

JWC WELCOMES NEW DCOM/COS

Rear Admiral John B. "Brad" SKILLMAN



Rear Admiral Skillman assumed the position of Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff for NATO's Joint Warfare Centre in August 2016. Skillman most recently served as Executive Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Financial Management and Comptroller, Washington, D.C.

By Inci Kucukaksoy, JWC PAO

I would like to begin by thanking you, Sir, for giving us the time for this interview. You assumed the position of Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff (DCOM/COS) for JWC in August 2016. What is your assessment so far?

— I have been very impressed with the professionalism and cohesion of the staff and the quality of the exercise delivery. It is a great place to work. Exercise TRIDENT JUNCTURE 16 was my first opportunity to see the entire team in action. They are the best at what they do. It is an honour to be part of this team.

For the first time JWC was assigned a Navy DCOM/COS, a position previously held by an Air Force Flag Officer. Why is the reason for this change?

— The DCOM/COS billet is like many of the billets that the United States fills in NATO in that it is a competitive and nominative joint billet. Any of the four services (Navy, Air Force, Army and Marines) may nominate an individual for the position. Selection is at the SACEUR/SACT level.

What have been the highlights of your career before this assignment?

— I have really enjoyed being both a surface



**Rear Admiral John
B. "Brad" Skillman**

U.S. Navy
Deputy Commander/
Chief of Staff
Joint Warfare Centre



Rear Admiral Brad Skillman, a native of Muncie, Indiana, was raised in St. Paris, Ohio. He is a 1986 graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy with a Bachelor of Science in Oceanography. He earned a Master of Science Degree in Operational Oceanography from the Naval Postgraduate School in 1993. He is also a proven financial management specialist.

A surface warfare officer, Rear Admiral Skillman's sea duty assignments include USS Josephus Daniels (CG 27), USS Belleau Wood (LHA 3), USS Nashville (LPD 13), USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44) Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) 8 and PHIBRON-4.

Rear Admiral Skillman was the commissioning commanding officer of USS New Orleans (LPD 18) from 2004 to 2008. He also commanded USS Ponce (LPD 15) and USS San Antonio (LPD 17), both in 2011. His major command was as Commander, Amphibious Squadron 4 from May 2012 to August 2013.

Ashore, Rear Admiral Skillman served in 1998 to 1999 as the lead ship maintenance action officer for the Maintenance and Modernization Division (N43) and from 2002 to

2004 as the Sea Shield and Surface Warfare Program Analyst for the Director of Integration and Warfare Assessment (N70) on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations. He was the Military Assistant and Director of Operations for the Deputy Director, Naval Warfare in Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics) Portfolio Systems Acquisition from 2008 to 2010.

Rear Admiral Skillman served most recently as the Executive Assistant and Naval Aide to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management and Comptroller) from August 2013 to July 2016.

Rear Admiral Skillman reported to his current assignment as Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff, NATO Joint Warfare Centre in August 2016.

His decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal and various campaign, unit and service awards.

Rear Admiral Skillman is married to Jacey and they have two boys and one girl.





HQ SACT's Industry Involvement Initiative for NATO Exercises examines how industry could be more involved in NATO exercises so that they could better understand NATO challenges on operations. Picture shows Rear Admiral Skillman with representatives from various companies who visited the JWC during Exercise TRIDENT JUNCTURE 16. Overall, 21 companies visited the exercise sites in Naples and Stavanger to receive briefings and essentially embed themselves in NATO activities, with special focus on some of NATO's most challenging Command and Control issues such as big data, cloud computing and cognitive computing abilities. Photograph by Maj Stephen Olsen, Norwegian Army, JWC PAO.

warfare officer and a financial manager. The knowledge from broad operational experience is beneficial when trying to make hard choices for defense investments. I would list my highlights as being the first Commanding Officer of the USS New Orleans (LPD 18), commanding the Kearsarge Amphibious Ready Group and as serving as the Executive Assistant and Naval Aide to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Financial Management and Comptroller.

What are your priorities at the JWC?

— My current priority is for the delivery of our Programme of Work (POW) over my time here with ever increasing skill. I also think it is important to focus on and expand our efforts for Transformation through experimentation and warfighting improvement from lessons learned and revised doctrine incorporation. It is an exciting and challenging time to be part of the JWC team due to our changing world and an opportunity to positively influence NATO's readiness.

What's your opinion about JWC's "One Team" culture programme?

— I am a big fan of the Newcomers' Programme and the overall "One Team" effort. I believe inclusivity is always important and when incorporating individuals from JWC's 16 Nations, it is absolutely critical. I think that due to these efforts, we have a strong culture of

all members of the command pulling together to do superb work.

Do you enjoy living in Stavanger?

— Stavanger is a beautiful place with a rich culture and welcoming people. It is a wonderful place to live. My family and I do enjoy getting out and discovering Norway. ♦



JWC's interactive "One Team Programme" introduced the new staff to the Centre's organizational culture. Led by Mr Paul Sewell, during the workshop the participants were exposed to the concepts which were designed to provide them with a common language for being effective in the organization. Photo by JWC PAO.