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MEMORANDUM FOR CORRESPONDENTS

U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY SUPERINTENDENT STEPS DOWN

The Navy today announced that Vice Admiral Richard J. Naughton has tendered his resignation as Superintendent of the United States Naval Academy. Vice Adm. Naughton's decision comes after an investigation by the Navy's Inspector General (IG) into an allegation that he improperly interfered with a Marine sentry at the Naval Academy by grabbing the sentry's wrist. This incident occurred December 31, 2002, as Vice Adm. Naughton was returning from a private dinner in Annapolis.

In addition to the sentry incident, the IG also investigated a number of alleged interactions between Vice Adm. Naughton and Academy faculty and staff, which were purportedly overly confrontational or demeaning in nature. The IG substantiated both the allegation of improper contact with the sentry and a general failure to promote good morale.

The IG's report was thoroughly reviewed by Admiral William J. Fallon, Vice Chief of Naval Operations (VCNO), who concurred with the IG's substantiation of improper contact with the Marine sentry. Adm. Fallon met with Vice Adm. Naughton May 28, 2003, and formally counseled him on his lapse in judgment and conduct in the exchange with the Marine sentry.

Additionally, although the VCNO did not concur with the IG's finding that Vice Adm. Naughton failed to adequately promote good morale at the academy, Adm. Fallon also discussed with Vice Adm. Naughton the negative perceptions of his leadership style documented in the IG report.

Vice Adm. Naughton requested an opportunity to meet with the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) to discuss the ramifications of the IG report and the counseling session. At that meeting yesterday, Vice Adm. Naughton told the CNO that it was clear that his efforts at the Naval Academy had had a disruptive effect on some elements of the faculty, and that his continued service as the Superintendent could adversely impact the academy's primary mission to produce commissioned officers for the Navy and Marine Corps. Accordingly, Vice Adm. Naughton asked to step down as Superintendent and retire from active duty. The CNO and the Acting Secretary of the Navy have approved Vice Adm. Naughton's request.

Vice Adm. Charles W. Moore, Jr. will be assigned temporary duty as the Acting Superintendent until a successor can be nominated and confirmed.