

BRAZING NEW TRAILS: CNE UPGRADES TRAINING EQUIPMENT

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GREAT LAKES, Ill. – The Revolution in Navy Training encourages taking a hard look at training to ensure Sailors are being given the right tools for the job. Sometimes though, the right tool for the job is a bigger hammer. Take for example the Hull Technician (HT) C School, Ultrasonic Testing (UT) Operator Course, held at the Center for Naval Engineering (CNE) Site Great Lakes, Ill. HTs enrolled in the course learn to operate ultrasonic testing equipment used to inspect metals and piping in the Fleet. As a preventative maintenance measure, ultrasonic testing grades braze bonds on joints, thickness of plates and piping, and weld conditions. In this case the bigger hammer is the Krautkramer Branson USN-60, the most state-of-the-art piece of ultrasonic testing equipment available to conduct nondestructive testing of metals.

“This is so important to Fleet,” said HTC Floyd Massey, UT phase leader. “These inspections have to be conducted or mishaps will occur.” Massey noted the 1963 sinking of *USS Thresher* (SSN 593) because of a piping failure. “This is about giving our Sailors the right tools to successfully complete the mission, and part of that is making sure our shipmates get home.”

Training commands throughout the Fleet are currently looking for new ways to deliver learning to Sailors. Naval Personnel Development Command’s Learning Centers, such as CNE, are developing resources to ensure Sailors get the right training at the right time, and Sailors are reaping the rewards. But there is no one solution for every training problem; each has to be evaluated on its own merits.

“We have an excellent training program,” said Massey. “The Sailors who come through our doors come to learn, and leave a more valuable asset to the Navy. But all the training in the world, no matter how great it is, will be of no value if the right thing is not taught. In our case, we had to get the best equipment available, or we couldn’t arm our HTs to excel.”

The ultrasonic testing operator training program is held just three times a year with only eight HT students per class. But the intensive seven-week course does more than just make these Sailors more valuable to the Navy. Accreditation earned for successful completion also makes them more valuable in industry. The accreditation is awarded by the American Society of Nuclear Testing and is typically required for shipyard and nuclear power plant pipe weld inspectors.

“This is the kind of forward thinking we need in our training environment,” said Capt. Robert Butler, CNE commanding officer. “It gives Sailors the tools to achieve success and rewards them for their hard work and dedication.”

To learn more, visit the Center for Naval Engineering’s Web page on Navy Knowledge Online at www.nko.navy.mil.