

1981

## The Ops Officers Manual

T.S. O'Keefe

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whose mention in the future may have to be couched in the past tense.

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Deutermann, Peter T. *The Ops Officer's Manual*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1980, 185pp.

*The OPS Officer's Manual* is a highly readable book written for officers ordered to, or serving in, the billet of Operations Officer. The book deals successively with: The Operations Officer; Planning; Training; Stateside Operations; Deployed Operations; Reporting; Operational Emergencies; CIC; and Combat Operations.

Commander Deutermann's work is a useful reference for all Surface Warfare Officers and represents a significant contribution to meet the goal of enhanced professionalism. The principles outlined in the chapters on Planning and Reporting have wide applicability and could serve as the basis for the effective management of any department. Commanding Officers and Executive Officers will, likewise, find the book germane and, in many respects, more relevant than the department head will find it, inasmuch as some of the ideas presented can be implemented only with the concurrence of the CO or XO. The book is written in clear, straightforward style and the ideas presented are innovative, thoughtful, and thought-provoking. The strength of *The OPS Officer's Manual* is in its timelessness. Unlike some "how to" books of the genre, for example *Command at Sea*, Deutermann's work is not so specific as to be restricted by current regulations. Hence, it will not require frequent revision as rules and regulations change. Planning, preparations and a systematic, commonsense approach to routine evolutions are stressed. The author correctly assesses the key to handling Operational Emergencies to be preplanning. Those familiar with

catastrophes that result from proceeding into harm's way without well-conceived contingency plans will derive considerable satisfaction from reading the chapter here.

Training is a subject dear to the heart of all Executive Officers and Deutermann has made his chapter on training the longest in the book. One gets the distinct impression from reading the training chapter that it was written from the viewpoint of the Executive Officer, not the OPS Officer. There is certainly nothing wrong with this approach. It is always good for the OPS Officer to acquire a feel for the larger picture the XO (supposedly) possesses. The chapter is good reading and in it an alternative to the standard shipboard training system is proposed. Under Deutermann's system there is no need for semiannual, quarterly or monthly training plans, *per se*. Ultimately, however, some chronological scheduling of training is necessary. The author divides training into three categories: operational training; advancement training; and organizational training. These functional areas have separate cycles. Operational training is based on the employment cycle, while advancement training, naturally, is based on the advancement cycle. The advantage of looking at training in terms of the requirements of distinct functional areas is that it reflects reality. The training requirements of the fleet are mandated by separate and distinct agencies without regard to ship schedules and without regard to conflicts, redundancy or clear-cut goals. As a first cut, training can be viewed in functional terms. It is only aboard ships, when scheduling commences, that training becomes a system. Because chapter 8 of OPNAVINST 3120.32 is not regulatory in nature but offers "guidance" to commanders and commanding officers, it is probably only heresy, not criminal, to propose an

alternative training plan to the SORM. Deutermann's plan seems reasonable and it probably works. It would seem that thinking of training in functional terms is necessary on any ship interested in scheduling a comprehensive program. It is the first step. CDR Deutermann has formalized what is probably done on most good ships anyway, on an informal basis. Whether the reader "buys" this system or not, the chapter at least gets the fledgling operations officer thinking in the right direction. It would be best for most newly arrived OPS Officers to consider working within the framework of the system established in the SORM, rather than rocking the boat with new proposals.

There are some significant areas of training overlooked in the Training Chapter. Formal schools, particularly those that produce a skill or NEC must be properly managed. Formal school training is an essential part of the long-range training program. This is particularly true for the Operations Officer who generally has a large number of equipments that require specific NECs (Navy Enlisted Classification). The OPS Officer who does not manage his formal school requirements will find himself without a needed NEC one day and NMPC is not going to detail replacements by NEC.

The day of PQS (Personnel Qualification Standards) has arrived. In the Atlantic Fleet, at least, PQS has become an end in itself, rather than a means to an end, much as PMS (Planned Maintenance System) did years ago. The PQS system is inflexible and mandatory. It isn't a "Captain reliever," but it is a "Commodore irritator" if a ship fails a PQS inspection. CDR Deutermann specifically mentions only Surface Warfare Officer PQS. The book should have covered the entire system, if only in general terms.

*The OPS Officer's Manual* is deficient

in the area of overhaul management. There are sufficient Operations Officers assigned as overhaul coordinators to make a chapter on ROH management relevant. Similarly, electronics maintenance and the associated area of GPETE (General Purpose Electronics Test Equipment) is totally neglected—probably with good reason in the case of GPETE. However, electronics maintenance, ultimately, is the function of the Operations department. A book on how to succeed as OPS Boss should include information on how to manage the electronic maintenance program.

Communications is an area that can be the undoing of the trusting, or unwary OPS Officer. It is also an area that can be greatly simplified by careful management and PMS. A prospective OPS Officer needs a communication survival kit and this book would have been the perfect vehicle.

Frequently at Surface Warfare School Command, as prospective Operations Officers near completion of the Department Head Curriculum and begin to run scared, instructors in the Combat Systems Division are flooded by a wave of students who want to know what Operations Officers do. For 26 weeks the students have been exposed to terminology, knobology and more isolated information than any single person can be expected to retain. The question mostly reflects a desire on the part of students to leave SWOS with a set of procedures and guidelines upon which they can rely and that are guaranteed to make them "successful" Operations Officers. Unfortunately, the set of procedures does not exist; nor will a set of procedures guarantee success anyway. CDR Deutermann recognized this by producing a worthwhile manual, broad in scope and general in nature, but one that offers the prospective Operations Officer a feel of the job and some good philosophy which, if taken aboard, will at least point the prospective OPS Boss in the right

direction as he enters the nether world of Operations. *The OPS Officer's Manual* is recommended reading for all Surface Warfare Officers.

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Dupuy, Trevor N., et al. *The Almanac of World Military Power*. San Rafael, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1980. 418pp.

Cline, Ray S. *World Power Trends and U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1980s*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1980. 228pp.

National power assessment is an inherently difficult task complicated by the necessity of making subjective and sometimes arbitrary value judgments. Mere rankings of a nation's military order of battle, natural resources, industrial capacity, and gross national product, while indeed important, can often be misleading in any overall assessment of that nation's national power. What is necessary is a complementary assessment of such factors as leadership, morale, national will, military efficiency, mobilization potential, etc., etc. Further complicating the task, especially from a military standpoint, is the consideration of alliances and treaties, and how effective or binding they are likely to be. Does an analyst look at composite strengths of alliance members, or should he heed the words of Charles de Gaulle when he said, "Treaties are like flowers and young girls—they last while they last"? Power assessments of states or regions then, while important, indeed critical, are inherently subjective. The accuracy of such assessments and their usefulness to national security managers and planners represent the stuff that "analysis" is all about.

The fourth edition of *The Almanac of World Military Power* is a comprehensive compilation of data on the armed forces and power potential

(as measured in geostrategic factors such as geography, population, GNP, military expenditures, iron ore production, fuel production, and electric power output) for nearly all of the world's countries—more than 150 listings. Accompanying maps, while useful for general geographical location and the location of major cities and ports, appear to be black-and-white reproductions of nontopographical, colored originals, and are of limited quality. The *Almanac* also contains regional surveys of the world in which the strategic importance, regional alliances, and recent conflicts are examined, if only in a very general sense. In fact, the authors devote only 41 pages to this section that divides the world into 10 regions, and 13 pages are maps and blank facing pages.

The hulk of the *Almanac* is devoted to the country listings, arranged alphabetically from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, without regard to alliances or geographical region. It is a valuable, single-source document of useful data—precisely what it purports to be—an almanac. The authors make no outward attempt, except in a very general sense, to assess the data; that is left to the reader. Still, the selection of sources, a treatment of "policies and posture," even the compilation of data itself represent at least an implied comparative assessment of global power relationships.

Ray S. Cline, on the other hand, in *World Power Trends and U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1980s*, quite clearly sets out not only to assess the power of nations in an international context but goes so far as to rank-order 77 of the world's nations in a final consolidated listing. He also prepares a regional assessment of power—11 geographical regions that he calls "politelectronic zones" that, he explains, represent the relatively static factors of geography and the consideration of the more fluid political, economic, and military factors