Securing that critical edge in the information age

INFORMATION DOMINANCE CORPS

AMERICA'S NAVY™

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Monitoring chatter. Analyzing data. Protecting networks. Breaking codes. In the Navy, the offensive and defensive use of information is the ongoing, critical responsibility of the Information Dominance Corps (IDC) – a dedicated team of problem solvers who help secure America's freedom by giving our Sailors the edge they need to make every mission a success.

THE MISSION OF THE IDC

In a highly networked world, information is everywhere – easier to access and increasingly exploitable. Today's technological advancements make information both a formidable weapon and a constant threat – to the point that it has evolved into a type of warfare all its own.

With this in mind, America's Navy has the Information Dominance Corps – a community of skilled specialists charged with mastering the capabilities, tools and techniques required to effectively collect, process, analyze and apply information. Operating independently or collaboratively, this community works to enable the Navy to effectively conduct all manner of operations – helping to ensure America's national and economic security.

America's Navy defines Information Dominance as the operational advantage gained from fully integrating our information functions, capabilities and resources to optimize decision making and maximizing warfighting effects. In other words, information dominance means maximizing America's Navy's operational employment of cyber, cryptologic and space forces working hand-in-hand with its intelligence, meteorological and oceanographic experts. The corps is the sum total of the team who leads the information dominance effort.

THE MAKEUP OF THE IDC

Made up of both Enlisted Sailors and Officers (and augmented by experienced professionals from the civilian sector), the IDC is centered around information-intensive fields and high-tech areas of focus that include everything from Cryptology to Intelligence, Information Warfare to Cyber Warfare, Information Technology to Information Management, Meteorology and Oceanography to the Space Cadre.

Whatever their individual focus areas, IDC members together:

- Develop and defend vital intelligence, networks and systems
- Manage the critical information that supports U.S. Navy, joint and national warfighting requirements
- Provide command and control capabilities, battle management and knowledge of the maritime environment
- Maintain that essential technological edge across the physical and cyber domains – undersea, over the sea, on land, in the air, into space and within cyberspace

UNIQUE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

What you do specifically in the IDC is dependent upon a variety of factors, including the field you specialize in, your job specialty, your classification as an Enlisted Sailor or a Commissioned Officer, whether you serve full-time on Active Duty or part-time as a Reservist, the location of your command, and many other factors.

Now, learn about some of the main focus areas within the IDC, available career opportunities, and the basic differences between associated Enlisted and Officer roles.

SERVICE OPTIONS

Active Duty Sailors serve full-time. This allows you to take full advantage of the available career and leadership opportunities. Enjoy the broad range of benefits. And experience incredible possibilities for travel and adventure.

Reserve Sailors serve part-time. This way you can maintain a civilian career while serving as few as two days a month and two weeks a year. With opportunities for additional service and pay. Additionally, you'll have the possibility of flexible drilling options to better meet service requirements. While enjoying many of the same advantages and benefits of full-time service.

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OPPORTUNITIES IN INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Specialist (IS) – Tracking targets in real time. Defending ships against inbound threats. Operating state-of-the-art computer and communications equipment. The development of useful intelligence starts with the diligent efforts of Navy Intelligence Specialists who break down seemingly limitless raw data into relevant and manageable pieces. Those in the IS rating work under the oversight of Intelligence (INTEL) Officers.

Intelligence (INTEL) Officer – Direct the analysis of satellite imagery. Be the first to ascertain the implications of the latest intelligence information. Use keen analytical abilities to detect existing or emerging patterns of communication. Intelligence Officers serve at the forefront of national security as they supervise the collection, analysis, production and dissemination of critical information and intelligence; provide intelligence support to U.S. Naval forces and multinational military forces; and advise executive-level decision makers in the U.S. government. INTEL Officers oversee the work of Enlisted Sailors in the Intelligence Specialist (IS) rating.

OPPORTUNITIES IN INFORMATION WARFARE

Cryptologic Technician (CT) – Analyzing encrypted electronic communications. Jamming enemy radar signals. Deciphering information in foreign languages. Maintaining the state-of-the-art equipment and networks used to generate classified intel. This is the highly specialized work of the Enlisted Sailors in the Navy Cryptology community. Within Cryptology, there are opportunities to focus on specializations that include Interpretive (CTI), Technical (CTT), Networks (CTN), Maintenance (CTM) or Collection (CTR). Those in the CT ratings work under the oversight of Information Warfare Officers (IW) or Cyber Warfare Engineers (CWE) – or possibly both.

Information Warfare Officer (IWO) – Conducting psychological operations. Managing the application of cryptography and cryptanalysis. Advising decision makers at all levels. Information Warfare Officers help ensure that America's Navy capitalizes on the information vulnerabilities of our enemies – maximizing the use of sensors, weapons, network communications and control systems. IW Officers oversee the work of Enlisted Sailors in the CT ratings.

Cyber Warfare Engineer (CWE) Officer – Complex computer networks. The tactical systems they control. The vital infrastructures they support. All are under siege by enemies seeking to steal information or sabotage capabilities. Cyber Warfare Engineering (CWE) Officers are the highly technical computer scientists and computer engineers who provide defense against attacks and deliver tactical advantages while developing tools and techniques in the information environment that ensure situational awareness. CWE Officers oversee the work of Enlisted Sailors in the CT ratings.

OPPORTUNITIES IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information Systems Technician (IT) – In the Navy, information technology plays an important role in everything from electronic mail systems to shipboard control systems to Special Intelligence (SI) systems. Navy Information Systems Technicians (essentially IT specialists) are Enlisted Sailors who engage in a broad range of responsibilities, including network administration, database management, and computer hardware and software implementation. Those in the IT rating work under the oversight of Information Professionals (IP).

Information Professional (IP) Officer – Effective, secure communication in the cyber domain is essential to the everyday operations of military intelligence in America's Navy. Information Professionals who oversee the seamless operation of the global Naval network environment are key to these efforts – mapping out the network platforms of the future; ensuring the effectiveness of Navy technologies; and helping to develop and deploy information systems, command and control systems, and space systems. IP Officers oversee the work of Enlisted Sailors in the IT rating.

ENLISTED AND OFFICER ROLES

Enlisted Sailors can be thought of as the hands-on workforce. These are members of the Navy or Navy Reserve who serve in an occupational specialty that requires a high school diploma (or GED) as a minimum educational requirement. Generally speaking, Enlisted responsibilities range from entry-level to Enlisted supervisory, advisory and managerial roles.

Commissioned Officers can be thought of as the management. These are generally members of the Navy or Navy Reserve who have a degree from a four-year college or university as a minimum educational requirement and have gone through Officer Training (there are exceptions to the degree requirement based on extensive service experience). Officer responsibilities range from low-level management to middle management to the highest levels of leadership and command.

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OPPORTUNITIES IN METEOROLOGY AND OCEANOGRAPHY

Aerographer's Mate (AG) – Monitoring sea conditions. Analyzing meteorological data. Developing accurate forecasts for virtually any locale in the world. Aerographer's Mates are Enlisted Sailors who do hands-on work that helps Navy Meteorologists and Oceanographers prepare Navy forces to succeed in any physical environment. Those in the AG rating work under the oversight of Meteorology and Oceanography (METOC) Officers.

Meteorology and Oceanography (METOC) Officer – Planning an air strike. Charting the best course for a deployed ship. Identifying currents that affect a submarine underway. Whatever the scenario, meteorology and oceanography are factors that inevitably come into play. And Officers in this field help lead efforts to ensure safe and successful operations as they deliver a timely and accurate understanding of operational conditions from sea to space and manage those who monitor the surrounding physical environment. METOC Officers oversee the work of Enlisted Sailors in the AG rating.

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SPACE CADRE

Space Cadre – Space plays an important role in the information environment, in the operation of cyber systems and, ultimately, in protecting national security. With that in mind, the IDC also has what is known as its Space Cadre – a distinct cross-functional community of servicemembers and civilian professionals whose core space competencies uniquely position them to manage space resources while concurrently protecting Navy space equities. Responsibilities include space acquisition, launch, control, and/or space operations and range from controlling communications satellites to providing technical direction for space-related systems to advising commands on how to use information acquired from space-based assets. There are even astronauts who are among the members of the Space Cadre. The Space Cadre servicemember workforce is comprised primarily of Officers from various designators who possess significant and substantive space-oriented education and/or experience. Most of these Officers serve in a Reserve capacity, and Space Cadre membership is only achieved through attainment of an Additional Qualification Designator (AQD) that signifies a level of space competence based upon a combination of education and experience. Enlisted roles and opportunities for those serving on Active Duty are also available.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Those serving full-time as members of the IDC perform a variety of duties worldwide – encompassing the full-spectrum of Navy operations. Therefore, duty stations could be wherever the Navy has a presence ashore or afloat: at any one of many overseas and stateside shore commands, aboard surface ships or submarines, or with aircraft squadrons. Assignments could be anywhere from shore-based communication and surveillance facilities to ship-based combat information centers or from joint intelligence centers to the Pentagon. And these could involve anything from working with Naval Research Labs to supporting Naval Special Warfare to collaborating with the National Security Agency to studying at the Naval Postgraduate School.

Typical environments range from air-conditioned electronic equipment spaces or computer rooms to office settings or lab settings, to maintenance shops or highly classified secure spaces. And those serving can expect to perform duties both independently and as part of small, coordinated teams.

For Reservists serving part-time, duties are generally carried out during scheduled drilling and training periods – usually at a location close to home during monthly drilling and potentially at any of the locations discussed above during periods of Annual Training.

The specific working environment will vary depending upon specialization area, job, role and whether you are serving on Active Duty or as a Reservist. A recruiter can provide more details.

READY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEPS?

Once you're inspired, better informed and seriously interested, here's how to proceed:

1. TALK TO YOUR RECRUITER

- Ask questions
- Discuss your long-term goals
- Review your qualifications
- Go over relevant financial incentives and bonuses

2. APPLY FOR THE POSITION

- Provide personal information that includes your birth certificate, Social Security card and professional details (if applicable)
- Take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) to help assess your skills and interests
- Pass a full medical examination
- Participate in a precommitment interview
- Take and pass any preliminary tests that may be required to qualify for the position you seek (a recruiter can tell you if the position you seek requires this)

3. BEGIN YOUR TRAINING

If pursuing an Enlisted role:

- Attend Boot Camp in Great Lakes, Illinois (7–9 weeks)
- Get advanced skills training at a Navy "A" School (time varies depending on specialty)
- From there, you're ready to start serving as a Sailor and respected professional

If pursuing an Officer role:

- If you have a college degree, attend Officer Candidate School (OCS)
- If you have a college degree and you're joining the Navy Reserve, attend the Direct Commission Officer Development Course in Newport, R.I., where you'll learn the history, traditions and structure of the Navy and Navy Reserve
- For certain roles, get advanced training to gain the skills and knowledge specific to your designator and duty
- From there, you're ready to start serving as a respected Navy Officer and leader

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TRAINING AND ADVANCEMENT

The specific training and advancement opportunities for members of the IDC are driven by your professional specialty and whether you serve in an Enlisted or Officer role – among other things.

Enlisted Training – For aspiring Enlisted Sailors, the initial step is the 7- to 9-week Recruit Training (often referred to as Boot Camp) in Great Lakes, Illinois. Upon completion, it's typically off to "A" School, where the technical basics of the job are taught over the course of several weeks at one of a handful of training locations across the country (length of training and location differs by specialty). From there, most can also expect to attend a field-related "C" School – which involves even more in-depth, specialized training for several weeks (length of training and location also differ by specialty). It is through this schooling that IDC members develop the working knowledge it takes to be qualified for their job and ready for whatever assignment they receive.

Officer Training – For aspiring Officers, the initial step is to attend Officer Candidate School (OCS) in Newport, R.I. (if serving full-time Active Duty), or Direct Commission Officer (DCO) School in Newport, R.I. (if serving part-time in the Navy Reserve). From there, it's typical to complete a "basic course" in your respective specialty area for a period of several weeks – though in some specialties you may be assigned to an initial command where you'll complete training courses and receive intensive on-the-job training (path, training and location differ by specialty). For many Officer roles in the IDC, you'll need to pass specific qualifications as part of training during operational tours, and the pursuit of advanced education is often an opportunity that's available and expected.

For all positions, skills continue to be enhanced through on-the-job training and experience. Continuing and advanced training go along with career progression. Promotion opportunities are regularly available but competitive and based on performance. It's also important to note that specialized training received and work experience gained in the course of service can lead to valuable credentialing and occupational opportunities in related fields.

To learn more about the specific training path for any of the focus areas within the IDC, contact a recruiter for details.

BENEFITS

When it comes to financial and professional advantages, the Navy amounts to much more than a competitive paycheck. Some of the outstanding benefits that you can look forward to as an Enlisted Sailor or Officer serving in the IDC include:*

- Supplemental/bonus pay
- Scheduled pay raises and regular promotions
- Postgraduate education, fully funded by the Navy
- Post-9/11 GI Bill – funding for you or your family to use for school
- 30 days' vacation with pay earned every year
- Outstanding retirement benefits, plus a 401(k)-like thrift savings plan
- Comprehensive medical and dental coverage
- Tax-free allowances for housing and meals
- Tax-free shopping privileges at military stores
- Free or low-cost travel opportunities
- Access to military bases, clubs and recreational facilities all over the world
- 100% tuition assistance while serving
- Credentials/certifications through Navy Credentialing Opportunities On-Line (Navy COOL)

*Though many of the above benefits are also available to those who serve in the Navy Reserve, the complete benefits package does vary for those serving part-time. A recruiter can provide more specific details.

AFTER THE NAVY

The world-class training and expertise you gain as a member of the IDC, often coupled with having a security clearance, may prepare you for a wide range of sought-after jobs within the civilian sector as well as highly competitive roles within the federal government.

Depending on your specialization area, this could include opportunities with the U.S. Intelligence Community, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), National Security Agency (NSA) or NASA, just to name a few.

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EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Beyond offering access to professional credentials and certifications, Navy technical and operational training in fields associated with the IDC can translate to credit hours toward a bachelor's or associate degree through the American Council on Education. You may also continue your education through opportunities and programs that include:

- Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Navy (SOCNAV) Degree Program
- Navy College Program and Tuition Assistance
- Post-9/11 GI Bill

For many of those serving in Officer roles, postgraduate education is important and expected – with access provided through additional programs and institutions, including:

- Naval Postgraduate School (NPS)
- Navy War College (NWC)
- National Defense University
- Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) – offered at any one of the various service colleges

Specific opportunities vary depending upon specialization area. A recruiter can provide further details.

QUALIFICATIONS

Enlisted Requirements – A high school diploma or equivalent is required to become an Enlisted Sailor in a specialty area of the IDC. Candidates must also be U.S. citizens who can meet eligibility requirements for a Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI) security clearance. Other typical requirements include having a good working aptitude of math; an understanding of modern computing devices; the capability to do highly detail-oriented work; an interest in advanced electronics and technology; exceptionally good character; and good speaking, writing and record-keeping skills.

Officer Requirements – A four-year degree is required to become an Officer in a specialty area of the IDC. Candidates seeking an Officer position in this community must have a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution, preferably in a technical field related to the specific area of interest. Candidates must also be U.S. citizens and eligible for a TS/SCI security clearance.

Some Enlisted and Officer positions also require that candidates be willing to serve worldwide and be qualified for sea duty. Specific qualifications vary depending upon specialization area within the IDC. A recruiter can provide further details.

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