

Interview with



RDML Jeffrey A. Lemmons

Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve

Vice Commander, Naval Air Forces



NRA: *Admiral, please give us your view of how Reserve integration is proceeding in the aviation world and a little about Naval Aviation Enterprise.*

RDML Lemmons: As we implement Active-Reserve Integration (ARI), our Reserve squadrons have become relevant and integral parts in the Navy's Fleet Response Plan. We are no longer operating independently but are in harness and part of the Navy's overall readiness production; in other words,

everything we do either produces readiness for the fleet or increases our Reserve Component (RC) surge readiness capability. Each Reserve aviation community is aggressively

“As long as I have been in the job . . . there has not been any pushback [from the Active Component] on any good idea.”

The following comments were provided by RDML Jeffrey A. Lemmons in response to questions posed to him by the Naval Reserve Association's Executive Director, RADM Casey W. Coane, USN (Ret). The Naval Reserve Association expresses its deep appreciation to RDML Lemmons for his continuing support of the Association and the Navy Reserve.

working to become more integrated with the Active Component (AC) to the degree that combatant commanders are no longer concerned whether a Reserve Component or Active Component aircrew is participating because our crews are qualified to fleet and theater requirements. The CNAFR mission is to train the fleet, move the fleet, and when needed, surge to the fight; and we do this every day across our force. The migration from a strategic Reserve to an operational Reserve force has increased Reserve aviation's role in the day-to-day requirements as defined by Combatant Commanders and Navy Component Commanders and has placed our sailors and equipment where most needed.

The Naval Aviation Enterprise is the totality of all things aviation. All of the people, equipment, and resources are aligned under a single process owner, VADM Jim Zortman,

and respond to a common fleet metric of aircraft Ready For Tasking (RFT). Each squadron is responsible to generate the exact level of readiness required for the delivery of the Fleet Response Plan and have an entitlement of resources to manage. NAVAIR, AIRLANT,

and CNAFR are aligned to that end and participate in an enterprise governance under the oversight of the Air Boss and the NAE Board of Directors, of which CNAFR is a member.

NRA: *When I visited RDML David Anderson at Fleet Forces Command and was briefed on his zero-based review project, I got the impression that when it came to Reserve squadrons, there was no zero-based review. Is that correct, and if so, why not?*

RDML Lemmons: The squadrons actually were included in the zero-based review (ZBR). Aviation ARI was essentially the analysis behind the ZBR for Naval Aviation RC squadrons. The difference is that the ARI road map was determined just before the ZBR began, so CNAF included that analysis and resulting savings in endstrength as the aviation input in the overall ZBR.

NRA: *Can you expand a bit more on the ARI plan and how it is affecting our squadrons?*

RDML Lemmons: It is tied to very specific events. A lot of this is tied to some very real pressures. Take the P-3 community for example – shortages of airframes, the war, and the flight hour expenditure that is flying the wings off these airplanes. When your country is at war, and there is a limited amount of an asset, and the only way to provide the

“We have bought a Navy to fight one kind of war, and we find ourselves operating a Navy in a very different kind of war.”

services to the troops in contact is to bring all the assets you can marshal – it’s the right thing to come to the dance.

NRA: *What is the single biggest challenge facing Naval Aviation?*

RDML Lemmons: Our Navy faces the reality of an inventory of aging aircraft coupled with extremely high replacement costs for these platforms. For the first time in our Navy’s history, the average age of its aircraft is greater than the average age of its ships. In a budget-constrained environment, it is extremely challenging to procure the funding to modernize fully and replace our various aircraft with skyrocketing costs.

NRA: *What would you say are the real success stories that our readers should know about?*

RDML Lemmons: Over the last few years, Reserve personnel have augmented the Naval Aviation Training Command (CNATRA) and now consistently account for 12 percent of production as they train new pilots to become fleet aviators. Additionally, Reserve personnel have augmented Fleet Replacement Squadrons in a similar manner, training pilots and Naval Flight Officers in the F/A-18 Hornet, S-3 Viking, and EA-6B Prowler, P-3 Orion, E-2 Hawkeye, and MH-60S. Our enlisted aircrew and maintenance folks are renowned for their professional competencies and are in demand throughout the fleet; and this is especially true regarding our great FTS experts.

We have made real progress implementing ARI as well. I recently signed a memorandum of agreement with Commander, Patrol and Reconnaissance Group to define how P-3 Fleet Response Units (FRU’s) will operate in the ARI environment; and now, Reserve VP aircrews are flying over-land combat missions. Other Reserve aviation communities are progressing toward the FRU concept as well. HCS-4 and HCS-5 have been operating in combat for the last three years continuously, and HSL-60 recently completed a six-month ship deployment coverage for the fleet. VFC-12 is converting to VFA-12 and taking on a Blue Air role; and VFC-13 has stood up a permanent det in Key West, FL. VAQ-209 covered an expeditionary deployment for the fleet in WestPac





and are likely in the rotation cycle again next year. VAW-77 provided continuous ABCC for JTF-Katrina; and our VR wing is making a difference in disaster relief for the tsunami, Katrina, and Pakistan earthquake victims while continuing to move the fleet to readiness events and deployment sites around the world . . . the list goes on and on.

VP-62 has sent four aircrews into the theater in CENTCOM flying real-world missions, and that's not been done before. They are in the rotation. They know their stuff. In the FRU, we inject veterans at a higher level of tactical understanding.

NRA: *Admiral, you mentioned “real progress implementing ARI.” What are the two or three near-future milestones in the ARI plan as it applies to CNAFR?*

RDML Lemmons: ARI will bring our RC squadrons into AC wing oversight for training and readiness by the end of FY07. For helicopters, HSL-60 will come under (AC) Wing operational control in October 2006, and HC-85 begins its transition to the MH-60S this summer. After the completion of the transition, HC-85 will become HSC-85 and operate under the same mission areas as the fleet.

Also in FY07, Commander Reserve Patrol Wing will disestablish, and the VP Fleet Response Units (FRUs) will be fully integrated into the Active Component Wing command structure.

In TACAIR, VFC-12 will become VFA-12 in FY06 and start assuming a Blue Air mission in addition to its traditional adversary mission.

Let's not forget VR. The AC disestablished some VRC squadrons in 1994 with the understanding that the Reserve Component (RC), through VR, would pick up these missions. Now, VR has grown to become fully half of all of CNAFR. Along with the VRC duties, VR has also assumed missions formerly accomplished by AC VIP P-3 aircraft (in Washington, DC; Sigonella; and, soon, in Hawaii), as well as supporting GWOT with forward deployed detachments and CONUS based aero-medical evacuation support for DoD with C-130s. VR provides an excellent example of how the RC can seamlessly and efficiently assume duties that were once AC requirements.

NRA: *Is your headquarters now completely relocated to NAS North Island, San Diego; or are you still a “headquarters in two cities”? What is the future there?*

RDML Lemmons: Currently, my flag is placed at NAS North Island where I have a small operating staff. My operations officer, aviation program managers, maintenance class desks, and Chief of Staff are still located in New Orleans (with a short stay in Millington to weather out Katrina); and I keep an office there, also. BRAC decisions have our staff in New Orleans until the staff is scheduled to move with Reserve Forces Command to Norfolk by FY09. Currently, the CNAF and CNAFR staffs are developing a plan to align CNAFR at that time for optimal performance within the Naval Aviation Enterprise.

NRA: *Do I understand correctly that ultimately your staff will relocate to Norfolk while you will maintain your office in San Diego?*

RDML Lemmons: We are currently working with CNAF to determine the best lay down for full integration of the CNAFR and CNAF staffs. CNAF itself operates as one staff through an enterprise governance with billets located in many places, such as San Diego and Norfolk. Over the next two years, we will determine the best location for each of our billets to support best the Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE). As we approach the time to execute the BRAC moves, we'll ensure that we obtain the appropriate authorization to meet the intent of Congress as well as to support the NAE.

NRA: *I understand that VFC-12 is going to become VFA-12. When will that take place, and what does that mean to its drilling Reservists?*

RDML Lemmons: The process is already in work. Both the aircrew and maintenance personnel have been training to the Blue Air mission and have done so with great success. However, the official designation change will not take place until October 2006. This change will now bring VFC-12 into the fold under TACAIR Integration (TAI) and Capabilities Based Integration (CBI) as another interoperable asset to the fleet. It means flight deck qualifications and surge readiness requirements for a previously sole adversary squadron.

NRA: *While we're on a tactical topic, what do you see as the future for CAG-20? When NAS Atlanta closes, where will they move?*

RDML Lemmons: Under ARI alignment, CVWR-20 will transition into a Tactical Support Wing (TSW) and will continue managing the training and readiness of its squadrons, operational fleet support, inventory management, maintenance and logistical support, as well as the oversight of AIMDs located at NAS Fort Worth and NAF Washington. BRAC has moved the TSW to NAS Fort Worth, and we are examining the timing opportunities for that move.

NRA: *Recently, we have lost VAW-78, the Fighting Escargots. Can you tell us what is ahead for the Nightwolves of VAW-77? Is their funding still provided by the war on drugs, and how secure is that going forward?*

RDML Lemmons: In addition to their homeland defense mission, VAW-77 continues to cover 100 percent in the Navy's commitment in fighting narco-terrorism by providing a minimum of 180 days annually of OCONUS support. FY05 successes include the confiscation of over 16,000 lbs. of cocaine with an estimated street value of over \$673M, and the arrests of 18 narcotic traffickers. VAW-77 does receive a portion of its funding specifically for the counternarcotics (CN) mission and will continue to do so as long as our political leadership directs. BRAC has realigned the Nightwolves to NAS New Orleans which will become their new home when BRAC funds become available.

NRA: *What is ahead for VAQ-209? How long will we keep those aircraft flying? This squadron has been a bright spot in Navy Reserve aviation for a long time, has it not?*

RDML Lemmons: VAQ-209 has been the quintessential example of ARI as they are routinely scheduled for expeditionary deployments. The squadron is currently slated to retain their EA-6B aircraft until 2012. With the implementation of proposed future product and airframe improvements, these aircraft will continue to maintain viability against real-world threats and allow VAQ-209 to extend their expeditionary mission capability out to 2020 and beyond.

NRA: *You seem to be saying that we will still have a VAQ 209 out to 2020. Is that the plan?*

RDML Lemmons: The Navy plan is to have organic Navy jamming capability today and into the distant future. EA-18Gs are coming on-line to provide that capability. I believe there is room in the production pipeline as well as a strong case to provide VAQ-209 with the new production aircraft. However, until the requirements are vetted and blessed, VAQ-209 will operate the Prowler through 2012 and perhaps as far out as 2020.

NRA: *I know that our VR squadrons have been doing yeoman work in the GWOT. Can you tell us about where they have been recently and how they are doing?*

RDML Lemmons: VR has a forward-deployed presence commitment of five aircraft. Our 15 squadrons rotate assets through Bahrain; Atsugi, Japan; and Sigonella, Sicily to ensure 100 percent coverage of Combatant Commander (COCOM) theater air logistics requirements. The VR Wing initially mobilized 227 Reservists in support of OIF/OEF and currently has 109 mobilized Reservists helping meet JCS DEPOD tasking. On an average day, there are 35 missions being flown in support of our Active Component Naval forces at home and deployed.

VR's contribution to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita relief efforts displayed exceptional speed and agility. Support missions commenced the day after landfall and continued into the month of October. Total Katrina support included 141 missions, 591 sorties, and over 970 flight hours. VR evacuated over 7,590 personnel and transported 2.34 million lbs. of cargo,



All Hands VR-58

including 1.4 million lbs. of humanitarian supplies. At one point, nine VR aircraft were engaged in New Orleans-Louis Armstrong airport evacuation efforts. On the 22nd of September, as Hurricane Rita approached the Texas coast, VR responded by flying 13 missions; evacuating 915 personnel, of which 556 were nonambulatory, elderly, or critical care patients; and transporting over 19,400 lbs. of cargo.

Most recently, VR has been directly involved in humanitarian aid to the Pakistan earthquake relief. A C-9 and C-130 detachment has thus far transported approximately 250,000 lbs. of vital food, blankets, and tents into Islamabad, Pakistan, for further distribution into the quake-affected areas. A dedicated VR asset will remain in theater until commercial channels are established.

NRA: *What is the future of our Fleet Logistics Support Wing (CFLSW)? Are there more squadrons or fewer squadrons as we go down the road? What is the C-40 delivery schedule going into the FYDP?*

RDML Lemmons: VR is the majority stockholder in CNAFR, and current demand for their mission exceeds capacity. Examples of this include the recent Sea Swap of the *USS Gonzalez* (DDG66) crew from Norfolk, VA, to Dubai, UAE, and return, combined with validated missions that are being regretted by NALO and JOSAC. We anticipate

requirements to continue exceeding capacity. Though the number of squadrons will remain constant, a few new developments demonstrate Wing's expanding capabilities and impact to the fleet.

One recent development is the Executive Transport Detachment (ETD) Hawaii aligning under CFLSW and commencing operations in the beginning of FY07. The detachment will fly and maintain one Gulfstream 500, replacing previous P-3 support of Commander Pacific Fleet.

Another is the alignment of five C-12 units/aircraft under the VR Wing to garner air logistics mission efficiencies. The C-12's fly CONUS and OCONUS missions in support of NALO and JOSAC.

Lastly, two AIMDs, AIMD New Orleans and AIMD Willow Grove, were also recently aligned under the VR Wing

mirroring the Active Component construct.

VR has transitioned three squadrons from C-9's to C-40's: VR-57, 58, and 59. Eight C-40's have been delivered to CFLSW with a ninth delivery scheduled for March 2006. The current FYDP has three C-40 deliveries scheduled for FY 2008 and one C-40 per year from FY 2009 to 2013.

NRA: *Can you give us a little background on the Reserve P-3 and helo squadrons being placed under the operational control of their respective Active Wing commanders.*

RDML Lemmons: Since 1 October 2004, Active Wing commanders have assumed operational control of the three Reserve P-3 squadrons (now called Fleet Response Units or FRUs) collocated at their respective sites. These Wing commanders are now responsible for operational scheduling and training of these Reserve aircrews as well as coordinating consolidated phased maintenance evolutions for Reserve aircraft. CNAFR remains responsible for administrative control of the FRUs, and a memorandum of agreement was recently signed by CNAFR and CPRG to clarify Active and Reserve responsibilities as this process matures.

We are actively implementing the helicopter ARI plan which encompasses transitioning from five to three squadrons by the end of FY07. The AC will assume operational control of the Reserve squadrons by October 2007 with the

disestablishment of Commander, Helicopter Wing Reserve and the embedding of a small number of RC billets in the AC wings. The Reserve helicopter squadrons will mirror the fleet in airframes, primary/secondary missions, and training matrices. This transition is taking place and is evident in the pending delivery of our MH-60S's in summer of 2006 and the approval of new mission and manning documents.

In both these communities, our FTS officers will integrate into the Active squadrons, wings, and groups as Operational Support Officers (OSO's) to assist in the training and administration of RC aircrews and equipment.

NRA: *I know that the Navy is executing a helicopter master plan. I've also heard that we are losing our HCS squadrons. Is there some good news on the rotary wing front?*

RDML Lemmons: Our HCS squadrons have performed magnificently, and their capability will now transition into the new fleet HSC community where their skill and experience will be available to the fleet in a new airframe and expanded mission. We are not losing the capability they have demonstrated so well over the past two years in the Global War on Terror. The Navy helo master plan is moving towards two airframes and two communities: the MH-60S forming the HSC community (formerly HS and HC), and the MH-60R forming the HSM community (formerly HSL). Fortunately, the HSC community is incorporating the mission areas our RC force has been performing. The RC will have two HSC squadrons, and the expertise we have developed in our HCS squadrons will have great benefit for the Navy's helicopter evolution.

NRA: *With about 50 percent of all Naval aviators going into the helicopter world, do three squadrons provide the right number of billets to capture that talent when those officers leave active duty?*

RDML Lemmons: Retention of helicopter pilots has traditionally been better than other communities. Our current three-squadron plan will cover the same operational support as we have in the past and will actually have an increased number of billets for Selected Reserve participation. Again, as in all our communities, we must consider the FRS squadron augment unit as part of the total helicopter operational support capability of the future. And, don't forget that fully half of VR, CNAFR's largest Wing, is manned by former helicopter pilots. With their fleet experience, these pilots transition

quickly into VR's fixed-wing aircraft and continue to serve the Navy on a daily basis. There will be no shortage of places for helicopter pilots to continue to serve their country within our Navy Reserve force.

NRA: *Admiral, as you know, I come from a patrol squadron background, as do you. When our NRA magazine last profiled the Naval Air Force Reserve in April of 2004, the VP community consisted of seven squadrons and forty-two aircraft. It is no secret that the numbers in both of those categories have been coming down as we transfer lower fatigue-life aircraft to fleet squadrons. If I am an AW2 drilling in one of our squadrons, what does my future look like?*



All Hands VP-65

RDML Lemmons: There will always be opportunities for hard-charging Sailors and Airmen. As the Reserve VP community reshapes, many Selected Reservists and Full Time Support personnel will have to make some tough decisions. There are three remaining VP FRUs that need qualified personnel, and each of these FRUs currently has openings. Additionally, CNAFR has other aviation communities that would benefit from the addition of these experienced and talented Sailors. In the end, there is enough work for all who are called to serve; and we will help to find the best positions available for our great service men and women.

NRA: *Am I correct that, with the decommissioning of our three squadrons this next year, our VP force will be down to the three Fleet Response Units? Are these units actually commissioned squadrons or has that status changed?*

RDML Lemmons: In the same way that a FRS is a squadron that supplies replacements to the fleet, a FRU is also a squadron that provides veterans to the fleet. These folks deliver both readiness production for fleet FRP events and surge capacity to meet emerging fleet requirements and are scalable from an individual crew, section, division, or squadron force element. Whereas replacements grow experience throughout an Active career, veteran skills stay trained and ready to deliver warfighting capacity to the combatant commander when desired. The Fleet Response Units, VP-62 at Jacksonville, VP-92 at Brunswick, and VP-69 at Whidbey Island are still commissioned squadrons. While that status will remain the same, their manning will change; and their chains of command will align to the Active Component Wings upon Reserve Patrol Wing's disestablishment. Additionally, the VP-30 SAU will provide additional opportunities for our VP veterans to serve.

NRA: *Admiral, I have heard stories about squadrons with personnel assigned but no flight hours to fly. Can you fill us in on what is happening here?*

RDML Lemmons: The maritime patrol community, Active and Reserve, has an aging fleet and is currently facing a severe aircraft shortage due to airframe structural problems. Many P-3's have been inducted into various aircraft depots for repair; but, in the meantime, there are not enough aircraft to support the 12 Active squadrons, VP-30 (the FRS), and the six Reserve squadrons. Three of the six Reserve squadrons have been targeted for disestablishment in the near future. Since these squadrons no longer have a role in the CNO's Fleet Response Plan, the aircraft assigned to these squadrons have been loaned to the three FRUs, collocated with Active squadrons, to alleviate the overall aircraft shortage. In short, we have shifted scarce P-3 assets to fleet concentration sites in an effort to mitigate a fleet-wide P-3 shortage. Flight hours have been allocated to crews preparing to deploy in both the Active and Reserve squadrons as a function of aircraft availability and measured fatigue life allocation. This problem should improve as more aircraft are returned from depot maintenance and are available for tasking. Compounding the issue is the lack of a budget this year and the

limited funding available in continuing resolution authority. This, too, should improve once the budget is received.

NRA: *Looking for good news in the VP world, I have heard that the Reservists assigned to VP-30 are doing well. What is going on there?*

RDML Lemmons: The VP-30 Squadron Augment Unit (SAU) was put in place to help VP-30 improve student throughput. In addition, Reserve maintenance personnel are augmenting the VP-30 maintenance department, bringing many years of P-3 maintenance experience to the squadron. The great value of the experienced veteran is a recognized and much-desired asset throughout the fleet, and our folks are doing amazing work at all of our FRS augment units. Currently, the Operations Officer and Safety Officer at VFA-106, the east coast Hornet RAG are FTS officers; and we envision similar opportunities throughout the Enterprise as relationships grow and talent flourishes.

NRA: *Turning to the Naval Air Training Command, this has been a growth area for some time now. Reservist flight instructors have been truly integrated in that community. Can you elaborate on the future for us?*

Note: *The NRA honors the Reserve Flight Instructor of the Year and gives the ARI Excellence Award to a VT squadron each year at the Spring Conference.*

RDML Lemmons: The Naval Air Training Command initiated Active-Reserve Integration (ARI) into each of its training squadrons by creating Squadron Augment Units (SAU) which fall under the squadron for operational tasking. Each SAU is composed of approximately 15 Selected Reservists (SELRES) and five Full Time Support (FTS) personnel. The FTS are in place to provide administrative support and command counsel on Reserve specific issues, while the SELRES bring a high level of experience and training command expertise. This combination traditionally accounts for close to 12 percent of the overall student production from the Training Command and has been an overwhelming success.

“We have aviators that participate across the spectrum [of warfighting] and are doing very well. And, they’re getting the leadership opportunities that they need to grow and mature.”

Rear Admiral Jeffrey A. Lemmons Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve Vice Commander, Naval Air Forces



Rear Admiral Lemmons is a native of Brownwood, Texas. He graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1979 and was designated a Naval Aviator in November of 1980.

In 1981, he reported to Patrol Squadron Two Three (VP-23) in Brunswick, Maine, deploying to Iceland, Spain, the Azores, Bermuda, and Sicily. He flew in maritime support for Operation Urgent Fury/Grenada Battle Group, Libyan, Syrian, and Nicaraguan surveillance operations. In September

1984, Rear Adm. Lemmons reported to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, DC, as a Naval Intern where he participated in global war planning, multiple theater wargaming, and joint service policy development.

Rear Adm. Lemmons received a Reserve commission in November 1985, and reported to Patrol Squadron Six Eight (VP-68) at NAF Washington, DC. He subsequently became the Commanding Officer of Patrol Squadron Six Eight (VP-68) in February 1996. After his squadron command tour, he has been assigned as:

- * Executive Assistant to the Commanding Officer, NR Reserve Patrol Wing Atlantic 0186;
- * Commanding Officer, NR CVN-71 0193 supporting *USS Theodore Roosevelt*;
- * Commanding Officer NR Naval Air Station Keflavik Iceland 0293;
- * Commanding Officer, NR Navy Command Center 106, supporting OPNAV N3/N5.

During this period he also served in the following extended active duty assignments:

- * Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) staff N88R, supporting the Director, Naval Air Warfare for programming and budget development;
- * Commander U. S. Second Fleet ASST C2W Officer during NATO Exercise Strong Resolve 1998;
- * *USS Theodore Roosevelt* Battle Group liaison officer to the Combined Air Operations Center, 5th Allied Tactical Air Force, Vicenza, Italy, during Operation Allied Force, the campaign to liberate Kosovo;
- * OPNAV Naval Operations Group “Deep Blue” liaison officer to the Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Pearl Harbor, HI;
- * Deputy for Mission Effectiveness, Navy Reserve Readiness Command Region Southeast;
- * Director for Fleet Readiness, OPNAV N43.

He has proudly served with shipmates who have earned four Meritorious Unit Commendations, the Joint Meritorious Unit Commendation, the Coast Guard Unit Commendation, and two Battle “E” Awards for excellence. He is authorized to wear the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal (3), Joint Service Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Kosovo Theater Medal, and the NATO Medal for Yugoslavia. He has completed the Naval War College and National Defense University Reserve Component studies curriculum.

Rear Adm. Lemmons has been a commercial airline pilot with American Airlines since 1987.

From an economic standpoint, the program saves \$2.79 million over a four-year period for the same level of Active Component (AC) support. Overall, the program has increased command opportunity within the Reserve Component, provided much needed direct support to an undermanned AC community, and has done it at a cost savings to the Navy. We currently have FTS officers in training squadron command, and this demonstration of ARI is a model for the future of the Naval Aviation Enterprise.

NRA: *I have heard that the Navy is considering outsourcing a lot of training command work to include all NFO training. How will that impact Reserve billets?*

RDML Lemmons: I can't comment to the legitimacy or level of outsourcing possibly being proposed. However, the Training Command Squadron Augment Units have proven their worth time and time again from both a productive and economic standpoint. Their contribution and success will be considered before talks of moving or removing those billets occurs.

NRA: *Do you think Reservists will ever enter the ever-increasing UAV community, or have they?*

RDML Lemmons: I think there is tremendous potential here for our Reserve personnel with aviation backgrounds to participate in this program. We have a real opportunity to use the expertise and experience of our force to operate UAVs from command centers both in CONUS and OCONUS. Additionally, as Navy forms its Total Force Readiness vision, capability and cost are elements of decisional analysis that do not preclude a Reserve Component solution.

NRA: *Admiral, a personal concern that I have for our future that affects both SELRES and FTS officers is leadership opportunities. As you know, CNO Mullen has made leadership one of his three focus areas. Prior to sewing on the big stripe, you wore the “Sheriff’s Badge” for*

aviation command at sea. That is a major leadership milestone in a Naval Officer's career. Where will we find those opportunities going forward? Squadron command is the crucible from which Naval Aviation leadership is born. Will we have that for our TACAIR and Maritime aviators? Will command ashore in the Training Command become a reality for both FTS and SELRES?

RDML Lemmons: I wholeheartedly agree that squadron command is a major leadership milestone; and, where it makes sense, we need to provide that opportunity for our future leaders in Naval Aviation. TACAIR remains relatively unchanged with CAG-20 (which will become the Tactical Support Wing) consisting of six squadrons. The VP and helicopter communities will each neck down to three squadrons; but, as mentioned earlier, they will all remain commissioned units. Our Fleet Logistics Support Wing supports the largest number of command opportunities with 15 squadrons.

A recent area of increased command opportunity is the Training Command. Two squadrons within the Naval Aviation Training Command have FTS built into their command rotations. As the Total Force continues to mature and we witness the successes we've seen within the Training Command, we may very well see the day where the right leader is selected to command opportunity regardless of

component . . . this is happening today in the fleet with Surface Warfare FTS officers in command of cruisers and DESRONS and is certainly worth further consideration for aviation.

NRA: *I'm sure that I have not touched on all that you would like to bring to our readers. Please answer the questions that I should have asked but didn't.*

RDML Lemmons: Only that we are exceptionally proud of the commitment and excellence of the 15,000 men and women of CNAFR. Each generation faces challenges in service, and the current day holds no difference. Budgetary, procurement, and wartime pressures are shaping the landscape for our all-volunteer force. These patriots have embraced the changes being made as part of the times of their service and are delivering readiness to the fleet each and every day with great skill and dedication. I hear often, from Active Flag Officers to hardworking Sailors on the deckplate, that the fleet could not perform its mission without its Reserve Component. Our CNAFR squadrons and personnel are out in front performing magnificently. There is a story of great contribution and achievement; and I am grateful for the opportunity to relay to you and this organization a portion of what they are doing to support, align, and integrate within our Navy. ↓



(L to R)
 RADM Casey W.
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 RDML Jeffrey A.
 Lemmons after the
 interview at NRA
 Headquarters.