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HELP NAME THE UPDATE!!!

We received great responses the past few weeks on renaming the Legislative Update. Some of the top finalists are; "Standing Watch," "Standing THE Watch," "Attention on Deck," "Legislative Watch," and "From Ship to Shore." Please feel free to email Anthony Wallis, the Legislative Director, at anthony.wallis@ausn.org with your recommendation. Legislative Update naming recommendations will be accepted until the end of May when a name will be announced.

AUSN ANALYZES NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE EQUIPMENT REPORT FOR FY14

Late last week, AUSN received from the Office of the Secretary of Defense- Reserve Affairs (OSD-RA), the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Report (NGRER) for Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) outlining the requirements and acquisitions for the Department of Defense (DOD) Reserve Components (RC's). The NGRER as mandated in section 10541 of Title 10, United States Code, identifies equipment crucial to the mission capabilities of the RC and recognizes shortages of mission critical equipment. The NGRER subsequently outlines how this equipment is being acquired and disposed of by DOD and its respective Services. In addition to standard information regarding RC presented in the NGRER, the Fiscal Year 2008 (FY08) National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) also introduced a reporting procedure for National Guard requirements as they pertain to the performance of Federal responsibilities. Once the Services and RC's have outlined their equipment shortages, funding for equipment shortfalls can be procured using National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriation (NGREA) funds or other Congressional add-on's to Appropriation or Authorization bills.

The top three equipping challenges identified by the USNR in the NGRER for FY14 continue to be

1) aircraft procurement, 2) Navy Expeditionary Equipment Procurement, and 3) Naval Special Warfare (NSW) equipment. Each of these components of the Navy Reserve requires the rapid replacement of steadily aging aircraft and equipment and the introduction of modern or updated platforms. Having outlined the needs of the Navy Reserve, additional equipment has been procured using NGREA funds which have increased from \$44.7 million in FY08 to \$75 million in Fiscal Year 2012 (FY12). In the recently passed Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) Continuing Resolution last March, \$90 million was included in NGREA for the Navy Reserve. While the United States Navy is comparatively well funded at just 9.8 percent short of its total RC equipment shortages, vast funding is still required to keep the USNR at full operating strength. This process of equipment procurement and modernization remains one of the most crucial demands for the Reserve Component hoping to bolster Navy Active Duty.

Details can be found by visiting [AUSN's Capitol Hill Blog on the FY14 NGRER](#).

SENATE ARMED SERVICES, SEAPOWER SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING ON USMC FY14 BUDGET

On 14 May 2013, the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC), Subcommittee on Seapower held a hearing on the Marines' Modernization programs. Witnesses included the Honorable Sean J. Stackley, Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition) and Lieutenant General (LtGen) Richard P. Mills, USMC Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration. Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), SASC- Seapower Subcommittee Chairman, opened the hearing by introducing the speakers and thanking them for their service. Senator Reed outlined the goal of the hearing as being focused on the developments with amphibious assault capabilities as well as the affordability of these capabilities in the Marine Corps. Chairman Reed was interested in how decisions would be made to ensure tactical and strategic effectiveness of amphibious capabilities along with cost and effects of sequestration. Senator John McCain (R-AZ), SASC- Seapower Ranking Member, acknowledged the budget as being short, stating that it achieved near-term readiness at the expense of the long-term. Senator McCain also noted that the shipbuilding goals for amphibious assault ships (LPD's, etc.) were not consistent with Strategic and readiness needs, expressing his concern about overall Marine Corps readiness. Marine Corps modernization funding represents less than 10 percent of the Marine Corps budget request for 2014. We must ensure the Marine Corps make good use of these scarce resources. The current fiscal situation has caused the Department of the Navy to assume significant risk in shipbuilding programs needed by the Marine Corps to accomplish their missions. For example, the Navy has identified a requirement for 38 amphibious ships to support the Marine Corps mission, but the shipbuilding plan calls for only 33 ships. That number of ships won't be achieved until the year 2025 and assumes a huge increase in the annual shipbuilding budget. The Navy is also taking on readiness risk with the current amphibious fleet, where only 22 ships available are fully mission- capable last year.

Secretary Stackley opened his testimony to the committee following Senator McCain. The opening remarks began by outlining the Marine Corps' mission. Secretary Stackley remarked on the importance of amphibious capability and programs right through studies and subject-matter experts, emphasizing that the Marine Corps modernization strategy includes sustainment of amphibious lift capabilities as outlined in the Department's 30-year ship-loading plan, replacement of the landing craft air cushion, or LCAC, ship-to-shore connectors, recapitalization of critical aviation capabilities from the short-takeoff/vertical- landing version of the Joint Strike Fighter, modernized attack utility

H-1 helicopters, the development of the heavy lift H-53K helicopter, modernization of the Corps' expeditionary command, control and communications capabilities with the development of the ground-air task-oriented radar, the common aviation command and control system, and the global communication support system Marine Corps, and modernization of the Marine Corps' ground combat vehicles, Marine Corps combat vehicles at the front end of much needed recapitalization. LtGen Mills then followed and acknowledged the choices the Marines had to make in making hard choices between budgeting and strategy. Fiscal prudence and operational return, LtGen Mills remarked, were important hallmarks. Acknowledging the JLTV and ACV as critical to sustaining combat readiness, LtGen Mills said that a study on high-water speed ability of amphibious vehicles was being conducted and that results would be out by October.

Senator Tim Kaine (D-VA) asked a question about the effects of sequestration on the procurement side and what's most vulnerable to the Marine Corps. Secretary Stackley noted it's going to have an impact on aviation, ground vehicles and shipbuilding and the Department of the Navy will have to look at these reductions from a balanced force capability standpoint. He noted that shipbuilding is a priority for the Secretary of the Navy, and so they Navy is going to be protecting that in the budget process, especially with LPD's, and another top priority for the Commandant of the Marine Corps is the STOVL version of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF). Secretary Stackley stressed that he'd like to see the F-35 program continue hold its place funding-wise in the budget as it continues its development. Keeping the development on track, a priority inside of the Joint Strike Fighter program is critical for keeping the funding for the development, but also performance inside of that development and test regime. The JSF STOVL version is the other priority for the Marine Corps.

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS, SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILCON/VA MARKUP OF FY14 MILCON/VA BILL

On 15 May 2012, the House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs (HAC-MILCON/VA) approved by voice vote the markup of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs (MILCON/VA) Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) Appropriations bill. This bill was approved providing \$147.6 billion, including \$73.3 billion in discretionary funding, for MILCON/VA. This amount is an increase of \$1.4 billion above the enacted Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) level from the Continuing Resolution (CR) that was passed last March. The bill also contains \$2.4 billion more than the FY13 level after sequestration, which affected military construction accounts, but not Veteran spending. In addition, the bill falls \$1.4 billion below the FY14 President's Budget (PB) request. Despite debate during the markup being described as, "no-drama," full HAC Chairman, Representative Hal Rogers (R-KY-05), stated, "During this time of difficult fiscal austerity, the subcommittee carefully went line by line, taking difficult but responsible steps to trim excess spending wherever possible. It's an extremely difficult year fiscally for us- the numbers we have to deal with are very difficult."

The HAC-MILCON/VA approved bill provides \$9.9 billion for military construction projects, a decrease of \$646 million below last year's FY13 level and a decrease of \$400 million from the FY14 PB request. Much of the reduction is attributable to savings from the privatization of family housing (a savings of \$106 million). These MILCON programs include large and small construction and rehabilitation projects on military bases within the U.S. and overseas. In addition, the bill also provides a total of \$147.6 billion in both discretionary and mandatory funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs. The total discretionary funding for Veterans programs in the bill is

\$63.1 billion, which is \$2.1 billion above the FY13 enacted level, with \$54.5 billion of this total provided last year in advance funding in the FY13 Appropriations bill. The HAC-MILCON/VA Subcommittee continues the tradition of Advanced Appropriations by including \$55.6 billion in advance for Fiscal Year 2015 (FY15). Some of the priority programs funded included \$344 million for a single Department of Defense (DOD) - VA electronic health record, proving \$155 million for the Veterans Benefit Management System, a paperless claims process system, as well as \$136 million for the Veterans Claims Intake Program, which aims to eliminate the paper-based system by digitally scanning existing paper health records. With 856,092 pending Veteran disability compensation claims as of August 2012, and an average wait time of 254 days, the VA has made it a priority to eliminate the backlog by the end of 2015. Overall, the bill is \$12.2 billion above the FY13 enacted level, but \$5.1 million below the FY14 PB request (a 3.3% decrease). Throughout the hearings leading up to the markup, DOD had emphasized the need for another round of Base Re-Alignment and Closure (BRAC), however Members of Congress had been reluctant in recent years to another BRAC round due to skepticism over cost savings, both in the long and short term from various studies by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) among many others.

Details can be found by visiting [AUSN's FY14 HAC-MILCON/VA Markup Analysis](#).

AUSN ON THE HILL

In addition to monitoring the markups and hearings on Capitol Hill this week, AUSN held many meetings with Congressional offices including staff meetings of the offices of Senator Kay Hagan (D-NC), Senator Ron Johnson (R-WI) and Representative John Kline (R-MN-02). In each of these meetings, subjects ranged from TRICARE concerns, the FY14 Budget and military compensation considerations, as well as Navy equipment needs. In the middle of the week, AUSN staff met with the Navy Sea Cadet Corps as they are currently facing devastating budget cuts to their important program for youth due to sequestration. A strong relationship is being established with them as AUSN works to help advocate for their program, drafting a new [AUSN Sea Cadet Corps Fact Sheet](#). AUSN staff also attended the Sailor of the Year (SOY) Celebration Ceremony at the U.S. Navy Memorial in downtown D.C. with Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON), Michael Stevens. Finally, as an associate member, AUSN participated in the first organizational meeting by the Veterans Day National Committee (VDNC) at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) this week to plan for this year's Veterans Day Celebration.

PRIORITY BILLS INTRODUCED THIS WEEK

S. 964 (*Official title yet to be released*). Introduced by Senator Claire McCaskill (D-MO), the bill would require a comprehensive review of the adequacy of the training, qualifications, and experience of the Department of Defense personnel responsible for sexual assault prevention and response for the Armed Forces. **S. 944**, (*Official title yet to be released*). Introduced by Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to require courses of education provided by public institutions of higher education that are approved for purposes of the All-Volunteer Force Educational Assistance Program and Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to charge Veterans tuition and fees at the in-State tuition rate

S. 938, (*Official title yet to be released*). Introduced by Senator Jerry Moran (R-KS), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to allow certain Veterans to use educational assistance provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs for franchise training.

S. 935, (*Official title yet to be released*). Introduced by Senator Al Franken (D-MN), the bill would

amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from requesting additional medical examinations of Veterans who have submitted sufficient medical evidence provided by non-Department medical professionals and to improve the efficiency of processing certain claims for disability compensation by Veterans. **H.R. 2002, Combating Military Sexual Assault Act of 2013.** Introduced by Representative Tim Ryan (D-OH-13), the bill would amend title 10, United States Code, to enhance assistance for victims of sexual assault committed by members of the Armed Forces.

H.R. 1988, Education Assistance to Realign New Eligibilities for Dependents (EARNED) Act. Introduced by Representative Rodney Alexander (R-LA-05), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to provide authority for certain members of the Armed Forces to transfer entitlement to Post-9/11 Educational Assistance to their dependents.

H.R. 1986, The Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) Deployment Act. Introduced by Representative Daniel Lipinski (D-IL-03), the bill would provide for the assignment of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners-Adult/Adolescent to brigades and equivalent units of the Armed Forces.

H.R. 1980, (Official title yet to be released). Introduced by Representative Tim Walz (D-MN-01), the bill would amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from requesting additional medical examinations of Veterans who have submitted sufficient medical evidence provided by non-Department medical professionals and to improve the efficiency of processing certain claims for disability compensation by Veterans.

H.R. 1971, Keep Faith with TRICARE Prime Act. Introduced by Representative John Kline (R-MN-02), the bill would direct the Secretary of Defense to provide certain TRICARE beneficiaries with the opportunity to retain access to TRICARE Prime.

In the advocacy section of the website, you can click on [Bills of Interest](#) to get daily revisions on Congressional action for all AUSN priority bills. We STRONGLY encourage you all to visit our [Advocacy](#) page, especially the [Capitol Hill Blog](#) which receives almost daily submissions when Congress is in session to see what AUSN is doing for you on Capitol Hill.

We also encourage you and your friends and family to visit the [AUSN FACEBOOK PAGE](#). If you have an account, please Login and “Like” us, which will allow you to see our [TWITTER](#) feeds and other updates from AUSN that shows us monitoring Capitol Hill on your behalf!

NEW LEGISLATIVE ALERTS

There was one new Legislative Alerts sent this week based on hearings and interaction with Congressional staff, as well as traction on the issue. When these alerts are sent to your email, please click on the TAKE ACTION link that is at the top of the alert email to send a letter response to your Members of Congress. If you have not seen them, please go to the [Legislative Alerts](#) section on the AUSN webpage and/or check your e-mail for the following alerts which were titled:

Legislative Alert #113-13: SUPPORT H.R. 32 & S. 734, Military Surviving Spouses Legislation

NEXT WEEK OUTLOOK

Next week Congress will be in session, and it will be a busy week for the House Armed Services Committee (HASC), as their Subcommittee’s markup the new Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), currently in the form of H.R. 1960. AUSN also has a few Pentagon meetings scheduled as well with the Office of the Chief of Navy Reserve (OCNR) as well as the Navy’s Office of Legislative Affairs (Navy-OLA). Both meetings will

discuss current FY14 priorities and collaborative efforts. Lastly, AUSN will be participating in a briefing next week by industry partners on Capitol Hill on the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) program and working with members of Congress.

AUSN LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT SEEKING LEGISLATIVE LIAISON VOLUNTEERS FOR 2013

AUSN has received numerous volunteers for the Legislative Liaison program and is grateful for everyone who has thrown their hands up to help in our grassroots efforts in the states. AUSN's Legislative Director and National Vice President of Government Relations have spoken recently on our current volunteers and are finalizing details which will be released before the end of the month. The program officially launched on 1 April 2013 and we have already had our volunteers out in the field engaging their Members of Congress in their state and district offices.

However, AUSN is still seeking TWO VOLUNTEER AUSN MEMBERS per state, (PARTICULARLY to fill remaining gaps from Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia and Wyoming) to act as AUSN Legislative Liaisons and meet with their Members of Congress AT LEAST TWICE a year, preferably once in the late Spring and once in the early Fall. The goal will be to have AUSN Members engage their Congressional Delegation and report to the Legislative Director at the AUSN Headquarters on what transpired and what they need. AUSN Headquarters will provide necessary copies of Legislative Alerts, Fact Sheets, Priorities/Objectives Cards and any other information in preparation for meetings upon request.

To qualify for being a 2013 AUSN Legislative Liaison, you must;

- Be an Active AUSN Member (and be a permanent resident of State you wish to liaison with)
- Be willing to meet with your Senators' offices TWICE a year (which have District offices throughout your State)
- Be willing to engage with at least ONE House Member District office TWICE a year
- Report to AUSN Legislative Director, Anthony Wallis, and/or the NEW National Vice President of Government Relations, RDML Robin Graf, USNR (Ret), on meetings and important highlights via e-mail
- Stick STRICTLY to FEDERAL issues of concern (AUSN Priority Card) to AUSN that are nation-wide and benefit all members of the Navy community

IF INTERESTED, please contact AUSN'S Legislative Director, Anthony Wallis, at anthony.wallis@ausn.org and copy RDML Graf, at grafrl@cox.net.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/CONCERNS

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