

Depot gets O- and I-level commands seats on the AIRSpeed bus

By Berti Humphrey

NAVAIR Depot North Island artisans and engineers have come to the aid of organizational- and intermediate-level activities by giving them a better seat on the naval aviation AIRSpeed bus. The Depot's surface and components branch (Code 6.2.3) and engineers in Code 4.3.4 have teamed up to revise and reinstitute the once taught class at North Island in the 1980s, Advance Composite Repair Training course for F/A-18 fleet maintainers.

In the past, the Depot provided O- and I-level maintenance activities, at their request, on-the-job training through the aircraft support, and composites, metal and fiberglass shops. But now that the Depot has renewed the Advance Composite Repair syllabus, Sailors at the O- and I-levels can enhance their own repair capabilities.

Supervisors, managers and artisans in Code 6.2.3 formed a core team along with an engineering support team from the Depot Materials Laboratory. The teams diligently combined their efforts and talents to meet the challenge of reinstituting the course.

The course affords O- and I-level maintenance personnel the opportunity to learn from formal and practical training in advance composite repair for F/A-18 Hornet components. It also allows Sailors to perform more in-depth repairs resulting in a reduction of components being returned to the supply system as Beyond Capability of Maintenance (BCM). This will help to reduce the number of components turned into the supply system, thereby avoiding the cost of having to procure replacement components.

Revising the training course is another example in which we support the fleet with quality service by continually engaging warfighters to understand their challenges, solve problems, create new capabilities, and provide essential support.

The three-weeklong course, held in a dedicated "classroom" in Building 250, consists of six students at a time. The room has desks, workstations, training aids, and other essential course items needed to ensure all students receive the maximum benefit from the course.

A large percentage of the class consists of hands-on repairs with F/A-18 aircraft components. The Sailors take progress tests during the three weeks plus a final written exam and upon completion, students "graduate" and receive course achievement certificates.

Certified Level II Depot instructors assigned to the composite shop teach the course, and are always eager to share their composite repair knowledge with the class. Teammates from 6.2.3 and 4.3.4 are anxiously waiting the opportunity to bring their teaching methods to fleet maintainers. This is yet another instance where the Depot is meeting its strategic goal of organizational excellence.

Humphrey works in Code 6.2.3.6.