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

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

Apache proves sub rescue capability in NATO exercise

Story and photos

Page 4



Military Sealift Command fleet ocean tug USNS Apache was fitted with submarine rescue equipment in Stavanger, Norway, before participating in Exercise Bold Monarch 08, May 24 to June 6 in Arendal, Norway.

INSIDE — MSC ships tow decommissioned sub • MSC accepts T-AKE 5

CIVMARs and Sailors – maritime apples and oranges

I was reading the Navy Times recently when I came across a letter to the editor from an MSC mariner who is also a Navy Reservist [Navy Times, June 2, 2008, Opinion/Back Talk, Pg. 47]. In the letter, the mariner/Reservist compared and contrasted Navy Sailors and MSC mariners. He was critical of his uniformed counterparts in the surface force.

Being a Navy Sailor with four command tours on my résumé, I think I can speak about the surface warfare community with some authority. Also, having spent the past two years getting to know our MSC civilian mariners, I think I can speak to that side of the issue as well.

One of the first observations I would make is that you can't compare apples and oranges.

Consider the typical MSC civil service mariner. He or she is an average of 45 years old and has been sailing professionally for more than seven years.

Almost 40 percent have prior military service experience. The typical CIVMAR is focused in one area of expertise, so he or she really knows the job in detail. Also, since MSC doesn't operate under the personnel rules of the uniformed Navy, the typical mariner has spent more time actually at sea perfecting their professional capabilities.

The average Navy Sailor, on the other hand is considerably younger and has far less sea time and experience, not only due to the personnel operations tempo rules, but because additional training requirements for weapons systems, damage control, small arms qualification, force protection and other shipboard tasks that may not apply to civilian mariners take a great deal of time and effort.

However, Navy Sailors become expert in those areas and others, such as command, control, communications and

Ship Comparison		
	Combat Stores Ship	Guided Missile Cruiser
Displacement (full load)	18,000 tons	9,600 tons
Speed	21 knots	30+ knots
Crew	118 Civilians and 26 Sailors	364 Sailors
Aircraft	2 UH-60 helicopters	2 SH-60 helicopters
Armament	None	MK-41 standard missiles, ASROC missiles, Tomahawk cruise missiles, MK-46 torpedoes, 5-inch/54-caliber guns, Phalanx close-in system

Photo illustration by Susan Thomas

computer systems. They take pride in their abilities and capabilities, and they are part of the most professional Navy in the world, just as we are here at MSC.

A second observation concerns comparing and contrasting Navy combatant ships and MSC ships. Let's look at two ship types that are roughly equal in size: the Mars-class combat stores ship and the Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruiser.

The mission of a combat stores ship is to provide underway replenishment of all types of supplies, ranging from repair parts to fresh food, clothing and mail, via tensioned cargo rigs and UH-60 Seahawk helicopters or their commercial equivalents.

That means that, like all MSC ships, it has a single purpose — in this case, providing supplies, including frozen, chilled and dry provisions, to U.S. Navy combatant ships that are at sea for extended periods of time.

On the other hand, a guided missile cruiser performs in a battle force role. These ships are multi-mission — air warfare, undersea warfare, naval surface fire support and surface warfare.

They are surface combatants capable of supporting carrier battle groups, amphibious forces, or of operating independently and as flagships of surface action groups.

They have to be ready for any combat situation, anywhere, anytime. That includes defending our ships from enemy attack on the high seas and in the littorals. That is no easy task, given the vast variety of potential threats.

So, comparing the missions of the two classes of ships is pretty difficult because of their missions. Contrasting them is much easier, which you can see at a glance in the ship comparison box above.

MSC ships are less complicated and generally operate at slower speeds in

deep water because of their single-mission focus. Navy combatants have to be capable of operating and maintaining multiple weapons systems and more complicated command, control, communications and computer systems; maneuvering in a variety of warfighting scenarios and water depths; and sustaining larger crews to support warfighting functions and respond to battle damage.

MSC ships and Navy combatants use different maintenance models that support two different roles and uses. Yes, MSC ships may find themselves in harm's way at times in support of our national security, but the Navy's role is to sail into harm's way intentionally to defend and protect our national security.

Now, there are some other similarities. Both MSC and Navy ships can and have run aground. Both have suffered collisions. Crew members have perished on both types of ships.

But, the biggest similarity is that we're both part of the U. S. Navy, and we need each other to successfully accomplish our mission.

You can't compare apples and oranges, but you sure need both in a healthy fruit salad.

Keep the faith,

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

MSFSC exec recognized



Military Sealift Fleet Support Command Executive Director Jack Taylor was honored as the Massachusetts Maritime Academy Mariner of the Year during a Maritime Day observation May 21 by academy cadet Matt White of Lowell, Mass. Taylor, a 1980 graduate of the academy, received the honor for exemplary performance and outstanding meritorious service to the maritime industry for his work within Military Sealift Command and MSFSC.

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COMSC Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly Jr., USN
Director, Public Affairs Timothy Boulay
Editor Rosemary Heiss
Writers Edward Baxter, Singapore
 Bill Cook, Norfolk, Va.
 Susan Melow, Norfolk, Va.
 Laura Seal, Washington
 Anna Hancock, Washington
 Gillian Brigham, Naples
 Sarah Burford, San Diego
Art Director Dale Allen, Washington
Graphics Susan Thomas, Washington

Military Sealift Command reports to the Commander, U.S. Transportation Command for defense transportation matters, to the Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command for Navy-unique matters and to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition for procurement policy and oversight matters.



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MSC ships tow decommissioned nuclear sub

By Laura Seal
MSC Public Affairs

It was an awesome sight as Military Sealift Command fleet ocean tug USNS Sioux towed one of the Navy's most famous namesake vessels to its final port of call, Bremerton, Wash.

At the end of Sioux's tow line was the 360-foot decommissioned nuclear submarine USS Hyman G. Rickover, named for the father of the nuclear Navy.

The powerful Sioux, less than two-thirds the size of the massive submarine at the end of its tow line, proceeded on a precise course into the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility.

Although Capt. Brad Smith, Sioux's civil service master, modestly called the operation "uneventful," to others who got a rare glimpse of the operation, it was nothing short of amazing.

The Bremerton arrival marked the completion of a 10,000-mile, seven-week journey that began April 8 when another MSC ship, the 255-foot rescue and salvage ship USNS Grapple, departed the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, with ex-Rickover in tow.

Grapple and ex-Rickover traveled 3,600 miles to the Panama Canal



U.S. Navy photo by Electronics Technician 2nd Class Daniel Strain

Military Sealift Command civil service mariners Able Seaman Robert Greene, Boatswain Howie Goettsch and 2nd Mate William Minton aboard rescue and salvage ship USNS Grapple hook up the tow wire and chain from Grapple to decommissioned Los Angeles-class nuclear submarine USS Hyman G. Rickover.

where, in accordance with Panamanian law, a canal pilot and tugboats guided ex-Rickover through the locks April 24-25.

Grapple escorted ex-Rickover through the canal to the Pacific Ocean, where the 226-foot Sioux resumed the submarine tow and continued the journey to Bremerton. Sioux and ex-Rickover stopped in San Diego May 13-23.

"We really enjoy towing submarines," said Smith. "When it came to Rickover, it was a pleasant tow. There was good weather, and the tow was uneventful, which is everything you hope for when doing a mission like this."

Sioux and Grapple are both crewed by civil service mariners working for MSC — 20 aboard Sioux and 24 aboard Grapple. Grapple also carries a

small military detachment, and for the tow, a seven-person crew of Navy submariners rode the MSC ships to monitor ex-Rickover and respond to any tow-related problems.

Ex-Rickover is the 22nd of the U.S. Los Angeles-class attack submarines and the only one not named after a U.S. city. Ex-Rickover played an instrumental role in submarine operations during the height of the Cold War. Commissioned in July 1984, it commenced inactivation in March 2007 and was decommissioned in December 2007. The submarine's reactor was defueled at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

U.S. Navy guided missile frigate USS Carr, guided missile destroyer USS Pinckney and guided missile frigate USS Rodney M. Davis provided force protection escorts from Maine to Panama, from Panama to San Diego and from San Diego to Bremerton, respectively.

While in Bremerton, ex-Rickover will go through a dismantling program overseen by the Navy. The submarine will remain moored at the shipyard until it is dry-docked for dismantlement and disposal, which is currently scheduled for 2016.

Grapple is one of MSC's four rescue and salvage ships, and Sioux is one of four fleet ocean tugs. These ships tow other ships, lift heavy objects like downed aircraft and deploy divers for rescue and salvage operations.



U.S. Navy photo by Sarah Burford

Fleet ocean tug USNS Sioux tows decommissioned nuclear submarine USS Hyman G. Rickover into the San Diego Bay. Ex-Rickover made a stop in San Diego on a journey that began in Maine and ended in Bremerton, Wash. The submarine was towed for the first leg of the trip by rescue and salvage ship USNS Grapple to the Panama Canal. From there, Sioux towed the decommissioned submarine the rest of the way.

MSC accepts fifth dry cargo/ammunition ship

By Anna Hancock
MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command accepted delivery of dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Robert E. Peary in San Diego June 5. The ship was built by General Dynamics NASSCO.

Named in honor of Navy Rear Adm. Robert E. Peary, leader of the first expedition to the North Pole, the ship is

the fifth in the Lewis and Clark-class of underway replenishment ships with the designation T-AKE 5.

The ships' primary mission is to deliver ammunition, provisions, stores, spare parts, potable water and petroleum products to the Navy's underway carriers and expeditionary strike groups, allowing them to stay at sea for extended periods of time.

"Introducing this ship to the fleet is a great step in modernizing the Navy and

bringing new capabilities to the fleet," said Capt. Gregory L. Horner, Peary's civil service master.

The T-AKEs will replace some of MSC's aging, single-mission ships such as Kilauea-class ammunition ships and Mars- and Sirius-class combat stores ships that are nearing the end of their service lives.

At the end of July, the 689-foot Peary will go on a short 'shakedown cruise' where the ship's crew will test a

range of shipboard operations. By the end of the summer, Peary will depart for its homeport in Norfolk, Va. From there, the ship will soon deploy on its first operational mission.

Peary has a crew of 124 civil service mariners working for MSC, as well as a military detachment of 11 Sailors who provide operational support and supply coordination.

When needed, Peary can also carry a helicopter detachment.

Apache represents U.S.

Bold

By Anna Hancock
MSC Public Affairs

Partially flooded and quickly descending to the ocean floor, the diesel-electric submarine USS Squalus malfunctioned and sank in nearly 250 feet of water during a test dive off the Isle of Shoals May 23, 1939. At the time, neither the U.S. Navy nor submarine experts believed that the crew could ever be rescued. However, the disaster sparked an unprecedented rescue operation that introduced rescue and salvage innovations, and within 39 hours, all 33 crew members aboard were saved.

Nearly 70 years later, Military Sealift Command fleet ocean tug USNS Apache proved to the world that MSC can successfully conduct similar rescues at sea.

Apache represented the United States during the largest multinational submarine rescue exercise in the world – NATO-led Bold Monarch 08. The exercise was conducted May 24 to June 6 three nautical miles off the coast of Arendal, Norway, as Apache and ships from other countries practiced life-saving operations for distressed submarines.

A worldwide effort

Bold Monarch brought together 14 NATO allies with submarine rescue capability. Participants included the United States, Great Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine.

Since sub rescues require specialized equipment and expertise to be successful, only a limited number of nations have the capability to conduct them. Apache, a 226-foot ship with a civil service crew of 16 and a 4-person military detachment, met all of the requirements.

Preparing for the operation

Preparations began three months before the exercise.

While in port in Charleston, S.C., Capt. Charles R. Rodriguez, Apache's civil service master, and Military Sealift Fleet Support Command Chief Engineer Tom Rusnak

intricately planned shipboard modifications to secure the sub-rescue equipment to the ship's deck.

"Apache is a very versatile ship with diverse capabilities," said Mark Helmkamp, MSFSC's rescue and salvage ship and fleet ocean tug class manager. "It can perform a variety of operations in support of our nation."

Apache's deck has an extensive bolt system that allows various rescue and salvage equipment to be temporarily secured on board. With only minor modifications, the ship was made ready to perform the task of saving submariners from what might otherwise be a deadly situation.

Engineers installed a weight system underneath the deck to ensure the ship would remain balanced once the extra load of the rescue equipment was added. They also added a detailed system of plates that would secure the equipment to the ship's deck.

"Apache's bolt system allowed the equipment to be mobile and interoperable," Rodriguez stated. "The equipment can be taken off the ship without leaving behind extreme alterations to the ship."

Meanwhile, across the country at Naval Air Station North Island in San Diego, Deep Submergence Unit, the U.S. Navy's only worldwide deployable submarine rescue capability command, prepared and loaded its sub rescue equipment on board a Russian aircraft for delivery to the Apache.

Apache left Charleston and met up with the equipment in Stavanger, Norway, five days before the exercise. The ship's crew quickly completed installation on Apache's after deck. With the modifications complete and the sub rescue equipment in place, Apache was ready to depart for Arendal.

Executing the mission

For the crew aboard Apache, the mission was two-fold – to practice and perfect a four-point mooring op-



Military Sealift Command fleet ocean tug USNS Apache hosts visitors to observe simulated submarine rescue operations. Apache hosted more than 200 international visitors throughout the two-week exercise.

S. in NATO exercise

Monarch

8

eration and to successfully rescue simulated submarine survivors using a state-of-the-art submarine rescue system.

Expertly executing the four-point moor

Apache's crew coordinated the mooring with NATO allies to practice rescuing submariners "trapped" in submarines from the Netherlands, Norway and Poland.

The difficult mooring operation began when an ally ship laid a two-point moor, consisting of one bow line and one stern line attached to a 3,200-pound anchor. Each anchor was placed at a specific coordinate, a half-mile apart, designated by the "distressed" submarine.

Once the submarine bottomed underneath approximately 320 feet of water within the two-point moor, it released a flare signaling to Apache to move into position.

As Apache moved, deck hands took hold of the bow and stern mooring lines, keeping the movement under control and the lines taut as the engineering crew simultaneously positioned the ship directly over the submarine. The ally ship then set port and starboard mooring points again a half-mile apart.

The precise location of the mooring points and Apache's exact location inside them were crucial for the rescue equipment aboard the ship to reach the submarine's escape hatch.

When Apache got in its final position, the assisting ship passed the last two mooring lines to Apache, completing the four-point moor. Apache's crew gave all four lines one final adjustment to ensure that the ship could not move while deploying the sub rescue equipment. The crew secured and monitored the mooring lines around the clock until the rescue exercise was complete.

"Getting Apache into the correct position within the four-point moor took extensive cooperation with the Deep Submergence Unit, the submarine crew simulating the distress call and my civilian and military crew," said Rodriguez as he described the complex operation.

Rescuing submarine survivors

Once the ship's anchors were set and buoys in place for the four-point moor, the crew began to deploy the system that enabled survivor rescue operations.

The rescue system has two major components, the pressurized rescue module, called Falcon, and the submarine decom-



Military Sealift Command fleet ocean tug USNS Apache's Second Mate Jean A. Marien guides members of Deep Submergence Unit through celestial navigation computations.

pression system, which is being developed to stabilize survivors during deep-submarine rescue operations. Named after similar equipment used for the Squalus rescue, Falcon can transfer up to 16 survivors in addition to the two module operators.

Falcon deployed to search for the submarine, and minutes later, Falcon mated with the submarine's escape hatch.

A pressure differential that exists on the ocean floor naturally sealed the rescue module to the hatch, and the crew on board Falcon pumped out excess water. At a depth of more than 300 feet, survivors from the distressed sub were transferred to Falcon, which then surfaced to bring the group onto Apache for simulated medical treatment.

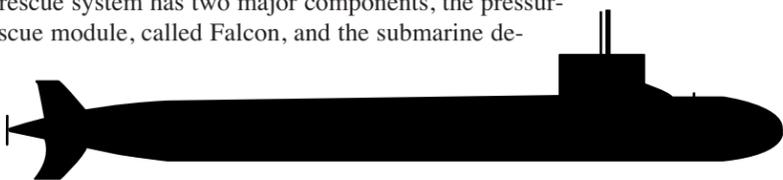
"Everyone knew the task and overcame significant obstacles in a very short period of time to ensure success," said Bill Orr, U.S. Submarine Force escape and rescue officer.

Emerging as an international leader

Throughout the exercise, international teams conducted various rescues, including dive and medical simulations, rescue-vehicle operations, parachute-recovery training and ship-maneuverability drills. Apache conducted approximately 20 rescue operations with the submarines, and transferred more than 200 people.

"Apache's crew did an incredible job and exceeded the expectations of the international community," said Rodriguez. "From the stewards on board, to the deck and engineering departments, to the Navy detachment, the crew was always flexible and adaptable."

Apache mirrored the successes of the 1939 operation and introduced improved capabilities to the international community. Upon its return to the United States, Apache continued its primary mission to conduct towing and salvage operations off the East Coast.



HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

Military Sealift Command honored 15 employees with awards for federal government length of service. **Mary Burroughs**, comptroller's office, received an award for 35 years of federal service. Thirty-year awards went to **Charlene Tutt**, **Lee McCray**, and **Terry Murphy** from command, control, communications, and computer systems; **Alan Mendelsohn** from counsel; and **Palma Anne Hutchinson** from joint plans, strategic studies, and wargaming. Recognized for 25 years of federal service were **Kevin Baetsen**, engineering; and **Dawn Doakes**, maritime forces and manpower manage-

ment. Twenty-year awards went to **Todd Carroll** from command, control, communications, and computer systems; **Raji Kanth** from the comptroller's office; **Griff Hume** from operations; and **Joel Weger** from counsel. **Timothy Langdon** from engineering received a 15-year award. **Joseph Cowen** from command, control, communications, and computer systems; and **Pamela Castellano** from counsel, were honored for 10 years of federal service.

MSC headquarters celebrated Asian Pacific American Heritage Month on May 28. The program featured the Fil-

Am Dance Ensemble, guest speaker civil service mariner Radio Electronics Technician **Terri Cheng-Nodelman** and remarks from **Rear Adm. Robert O. Wray**, deputy commander, MSC.

At an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., May 19, **Jessica Chu**, contracts and business management, received the MSC headquarters 4th Quarter 2007 Civilian of the Quarter Award, and **Warren Thomas**, administrative support center, was recognized as the runner up. Navy **Intelligence Specialist 1st Class Stefanie Crawford**, operations, received the MSC headquarters 1st Quarter 2008 Senior Sailor of the Quarter Award, and Navy **Operations Specialist 2nd Class Carol Halstead**, operations, received the MSC head-

quarters 1st Quarter 2008 Junior Sailor of the Quarter Award.

MSC welcomes **Louis Novak** and **Seamus Hunt**, engineering; Navy **Chief Storekeeper Evelyn Lim**, logistics; **Andrew Fiske** and **Stephen Hughes**, contracts and business management; Navy **Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Rodney Brown**, command, control, communications, and computer systems; and Navy **Cmdr. Glenn Macario**, operations.

MSC bids farewell to **Christine Muth**, counsel; **Talishia Turner**, comptroller's office; **Johanna O'Neill**, administrative support center; Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Stephen Frangos**, engineering; and **Rowland Smith**, Special Mission Program.

Rock bottom

Navy Diver 1st Class Frederick Heimgartner, assigned to Mobile Salvage and Diving Unit One, aboard rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard, stands beside a large rock under water near Saipan, May 14. The rock was later removed from the seabed because it posed a danger to navigation. Working in strong currents, divers attached heavy wire to break the obstruction free from the ocean floor. The obstruction was then lifted onto Safeguard's deck using the ship's on-board crane.



U.S. Navy photo

Merchant mariners honored by Military Sealift Command

*By Anna Hancock
MSC Public Affairs*

From Saipan, to Korea, to Washington, D.C., Military Sealift Command took part in honoring U.S. merchant mariners all around the world.

Air Force Gen. Norton A. Schwartz, commander, U.S. Transportation Command, and more than 250 guests paid tribute May 22 to some of the unsung heroes of national defense – U.S. merchant mariners – at Military Sealift Command's annual National Maritime Day memorial service and wreath-laying ceremony at the Washington Navy Yard Cold War Museum.

National Maritime Day was established by Congress in 1933 to honor the contributions and sacrifices of U.S. merchant mariners in defense of the nation.

At the heart of the ceremony was the placing of three wreaths to commemorate the sacrifices that generations of mariners have made in service to the nation. The solemn occasion drew to a close with a 21-gun salute by a seven-person firing party positioned on the Anacostia River waterfront just outside the museum. Following the ceremony, the wreaths were transferred to the Merchant Marine bronze relief sculpture on the East Wall of the Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C.

"These are the people who ensure that the promises we've made to our service men and women are and always will be promises kept," said Schwartz.

Special guests in attendance included World War II veterans who served as merchant mariners on the tankers and ammunition ships that supplied Allied troops in the Atlantic and Pacific theaters.

"This was the first Maritime Day that I've [observed], and it has been a wonderful experience," said retired Navy Cmdr. Bill Carter, one of the six World War II veterans honored at the ceremony.

Cadets from the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education in Piney Point, Md., also attended the ceremony.

Across the Far East and Indian Ocean, MSC offices and squadrons took the opportunity to recognize the service and sacrifice of U.S. merchant mariners.

MSC's office in Korea observed Maritime Day during a ceremony in Busan, the world's fifth largest port and MSCO Korea's home for over a half a century. More than 80 dignitaries from the U.S. and Republic of Korea military, port authorities, local government officials, U.S. Consulate, and representatives from the maritime industry attended the event.

MPS Squadron Three operations officer Navy Chief Warrant Officer Tim Ratliff, along with Lafe Fraley, a U.S. merchant mariner and boatswain aboard Maritime Prepositioning Ship MV 1st Lt. Alex Bonnyman, attended a ceremony to honor National Maritime Day at the American Memorial Park in Saipan May 22. Sponsored by the U.S. National Park Service, the American flag was raised slowly in tribute to the thousands of merchant mariners who perished in service to the nation in past conflicts.

At Diego Garcia, MPS Squadron Two commander Navy Capt. John Arbter, along with Capt. Wilbur Dahn, master of Maritime Prepositioning Ship SS Pfc. Eugene A. Obregon, Capt. Tim Sullivan, master of prepositioning ship MV SSG Edward A. Carter Jr., and MSCO Diego Garcia commanding officer Navy Lt. Cmdr. Omar Jana, spoke at a Maritime Day ceremony held May 23 at the Indian Ocean island's United Seamen's Service center.

At Guam's United Seamen's Service center May 23, MPS Squadron Three commander Navy Capt. Ulysses Zalamea, addressed an audience of 30 U.S. Navy Sailors, merchant mariners and other guests on the importance of U.S. merchant mariners to the nation. Staff members from Ship Support Unit Guam attended. At Okinawa's United Seamen's Service center, Navy Capt. Humberto L. Quintanilla, chief of staff of Expeditionary Strike Group 7 and Task Force 76, was the keynote speaker at a Maritime Day ceremony May 23. More than 200 guests attended, including Japanese Coast Guard Rear Adm. Uryu Haruhiko, deputy commander, 11th Regional Coast Guard headquarters, Okinawa.

Since the American Revolutionary War, U.S. merchant mariners have provided vital equipment and supplies to our warfighters. MSC is the nation's largest employer of U.S. merchant mariners and seeks to honor them each year.

COMPASS • HEADING

Military Sealift Fleet Support Command's new headquarters has been opened, on a limited basis, for scheduled tours by personnel ultimately moving into the new facilities. Employees from both the comptroller and contracting directorates have visited the spaces. With newly painted walls, carpet and a paved employee parking lot, the facility should receive its first occupants within weeks instead of months.

Capt. Bob Wiley, master of hospital ship USNS Mercy, has established a blog to keep family, friends and the civil service mariner community abreast of events aboard Mercy while the ship is underway for the humanitarian mission Pacific Partnership 2008. Wiley posts stories of the men and women who comprise Mercy's crew along with photographs taken along the way. His blog, which has a link from the MSFSC Web page, is at <http://mercycaptain.blogspot.com>.

MSFSC's Web page has a new link to the organization's shore-side civil service vacancy announcements. By selecting the tab to the position announcement, viewers will gain access to information about the position and steps to applying for jobs ashore.

Fair winds and following seas to the following civil service mariners as they enter onto the retirement rolls: **Assistant Damage Control Officer George Blanchard**, **Able Seaman Reynaldo Dandan**, **Supply Officer Henry Dunlap Jr.**, **1st Assistant Engineer Neil Hutchings**, **Laundryman Abel Lejarde**, **Chief Cook Eduardo Medina**, **Boatswain Jose Monge**, **Able Seaman Gennaro Oratelli** and **Utilityman Gerald Soriano**.

For more news on MSFSC and civil service mariners, visit the Web site and online publication: www.msc.navy.mil/msfsc.

FAR • EAST • HAILS

Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three changed command May 30 when Navy **Capt. Richard Daniel** relieved Navy **Capt. Ulysses Zalamea** aboard the squadron's flagship MV Cpl. Louis J. Hauge Jr. Daniel reports to the squadron from Navy Training Support Center, San Diego.

Navy **Capt. Jim Romano**, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Far East visited the Republic of Singapore navy's Changi Naval Base May 20, where he met with the base commanding officer Col. Joe Cheung. Accompanying Romano were Ship Support Unit Singapore commanding officer Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Mike Little** and SEALOGFE's operations officer Navy **Cmdr. Paul Grgas**. Cheung presented an overview brief to Romano, Little and Grgas on base operations and infrastructure. Next, the group was able to observe some of the Singapore navy's most modern warships at the pier. Changi is Singapore's largest naval base and host to many MSC and USS ships visiting Singapore.

In other news, Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS 1st Lt. Jack Lummus hosted a group of teachers and students from the local Marianas High School

May 7. The group toured the ship and stayed aboard for lunch.

During a routine port visit to the Philippines, crew members from combat stores ship USNS Niagara Falls cleaned and painted several classrooms at the Kalalake elementary school outside of Olongapo April 29. The school's teachers treated the Niagara Falls' crew to a lunch of local cuisine as students performed traditional dances.

SEALOGFE welcomed Navy **Cmdr. Paul Grgas** as the command's operations officer. Grgas reports from the staff of Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific, which is collocated with SEALOGFE in Singapore.

Navy **Chief Gunner's Mate David Price** departed MPS Squadron Three and was relieved by Navy **Chief Gunner's Mate Thomas Peck**.

At Military Sealift Command Office Korea, Navy **Storekeeper 1st Class Arnel Betita** relieved Navy **Storekeeper 1st Class Chris Lapid** as supply officer. Navy **Chief Yeoman Rick Pettis**, the command's administrative officer, was relieved by Navy **Yeoman 2nd Class Deanna Cox**. MSCO Diego Garcia welcomed Navy **Storekeeper 2nd Class David Haney**.

CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Military Sealift Command fast combat support ship USNS Rainier, combat stores ship USNS San Jose, fleet replenishment oilers USNS Kanawha and USNS Pecos and fleet ocean tug USNS Catawba continued their 5th Fleet deployments in support of maritime security operations and operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring

Freedom in June. They have been providing support to the USS Abraham Lincoln carrier strike group, USS Nassau expeditionary strike group and other coalition naval forces. Catawba recently participated in a dive training exercise with Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit Two, while in port in Manama, Bahrain.

In May 2008, Sealift Logistics Command Central coordinated four dry cargo operations, moving more than 1.2 million square feet of combat equipment. In addition, the command moved more than 52 million gallons of fuel in support of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

Navy **Capt. Anthony Dropp**, SEALOGCENT commander, wel-

comes incoming deputy commander, Navy **Capt. Joseph Hennessy**, and replenishment officer, Navy **Lt. Cmdr. William Booth**. Departing deputy commander, Navy **Capt. Michael Johnson**, will head to U.S. Fleet Forces Command and departing replenishment officer, Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Michal Carl**, will be the aide for U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Robert Dail, director of Defense Logistics Agency.

PACIFIC • BRIEFS

In May, fleet ocean tug USNS Navajo played an instrumental role in the recovery of the tail rotor of a Navy H-60H helicopter that crashed Nov. 9, 2007, off the coast of San Diego. Navajo deployed a remotely operated vehicle, which located the tail rotor of the helicopter. Navajo searched a sea floor area measuring approximately two square nautical miles, searching for the 150-pound, 132-inch-long rotor. Operations began on May 13. The rotor was recovered May 18, well ahead of its scheduled date of June 10, and will be used as part of the investigation into the cause of the accident.

Fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon participated in Exercise Northern Edge 2008 May 1-18 in the Gulf of Alaska. The joint exercise allowed participants to simulate responding to crises in the Asian Pacific region. During the exercise, Yukon provided fuel and supplies to the Navy guided missile destroyers USS Chafee and USS John Paul Jones, also participating in the exercise.

Fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser received Bravo Zulu recognition for its fueling efforts in support of the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan and its strike group. Kaiser supported five emergent underway replenishments, which enabled the recently deployed Reagan strike group to clear the Southern California operating area

quickly as the weather deteriorated rapidly and continue on their first leg of their 2008 Western Pacific deployment.

Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly Jr., commander, Military Sealift Command, recently visited San Diego May 27-29. While in the city, Reilly served as guest speaker for the San Diego Military Advisory Council breakfast and the Surface Navy Association luncheon. Reilly also visited Kaiser, Yukon and Navajo. In addition, he also held all-hands calls with Sealift Logistics Command Pacific and Ship Support Unit San Diego personnel and civil service mariners from the Customer Support Unit West.

Navy **Capt. David Kiehl**, commander, SEALOGPAC, presented letters of commendation to MSC representative office Seattle employees **Kathleen O'Leary** and **Steven Busby** for their outstanding efforts to support MSC's mission in the Pacific Northwest during the period of January to April while the director's position was vacant.

SEALOGPAC welcomes **Bruce Leach**, the new director of MSC's representatives in Seattle. Best wishes to **Terry Wight**, Military Sealift Fleet Support Command/SSU San Diego contracts department as he leaves a 10-year career with MSC in San Diego for a position with Commander, Maintenance and Logistics Command, Pacific, U.S. Coast Guard, Alameda, Calif.

Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Once changed hands May 22 in Corfu, Greece. Navy **Capt. William Sheehan** accepted command from Navy **Capt. Clay Saunders** aboard squadron flagship USNS 2nd Lt. John P. Bobo.

U.S. 6th Fleet command ship USS Mount Whitney participated in Austere Challenge 2008 May 2-13 in the Mediterranean Sea. This exercise was designed to test U.S. European Command's joint task force capabilities when responding to military contingencies in theater.

After internal fighting broke out in Lebanon May 8, MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Patuxent, dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Sacagawea and fast combat support ship USNS Arctic conducted resupply missions in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea in support of U.S. 6th Fleet ships deployed to the region. USS Mount Whitney also deployed

from its homeport in Gaeta, Italy, May 14 to support efforts to resupply the U.S. Embassy in Beirut.

MSC Deputy Commander **Rear Adm. Robert O. Wray** visited Sealift Logistics Command Europe in Naples, Italy, May 7-10. While in Naples, the admiral met with SEALOGEUR commander Navy **Capt. Nicholas H. Holman** and Ship Support Unit Naples director **Michael Ragonese** and addressed the staff during an all-hands call.

Sacagawea was in Hammernesodden, Norway, May 19-21, loading U.S. Marine Corps Prepositioning Program-Norway, or MCPP-N, ammunition for delivery to the United States. The MCPP-N facility prepositions a 30-day supply of combat equipment and ammunition ashore in Norway for use in Europe-based U.S. and NATO exercises or for use by the Marine Corps in times of conflict.

ATLANTIC • LINES

Large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Gilliland off-loaded 165,000 square feet of cargo returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom during the ship's May 12-17 Charleston stop.

Military Sealift Command-chartered ship SS Westward Venture loaded

75,000 square feet of cargo and mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles on June 8 destined for duty in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic supply officer, Navy **Lt. j.g. Maura Thompson**, was promoted to the rank of lieutenant on June 2.

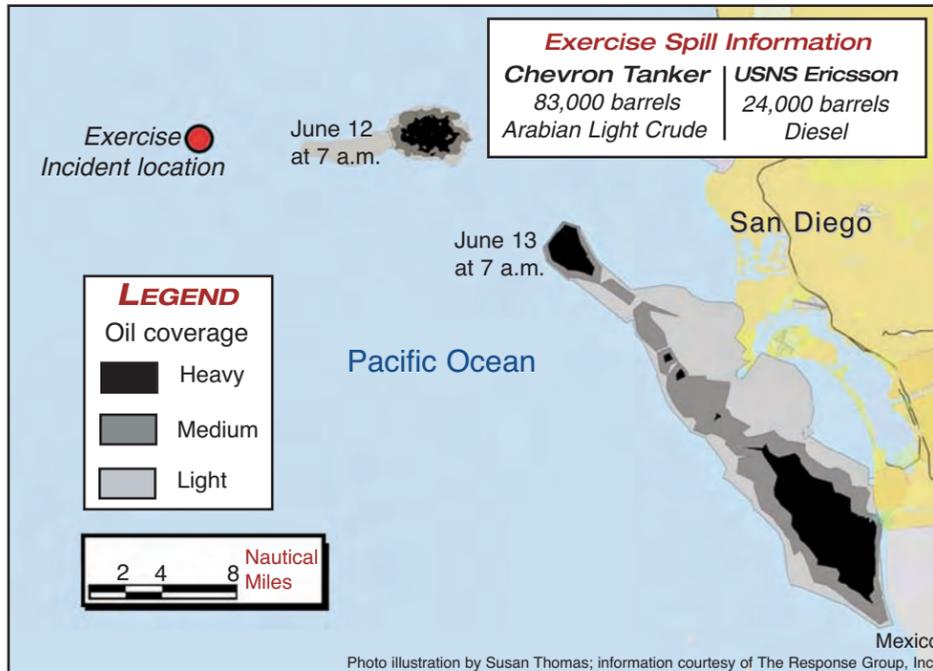
Oil-spill exercise tests MSC responders

By Trish Larson
MSC Public Affairs

Every day, millions of barrels of fuel oil are moved across the world's oceans on Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oilers, as well as MSC's government-owned and commercially-chartered tankers. These oil-laden ships are a pivotal part of the supply line that keeps U.S. military ships and aircraft deployed around the world in support of the nation's armed forces. With that mission goes the enormous responsibility of protecting ocean and coastal environments.

Nowhere was that responsibility more evident than during a carefully crafted oil-spill exercise conducted at the San Diego Convention Center June 10-12 and led by Navy Region Southwest. More than 150 government and industry participants, including 10 from MSC commands, were able to test their response skills without posing any harm to the waters off the California coast.

A multi-faceted computer simulation featured a collision at sea between the 678-foot MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Ericsson and a 670-foot Chevron tanker MV Jupiter about 25 miles off the coast of San Diego. Participants got to visualize the adrenaline-charged situation that would exist if the two ships had suddenly and unexpectedly discharged more than 100,000 barrels of crude and diesel oil into the ocean.



This chart shows the effects of the fictitious oil spill as it migrates over a 24-hour period.

"We all hope that a situation like this would never occur," said Jerry Abrams, safety management director at Military Sealift Fleet Support Command and an evaluator of the exercise's unified command, which included the U.S. Coast Guard, the state of California, MSC and Chevron. "But we must be prepared for a worst-case scenario. Exercises like this one help ensure that the agencies that are tasked to respond are able to do so quickly and appropriately."

MSC civil service mariners from dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Amelia Earhart were key participants, including ship master Capt. John Pope, Chief Mate Mike Price and Cargo Mate Guy Ziccardi. All of them role-played the

parts of crew members aboard the hypothetical, disaster-struck Ericsson in the exercise. Other MSC participants included engineers and a naval architect from headquarters and representatives from MSFSC in Norfolk and Sealift Logistics Command Pacific in San Diego.

First responders, like the U.S. Coast Guard, demonstrated the rapid-fire series of actions they would take in an oil-spill emergency. Masters from both ships involved in the simulation initiated the drill by making a series of notifications to Coast Guard, Navy and other federal and state authorities.

Navy Lt. Roger Barajas, SEALOG-PAC's representative on the unified

command, ensured that the Navy's interests were considered as the scenario unfolded. He coordinated with the Navy's Supervisor of Salvage in Washington, D.C., to help put salvage operations in motion for Ericsson and ensured the wounded ship would have an escort while it was towed to a shipyard for repair.

"This exercise tested the unified command system," said Barajas. "It ensured that in the event of a real emergency, we would all know what steps we needed to take."

"MSC's efforts as a response team were truly impressive," said Pope. "I was also encouraged by the success and smooth coordination of the vast number of response agencies involved. We all have a common goal: to protect the environment, and we've all gained a great deal from this exercise."

Throughout the exercise evaluators provided feedback to exercise participants — maximizing the training benefit to all participants. More detailed information was shared during a comprehensive debrief and a sharing of lessons learned at the conclusion of the exercise.

"The Navy at large, and MSC in particular, can be justifiably proud of spearheading exercises like this one," said MSC's Director of Engineering Kevin Baetsen. "We cannot afford to grow complacent about our roles as stewards of the environment. It takes constant vigilance and training to make sure that we're ready to respond if a crisis occurs."

MSC helps search for plane downed in WWII

By Rosemary Heiss
MSC Public Affairs

Oceanographers from the Naval Oceanographic Office and mariners aboard oceanographic survey ship USNS Pathfinder collaborated with Estonian researchers from May 31 to June 4 in an attempt to find the remains of a Finnish airplane, the Kaleva, that crashed during World War II. Kaleva, which was carrying nine passengers — including U.S. diplomatic courier Henry W. Antheil Jr. — mysteriously exploded 10 minutes after taking off from Estonia's airport on the first day of the Soviet-blockade of the country June 14, 1940.

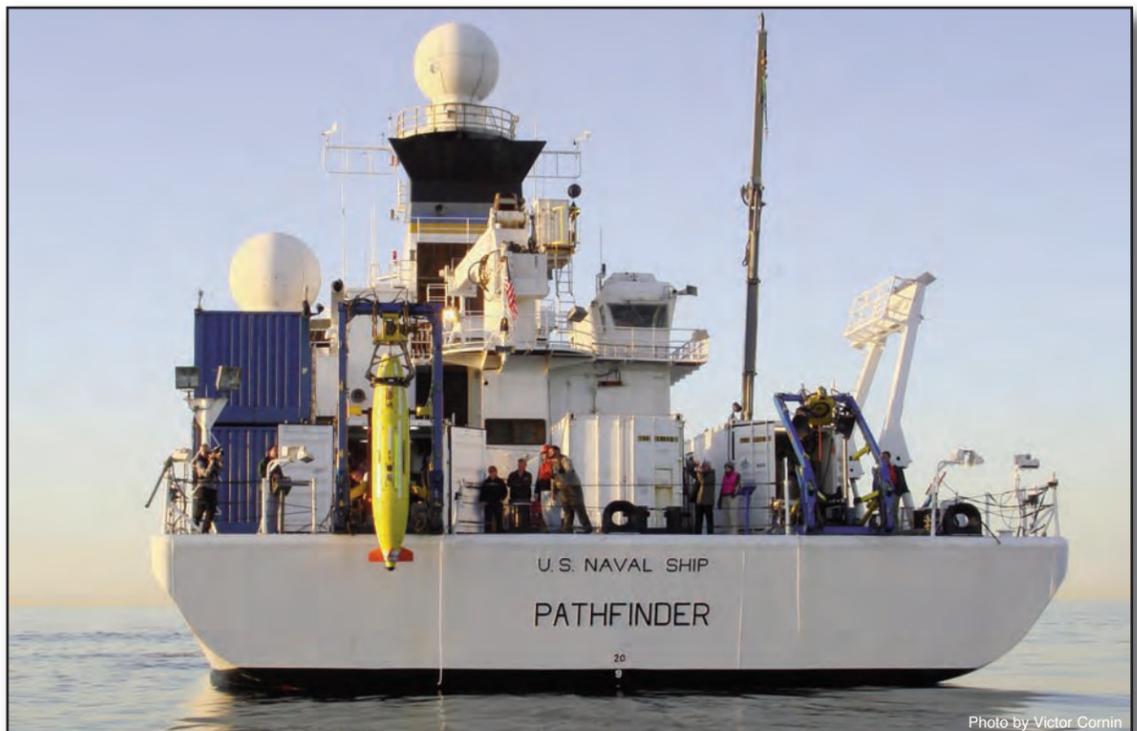
Pathfinder arrived in Tallinn, Estonia, on May 26, after its Minister of Defense Jaak Aaviksoo requested the assistance of a U.S. Navy survey ship in a January 2008 letter to U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates.

"We were glad to work with the Estonian military and to search for Kaleva," said Navy Capt. Nicholas H. Holman, the commander of Sealift Logistics Command Europe who oversees all U.S. Navy non-combatant ships and aircraft operating in Europe and Africa. "This was a wonderful opportunity for us to work together and build upon the already strong partnership between our two nations."

During the search, Pathfinder deployed three autonomous underwater vehicles, which used sophisticated scientific data-gathering methods to collect information about a section of the Baltic Sea where Estonian and Finnish researchers believed the downed airplane to be.

Pathfinder's crew worked around the clock for days collecting and reviewing recorded data from the autonomous underwater vehicles, including side-scan sonar and video.

"After gathering the data, there was no indication of a large, human-made object in this area," said Marty Ammond, the senior surveyor for the Naval Oceanographic Office. "I have a high level of confidence that the plane is not there."



Oceanographers from the Naval Oceanographic Office deploy an autonomous underwater vehicle into the Baltic Sea from Military Sealift Command oceanographic survey ship USNS Pathfinder. The vehicle was part of a search effort to locate a Finnish airplane that went down during World War II.

"Now that these coordinates have been ruled out, we hope that other ships will continue the search this summer," said Eric Johnson, a spokesman at the U.S. Embassy in Estonia. "We are confident that the Kaleva will someday be found."

Though the Kaleva location remains a mystery, the search benefitted both U.S. and Estonian participants.

"Americans and Estonians have deepened their relationship, and have honed their abilities," said Johnson. "As a result, we both contribute stronger, surer capabilities to NATO."

USNS Pathfinder is one of seven noncombatant oceanographic survey ships owned by Military Sealift Command and operated on behalf of the

Naval Oceanographic Office. These survey ships are forward-deployed year round surveying the world's oceans using a variety of sonar systems to collect data in coastal and deep sea waters. The ships are operated by U.S. merchant mariners, while a team of civilian oceanographers from the Naval Oceanographic Office are embarked to carry out the survey mission.

Oceanographic survey ships have a recent history of being asked to find missing aircraft. In January 2007, Pathfinder's sister ship USNS Mary Sears was part of a team that successfully located a commercial jetliner that had disappeared off the coast of West Sulawesi, Indonesia.