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ORGANIZATION OF THE NAVY

by

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Lest I be justly accused of plagiarism, I wish to state that in preparation of this paper I have "cribbed" freely from General Board papers, former speeches on the subject, and Navy Regulations without even bothering about acknowledging the source. However, I wish to thank the anonymous contributors for lightening my labor.

The present organization has been developed through a process of evolution, and this process is still continuing. During this evolution practically all of the difficulties which existed have at one time or another been overcome and today the organization functions smoothly and without friction.

The Constitution provides that:

"Congress shall have power . . . to . . . provide for the common defense . . . to provide and maintain a Navy . . . to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces" and

"The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States . . . shall be Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States . . . "

Congress has provided by law for

"an executive department . . . the Department of the Navy, and a Secretary of the Navy, who shall be the head thereof," and

"An Assistant Secretary shall be appointed, from civil life, by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate . . . shall perform such duties as may be prescribed by the Secretary of the Navy or required by law," and that

"The Secretary of the Navy shall execute such orders as he shall receive from the President relative to the procurement of naval stores and materials, and the construction, armament, equipment, and employment of vessels of war, as well as all other matters connected with the Naval Establishment "

The Navy Department is the "head office" of the entire Naval Establishment. Within the Navy Department, under the Secretary of the Navy, and responsible to him, are

(a) The Chief of Naval Operations, who is, by law, ". . . charged with the operations of the fleet, and with the preparation and readiness of plans for its use in war." The functions thus imposed were, and continue to be, so delimited in the law itself that it has been necessary to adopt regulations in the endeavor to effect the coordination and cooperation essential to the proper performance of the basic duties.

(b) The Bureaus of the Navy Department, for which existing law prescribes that

"Except as otherwise provided . . . the business of the Department of the Navy shall be distributed in such manner as the Secretary of the Navy shall judge to be expedient and proper among the following bureaus

"First, A Bureau of Yards and Docks
"Second, A Bureau of Navigation
"Third, A Bureau of Ordnance
"Fourth, A Bureau of Construction and Repair
"Fifth, A Bureau of Engineering
"Sixth, A Bureau of Supplies and Accounts
"Seventh, A Bureau of Medicine and Surgery
"Eighth, A Bureau of Aeronautics,"

and also that.

"all of the duties of the Bureaus shall be performed under the authority of the Secretary of the Navy, and their orders shall be considered as emanating from him, and shall have full force and effect as such."

(c) Various offices and boards of the Navy Department, statutory and otherwise, have been established from time to time to meet specific and continuing needs of the Naval Establishment. Examples are the Office of Naval Intelligence, the Compensation Board, the Shore Establishment Division, the Naval Communication Division, the General Board, the Office of the Judge Advocate General, examining and retiring boards. Some of these offices and boards are directly under the Secretary of the Navy, or the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and some are included within the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. They perform necessary functions that must be provided for, in their appropriate relationships, in any reorganization.

(d) The Headquarters of the Marine Corps, with the Major General Commandant at its head. The functions of the Marine Corps, while interlocked with those of the Navy, and included in the concept of the Naval Establishment, are distinctive in character.

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By law the Secretary of the Navy is directly responsible to the President and to Congress and is charged with responsibility for decision in all major matters affecting the Naval Establishment afloat and ashore.

The Assistant Secretary of the Navy has no definite statutory duties other than such duties as are assigned him by the Secretary. He is now charged with general administrative control of the material activities of the shore establishment including public works and the supervision of the preparation of departmental estimates.

In the absence of the Secretary of the Navy, he acts as the Secretary. In the absence of the Assistant Secretary the succession to the position of Acting Secretary is in the following order. the Chief of Naval Operations, the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, the Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance, the Chief of the Bureau of Engineering, the Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics and the Judge Advocate General.

The Chief of Naval Operations is charged with the duty of coordinating all repairs and alterations to vessels and the supply of personnel and material thereto as to insure at all times the maximum readiness of the Fleet for war, with the direction of the Office of Naval Intelligence, the Division of Fleet Training, the operation of the Communication Service, of naval Districts and the operations of the Marine Corps.

He is the principal adviser to the Secretary of the Navy in regard to the military features and design of all new ships and any alterations which may affect their military value, as to the location, capacity and protection of shore stations including all features which may affect their military value, also as to matters pertaining to reserves of military material, stores and supplies whose sufficiency and location may affect the readiness of the Fleet for war.

The Chief of Naval Operations has no direct control over personnel or the expenditure of Appropriations, but by the Annual Operating Force Plan, Aeronautical Organization and Shore Establishment Operating Plan which flow from the decisions in the Annual Estimate of the Situation he practically determines the personnel requirements; and by virtue of his responsibility for the readiness of the Fleet and his duty of coordinating all efforts to this end he influences to a great extent the expenditures without interfering with the detailed duties of the material bureaus.

The work of the Office of Naval Operations is carried out by the following ten divisions

War Plans	Fleet Training Division
Central Division	Fleet Maintenance
Technical Division	Naval Districts
Intelligence Division	Ship Movements
Communications Division	Inspection

The names of War Plans, Intelligence, Fleet Training and Communications indicate the general nature of the work performed.

The Central Division frames the Chief of Naval Operations endorsement on all legislation requiring comment from the Navy Department, administers Island Governments of Guam and American Samoa, all matters relating to Treaties and Conventions, liaison with other government departments, visits of Naval Forces to Foreign waters or territories and all matters not within the cognizance of any other division.

The Fleet Maintenance Division coordinates the efforts of material bureaus from the broad viewpoint of requirements of the Navy in so far as the material readiness of the Fleet is concerned. It maintains liaison with the Shore Establishments Division of the Secretary's Office in regulating the flow of ship work to Navy Yards to maintain an even work load, prepares schedule of availability of vessels at Navy Yards, and has a War Procurement Planning Section which coordinates the work of all Bureaus, Offices and Naval Districts in material procurement planning and for liaison with the War Department in procurement planning for war.

The Technical Division keeps informed on status of Research in Naval, Industrial, University and Private laboratories here and abroad, establishes contacts between persons submitting valuable ideas and inventions and the interested material bureaus, and supervises the work of the Naval Research Reserve. A recent General Order transfers the duties of this division in connection with research and inventions to the Office of the Secretary of the Navy.

The Naval Districts Division has cognizance of Naval District matters as regards general policy, military administration and defensive matters, the acquisition, development and disposal of shore properties, transfer loan and sale of naval vessels, membership on Shore Station Development Board, etc.

Ship Movements Division directs movements of all naval vessels and aircraft, prepares the Operating Force Plan and Organization of Naval Forces, assigns home ports, makes estimates of fuel and mileage for all naval forces and allocates this fuel and mileage to vessels.

The Bureau of Navigation, under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy, is responsible for the procurement, education, training, discipline, and distribution of officers and enlisted personnel of the Navy, including the Naval Reserve. It is also responsible for the provision of navigational equipment, and for the upkeep and operation of the Naval Academy, the Post Graduate School, the Naval War College, Schools for Enlisted Men, Training Stations, the Naval Home, the Naval Observatory, and the Hydrographic Office.

The Hydrographic Office conducts surveys of foreign waters and furnishes charts, notices to mariners, light lists, sailing directions, etc., to the Navy and merchant vessels. Since the outbreak of the war it has issued a series of serially numbered "special warnings" as to location of mine fields, special markings carried by United States merchant vessels, etc. It also publishes notices to aviators and the Naval Air Pilot.

The Bureau of Ordnance is responsible, under the Secretary of the Navy, for the design, manufacture, procurement, maintenance, issue and efficiency of all offensive and defensive arms including armor. It is responsible for the upkeep and operation of Naval Gun Factories, Ordnance Plants, Torpedo Stations, Proving Grounds, Powder Factories, Ammunition Depots, Mine Depots and Magazines on shore.

The Bureau of Engineering is responsible, under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy, for the design, construction, installation, and maintenance of all propelling machinery together with its auxiliaries, electric wiring, radio and sound equipage and appliances used by the Naval Communication Service.

It is responsible for the upkeep and operation of the Engineering Experiment Station at Annapolis, the Research Laboratory in Washington, Boiler Laboratory in Philadelphia and the Material Laboratory in New York.

The Bureau of Construction and Repair is under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy responsible for the design, the structural strength, stability, and seaworthiness of all ships of the Navy except airships. It is charged with the building, fitting out, and repairing of hulls of vessels, district craft and small boats.

It is also responsible for the upkeep and operation of experimental model basins, wind tunnels and material laboratories.

The Bureau of Yards and Docks is responsible, under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy, for the design, construction, alteration, and inspection of public works and public utilities of the shore establishment.

It has custody of real estate not in use by other subdivisions of the Navy Department and handles funds involved in the acquisition and disposition of real estate.

The Bureau of Supplies and Accounts is under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy responsible for the procurement, custody, shipment, warehousing, and sale of all supplies, fuel and other property of the Navy except as otherwise provided, the supply and disbursement of funds and payment for articles procured for the Navy, the keeping of money and property accounts and the upkeep and operation of the Naval Clothing Factory and coffee roasting plants.

It has cognizance of the transportation of naval property, charters merchant ships, procures cargoes, and loads and discharges supply ships, colliers and tankers.

The Bureau of Medicine and Surgery officered by the Medical Corps, is under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy, responsible for the maintenance of the health of the Navy and for care of the sick and injured.

It is responsible for the upkeep and operation of naval hospitals, medical supply depots, medical laboratories, naval medical school, and of technical schools for the training of members of the Medical Corps, Dental Corps, Nurse Corps, and Hospital Corps.

The Bureau of Aeronautics is under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy, responsible for everything relating to the design, construction, fitting out, testing, repair and alteration of naval and marine corps aircraft, and except as specifically assigned to other cognizance instruments, equipment, and accessories pertaining thereto.

It provides aircraft in accordance with approved operating plans.

The Marine Corps is an integral part of the Navy, is a military organization within the Naval Establishment, which performs services both afloat and ashore.

The Corps is administered by a Major General Commandant, who is, under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy, responsible for the procurement, discharge, education, training, discipline, and distribution of officers and enlisted personnel and the efficiency of the Marine Corps.

He is charged with the upkeep and operation of Marine Barracks and Marine Posts.

The General Board is composed of not less than five senior officers of the line, a majority of whom are of flag rank. The Board is a purely advisory body without administrative or executive functions. It considers and reports upon any subject which the Secretary may direct and is specifically charged with the duty to consider the United States Naval Policy and the general terms of its application, to recommend changes in the policy which may become necessary from time to time to recommend the number and types of ships necessary to constitute the fleet, their military characteristics, and such building program as may be required, and to advise the Secretary of the Navy regarding the general policy as to naval districts, navy yards, naval stations, operating bases, and other shore activities.

The Judge Advocate General, under the Secretary of the Navy, has cognizance of all matters of law arising in the Navy Department, and performs such other duties as may be assigned to him by the Secretary of the Navy.

Among the duties assigned him are: preparation of advertisements, proposal and contracts; questions relating to validity of proceedings in court martial cases, the supervision and control of naval prisons and prisoners, including prisoners of war, interpretation of statutes, examination of bills and resolutions introduced in Congress and referred to the Navy Department for report, drafting of proposed legislation arising in the Navy Department.

The Judge Advocate General also examines and reports upon questions of International Law, searches title, examines into the purchase, sale, transfer and other questions affecting lands and buildings pertaining to the Navy.

The Board of Inspection and Survey under specific orders in each case is charged with the acceptance, examinations and trials of all naval vessels and aircraft, except experimental aircraft, and with the inspection of all vessels newly commissioned. It inspects all naval vessels on their return from foreign stations, and all vessels as often as once in three years when practicable, and prior to undertaking of a general overhaul.

Reports of acceptance trials are made to the Secretary of the Navy and reports of material inspections of naval vessels to the Chief of Naval Operations.

Coordination of effort of the various Bureaus and Offices within the Navy Department is primarily secured through the formulation of policies and plans which when approved by the Secretary become directives for all Bureaus and Offices. Naturally there are many cases which are not fully covered by such plans or policies or necessitate some change in the detailed plan. If such a case is definitely within the cognizance of some one Bureau it is acted upon by the Chief of that Bureau, but if the required decision involves the coordination of two or more Bureaus, cooperation with any other government department or any vessel or aircraft, the case generally comes under the Chief of Naval Operations. The best example of how these plans coordinate effort is evidenced in the set up for the preparation of the budget.

The Secretary of the Navy has directed that the first step in the preparation of the budget shall be an "Estimate of the Situation", made by the Chief of Naval Operations. This estimate is an analysis of the existing condition of the entire naval establishment and how best to approach the standards of readiness prescribed by the War Plans for what appears to be the most probable war. The decisions of this "Estimate", after approval by the Secretary of the Navy, constitute the basis for the formulation of plans and policies which become directives to all Bureaus and Offices of the Navy Department in preparation of their respective budget estimates.

This "Estimate of the Situation" is generally completed early in the year, and the approved decisions are circulated to all interested Bureaus and Offices.

Early in April the Secretary issues an order listing the plans which are to be prepared, based on the approved decisions and who is to prepare them. As an example of the nature of these plans the following shows those prepared for the Budget for the fiscal year 1941.

Prepared by the Chief of Naval Operations

Operating Force Plan
Air Operating Policy
Naval Aeronautical Organization
Tentative Availability of Ships at Navy Yards
Fleet Employment Plan
Material Improvement Plan Vessels
Material Improvement Plan Communications
Shore Establishments Operating Plan
Plan for Maintenance and Development of Naval Intelligence Service
Reserve Material Navy Plan
Table Showing Commissionings and Decommissionings for Fiscal Year

Prepared by General Board - C. N. O.

Building Program Vessels

Prepared by Assistant Secretary (Shore Establishments
Division)

Plan for Shipbuilding and Ship Repair Facilities at Industrial
Navy Yards

Prepared by Bureau of Navigation

Personnel Plan Navy

Prepared by Marine Corps Headquarters

Personnel Plan Marine Corps

Prepared by Judge Advocate General

Legislative Plan

Prepared by District Craft Development Board and
Chief of Naval Operations

District Craft Program

Shore Development Board

Base Development Board

These plans are not vague plans but are definite concrete plans to accomplish definite and specific objects during the fiscal year and are in such detail that all bureaus and Offices involved can use them as a basis for estimating cost.

The Operating Force Plan shows the vessels to be maintained in commission, to be commissioned, or decommissioned during the year. It shows the organization and distribution of naval forces and the personnel requirements of such forces. It serves as a guide to the Bureau of Navigation in preparing the Personnel Plan, and to other Bureaus in estimating for commissioning and decommissioning, and the cost of normal operation of the naval forces within the area assigned by the plan.

The Air Operating Policy states the policy as to the operation of aircraft, and as to the operation and construction of aircraft, carriers, tenders, fleet air bases and minor air facilities.

The Naval Aeronautical Organization flows from the Air Operating policy, contains the organization of air commands, assigns planes thereto, states the personnel required, and the aircraft operating facilities necessary.

The Shore Establishment Operating Plan shows the Shore Establishments to be operated during the year and at what capacity. Naturally this capacity varies with the number of vessels to be maintained in commission and their strategic distribution as set forth in the Operating Force Plan.

The Material Improvement Plan Vessels, Tentative Availability of Ships at Navy Yards are connected as the first shows the plans for the alteration or major repairs to naval vessels most of which will require Navy Yard work and the second plan indicates when the work will be done.

The Material Improvement Plan although assigned to the Chief of Naval Operations is developed in conference with the material Bureaus (Construction and Repair, Engineering, Ordnance and Aeronautics) who are the ones responsible for the cost estimates of the various repairs and alterations. The recommendations of the forces afloat are considered and the decisions of the Estimate of the Situation.

The Plan for Shipbuilding and Ship Repair Facilities at Industrial Navy Yards is formulated by the Shore Establishments Division of the Secretary's Office. It contains the general plan for the work to be assigned to various Navy Yards, the facilities the various yards should have and the general type of work which each yard should be able to do. This Division, after consideration of the Operating Force Plan, Fleet Employment Plan, Shore Establishment Operating Plan, Material Improvement Plan Vessels, Tentative Availability of Vessels at Navy Yards, determines the assignment of shipbuilding and other industrial work not immediately concerned with the repair and alteration of naval vessels to the various industrial Navy Yards so as to balance the work load and recommends as to the industrial equipment and civil personnel required by Navy Yards to perform the work assigned.

The Legislative Plan contains the items of legislation considered essential to obtain for the proper functioning of the Navy.

The Personnel Plan Navy is based on the requirements of the Operating Force Plan, Shore Establishment Operating Plan, Aeronautical Organization and upon the Bureau of Navigation estimate of the personnel under training, at schools, etc., under the jurisdiction of that Bureau.

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The above indicates the nature of some of the various plans previously enumerated, and shows the interdependence of these plans

To complete a statement of the preparation of the budget, after completion of the above plans and their approval by the Secretary about the first of June, the plans are circulated to the various Bureaus and used by them as a basis of money estimates.

These estimates are sent to the Budget Officer about the middle of July. He tabulates them and classifies them for comparison with previous Budget and previous Appropriations. As is to be expected the estimates submitted even under the restrictions imposed always total more than there is any chance of having approved by the Bureau of the Budget.

The Budget Officer who is thoroughly familiar with the Estimate of the Situation and the various plans and policies holds hearing at which each agency making a budget estimate is required to justify that estimate. The Budget Officer then prepares a statement as to how the budget can best be reduced to a reasonable sum, and this statement is presented to the Chief of Naval Operations for recommendation. Through conferences between the Chief of Naval Operations and the various Bureaus and Offices items suggested for elimination are approved or disapproved, and for those disapproved other items of approximately equal cost are eliminated.

Naturally such compromise is by no means satisfactory to all concerned but the estimates having a common background do not require as much adjustment as when each Bureau made its estimates upon its own individual ideas of the Navy's requirements.