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THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF
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OFFICE OF CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS
OF THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

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Good morning, Mister Chairman and members of the Committee. I am Rear Admiral Greg Shear, Director, Ashore Readiness Division, Office of Chief of Naval Operations. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today concerning the Navy's responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act

The clear objective of the Navy's historic preservation program is to balance the Navy's current and future mission needs and our stewardship responsibility to the American taxpayer with our desires to preserve Navy heritage for future generations. We take great pride in our heritage, and the many historic buildings on our installations serve as reminders of the long and distinguished course we have charted. In this area the Naval Academy, the National Naval Medical Center and the Washington Navy Yard are replete with historic structures that are in active use today. The refracting telescope with which the moons of Mars were discovered in 1877 is still used for astronomical observations from its fully functional 1890s-era dome at the Naval Observatory. Our historic properties provide today's Sailors, their families, and our Navy civilians with a direct connection to their predecessors. These properties are also important to Navy retirees and veterans, and to citizens living near our installations.

Most of our historic properties are in full mission use, and symbolize the Navy for American citizens and people around the world. The Naval Academy campus, the main tower of the National Naval Medical Center at Bethesda, and USS *Constitution* each represent the Navy in their own way. The oldest dry-dock in the western hemisphere still faithfully performs its work at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. Our installations are filled with examples of historic preservation supporting and reinforcing the mission of a facility.

We take very seriously our statutory obligations regarding historic properties. We work with OSD, the other Services, and other agencies such as The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and State Historic Preservation Officers, and interested members of the public, to develop effective and efficient ways to balance our stewardship and fiscal responsibilities as part of our Shore Installation Management program.

The National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies, including Navy, to take into account the effect of their undertakings on properties on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NR), and to give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) a chance to comment on those undertakings. The NHPA does not mandate preservation, and Navy's mission is still the most important part of the facilities management equation, however, I will discuss a few examples that illustrate how we have enhanced both the Navy's mission and the Navy's history.

CASE STUDIES

Each case involves a National Historic Landmark (NHL) district, the most significant and extensive kind of resource type recognized by the Secretary of the Interior. Each contains properties that are important to the Navy and to the nation, and each has recently been the subject of consultation with SHPOs and other parties.

WASHINGTON NAVY YARD. The first example is the Washington Navy Yard (WNY), a few blocks from here on the banks of the Anacostia River. WNY was established in 1799 as one of the original navy yards, and was burned in 1814 when the British attacked Washington. WNY's location relatively far from the ocean led the early nineteenth century Navy to shift its mission from ship construction and repair to ordnance development and manufacture. From then until the beginning of the 1960s, WNY was

the major manufacturing center for shipboard guns. WNY has four NR-listed properties and an NHL district that reflect both the early shipyard period and the more recent industrial period.

WNY was identified as a prior BRAC receiver site for such commands as the Judge Advocate General's Corps Headquarters, the Naval Facilities Engineering Command Headquarters, and the Naval Sea Systems Command Headquarters. Unbuilt land was rare, and there were significant environmental issues dating from WNY's industrial past. Fortunately, most of the industrial buildings at WNY were high-bay types ideally suited for reuse by gutting the original building and constructing new office spaces within the historic façade. In this particular case, the cost of renovating buildings was competitive with the alternative: demolition, environmental remediation, performing new foundation work in 150-year-old fill soil, and new construction. Consultation on the plan required effort on all sides, particularly since consultation in the District of Columbia involves other agencies and statutory authorities besides NHPA. In the end a revitalized and repopulated historic district was recognized as the best outcome for both mission and preservation.

WNY is now a showplace for adaptive use of historic properties, including "green" renovations that reduce energy consumption. Quality of service for WNY tenants has improved dramatically over the last fifteen years, and the yard has served as the catalyst for a redevelopment of the M Street corridor that still continues. Mr. Chairman, I invite you and the committee to come down to WNY to see what can be accomplished with historic buildings.

PEARL HARBOR. The next example I would like to discuss is Pearl Harbor. Pearl Harbor is, of course, one of the few World War II battlefields in the fifty States, and one with particular resonance for the Navy. Still and movie images of the December 7th attack are still frequently seen in books and on television, making the base landscape seem almost familiar to first-time visitors. Strafing marks on concrete provide a hint of the violence of the attack. The presence of the sunken battleship *Arizona* and target ship *Utah*, tombs for over a thousand Sailors, serves as a continuing reminder of the cost of war and eventual victory.

The National Historic Landmark district at Pearl Harbor focuses on the attack, but also includes properties that represent such events as the Navy's first shore establishment and the first military air facilities in Hawaii. Pearl Harbor is also, however, an active naval base that supports today's fleet, its Sailors and their families, and its civilian employees. The World War II Navy for which the NHL district represents the infrastructure footprint was vastly different from the modern Navy and its needs.

For instance, there were many, many more Navy ships during World War II, but today's ships are on average larger and far more complex, with implications for such diverse factors as pier weight limits, shore power and other utilities, and in-port training systems. Modern Sailors and their families have much different expectations for housing and family support services than their World War II counterparts – most of whom left their families at home for the duration – and housing quality can be a significant factor in each Sailor's decision to re-enlist or not. The Navy also does shipbuilding and repair much differently today than during World War II, when the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard was providing major combat and voyage repair services to history's greatest naval force

engaged in history's greatest naval war on the other side of the Pacific. Yet much of the historic district represent's Pearl Harbor's 1940s "high-water mark," and much of it is excess or ill suited to modern needs in its current condition.

The Navy knows well that the American public cares very much about Pearl Harbor. Historic properties such as the Ford Island Dispensary, the Lockwood Hall transient quarters, and the Shipyard Administration Building have been renovated and are in mission-supporting use. Maintenance costs for these renovated buildings, as with most renovated historic buildings, are comparable to maintenance costs for non-historic properties.

In consultation with the ACHP, the Hawaii SHPO, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and other consulting parties, Navy has developed a detailed Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (ICRMP) and associated Programmatic Agreement (PA) that streamlines compliance on a broad category of facilities management actions. The PA we developed to manage historic preservation compliance for the Ford Island redevelopment has worked well, and may serve as a model for similar open-ended development or design actions. We are also fortunate to have had some technically outstanding adaptive use projects, such as the new Navy Lodge on Ford Island. We will continue to work with these consulting parties as we balance Pearl Harbor's historical significance with the mission requirements required to support the twenty-first century Navy.

NAS PENSACOLA. My third example is the Naval Air Station (NAS) at Pensacola, Florida. This facility had its birth in the early nineteenth century as the Pensacola Navy Yard. It was also the scene in the early twentieth century of some of the

Navy's first experiments with aviation, and continues to be where the Navy trains its aviators. The NHL district is located on the waterfront at the site of the original Pensacola Navy Yard, and includes facilities from the Navy Yard and from World War I-era seaplane operations.

However, by the middle of the twentieth century the focus of the base had shifted inland. The installation had not served as a navy yard since the nineteenth century, and the end of the Navy's seaplane programs in the mid twentieth century meant that there was no longer any aviation-related mission for the former seaplane facilities. Even before World War II, most naval aviators were being trained for aircraft carrier or land-based aircraft operations at facilities away from the NHL district. The long decrease from the base's World War II peak student load also meant that by the end of the twentieth century there were several hundred thousand square feet of excess building capacity at NAS Pensacola.

Hurricane Ivan brought these conditions to national attention by striking the NHL district with its full force in September 2004. Hundred-knot winds and significant storm surge flooding struck the district, the most exposed part of the station, and added to the widespread serious damage inflicted throughout the base and the Florida Gulf coast. The Congress passed a supplemental appropriation to restore DOD facilities in the affected area, with a fund expiration date of 30 September 2005.

Among Navy's goals for NAS Pensacola were to restore base operations, ensure that base functions were appropriately located with respect to their supported tenants or activities, and reduce the risk of damage in the inevitable future storms. These precepts

appeared to reduce the possibility of mission-supporting activities in much of the NHL district, leaving us with difficult decisions to make about the damaged buildings there.

We were very fortunate that the consulting parties in this case recognized the magnitude of the problem and the severe time limitations we were operating under – especially the Florida SHPO’s office, which was also dealing with the implications of three other 2004 hurricanes. NHPA compliance regarding repairs to historic properties was managed by an existing PA, and in fact a number of National Register-eligible properties outside the NHL district are being returned to full service. We expect that ongoing maintenance costs for those buildings after repair and renovation will be comparable to maintenance costs for non-historic buildings.

After extensive consultation, a Memorandum of Agreement signed in March 2005 provided for the demolition of a number of properties, including properties in the NHL district, but the Navy agreed to conduct a more extensive analysis of the sixteen most significant NHL district properties being considered for demolition.

That analysis was performed during the spring and early summer of 2005, and as a result of the analysis, public input and extensive further consultation, the Secretary of the Navy decided to retain nine of the sixteen buildings, although not all in their original functions. The Navy has now requested funds to make the area safe and suitable for continued use, and to provide some historical interpretation once the buildings are removed.

NAVY INITIATIVES.

The preceding examples have highlighted how we balance mission with historic preservation. From a practical and fiduciary perspective, the best opportunity to retain a historic building is to keep it in current mission use, appropriately renovated and maintained. The following cultural resources initiatives help us to manage historic properties as part of our overall asset management program.

The Navy has incorporated historic property data elements in its real property inventory system, the internet-based Naval Facilities Asset Data Store (iNFADS). Populating the data elements is a long-term process requiring the location and data entry of NR eligibility determinations, in some cases dating back decades. We intend to make this location and data entry function a required deliverable of all new and revised ICRMPs, and so should have the backlog completed over the next five years as a full cycle of ICRMP revision occurs.

We are also exploring the incorporation of cultural resources data into Navy geographic information systems (GIS), where available. An early example of GIS-based historic property management at Pearl Harbor has demonstrated the value of having historic property information available to planners, managers and operators on the common installation GIS. GIS is also a much more satisfactory way to represent certain historic resources such as archaeological sites than traditional real property relational databases.

ICRMPS. Good ICRMPs remain the key way to gather information about an installation's historic inventory, assess potential use/reuse candidates and provide an interface with facilities planners. Navy is revising its ICRMP guidelines to improve ICRMP function and incorporate new requirements such as iNFADS updates.

Programmatic alternatives. The regulations implementing NHPA provide several alternatives to case-by-case consultation. PAs have long been used for complex projects, projects involving more than one state, or routine base activities. Navy presently has PAs in effect for its historic properties in Hawaii, Hampton Roads, and the San Diego metro area. We would like to develop more.

“Program comments” are a relatively new tool that allows agencies to propose programs that address particular preservation categories, which ACHP comments on following consultation with interested parties. Navy followed Army’s lead in requesting a program comment for Capehart-Wherry era family housing (1949-1962), which in exchange for a centrally-managed documentation effort removed this category of property from case by case consultation and treatment. The services are nearing completion of program comments on unaccompanied personnel housing and on ammunition bunkers. Navy is also developing a program comment for ships. We look forward to working with OSD, our sister services, ACHP and other consulting parties to develop similar approaches for other categories of historic property.

CONCLUSION

The Navy will remain committed to remembering and honoring its heritage. We are also committed to full compliance with our statutory obligations regarding historic properties. We will continue to work with OSD, the other services, and other appropriate agencies and organizations to find more effective and efficient ways to balance our stewardship and fiscal responsibilities as part of our comprehensive asset management program.

This concludes my statement. I welcome your questions and look forward to working with your committee on this important issue.