

Bronze Star awarded to Naval Reserve RP

JO1 (SW) Jason McKnight
Navy Region Southwest Public Affairs

MIRAMAR, Calif. – RP1(FMF) Robert Page was awarded a Bronze Star at a ceremony held during the 25th Anniversary of the Religious Program Specialist rating luncheon at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Officer's Club Jan. 23.

Attached to First Marine Expeditionary Force (1 MEF) at Camp Pendleton, Page earned the medal for his actions near An Nasariya, Iraq, in March while supporting Operations *Enduring* and *Iraqi Freedom*.

Page is a Naval Reservist with 16 years of prior service in the Marine Corps. Most have been inactive as infantry, but he made the switch to Navy so that he could be associated with military religious ministry, he said.

The self-effacing Page said he didn't feel like a hero.

"I don't know what a hero feels like," he said. "My wife is a hero. The Rabbi is a hero."

He went on to say that the medal, with the Combat Distinguishing Device 'V' for Valor, indicating direct combat involvement, was for all religious program specialists (RP), and that he wanted his wife to know that he couldn't have done it if it wasn't for her.

The medal was pinned on by the same man whose life Page guarded, Rabbi (CDR) Irvin Elson.

"Without this man acting as he did, I probably wouldn't be here today," said Elson. "My family would be without a husband and father."

Page's citation described some of the action, but Page went more in depth with several local media representatives who attended the event.

"We were headed through Nasariya and came under fire from a bus full of Iraqi soldiers who were using innocent civilian passengers as human shields," he said. "I did the best I could to get the Rabbi down as low as I could to protect him, while the rest of the unit returned fire and tried to flank the enemy soldiers."

"We came under fire while the Rabbi was ministering to the wounded," said Page. "I heard a slapping noise as bullets came in and hit the ground nearby. I saw one shot hit the ground near the Rabbi's head and said 'That's it, let's go.'"

Elson said Page was very dedicated to his duty as a bodyguard.

"I'm not a small guy, and when RP1 [Page] said 'let's go,' he literally picked me up and threw me about five feet away from where the bullets were hitting the ground," Elson said. "I'm so glad that God saw fit to put us together at that place and time."

Page said he and the Rabbi once found themselves between friendly artillery and enemy soldiers hiding inside buildings forward of their position, while they were ministering on the battlefield.

"That's a scary thing," he said. "Seeing your own artillery muzzles being lowered down, and you're out in front of them as they open up almost point blank."

Fear might have been present on the battlefield, but as both Page and Elson put it, faith and friendship helped keep them both going.

"There were times when I would say 'I just can't do this any more,'" said Elson. "Then RP1 would kick me and tell me I'd have to. We did that for each other when one of us would get that way."

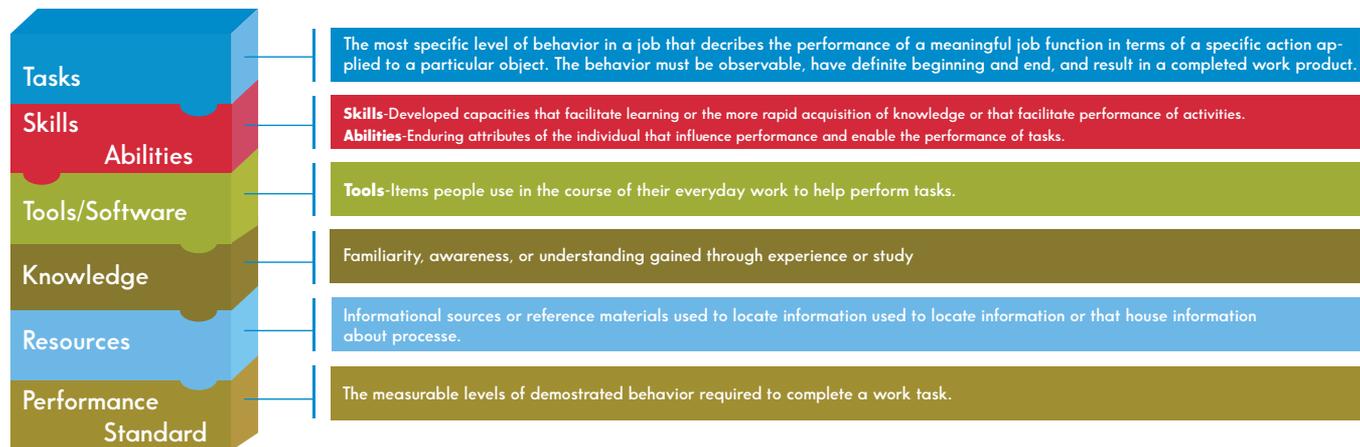
"I was reactivated last November," Page said. "I just got word that I'm going back to Iraq."

But he's not worried, Page said.

"I'm traveling with the world's finest. I'm traveling with God."

WHAT IS A SKILLOBJECT?

Key SkillObject Metadata Elements



SkillObjects are re-usable detailed descriptions of what people do in accomplishing work

SELRES Civilian Skills Project

Sea Warrior's Civilian Occupation Project is Crucial to Your Career

NEW ORLEANS – The Navy's Reserve Civilian Skills Project is being launched this month to establish an Authoritative Database of Selected Reserve (SELRES) Civilian Occupation SkillObjects™ to support the Sea Warrior initiative.

A SkillObject™ is a “named” set of data describing what people do in accomplishing both critical and important work. It incorporates a number of elements such as tasks performed, tools used, knowledge required, etc. This project parallels active Navy's initiative, “Improving the Navy's Workforce,” in which all Navy work is being captured and defined in SkillObjects™ in order to pioneer real changes in human resource management.

Beginning this month, SELRES will have the opportunity to initiate this project by completing a Job Profiler, a web-based SkillsNET™ software tool designed to capture existing civilian job tasks, capabilities, and resources required to be successful in all aspects of their jobs. The first step of the process is for each SELRES to access the Job Profiler through Navy Knowledge Online at www.nko.navy.mil, select a pre-existing occupational title, and then modify the data (tasks, tools, unique knowledge) about the selected occupation. SELRES will rate themselves on their proficiency in their identified tasks. (Detailed instructions are provided. Estimated average completion time is one hour.)

After SELRES have completed profiling their individual jobs in the Job Profiler, a team of skill analysts working on this project will organize this information for creation of the SkillObjects™. This effort will take the skills analysts several months to complete. These SkillObjects will be loaded into their Five-Vector Model (5VM) and become an integral part of their personal skill resume.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why should SELRES participate in this program?

A: This is a CNO-sponsored initiative that has national importance. Never before have SELRES contributed so much to the active forces. It is critical to recognize that SELRES bring a broader set of skills to active duty, integrating

civilian work skills with military ones for enhanced performance capacity. Applying this unique mix of skills with better assignments, better use of training, and better use of drills will provide for a more exciting and fulfilling experience for the SELRES, while enhancing our Nation's capacity to respond to new threats in a new world order. From a career management perspective, the SELRES information will become part of their Five Vector Model, augmenting Navy SkillObjects™ evaluated for billet assignments, Active Duty for Special Work (ADSW) opportunities, rating/designator changes, and advancement.

Q: SELRES are continuously being asked to update personal data similar to this. What makes this effort different?

A: This project, not only captures basic civilian employment data previously required by the Department of Defense, but also drills down in defining and capturing actual skill competencies acquired by Reservists in their civilian jobs. It defines those competencies in the same language (SkillObjects™) as active Navy work used within the 5VM.

Q: Where do I go for help if experiencing problems?

A: For technical problems (i.e. the Web-based survey is down) call (972) 923-2950, ext. 105. For application problems while completing the survey, call the Tele Analyst Service helpline at (469) 337-2515.

Q: Is this project collecting individual information in order to involuntarily activate SELRES based on their civilian occupations?

A: No. However, that being said, there will be interest in applying both military and civilian capabilities when and where possible to make for the best opportunity for the Navy and the SELRES to excel.

Q: What will happen with the data once the project is completed?

A: This data will become part of the Navy's 5VM and will be included in the future Career Management System and Skills Management System for the Navy. Information will be used to enhance our overall approach to training and assignments where feasible.

—COMNAVRESFORCOM N5

Navy's Sea Warrior Reserve civilian skills project Accelerates Our Advantages

Within the emerging world of Sea Warrior, your civilian skills are a bonus for you and the Navy

NEW ORLEANS – Many Selected Reservists (SELRES) bring an additional wealth of civilian knowledge, skills and abilities to the Navy far beyond their military capabilities

The Navy wants to capture and reward those extraordinary skills.

“The value the individual Reservist brings to the Navy encompasses far more than his military training, and always has,” said CAPT Carl Hill, program manager for the Naval Reserve Sea Warrior integration program. “Skills learned as a civilian broaden the Reservist's perspective and increase his or her ability to perform. The Sea Warrior Five-Vector model is being developed to capture and display the added value.”

SELRES will eventually be able to apply their civilian capabilities in new and different ways in their Reserve careers and accelerate their advancement. They will be given credit for their civilian expertise as well as their military capabilities. A Reservist's civilian job skills will become increasingly important in determining Navy training, assignments, and career paths. The end result will make it easier for you, the Reservist, to change ratings, find new billets, and apply for extra active duty. Some Reservists have begun the process.

It's a recipe for success, according to a Norfolk police officer. CSCS Ollan Burruss, a 22-year veteran of the Navy and Naval Reserve, likes to cook, but as a Metro-Tactical-Unit police officer found himself serving as Command Senior Chief for NR Naval Security Oceana. RADM David O. Anderson, director of force integration at Fleet Forces Command, was aware of the senior chief's background and tapped him to organize security for the hangars, airfields and grounds of Naval Station Norfolk. While the Navy lost an accomplished chef, it gained 15 years of security expertise.

Burruss' job change allowed him to provide valuable assistance that increased the level of security for the Navy.

“This allows me, as a Reservist, to provide a product to active duty that fits their need,” Burruss said. “We have unlimited talent and abilities ... [but] have never tapped into the full resources available to us in the Reserves.”

More changes are sure to be on tomorrow's menu.

—COMNAVRESFORCOM N5



NEPLO

THE NAVY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS LIAISON OFFICER

“saving lives & reducing suffering”

WANTED: Senior Naval Reservists with extraordinary leadership skills. They must be poised and level headed in a crisis; able to perform their Naval Reserve drills during the regular work week; highly organized; vigilant networkers of people and resources; willing to hustle for long periods of time in questionable conditions; and capable of mobilizing for unspecified lengths of time in support of state and national crisis.

CAPT Jean Roberts
CNRF ESC PAO

Clearly, not everybody is cut out to be a Navy Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer (NEPLO, pronounced nep-lo). However, for those who do possess the necessary skills and who excel under stressful conditions, it can be one of the most rewarding and vital jobs in the entire Naval Reserve Force because, as R.P. Davis, the program's manager since 1986 explains, "NEPLOs save lives and reduce suffering by using their leadership and problem-solving skills gained through years of service."

What type of activities do NEPLOs support?

When there is a state or national crisis, a NEPLO is there. In fact, since the program's inception in the early 1980s, NEPLOs have served during everything from wildfires, earthquakes, mudslides, tornadoes, ice storms, floods, aircraft

crashes, and hurricanes to acts of terrorism. NEPLOs have even served in Presidential inaugurations, Olympic games, and a G-8 Conference. That information alone is impressive, but it's only part of the NEPLO story.

What exactly does a NEPLO do?

It is the NEPLO who makes Navy expertise and resources available to civilian governmental agencies. Because peoples' lives can depend on the prompt and accurate response of a NEPLO, Davis points out "NEPLOs don't train: they do!"

How do NEPLOs prepare?

The gravity of the job demands that long before a NEPLO ever arrives at the scene of a crisis, that person has become thoroughly familiar with all local emergency response plans and has established a solid working relationships with vital links to fire, police and emergency services personnel. Additionally, with the increased threat levels against our nation, NEPLOs find themselves coordinating with an ever-widening range of community officials in an attempt to



prepare for terrorist-initiated disasters. Because a NEPLO needs to know and understand specific community concerns, most NEPLOs live and work within the state they represent.

Who decides when NEPLOs are needed?

Under a Department of Defense mission known as Military Support to Civilian Authorities (MSCA), a NEPLO receives orders to duty when the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) invokes its statutory authority to request and receive military support. It is at that time that the NEPLO is called to what has been described as the ultimate independent duty assignment because it is the NEPLO who represents the Navy in MSCA's urgent mission, and it is the NEPLO who directly works for the active duty Navy flag officer, and when reporters speak with the Navy representative, it is the NEPLO standing there in a Navy uniform whose words tell the nation that the Navy is present and making a difference in people's lives.

NEPLOs support the Regional Planning Agent

In the advent of civil disasters or emergencies, civil disturbances and other emergencies that may threaten National Security, each Navy activity comes under a Regional Planning Agent (RPA). RPAs are designated Navy commanders assigned a specific geographical area of responsibility that, in most cases, covers a number of states.

- Seven are within CONUS.
 - Four are assigned to Commander-in-Chief Atlantic Fleet.
 - Three are assigned to Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet.
 - Other RPAs are assigned to the Pacific and Caribbean areas.
- Because the NEPLO is the RPA representative, it is the NEPLOs job

to facilitate and assist Navy installations in working with each other and with the civil and military officials on the state, regional and national levels.

Joint Operations

Added to that is the NEPLO's joint operation challenge of working in sync with Army and Air Force Reserve liaison officers, plus with Marine Corps, Coast Guard, FEMA officials, National Guard officers and state emergency management coordinators.

Joint operations can be highly demanding, especially in pressure-cooker type situations. The NEPLO must have a keen ability to effectively jump into a highly diverse team of professionals and not miss a single beat.

NEPLOs coordinate the use of Navy resources in disaster response operations. Well before a state or national crisis arises, they work diligently to identify Navy civil emergency response capabilities and prepare plans that protect key assets. Additionally, NEPLOs are masters at networking with community emergency preparedness officials so that in a crisis, everybody is already familiar with existing plans, policy, and personnel.

"Senior Naval Reserve officers are ideally suited for this work because they combine professional military accomplishment and leadership in the Navy with familiarity with the civilian realities of their respective home states," said Davis. "Being a NEPLO is about helping fellow Americans when they need it the most."

For more information about the NEPLO program, visit the following Web site: www.neplo.navfac.navy.mil. ♦