

# CNO Discusses Building Navy Of The Future

WASHINGTON (NNS) -- Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Vern Clark detailed many aspects of the future Navy and the service's transformation efforts during an interview with the Defense Writers Group March 2.

Throughout the interview, Clark stressed the importance of the Fleet Response Plan, manning initiatives, and new flexibility-enhancing technologies like the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), and how they play major roles in adapting the Navy to current and conceivable future world situations.

"If there's one message for me to get across to you this morning, it's that we are re-creating the Navy," said Clark. "The value of naval forces is that they're not fixed, they are mobile and they can respond. With the sovereignty issues of the world today, we need to be able to extract as much utility as we can from our Navy."

One way the Navy plans to extract utility from the fleet is through the flexibility provided in the Fleet Response Plan, by incorporating it with new concepts of forward presence and power projection.

"I have talked a lot about presence with a purpose. It means to go after challenging assumptions about our ideas on presence," Clark said. "I'm not in love with six-month heel-to-toe deployments just so we can say we did six-month heel-to-toe deployments. We are revolutionizing the way we think about how we equip and train our forces so we can get more utility out of them, and that's what FRP is all about. So in a crisis, when our nation needs it, we'll be able to surge more combat capability than ever before."

Another way the CNO believes more utility can be extracted from the Navy is through the pursuit of a more effective 21st century human

resources strategy, and leading the charge on pursuing an efficient end strength level to accommodate new and emerging operational requirements. At the same time, Sailors will see an increase in job content and increased opportunities to make a difference.

"One of the bottom line issues is: how do I run this place more effectively?" said Clark. "Everything I'm looking at developing into the future is through new manning concepts. I fully expect that we're going to expand this kind of thinking in every area we can to make the force more productive."

Productivity of the force is also dependent on the acquisition of new ships and airframes that contribute to mission efficiency. Clark stressed the importance of getting rid of old systems that take time and money away from acquiring new ones that would increase readiness and mission capability.

"Flexible platforms like LCS and DD(X), manned by talented and professional Sailors, are the key to dominating the maritime now and in the future," said Clark.

When asked about the pace of the Littoral Combat Ship program that would increase the Navy's capability to operate in many of the most dangerous and strategic areas of operation it enters Clark responded, "When I go to the Hill, I testify that I need LCS tomorrow morning."

"It is important for us to develop military capability that can respond to different circumstances, and that's exactly the kind of Navy that I'm trying to develop," said Clark.

"I'm trying to develop a Navy that is not wed to one particular problem set that will occur with great clarity. I just don't think the world is like that. We must focus on a capabilities-based military. I can't endorse that approach any stronger."