

DEPLOYMENT FOR TRAINING, TRAINING, TRAINING

By PN2 David R. Bowman

For Seabees, training is a way of life. Regardless if they are in homeport or deployed, Seabees are always conducting some sort of training. Whether it's training on equipment, medical/first aid, General Military Training (GMT), physical readiness, their individual rates, or Seabee Combat Warfare Specialist (SCWS), Seabees are among the most training oriented personnel in the Navy. For the men and women of a Deployment for Training (DFT), the name says it all. Personnel are on the DFT to provide construction (either Humanitarian Assistance or Exercise Related) while learning a little bit more about their own ratings, other rates, different cultures, and each other. The DFT provides every member an opportunity to understand how a Battalion truly operates while participating in and observing a small-scale version of the Battalion in action.

Although DFT Grenada has been on island for only three weeks, both the Task Force Commander (TFC), LT Anthony Conley, and Executive Officer, UTC (SCW) Michael Nasso, have already begun intensive physical, general military, and SCWS training programs. "This training isn't mandatory, but it will make you better Seabees," directs Nasso. "A little over half the personnel attached to this DFT are not SCWS qualified, so we have a little work to do," states BU1 (SCW) Jonathon Poellot. "They have to take some initiative, but I know they can do it." Based on the number of personnel needing to get SCWS qualified, the TFC has issued a realistic goal of getting five personnel their "pins" by the end of the DFT. "I think we have the capability of getting more than that qualified, but a lot depends on the member's own initiative," stated LT Conley. "There are a handful of guys with the drive and motivation to pass their boards; I just hope it becomes infectious and spreads to the other members in the program."

In addition to the GMT and SCWS training, many DFT personnel are busy getting on-the-job training (OJT) in the operation of battalion Civil Engineering Support Equipment (CESE). "Licensing and proper operation of

equipment is the cornerstone of Alfa Company itself,” explains EO2 Nathan Elling, DFT Grenada’s Road Master and Accident Investigator. “Without qualified EO’s and CM’s, all the equipment in the world would be no good. We’ve got to know how to run it and fix it.” This attitude is exactly what the DFT will need to be successful this deployment. Right now, they are off to a good start.



UTC(SCW) instructs DFT Grenada personnel in the proper way to set up and conduct a SCWS oral board.