

It's Time to Restructure Our Reserve Payment System

By CDR David Tyler, USN

Navy Reserve Sailors are increasingly tasked to perform work without compensation. A culprit in this encroachment of unfunded work is none other than technology itself. Advances in Web-based tools have eliminated the burden of performing functions at specified geographic locations. For example, it is no longer necessary to perform General Military Training (GMT), submit requests for orders, write fitness reports, and so much more at a Reserve Center. Without question, this has increased efficiency and reduced the demands of travel. However, the popular Internet tools have introduced a temptation to senior leadership that is too hard to resist. In many ways, this is a tribute to the “can-do” approach of good leadership; but it’s beginning to wear on the troops. To fulfill ever increasing training and administrative tasks, Reserve Sailors are routinely directed to “log-on” to tackle short-notice action items.

The Navy Reserve has implemented numerous changes to take advantage of the benefits of technology. The authorization to perform remote, off-site drills has been one such improvement. But, we need to continue the evolution, particularly in the way

we manage the accreditation and reimbursement for work performed.

If we want to implement effective business practices, we should adopt a business-like disbursement program. Federal employees currently use hourly increments for recompensing work performed. Each government employee is responsible for submitting a weekly time sheet that accounts for the work performed. And, in turn, every two weeks, they are paid for the number of hours worked.

The Navy should allow Reserve commands to manage their pay in hourly increments.

Commanding Officers are responsible for ensuring their commands are ready. Hence, COs should be authorized to control when and how work hours are used.

Each Sailor should be authorized 288 work hours. This is equivalent to the amount of compensation they presently receive; that is, (48 periods x 4 hours) for IDTT and (12 days x 8 hours per day) for AT. This improvement would cut down on short-duration, uncompensated work and give more flexibility to Commanding Officers for additional training efficiency. ↴