November 28, 2007

From: Chairperson, Board of Advisors to the President, Naval Postgraduate School
To: Secretary of the Navy
Via: (1) President, Naval Postgraduate School
      (2) Chief of Naval Operations
Subj: FORTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ADVISORS TO THE PRESIDENT, NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
Ref: (a) Public Law 92-463, Federal Advisory Committee Act
     (b) SECNAVINST 1524.2B
Encl: (1) List of Board Members and Visitors in Attendance

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Board of Advisors met on October 16, 2007 in Arlington, VA at the Office of Naval Research. Board Members and others in attendance are listed in Enclosure (1).

2. The Board continues to be pleased to report that NPS is delivering an excellent graduate level education to the future leaders of all the armed services and is convinced the current leadership of NPS will ensure the continuing quality of this important institution and enhance its programs substantially for the future.

3. **Flagship Status.** The Board is aware that the Navy at the most senior levels considers NPS as one of its “flagship” institutions along with the Naval Academy and the Naval War College. Such a designation is well-deserved recognition of the academic standing that NPS has achieved. That among other major post-graduate degree-granting institutions, NPS is one of the few that requires a masters thesis for completion of its masters programs is an example of its stature as an education institution of excellence.

Conferring "flagship" status must be more than a label to have the desired effect. A clear definition of what is intended, as well as financial support, policies, appropriate facilities and a governance framework are needed before this approach can fully achieve what is warranted. It is a worthy concept as it will assist in ensuring NPS maintains its elite status for the Navy, but also in the educational community which has quite different
goals, missions and access to resources. Because these differences can make it a challenge for NPS to compete with the nation's best universities for high quality faculty, Navy's support for NPS as a "flagship" can go a long way to helping NPS maintain the high degree of academic excellence so critical to the Navy's mission. The governance structure that is developed to address this designation of "flagship" status should be mindful of the autonomy often desired in a university to maintain its academic rigor.

4. Coast Guard Member. The Board noted that it would be very helpful to have a representative of the Coast Guard on the Board of Advisors as this organization has a notable presence at NPS.

5. Strategic Plan. The Board was encouraged to see the strategic planning process commenced at the direction of the Secretary of the Navy continuing in a positive and productive manner. One of the next steps as this process unfolds in terms of guiding NPS forward will be to develop metrics to assess the progress toward the stated goals.

6. Systems Engineering Curriculum. The Board was delighted that Mr. Carl Siel, Chief Engineer for the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition joined our meeting in the afternoon session. We noted with interest the reference during his presentation to the role of Human Systems Integration (HSI) in the Navy's Systems Engineering program. The upcoming review of the HSI curriculum at NPS, like any curriculum review, is critical to ensuring that the school continues to deliver the right education to the customer. The Board believes that the HSI curriculum review would benefit from participation by a wide range of stakeholders, including all of the Systems Commands and ASN(RDA).

The Board also observed that among major engineering programs at major universities, NPS is uniquely qualified to develop an integrated Systems Engineering program because of the unique nature of its focus and student body.

7. The Importance the Naval Services Accord to Assigning Students. Members of the Board are always impressed by the work of NPS students and by the students themselves. It is one of the genuine pleasures of service on the Board that we have the opportunity to interact with these students each year. As is the case with other military and civilian students, and those from allied and friendly nations, we continue to admire the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps officers who study at the University.
Nevertheless, we are aware that the Navy and Marine Corps processes for choosing and assigning officers to NPS as students are not optimal. We are aware of officers assigned so late in their careers as to make it unlikely that the Navy and Marine Corps will ever realize the value of their schooling following graduation. We know of imbalances in opportunity to attend this fine institution resulting from the differing career patterns of officers in the several warfare and line specialties. We recognize that an NPS education is accorded differing levels of respect from one warfare and line community to the next.

The Board recommends a review of the Navy’s procedures in particular for selecting and assigning its officers as NPS students. It is the view of the Board that an NPS education is of great value to the officer, his or her service, and to the Nation. Therefore, those who are given the opportunity to spend this important time in the rich environment of NPS should be among the best of their communities, with time to serve and compete for Navy’s most important positions in the future.

In the case of the Marine Corps, we recognize there is a perception (and maybe the reality) that assignment to NPS can damage a career. The impact seems to be evident in a long term trend in the decline of applications, making selection rates unusually high; on occasion in past years, the Corps has needed to conduct supplemental selection boards to meet vacancies.

Although we are pleased with the Marine Corps' payback policy for graduates, the unintended consequence of this policy is to keep a number of graduates out of their MOS or other promotion competitive billets for around 5 years. This is certainly not true in all cases, and a solid number of graduates map directly to very credible assignments. It is possible that added flexibility in payback assignments to allow MOS competitiveness immediately following graduation may change both the reality and the perception of career damage to NPS graduates. Although we recognize there is an up front personnel cost, there may be real long term benefits with respect to career prospects for those in whom this significant investment has been made to the benefit of both the Marine Corps and graduate Marine.

We recommend a comprehensive and open review of selection and assignment be conducted to ensure the Marine Corps is maximizing the value of the significant personnel investment made with NPS.
8. Accreditation process. The Board was pleased to hear about the progress NPS is making towards accreditation and notes the upcoming visits. Both regional and specialized (engineering, business, and public administration) accreditation are extremely important for NPS and the Navy. It is imperative that NPS and the Navy spend the time and resources to assure educational processes, facilities, laboratories, governance and policies are in place to guarantee successful accreditation. To that end, the Board will receive progress reports and each meeting and will review the pertinent accreditation documents. The Board will focus at its next meeting at NPS campus on the quality of facilities and infrastructure and other related issues that could be relevant to the accreditation process.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. G. Kim Wincup

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NPS BOA Members
Forty-eighth Meeting of The Board of Advisors to the President,
Naval Postgraduate School
16 October 2007
Arlington, VA

MEMBERSHIP ATTENDANCE LISTING
Mr. G. Kim Wincup, Board Chair
VADM (Ret) Lee Gunn, Vice Chair
Mr. Walter Anderson
ADM (Ret) Stanley Arthur
Dr. Robert Fossum
VADM (Ret) David Frost
RADM William Landay, USN
ADM (Ret) T. Joseph Lopez
Dr. Elisabeth Paté-Cornell
Dr. Graham B. Spanier
BGen Melvin Spiese, USMC
CDR James Dick, USN (for VADM John Harvey)

INVITED ATTENDEES
CAPT Richard Scudder, USN, Vice Commandant AFIT
Mr. William Navas, Office of the Assistant SECNAV
Mr. Carl Siel, Office of the Assistant SECNAV

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
VADM (Ret) Daniel Oliver, President
Dr. Leonard Ferrari, Provost
Dr. Julie Filizetti, Associate Provost
Mr. Tom Hazard, NPS National Capital Region
Dr. James Kays, Graduate School of Engineering & Applied Sciences Dean
Mr. Bob Beck, Graduate School of Business & Public Policy Dean

DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICIAL
Ms. Jaye Panza