

# New Capability Streamlines Drill Process for Navy Reservists

By **DON Innovation**

Chief Zita Ethier, Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC) Kitsap, developed the Enhancement for Drill Management (EDM) tool, which provides the Navy Reserve with automated 24/7 self-service drill management capability for rescheduling normal monthly Inactive Duty Training (IDT) periods and the requesting and scheduling of additional IDT periods.

Prior to the EDM tool's creation, there was no single automated process for Selected Reservists (SELRES) and Voluntary Training Unit members to have their reschedule requests and additional IDT requests routed, approved, and authorized in a timely manner. Manual processes (via hand-delivery, faxing, scanning, and email) were the primary techniques used that resulted in human errors, timeliness inefficiencies, and personally identifiable information (PII) risks, which further contributed to pay inaccuracies and poor coordination and visibility between the Navy Reserve Activity and the Unit CO.

Chief Ethier's vast Reserve experience among multiple echelons made her uniquely suited to the development of the invaluable EDM tool. The technical capabilities required for this system to be developed required complex policy knowledge application combined with intimate knowledge of existing personnel systems. Additionally, these policy applications had to be applied within the exceptionally challenging constraints of the Navy Standard Integrated Personnel System (NSIPS). Without the dedication and innovative application of Chief Ethier's knowledge and experience, this business process initiative would not have been launched or developed with the success it has earned. Since October 2014, over 55,000 SELRES have successfully utilized EDM. Not only does EDM provide more flexibility to the Navy Reserve, it also enhances the audibility for drill pay by electronically tracking each step of the process, leaving a thoroughly documented audit trail for each drill.

While it initially appeared to be a straightforward initiative in the development of EDM, it became a significantly more complicated process when it came time to develop the capability. Reservists demanded the ability to reschedule previously approved and rescheduled drills, multiple times. Chief Ethier was the innovator responsible for building this level of additional flexibility into the system while still adhering to the overarching policies and instructions that governed Reservists. Additionally, since



(BREMERTON, WA) Chief Zita Either and PO1 Valerie Randolph navigating the Job Performance Aids (JPAs) for Enhancement for Drill Management (EDM)

Reservists are consistently changing units and Navy Reserve Activities (Navy Operational Support Centers) due to civilian career and personal changes, Chief Ethier configured EDM to sustain these internal workflow changes.

The increased flexibility, worldwide access, timely electronic status, and automated capability of EDM have proved invaluable to Navy Reservists managing their drills. These benefits have effectively eliminated the days of “one weekend a month” for today's Navy Reservists. In the ever changing, fast-paced world, it is vital that the Navy provide its Reservists with the flexibility to keep up with their demanding and on the go civilian lives. Flexibility is exactly what EDM provides. Since its launch, EDM has successfully processed well over 200,000 drills.



(BREMERTON, WA) Chief Zita Either and PO1 Valerie Randolph discussing the workflow roles for Unit Leadership in Enhancement for Drill Management (EDM)

In the past decade, the Navy has changed how its Reservists are managed. The model of a Reservist drilling at the Reserve Center has shifted to the Reservist providing direct support to the active duty command they are assigned to. A Reserve Center may only see their Reservists several times a year. EDM provides the Reserve Center the oversight to manage hundreds of Reservists, their corresponding drills, and the ability to pay them quickly and accurately, all within a highly auditable environment.

In today's budget constrained environment, it is all the more crucial for the Department of the Navy to maximize

its most valuable asset—its people. EDM saves countless man-hours that were once spent physically traveling to and from the Reserve center or requiring a scanner to deliver the required form to permit a Reservist to drill. This form had to be generated at the Reserve Center, sent to the Unit CO, and then to the member. After the drill was completed, the form had to go back to the Unit CO for signature and then returned to the Reserve Center for the pay to be processed. This entire process can now be completed in a matter of minutes, saving valuable time that can now be focused on warfighter readiness. A ready Reserve force provides outstanding value by delivering well trained Sailors, where and when required. Chief Ethier’s innovation provides a great improvement to combat readiness.

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Chief Ethier currently serves as Leading Chief Petty Officer for N01a, N1, N3, and N6 at Navy Operational Support Center Kitsap.