

When no other means of communication between stations exists, runners may be used to pass messages between them. In damage-control situations, preprinted message pads facilitate passing information between the scene of the casualty and damage-control central.

The general, chemical and collision alarms sound over the 1MC system; each has a distinctive sound that should be familiar to everyone in the crew. Additional specialized alarm systems, such as high-temperature alarms and flooding alarms, are monitored by particular watch stations.

## STAFF ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS

*No military or naval force, in war, can accomplish anything worthwhile unless there is back of it the work of an efficient, loyal, and devoted staff.*

—Lieutenant General Hunter Liggett

*And so, while the great ones depart to their dinner, the secretariat works—and gets thinner and thinner.*

—British military jingle

Staffs are assigned to flag officers or other senior officers who are in command of a group of subordinate commands. A commander who is not a flag officer normally has the title Commodore.

Staffs are absolutely essential for the smooth functioning of a military organization. No commander acting alone, however versatile and intelligent, can hope to gather and collate all of the information available, make a reasoned and correct decision, organize assigned personnel and forces, and then issue detailed orders for the execution of the decision. A staff is the organization that exists to assist the commander in all of these functions.

Because military operations are increasingly employed in joint or federal interagency settings under reactive or contingency circumstances, staff composition and organization have adapted accordingly. In practice, depending on their function, staffs may be organized differently from the notional staff organization described in this chapter.

Staffs vary widely in size, from the handful of officers and dozen enlisted personnel on the staff of a destroyer squadron commander to the hundreds of personnel assisting the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). A staff may have a largely administrative function if assigned to a commander in the administrative chain of

command, or an operational function if assigned to an operational commander, or both if assigned to a commander who has a role in both chains of command.

## General Staff Functions

A staff exists for one purpose: to assist the commander in carrying out the functions of command for which he or she is responsible. These include operational functions and supporting functions. Operational functions are the missions assigned to the command: making decisions, evaluating intelligence, and formulating plans for executing missions. Supporting functions provide for the welfare of assigned personnel, for training, for personnel management, and for supply and allocation of resources.

The magnitude of these functions will vary with the commander's mission. For example, an administrative commander is concerned mainly with support to the fleet: personnel administration, basic-phase training, and maintenance and repair of ships and aircraft. These support tasks form the basis for operational functions. An operational commander is more concerned with advanced training for combat and with planning, supervising, and evaluating the execution of combat operations. Regardless of the mission and size of a staff organization, some basic functions are common to all staffs.

Effective staff organization ensures the staff's ability to furnish maximum assistance to the commander. In addition, efficient staff work, which relies on a good organizational structure, is essential to the accomplishment of the commander's mission. For this reason, staff organizations follow a standardized plan for dividing the work of the staff, for assigning personnel to positions on the staff, and for delegating authority and assigning duties within the staff organization.

*Liaison with Other Commands.* The following discussion of duties applies to all types of staffs.

Coordinated teamwork is the essence of not only successful military operations but also efficient staff functioning. The operations of a naval task force or strike group, often involving all the elements of the armed forces of the United States and of allied powers, require extensive liaison between members of the staff and commanders as well as with staff members of other armed forces. Staff officers must conduct liaison in a courteous and cooperative manner, keeping the commander fully informed, as tentative agreements reached at staff levels are not binding on the commander. The vast scope of naval and joint operations, particularly in amphibious operations, and the complex interrelation of forces and types make good staff work essential.

*Completed Staff Work.* It is not sufficient for a staff officer to bring a problem to the commander's attention and wait for guidance on how to resolve it. When a staff officer presents an issue to the commander for decision, it should normally be in the format of a smooth point paper (never a rough draft) as discussed in chapter 8. Staff officers are responsible for researching all aspects of issues in their areas and for providing detailed but succinct information to the commander, including the pros and cons of various options and thoughtful recommendations for action. A good staff officer never asks the commander "What do you want to do?" or "How should we handle this?" He or she should be flexible enough to accommodate changes in plans, if the commander overrules his or her recommended action.

*Providing Advice to the Commander.* A staff officer must be willing to tell the commander that a planned action would be a mistake. As Major General Orland Ward, USA, said in 1934, "A yes man on a staff is a menace to the commander. One with the courage to express his convictions is an asset." However, once you have made your objections clear, you are obligated to carry out your commander's orders to the best of your ability.

## **Navy Staff Organization**

A staff's organization will depend on its mission and size. While staffs are generally organized by standard operational functions for consistency and to facilitate external liaison with other organizations and patterned after the joint staff, there are many variations on the pattern described below. In addition, as threats and technology evolve, staff organizations change to optimize their effectiveness, as evidenced by the ongoing process of reorganization within the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) staff itself.

Although the division heads, sometimes called assistant chiefs of staff or deputy chiefs of staff, are all on the same level organizationally, they may be of widely disparate ranks. The chain of staff authority extends from the commander to the chief of staff (or chief staff officer) and on down through each division, but does not cross from one division to another.

## **Navy Staff Functions**

*Chief of Staff.* The chief of staff (COS) is the senior officer on an admiral's staff. Instead of a chief of staff, the officer assigned to coordinate the activities of a commodore's staff is called a chief staff officer (CSO). The COS or CSO functions much as an XO does. He or she keeps the commander informed of the condition and situation of the command, of subordinate commands and other commands in the

theater of operations; advises the commander on administrative matters; supervises administrative work; and coordinates staff activities. The COS or CSO signs routine correspondence for the commander, except those concerning policy or legal action; and acts for the commander on issues for which the commander's policy is known, such as requests for repairs and maintenance, endorsements of routine correspondence, and orders to subordinate officers other than flag officers. If the admiral delegates this authority, his or her COS may exercise nonjudicial-punishment authority for the admiral.

*Flag Secretary.* The flag secretary is a personal aide who, on many staffs, acts as assistant COS for administration. He or she is responsible for routing, filing, and managing incoming and outgoing correspondence and message traffic; for managing the commander's directives and instructions; for administering the flag office; and for supervising the preparation of evaluations and fitness reports.

*Flag Lieutenant.* The personal aide to a flag officer (flag lieutenant) looks out for such matters as honors, presentations of awards, official calls, uniforms, entertainment, invitations, and liaisons with other organizations. He or she schedules the commander's calls; maintains the commander's schedule; arranges transportation; and keeps the COS, staff duty officer, OOD of the flagship, and other interested persons advised as to the commander's prospective movements.

In addition, the flag lieutenant tends the side upon the arrival and departure of the commander, visiting flag and general officers, and other dignitaries, and serves as flag signal officer. In this latter capacity, the flag aide is responsible to the staff communications officer and, on many flagships, is responsible for all visual signaling to and from the flagship and the performance of all signal personnel, whether assigned to the ship or staff.

*Principal Assistants and Deputies.* Assignments and titles of staff division heads depend in large measure on the mission of the staff. Administrative staffs have different primary functions than do operational staffs, and their organization reflects that difference. Although no staff will have an assistant or deputy COS in every one of the positions described below, the following numbering system is fairly standard throughout the Navy.

- *N<sub>1</sub>, Administration and Personnel.* The officer heading the administration division is often also the flag secretary. In addition to the duties already discussed for the flag secretary, he or she advises the commander on the formulation of command administrative policies and handles all administrative matters for assigned staff personnel. N<sub>1</sub> also supervises training for enlisted staff members.
- *N<sub>2</sub>, Intelligence.* The head of the intelligence division formulates and implements policies pertaining to combat intelligence, counterintelligence, infor-

mation operations, and public information. The intelligence officer also keeps the commander and staff informed as to the capabilities of present and potential enemies by the collection, evaluation, interpretation, and dissemination of information regarding the enemy, hydrography, terrain, and weather. Through liaison with subordinate, parallel, and higher commands, and by use of all existing sources of intelligence, including aviation, satellite, and submarine visual and photographic reconnaissance, he or she strives to maintain accurate and current intelligence on all actual and potential enemies. The Navy staff was recently reorganized to combine N2 and N6, as well as other information capabilities, into a single organization (N2/N6) under the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information Dominance.

- *N3, Operations.* The operations division is the primary executive element of the staff. The operations officer is responsible for the functions that relate to organization and command: training, preparing and issuing directives for combat operations and training exercises, and managing related reports. He or she also prepares operation orders, prepares the command employment schedule, issues the necessary movement orders, keeps track of the location and movement of ships and units assigned to the command, and advises the commander on the assignment of ships and other units to task groups to perform specific tasks. On the Navy staff, N3 and N5 are combined as N3/N5, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Information, Plans and Strategy.
- *N4, Logistics.* The logistics division is responsible for advising the commander on all matters relating to logistics and material. Logistics is essential to strategy and the execution of operations and is emphasized throughout the planning process. The assistant chief of staff for logistics prepares studies for proposed operations and the logistics annex for all operational orders and plans. He or she maintains full liaison with subordinate, parallel, and senior commands.
- *N5, Plans.* This officer prepares and develops operation plans, monitors force levels and structure, and makes plans to carry out all assigned missions of the commander under peacetime, limited-war, or general-war conditions. As previously described, on the OPNAV staff, N3 and N5 are combined into a single division.
- *N6, Communications.* This officer is responsible for providing adequate, rapid communication within the command and with other commands, and for operation of the message center. Normally, cyberwarfare falls under the N6 umbrella, as do information warfare activities that don't fall within the

purview of N2. As previously described, on the OPNAV staff, N2 and N6 are combined.

- *N7, Readiness and Training.* This officer conducts readiness inspections, reviews inspection reports, and oversees training of individuals, ships, units, and special task organizations.
- *N8, Resources and Assessment.* This officer is the commander's representative in the development of primary mission assessment and procurement.
- *Other Staff Officers.* In addition to the positions described above, staffs may include a chaplain, medical officer, staff JAG officer, PAO, meteorologist, and other specialists. These officers are typically assigned three-digit numerical codes beginning with the number 01.

*Staff Duty Officers.* The COS designates certain staff officers to take turns being staff duty officer on watch at sea and to perform a day's duty in port. In port, the staff duty officer receives routine reports and acts on routine matters as necessary in the absence of other staff officers. He or she regulates the use of staff boats and tends the side on all occasions of ceremony or when officers of command or flag rank are visiting; sees all message traffic; and takes prompt action on those messages requiring immediate attention. In the absence of the flag secretary, the staff duty officer examines incoming mail and takes appropriate action as required.

The duties of the staff duty officer assume special importance when, in the absence of the commander and COS, he or she is called upon to make decisions in an emergency or other urgent situation. For this reason it is imperative that officers on duty keep informed as to the status quo, the policies of the commander, and the appropriate actions in various situations. In port, in an emergency, and in the absence of the admiral and COS, the staff duty officer may refer the situation to the senior unit CO present.

When the flagship is under way, the staff duty officer represents the admiral in much the same way as the OOD represents the CO. He or she must remain abreast of the formation and location of ships and units, of the navigational situation, and of any significant scheduled events. The staff duty officer makes reports to the admiral and COS as required.

## **Relationships between Staff and Flagship Personnel**

Officers serving in a flagship or on the staff of an embarked commander are involved daily in relationships between members of the staff and flagship crew.

*Relationship between Flag and Flagship Officers.* A flagship crew plays a dual role. The CO is at all times responsible for the safety of the ship and its performance,

but the CO and the ship are answerable to the embarked commander. While under way, the flagship maneuvers as directed by the signals from the officer in tactical command (OTC). When the embarked commander is OTC, he or she may verbally direct the flagship to maneuver, in which case the flagship must notify other ships in company.

The embarked commander takes over responsibility for the operation of all communications of the flagship, absorbing into his or her organization the members of the flagship communication unit. This unit is then responsible to the flagship for all communications.

*Staff Officers' Responsibilities.* Staff officers embarked in a ship must always be careful to respect the flagship's unity of command. When making requests to the ship in the name of the admiral, staff officers should always make requests directly to the CO or XO, and preface them with "The admiral desires that you . . .".

All officers and enlisted personnel who serve in a ship, except for the commander, are subject to the authority of the CO and to his or her discipline and punishment. Staff officers have no authority of their own; all of their authority comes from the admiral.

Shore leave and liberty for staff members should conform as closely as possible to that of the flagship. Flag watch, quarter, and station bills should be kept up to date, and flag personnel, unless excused by proper authority, should observe calls to general drills promptly. Staff compartments, lockers, berthing, and messing areas should be kept in a condition on par with or better than that of similar ship facilities.