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Matzdorf Lauded as a Top Navy Engineer

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Craig Matzdorf

On May 29, a top navy official honored 46 of the Navy's top scientists and engineers in its second-annual recognition of distinguished Navy scientists and engineers among 35,000 who conduct research, development, acquisition, and sustainment. John S. Thackrah, acting assistant secretary for the Navy, presented an award to Craig Matzdorf of the Naval Air Warfare Center – Aircraft Division for developing an entirely new surface chemistry for metal pre-treatment that reduces cost and protects the environment.

Matzdorf currently serves as the head of both the Corrosion & Wear and NDI (Non-Destructive Investigation) Branches under NAVAIR's Materials Engineering Division. "Craig Matzdorf is an extremely capable individual, and it is nice that he received this recognition because he is clearly one of the future leaders in naval aviation," said Steve Spadafora, head of the Materials Engineering Division at NAVAIR.

Matzdorf was recognized for his work in the field of surface chemistry in relation to the corrosion control of naval aircraft and environmental stewardship in the development of non-chromate pretreatments for aluminum. According to the award citation, Matzdorf's efforts have "led to improvements that allow naval aircraft to continue to function in a multitude of environmental conditions under mission profile without degradation to the assets."

In addition, Matzdorf's work has helped naval repair facilities to comply with major national environmental and health laws. His responsible approach has helped decrease the exposure of naval aircraft maintainers to harmful chemicals, resulting in a healthier and safer long-term work environment. He has also been instrumental in promoting the results of his efforts in conjunction with the NAVAIR business office to patent and license this technology to industry. This new product is increasingly being used nationally and internationally as a high performing and environmentally friendly alternative to hexavalent chromium pretreatments for aluminum in all industries. The effects of his efforts have had a global impact in the adoption of his surface chemistry for the pretreatment of aluminum and a testament to NAVAIR innovation.

Since 2003, Matzdorf has been a pivotal member of the working teams that comprise the Corrosion Prevention Integrated Product Team (CPCIPT) that supports the DoD Corrosion Policy and Oversight Office. Specifically, he has led NAVAIR's development and execution of CPCIPT projects, participated on the Metrics, Impact, and Sustainment working integrated product team (WIPT), and supported joint Service initiatives to share materials science and technology with Army and Air Force counterparts in their far-reaching aim to design more corrosion-resistant aircraft and preserve the U.S. aging aircraft fleet.