

## Appendix M

# UPH Privatization Site Visits

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The CD placed in the back inside cover contains reports on study team visits to unaccompanied personnel housing in San Diego, CA, and Norfolk, VA.

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** George Mino, Office of Secretary of Defense Housing and Competitive Sourcing  
**FROM:** Kristie Bissell and Jim Hathaway  
**CC:** Bill Pearson, Commander Navy Installations Command (CNIC)  
**DATE:** October 11, 2007  
**REGARDING:** San Diego Unaccompanied Housing- Site Visit Trip Report

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**Location:** San Deigo, CA  
**Dates:** Sept. 24 – 26, 2007  
**Attendees:** LMI – Kristie Bissell  
Jim Hathaway  
CNIC – Bill Pearson

## **Bachelor Housing**

### ***General Comments:***

In addition to having over 850 government managed bachelor units, San Diego is first of three locations selected for the Navy's privatized bachelor housing program pilot. (The Hampton Roads project is currently under procurement and the Navy is currently analyzing possibilities for the third location.). Government owned and operated bachelor housing facilities include a high rise tower with almost 400 1+1 standard units with double occupancy (housing approximately 1575 service members); a smaller barracks with 326 rooms; and a student dormitory with 126 rooms (double occupancy). There are over 1,000 E1 to E4 sailors living in the privatized barracks (Palmer Hall with 258 1+1 style units with double occupancy) and another 400 service members on the waiting list for barracks who are currently living on-board their ship.

### ***Findings:***

**Homeport-Ashore program** – The Navy has instituted the Homeport Ashore program to minimize the number of sailors living aboard ship while docked in its home port. In San Diego, the Navy is doubling occupancy in its existing bachelor quarters facilities. However, due to the deployment schedule and high variability of ships in home port, it is difficult to make accurate predictions on the number of barracks units needed. The senior enlisted representatives we spoke

with were in favor of the Homeport Ashore program. They indicated that they typically saw an improvement to the sailors work performance after the service member was allowed to live ashore. The representatives indicated that the separation from work and residence, recreational opportunities, and increased socialization with other service members contributed to improved performance.

**Occupancy and waiting list**– The ships are fully involved in the process for approving E-1 through E-4 (less than 4) service members to live ashore. The leadership of the ship grant approval for living ashore but can revoke this privilege if work or residential issues arise. The bachelor quarters (both government owned and privatized) are generally full. If occupancy levels fall due to deployments, the Navy's bachelor housing manager first fills the privatized units with service members then fills the government owned facilities. If there are no privatized units available, service members can be placed in government quarters until a privatized unit is available. Although certificates of non-availability can be given to E-1 through E-4 (less than 4) if occupancy of government and privatized units reaches 95 percent or above, they are rarely authorized and sailors live aboard the ship. In this case, the service member is placed on a waiting list which uses the service member detachment date from prior installation as the control date. This helps to avoid “who comes first” issues when ships return from deployments and a large number of service members want units at the same time.

**BAH** – Single service members ranked E-5 and above are permitted to draw BAH. Due to the limited barracks space and the less than desirable living space aboard ship, most E-5s and above draw BAH and opt to live in community housing off base. If a sailor is living in barracks when they get promoted to E-5, they are not forced out of the barracks but they do not typically stay long after the promotion. E1 to E4's are able to draw BAH E-4 and below living in privatized barracks are given partial BAH to pay the monthly rent. Because of double occupancy in each of the privatized rooms in San Diego, the rental amount is equal to 33 percent of the service members BAH. If there were adequate space to give each sailor a private room, the rent would be equal to 66% of the E-1 to E-4 BAH.

**Unit integrity** – Neither the government operated nor the privatized bachelors quarters are managed such that sailors from one unit/ship are collocated. This did not appear to be a concern from the senior enlisted community.

**Deployments** – if a service member deploys for 90 days or more, they vacate the barracks/privatized unit to make room for other single service members. While deployed, the ship division chiefs help the service member and the Navy bachelor housing office by providing bachelor housing information to service members during the trip home and mailing applications back to the Navy bachelor housing office prior to returning to home port.

**Ships in overhaul** – when a ship goes into overhaul for maintenance and sailors living on the ship are displaced, the government can house most in either the government or privatized bachelor quarters. When this is not possible, the service member can stay in the visitor quarters.

**Geographic bachelors** – Geographic bachelors in San Diego can apply to become a resident advisor in the E1 to E4 government managed bachelors quarters. If selected, the geo-bachelor is provided a room at no cost in return for serving as a resident advisor – counseling and supervising residents. All other ship-based geographic bachelors live on the ship, in the community, or pay for space in the visitor quarters. There are 138 rooms in Point Loma that are dedicated to shore-based geographic bachelors and are typically 97 percent occupied.

## **Government Housing**

There is a stark contrast to the overall appearance and welcoming feel between Synder Hall, the government owned facility, and Palmer Hall, the sister building that has been privatized and is located directly adjacent to the government facility. When you first walk into the government facility, you are likely greeted by a sailor on temporary duty sitting at a makeshift reception desk with vacuum cleaners, a laundry cart with clean linens for incoming residents, and television security monitors mounted on the wall all in plain view. The lights are dim, the paint is dull, and ceilings low which make the facility feel very institutional. The privatized facility, on the other hand, has higher ceilings, is well lit, has a tidy and welcoming reception area complete with free cookies and coffee for the residents, and is staffed by professional property management staff.

**Management** – The bachelor housing at San Diego has always been managed centrally. The front desk is operated by military persons on temporary duty who may be in a medical hold status. These individuals are not trained in barracks operations, nor do they have an incentive to provide quality service. Service members must show the front desk attendant an ID card prior to entering the barracks. The reception area is not currently manned 24 hours a day, so if a resident loses a key and needs to get into their room after 5 PM, they have to pay \$100 to have the on-call public works representative respond and issue them a new key. Because of the use of military manpower to operate these barracks facilities, there is high turnover of the reception staff.

**Supervision** – In addition to the resident advisors living in the facility, there are security cameras positioned in the hallways and common areas. Additionally, commands can enter the barracks to conduct inspections of the sailors living quarters.

**Condition** – while the overall structure of the Synder Hall barracks is in good condition, the building is tired, not well lit, and the rooms and common areas could use a fresh coat of paint. According to the Navy's bachelor housing manager, there are some issues with the plumbing and the fixtures in the bathrooms inside the unit are dated. The rooms are slightly larger than the privatized units and each unit has a small mini-refrigerator and microwave (compared to the privatized units, where two units share a slightly larger mini-refrigerator and a microwave).

**Furniture** - The furniture in both the bedrooms and community rooms are tired and more worn than those in the privatized units. The Navy's bachelor housing managers coordinate furniture replacement through the region using standard vendors and standard furniture. The Navy currently budgets to have furniture replaced every 10 years.

## **Privatized Bachelor Housing**

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## **Privatized barracks for E-1 through E-4 (less than 4) sailors**

Clark/Pinnacle was awarded the Navy's first unaccompanied housing privatization project in December of 2006. In the first phase of this project, the Navy conveyed Palmer Hall, a 258 unit high-rise facility built in 2004, to Pinnacle Property Management. These units are 1+1 standard unit at double occupancy with two rooms sharing a bathroom, sink, short refrigerator and a microwave.

**Approval to live in privatized housing and rent payments** – In order to live in privatized housing, the service member must show paperwork from the ship authorizing the service member to reside in privatized barracks and a copy of their orders. Navy reviews the leave and earnings statement to ensure that the service member does not have excessive allotments that will prohibit the payment of the rent and the service member completes an application for bachelor housing. If no housing units are available, the service member can move into government housing and later move into privatized housing when a unit becomes available. Once in privatized bachelor quarters, the sailor receives partial BAH equal to the rent (1/3 of their BAH rate with double occupancy) and pay rent to Pinnacle primarily via allotment. (Note: the rental rate for the unit is 66% of the E-1 through E-4 BAH rate. Due to double occupancy, each service member is receiving and paying only 33% of their BAH to the property manager)

**Supervision** - Living in privatized quarters is seen by both the junior enlisted and the senior enlisted as a privilege. This privilege can be revoked and service members can be pulled back on ship for disciplinary reasons for issues that arise at work or in the quarters. Rooms inspections by the command are not authorized in privatized units, as this is prohibited by California leasing laws. However, senior leadership would like to have the ability to inspect sailor's privatized rooms and have more open communication with the privatized property manager. They believe they can help to avoid issues that may arise, or fix them before they get out of hand. Senior enlisted representatives we talked to during the site visit indicated they believe service members take better care of the privatized units because they take pride in their units which are in great condition and professionally managed by a staff that gets to know the sailors by name.

**Junior enlisted perception of privatized bachelor quarters** - During our site visit we were able to meet with a group of junior enlisted living in Palmer Hall, the privatized bachelor quarters, many of whom had previously lived in government operated barracks. During the focus groups, these junior enlisted service members indicated the following a positives to living in privatized quarters:

- treated like an adult and perform better at work because they have downtime
- privatized partner seen as more responsive to maintenance issues than government,
- staff is more professional and personable than the military manpower used to operate the government building,
- inside and outside of the facility is better maintained,
- less restrictions than government operated barracks,
- the college dorm feel to the privatized barracks,

- amenities offered by the property managers are (e.g., fresh cookies daily; free coffee in the lobby; free loaner bikes, laptops, and movies available for check out; poker nights; massage days; self-help; and barracks-arranged trips).

Some of the complaints the residents mentioned during this focus group include the following:

- cumbersome lease termination process (e.g., required to show orders and then also asked for a note from the ship for each resident; have to check out with privatized property manager as well as Navy's bachelor housing office);
- adequate parking is difficult to find around the barracks;
- cannot lock suite doors to prohibit sailors and guests in the adjoining unit from invading privacy (this is a safety issue as being able to lock the suite door could lead to someone being locked in the bathroom);
- wireless internet not being provided as part of the rent (residents can buy internet service but if it is connected to a box, then only one roommate can access the internet at a time),
- roommate issues (noise, unequal participation in cleaning the unit, smoking in the units, etc)
- perception that the property manager cannot punish residents as effectively as the military and, as such, residents are given multiple warnings but not evicted for continually breaking the rules. (Note: residents can file complaints about other residents by going to the property management staff or by placing an anonymous note in the complaint box. Residents indicated that these complaints are almost always addressed by the property management staff but maybe not always resolved.)

### **Privatized barracks for E-4s with over 4 years in service, and above.**

In addition to the 258 units for E-1 through E-4 (under 4) bachelors that have been conveyed to the business partner, an additional 941 units are being constructed by the business partner to house bachelors ranked E-4 +4 and above. Clark/Pinnacle is in the process of building what will soon become Pacific Beacon, a four-tower privatized bachelor quarters residential complex located inside the installation fence. The facilities are being constructed of structural concrete, and comply with anti-terrorism force protection standards (e.g., blast protection windows, appropriate off-set distances, etc). An adjacent 935- space parking facility with storage for residents who deploy is also under construction. This facility will provide enough parking for every 1.5 residents.

**Unit design** – These units are based on market style design with 2 service members living in one unit. The unit size range from 800 to 1200 square feet depending on the floor plan and the average unit size is 950 square feet. Each service member will have their own furnished bedroom, private bathroom (shower, toilet, and sink), walk-in closet. They will share a common area that includes a living room (furnished with a couch, coffee table, and end tables); a full size kitchen (full size refrigerator, microwave, stove, and dishwasher); and stacked washer and dryer.

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**Property amenities** – The property is inside the installation gate and within walking distance to the piers, the primary work place of many sailors. The site will include retail space for Navy Exchange retailers including a Subway, Credit Union, mini-exchange, internet café. Recreational amenities include a fitness center, a roof top swimming pool and terrace, sport courts for basketball and volleyball, and a 50 person movie theater. During the design of this facility, Clark/Pinnacle surveyed prospective residents and found that education was a primary concern. As such, they included two 30-person classrooms that will be operated by the Navy college and two classroom style computer rooms as on-site amenities.

**Rental payments** – The service members electing to live in Pacific Beacon will pay rent based on their rank with an average rent equal to 92% of the E-4 BAH. Utilities will be included in the rent and service members will have to pay for cable television and in-room internet services. (Note: water will be provided to the property owner by the base and all other utilities will be provided by San Diego Gas and Electric Company.)

**Occupancy expectations** – these units were built with the intention of housing E4 over 4 and above. The quality of the units, market style design of the units, private bedrooms and bathrooms, and on-site amenities are expected to encourage occupancy from the target market. During the focus group with the junior enlisted service members living in the privatized E1-E4 barracks, they indicated they didn't think that there would be enough E-4 over 4 and above population interested in these units, especially if there are restrictions on overnight guests and residents must remain on base, rather than live in the community. These junior service members indicated that living off base was highly desired because it provided a separation of work and home. In the event that occupancy falls below acceptable ranges, it is possible for the Navy to fill the units with E1-E4 sailors, and even move the installation fence to open the units to civilians if necessary.

# Visit Summary—Navy Privatized UPH, Hampton Roads, VA

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The visit was conducted on August 5-6, 2008, in conjunction with a study of Unaccompanied Personnel Housing (UPH) sponsored by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Housing and Competitive Sourcing. The purpose of the visit was to review the current status of privatized Navy barracks at Hampton Roads, one of three Navy privatized UPH pilot projects authorized by Congress. The Hampton Roads project is Navy's second. The first project for the Naval Station San Diego (Southwest Region) was initiated in 2007. Because the Army had expressed interest in Navy's pilot projects, OSD invited Army representatives to accompany the visit team. A visit agenda and list of visit team members is attached.

The visit was comprehensive in that it included project details, construction schedule and features, Navy staff and partner perspectives, and through focus groups—service member (customer) perspectives. The report is summarized in the following topics:

- ◆ Navy Homeport Ashore—a driver
- ◆ Project information
- ◆ Management practices
- ◆ Focus group perspectives
  - Resident perspective
  - Leadership challenges
- ◆ Privatized—government UPH contrasts.

## Navy Homeport Ashore

Navy's decision to bring sailors ashore for berthing purposes while in homeport has been a critical driver in determining Navy UPH requirements. To better understand that requirement, the visit included a tour of the USS Ashland, an amphibious ship (LSD) homeported at Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, VA. The team saw the extremely tight berthing spaces in which sailors live while aboard ship. The Ashland was one of three ships homeported at Little Creek that have begun to house sailors in available barracks while in homeport.

Most Naval Stations do not have the barracks capacity to house sailors currently aboard ship. The privatized UPH authority for Navy provides an opportunity to rapidly increase barracks inventory at the three pilot sites. Although a third project has not been initiated, San Diego and Hampton Roads will provide a net increase of 4,249 rooms when construction is completed. The Hampton roads project is solely for E1s through E-4s with less than 4 years of service. The San

Diego new construction project, developed to offset the severe housing shortage in San Diego is designed for E-4s over 4 and above, whose residents draw full BAH. The existing Palmer Hall high rise facility at San Diego turned over to the developer is San Diego's only privatized facility serving junior enlisted.

A separate discussion concerning Navy's master plan for its future UPH program will be presented in the final UPH final report.

## Project Information

The Hampton Roads project awarded 12/1/2007 is a joint venture of Hunt Development Group of El Paso, TX; American Campus Communities of Austin, TX; and the Navy. The team formed an LLC named Homeport Hampton Roads (HHR) to manage the barracks. 1,315 rooms in 7 existing buildings inside the fence line were turned over to HHR, with an additional 2,367 rooms to be constructed at 3 sites (240 rooms in 24 "manor homes" at Camp Elmore, 370 rooms in 37 manor homes and 1,497 rooms in one 6-story mid-rise building at Camp Allen, and 260 rooms in 26 manor homes at Huntington Hall, Newport News). The new construction sites are on Navy property, but outside the fence line at Camp Elmore and Camp Allen, The Newport News site is on land donated by the city. The team visited a partially completed manor home at Camp Elmore projected to be ready for occupancy by October, 2008.

The \$336 million construction project will be completed in 2010. HHR ownership of the existing 1,315 rooms and the new 2,367 rooms will continue for a 50-year period. These improvements on leased government land will revert to the Navy at lease expiration. The new 2-bedroom apartments are configured with each bedroom having a private bath, walk-in closets, and a common kitchen and living area. Income will be generated through partial BAH payments<sup>1</sup> with nearly all rents being paid through allotment. Rent includes utilities and renters insurance costs.

We found the new manor units attractive and built to contemporary standards, including an innovative construction feature that permits the structure to "bend but not break" when hurricane force winds are encountered. Using the 5-unit, 10-person style unit, keeps these manor units within ATRF<sup>2</sup> guidelines that limit barracks facilities to a maximum of 10-person structures without requiring extensive blast protection features. This same manor style unit is used for all three sites. At Camp Allen, the 37 manor homes surround the 6-story mid rise building thereby providing a stand-off perimeter for ATRF purposes.

## Management Practices

Privatized UPH are managed as if they are private apartment complexes, albeit they are located on Navy property. Navy commands, therefore do not have a right of access to these facilities, unless "invited" by either the resident or the property manager. Although this practice is a dramatic departure from traditional barracks practices, it places a special responsibility on both the

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<sup>1</sup> The higher rate of partial BAH for the existing housing is 66 percent of BAH, and 74 percent of BAH for new housing. These rates are consistent with market rents.

<sup>2</sup> ATRF—Anti Terrorism/Force Protection.

residents and the property management team to ensure Navy standards associated with barracks life are met.

## HRR STAFFING

The current staff of 49 persons includes all administrative, maintenance, porter/housekeeper, assignment and leasing, and service functions. Another 13 positions provide community advisor (CA) services. Security is provided by contract. A number of the ACC key positions, including the Director of Operations, are currently filled by retired E-9s. As the new units are completed, staffing will ramp up proportionately.

The contrast in the HHR (military background) staffing approach with the San Diego privatized UPH project is noteworthy. The San Diego counterpart position of Director and her staff are experienced property management professionals. While each approach has its advantages (military experience vs. property management experience), it is not yet clear whether one approach is superior. We would expect that an ideal approach will blend both experience backgrounds, and provide proper training and orientation to strengthen each skill area across the management team.

## COMMUNITY ADVISORS

HRR assigns Community Advisors (CAs) to provide a role similar to resident advisors in university housing and a similar function performed in Navy's government managed barracks. HRR assigns CAs based on a ratio of 1 CA: 100 residents. This contrasts with the Navy practice of assigning at a ratio of 1:20. CAs are hand picked, trained, and must meet critical performance standards in order to retain their positions. A number of the CAs are senior enlisted who work for HRR on a part-time basis. In addition to maintaining discipline in the barracks, the CAs also function as counselors for the junior enlisted residents. CAs are available on a 24/7 basis. CA compensation is generally in the form of free rent. The government did not require CAs but approved the concept for HHR. This practice is not followed in San Diego.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND WAITING LISTS

To apply for HRR housing requires that service members provide a copy of their leave and earnings statement (LES), a copy of their orders with detaching endorsement, a signed application, and a special request "chit" with command approval to live in privatized housing. The applicant is processed initially through the by the Navy Housing office, then is referred to HRR for a housing assignment or placed on a waiting list. When the applicant signs a lease, the government housing office is notified and sends the appropriate information to Navy Pay and Personnel Support Center for final verification and the start of the higher rate of partial BAH. The waiting list during our visit had about 100 applicants. With turnover averaging 50 residents per month, most applicants should have only a few months wait for assignment to privatized housing. Waiting list applicants may also be assigned to government quarters or, if assigned to a ship, may return to live aboard ship. As word begins to spread, applicants generally express a strong preference for HHR housing.

## LEASES AND BAH PAYMENT

Leases are paid in arrears and the minimum lease period is six months. After that period, leases are month-to-month. The receipt of PCS orders, ship deployment for more than 90 days, getting married, or purchasing a home allows for early lease termination without penalty. With few exceptions, lease payments are made through allotments. Those who pay by check must pay a security deposit equal to one month's rent. Sailors who are over committed in their allotments may have no choice but to pay by check although many arrange an electronic funds transfer from their bank.

Residents receive free internet and cable service in each apartment. As part of the kitchen package, residents are provided cookware, serving dishes, and utensils. Bed linens and towel sets are also included under the lease provisions.

The lease provides for up to \$6,500 coverage of personal property, with a \$250 deductible paid by the tenant. Residents are encouraged to purchase additional liability and personal property insurance.

When sailors depart on deployment, HHR provides storage for personal items, such as televisions; however, the service member must retrieve items from storage within 30 days upon return from deployment.

A significant pay issue noted was that DFAS does not recognize "partial BAH" as part of the service member's income stream, thereby constraining the amounts service members can receive through allotment. Efforts are underway to correct this flaw, but a date for resolution was not known.

## RESIDENT RULES

Since HHR housing operates like private apartment complexes in the community, resident rules are similar. A few of the more notable rules include the following:

- ◆ Standard prohibitions include a ban on smoking, firearms, gambling, under age drinking, vehicle maintenance, and of course drugs.
- ◆ Visitors are allowed up to 14 days, subject to concurrence by the apartment mate; but visitors must be accompanied by the resident when not remaining in the apartment. Visitors may include members of the opposite sex.
- ◆ Fire safety inspections are conducted bi monthly with 48 hours advance notification.
- ◆ Lockouts can be serviced on a 24-hour basis, but a \$25 service fee can be charged.

## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

The activities provided for HHR residents present one of the more stark contrasts with government UPH. Although many of the same activities are available to residents of government barracks through base MWR, the business partner packages community activities in creative and

promotional methods designed to establish a sense of community among HHR residents. Additionally, HHR has a budget for underwriting activity expenses, frequently providing free food and entertainment at HHR-sponsored events.

We found a full calendar of events scheduled for the month of August such as a bowling night with Karaoke, Guitar, and free pizza. Another evening event provided tickets for a (minor league) Tides game. Horseshoes, bingo nights, free movies, and basketball and volleyball tournaments were among other scheduled events. One evening birthday cupcakes are delivered to each room with residents having birthdays that month. Prizes in the form of visa cards are frequently provided at these events. The HHR manager reported that these events are very well attended and they provide a highly desired alternative for resident's after hours activities<sup>3</sup>.

## Focus Group Perspectives

The following discussion reflects information obtained through the use of focus groups. We used the questionnaire included in the attachment to stimulate discussion. It is important to point out that the Tuesday evening focus group was the only group made up exclusively of residents and those 11 representatives were all residents of privatized housing (HHR). We sought to gain the senior enlisted perspective from the nine E7 - E9 representatives in the first focus group on Wednesday morning. The second focus group that morning was comprised of a mix of enlisted members ranging from E2 – E6, but rather than residents, these 30 individuals comprised the government barracks management team. We use each of these three diverse perspectives to develop the remainder of this report.

### RESIDENT PERSPECTIVE

Of the factors deemed most important to the residents, privacy was ranked by all residents as the most, or second most, important quality of life issue. Ranked nearly as important was being able to live ashore while in homeport, although only one of the focus group members was actually assigned to a ship. Other top QOL factors were private baths, recreational activities, and the availability of kitchens in each suite. Kitchens provide residents considerable savings, rather than eating in restaurants. The ability to eat more healthy foods was also an important factor.

The visitor policy was another positive factor, especially when contrasted with government managed barracks. Visitors in government facilities must leave by 1000 and front desk petty officers can be zealous in enforcing the rules when visitors overstay their time limit or forget to check out<sup>4</sup>. The HHR residents reasoned that now that they are paying rent, they are entitled to that same policy latitude that prevails in off-base private apartments.

Being able to drink in the rooms provides a major deterrent to drunk driving. Although the focus group was aware of underage drinking prohibition, they believed that it was hard to control. On the other hand, they sensed it was not a problem, since no incidents had been reported.

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<sup>3</sup> We also note the similarity of community activities provided by the privatized business partners that manage military family housing.

<sup>4</sup> Drunk or disorderly visitors and residents can also be responsible for more intense rules enforcement.

The fast response to maintenance calls was cited as another very distinguishing factor from government barracks. They all agreed the HHR management staff are very friendly and create a positive atmosphere within the HHR property.

A few of the HHR features residents would like to see improved include the following:

- ◆ Improve process for choosing roommates. Residents confirmed this process was still better managed than government barracks.
- ◆ Would like to see full size ovens to increase cooking options. (We noted that HHR is installing cook tops in existing facilities that do not already have them.)
- ◆ A study room with computers in each facility would be helpful (only about half of the focus group had their own laptops).
- ◆ Some residents leave their trash in stairwells and common areas, rather than taking to the outside trash receptacles, leaving a smell.
- ◆ Climate controls have a narrow range (between 72–74 °F) and are sensor activated, thus leaving rooms uncomfortable at times.

Some additional comments we heard were as follows:

- ◆ Overall a much better quality of life. Nice to get off the ship, have a place to call home, and not share a bath with 30 other shipmates.
- ◆ Large laundry room with enough appliances that actually work is great.
- ◆ All and all, these barracks get a “big thumbs up”. Best decision the Navy has made. Quality of life has improved and any negatives are greatly outweighed by the positives.
- ◆ Some shipmates are living off base with full BAH, but they have to drive through traffic and pay extra for gas.

## LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES

The senior enlisted representatives, including a couple of command master chiefs, and the government barracks master chief added another critical perspective to this visit. There were some sharp contrasting views, both among themselves and also with the junior enlisted.

This group also listed getting off the ship and privacy as the top QOL priorities. Recreational activities, internet access, positive maintenance response, and kitchen facilities were other attributes they felt were important. They also believed the visitor policy and having a private bathroom were two HHR features also considered important to the junior enlisted.

The senior enlisted voiced positive support for the myriad of community activities sponsored by HHR and expressed the desire that similar activities be provided for all sailors, whether living in privatized or government barracks. Resigned to the fact that (in their view) the government can-

not provide such activities, they believe the appeal of those HHR events sets up a have-have not relationship between the two housing groups. Government barracks residents are not eligible for the HHR activities. As word spreads concerning the features of HHR housing, the chiefs have seen a significant increase in requests to live in HHR housing.

These chiefs also cited the significant improvement in storage area in HHR suites. They contrasted this with government barracks, which do not have as much storage and the locks on lockers are generally broken.

The major concern voiced was the inability to conduct room inspections. In government barracks, the goal is to inspect 10 percent of all rooms on a daily basis! Finding unauthorized alcohol is a critical part of the government inspection program. This contrasts sharply with HHR's policy of conducting fire safety inspections every two months. The chief's on the other hand recognized it is the HHR property manager's responsibility to maintain order and conduct more inspections if they appear necessary.

Some reservation was voiced about the liberal visitor policy. One chief said he wouldn't want his college age daughter exposed to such freedom, but then opined he might not have much to say about it if she lived off campus.

Another concern was the lack of consistent communication regarding availability of HHR housing. Some ships are promoting it more than others. There appeared to be inconsistency in communicating the rules of HHR eligibility and differences between shore-based and shipboard sailors. The shortage of HHR housing appeared to be the primary issue, however, that issue should diminish this fall as new construction units start coming on line.

Another sharp contrast between married and single service members with claims of a double standard was also addressed. Married family housing, whether privatized or government, are not subjected to inspections, other than fire safety (or unless responding to a complaint). Moreover, service members continue to receive BAH and are not required to vacate family housing when service members deploy. The single sailors that vacate HHR or government barracks must surrender their rooms and reapply for a room upon return from deployment.

When asked about "unit cohesion", the chiefs said it had been practical at some locations to have the majority of ship's company in the same barracks building, but more often than not space was not available to maintain unit integrity. In HHR housing, managing vacancies and income can preclude having ship's company in close proximity. One master chief expressed a contrary view that it was more important for sailors to live with shipmates from other Navy communities resulting in a much greater appreciation for the diverse missions, skills, and needs of each.

When sailors report for work, there is no apparent distinction between those who live in HHR housing and government barracks. If they detect discipline issues, sailors can always be returned to live aboard ship. One contrary view was offered by a master chief whose office continues to be located within one HHR facility that otherwise is fully privatized. She has observed frequent behavior issues that would not be tolerated in government barracks (males wearing ear rings after hours, far more casual dress code, smoking and drinking in off-limit areas and a sense of disrespect for seniors)—all because of their living in "private" housing.

Some additional comments from the senior enlisted group:

- ◆ HHR has done a good job of taking housing out of the hands of the senior enlisted, but still keeping on top of the living conditions and not having issues brought to their (the chief's) attention. The chief's are freed from the barracks management responsibility and can concentrate on their primary war fighting responsibilities.
- ◆ Junior sailors should live in HHR housing rather than in the community. Not only do they receive good value for their BAH, they don't have to commute and they are in a much safer and more friendly environment. Moreover, no deposits, separate utility costs, or worry about getting out of a place when deploying makes HHR a great deal for the sailor.
- ◆ HHR provides our sailors a "normal life style—they have their own living space that they can call home".

## Privatized—Government UPH Contrasts

Although the second Wednesday focus group consisting primarily of the enlisted barracks management teams, they provided valuable insight to help contrast privatized and government barracks. Most of the focus group members reside off base, but nearly all had previous experience as barracks residents.

We reviewed some of the same factors of living in barracks that we did with the earlier groups and there appeared to be similar agreement that privacy and living ashore were top priorities. More freedom in living ashore, having personal property in a safe place, internet access, and kitchen facilities were mentioned as being most important.

### BARRACKS MAINTENANCE

When we asked how they viewed their ability to deliver quality barracks services the resounding response was that **maintenance service** was by far the overriding critical issue. Exploring this issue revealed the following issues which we contrast with the HHR services:

- ◆ A team of five enlisted personnel, assigned to first class petty officer (E6) responds to all trouble calls. That responsibility spans 10 barracks buildings (311 bedrooms).

*HHR manages their 7 buildings (723 units, 1313 bedrooms) with a crew of 41 personnel, of which 10 are maintenance, and 12 serve as porters/housekeepers.*

- ◆ Problems beyond their capability result in a work order to public works. But the ability of public works to respond varies greatly, primarily dictated by severe limits on funding capacity.

*HHR provides a full range of maintenance support services. For those repairs beyond the capability of the HHR staff, area contractors are retained for expanded response capability.*

- ◆ A significant number of units (perhaps as high as 20 – 25 percent of the inventory?) are continuously awaiting resolution, depending on funding availability. Residents of those units are given the option to move to another room, but many decide to stay with the problem, rather than encounter the hassle of moving and pairing up with another roommate. Rooms down for maintenance make it difficult to keep occupancy rates where they should be.

*HHR maintains an occupancy rate of 99%. Even with a high turnover rate, units are normally turned the same day a resident vacates. Unless more extensive maintenance is required (painting, carpet replacement)*

*It is important to note that the 1,313 rooms turned over to HHR were in better condition than those retained by the Navy, according to Navy staff.*

- ◆ The crew of five maintenance workers has resorted to bringing their own tools from home in order to get the job done. The first class petty officer indicated that last week a decision had to be made on whether to order a wrench or a couple of pipe fittings since funds were so scarce. Service members must use their personal vehicles to respond to trouble calls and are not reimbursed mileage for their use. Moreover, parking is severely restricted at most barracks facilities, further impeding government maintenance services. The maintenance crew felt they should be provided government vehicles to do their jobs.

*The HHR project is fully funded through its dedicated annual budget. Decisions on repairs and priorities are vested with the HHR property manager. HHR provides transportation for their maintenance personnel.*

- ◆ Heating and air conditioning problems are not considered an emergency by public works, thus making it difficult to quickly resolve HVAC issues.

*HHR responds to all service calls within the same day or within an hour if an emergency. Maintenance service requests can be processed through an on-line service, in person at the front desk, or by phoning the Maintenance Helpline.*

- ◆ The barracks team is often criticized by residents for not being responsive, but severe funding restrictions are believed to be at the bottom line of this concern.

*Residents of HHR had positive comments regarding the quality of maintenance as well as other services provided by the business partner.*

## ADDITIONAL BARRACKS MANAGEMENT COMMENTS

- ◆ Managers attempt to keep residents over 21 in the same suites to reduce over age drinking. In most buildings, different sexes are assigned to different floors or wings. At Little Creek, different sexes can be assigned to adjacent suites.
- ◆ Complaints to leadership about barracks conditions or uncooperative suite mates can result in moves to other units, but managers expressed a concern that they often are not informed of complaints until commands get involved.

- ◆ Resident morale often reflects barracks manager morale, especially those having long days and not getting days off for extended periods.
- ◆ Three barracks buildings have 3 or 4 residents in a room and some consist of gang latrines. Limiting two/room would reduce building wear and tear and reduce vandalism.
- ◆ The use of security cameras is effective only if commands take action against those breaking the rules, but that doesn't always happen.
- ◆ Parking is limited to one vehicle space per room, so 3 or 4 persons/room encounters a parking shortage.
- ◆ Would prefer that HHR housing not "outshine" the government barracks. It makes the job of the government managers more difficult. Maybe there is a way the government can adapt some of the same practices of the HHR team.

## NEW MILCON BARRACKS

A new barracks facility designated X-1, will be turned over to the Navy this fall. It is designed using the "apartment style" layout that current standards prescribe for Navy barracks. In comparing the layout of this two story facility with the privatized HHR new construction units, we found the layout of these 2-bedroom apartment suites to be nearly identical to the HHR project - each having full kitchens, private baths, washer/dryer units, and separate walk-in closets with each bedroom. The primary difference will be that Navy intends to double load these units (2 sailors per bedroom), to help achieve Homeport Ashore goals.

With the vastly different approach to barracks management and maintenance procedures between the government and HHR, it will be important to monitor the condition, utilization, and management practices of each to contrast outcomes over time.

**Agenda**  
**OSD, H&CS Visit**  
**Hampton Roads Privatized UPH (5,6 August 2008)**

The Office of the Secretary of Defense, Housing and Competitive Sourcing is conducting a study of all Services UPH programs and needs to incorporate Navy's pilot UPH privatization projects as part of that review. To accomplish this portion of the study, the below schedule was applied:

**Day 1**

- 1100 – 1300 Working lunch with Navy UPH staff (OSD/LMI to host)  
Conference room, SDA 337, Housing Welcome Center
- 1300 – 1430 Meet with Navy UPH Business Partner at Bldg U-16.
- 1430 – 1600 Tour sample privatized UPH facilities
- Van tour of various buildings and Camp Allen site to include front desk at Carter Hall, J-53.
- 1600 – 1730 Visit USS Ashland at NAB Little Creek to see enlisted berthing compartment.
- 1730 – 1900 Dinner
- 1930 – 2100 Evening Focus Group with privatized UPH residents,  
Bldg U-16.
- 2100 - Reservations at Navy Gateway Inns & Suites, Spruance Hall, Bldg A-128, NAVSTA

**Day 2**

- 0830 – 0930 Call on CAPT Pollpeter, NH-140
- 0800 – 0930 Focus Group, conference room U-16 (Senior enlisted leadership, including ship representatives)
- 1000 – 1130 Focus Group, U-16 (managers of government UPH)
- 1130 – 1300 Lunch, NAVSTA Galley
- 1300 – 1400 Tour of MILCON P-293, Market Style Apartments  
Depart

## OSD (H&CS) VISIT

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## Questionnaire to Help Focus Our Discussion

Where is your current duty station?

- Ship       Shore Duty       Training (school)       Other

Please mark the top 3 factors below that are of greatest importance to you in barracks (#1 most important, #2 second most important, #3 third most important).

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Getting off ship               | <input type="checkbox"/> Size of room        | <input type="checkbox"/> Socialize with shipmates |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Privacy                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Room furnishings    | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet access          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Allowing visitors in room      | <input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen facilities  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation/athletic activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual bathroom | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____              |

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Please jot down some of your thoughts about the following:

Identify three things you believe are going well with privatized (PPV) barracks.

- a.
- b.
- c.

List three things that you believe could help make PPV barracks better.

- a.
- b.
- c.