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Reagan Sailors Aim to be Warfare Qualified

By Aviation Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Kimani J. Wint

While underway on the Navy's only forward-deployed aircraft carrier, USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), Sailors push to become qualified in not only their job, but many other aspects of at-sea operations. One of the most important aspects is warfare qualifications, which prove a Sailors' understanding of the Navy's warfare areas.

For enlisted Sailors, there are three primary warfare qualifications that can be attained: Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS), Enlisted Air Warfare Specialist (EAWS) and Enlisted Information Warfare Specialist (EIWS).

One Sailor, Airman Daja Robinson earned both ESWS and EAWS qualifications in only a short time on board, and explained why these qualifications are important to career development.

"Earning both pins shows that you can do anything. If you really want it, then you can get it," said Robinson. "I'm undesignated, so the more I accomplish, the more competitive I am when it comes to choosing a rate."

But for many, the window of earning dual-warfare qualifications is coming to an end. Per Navy instruction, Sailors are now only able to register in the program if they are E-5 and above, have completed all in-rate qualifications and have qualified as a work-center supervisor.

Chief Aviation Ordnanceman Jarrell Duffie, Reagan's EAWS board chairman, explained the purpose behind the changes.

“The changes are a great move in the right direction,” said Duffie. “A lot of junior Sailors want to get qualified instead of understanding their actual job. Now everyone has an opportunity to focus on their parent trait, and be more diverse in their own rating.”

While Sailors E-3 and below are not eligible to enroll in the program, an E-4 with an early promote (EP) evaluation – who scored at least 50 or more on their last navy wide advancement exam – can become eligible to enroll in a warfare qualification program with the endorsement of either their Command Master Chief (CMC) or Command Senior Enlisted Leader (CSEL).

Gunner’s Mate 1st Class Anthony Jaramillo, one of the ESWS program coordinators aboard Reagan, explained how a Sailor should pursue a warfare qualification.

“Focus on your primary job first,” said Jaramillo. “That’s kind of where you have to learn to juggle your work and knock out your pins as well. On top of that, when you go through the trainings and walkthroughs, you’ll see parts of jobs that you wouldn’t normally get to. You get that insight and it gives you a better understanding that the ship needs every department.”

Though the warfare qualifications standards have become stricter, ultimately, the revisions to the programs will allow Sailors the opportunity to hone their craft, increase their technical proficiency and, when they’re ready, earn their pin knowing they are ready for any mission, any time.

Ronald Reagan, the flagship of Carrier Strike Group 5, provides a combat-ready force that protects and defends the collective maritime interests of its allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific.

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