publicly funded laundering of uniform clothing. In addition to the Crown laundry entitlement personnel in receipt of OWP, and serving in a ship with a World Wide Laundry Service contractor, receive a monthly entitlement of up to 4-1 in temperate climates and up to 4-6 in tropical climates.

f. E-mail. Where available, each member of the ship's company may transmit and receive one message per week, this may be increased at the CO's discretion if circumstances permit.

g. E-Blues. The E-Bluey system allows family and friends to log on to a web site (www.bfpo.org.uk) and type a text message of up to four pages to Service personnel on operations.

h. Communications Infrastructure. A rolling programme is in place to increase the number of Mentor lines available in all SCOT fitted ships.

i. TV. The greatest challenge facing the OWP team at present is provision of enhanced TV Services to units at sea. The aspiration of seagoers for access to real time TV at sea is acknowledged and fully understood. It is essential however that upgrades and enhancements can be sustained, supported and applied as equitably as possible across the Fleet. Although there are no quick fixes, a number of initiatives are in place, including the Near

Real Time TV project which should come to fruition during the next year, as well as longer term plans to provide real time TV to all platforms.

j. Fitness Equipment. Equipment is now updated and replaced at public expense, in a rolling programme administered by the Fleet Physical and Adventurous Training Officer.

OWP for Submariners

The difficulty of submariners accessing all elements of the standard OWP has prompted the development of a tailored package comprising: provision of hand held Iridium Satellite phones and telephone credits; more flexible provision of newspapers, magazines and books; laptop facilities for downloading e-mails; and where applicable (in the SSBNs) enhanced radio receivers.

OWP for Expeditionary Forces

Early in Exercise SMI SAREFA II, it quickly became apparent that neither the standard OWP for ships nor the land package was entirely suitable for expeditionary forces, moving between ship and shore. As a result, embarked expeditionary forces now receive initial phase elements of OWP quite independently from the ship. They manage their own portable phones, maintain their own card reporting system and when necessary are allocated separate BEPO mail addresses. Other follow-on phase facilities are also available on board as normal, whilst ashore these elements become available once a stable base is established.

Development of the Package

The first year of OWP is now under review by SPPol and PJHQ. Surveys and Focus Group meetings are planned to determine the success of the package to date and where changes should be made for the future.

In March 2001, as the White Ensign was slowly lowered for the final time at the decommissioning ceremony of HMS CAMBRIDGE, many past and present "Gunners" in attendance commented on the sad loss of the Wembury School, for so long their spiritual home. The closure of the Establishment necessitated a transfer of individual disciplines of Gunnery Training to other Naval Establishments, Close and Medium Range to HMS COLLINGWOOD and Naval Military Training, along with Board and Search Training, transferring to a new purpose built school at HMS RALEIGH. Little did they, the old guard of Gunners, know at the time that their alma mater was about to return to its original roots.

In May at HMS RALEIGH, the foundation trenches were dug for the new Naval Military Training School and simultaneously uncovered a historical mystery that, once solved, would prove to have taken Naval Military Training in the West Country full circle in 150 years.

The first West Country Gunnery School can be traced back to 1838, when HMS SAN JOSEF, a floating hulk, was utilised for gunnery training whilst moored in Plymouth Sound. In 1869, with the introduction of steam propulsion and the great change from wood to steel, the Admiralty assigned the redundant three-deck sailing ship HMS WINDSOR CASTLE to the Plymouth station and, renaming her HMS CAMBRIDGE, established the Devonport Gunnery School.

Sailors of that time, or Blue Jackets, as they

were affectionately known, were frequently landed to act alone or in support of the Army, as was the case in the Zulu, Egyptian, Crimean and Boer wars, in each case the Royal Naval Landing Parties acquitted themselves with distinction. To train the men at the gunnery school in their role as members of a landing party, the Admiralty leased some land known as 'The Field', situated on the present Trevel Range site, from a local land owner, Sir Reginald Carew Pole. Here the men would practise, amongst other disciplines, their rifle, pistol and cutlass drills, with a considerable part of their shore training concentrated on infantry and field gun skills. Drills and practices, inconceivable to today's modern sailor, were conducted ashore on the field, skirmishing, entrenching and forming hollow squares were just some of the infantry skills and tactics the sailor of the time had to master. The small arms ranges, relatively unchanged today, were utilised to hone the marksmanship skills of the sailors in the use of the Service rifles, Martini Henry and later the Lee Enfield, and pistols of the period.

The facilities at The Field were developed over time, and by the turn of the 19th century the land had been bought outright, with a drill shed, armoury, parade ground, canteen and bathrooms being built. The addition of a gymnasium, accommodation and a boiler house allowed the field to act as a stand alone facility by 1902. The gunnery school remained combined both ashore and afloat until 1907, at which time the accommodation of sailors moved from the floating hulk to the then

HMS VIVID, now HMS DRAKE.

In 1936-1940 the shore gunnery training facilities were extended to Wembury Point, with an AA Battery being established at Breakwater Fort. In 1948 the land at Wembury was purchased and further developed, a few years later, in 1956, the remainder of the shore facilities were relocated from Trevel "field" and elsewhere in the Plymouth area to Wembury Point, where the Naval Gunnery school was commissioned as HMS CAMBRIDGE. For very nearly fifty years, every Royal Naval Officer and Rating specialising in Gunnery passed through the gates of CAMBRIDGE at some time in their careers.

Owing to a combination of technological advances in Gunnery Training and the Estate Rationalisation Policy, it was decided to close HMS CAMBRIDGE and transfer the individual disciplines of Gunnery Training elsewhere by 2002. During the digging of the foundations of the new Lead Naval Military Training building at RALEIGH, some unexpected metal and brick foundations were uncovered that were not recorded on any site drawings. Only after an in depth investigation by RALEIGH's Military Training Staff was it discovered that these were the original foundations of "The Field's" gymnasium and drill shed. The discovery set in motion a search that ultimately solved the mystery but, more importantly, brought to light important naval historical facts that would have undoubtedly been lost in time, had it not been for the transfer of Naval Military Training to HMS RALEIGH. Additionally, it demonstrated to the researchers that Naval Military Training taught at the field in the 19th and 20th centuries had many similarities to that taught to the modern day sailor.

The new Lead Naval Military Training School may have strong historical links with the past, however it has been designed and constructed for the requirements of the Naval Military Training task of the 21st century. With a requirement to train large numbers of personnel, ranging from the most recent ratings to join the Service through to Commanding Officers, in a varied and wide spectrum of specialized train-

Career courses, Royal Naval New Entry training, Ship Protection Organisation courses, Northern Ireland training, Casco Baton courses, Basic rifle and pistol courses, Board and Search Pre Deployment training and a variety of training courses for other International Navies; the new facility needed to be absolutely fit for purpose.

The new building has the very latest office, administration and instructional facilities; they far outstrip anything previously used for Naval Military Training. These include 10 specifically designed weapon-training classrooms, as well as 7 fully fitted multi media classrooms, three of which can convert easily into a large 100 seat auditorium. Intrinsic to the heart of the design was the internal inclusion of a 12 lane Small Arms Trainer. This is a computer simulator used to train personnel in the safe use of the 5.56mm rifle and to improve the principles of marksmanship prior to live firings on the ranges. RN personnel were trained to shoot the Henry Martini Rifle out to a distance of a 1000 yards, whereas personnel are currently only trained to shoot the 5.56 mm Rifle out to 100 metres. As well as lesson preparation, rest and changing facilities for the instructional staff, students are well catered for with a large seated automat area. The Board and Search element of Military Training has similarly been carefully designed, fully incorporating changes gained through operational and customer feedback. With its enhanced instructional and search capability, added to a larger roping tower, three-tiered cargo repelling simulator and purpose built NATO standard helicopter landing pad, the future of Naval Board and Search training is indeed looking bright.

To complement the new building, the range and ancillary facilities supporting the NMT task have been completely modernised. The 10 lane, 600 Metre long

Left and above: Vintage Gunnery Training

range has been totally refurbished, to include an enhanced command, control and communication package and a fully automated, computer programmable, targetry system. Additionally, a new 6 lane, 25 Metre, Barrack range has been constructed adjacent to the old 8-lane Barrack range, enabling a greater number of firers to be trained on a live range. A second Small Arms Trainer and a .22 range is also part of the new School's real estate; situated within the main Establishment, these facilities will be utilised for the training of Sea Cadets and outside military units. The armoury has been substantially improved, both in terms of personnel, with the recruitment of a class one civilian armourer, and modernisation to accommodate the Navy's largest single holding of small arms, as well as preparation for the receipt of the upgraded SA80 A2 rifle, due in service 2005.

As a fitting dedication to so many "Gunners" of

with gunnery training in the West Country and be known as the Cambridge Building. As well as carrying a glorious name forward, it displays a clear vision and commitment to the NMT task that will allow our people to be trained to a world class

the past, who learnt their trade in the previous CAMBRIDGE, and in recognition of the strong historical links with Naval Military Training that was conducted in the exact spot of the new build, the new facility will bear the name that is synonymous

standard fit for a world-class navy of the 21st century.

Top and above training below

In July 2001, the Navy Board announced the creation of an integrated Maritime Warfare School (MWS) based on HMS COLLINGWOOD. The MWS integrates the training conducted at COLLINGWOOD, DRYAD, EXCELLENT and the Hydrographic and Meteorology Schools at DRAKE and CULDROSE. Additionally, the School is responsible for the Royal Marine School of Music in NELSON and P11 Training at TEMERAIR. The intention is for training at DRYAD to be moved to the COLLINGWOOD site by 2011 (and earlier if at all possible). Project WARSPITE (Maritime Warfare School Project Implementation Team) encompasses the development of COLLINGWOOD.

The MWS formed on 15 January 2002 under the command of the Commodore HMS COLLINGWOOD, now known as the Commodore Maritime Warfare School. Supporting him are 2 Captains, the MWS Chief of Staff responsible for future development and pan-MWS issues and the Captain Warfare Training who is responsible for training output. The latter is also Commanding Officer of DRYAD for moment. Within the next year further changes to the MWS structure will take place to prepare for a single integrated structure.

Of course every organisation has a Vision and a Mission. In our case they are respectively

Vision

To deliver World Class Maritime Warfare Training

Mission

To train Officers and Ratings for the Fleet, ready to Fight and Win

The Defence Training Review, Second Sea Lord's future manpower work encompassed within TOP-MAST and the Fleet First move of staff from Northwood to Whale Island, bound the Vision and Mission. Consequently, there are key issues at the forefront of the MWS future. We must prepare officers and sailors for the Fleet at a level of Operational capability that matches the need to be 'Ready to Fight and Win' and provide that output to quality and on time within our resource allocation. The focus on "Naval General Training" must be increased. We must develop future training equipment and operational training concepts through the doctrine laid down in the 'Future Navy' paper, and incorporate generic Computer based Training facilities commensurate with a our highly technical Navy. We will develop effective distance training in both Faslane and Devonport in order to maximise quality base port time for sailors in those home ports. And finally we must prepare now for the commissioning of HMS DARING, the first of the new Type 45 class.

The development of the COLLINGWOOD site has already begun. Short-term achievements since late last year have included the move from EXCELLENT of the Divisional School and the RN School of Leadership and Management functions. We have absorbed the Special Communications Unit from

Leydene, and have refurbished the Junior Rate Living accommodation. The new obstacle course is complete and in constant use.

More or less as the magazine goes to print we will have taken on Ceremonial Training, Navigational Training and Junior Officers Training, all from DRYAD. The new Navigational Bridge Simulators will be fully operational, and an integrated and combined Operator Maintainer Course will running. Senior Rates Single Living Accommodation (96 ensuite cabins) will be complete.

For those of you, and there are many, with a wary eye on tradition, the historic names of the past have been kept in use for the buildings: ENDEAVOUR (Navigation), ROYAL ARTHUR (Command Training), WARSPITE (Warfare Training), CUNNINGHAM (Team Training), GOULD VC and SEPHTON VC (Senior and Junior Rates accommodation respectively).