



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
PROGRAM EXECUTIVE OFFICER, COLUMBIA
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WASHINGTON NAVY YARD, DC 20376-7003

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PEO CLB/0009
19 Apr 2021

MEMORANDUM

From: Executive Director, Program Executive Office COLUMBIA
To: Pennsylvania Industry Partners

Subj: PENNSYLVANIA PIPELINE PROJECT: BUILDING AND SUSTAINING THE
FUTURE MARITIME DEFENSE WORKFORCE

1. Purpose:

a. The purpose of this memo is to communicate the Navy shipbuilding/sustainment enterprise engagement and support for enhancing the capability and capacity of the defense industrial base workforce across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (PA). Over the last decade, our joint maritime ecosystem has been challenged to sustainably and holistically address the human capital demand and trade skill gaps impacting our success in building and maintaining Navy platforms and systems. We must collectively use this opportunity to benchmark for the ways we recruit, train, and retain our current and future maritime workforce.

b. As we work towards the plan for an increasingly complex and growing future shipbuilding force structure, the Shipbuilding Industrial Base Task Force (within Naval Sea Systems Command), collaboratively with the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Industrial Base Analysis and Sustainment (IBAS) program, have been working across the Government-Industry team to understand and address Enterprise-wide challenges and constraints. Universally, workforce and technical trade skills are at the top of that list and are a leading indicator of Navy program performance.

2. Perspective & Opportunity:

a. With more critical suppliers than any other state in the U.S., the shipbuilding enterprise has hundreds of millions of dollars of important work that relies on PA's industrial capability, capacity, and great quality. We are now focused on addressing workforce constraints in order to maximize those investments and optimize Navy-Industry execution. We have spent the last several months engaging across defense stakeholders, regional supply chains, and state and local government organizations in an effort to align and inform a workforce development pipeline pilot planned for implementation in the greater Philadelphia area in Fall 2021. These same pipeline efforts will then be scaled and executed across the state.

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b. To accelerate this effort and build upon best practices, the Navy is leveraging a proven talent acquisition and retention model designed, developed and implemented in a Virginia maritime region. In coordination with industry partners and regional academic institutions, the model's framework is built on creating and sustaining a maritime and defense industrial base pipeline that enables vendors to re-capitalize their workforce through recruiting, hiring, training, and retaining the critical trade skills required to meet the demand.

3. The Partnership:

a. Building a stronger, more resilient maritime industrial base workforce center of gravity across Pennsylvania – particularly in the wake of a post-pandemic environment – requires that we re-imagine the way we plan for and develop the human capital aspects of our business. Hiring new, skilled employees and building bench strength in our existing workforce will require a networked community and innovative approaches that overcome some challenging inefficiencies in the technical trade skills market. The overlap of desired trade skills into adjacent market spaces, compounded by high rates of attrition from an experienced legacy workforce and a cultural focus on four year academic degrees, have created the exact set of circumstances that require urgent and aligned workforce-centered action.

b. Collectively, we must capitalize on the gains and partnerships that are being fostered across Pennsylvania's government, industry, and academic spheres as we look to preserve our capability to innovate and execute faster and better than anyone else. Over the next several months, and leading up to program kickoff later this year, we want to collaborate with you to build a clear strategy on how to grow and develop people to best support *your* needs.

c. As a critical stakeholder in the early success of the Pennsylvania Pipeline Project, please consider this an invitation for your active collaboration, engagement, and advocacy as we move forward in our Philadelphia pilot, and rapidly expand those opportunities to maritime and defense supply chains across the state. We will continue communicating next steps as we work towards tackling one of the greatest challenges facing our defense Enterprise, and we encourage your questions, comments, and ideas as we work to break down barriers and align priorities.

4. The Navy's point of contact for this effort is Mrs. Whitney Jones, whitney.b.jones1.ctr@navy.mil. Whitney has been working closely with the program management and oversight team at Training Modernization Group, Inc. (TMG), led by Mr. Joe Barto, as well as various key stakeholders on the Philadelphia Navy Yard Annex to include both Rhoads Industries and Philly Shipyard.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. D. Sermon', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

M. D. SERMON