

Navy Organizational Commitment and Non- response

Zannette A. Uriell

Rosemary A. Schultz

Navy Personnel Research, Studies, and Technology

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Zannette A. Uriell
Rosemary A. Schultz

Reviewed by
Paul Rosenfeld, Ph.D.
Institute for Organizational Assessment

Approved and released by
David L. Alderton, Ph.D.
Director

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Navy Personnel Research, Studies, and Technology
Navy Personnel Command
5720 Integrity Drive
Millington, TN 38055-1000
www.nprst.navy.mil

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Foreword

The Navy conducts personnel surveys to provide attitude and opinion data to inform leadership decisions. Since the early years of Navy personnel surveys, response rates have declined from about 60 percent to about 30 percent, leading some to wonder if those who respond are inherently different from those who do not respond. The concern often expressed is that only those who are unhappy will respond, thereby providing leadership with data that is more negative than reality. This report provides results of a follow-up study conducted to determine if the reason people reply to surveys is that they are more organizationally committed to the Navy.

The authors thank those who responded to the original survey as well as those who responded to the follow-up survey described here. Additional thanks are due to Mr. Bill Mullins, who sponsored these surveys, and Ms. Cheryl Loft, who was the primary sponsor point of contact.

DAVID L. ALDERTON, Ph.D.
Director

Executive Summary

Background

Response rates on military and civilian surveys have been decreasing; the response rate on the 1989 Navy Equal Opportunity/Sexual Harassment (NEOSH) was 60 percent while response rates on recent Navy surveys have been about 30 percent. Because of the low response rates currently found, there is a concern that results may be subject to “non-response bias,” where those who respond are systematically different from those who do not. It has been suggested that perhaps only those who are happy are responding while those who are unhappy do not respond. Department of Defense and civilian research literature tends to find minimal impact of non-response bias even in surveys with low response rates, but non-response follow-ups are rarely executed to confirm this finding.

In May and June of 2005, a web-based Navy-wide survey of MWR issues was administered, results showed an overall response rate of 20 percent. A random selection of that original sample was sent a non-response follow-up survey in August of 2005. The survey contained some questions directly from the original survey of MWR issues as well as questions assessing various aspects of organizational and occupational commitment. In addition, respondents were asked their opinions on why people do not respond to surveys and what the Navy could do to increase response rates.

Of those who had completed the original survey (3,229, referred to here as “Completers”), 1,000 were sent the follow-up survey and 440 responded, for a simple response rate of 44 percent. Of those who had not completed the original survey (11,853, referred to here as “Non-Completers”), 3,997 were sent a follow-up survey; 386 of those completed the survey, for a simple response rate of 10 percent. The survey was the same across the two groups, but different colored Business Reply Envelopes were used for each. Results were weighted to represent the populations of Completers and Non-Completers.

Findings

There were statistically significant differences found in the paygrades of the two groups; 63 percent of Non-Completers were enlisted, while 51 percent of Completers were enlisted. There was no significant difference in the gender of the two groups. Because of the large paygrade differences found, results were analyzed overall as well as separately for enlisted and officers.

Overall, Completers were more likely to plan to stay in the Navy until retirement (74%), while Non-Completers indicated they were undecided (26%) or would not stay until retirement (21%). This was true for enlisted (69% of Completers plan to stay until retirement as compared to 47% of Non-Completers) as well as for officers (79% of Completers versus 64% of Non-Completers).

Significant differences were also found for satisfaction with Navy life and their Navy job; 82 percent of Completers were satisfied with Navy life and 76 percent were satisfied with their Navy job, compared to 71 percent and 69 percent (respectively) of the Non-Completers. Statistically significant differences were also found for enlisted satisfaction with Navy life (78% of Completers and 63% of Non-Completers were satisfied). Perhaps related, statistically significant differences were found for perceptions of morale overall (43% of Completers and 36% of Non-Completers indicated high morale at their command) and for enlisted only (42% of Completers and 30% of Non-Completers indicated high morale).

Opinions about MWR importance, use, and satisfaction did not systematically differ between Completers and Non-Completers. Satisfaction with MWR overall (facilities, services, and recommending MWR facilities to others) and perceptions of contributions of MWR to Navy-specific outcomes such as readiness and retention were not statistically significant overall, although significant differences were found for enlisted personnel (with Completers more satisfied than Non-Completers).

Large, statistically significant differences were found between enlisted Completers and Non-Completers on most organizational and occupational commitment questions, but the finding was not true for officers. Completers were more likely to be committed to the organization than Non-Completers.

Completers were most likely to know that they had completed the original survey (82%); 13 percent were unsure and only 5 percent thought incorrectly that they had not done the original survey. The spread was different for Non-Completers; 37 percent incorrectly thought they had done the survey while 28 percent were not sure and only 35 percent knew they had not done the survey. The most common reasons that Non-Completers indicated they had not done the survey were because of more important work demands or some other reason not included in the answer choices.

Respondents (with similar comments from both Completers and Non-Completers) thought that key reasons for declining response rates were lack of time, lack of impact of the survey or feedback about the survey results, some issue related to surveys specifically (e.g., too many, boring), or lack of interest. Suggestions to increase response rates included improving the survey process or the survey itself (e.g., shorter surveys, minimizing number of surveys each year), providing feedback, using the command in the process (e.g., encouraged by chain of command, tie survey completion to liberty), or offering incentives.

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Navy Organizational Commitment and Non-response

The U.S. Navy utilizes personnel surveys to provide data to leadership to make sound decisions. These data may be related to use and satisfaction with programs, attitudes and opinions towards policies and policy changes, and opinions and satisfaction with career, work, quality of life, or other aspects of Navy life.

Currently, however, many of these surveys have relatively low response rates, typically about 30 percent (see e.g., Whittam, 2008; Uriell & Burrell, 2007; Wilcove, Schultz, & Patrissi, 2007). On one such survey, the Navy Equal Opportunity/Sexual Harassment Survey, the response rate declined from 60 percent when it was first administered in 1989, to 30 percent ten years later (Newell, Rosenfeld, Harris, & Hindelang, 2004).

Declining response rates are not unique to the Navy or the military, and many researchers have tried to ascertain causes of the decrease as well as what impact such a decrease has on results. A key concern with low response rates is that only certain people are responding, perhaps only those who are unhappy with the topic, so results are not generalizable to the population of interest due to this *non-response bias*. To determine if responders and non-responders differ, follow-up studies are becoming more commonplace. These studies generally consist of using alternative methods to contact the non-responders to gather their opinions. For example, the American Community Survey conducted by U. S. Census Bureau, first attempts to contact non-responders by telephone and then on-site visits (U. S. Census Bureau, 2005).

In the military, non-response follow-ups have been rare but a few non-response follow-ups have been done within the Navy. One study (Newell et al., 2004) found that attitudes were the same between self-reported responders and self-reported non-responders; however, the two groups differed on their reported attendance at various Navy trainings. A second study (Newell & Kang, 2006) found little difference between responders and non-responders, but recommended continued follow-ups to determine if this lack of differences persisted. Another study (Uriell, Whittam, Newell, & Hargrove, 2007) found no significant differences in attitudinal, factual, or conscientiousness questions between responders and non-responders.

While the limited Navy non-response follow-ups indicate no differences between responders and non-responders on the attitudes being surveyed, an understanding of any individual differences that could distinguish respondents from non-responders could lead to better survey methodologies and a better understanding of the survey process. One possible difference between responders and non-responders—organizational commitment—has been suggested by others (Newell et al., 2004; Rogelberg, Luong, Sederburg, & Cristol, 2000).

One aspect of organizational commitment, perceived organizational support, relates to the feeling of being valued by the organization and has been found to relate to absenteeism (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Another aspect, role-identity, relates to the connection a person feels to their role in an organization (Callero, 1985).

Additional aspects of commitment have been suggested by other researchers (e.g., Meyer & Allen, 1991; Culpepper, Gamble, & Blubaugh, 2004). These aspects include affective commitment (attachment to the organization), normative occupational commitment (feelings of obligation to stay with the organization), accumulated costs occupational commitment (time and emotional investments in the organization), and limited alternatives occupational commitment (other job options available).

The objectives of the current project are to determine if responders and non-responders differ in their attitudes toward Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) programs within the Navy, and if any aspects of organizational commitment differentiate between those who responded to a survey and those who did not. Although Newell and Kang (2006) did not find differences in levels of affective commitment, all six types of organizational commitment discussed here will be investigated, with it being predicted that none will show differences between those who completed the original survey and those who did not.

Method

Participants

A web-based survey about Navy MWR programs and services was administered in May and June of 2005, and yielded a response rate of 20 percent (AAPOR Response Rate Formula 4). Of the 17,621 sent notification of the survey, 16,589 were still in the Navy at the time of the non-response follow-up. There were 3,229 who had completed the original survey while 11,853 did not respond; the remaining 1,507 had never received the initial notification of the survey and were not included in the follow-up.

Because of the low response rate, a paper-based follow-up survey was mailed to a randomly selected sample of both those who responded to the original survey (“Completers”) and those who did not (“Non-Completers”). Due to funding constraints, only 5,000 follow-up surveys were printed, with 1,000 being sent to Completers and 3,997 to Non-Completers, or roughly 30 percent of each group in the original survey sample.

Measures

The survey (see Appendix A) consisted of questions from other Navy surveys, including the original survey, about MWR. Additionally, several organizational commitment scales were adapted for Navy use.

Demographics

Four demographic questions asked about paygrade, gender, remaining in the Navy at next decision point, and remaining in the Navy until retirement; answer choices for the retention-related questions were “Yes,” “No,” and “Undecided.”

Importance, Use, and Satisfaction with Navy MWR Facilities/Services

Five questions were included from the original survey on MWR. The first four questions asked about importance, use, and satisfaction with specific MWR programs; in the original survey, each of these questions included 36 individual programs but on the follow-up only 4 of the more common programs were included.

The importance and satisfaction questions used a 5-point Likert-type scale, with an additional “Don’t Know/NA” option for satisfaction. Choices for the use question were “Yes,” “No,” and “Not Available.” The last question of the four was a multiple choice question relating to the use of similar programs off-base.

Respondents were also asked about satisfaction with Navy MWR overall, adapted from two questions on the original MWR survey. Included on the follow-up survey were question stems about satisfaction with MWR facilities and services, whether the respondent would recommend MWR facilities to others, and whether MWR programs contribute to readiness and their retention decision. Answers again used a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree,” with an additional option of “Don’t Know/NA.”

Navy Satisfaction and Morale

Three questions from other Navy surveys were included to capture opinions about satisfaction with Navy life and Navy job, as well as opinions about morale at their current command. All three questions used a 5-point Likert-type scale.

Organizational Commitment

A total of 25 sub-questions relating to organizational commitment were included. For layout purposes, these were divided into four separate questions, with answers ranging on a 5-point scale from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree,” with a sixth option of “Don’t Know/NA.”

Non-response

Five questions were included about non-response and Navy surveys. The first asked if the respondent completed the original MWR survey; those who answered “No” were asked to complete a sub-question about why they did not. The last three questions were open-ended, and asked about reasons the respondent thinks response rates to Navy surveys have been declining, what steps the Navy could do to increase response rates (knowing that surveys must be voluntary and payment is not allowed), and other important issues that should be asked about on Navy surveys.

Procedures

Because this survey was a follow-up to a previous survey, no pre-notification letters were sent. The surveys were mailed to respondents on 8 August 2005, after the original MWR survey closed the response window. Respondents were sent one reminder letter on 7 September 2005, and the response window was closed on 21 November 2005.

Results

Not surprisingly, individuals who completed the original survey were much more likely to respond to the follow-up than those who did not complete it; responses were received from 440 Completers and 386 Non-Completers, yielding response rates of 44 percent and 10 percent respectively (AAPOR Response Rate Formula 4). Responses were weighted to reflect the distribution of Completers and Non-Completers in the original survey sample. Analyses were conducted using SPSS and SUDAAN. Margins of error ranged from ± 4.47 percent for Completers to ± 5.23 percent for Non-Completers.

Results primarily consist of percentages, with responses collapsed from a 5-point Likert-type scale to a 3-point scale. For organizational commitment items, scale scores were also computed by taking a simple mean of the items answered using a scale of 1 = “Strongly Disagree” to 5 = “Strongly Agree.” Chi-square and *t*-tests were performed to determine significant differences; to avoid capitalizing on chance, a significance level of $p < .01$ was adopted for all tests. The complete briefing of results is available in Appendix B.

Demographics

Gender and enlisted/officer status were compared between the two groups. The gender breakdowns were comparable, with Completers being 70 percent male and 30 percent female while the Non-Completers were 65 percent male and 35 percent female. Enlisted/officer status was significantly different between the two groups; 51 percent of Completers were enlisted compared to 63 percent of Non-Completers. Because enlisted and officer populations have historically been dissimilar in their opinions, follow-on analyses were conducted for the two groups separately.

Respondents were asked two questions about their intentions to stay in the Navy, either at their next decision point or until they can retire from the Navy. There was no significant difference between the enlisted or officer groups for their intention at the next decision point, but there was a significant difference for intentions to stay until retirement for enlisted personnel, with Completers more likely to indicate they will stay than Non-Completers (see Table 1).

Table 1
Retention intentions of Completers and Non-Completers

	Enlisted		Officer	
	Completers	Non-Completers	Completers	Non-Completers
Do you plan to remain in the Navy at your next decision point?				
Yes	55%	48%	61%	51%
No	26%	28%	19%	21%
Undecided	20%	24%	20%	28%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 447) = 2.22,$ $p = .3296$		$\chi^2(2, N = 347) = 4.01,$ $p = .1350$	
Do you plan to remain in the Navy until you can retire?				
Yes	69%	47% *	79%	64% *
No	13%	26%	7%	12%
Undecided	17%	28%	14%	24%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 448) = 26.65,$ $p = .0000$		$\chi^2(2, N = 348) = 10.01,$ $p = .0069$	

* Significant difference ($p < .01$) between groups for question.

Importance, Use, and Satisfaction with Navy MWR Facilities/Services

As the original web-based survey asked about MWR facilities and services, similar questions were included on the follow-up survey. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of four facilities/services, indicate whether they regularly used those facilities/services, and rate their satisfaction with those MWR facilities/services. Responses between the two groups were similar and only one significant difference was found, for officer use of the gym (see Table 2).

Table 2
Importance, use, and satisfaction of MWR facilities/services for
Completers and Non-Completers

	Enlisted		Officer	
	Completers	Non-Completers	Completers	Non-Completers
For each item listed, rate its importance to you.^a				
Fitness Center	88%	83%	92%	91%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 447) = 2.18, p = .3371$		$\chi^2(2, N = 348) = 2.07, p = .3548$	
Gym	72%	68%	68%	58%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 446) = 2.25, p = .3244$		$\chi^2(2, N = 348) = 7.01, p = .0305$	
ITT	81%	75%	75%	77%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 445) = 2.89, p = .2359$		$\chi^2(2, N = 346) = 1.112, p = .5712$	
Special Events	68%	67%	45%	55%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 446) = 2.71, p = .2590$		$\chi^2(2, N = 346) = 4.83, p = .0900$	
Indicate whether or not you regularly use each facility/service listed.^b				
Fitness Center	88%	82%	81%	83%
	$\chi^2(1, N = 435) = 3.26, p = .0715$		$\chi^2(1, N = 332) = 0.14, p = .7044$	
Gym	60%	58%	52%	38%*
	$\chi^2(1, N = 424) = 0.12, p = .7302$		$\chi^2(1, N = 330) = 6.93, p = .0086$	
ITT	67%	63%	67%	64%
	$\chi^2(1, N = 415) = 0.92, p = .3375$		$\chi^2(1, N = 327) = 0.37, p = .5431$	
Special Events	48%	50%	29%	41%
	$\chi^2(1, N = 408) = 0.28, p = .5979$		$\chi^2(1, N = 321) = 5.12, p = .0240$	
Of the facilities you regularly use, indicate your satisfaction with each facility/service listed.^c				
Fitness Center	90%	84%	89%	93%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 362) = 3.07, p = .2162$		$\chi^2(2, N = 269) = 8.44, p = .0150$	
Gym	88%	82%	82%	92%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 246) = 1.87, p = .3938$		$\chi^2(2, N = 150) = 3.57, p = .1681$	
ITT	84%	79%	80%	84%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 261) = 1.08, p = .5825$		$\chi^2(2, N = 210) = 0.69, p = .7098$	
Special Events	79%	77%	73%	73%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 195) = 0.60, p = .7417$		$\chi^2(2, N = 107) = 0.32, p = .8542$	

* Significant difference ($p < .01$) between groups for question.

^a Responses collapsed into three categories: "Important"/"Very Important," "Neither," and "Unimportant"/"Very Unimportant"; only "Important"/"Very Important" percentages shown.

^b Those who indicated facility was not available are not included in analyses; only those who indicate "Yes" are shown.

^c Responses collapsed into three categories: "Satisfied"/"Very Satisfied," "Neither," and "Dissatisfied"/"Very Dissatisfied"; only "Satisfied"/"Very Satisfied" percentages shown for those who indicated they regularly used the facility.

Navy Satisfaction and Morale

Only one of the two general questions about satisfaction with the Navy and their job yielded a significant difference; significantly more enlisted Completers indicated they were satisfied with Navy life than enlisted Non-Completers. Respondents were also asked about the overall morale at their present or most recent command. Results for enlisted were significantly different, while results for officers were similar between the two groups, as indicated in Table 3.

Table 3
Navy Satisfaction and Morale: Completers compared to Non-Completers

	Enlisted		Officer	
	Completers	Non-Completers	Completers	Non-Completers
Considering everything, how satisfied are you with Navy life?				
Satisfied	78%	63%*	87%	85%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	12%	20%	8%	6%
Dissatisfied	10%	17%	5%	9%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 448) = 12.32,$ $p = .0022$		$\chi^2(2, N = 347) = 2.77,$ $p = .2513$	
Overall, how satisfied are you with your Navy job?				
Satisfied	74%	65%	79%	77%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	14%	16%	10%	10%
Dissatisfied	12%	20%	11%	13%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 448) = 5.97,$ $p = .0512$		$\chi^2(2, N = 347) = 0.42,$ $p = .8119$	
How would you rate the overall morale of your present (or most recent) command?				
High	42%	30%*	45%	46%
Medium	39%	37%	37%	41%
Low	20%	33%	18%	13%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 449) = 13.64,$ $p = .0012$		$\chi^2(2, N = 348) = 1.67,$ $p = .4340$	

* Significant difference ($p < .01$) between groups for question.

Organizational Commitment

Within the organizational commitment section of the survey, there were many significant differences between the two groups. Scale scores were computed for each person, with higher scores indicating higher levels of agreement. In addition to the results for individual questions, the means of these scale scores were compared.

Questions relating to perceived organizational support yielded significant differences for enlisted on five of the six questions and no significant differences for officers (see Table 4). For all questions in the section, enlisted Completers were more likely to agree or strongly agree with each statement while there was no consistent pattern for officers. The mean scale scores were also significantly different for enlisted [$t(449) = 4.26, p = .0000$]; Completers averaged 3.35 while Non-Completers averaged 2.98. For officers, scale scores for both Completers and Non-completers were 3.31 [$t(348) = -.02, p = .9828$].

Table 4
Perceived organizational support: Completers compared to Non-Completers^a

	Enlisted		Officer	
	Completers	Non-Completers	Completers	Non-Completers
I trust the Navy to look out for my best interests	50%	36%*	44%	39%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 442) = 11.60, p = .0032$		$\chi^2(2, N = 346) = 0.97, p = .6160$	
The Navy really cares about my well-being	50%	35%*	49%	45%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 442) = 2.25, p = .3244$		$\chi^2(2, N = 346) = 2.20, p = .3338$	
The Navy would forgive an honest mistake on my part	43%	33%	40%	41%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 428) = 6.02, p = .0500$		$\chi^2(2, N = 335) = 0.46, p = .7947$	
The Navy cares about my opinions	53%	31%*	46%	49%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 440) = 23.46, p = .0000$		$\chi^2(2, N = 345) = 0.66, p = .7197$	
Help is available from the Navy when I have a problem	83%	67%*	79%	83%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 738) = 16.97, p = .0002$		$\chi^2(2, N = 345) = 0.93, p = .6298$	
I would feel a loss if I were forced to give up being a Navy Sailor	56%	50%*	66%	66%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 441) = 9.42, p = .0093$		$\chi^2(2, N = 343) = 0.72, p = .6971$	

* Significant difference ($p < .01$) between groups for question.

^a Responses collapsed into three categories: "Agree"/"Strongly Agree," "Neither," and "Disagree"/"Strongly Disagree"; only "Strongly Agree"/"Agree" percentages shown.

All three role identity salience questions yielded significantly different results for enlisted, with Completers again more likely to agree or strongly agree with the statements (see Table 5). Mean scale scores for enlisted were also significantly different [$t(447) = 3.89, p = .0001$], with Completers averaging 3.86 while Non-Completers averaged 3.46. There were no significant differences for officers [$t(348) = 1.19, p = .2325$], and the mean scale score for Completers (4.00) was similar to the score for Non-completers (3.89).

Table 5
Role identity salience: Completers compared to Non-Completers^a

	Enlisted		Officer	
	Completers	Non-Completers	Completers	Non-Completers
Being a Navy Sailor is an important part of who I am	74%	62%*	79%	77%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 442) = 13.07,$ p = .0015		$\chi^2(2, N = 345) = 0.29,$ p = .8670	
Being a Navy Sailor is consistent with my important values	72%	54%*	85%	81%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 443) = 20.07,$ p = .0000		$\chi^2(2, N = 346) = 1.22,$ p = .5427	
Most of the time I like thinking of myself as a Navy Sailor	70%	57%*	75%	78%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 439) = 9.97,$ p = .0070		$\chi^2(2, N = 347) = 2.74,$ p = .2543	

* Significant difference (p < .01) between groups for question.

^a Responses collapsed into three categories: "Agree"/"Strongly Agree," "Neither," and "Disagree"/"Strongly Disagree"; only "Strongly Agree"/"Agree" percentages shown.

All five questions about affective commitment were significantly different between the groups for enlisted personnel while no differences were found for officers (see Table 6). Enlisted Completers were more likely to agree or strongly agree with the statements than Non-Completers; but again, there was no consistent pattern for officers. Mean scale score for enlisted was also significantly different [$t(446) = 4.15, p = .0000$], with a score of 3.65 for Completers and 3.24 for Non-Completers; officer scores were not significantly different [$t(348) = 1.35, p = .1774$], ranging from 3.80 for Completers to 3.69 for Non-Completers.

Table 6
Affective commitment: Completers compared to Non-Completers^a

	Enlisted		Officer	
	Completers	Non-Completers	Completers	Non-Completers
I feel like “part of the family” in the Navy	64%	52%*	63%	66%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 442) = 9.48,$ p = .0090		$\chi^2(2, N = 347) = 0.59,$ p = .7431	
I feel “emotionally attached” to the Navy*	50%	38%*	61%	56%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 443) = 10.55,$ p = .0053		$\chi^2(2, N = 347) = 1.26,$ p = .5335	
The Navy has a great deal of personal meaning for me*	70%	60%*	76%	79%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 440) = 14.93,$ p = .0006		$\chi^2(2, N = 346) = 4.77,$ p = .0929	
I feel a strong sense of belonging to the Navy*	67%	51%*	69%	72%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 444) = 18.21,$ p = .0001		$\chi^2(2, N = 346) = 5.82,$ p = .0549	
I enjoy discussing the Navy with others*	72%	59%*	79%	78%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 439) = 10.70,$ p = .0049		$\chi^2(2, N = 347) = 0.92,$ p = .6312	

* Significant difference (p < .01) between groups for question.

^a Responses collapsed into three categories: “Agree”/“Strongly Agree,” “Neither,” and “Disagree”/“Strongly Disagree”; only “Strongly Agree”/“Agree” percentages shown.

Normative occupational commitment questions yielded significantly different results for enlisted on four of the six questions while officers significantly differed on two of the questions (see Table 7). For all questions, both enlisted and officer Completers were more likely to agree or strongly agree with the questions than Non-Completers. Both enlisted and officer mean scale scores differed significantly between Completers and Non-Completers; enlisted scores were 3.04 and 2.66 [$t(447) = 4.11, p = .0000$] while officer score were 3.03 and 2.68 [$t(348) = 3.77, p = .0002$], respectively.

Table 7
Normative occupational commitment: Completers compared to Non-Completers^a

	Enlisted		Officer	
	Completers	Non-Completers	Completers	Non-Completers
I believe that people who have been trained by the Navy have a responsibility to stay in it	35%	23%*	36%	22%*
	$\chi^2(2, N = 441) = 11.41,$ $p = .0040$		$\chi^2(2, N = 346) = 13.02,$ $p = .0016$	
I feel a responsibility to continue in the Navy	48%	3%*	51%	31%*
	$\chi^2(2, N = 438) = 16.61,$ $p = .0003$		$\chi^2(2, N = 347) = 15.55,$ $p = .0005$	
Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel that it would be right to leave the Navy right now	44%	39%	32%	22%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 438) = 7.30,$ $p = .0265$		$\chi^2(2, N = 343) = 5.64,$ $p = .0601$	
I would feel guilty if I left the Navy	21%	16%	19%	11%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 432) = 5.27,$ $p = .0724$		$\chi^2(2, N = 344) = 5.15,$ $p = .0768$	
I am in the Navy partly because of a sense of loyalty to it	51%	35%*	59%	49%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 438) = 17.04,$ $p = .0002$		$\chi^2(2, N = 345) = 6.60,$ $p = .0374$	

* Significant difference ($p < .01$) between groups for question.

^a Responses collapsed into three categories: "Agree"/"Strongly Agree," "Neither," and "Disagree"/"Strongly Disagree"; only "Strongly Agree"/"Agree" percentages shown.

Completers were more likely to agree or strongly agree with all questions about accumulated costs than Non-completers, for both enlisted and officer respondents. Only one of the three questions about accumulated costs was significantly different for enlisted while none were different for officers (see Table 8). Although there were only three questions in the section, mean scale scores were again significantly different between the groups for enlisted [$t(444) = 3.75, p = .0002$], with Completers averaging 3.17 while Non-Completers averaged 2.80 [3.04 and 2.88, respectively, for officers, $t(348) = 1.66, p = .0983$].

Table 8
Accumulated costs occupational commitment: Completers compared to Non-Completers^a

	Enlisted		Officer	
	Completers	Non-Completers	Completers	Non-Completers
I have too much time invested in the Navy to leave	54%	39%*	50%	44%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 435) = 12.50,$ $p = .0020$		$\chi^2(2, N = 339) = 3.03,$ $p = .2199$	
I have too much invested (e.g., education, personal effort) in the Navy to leave at this time	50%	40%	43%	38%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 438) = 4.71,$ $p = .0956$		$\chi^2(2, N = 340) = 3.66,$ $p = .1614$	
There would be a great personal price involved (e.g., disrupted interpersonal relationships) in leaving the Navy	40%	31%	27%	21%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 435) = 4.51,$ $p = .1053$		$\chi^2(2, N = 342) = 2.19,$ $p = .3358$	
Leaving the Navy would not be easy emotionally for me	43%	33%*	44%	35%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 434) = 10.91,$ $p = .0044$		$\chi^2(2, N = 343) = 2.82,$ $p = .2445$	

* Significant difference ($p < .01$) between groups for question.

^a Responses collapsed into three categories: "Agree"/"Strongly Agree," "Neither," and "Disagree"/"Strongly Disagree"; only "Strongly Agree"/"Agree" percentages shown.

Results for the two limited alternatives questions were not significantly different for either enlisted or officer, nor did the mean scale scores differ between Completers and Non-Completers (respectively, 3.31 and 3.29 for enlisted [$t(445) = .20, p = .8448$] and 3.48 and 3.54 for officers [$t(347) = -.86, p = .3882$]; see Table 9).

Table 9
Limited alternatives: Completers compared to Non-Completers^a

	Enlisted		Officer	
	Completers	Non-Completers	Completers	Non-Completers
I would have many options if I decided to leave the Navy	64%	66%	87%	91%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 432) = 1.01,$ $p = .6047$		$\chi^2(2, N = 341) = 5.88,$ $p = .5035$	
Leaving the Navy right now would cause too much of a disruption in my life for it to be worthwhile	43%	34%	31%	27%
	$\chi^2(2, N = 434) = 4.23,$ $p = .1212$		$\chi^2(2, N = 340) = 0.59,$ $p = .7429$	

^a Responses collapsed into three categories: "Agree"/"Strongly Agree," "Neither," and "Disagree"/"Strongly Disagree"; only "Strongly Agree"/"Agree" percentages shown.

Non-response

Questions about non-response were included in the survey. Non-Completers who indicated they had not completed the survey were asked why they had not; because of the low number of people asked to respond to the question, only overall results are presented. The most common reasons were either "Other" or "More important work demands" (see Table 10). Those who indicated "Other" were provided a place to further explain their answer. These "Other" responses primarily were because they were either "deployed" (likely aboard ship) or "deployed to Iraq," or they never received the original communications about the survey.

Table 10
If you did not complete the 2005 MWR Customer Assessment survey, why not?*

	Non-Completers (N = 126)
Not interested in topic	7%
Web pages would not load	9%
Did not want to	6%
Concern CoC would see answers	3%
Website blocked for security	5%
More important work demands	26%
Limited computer time	2%
Don't trust organization	0%
Dislike computer surveys	5%
Don't believe results are used	3%
Other	36%

* Includes all respondents who indicated they did not complete the survey.

Two additional open-ended questions related to non-response. The first asked, “Why do you think response rates to Navy surveys have been declining?” Overall, responses were similar between the Completers and Non-Completers. Key issues mentioned were lack of time, lack of impact or feedback, general survey-related comments (e.g., too many surveys, surveys too long), and a lack of interest by respondents.

The second open-ended non-response question asked, “What could the Navy do to increase response rates to surveys? Note: Completion of Navy surveys must be voluntary and payment is not allowed.” Overall, suggestions were similar between the two groups, although Non-Completers tended to include negative opinions relating to the Navy overall and not to the survey question. Key suggestions from respondents related to the survey process or the survey itself, such as making the survey shorter or doing fewer surveys. Additional responses indicated a desire for survey feedback, while the third major category related to making the surveys mandatory or offering incentives, neither of which is generally possible in the Navy.

The last open-ended question asked respondents, “What other important issues do you think should be asked about on Navy surveys?” The basic themes were similar, but Non-Completers were more likely to discuss large Navy issues such as climate or policies while Completers were more likely to discuss quality of life issues such as education and housing.

Discussion

While survey bias may occur at several points in the survey process, a key area of interest as response rates have declined is non-response bias, when responders are systematically different from non-responders on key survey outcome measures. The findings of the non-response follow-up described here show that Completers of the original survey on MWR are generally not different from Non-Completers on their opinions about MWR facilities and services; opinions about importance and satisfaction, as well as their use of MWR, are generally similar between the two groups, for both officers and enlisted. Thus, the follow-up study does not indicate systematic non-response bias on the original MWR study.

However, findings from the current survey do indicate statistically significant differences between Completers and Non-Completers on other factors, especially for enlisted personnel. Enlisted Completers are more likely than Non-Completers to indicate they plan to stay in the Navy until retirement, tend to be more dissatisfied with their jobs and the Navy overall, and have lower morale at their command. Why these differences occurred for enlisted but not officer personnel is unclear from the present study.

Organizational commitment generally tended to be higher for enlisted Completers than Non-Completers, as well as for officers although not significantly so. Only one of the commitment scales, limited alternatives, yielded no significant differences for either enlisted or officers. Thus, at the enlisted level, those who responded to the survey were both more positive on a number of items and had higher commitment to the

organization than those who did not. If this finding is replicated in future studies, it suggests that current estimates of enlisted attitudes and opinions found on Navy-wide surveys may be somewhat more positive than would be obtained if the views of non-respondents were fully represented. So, rather than Navy surveys being overrepresented by the responses of “whiners,” as has been suggested, the opposite may be true.

The largest reason for non-response to the original survey was that the respondent had more important work demands. Few expressed confidentiality concerns or technical problems, and only a small number indicated apathy. When asked likely reasons for non-response in general, respondents suggest more important work demands, as well as apathy or that survey results have no impact.

A key step that may be implemented to potentially improve response rates relates to the apathy aspect of non-completion; several suggested that “surveys should be two way” and respondents should get results. Select Navy surveys have begun sending a short results letter to all personnel selected for a survey, regardless of completion status; some letters have even included a link to an executive briefing package of results that personnel may access at any time.

Additionally, many Navy survey briefings now recommend creating an action plan to publicize results and follow-on actions. For example, a survey relating to Navy uniforms received front-page coverage in the Navy-related publication *Navy Times*; survey results were discussed in the March 6, 2006 edition and follow-on actions were included a week later.

While the follow-up survey did yield useful data on reasons for non-response and ways to improve response rates, two limitations need to be addressed in future research. One limitation of this study is the low response rates, even among those who are known to have previously completed a related survey. Of all those selected for the follow-up survey, only 17 percent responded. It is possible that there was confusion between the follow-up survey and the original survey, and that some discarded the follow-up because they had already completed the MWR survey on-line. There are still many active non-responders who received both surveys but decided to not respond to either. The current research suggests that they may have been too busy to respond, but additional methods may be needed to confirm that this is the case.

An additional area of interest relates to the differences between the enlisted and officer groups. While non-response of the enlisted community may relate to their lower organizational commitment, that finding does not hold true overall for the officers, so some other variable or set of variables may relate to non-response. While the lack of differences between non-responders and responders for the MWR items taken from the original survey supports the accuracy of those data, the finding of other systematic differences between enlisted responders and non-responders indicates that non-response bias may impact some responses to Navy surveys for certain groups.

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**Appendix A:
2005 Navy Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR)
Follow-up Survey**



Chief of Naval Personnel Washington, DC

2005 Navy Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Follow-up Survey

Dear Survey Participant,

Navy leaders often need to hear opinions about Quality of Life programs from Navy personnel like you, and surveys have often been used to gather this information. However, response rates to surveys have declined over the years. Finding reasons for this decline is important so that steps can be taken to increase response rates and make surveys more useful to Sailors and Navy leaders.

In the last few months, you should have received a letter informing you that you were selected to participate in the Navy Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Customer Assessment Survey that was administered online. You may or may not have completed the survey at that time. This survey is a follow-up to that survey; we are attempting to determine reasons why people do and do not complete surveys.

Please take a few minutes to complete and return this survey. Your participation is voluntary and greatly appreciated. Your responses will remain anonymous and will only be known to the researchers conducting this survey.

If you have any questions, please call or email:

Zannette Uriell
(901) 874-4641 or DSN 882-4641
zannette.uriell@navy.mil

Rosemary Schultz
(901) 874-2284 or DSN 882-2284
p14c@persnet.navy.mil

Thank you for your participation!

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

Public Law 93-579, called the Privacy Act of 1974, requires that you be informed of the purpose of this survey and of the uses to be made of the information collected.

Authority: The Navy Personnel, Research, Studies, and Technology Department may collect the information requested in this survey under the authority of Title 5 U.S.C. 301 and Title 10, U.S. Codes 3051 and 3052, and Executive Order 9397. License to administer this survey is granted under OPNAV Report Control Symbol 7548-3 which expires on 31 July 2006.

PRINCIPAL PURPOSE: The information collected in this survey will be used to evaluate existing and proposed policies, procedures, and programs in the Navy. The data will be analyzed and maintained by the Navy Personnel Research, Studies, and Technology Department.

ROUTINE USES: None.

CONFIDENTIALITY: All responses will be held in confidence. Information you provide will be considered only when statistically combined with the responses of others, and will NOT be identified to any single individual.

PARTICIPATION: Providing information is completely voluntary. Failure to respond to any of the questions will NOT result in any penalties except lack of your opinions in the survey results.



IMPORTANT MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

- Use a No. 2 pencil only.
- Do not use ink, ballpoint, or felt tip pens.
- Make solid marks that fill the response completely.
- Erase cleanly any marks you wish to change.
- Make no stray marks on this form.
- Do not fold, tear or mutilate this form.



CORRECT: ●
INCORRECT: ○ ⊗ ⊘ ⊙

BACKGROUND

1. What is your current paygrade?

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> E1 | <input type="radio"/> W2 | <input type="radio"/> O1/O1E |
| <input type="radio"/> E2 | <input type="radio"/> W3 | <input type="radio"/> O2/O2E |
| <input type="radio"/> E3 | <input type="radio"/> W4 | <input type="radio"/> O3/O3E |
| <input type="radio"/> E4 | <input type="radio"/> W5 | <input type="radio"/> O4 |
| <input type="radio"/> E5 | | <input type="radio"/> O5 |
| <input type="radio"/> E6 | | <input type="radio"/> O6 |
| <input type="radio"/> E7 | | <input type="radio"/> O7 or above |
| <input type="radio"/> E8 | | |
| <input type="radio"/> E9 | | |

2. Are you:

- Male
 Female

3. Do you plan to remain in the Navy at your next decision point?

- Yes
 No
 Undecided

4. Do you plan to remain in the Navy until you can retire?

- Yes
 No
 Undecided

5. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with Navy life?

- Very satisfied
 Satisfied
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 Dissatisfied
 Very dissatisfied

6. Overall, how satisfied are you with your Navy job?

- Very satisfied
 Satisfied
 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 Dissatisfied
 Very dissatisfied

7. How would you rate the overall morale of your present (or most recent) command?

- Very high
 High
 Medium
 Low
 Very low

NAVY MWR FACILITIES/SERVICES

8. For each item listed, rate its importance to you.

	Very Important	Important	Neither Unimportant Nor Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant
a. Fitness Center (e.g., weight training, cardiovascular equipment, aerobics classes)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Gym (e.g., basketball, volleyball, racquetball)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. ITT (e.g., tickets, off-base trips, entertainment info)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Special events (e.g., concerts, festivals)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Indicate whether or not you regularly use each facility/service listed.

	Not Available	No	Yes
a. Fitness Center (e.g., weight training, cardiovascular equipment, aerobics classes)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Gym (e.g., basketball, volleyball, racquetball)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. ITT (e.g., tickets, off-base trips, entertainment info)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Special events (e.g., concerts, festivals)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Indicate whether or not you use similar services off-base. (Mark ALL that apply.)

- Fitness Center (e.g., weight training, cardiovascular equipment, aerobics classes)
 Gym (e.g., basketball, volleyball, racquetball)
 ITT (e.g., tickets, off-base trips, entertainment info)
 Special events (e.g., concerts, festivals)

11. Of the facilities you regularly use, indicate your satisfaction with each facility/service listed.

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know/NA
a. Fitness Center (e.g., weight training, cardiovascular equipment, aerobics classes)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Gym (e.g., basketball, volleyball, racquetball)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. ITT (e.g., tickets, off-base trips, entertainment info)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Special events (e.g., concerts, festivals)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SATISFACTION WITH NAVY MWR

12. How much do you **AGREE** or **DISAGREE** with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know/NA
a. I am satisfied with the Navy's MWR facilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I am satisfied with the Navy's MWR services.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. I would recommend the Navy's MWR facilities to others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. MWR programs contribute to my readiness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. MWR programs are a benefit I consider when deciding whether to remain in the Navy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SATISFACTION WITH THE NAVY

13. How much do you **AGREE** or **DISAGREE** with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know/NA
a. I trust the Navy to look out for my best interests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. The Navy really cares about my well-being.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. The Navy would forgive an honest mistake on my part.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. How much do you **AGREE** or **DISAGREE** with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know/NA
a. The Navy cares about my opinions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Help is available from the Navy when I have a problem.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. I would feel a loss if I were forced to give up being a Navy Sailor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. Being a Navy Sailor is an important part of who I am.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Being a Navy Sailor is consistent with my important values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Most of the time I like thinking of myself as a Navy Sailor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. How much do you **AGREE** or **DISAGREE** with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know/NA
a. I feel like "part of the family" in the Navy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I feel "emotionally attached" to the Navy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. The Navy has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. I feel a strong sense of belonging to the Navy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. I enjoy discussing the Navy with others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. I believe that people who have been trained by the Navy have a responsibility to stay in it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. I feel a responsibility to continue in the Navy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel that it would be right to leave the Navy right now.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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16. How much do you **AGREE** or **DISAGREE** with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know/NA
a. I would feel guilty if I left the Navy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. I am in the Navy partly because of a sense of loyalty to it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. I have too much time invested in the Navy to leave.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. I have too much invested (e.g., education, personal effort) in the Navy to leave at this time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. There would be a great personal price involved (e.g., disrupted interpersonal relationships) in leaving the Navy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Leaving the Navy would not be easy emotionally for me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. I would have many options if I decided to leave the Navy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Leaving the Navy right now would cause too much of a disruption in my life for it to be worthwhile.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

17. Did you complete the 2005 MWR Customer Assessment survey?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

18. If no, why not?

- I was not interested in the topic
- The survey web pages would not load
- I did not want to do it
- I was concerned someone in my chain of command would see the answers
- The website was blocked due to security reasons
- There are more important work demands on my time
- I have limited time to use the computer and prefer to use it for other things
- I don't trust your organization to keep my answers confidential
- I dislike computer surveys
- I don't believe that survey results are used to improve programs/policies
- Other _____

YOUR THOUGHTS

19. Why do you think response rates to Navy surveys have been declining?

20. What could the Navy do to increase response rates to surveys? **(Note: Completion of Navy surveys must be voluntary and payment is not allowed.)**

21. What other important issues do you think should be asked about on Navy surveys?

THANK YOU!

Please complete this survey as soon as possible and return in the enclosed envelope to:
Commanding Officer
Survey Operations Center (SOC)
Navy Personnel Research, Studies, and Technology (PERS-14)
5720 Integrity Drive
Millington, TN 38055-1400

Appendix B: Survey Non-response Briefing




MWR Non-Response Survey

Overview

- Background issues
- Method
- Demographics
- Navy satisfaction and morale
- Importance, use, and satisfaction with Navy MWR programs
- Organizational commitment
- Summary
- Recommendations

NPRST



2

Background Issues

- Response rates on military and civilian surveys have been decreasing
 - Response rate of about 60% on 1989 Navy Equal Opportunity/Sexual Harassment (NEOSH) down to about 30% on recent, paper-based surveys
- Concern about “non-response bias”
 - Are those who respond systematically different from those who do not on key survey items?
 - Common view that either those who are very happy or very unhappy tend to respond to surveys
 - DoD and civilian research literature tends to find minimal impact of non-response bias even in surveys with relatively low response rates
 - » But in Navy and DoD research, non-response follow-ups are rarely done



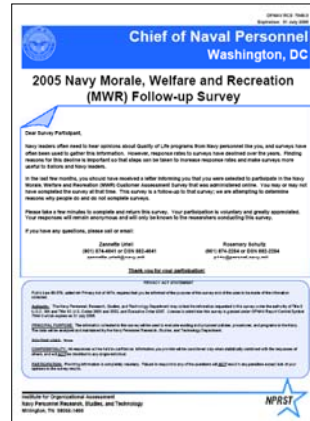
Method

- Original web-based, Navy-wide survey of MWR issues administered 3 May to 28 June 2005
 - Response rate of 20% (32% when considering only E-4 and above)
- Original survey sample of 17,621 grouped based upon whether they completed the survey (“Completers”) or not (“Non-completers”)
- Random sample taken of both groups, and each sent a paper survey
 - Same survey, but different color Business Reply Envelopes



Survey Contents

- Demographics
- Navy satisfaction & morale
- Importance, use, and satisfaction with specific MWR facilities/services
- Satisfaction with Navy MWR overall
- Organizational commitment
- Respondent comments on non-response



Since there were differences in time, format (paper vs web), survey content, etc. between original survey and this follow-up survey, comparisons focus on differences between completers and non-completers in the follow-up survey.



Demographics

Surveys mailed: 8 August 2005
 Reminder letter mailed: 7 September 2005
 Survey period closed: 21 November 2005

COMPLETERS:
 Original population: 3,229
 Eligible Sample: 1,000
 Eligible Returns: 440
 Response Rate: 44%

NON-COMPLETERS:
 Original population: 11,853
 Eligible Sample: 3,997
 Eligible Returns: 386
 Response Rate: 10%

Results statistically weighted to represent populations of Completers and Non-completers. Statistically significant differences discussed in text boxes or annotated with * (for p<.05) or ** (for p<.01).



Demographics

	Completers	Non-Completers
Paygrade**		
Enlisted	51%	63%
Officer	49%	38%
Gender		
Male	70%	65%
Female	30%	35%



Demographics

Because of the significant difference found in paygrade group, analyses were also conducting for enlisted and officer separately as well as for all respondents.

	Completers	Non-Completers
Enlisted		
Male	76%	71%
Female	24%	29%
Officer		
Male	64%	56%
Female	36%	44%



Demographics – Retention Intentions

	Completers	Non-Completers
Remain at your next decision point*		
Yes	58%	50%
No	22%	25%
Undecided	20%	25%
Remain until you can retire**		
Yes	74%	53%
No	10%	21%
Undecided	16%	26%



Demographics – Retention Intentions: Enlisted Only

	Completers	Non-Completers
Remain at your next decision point		
Yes	55	48
No	26	28
Undecided	20	24
Remain until you can retire**		
Yes	69	47
No	13	26
Undecided	17	28

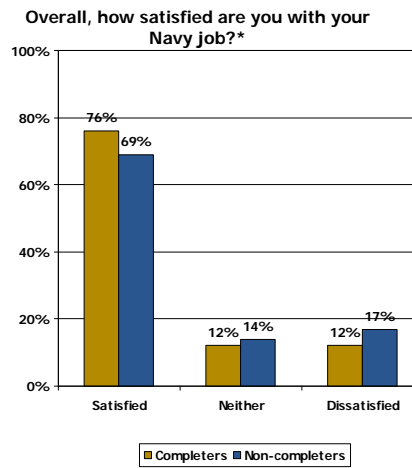
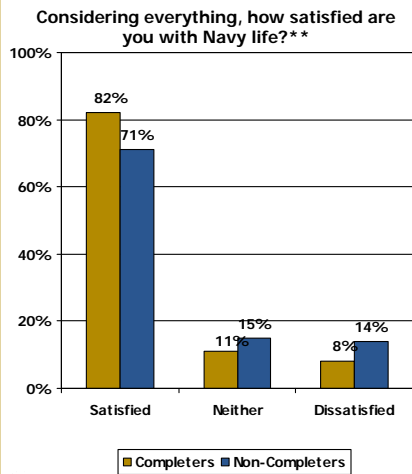


Demographics – Retention Intentions: Officer Only

	Completers	Non-Completers
Remain at your next decision point		
Yes	61	51
No	19	21
Undecided	20	28
Remain until you can retire**		
Yes	79	64
No	7	12
Undecided	14	24

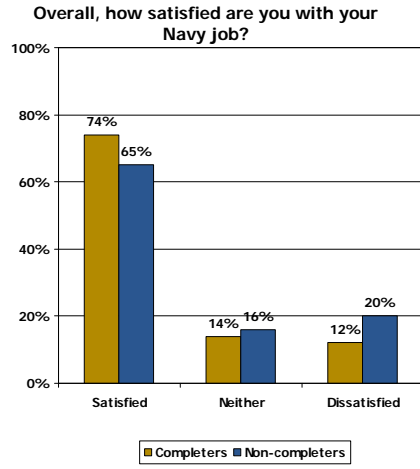
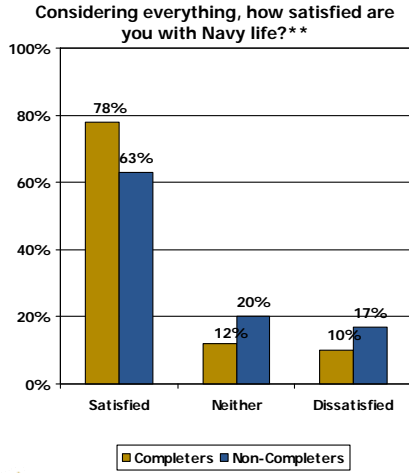


Navy Satisfaction



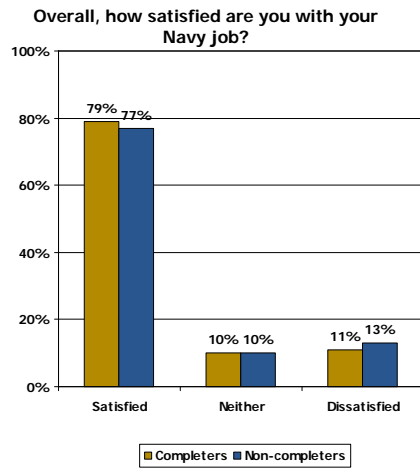
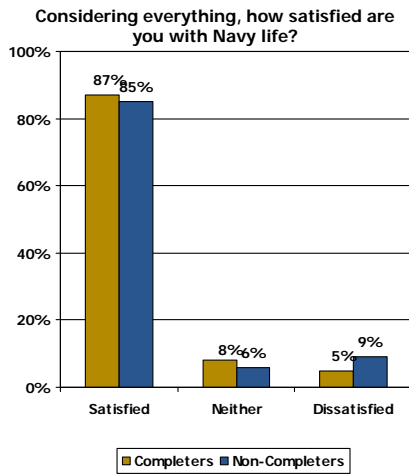
Navy Satisfaction: Enlisted Only

NPRST



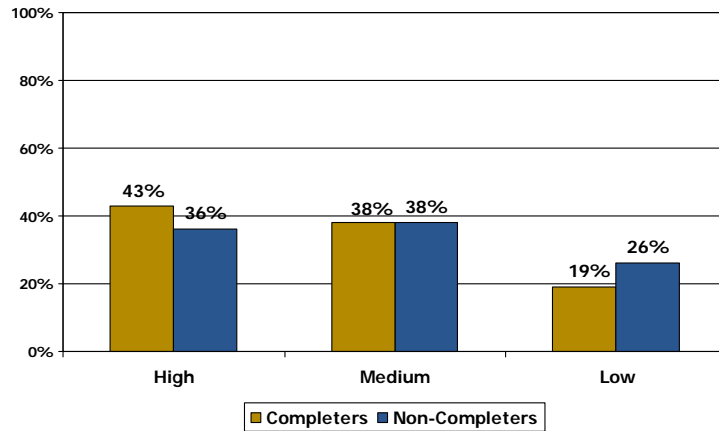
Navy Satisfaction: Officer Only

NPRST



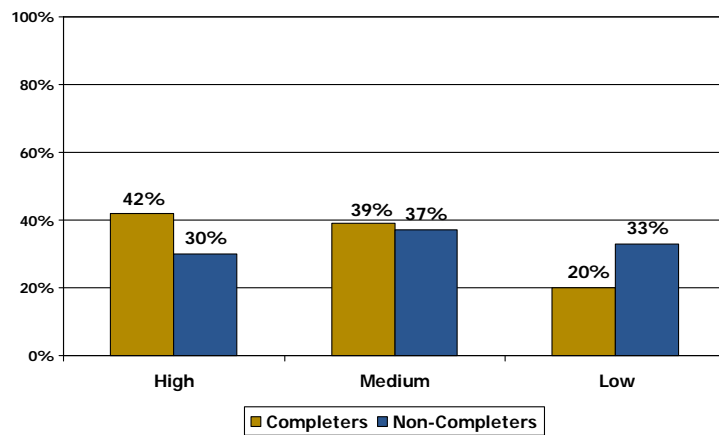
Morale

How would you rate the overall morale of your present (or more recent) command?*



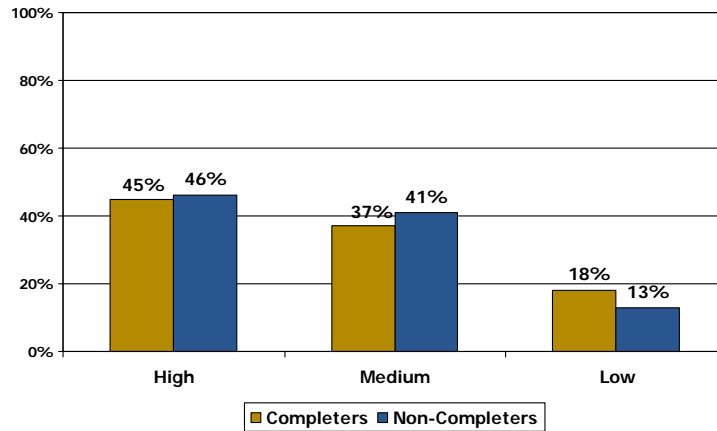
Morale: Enlisted Only

How would you rate the overall morale of your present (or more recent) command?***



Morale: Officer Only

How would you rate the overall morale of your present (or more recent) command?



Importance of MWR Facilities/Services: All Respondents

Percent "Important"/"Very Important"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
Fitness Center**	90%	86%
ITT	78%	76%
Gym**	70%	64%
Special events	56%	63%

Importance of Navy MWR Facilities/Services Section:
For each item listed, rate its importance to you.



Importance of MWR Facilities/Services: Enlisted Only

Percent "Important"/"Very Important"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
Fitness Center	88	83
Gym	72	68
ITT	81	75
Special events	68	67
Importance of Navy MWR Facilities/Services Section: For each item listed, rate its importance to you.		



Importance of MWR Facilities/Services: Officer Only

Percent "Important"/"Very Important"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
Fitness Center	92	91
Gym*	68	58
ITT	75	77
Special events	45	55
Importance of Navy MWR Facilities/Services Section: For each item listed, rate its importance to you.		



Use of Facilities/Services: All Respondents

NPRST



Percent "Yes"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
Fitness Center	85%	82%
Gym	56%	50%
ITT	67%	63%
Special events*	38%	47%

Use of Navy MWR Facilities/Services Section:
Indicate whether or not you regularly use each facility/service listed.

Use of Off-base Facilities/Services: All Respondents

NPRST



	Completers	Non-Completers
Special events	53%	46%
ITT	40%	37%
Fitness Center	26%	30%
Gym	13%	16%

Use of Facilities/Services: Enlisted Only



Percent "Yes"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
Fitness Center	88	82
Gym	60	58
ITT	67	63
Special events	48	50

Use of Navy MWR Facilities/Services Section:
Indicate whether or not you regularly use each facility/service listed.

Use of Off-base Facilities/Services: Enlisted Only



	Completers	Non-Completers
Fitness Center	21	25
Gym*	14	21
ITT	36	37
Special events	48	46

Use of Facilities/Services: Officer Only



Percent "Yes"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
Fitness Center	81	83
Gym**	52	38
ITT	67	64
Special events*	29	41

Use of Navy MWR Facilities/Services Section:
Indicate whether or not you regularly use each facility/service listed.

Use of Off-base Facilities/Services: Officer Only



	Completers	Non-Completers
Fitness Center	32	41
Gym	13	10
ITT	47	43
Special events	60	53

Satisfaction with Facilities/Services: User Responses Only

	Completers	Non-Completers
Fitness center	89%	87%
Gym	85%	85%
ITT	82%	80%
Special events	77%	75%

Satisfaction with Navy MWR Facilities/Services Section
Of the facilities you regularly use, indicate your satisfaction with each facility/service listed.



Satisfaction with Facilities/Services: Enlisted User Responses Only

	Completers	Non-Completers
Fitness center	90	84
Gym	88	82
ITT	84	79
Special events	79	77

Satisfaction with Navy MWR Facilities/Services Section
Of the facilities you regularly use, indicate your satisfaction with each facility/service listed.



Satisfaction with Facilities/Services: Officer User Responses Only



	Completers	Non-Completers
Fitness center*	89	93
Gym	82	92
ITT	80	84
Special events	73	73

Satisfaction with Navy MWR Facilities/Services Section
Of the facilities you regularly use, indicate your satisfaction with each facility/service listed.

Satisfaction with MWR



Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I am satisfied with the Navy's MWR facilities.	82%	78%
I am satisfied with the Navy's MWR services.	80%	79%
I would recommend the Navy's MWR facilities to others	82%	79%

Satisfaction with MWR Section

Satisfaction with MWR: Enlisted Only

NPRST



Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I am satisfied with the Navy's MWR facilities.*	85	76
I am satisfied with the Navy's MWR services.	84	77
I would recommend the Navy's MWR facilities to others.*	85	75
Satisfaction with MWR Section		

Satisfaction with MWR: Officer Only

NPRST



Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I am satisfied with the Navy's MWR facilities.	78	81
I am satisfied with the Navy's MWR services.	75	82
I would recommend the Navy's MWR facilities to others	79	86
Satisfaction with MWR Section		

MWR Contributions to Outcomes

NPRST



Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
MWR programs contribute to my readiness.	64%	57%
MWR programs are a benefit I consider when deciding whether to remain in the Navy.	43%	36%
MWR Contributions to Outcomes Section		

MWR Contributions to Outcomes: Enlisted Only

NPRST



Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
MWR programs contribute to my readiness.*	66	53
MWR programs are a benefit I consider when deciding whether to remain in the Navy.*	43	30
MWR Contributions to Outcomes Section		

MWR Contributions to Outcomes: Officer Only

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
MWR programs contribute to my readiness.	61	63
MWR programs are a benefit I consider when deciding whether to remain in the Navy.	42	46
MWR Contributions to Outcomes Section		

Perceived Organizational Support

The survey contained several adaptations of scales related to organizational commitment. The first, Perceived Organizational Support (POS), asks respondents about how valued they feel they are as a Sailor. Scale scores were computed for all organizational commitment scales, with higher scale scores indicating higher levels of agreement. For completers, the mean POS score (3.32) was significantly different ($p < .01$) from non-completers (3.10).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I trust the Navy to look out for my best interests.**	47%	37%
The Navy really cares about my well-being.**	49%	39%
The Navy would forgive an honest mistake on my part.	41%	36%
The Navy cares about my opinions.**	50%	38%
Help is available from the Navy when I have a problem.**	81%	73%
I would feel a loss if I were forced to give up being a Navy Sailor.*	61%	56%

Perceived Organizational Support: Enlisted Only

Looking at just enlisted respondents, the mean scale score for completers (3.35) was significantly different ($p < .01$) from non-completers (2.98).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I trust the Navy to look out for my best interests.**	50	36
The Navy really cares about my well-being.**	50	35
The Navy would forgive an honest mistake on my part.	43	33
The Navy cares about my opinions.**	53	31
Help is available from the Navy when I have a problem.**	83	67
I would feel a loss if I were forced to give up being a Navy Sailor.**	56	50



Perceived Organizational Support: Officer Only

For officers, the mean scale score for completers (3.31) was not significantly different from non-completers (3.31).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I trust the Navy to look out for my best interests.	44	39
The Navy really cares about my well-being.	49	45
The Navy would forgive an honest mistake on my part.	40	41
The Navy cares about my opinions.	46	49
Help is available from the Navy when I have a problem.	79	83
I would feel a loss if I were forced to give up being a Navy Sailor.	66	66



Role Identity Saliency

The second scale adapted for the Navy was the Role Identity Saliency (RIS) scale. This scale measures the value personnel put on being a Sailor. The mean scale score for completers (3.93) was significantly different ($p < .01$) from non-completers (3.62).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
Being a Navy Sailor is an important part of who I am.**	76%	68%
Being a Navy Sailor is consistent with my important values.**	79%	64%
Most of the time I like thinking of myself as a Navy Sailor.**	73%	65%



Role Identity Saliency: Enlisted Only

Looking at RIS for enlisted respondents, the mean scale score for completers (3.86) was significantly different ($p < .01$) from non-completers (3.46).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
Being a Navy Sailor is an important part of who I am.**	74	62
Being a Navy Sailor is consistent with my important values.**	72	54
Most of the time I like thinking of myself as a Navy Sailor.**	70	57



Role Identity Salience: Officer Only

The mean RIS scale scores for officer completers (4.00) was not significantly different from officer non-completers (3.89).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
Being a Navy Sailor is an important part of who I am.	79	77
Being a Navy Sailor is consistent with my important values.	85	81
Most of the time I like thinking of myself as a Navy Sailor.	75	78



Affective Commitment

Respondents were asked questions relating to their Affective Commitment, or how attached they are to the Navy. The mean scale score for completers (3.72) was significantly different ($p < .01$) from non-completers (3.41).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I feel like "part of the family" in the Navy.*	63%	57%
I feel "emotionally attached" to the Navy.**	56%	45%
The Navy has a great deal of personal meaning for me.**	73%	67%
I feel a strong sense of belonging to the Navy.**	68%	59%
I enjoy discussing the Navy with others.**	75%	66%



Affective Commitment: Enlisted Only

The mean scale score for enlisted completers (3.65) was significantly different ($p < .01$) from enlisted non-completers (3.24).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I feel like "part of the family" in the Navy.**	64	52
I feel "emotionally attached" to the Navy.**	50	38
The Navy has a great deal of personal meaning for me.**	70	60
I feel a strong sense of belonging to the Navy.**	67	51
I enjoy discussing the Navy with others.**	72	59



Affective Commitment: Officer Only

For officers, the mean scale score for completers (3.80) was not significantly different from non-completers (3.69).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I feel like "part of the family" in the Navy.	63	66
I feel "emotionally attached" to the Navy.	61	56
The Navy has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	76	79
I feel a strong sense of belonging to the Navy.	69	72
I enjoy discussing the Navy with others.	79	78



Normative Occupational Commitment

Another scale adapted for the survey was the Normative Occupational Commitment, which looks at the feeling of obligation to stay in the Navy. The mean scale score for completers (3.09) was significantly different ($p < .01$) from non-completers (2.72).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I believe that people who have been trained by the Navy have a responsibility to stay in it.**	35%	23%
I feel a responsibility to continue in the Navy.**	50%	35%
Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel that it would be right to leave the Navy right now.*	38%	32%
I would feel guilty if I left the Navy.*	20%	14%
I am in the Navy partly because of a sense of loyalty to it.**	55%	40%
I have too much time invested in the Navy to leave.**	52%	41%



Normative Occupational Commitment: Enlisted Only

For enlisted, the mean scale score for completers (3.10) was significantly different ($p < .01$) from non-completers (2.70).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I believe that people who have been trained by the Navy have a responsibility to stay in it.**	35	23
I feel a responsibility to continue in the Navy.**	48	37
Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel that it would be right to leave the Navy right now.*	44	39
I would feel guilty if I left the Navy.	21	16
I am in the Navy partly because of a sense of loyalty to it.**	51	35
I have too much time invested in the Navy to leave.**	54	39



Normative Occupational Commitment: Officer Only

The mean scale score for officer completers (3.06) was significantly different ($p < .01$) from officer non-completers (2.75).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I believe that people who have been trained by the Navy have a responsibility to stay in it.**	36	22
I feel a responsibility to continue in the Navy.**	51	31
Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel that it would be right to leave the Navy right now.	32	22
I would feel guilty if I left the Navy.	19	11
I am in the Navy partly because of a sense of loyalty to it.*	59	49
I have too much time invested in the Navy to leave.	50	44



Accumulated Costs Occupational Commitment

The Accumulated Costs Occupational Commitment scale asks Sailors about their time and emotional investments in the Navy. The mean scale score for completers (3.05) was significantly different ($p < .01$) from non-completers (2.79).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I have too much invested (e.g., education, personal effort) in the Navy to leave at this time.*	47%	39%
There would be a great personal price involved (e.g., disrupted interpersonal relationships) in leaving the Navy.	33%	27%
Leaving the Navy would not be easy emotionally for me.**	43%	33%



Accumulated Costs Occupational Commitment: Enlisted Only

The mean scale score for enlisted completers (3.10) was significantly different ($p < .01$) from enlisted non-completers (2.77).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I have too much invested (e.g., education, personal effort) in the Navy to leave at this time.	50	40
There would be a great personal price involved (e.g., disrupted interpersonal relationships) in leaving the Navy.	40	31
Leaving the Navy would not be easy emotionally for me. **	43	33



Accumulated Costs Occupational Commitment: Officer Only

The mean scale scores for officer completers (2.98) was not significantly different from officer non-completers (2.81).

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I have too much invested (e.g., education, personal effort) in the Navy to leave at this time.	43	38
There would be a great personal price involved (e.g., disrupted interpersonal relationships) in leaving the Navy.	27	21
Leaving the Navy would not be easy emotionally for me.	44	35



Limited Alternatives

The last scale – Limited Alternatives – asked about occupational alternatives available to the Sailors. Completers had a mean scale score of 3.40 while non-completers had a mean scale score of 3.39; no significant difference found.

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I would have many options if I decided to leave the Navy.	76%	75%
Leaving the Navy right now would cause too much of a disruption in my life for it to be worthwhile.	37%	32%



Limited Alternatives: Enlisted Only

Enlisted completers had a mean scale score of 3.31 while enlisted non-completers had a mean scale score of 3.29; no significant difference found.

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I would have many options if I decided to leave the Navy.	64	66
Leaving the Navy right now would cause too much of a disruption in my life for it to be worthwhile.	43	34



Limited Alternatives: Officer Only

For officers, completers had a mean scale score of 3.48 while non-completers had a mean scale score of 3.54; no significant difference found.

Percent "Agree"/"Strongly Agree"		
	Completers	Non-Completers
I would have many options if I decided to leave the Navy.	87	91
Leaving the Navy right now would cause too much of a disruption in my life for it to be worthwhile.	31	27




Did you do the original survey?*

	Completers	Non-Completers
Yes	82%	37%
No	5%	35%
Not Sure	13%	28%




Did you do the original survey?: Enlisted Only**



	Completers	Non-Completers
Yes	82	40
No	4	32
Not Sure	14	28



Did you do the original survey?: Officer Only**



	Completers	Non-Completers
Yes	81	33
No	7	40
Not Sure	11	28



Reasons for Non-completion

	Non-Completers
Not interested in topic	7%
Web pages would not load	9%
Did not want to	6%
Concern CoC would see answers	3%
Website blocked for security	5%
More important work demands	26%
Limited computer time	2%
Don't trust organization	0%
Dislike computer surveys	5%
Don't believe results are used	3%
Other	36%

Note: Only those who indicated they did not complete the survey are included in analyses.



Reasons for Non-completion: Enlisted Only

	Non-Completers
Not interested in topic	8
Web pages would not load	10
Did not want to	7
Concern CoC would see answers	3
Website blocked for security	3
More important work demands	22
Limited computer time	3
Don't trust organization	0
Dislike computer surveys	2
Don't believe results are used	3
Other	37

Note: Only those who indicated they did not complete the survey are included in analyses.



Reasons for Non-completion: Officer Only

	Non-Completers
Not interested in topic	4
Web pages would not load	8
Did not want to	4
Concern CoC would see answers	2
Website blocked for security	6
More important work demands	29
Limited computer time	0
Don't trust organization	0
Dislike computer surveys	8
Don't believe results are used	2
Other	35

Note: Only those who indicated they did not complete the survey are included in analyses.



Why do you think response rates to Navy surveys have been declining?

- Overall similar responses between completers and non-completers
- Key issues
 - Lack of time
 - » "Surveys seem much less important than all operational commitments going on"
 - » "As the Navy downsizes, the individual work load increases not leaving much time for voluntary surveys"



Why do you think response rates to Navy surveys have been declining? (continued)

NPRST



- Key issues (continued)
 - Lack of impact/feedback
 - » “No tangible evidence of actions taken as a result of the surveys can be seen”
 - » “99% of the time there is no answer to cries”
 - General survey comments
 - » “Too many surveys, multiple mailings, too low bandwidth on ship”
 - » “They are too long and boring”

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Why do you think response rates to Navy surveys have been declining? (continued)

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- Key issues (continued)
 - Lack of interest
 - » “Because of apathy”
 - » “Because some members don’t really care about it”

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What could the Navy do to increase response rates to surveys?

- Similar suggestions and quantities of suggestions from both completers and non-completers
 - More non-completers included additional comments (often negative) that did not directly relate to the survey question
- Key suggestions
 - Improve survey process or the survey itself
 - » "Make them shorter, and make later questions directly correlated to earlier answers"
 - » "Keep it random and only one every two year per person"
 - » "Do them by mail. I did not complete the first survey because of Internet issues while deployed"
 - » "Online really was easier, no mailing or filling out. It was all right there"



What could the Navy do to increase response rates to surveys? (continued)

- Provide feedback
 - » "Surveys should be two way; once a person is asked to participate feedback should be provided on what the end results of the survey accomplished"
 - » "Prove to sailors our thoughts and opinions are actually being heard/read. Are these surveys really changing anything?"
- Use the command in the process or offer incentives
 - » "Have these surveys be items that are strongly encouraged by chains of command and necessary for going on liberty"
 - » "Give rewards like gasoline cards or phone cards which are very useful"



What other important issues do you think should be asked about on Navy surveys?

- Same basic themes in comments of completers and non-completers
 - Several non-completer comments included more negativity
- Non-respondents tended to speak more of large Navy issues than completers while the opposite was true for Quality of Life Issues



What other important issues do you think should be asked about on Navy surveys? (continued)

- Key issues
 - Navy-wide issues
 - » "Ethical conduct and culture within the Navy"
 - » "Mentorship at the mid-grade level"
 - » "All roads lead to sailor morale - look into how morale and work performance are inter-related"
 - » "Surveys should ask why we feel the way we do about feeling small and having no voice or say in things"



What other important issues do you think should be asked about on Navy surveys? (continued)

- Quality of Life issues, including MWR programs and services from the original survey
 - » “Does the Navy provide adequate resources and/or time to work on obtaining a college degree?”
 - » “Adequate housing issues on and off base”
 - » “How to improve entertainment on/off base for single sailors under age of 21”



Summary

- Importance, use, and satisfaction with MWR programs generally similar between completers and non-completers
 - Lack of statistical differences supports validity of original MWR survey results
- Completers are more likely than non-completers to indicate that MWR contributes to their readiness and is a benefit they consider when deciding to remain in the Navy
- Completers indicate they are more likely to stay in the Navy until retirement, while non-completers indicate they are undecided or will not stay until retirement



Summary (continued)

- Largest (>10%) differences between completers and non-completers relate to Perceived Organizational Support
- Many indicate they and their shipmates are too busy to do surveys
 - Lack of impact of results and lack of interest also key issues
- Consistent desire by respondents to receive feedback on survey results and outcomes



Recommendations

- Provide feedback to Sailors for this and all surveys
 - Determine most effective methods of feedback
- Utilize formal and informal mentorship programs to increase Perceived Organizational Support
- Conduct non-response studies with wider range of survey topics to see if patterns hold for more negative or more sensitive topics
- Explore statistical corrections to larger survey results based on responses of non-respondents






MWR Non-Response Survey

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