

Department of the Navy, Chief Information Officer, Dave Wennergren



Embracing Change: Continuing Transformation

Change is inevitable. The work of a Chief Information Officer revolves around change, and those that lead change must be prepared to live it too. And so it is with great respect and admiration that we wish "fair winds and following seas" to Mr. Dan Porter who retired from Federal Service and stepped down as the Department of the Navy CIO on December 1. Over a four year period, Mr. Porter successfully led the most aggressive and transformational Information Management/Information Technology (IM/IT) agenda in the Federal Government. His tenure included the launching of numerous groundbreaking and innovative efforts, including the Navy Marine Corps Intranet, DON eBusiness Operations Office, the first online reverse auction in Federal Government history, DoD Common Access Card, Critical Infrastructure Protection, Knowledge Management and Legacy Applications rationalization. It's not often that you find an individual that embodies the traits of a great leader, great teacher, great innovator, great mentor and great friend, but those of you who worked with Dan know that he has been all these things, and more, during his almost 30 years of service to the U.S. Navy and nation.

But change in the IM/IT world is as inevitable as the change in seasons, and so it with a great deal of enthusiasm and excitement that I am proud to continue championing the Department's outstanding IM/IT work to ensure a knowledge- and network-centric Navy and Marine Corps team. Our vision remains clear — to create and maintain: (1) an integrated, results-oriented Navy and Marine Corps team characterized by strategic leadership, shared goals, ubiquitous communication, and invisible technology, (2) an effective, flexible and sustainable DON enterprise-wide information and technology environment that delivers decisive capability to the Naval Warfighting Team, and (3) a knowledge-centric culture that fosters innovation and organizational learning, enabling the rapid and effective transition of interoperable solutions in support of our expeditionary warfighting and homeland security missions.

Having served as one of the Department's Deputy CIOs for the last four years, I've had the tremendous opportunity and great pleasure of working with — and continuing to work with — the most phenomenal group of information professionals: on the CIO staff, at the Navy and Marine Corps headquarters and throughout the entire Navy and Marine Corps team. I believe that the Department's current IM/IT agenda and strategic plan is right on target: creating a seamless enterprise network; embracing knowledge management and eGovernment; rationalizing our legacy applications; moving our applications to the Web — accessed through an enterprise portal structure; establishing authoritative data sources and consolidating databases; providing career paths and growth opportunities for the IM/IT workforce; embracing new technologies, like wireless, to address the needs of our mobile workforce; providing tools to our people to help them implement these new strategies; championing Smart Cards and Public Key Infrastructure to increase security; and, aggressively focusing on Critical Infrastructure Protection as a part of our full dimensional protection strategy.

The IM/IT world will continue to evolve. As we evolve with it, we must each keep an eye to the future and continue to ensure that the Navy-Marine Corps team remains agile and ready to embrace these new ideas and new technologies. Part of this evolution is the ongoing restructuring of IM/IT management in the Department, which will strengthen and align our efforts in several ways. First, it will establish a Navy Flag Officer and Marine Corps General Officer as Deputy Chief Information Officers for the Navy and Marine Corps. Formal reporting relationships will also be established between these Deputies and the Information Officers at our major commands to align the DON's IM/IT vision and execution. "Centers of Excellence" across the Department will become management partners, working on specific tasks on behalf of the CIO. Finally, a DON IM/IT Implementation Plan will be developed. This detailed document will link the Department's vision and strategy to actual implementation guidance that will serve as the basis for funding and approving IM/IT initiatives.

It is a very exciting time, and the opportunities to improve the ways our Sailors, Marines and Civilians fight and work are tremendous. But it is a time of change, and we must all do our part to be change leaders. Choosing to change almost inevitably means choosing to accept some risks; but choosing not to change, in the midst of the digital revolution, almost certainly risks irrelevancy. I look forward to working with each of you as we continue our transformational efforts to ensure that we continue to have the greatest Navy and Marine Corps in the world.

"Putting Information to Work for Our People."