

February 1, 2016

Forum focuses on hot topics of collaboration, partnerships to increase readiness, speed to fleet



NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. -- Rear Adm. Paul Verrastro, commander, Naval Supply Systems Command, Weapons System Support (NAVSUP WSS) addresses attendees at the Naval Air Systems Command's (NAVAIR) Logistics and Industrial Operations (AIR 6.0) Hot Topics Forum at the Center Stage Theater Patuxent River on Jan. 20. The forum addressed the need for collaboration among Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE) service agencies to recover and sustain readiness requirements. (U.S. Navy photo)

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. -- It was a standing-room-only crowd for Naval Air Systems Command's (NAVAIR) Logistics and Industrial Operations (AIR 6.0) Hot Topics Forum here Jan. 20. The resounding theme for the day was collaboration as leaders from AIR 6.0 joined with those from across several services' agencies encompassed in the Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE) to discuss key issues and challenges with the workforce.

Brig. Gen. Greg Masiello, assistant commander, AIR 6.0, kicked off the discussion with the "big picture" perspective, laying out his strategic imperatives that align with the mandate Vice Adm. Paul Grosklags put forth when he took the helm of NAVAIR as its commander.

In his "Commander's Intent," Grosklags stressed NAVAIR should be "ready to fight tonight" and must continue to develop the capabilities and capacity to win the future. To achieve this, he set two courses of action: align resources to better support today's readiness; and reduce costs and increase speed of products to the fleet.

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The Hot Topics forum recognized the challenges that face naval aviation -- including an increased operating tempo and flying airframes past their intended life -- and sought to begin the dialogue to resolve them.

"Enabling a globally responsive fleet that is ready, affordable and effective -- that is our job," Masiello said. "We need to innovate and make things happen and we need to sustain emphasis on readiness and an in-service mindset."

Speakers at the forum included Brig. Gen. Allan Day, Commander, Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Aviation; Russ Howard, assistant deputy commandant of Aviation (Sustainment), Headquarters United States Marine Corps; and Rear Adm. Paul Verrastro, Commander, Naval Supply Systems Command, Weapons System Support (NAVSUP WSS).

Verrastro spoke to NAVSUP WSS efforts to expand repair capability and capacity to meet the Fleet's requirements through partnerships with industry, DLA, NAVAIR and the depots.

"When we leave this forum, our success will be determined by how well we leverage the linkages among the NAVAIR team, DLA, NAVSUP WSS and our many partners, to effectively deliver required readiness to the Fleet. Today's discussion ensured our collective efforts were aligned to tackle key supply and maintenance enablers to improve Fleet readiness," Verrastro said.

Capt. Joe Parran, lead, Supply Department, Commander, Fleet Readiness Centers (COMFRC), agreed that the forum stressed the need to have "dedicated working relationships from an Enterprise perspective. Air 6.0 and COMFRC are continuously striving to drive readiness and a link among the organizations is crucial to improving aviation readiness. Knowing this going into the session made it clear and easy to reinforce and have candid discussions on the specific roles and responsibilities of this strategic partnership."

The second half of the forum featured speakers from the AIR 6.0 Planning and Sustainment Department (AIR 6.7). Almost all presenters pointed to the expanded role of new technologies, specifically Additive Manufacturing, and increased use of data metrics, such as Vector, the impending web-based version of the Integrated Logistics Support Management System (ILSMS), to drive forward the changes necessary to meet the mission.

Remote NAVAIR sites in Florida, New Jersey, North Carolina and California joined the meeting by video teleconference. Hot Topic Forums began in January 2014 and are held regularly to inform the logistics workforce of current trends in improving support to the warfighter.

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NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. -- Brig. Gen. Greg Masiello speaks to participants at Naval Air Systems Command's (NAVAIR) Logistics and Industrial Operations (AIR 6.0) Hot Topics Forum at the Center Stage Theater Patuxent River on Jan. 20 about the need to enhance our workforce; increase and sustain readiness; and improve affordability. (U.S. Navy photo)