

December 2008

S.E.A.L.I.F.T

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

Afloat Ambassadors Safeguard visits India, Bangladesh

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Strategic planning — shaping the way ahead

If you want to do anything the right way, you have to have a plan. And plans don't grow on trees; they have to be developed.

Okay, before you drop off to sleep, consider this: When you head for work in the morning, whether it's afloat or ashore, if you don't have a plan on how to get where you're going, your chances of getting there are pretty slim. So, you listen to the traffic reports or remember that the ladder from deck 3 to deck 4 is being repaired today. Then, you alter your route accordingly.

It's the same for MSC — without a plan, we're not going to get the mission done or keep our customers satisfied or even get our people paid. That's just not acceptable. So we engage in an annual planning cycle that constantly monitors conditions and factors that affect the command. Everyone is involved, whether they know it or not. People in the field gather data. That data is reviewed and analyzed by managers. The analysis is briefed to senior leadership, and decisions are made that are written into the annual corporate plan. Mission execution is then a matter of following the plan.

Corporate plan

In late October, I gathered MSC's senior leadership at a summit in Norfolk. Our senior Reservists came a day early to discuss some relevant Reserve issues, and then they joined the rest of us to look at a number of significant challenges and opportunities for the command. Foremost among the issues we discussed was the MSC 2009 Corporate Plan, which has been in development for the past year. This was the final review.

The MSC 2009 Corporate Plan includes 47 initiatives divided into four areas of emphasis — customer, business, current readiness and future missions, and workforce. If you want to see what they are, you can find the MSC 2009 Corporate Plan on the MSC Intranet, or you can request a copy

from Dave Hatcher (david.hatcher1@navy.mil), MSC headquarters strategic planning. Right now, I want to give you what senior leadership considers the top 12 priorities.

Priority initiatives

The first area of emphasis is helping our customers efficiently meet their objectives. To do this, we're going to:

- Implement a strategic communications program to increase MSC visibility to our customers.

The second area of emphasis is using smart business practices to provide quality services at the best value. In this area, we're going to:

- Review overtime management processes;
- Develop a fuel allocation process that allows for accurate budget and fuel estimates for Navy;
- Develop the case for fleetwide use of Intersleek 900 hull coating;
- Capture government-owned/government-operated and government-owned/contractor-operated maintenance and repair costs; and
- Improve the way we store electronic data.

To ensure that MSC has the right ships and people to conduct current and future missions, our initiatives are to:

- Develop an MSC instruction and standard operating procedure for U.S. Transportation Command's new initiative on Joint Task Force—Port Opening for Sea Ports of Debarkation;
- Use global force management to schedule MSC towing and salvage ships;
- Develop joint-high-speed-vessel and mobile-landing-platform management plans for MSC; and
- Implement next-generation wide-band communications for the MSC fleet.

The final emphasis area involves developing and caring for our workforce. The priority initiatives are to:

- Improve the master and chief engineer evaluation processes, which you can read about on Page 3; and

- Streamline the recruiting process.

Leadership summit

The rest of the senior leadership summit addressed a variety of topics. The key to the discussions was the fact that the information was being shared at a strategic level, high enough that there was collaboration between and among all parts of the MSC organization. Also, the format of the summit was designed to allow feedback on questions that were asked and issues that were raised.

We worked through our long list of issues — very much aware of the national and global dynamics generated by the economic uncertainties that MSC, and all of us individually, face every day. We took into consideration that the Department of Defense budget will be rigorously scrutinized due to the election of a new president. Budget pains will mostly affect MSC headquarters initially, but trickle-down effects could become apparent by next summer.

We're going to be proactive in executing the budget, taking some evaluated and acceptable risks, maintaining budget visibility down to the lowest levels and eliminating surprises as much as humanly possible.

While the operating tempo of our Navy fleet support will remain fairly steady, we're pretty sure that there will be some changes on the joint side of our operations. Just what those changes will be remains to be determined, but we'll stay flexible in order to respond quickly.

My personal priorities

There are four areas that I consider my personal priorities. The first is "people programs." I want to make sure we're doing everything we can to motivate, train and equip our shipmates around the world, afloat and ashore, to execute MSC's mission.

Second, I also want MSC to be a vital part of the Navy's strategic focus on energy costs and fuel consumption. We can help the rest of the Navy be

better stewards of our tax dollars, while being conscious of environmental issues and operational needs.

Third, it's my intent to increase the visibility of our business for both our customers and potential customers and for ourselves as we monitor our own performance. Metrics and the MSC business execution cycle (see my Commander's Perspective in the September 2008 issue of Sealift) will help us examine the way we do business and identify ways to do business better.

Finally, I want to make maritime domain awareness and force protection — how we maintain visibility of our ships and cargo and what we do to protect them from pirates and terrorists — a constant part of our mission and a constant consideration of our people around the globe every day.

Planning works

Everything we accomplished at the senior leadership summit was the result of careful planning on the part of those who put the summit together. Everything MSC accomplishes in fiscal year 2009 will be the result of our corporate plan and the efforts of our people. We truly do shape our own future. We're all part of the process. We're all responsible for its success.

Keep the faith,

Robert D. Reilly Jr.
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Commander, Military Sealift Command

Get your photos in Sealift

Great photos tell great stories. When Sealift tells about the work that Military Sealift Command people are doing worldwide, photos add interest and aid in readers' understanding.

When an event happens on your ship or at your command, we'd like your help telling the story. Take some photos, and send them to us. If there is an MSC ship visiting your area, take a picture. Is your ship participating in an operation or exercise? We'd love to have your photos from the deck, the engine room, the galley or wherever you see something that would interest the Sealift audience.



The high-resolution photo, left, appears clearer than the same photo at a lower resolution, right. When taking photos for Sealift, remember to use your camera's highest resolution setting.

Here are some tips to increase the chances of having your photos published in Sealift.

- Before taking photos, ensure your camera is set to take photos at the highest resolution possible.
- Capture the whole story in the photos. If the subject of the picture is a ship, show the entire ship along with any identifying marks like the hull number or the name.
- Get photos of people while they're doing something. Posed photos are okay, but action shots help the viewer visualize what happened: captain looking through binoculars, 1st engineer checking fluids, etc.
- When you submit your photos, identify all the people

in the photos by name, rank/rate and service and explain what's happening in the photo. Also, be sure to provide your name as the photographer so that we can credit you with the photo.

- Send the photos to us as soon as you take them. E-mail them to rosemary.heiss@navy.mil.

Using these guidelines will give you the best chance to see your photos in Sealift.

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Major strategic sealift relocation plan complete

By Rosemary Heiss
MSC Public Affairs

On a typical November day in Louisiana, the port of Violet – like any good maritime location – is busy, with ships sailing up and down the Mississippi River moving sea commerce.

The 907-foot-long large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Shughart arrived at Berth 2 in Violet Nov. 4 with little fanfare, but this industrial site near New Orleans was the last stop in Military Sealift Command's coast-to-coast plan to relocate 15 government-owned cargo ships that are kept on stand-by to be prime movers of combat gear for deployed U.S. warfighters.

This major movement of ships to 10 ports around the country started in January. It was initiated by U.S. Transportation Command and executed by MSC and the Maritime Administration to provide better sea transportation options on the West Coast, where MSC LMSRs and MARAD fast sealift ships did not previously have a presence, to support the changing Army and Marine Corps footprint on that side of the country.

"It was a task that required the cooperation and commitment of an entire team of MSC and Maritime Administration people around the country," said Mark Coggins, Sealift Program surge project officer responsible for a large part of the move. "Repositioning and siting these heavy haulers – the largest ships in the surge sealift fleet – will provide a significant benefit to U.S. Transportation Command and military commands that depend on our rapid-response capabilities."

According to David McDonough, from the U.S. Transportation Command Joint Distribution Process Analysis Center, this relocation was initiated after

multiple mobility capabilities studies and a siting study that identified specific requirements. Such a comprehensive siting study hadn't been done in more than 10 years, he said.

U.S. Transportation Command determined that having LMSRs and fast sealift ships on the West Coast, in addition to their locations on the East and Gulf coasts, would improve response times for the land-based forces from places like California, Washington, Alaska and Hawaii – areas that have significant military presence and require closer port access to deploy massive amounts of combat equipment and supplies in support of U.S. warfighters around the world.

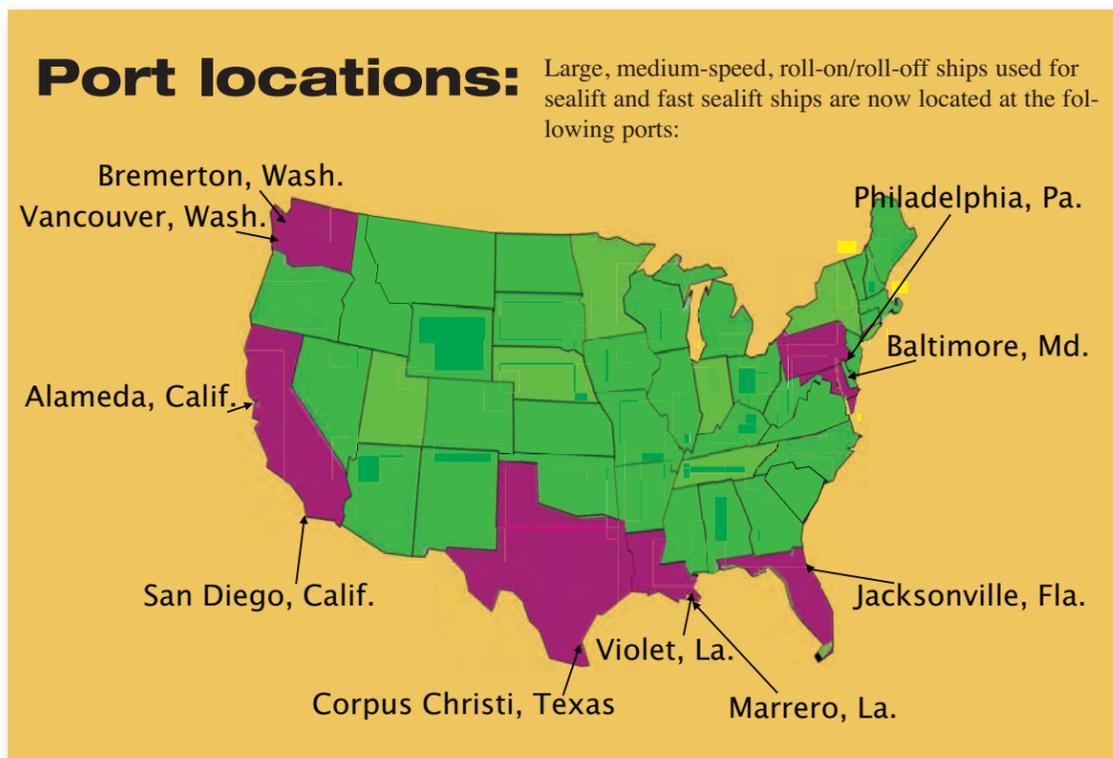
MSC managed the ship relocation while sealift operations continued to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. To relocate most of the ships, MSC took advantage of voyages the ships were already scheduled to make, saving money for the command by not having to get a ship underway to go from one port to another without cargo.

strategic sealift relocation plan was for MSC to identify the best permanent port locations for surge sealift ships. After the ports were identified – with help from people like Sealift Logistics Command Pacific Operations Officer Rick Appling – MSC identified Navy piers and berths where the ships could maintain a permanent presence. In other cases, the command negotiated contracts at commercial ports. Coggins oversaw the execution of the siting plan, which included relocating LMSRs to Navy or government berths like Naval Station San Diego, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton, Wash., and Blount Island Command in Jacksonville or commercial layberths such as Vancouver, Wash., and Violet.

"Implementation of the strategic sealift relocation plan adds greatly to the mobility and flexibility of U.S. forces," said Vice Adm. Ann Rondeau, U.S. Transportation Command deputy commander. "Our surge sealift ships are now better aligned to support the needs of the warfighters we serve."

In one case, LMSR USNS Bob Hope, the first ship to reposition, was unloading redeployment cargo from Kuwait in San Diego and stayed there as part of the relocation plan. The ship was subsequently on site for the Army's 25th Infantry Division to load cargo destined for the Middle East for Operation Iraqi Freedom. As a result, MSC and U.S. Transportation Command avoided having to activate a Gulf Coast ship to go to San Diego for the lift – a voyage that, before cargo pickup, would have cost \$1.8 million.

The first step of the



MSFSC phases in new civil service mariner evaluation

By Meghan Patrick
MSC Public Affairs

This month, the licensed masters who lead Military Sealift Command's 5,200-strong civil service mariner workforce are being introduced to a new paperless evaluation system that will save time, invite mariners' feedback and be available online 24/7. The new system will replace the current paper-based system for chief engineers in March 2009 and the rest of the civil service mariners seven months later.

The system was created under the supervision of Kathleen Giacalone, Military Sealift Fleet Support Command's labor and employee relations division head, and civil service mariner Capt. Charles Becker, a 31-year MSC veteran and special assistant to MSFSC Director Jack Taylor.

MSFSC senior leadership recognized the increased efficiency and effectiveness of the recently developed mariner advancement program. The entirely computerized assessment prototype received a 4.3 out of 5.0 satisfaction rating from masters, department heads, officers and unlicensed mariners in a trial run of the software in Norfolk the week of Oct. 13-17 and in San Diego Oct. 20-24.

The positive reception of the 68 mariners who tested the new evaluation quickened the implementation of the system for MSC's highest ranking civil service mariners, who were originally scheduled to start using the evaluation next year.

The new system greatly reduces administrative requirements and improves the accuracy of reporting, according to Raymond Blanchet, port chief engineer east. Blanchet, who spent the last 28 years as a seagoing marine engineer with MSC, provided subject matter expertise to Becker's team.

"It's like turning a horse and buggy into a Lamborghini," said Becker. "I am very, very pleased with the outcome."

The old paper-based evaluation can take more than one hour to administer, said Becker. Civil service mariners and their supervisors are required to complete three handwritten documents: a promotion evaluation form, a supervisory assessment, and a knowledge, skills and abilities form. Most of the data is re-keyed into a computer at a later time. In addition, an evaluator often drafts an essay to support capable mariners.

Promotion boards, which review 30 to 100 applicants each time they convene, are frequently challenged by the

essay format, said port chief engineer west, James Shirley.

"The current design lacks anything systematic," said Shirley, who has participated in more than a dozen promotion boards during his 28 years as a civil service mariner.

The narrative summaries vary widely from one supervisor to the next – making the situation difficult for promotion boards that look at several evaluations simultaneously.

Thus, Becker and his team embarked on the project 18 months ago to create a clear snapshot of the mariners and their knowledge, skills and abilities, tailored to the duties of their specific rates.

"We took on the dragon by examining various formats of commercial industry and Navy evaluations such as Navy fitness reports," said Becker, whose team extracted the best parts from each.

The new electronic program streamlines the different components into one, fully automated evaluation that requires only 10 to 15 minutes to administer, saving about three-fourths of the time required under the old system.

The change is a "paradigm shift for MSC," said Blanchet. "The goal is to remove the arbitrariness from the assessment."

Under the mariner advancement program, evaluations are based on four broad skill areas. One is technical, evaluating the type of skills found on U.S. Coast Guard exams. Another is organizational, pertaining to communication, policies and practices. The third is general, regarding judgment, dependability and initiative. The last area is potential, including skills such as how forward looking the candidate is, and his or her aptitude for promotion.

"From a mariner's perspective, the biggest change is their ability to give feedback," said Becker.

Every mariner can electronically view his or her evaluation and add comments in each of the sections, which are preserved as part of the assessment. Promotion board members will see both the mariners' and their supervisors' inputs to the evaluations when considering candidates for promotion.

"Finally, we have a fair system which levels the field across the fleet," said Becker. "If our recent field test results are any indication of how well the new system will be received by the mariners, I'm expecting it will be embraced as an excellent tool for evaluation and advancement."

Safe in



Safeguard wraps up dive e

**By Edward Baxter
SEALOGFE Public Affairs**

Civil service mariners and U.S. Navy divers assigned to Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard completed bilateral dive exercises with Indian and Bangladeshi navies Nov. 7.

Safeguard arrived at the scenic port of Goa on India's southwest coast Oct. 14 to conduct the ship's seventh dive

exercise with a foreign navy this year and the third with India's navy since 2004.

The at-sea joint diving exercise followed classroom training, which featured dive and salvage techniques and safety procedures such as decompression and emergency response procedures. Seventeen Indian navy personnel, some of whom are the equivalent of U.S. Navy SEALs, joined 15 Pearl Harbor, Hawaii-based Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One, Company 1-8 divers in hands-on underwater welding training.

The exercise included 25 dives totaling more than 13 hours underwater, with both surface-supplied air dives using dive helmets and dives using the more common self-contained underwater breathing apparatus, or SCUBA. Each dive consisted of one Indian and a U.S. Navy counterpart.

Indian divers received a metal plate – about two feet wide – that had square sections cut out. While underwater, the Indian divers, accompanied by a U.S. navy diver as an observer, were required to weld metal plates into the empty squares. After the metal plate was brought to the surface, the Indian divers observed their work first hand.

Indian and U.S. divers also trained in hand-held sonar operations by bouncing the sonar device's waves off the tanks of other divers.

Marking the end of a successful dive operation, MDSU One divers and Safeguard's civil service mariners embarked the Indian naval patrol boat INS Bitra where they were treated to a shipboard reception, which included a large selection of local cuisine. Renowned for its pristine beaches and historic architecture, Goa is a former Portuguese settlement and India's smallest state. With the dive exercise complete, Safeguard got underway Oct. 23 destined for its next dive exercise with the Bangladesh navy.

Along the way to Chittagong, Bangladesh, Safeguard completed an underway replenishment with MSC combat stores ship USNS San Jose Oct. 25 off the coast of Sri Lanka.

"We completed the replenishment successfully, and much credit goes to the seamanship of our mariners because the seas were rough with 30 knot winds," said Capt. David Bradshaw, Safeguard's civil service master.

The following day, Safeguard conducted small boat transfers with San Jose to take on stores and other supplies.

Safeguard arrived at Bangladesh's largest port city Nov. 2 and conducted its first-ever dive exercise with the Bangladeshi navy and the first pierside visit by a U.S. Navy ship to the South Asian nation in more than 15 years.



A Bangladeshi girl proudly displays her new backpack bearing the U.S. and Bangladesh flags at the Islamia Sukani Primary School in Chittagong, Bangladesh. The backpacks were distributed by civil service mariners and divers from Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard.



Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard sails through heavy seas off the coast of Sri Lanka, Oct. 25, in order to take on fuel from MSC combat stores ship USNS San Jose.

guard Asia

Cover: A diver aboard Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard assists an Indian navy diver in preparation for a dive.

xercises

On Nov. 5, Safeguard got underway from Chittagong to a nearby dive site, where a small boat was sunk the day before by a Bangladeshi tug boat. Safeguard arrived at the coordinates provided by the Bangladesh navy and civil service mariners performed a two-point moor over the salvage project.

Using side-scan sonar, Safeguard located the wreckage in about 80 feet of water.

“Strong currents up to four knots and zero visibility in the water made locating the wreck challenging,” said Navy Chief Warrant Officer Randy Duncan, MDSU Two’s officer in charge aboard Safeguard.

U.S. Navy divers and their Bangladeshi counterparts then conducted several surface supplied air dives, using hand-held sonar, to confirm the location of the wreck and pinpoint the coordinates. Later that day, Bangladeshi divers were transferred off the ship by small boat, and Safeguard got underway for a scheduled port call in Singapore.

“We are looking forward to future operations with the Bangladeshi navy,” said Duncan.

Navy divers took the opportunity to tour the Bangladeshi navy dive school Nov. 3, and later that day U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh, James F. Moriarty, joined 20 Bangladeshi military officers from all branches of their military, as well as the Bangladesh maritime academy, aboard the ship for an evening reception hosted by Bradshaw.

“Second Cook Edmund Serrano led our stewards department. They worked very hard to prepare some fine cuisine for an event that brought our respective navies together in a spirit of friendship and cooperation,” Bradshaw said.



Divers aboard Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard lead cadets from the Bangladesh naval academy on a tour of the ship.

While in Bangladesh, civil service mariners and MDSU divers volunteered to help out at a local school in Chittagong. Safeguard’s crew painted classrooms, repaired dangerous electrical wiring and installed lights and fans. Moriarty also paid a visit to the Islamia Sukani Primary School in Chittagong, with 450 students enrolled, to observe the work up close.

“As Americans, it was a great privilege to help these kids by creating a better environment for them to study in,” said Safeguard’s Chief Engineer Sam Battles, a second generation MSC mariner, whose father – James Earl Battles – was also a chief engineer. “I believe our visit will leave a favorable impression with these youngsters, as well as their teachers, that will last for years to come.”

“Both the Indian and Bangladeshi navies were very professional, and they were very good hosts,” said Navy

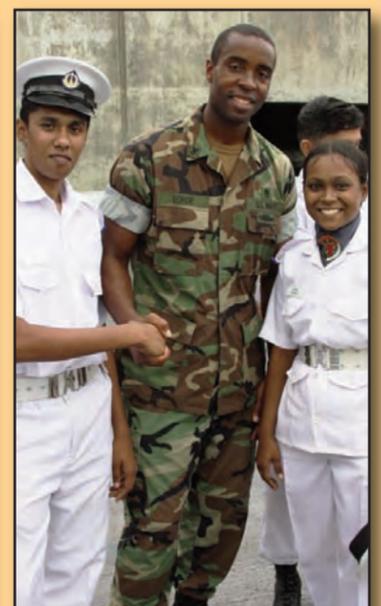
Lt. Cmdr. Charles Ehnes, U.S. 7th Fleet diving and salvage officer aboard Safeguard. Safeguard, the U.S. Navy’s only forward-deployed rescue and salvage ship, has conducted dive or salvage operations in Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, the Philippines, Palau, Thailand and Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands this year.

“The divers and civilian mariners and all those involved in the India and Bangladesh dive exercises have worked incredibly well together to complete two high-visibility exercises with foreign navies in theater,” said Navy Rear Adm. Nora Tyson, commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific and commander, Task Force 73. “The ship and the crew have once again proved themselves fine ambassadors of their country, and I congratulate them on a superb job.”

More from the shore



U.S. Navy photos by Navy Diver 2nd Class Ellis Richard



Left: Safeguard’s Engine Utilityman Roland Palisoc (left) and Chief Engineer Sam Battles take time out of their community relations project to play with the children at the school where the civil service mariners and divers from Safeguard repaired wiring and installed lighting and fans.

Middle: Safeguard’s Navy Electronics Technician 1st Class Azalea Spearman and civil service master Capt. David Bradshaw hand out backpacks to children.

Right: Navy Diver 2nd Class Mariano Lorde of Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One meets cadets from the Bangladesh naval academy.

HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

Two Military Sealift Command employees — **Renee Desrosiers**, maritime forces and manpower management, and **Tiffany Brockman**, a West Coast 1st mate — represented Military Sealift Command as panelists at the Maritime Administration-sponsored Women on the Water conference Nov. 8 at California Maritime Academy. The second annual conference brought together academy cadets and women from across the maritime industry to discuss issues, including environmental changes, human factors affecting

mariners at sea, industry trends, emerging employment opportunities and regulatory changes affecting the industry. Desrosiers discussed seagoing employment opportunities, and Brockman, who was also a panelist last year, shared insights about working at sea.

More than 100 leaders from MSC's worldwide workforce attended the MSC Leadership Summit 2008 Oct. 28 and 29 in Norfolk, Va. Through presentations and discussions, representatives from MSC headquarters, Military Sealift Fleet

Support Command, ship support units, MSC liaison offices and sealift logistics commands covered topics including the fiscal 2008 financial review, the commander's intent, and ship acquisition and expansion plans. The day before the summit, **Rear Adm. Robert O. Wray**, MSC deputy commander, and Navy **Capt. Steve Carmichael**, Reserve Programs special assistant, hosted MSC's Reserve leadership in Norfolk to discuss Reserve-specific issues. The Reserve leadership also attended the leadership summit.

MSC welcomes **Nefertiti Horton**, administrative support cen-

ter; **Graham McAllister** and **Daniel Lynch**, operations; **Tyrone Ware**, logistics; **Bryant Grumbach**, command, control, communications and computer systems; **Michael Spaugy** and **Theo Gionis**, engineering; and **Elizabeth Bogart**, Prepositioning Program.

The command bids farewell to **John Simmons**, Sealift Program; **Marvin Hatcher**, operations; Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Mary Brown** and Navy **Personnel Specialist 1st Class Felicia Brown**, maritime forces and manpower management; and **Susan Paolini**, contracts and business management.



MSC Leadership Summit 2008

COMPASS • HEADING

Military Sealift Fleet Support Command dedicated its new headquarters complex in a ceremony Oct. 30 at the Breezy Point area of Naval Station Norfolk. The event marked the completion of Military Sealift Command's five-year global transformation. During the ceremony, a granite monument symbolizing the patriotic service of mariners was unveiled. The historic marker is etched with the image of civil service mariners performing their duties during an underway replenishment. MSFSC personnel continue to move from the Virginia National Guard Reservation at Camp Pendleton in Virginia Beach to the new headquarters.

Phyllis Spano, MSFSC director of manpower and human resources, received the Navy Superior Civilian Service Award Oct. 29, for her sustained superior performance, including exceptional dedication, professionalism and leadership ability.

Fair winds and following seas to **Engine Utilityman Wildredo Diaz**, **Yeoman Storekeeper Maximo Bayquen Jr.**, **Ordinary Seaman Antonio Mamaril** and **Electronics Technician Fernando Joseco** as they retire.

For more MSFSC and civil service mariner news, visit the Web site and online newsletter www.msc.navy.mil/msfsc.



During a ceremony to open the Military Sealift Fleet Support Command headquarters at the Breezy Point area of Naval Station Norfolk Oct. 30, the command unveiled a granite monument, which pays tribute to the patriotic service of mariners. The marker bears the image of civil service mariners conducting an underway replenishment.

EUROPE • NEWS

Military Sealift Command large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Bob Hope loaded 550 pieces of cargo in Antwerp, Belgium, Oct. 24-26 for redeployment to the United States.

Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron One flagship USNS

2ND LT John P. Bobo completed its 54,000-hour main propulsion diesel engine overhaul at Naval Station Rota, Spain, in October. The ship's engineers worked around the clock to complete the major overhaul four days ahead of schedule.

CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Two Military Sealift Command ships supported ships doing counter-piracy operations in U.S. 5th Fleet's area of operations. The ships loaded fuel and supplies and transited to the Horn of Africa to complete their missions. MSC fleet ocean tug USNS Catawba supported Ukrainian vessel MV Faina off the Somali Coast, and MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Lenthall delayed its transition into U.S. 6th Fleet in order to support the mission.

Sealift Logistics Command Central bids farewell to MSC combat stores

ship USNS San Jose as it departs the Central Command area of operations. Capt. Stephen Kelley, SEALOGCENT commander, gave the ship a bravo zulu for safely and efficiently transferring more than 795 tons of cargo and provisions and 840,000 gallons of fuel in 89 replenishments at sea.

SEALOGCENT Navy **Medical Services Officer Yesenia Astorga** was promoted to the rank of lieutenant days before she transferred to the 1st Medical Battalion, Camp Pendleton, Calif. The command welcomes Navy **Lt. Erik Sarmiento** as her relief.



U.S. Navy photo by Bill Cook

52 years

Civil service mariner Boatswain Luis "Tony" Torres is congratulated by Rear Adm. Robert O. Wray, Military Sealift Command deputy commander, on receiving the Secretary of the Navy Career Service Award. Torres has served with MSC for 52 years.

Torres, 76, was first employed by the Military Sea Transportation Service, MSC's predecessor, as an ordinary seaman after finishing a tour in the U.S. Marine Corps. His first ship assignment as a civil service mariner was USNS General S.D. Sturgis, a General G.O. Squier-class transport ship. Torres, a native of Puerto Rico who now resides in Florida, most recently served aboard fleet re-

plenishment oiler USNS Kanawha. "I've visited many ports over the years, including the North and South Poles," said Torres. "I suppose after sailing on so many MSC ships, that's not surprising. I've been a bos'n for 23 years and taught many of the mariners who are now chief mates and captains!"

During his long career, Torres has sailed aboard 38 MSC ships — all but three of which have been deactivated. In all, he has received four length of service awards, two shipmate of the year awards, six special act awards, one on the spot award, one time off award, three letters of commendation and one sustained superior performance award.

PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Fleet replenishment oiler USNS Guadalupe supported aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis and its strike group during a composite training exercise Oct. 16 to Nov. 2. During the exercise, which prepared the carrier strike group for deployment, Guadalupe delivered 208 pallets of dry stores and jet fuel to Stennis and diesel fuel to the other ships in the strike group.

Fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon provided a platform for training teams from amphibious assault ship USS Boxer during an exercise Nov. 2-16. Yukon played the role of a suspect ship boarded by training teams as part of the war on drugs and the war on terror.

Hospital ship USNS Mercy hosted Jonathan Kleinwaks, Navy assistant auditor general for manpower and Reserve affairs, Oct. 25. While aboard

Mercy, Kleinwaks toured the ship's medical facilities and met with some of the crew members who participated in Pacific Partnership, the ship's recent humanitarian deployment to Southeast Asia.

Navy **Capt. David Kiehl**, Sealift Logistics Command Pacific commander, presented Navy **Chief Quartermaster Jeremy Cornell** with the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal for meritorious service as the SEALOGPAC security officer, facilities officer and senior enlisted advisor from January 2006 to November 2008.

Navy **Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Andrew Thudium** received the Navy Achievement Medal for professional achievement while serving as SEALOGPAC staff information systems technician from February 2005 to October 2008.

ATLANTIC • LINES

Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic Marine Transportation Specialist **Brian Hill** assisted Military Sealift Command-chartered tanker MV Houston in delivering more than 200 million barrels of fuel to Yabucoa, Puerto Rico; Guantanamo, Cuba; Jacksonville, Fla.; and Houston, Texas; in October.

Rich Bolduc and **Allen Dickerson**, SEALOGLANT Jacksonville, Fla., representatives, assisted MSC tanker USNS Richard G. Matthiesen in delivering more than 190,000 barrels of fuel to Jacksonville and Key West, Fla., in October.

Bolduc and Dickerson oversaw the loading of cargo fuel, bunker fuel, vehicles and general cargo containers onto Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS PFC Dewayne T. Williams in Jacksonville Oct. 27 to Nov. 3.

Tom D'Agostino, SEALOGLANT Charleston, S.C., representative, oversaw the discharge of more than 90,000 square feet of cargo from MSC-chartered ship SS Westward Venture Oct. 20 and 21. Days later, D'Agostino oversaw the loading of the ship with 126,425 square feet of cargo, including more than 150 mine-

resistant, ambush-protected vehicles, bound for Operation Iraqi Freedom. Large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Mendonca also loaded about 220,000 square feet of cargo that included more than 200 MRAPs Oct. 25 to 27.

SEALOGLANT welcomes **Donald Price**, antiterrorism/force protection officer, and **Randle Dixon**, operations specialist. Though both are new to SEALOGLANT, neither is new to MSC. Price served as Sealift Logistics Command Far East commander from 2005 to 2006 and later served as Military Sealift Fleet Support Command operations director. Dixon served as an assistant operations department manager while part of the military department aboard MSC combat stores ship USNS Saturn.

Congratulations to Navy **Cmdr. Hugo Polanco**, who completed the U.S. Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C., Oct. 26. Polanco is a full-time MSFSC damage control officer but is also a U.S. Navy Reservist temporarily on active duty assigned to SEALOGLANT's antiterrorism/force protection department.

FAR • EAST • HAILS

Civil service master **Capt. Steve Karavolos** and the crew of fast combat support ship USNS Bridge participated in Malabar 2008, a joint exercise between Indian and U.S. navies Oct. 18-22. Bridge provided underway replenishment services to the USS Ronald Reagan carrier strike group and helped train four Indian naval ships in approach procedures as well as dry hook ups. First conducted in 1992, this year's Malabar exercise took place in the Arabian Sea off India's southwest coast.

Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Alexander Soe**, Military Sealift Command Office Okinawa commanding officer, briefed Army Brig. Gen. Francis Wiercinski, commanding general, U.S. Army Japan and deputy commanding general of I Corps (Forward) Japan, at Naha, Okinawa, Oct. 23 on MSC operations at

Naha's military port. Wiercinski also toured high-speed vessel Westpac Express, hosted by the vessel's civilian master **Capt. Ken Kujala**.

Navy **Cmdr. Paul Grgas**, Sealift Logistics Command Far East operations officer, briefed Navy Vice Adm. John Bird, U.S. 7th Fleet commander, Oct. 28 on MSC ship operations in the area of responsibility during Bird's familiarization tour of Singapore.

Navy **Capt. Colette Kamlin**, acting commander of SEALOGFE, presented Navy **Cmdr. John Connell**, a Reservist assigned to SEALOGFE from Oct. 9-27, with a Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, marking his outstanding assignment with the command. Connell was recognized for his work in developing standard operating procedures in order to respond efficiently to a crisis or contingency.

Kamlin filled in for SEALOGFE Commander, Navy **Capt. Jim Romano**, while he was on temporary duty in the United States Oct. 27 to Nov. 7.

Navy **Cmdr. Chris Cruz**, MSCO Korea commanding officer, presented a \$500 check to the Miae Won Orphanage in Busan Oct. 29. Cruz donated the money on behalf of Commander, Fleet Activities Chinhae Religious Offering Fund. MSCO Korea was asked to present the donation because of the command's longstanding relationship with the orphanage — visiting regularly to host parties, donate food items, give gifts and make monetary donations.

SEALOGFE public affairs officer **Ed Baxter** served as master of ceremonies at Singapore's 2008 Navy Ball Oct. 11. More than 400 guests attended, including, U.S. Embassy in Singapore Charge d'Affaires, Dan Shields; former

commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet, retired Navy Admiral Water Doran; chief of the Singapore navy, Rear Adm. Chew Men Leong; and Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific, Rear Adm. Nora Tyson. SEALOGFE Special Mission ship officer, Navy **Lt. Jerry Daley**, played a key role in planning the 17th annual ball in Singapore.

SEALOGFE took first prize in this year's Navy Region Singapore Halloween door decorating contest held at Sembawang Oct. 31. Fourteen other doors from Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific offices and tenant commands were considered, but SEALOGFE's "Addams Family" theme, which included command counsel Lis Young as "Morticia," Navy Yeoman Seaman Joe Ayala as "Lurch," and Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force officer Navy Lt. Rick McVoy as "Gomez," earned the command first place in the competition.

Special AOTOS awards given to hospital ships

Stockham earns AOTOS Mariner's Plaque

By Meghan Patrick
MSC Public Affairs

On Nov. 7, the crews of two Military Sealift Command hospital ships received special awards at one of the nation's most prestigious U.S. maritime awards events, the Admiral of the Ocean Sea Awards banquet held annually in New York City. The awards, given by the United Seamen's Service, have traditionally paid tribute to the crews or individuals of U.S. government-owned and other U.S.-flagged ships who have risked their lives to save others or have demonstrated exceptional seamanship in rescuing others at sea.

Unlike most AOTOS winners, the captains and crews of USNS Comfort and USNS Mercy did not respond to short-notice, emergency situations, nor did they rescue shiploads of people from treacherous storms.

In fact, under the award's traditional terms, they would not be considered seafaring heroes.

But this year the deployment accounts of the two ships were so impressive to the selection committee that members could not pass them over. USS added a special category to the award line-up for the first time in the event's 39-year history.

Comfort's civil service master Capt. Edward Nanartowich and Mercy's civil service master Capt. Robert Wiley – accompanied by Joe Watts, Mercy's chief engineer – each accepted an AOTOS Humanitarian Service Recognition Mariner's Plaque on behalf of their crews.

Comfort's chief engineer for the deployment, Douglas B. Puritis, was at sea and unable to attend the ceremony. An audience of more than 750 guests, including defense transportation leaders from government and private industry, applauded as the hospital ship leadership took center stage and received the awards from Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly, Jr., MSC commander.

The USS, a 66-year-old nonprofit organization that supports merchant seafarers, added the new award category in order to properly honor the



From left: Civilian master Capt. Perry Seyler, USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham; Civil service master Capt. Edward Nanartowich, USNS Comfort; and civil service Chief Engineer Joe Watts and civil service master Capt. Robert Wiley, USNS Mercy; are congratulated by Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly Jr., Military Sealift Command commander (center), after receiving Admiral of the Ocean Sea Awards Nov. 7 in New York City.

civil service crews, who supported U.S. military medical professionals, non-government organizations, U.S. Public Health Service workers and partner nations that facilitated the humanitarian efforts of Comfort and Mercy during their respective summer 2007 and 2008 tours.

The work of the civil service mariners allowed the medical personnel of both ships to examine a combined 188,000 patients in 17 countries around the world in a cumulative 275 days. More than 2,350 total surgeries were performed in Mercy and Comfort's on-board hospitals.

Wiley and Nanartowich coordinated closely with the commanding officer of the ship hospital and mission commander, both Navy captains, to ensure that each vessel's humanitarian operations went smoothly.

In addition to navigating the vessels between ports, CIVMAR responsibilities included supplying constant electricity and fresh water throughout the deployments, ferrying thousands of patients and passengers to and from the ship aboard utility boats, and volunteering for significant community relations efforts ashore.

"With a thousand people on board, it's humbling to think that only 67 civilian mariners drove the ship,"

Wiley said. "The mariners did the challenging job well each and every day."

These awards are a "testament to the virtues of such a mission, also recognizing the inherent dangers and expert seamanship involved," said Nanartowich.

USNS Comfort

"The hard work and diligence of Comfort's CIVMAR crew enabled the [provision of] extensive medical coverage," notes the MSC nomination. During the four-month deployment between June and October 2007, Comfort performed more than 1,000 surgeries and 32,000 immunizations, distributed 24,000 pairs of eyeglasses, and dispensed 122,000 pharmaceuticals to people in Belize, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama, El Salvador, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Haiti, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, and Suriname.

In Ecuador, CIVMARs assisted Navy Seabees in constructing two wheelchair ramps and installing 18 fans in a local school.

On an individual basis, the ship's mariners found time to entertain the patients as they awaited examinations, immunizations and surgical procedures. The children were especially glad to see magic tricks, animals made out of balloons and the joy of soap bubbles drifting across the room.

"When people from other countries see a big white ship with white crosses come into port, it is a great thing," said Nanartowich. "Humanitarianism is a powerful weapon. It demonstrates the goodness of the American people."

USNS Mercy

Sailing to the other side of the globe, Mercy saw patients and performed 1,350 surgical procedures in the Philippines, Vietnam, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea and the Federated States of Micronesia on its May through September 2008 deployment.

Mercy mariners joined forces with Navy Seabees and engineers from partner nations to renovate schools, medical clinics and hospitals throughout the region. A total of 16 major construction projects will "serve as impressive reminders of the goodwill and positive contributions of the United States," noted the MSC nomination.

USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham

A third MSC vessel, Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham, received one of this year's five AOTOS Mariner's Plaques for rescue efforts conducted by the master and crew off of Sibuyan Island and Panay Island in the Philippines June 23 through July 3. Former Maryland congresswoman and U.S. maritime advocate Helen Bentley presented the award to Stockham's civilian master Capt. Perry Seyler.

When Typhoon Fengshen's 90-mph winds capsized commercial passenger ferry MV Princess of the Stars, Stockham delivered nine Navy divers and several helicopters to the scene, aiding the Philippine Coast Guard in its rescue of 43 survivors. Stockham's helos covered 17,000 square miles of ocean in a 34-hour search and assisted with the ashore delivery of more than 519,000 pounds of food.

"We simply cannot put into words how grateful we are for your unconditional assistance," said Gen. Alexander Yano, chief of staff of the armed forces of the Philippines, in a special letter of thanks.



U.S. Navy photo by Bram de Jong

Load 'em up

A helicopter is loaded aboard Military Sealift Command large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Bob Hope in Antwerp, Belgium. More than 500 pieces of Air Mobility Command cargo, including about 30 UH-60 and CH-65 helicopters were loaded Oct. 24-26 for redeployment to the United States.