



VOYAGE PLAN

2017 ♦ Charting the Course for Success ♦ 2020

U.S. NAVY'S **MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND... UNITED WE SAIL**

MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND'S ROADMAP TO SUCCESS; Q&A WITH REAR ADMIRAL DEE MEWBOURNE

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

I recently had the pleasure of sitting down with the commander of Military Sealift Command, Rear Adm. Dee Mewbourne, to discuss the new MSC Voyage Plan. Here are the highlights from our conversation:



What is the purpose of the Voyage Plan?

-Mewbourne- Every organization should have a high-level plan which lays out direction and guidance for its teammates. Military Sealift Command's Voyage Plan provides a strategic roadmap that answers the question, 'Where does MSC see itself going as an organization in the next couple of years?'

Our Voyage Plan is a 'big picture' tool. Often we only focus our eyes downward at the tactical level. Voyage Plan is written to lift our focus to the stars above the horizon to guide us along our journey over the next couple of years.

It does not provide detailed guidance as to *how* MSC is going to succeed. The next document, which will be called Navigation Track, will do that. But Voyage Plan does inform *where* we are going.

We must have a vision so that we can effectively navigate to our destination. How does 'United We Sail' represent MSC's vision?

-Mewbourne- The vision statement that is presented within our Voyage Plan succinctly describes the destination of our multi-year journey. Each of the 27 words was carefully chosen to evoke passionate feelings for our profession and to resolve our shared commitment to excellence in mission accomplishment.

The world in which MSC operates is ever-changing. We will encounter more challenges ahead in completing our mission than MSC has encountered in the past several decades. To overcome the challenges we will face, unity of effort will be essential.

In the Voyage Plan, readers will discover the key phrase 'United We Sail' paired with a powerful image of an MSC ship in challenging weather conditions. The ship is being expertly sailed by our mariners, clearly devoted to accomplishing the mission. These mariners are going to do what it takes to safely get the mission done. They are Ready, Relevant, and Resolute.

At MSC, we are united by a sense of teamwork, pride and professionalism. We are united in our support for the warfighter. We are united in our strong patriotism and our conviction that what we do at MSC answers a higher calling. The image of our ship sailing deftly through stormy waters is representative of these key MSC traits and symbolizes our deeply rooted passion for the work we do.

No matter which of our ships we are talking about, our job is to sail the oceans of the world to accomplish our mission. MSC's mission includes logistics support, sealift, and specialized operations; all designed to provide support to the warfighter. The only way we are going to be able to accomplish our varied, critical missions is to safely sail our oceans together as a unified team. Thus, 'United We Sail.'

Why are the four pillars of MSC's Voyage Plan our People, Platforms, Processes and Partners?

-Mewbourne- The pillars in our Voyage Plan describe the vital areas upon which the entire weight of MSC rests. Metaphorically speaking, these are the load-bearing areas upon which rests our success or failure. We will never be stronger than the combined strength of our pillars.

First and foremost, MSC relies on its people to succeed. We cannot accomplish anything at MSC without our people. We depend on our people's training, expertise, dedication, talent and commitment to get the job done.

Secondly, we rely on our many varied platforms. Our ships are the conduit our people use to provide assured logistics and service support to the warfighter.

Third, our processes define the actions of our workforce and are critical in ensuring mission success. For this reason, we must be devoted to continuous process improvement and incorporating the innovative ideas of our workforce.

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"We will remain the world's finest Navy only if we all fight each and every minute to get better. Our competitors are focused on taking the lead. We must pick up the pace and deny them. The margins of victory are razor thin, but decisive!"

- Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. John M. Richardson



Military Sealift Command Voyage Plan

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A “Voyage Plan” is a description of a vessel’s voyage from start to finish. The plan includes leaving the pier or harbor area, the transit, approach to the destination, and mooring. MSC’s Voyage Plan will be used to safely sail on a Navigation Track within the appropriate Sea Lanes to accomplish our mission in the spirit of our vision.

MISSION

Empower Global Warfighting Capabilities

Military Sealift Command exists to support the joint warfighter across the full spectrum of military operations. Our mission is timeless and essential. Regardless of the challenge, we prevail! Working seamlessly with key partners to master the maritime and cyber domains, MSC provides on-time logistics, strategic sealift, as well as specialized missions anywhere in the world, under any condition, 24/7, 365 days a year.

VISION

United We Sail

With unified resolve, we boldly sail the world’s oceans to provide essential assured logistics and service support to the warfighter as the nation’s premier maritime transportation organization.

PILLARS

Our People

MSC will sustain our ships through acquiring, valuing and developing human excellence. We will become an employer of choice, both afloat and ashore, that believes in its people and values them as critical assets to MSC, the United States Transportation Command, the U.S. Navy, and the United States of America. We must attract, optimize, and retain top talent. We will enable our workforce to capitalize on their skills, experience and most importantly, their potential. Our workforce will be prepared, empowered, equipped, and flexible in responding to challenges across the full spectrum of military operations. Our people are the key enabler to accomplish our mission!

Our Platforms

MSC safely operates, supplies, and maintains the ships that provide logistics support, conduct special missions, move military equipment, supply combat forces, provide humanitarian relief, and strategically position combat cargo around the world. For this reason, we are committed to maximizing the readiness of those ships and recapitalizing where necessary. Our mission responsibilities remain constant whether in peace or war, and our customers expect on-time delivery of their product or service without exception. Our platforms, whether U.S. government owned or commercially chartered, are the conduit for our people to accomplish the mission.

Our Processes

Committed to exemplary stewardship, MSC will efficiently and economically expend the resources our country has entrusted to us. We will do this by mastering best practices required by federal laws and regulations, by leveraging cutting edge technology, and adopting commercial maritime best practices. We will standardize our processes through risk mitigation and oversight to ensure we maintain the trust of the American public. The focus of our processes will be maintaining the highest level of service quality to our customers. We will become a safer, more efficient organization that continues to build trust and confidence through collaboration, alignment, and transparency. Our processes are the tools which allow our people to sustain our platforms to accomplish the mission.

Our Partners

MSC establishes, fosters, and maintains strategic relationships with various organizations that mutually strengthen one another. We value our partnership with the maritime industry and strive to collectively address and solve holistic problems. We rely on our unions to assist with crewing our vessels and represent the interests of the workforce. We empower our operating companies to safely navigate the vessels under their charge. We depend on our foreign allies and partners to enable expeditious support to the warfighter. We work in unison with our Navy’s Fleets, U.S. Transportation Command, and other services to coordinate our efforts to provide resources whenever and wherever required. Our partners expand our scope of operations by providing additional tools for our people and platforms to accomplish the mission.

STRATEGIC THEMES

Harnessing and Developing a Diverse, Capable and Talented Workforce

MSC will recruit, hire, train and develop a diverse workforce and improve its capability by creating a culture that seeks to maximize the contributions of all. We will encourage our employees to reach their professional and personal potentials by providing them with the necessary training, tools, mentoring opportunities, and encouragement. MSC will design and apply comprehensive training solutions that address employee gaps. We will establish a work climate that is free from discrimination, harassment, hazing, reprisal, or inappropriate conduct; inspires unbridled motivation and professionalism; unifies the command workforce under a common goal; and encourages a work-life balance for its employees. MSC will collaboratively work to harness the diversity of knowledge, experiences, skills, and perspective the workforce offers to creatively meet its challenges.



Assuring Global Maritime Logistical Services

MSC exists to provide unfailing support to our country's warfighters during peacetime and war. This is what we do. Our duty is to provide vital services to the U.S. Navy, U.S. Transportation Command, and a wide variety of federal entities and foreign governments. To fulfill this obligation, our ships and crews must be ready for tasking. Our complete inventory of ships will be managed to maximize their life cycles and operated professionally, safely, and economically. Ready, Relevant and Resolute: We are committed to mission accomplishment!

Developing Tactical Capabilities that Support Future Warfighting

Throughout its history, MSC has helped to provide American security and prosperity. To continue to meet this obligation, MSC must adapt to emerging security challenges. The maritime system is becoming more heavily used, more stressed, and more contested than ever before. Advances in technology have created a commensurate reliance on its application, exposing critical vulnerabilities to nefarious actions, particularly in cyberspace. Meanwhile, the emergence of great power competition, as well as the increasing tempo of violent mischief and "Grey War" activities by state and non-state actors, all require adaptation to ensure mission accomplishment. As warfare changes, MSC will work with stakeholders to develop and train with supporting platforms, capabilities, and tactics to assure global maritime services to the warfighter.

Dedicated to Continuous Improvement and Innovation

MSC is committed to continuous process improvement and customer focus. MSC will continuously pursue new and innovative ways to employ technology to increase efficiency and reduce costs while fulfilling mission requirements. We will implement procedures and controls to ensure meaningful gains are achieved and sustained. MSC will develop an organizational culture that embraces change for the better, soliciting and valuing employee and customer recommendations. MSC will leverage modern knowledge management practices to enhance high-velocity learning across the organization. To promote efficiency and effectiveness, MSC will make informed decisions based on information, data, facts, and experiences. We will do this by developing and capturing performance metrics that allow us to quantitatively and qualitatively assess our operations. We will analyze trends in events and patterns of behavior to continuously look for ways to become greater each day.

We are a Team

We will work together, each of us committed to the shared vision of being the nation's premier maritime transportation organization. Since we are a team, we treat everyone with mutual respect. We foster esprit de corps among our workforce and within our service. We acknowledge the strengths and weaknesses of our co-workers, believing that they can and will succeed, and we collaborate in our decision-making as much as possible. We welcome forceful backup from our co-workers and stakeholders.

We Demand Integrity

We adhere to the highest ethical and moral standards and demand the same of those we work with to achieve mission goals. Our actions are to be such that we would always be proud should they be made public and made known to our immediate family members. The ends never justify the means. We obey all rules and regulations and will not condone the misbehavior of others.

Our Actions are Guided by Our Core Values of Honor, Courage and Commitment

We have the courage to assume responsibility for our actions, to face the unknown, and to overcome adversity. We treat one another as we would like to be treated. We do not tolerate discrimination, sexual harassment or assault, hazing, bullying, reprisal, fraternization, or the illegal or improper use of drugs or alcohol. We are committed to our profession and our people.

We Foster Positive Leadership

Leadership is the essence of our profession. We lead by example at all levels and develop our future leaders. Our perpetual optimism gives us strength to overcome all challenges. By delegating responsibility, and the authority that goes with it, we are more effective and efficient.

We are Proactive Managers

We plan ahead to identify and avoid obstacles to success. We keep our planning focused on the future. We develop action plans that include goals, steps, and tracking to reach objectives. We clearly establish the priorities for all tasks to promote alignment and unity of effort. We act quickly to resolve problems. We encourage initiative and innovation.

We Believe in Highly Effective Communications

To enhance our efficiency and effectiveness, we continuously communicate up and down the chain of command, as well as across the various work units. We actively communicate with our internal and external partners to learn and share innovative ideas and enhance the image of our organization and our service. We unify our efforts through effective communication.

We are Responsible Citizens

We support our local communities. Whether at home or deployed, we act as ambassadors of our nation and our Navy. Concern for the environment and energy conservation are integral parts of our operations.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Voyage Plan, continued reading from page 1

Finally, MSC cannot support the warfighters alone. We rely daily on key partnerships with industry, labor, academia, and government entities to accomplish our mission and must continue to strengthen this important pillar.

The Strategic Themes section of the Voyage Plan begins with an additional focus on MSC's workforce. 'People' seem to be the most important element throughout the Voyage Plan. Was this intentional?

-Mewbourne- This was absolutely intentional. MSC is committed to our workforce. When my MSC teammates read our Voyage Plan, I want them to see how much they are valued.

At the end of the day, MSC is a people organization. We do a great job of recruiting professional talent, and we need to continue bringing in the best and the brightest.

We do a good job of training our people. But we need to keep pushing the envelope to improve in this area, too.

We need to make sure our people are taken care of. We must make sure our people are able to develop to their fullest potential. From the most senior to the most junior, MSC is dedicated to the success of our people.

Why should MSC be 'dedicated to continuous improvement and innovation?'

-Mewbourne- MSC is a phenomenal organization. We have been around since the late 1940s and we have accomplished amazing work over our history. However, the world in which we live is constantly changing.

Over the past 20 years, there have been significant shifts in the environment in which MSC operates. For example, reliance on new technology has increased exponentially over the last two decades and continues to accelerate. In order to succeed, MSC must implement these emerging technologies into our business processes while taking care to secure our critical networks from malicious actors operating in the cyber domain. Meanwhile, the physical security environment in which we operate is also changing. The emergence of great power competition and increasing occasions of violent global mischief challenge our full freedom of the seas and require us to develop mitigations that will ensure essential logistics and services are provided to the warfighter.

Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, we must prevail. To overcome these challenges requires innovation and constant improvement.

It is that philosophy of continuous improvement that will distinguish MSC from all others. The opposite of this philosophy, complacency, has a devastating impact on an organization and historically leads to total failure.

In order to succeed, MSC must never give up and never stop pushing for improvement. Excellence is a journey and not a destination. We must be committed to become 'greater each day.' This mindset will be critical for MSC to maintain its role as the world's premier maritime transportation organization.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

-Mewbourne- The MSC roadmap does not end with the Voyage Plan. This is the first part of a two-part series.

While Voyage Plan defines our end-state, detailed lines of effort and activities are being developed and will be presented in a follow-on document called, Navigation Track. Taken together, Navigation Track and Voyage Plan will provide the ways, means, and ends of our strategic plan for the next several years, guiding our united efforts as we boldly sail the world oceans...Ready, Relevant, and Resolute!



“Ensure today’s readiness...advocate for tomorrow’s capabilities...to always provide the president with viable national security options and maintain our ability to rapidly project forces anywhere on the globe at the time and place of our country’s choosing. We must ensure we have the personnel, platforms, systems and training to provide this unique capability on behalf of our nation.”
- Commander, United States Transportation Command, Gen. Darren W. McDew

