



# PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Release 01-17  
September 29, 2017

## Naval Ordnance Test Unit Holds Change of Command Ceremony

By Naval Ordnance Test Unit Public Affairs

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Naval Ordnance Test Unit (NOTU) held a change of command ceremony at Port Canaveral's Cruise Terminal 5, Port Canaveral, Fla., Sept. 29.

During the ceremony, CAPT Jason D. Wartell relieved CAPT John A. Sager as NOTU's commanding officer. Both men are originally from Florida. The time-honored ceremony marked an end to Sager's leadership of the command he headed since April 2014.

NOTU's primary mission is test and evaluation support for the United States Navy's Trident II D5 missile system as well as the Fleet Ballistic Missile program of the United Kingdom through the Polaris Sales Agreement. In addition, NOTU operates the Navy port at Port Canaveral – the second busiest Navy port in the Navy's Southeast Region - supporting submarines and surface ships of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet as well as foreign navies and assets of the Military Sealift Command.

Vice Adm. Terry Benedict, Director, Strategic Systems Programs, served as the guest speaker for the ceremony. He presented Sager with the Legion of Merit for his performance of outstanding service and achievements.

"From command of 19 successful conversions and launch tests of the Trident II D5 missile system to overseeing the safe management of the second busiest port in the Navy's Southeast Region, John has displayed exceptional technical knowledge and fleet operational experience during more than three years of leadership at NOTU. Beyond the high op-tempo that is the norm at NOTU, John also weathered two major hurricane evacuations in less than a year during Hurricanes Matthew and Irma, ensuring NOTU's people and facilities were able to quickly return to full operation," said Benedict.

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Originally from Dunedin, Fla., Sager graduated from the University of South Florida in 1989, earning a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering. He was commissioned and completed Naval Nuclear Power Training in Orlando, Fla., and Charleston, S.C., and has served various ashore, staff and afloat tours as a career submarine warfare officer. Sager reported to NOTU from his previous assignment with Commander, Cruise Missile Support Activity, Pacific based in Hawaii. His next assignment is with Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, in Tampa, Fla.

He thanked NOTU's FBM program partners, the community, and the NOTU staff.

"It's appropriate that USS GEORGE WASHINGTON was the first submarine to launch a submarine ballistic missile right here," Sager said. "So in honor, I'd like to quote our first President who put it clearly, 'without a decisive naval force, we can do nothing definitive, and with it, everything honorable and glorious.' Naval Ordnance Test Unit, you make our country decisive and the honor and glory will always be yours."

Wartell addressed the NOTU team for the first time as NOTU's 25th commanding officer.

"To join the NOTU team with its cumulative expertise and experience covering an immensely diverse portfolio of complex systems supplemented by an amazing professional supporting staff is truly humbling...I look forward to serving you and enabling you to lead the enterprise forward as we continue to modernize the deployed system and pave the way for the primary mission of the Columbia and Dreadnought submarines," Wartell said after congratulating Sager on a job well done.

Wartell, who is a 1987 graduate of Merritt Island High School, enlisted in the Navy in 1988. He is a 1993 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy where he earned a Bachelor of Science in marine engineering. He holds a Master of Science in nuclear engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology. A career submarine warfare officer, Wartell's previous assignments include Commanding Officer of USS NEBRASKA (SSBN 739), and most recently as Director, Submarine Inspections at the Naval Board of Inspection and Survey in Norfolk, Va.

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For more news from NOTU and photos of the Change of Command, visit NOTU's Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/navalordnancetestunit> .



Photo by Navv photographer ET2 Frederick Saunders.

CAPT John A. Sager relinquishes command of Naval Ordnance Test Unit to CAPT Jason D. Wartell in a ceremony held at Port Canaveral's Cruise Terminal 5, Port Canaveral, Fla., Sept. 29.

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Photo by Navy photographer ET2 Frederick Saunders.

CAPT Jason D. Wartell speaks to the NOTU team for the first time as 25<sup>th</sup> Commanding Officer of Naval Ordnance Test Unit during the Change of Command Ceremony held at Port Canaveral's Cruise Terminal 5, Port Canaveral, Fla., Sept. 29. CAPT John A. Sager relinquished command of NOTU to Wartell who is a 1987 graduate of Merritt Island High School located less than 10 miles from the command.

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