



FY26 Active ACSB Lessons Learned

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Purpose



- Provide FY26 ACSB observations to Fleet leadership based on board statistics
- Present board results in context of the precept, convening order and aviation career path
- Provide tools and data that leaders can use to both mentor junior officers and effectively document their performance and potential



BLUF



- Officers with a #1 OP DH were most competitive
- The Board valued:
 - Top hard break outs in NAE valued jobs – competitive on every tour
 - A career path with increasing responsibility & diversity of experience
 - Valued post-DH tours
 - NAE Community Billets
 - Joint tours, Nominative Billets, Financial Management
 - In-residence graduate education
 - Specific, consistent, and credible Command recommendations



Precept



- The best and fully qualified
 - Possess the appropriate level of leadership, professional skills, integrity, management acumen, grounding in business practices, and resourcefulness in difficult and challenging assignments
 - Demonstrate adaptability, intelligent risk-taking, critical thinking, and innovation
 - Adhere to ethical standards, physical fitness, and loyalty to Navy Core Values
 - Are best qualified within their respective competitive category



Convening Order



- Naval Aviation is first and foremost an aerial combat force that:
 - Values attainment of warfare qualifications and leadership both in the air and on the ground
 - Values war fighting ability and tactical excellence required for combat now and in the future
 - The ultimate measure of success is:

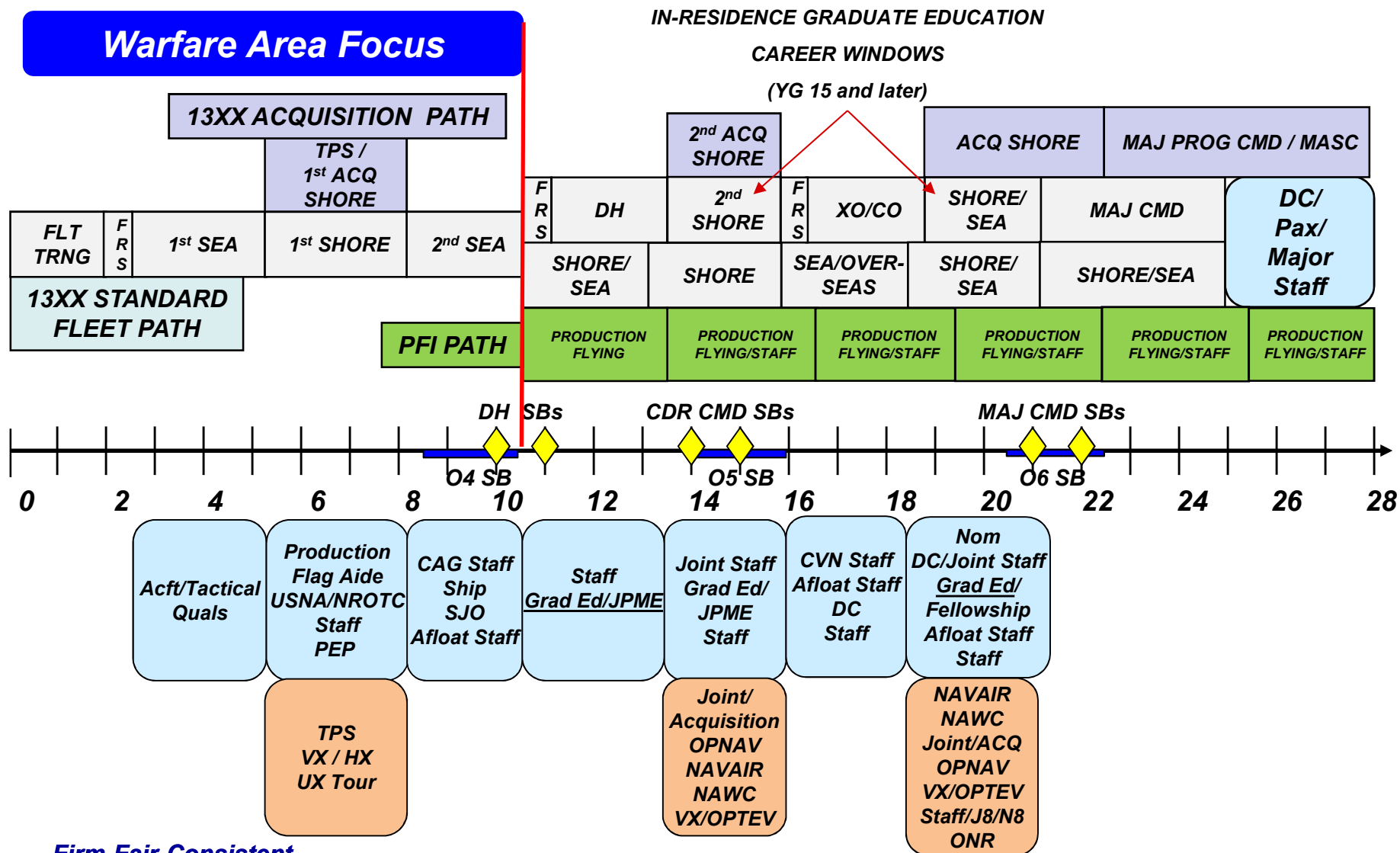
***Sustained superior performance
in operational environments***



Aviation Career Path



Warfare Area Focus



Firm-Fair-Consistent



Deferral Requests



- Advertised with detailed notes sent to all eligible officers
- PERS -43 reviewed prior to convening the ACSB
- ETP deferral requests are intended for officers who are disadvantaged due to zone creep and who reported to DH milestone behind timeline due to no fault of their own
 - Preserves a competitive AZ look
- 18 deferral requests were approved for IZ officers



Screen Groups



- Maintained the multi-year Screen Group (SG) format
- URL SG-11 / 12 separated to balance command opportunity rates across communities and ensure ability to fill all commands
- Officers compete within their SG for future IZ and AZ looks to retain competitive advantage
- Approved FY26 ACSB deferral officers should expect to fall into SG-13



Board Results



- URL SG-11 AZ: 41
 - OP 9
 - OP-T 23
 - SM 9
- URL SG-12 IZ: 85 OP
- TEST 4
- LDO 5 OP, 1 SM
- AMDO 8 OP

144 Commanding Officers Selected



URL DH FITREPs (SG-11/12)



- 60.7% of eligible were #1 OP DH (232/382)
 - 125/126 URL selects were #1 OP DH
 - 107 #1 OP DHs not selected (57 \geq 6 Months)
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- SG-11 (150 eligible Above Zone)
 - 44.6% of AZ eligible were #1 OP DHs (67/150)
 - 59.7% of the #1 OP DHs selected OP, OP-T, or SM (40/67)
 - Avg. #1 DH ticket length (Selects): 7.4
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- SG-12 (232 eligible In Zone)
 - 71.1% of IZ eligible were #1 OP DHs (165/232)
 - 51.5% of the #1 OP DHs selected OP command (85/165)
 - Avg. #1 DH ticket length (Selects): 10.5

Competition for Command remains fierce!



Takeaways





Operational Command Path



Warfare Area Focus

FLT TRNG	F R S	1 st SEA	1 st SHORE	2 nd SEA	F R S	DH	2 nd SHORE
		Acft/Tactical Quals	Production Flag Aide USNA/NROTC Staff PEP	CAG Staff Ship SJO Afloat Staff		<u>OP DH</u> MO OPSO OIC	NAE Key Billet Joint / MAJ Staff Grad Ed Fellowship JPME

- Valued achievements prior to DH
 - Competitive breakout in first sea & shore tours (production highly valued)
 - Tactical excellence **documented in record**
- Valued achievements prior to Command
 - JPME I required prior to assuming command at sea, not selection
 - Top DH performers detailed to most demanding jobs
 - NAE community valued fills, Major Staff, Joint
 - Master's degree valued but not prerequisite for selection
 - Competitive breakout as an OP DH: OPS/MO/OIC required to be competitive
 - Attainment of **advanced** warfare qualifications



Career Path



- DH performance, especially as OPSO/MO/OIC, remained a critical determinant for selection to CMD
- A breadth of experience combined with top breakouts across the entire record in some cases was more valued than length of HW DH FITREP
 - A longer HW DH FITREP alone did not necessarily lead to selection of an otherwise unremarkable record
- Post-DH assignments were scrutinized – critical NAE community valued billets, experience enhancing joint billets, and graduate education were viewed positively



Statistical Takeaways



- Correlation does not equal causation
 - Qualifications such as JPME 1 and CDO(U/W) strengthen record but will not salvage an otherwise weak record
- Valued qualifications and experience
 - Reference specific community values slides as valued experience and qualifications can vary significantly between communities
 - WTI / ACTC Level V / TPS
 - Tactical Mission Command Qualifications
 - AIMC, SEAD MC, C2 MC, Maritime RWMC, etc.
 - FDNF / Overseas / Operational experience
- Diversity of assignment locations, scope, and responsibility was viewed positively



FITREPs



- A double-tap #1, especially from different reporting seniors, was a clear and strong message to the board
- Credible, consistent, and specific command recommendations in block 40 & 41
- Credible soft breakouts are important, particularly during detaching as 1 of 1, during ship's company tours, and LCDR(sel) small summary groups
 - Detaching 1 of 1 FITREPs with strong language supporting future milestones and promotion were important
 - Lack of a breakout (hard or soft) and/or a relatively low trait average on a HW or detaching FITREP was viewed negatively
- Larger summary groups increase record strength



FITREPs



- Individual Trait Average vs Reporting Senior Cumulative Average (RSCA) was scrutinized
 - Letters of Extension vs 1 of 1 detaching FITREP
- Block 41 Specifics
 - Clearly and efficiently **communicate to the board!**
 - White space is OK
 - Use the intro to specify hard and/or soft breakouts
 - Be explicit! “My # X of XX Pilots” vs “Top EP Player” makes a difference
 - Use the intro and closing to communicate recommendations for promotion and specific career milestones (OP CMD, OP DH, MAJ CMD, CAG/CVW CMD, CVN CMD)
 - Highly encouraged to **include the job and location of a member’s future duty station** on detaching FITREPs



FITREPs



- Use FITREP to document:
 - Community, peer, and higher echelon nominations and awards,
 - Education
 - Training and/or experience with emerging combat capabilities
 - **Be explicit with Qualifications acquired during a reporting period**
 - IA/GSAs
- Use FITREP to explain unusual circumstances:
 - Victim of a recent and unexpected zone shift
 - Perceived decliner due to promotion OR decrease in summary group size
 - Merit reorders
- Avoid “managing RSCA” on the HW or detaching FITREP of an officer that deserves command



Awards/ AQDs



- Wing, community, NAE, service and DoD level awards recipients were valued by the board
- Credible higher echelon endorsements / nominations for NAE and service level awards should be noted in both Block 41 and on end of tour awards
- AQDs are important but the right AQDs are essential
 - Members should ensure they have the appropriate AQDs that reflect their respective community value for qualifications (e.g. WTI, ACTC Lvl, Instructor, etc.)



Letters to the Board



- Most effective LTBs explain a poorly written, incomplete, or future FITREP
 - Explain extraordinary situations
 - Highlight undocumented achievements (awards, qualifications, education)
 - Note job selection/performance before FITREP opportunity
- Least effective LTBs were “Great officer...must pick” letters – regardless of endorsing officer’s rank
- LTBs should be submitted if important factual and/or objective information is not in the officer’s record
- A well-written FITREP will preclude the need for a LTB



Officer Records



- Record maintenance is an individual responsibility
 - Community Detailer/Assistant Recorder reviews are a courtesy
- The most common problems with records were
 - Missing/gapped/rejected FITREPs
 - Missing awards/citations, qualifications, and advanced education
- **Board correspondence does not update or fix permanent record**
 - Eligible officers should contact the appropriate PERS code to ensure missing record items are added
- A complete record gives an officer the best possible chance for selection

It is your record. Keep it up to date!