

PROPOSAL FOR A WESTERN PACIFIC NAVAL SYMPOSIUM SENIOR ENLISTED WORKING GROUP

INTRODUCTION

1. The Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS) for senior sailors was established in 2007 with the primary focus being to increase cooperation within Western Pacific navies at the senior enlisted level. The inaugural Senior Sailor Symposium was hosted by the Royal New Zealand Navy in Auckland in 2007, with the theme being 'Making a Difference'. The United States Navy hosted the second Symposium in Hawaii, in 2008. The theme for Hawaii 2008 was 'Challenges and Opportunities'. The third Senior Sailor Symposium was held in Tokyo, Japan in 2009, and was hosted by the Japan Maritime Self Defence Force. The theme for this Symposium was 'Sailors of Tomorrow'. At the Tokyo Symposium, Australia, Chile and France were invited to consider hosting the fourth Senior Sailor Symposium in 2010.

2. The initiative to establish a senior sailor forum is well supported, however, there is no formal agreement on its continuation or future framework. Therefore, a proposal for a WPNS Senior Enlisted Working Group (SELWG) was raised as an agenda item at the WPNS Workshop held in Sydney in June 2010. Australia presented on the potential benefits of establishing a SELWG and suggested that there is an opportunity for WPNS navies to look to their senior enlisted personnel as trusted and integral members of senior leadership teams, and to develop capabilities through increasing dialogue between senior enlisted personnel. Some key drivers for establishing a SELWG include:

- a. the recognised need for closer working relationships at the senior enlisted level
- b. sharing common areas of interest in areas such as training, recruiting and retention strategies, management, leadership and cultural change programs, personnel exchange programs as well as learning from each other's cultural and religious differences.

3. Delegates at the June 2010 WPNS Workshop agreed that Australia should develop a SELWG submission for consideration by the WPNS in 2010 (Action Item 15 from the Minutes of the WPNS Workshop June 2010).
4. The September 2010 WPNS considered Australia's submission for the establishment of a SELWG and supported the view that there are real benefits to be gained from establishing such a Working Group under the WPNS Charter.
5. The SELWG proposal was widely endorsed within the WPNS and it was agreed that the Royal Australian Navy would prepare Terms of Reference (TOR) for the 2012 WPNS Workshop and, if endorsed at the Workshop, a formal proposal would be brought to the 13th WPNS in 2012 to approve this initiative.

SELWG OBJECTIVES

6. The proposed SELWG will foster cooperation between WPNS navies on enlisted matters, focusing on the exchange of ideas in training, leadership, management and reputational issues.
7. The SELWG could specifically address issues of enlisted interests or be broadly tasked to research areas of a particular interest to WPNS navies including but not limited to
 - a. identifying broader leadership challenges from a Senior Enlisted Leaders perspective
 - b. better appreciation of each others border protection challenges
 - c. climate change and the impact it could have on maritime security
 - d. identifying the training, development and selection processes for senior enlisted personnel that exist within WPNS navies
 - e. identifying education and training opportunities to further develop non-commissioned officers for the future.

SELWG REPORTING AND INFORMATION SHARING

8. The Chair of the SELWG will report meeting outcomes to the WPNS Workshop, and provide specialist advice and/or recommendations to the WPNS on enlisted matters and potential initiatives.

9. The SELWG will set up a website to facilitate member contact and information exchange, to support the ongoing series of formal group meetings and enable informal sharing of information.

ACTION REQUIRED OF THE WPNS WORKSHOP

10. This document discusses the potential role and benefits of a WPNS SELWG and presents draft Terms of Reference (TOR) for consideration and, if appropriate, endorsement during the 2012 WPNS Workshop.

11. This document also recommends, subject to WPNS Workshop agreement, that the SELWG be held annually and conforms to the WPNS Business Rules.

12. The outcomes of the SELWG will be formally reported to the WPNS Workshop for consideration and, if appropriate, forwarded to the WPNS for review and endorsement.