

March 2009

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

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

# COBRA GOLD

## 2009



U.S. Navy photo by Edward Baxter

A U.S. Marine from the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force's Combat Logistics Regiment Three directs a Marine Corps amphibious assault vehicle to a staging area at the port of Laem Chabang, Thailand, Jan. 27. One hundred pieces of rolling stock were offloaded from Military Sealift Command Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS MAJ Stephen W. Pless in support of the Marines' field portion of Cobra Gold 2009.

**INSIDE —** *Invincible, crew aid stranded Indian dhow • Byrd rescues 3 Indonesian mariners*

# NSPS puts you in the driver's seat

NSPS, the now popular acronym for the National Security Personnel System, has made its official debut at Military Sealift Command. Granted, this new performance/pay plan affects only 14 percent of our 9,000-strong global workforce, but it's a very important, and often unsung, part of our team — our civil service employees ashore.

Our first phase-in of NSPS began in 2007 for managers, supervisors and attorneys at headquarters and Military Sealift Fleet Support Command and the sealift logistics commands, plus selected other staff. They've moved successfully through all the steps to the payout in January. Despite some fears and trepidations, I'm pleased to report that the system seems to have worked well. Now we're ready to begin phasing in the remainder of the shoreside civil service workforce who are not represented by unions.

For those of you who are still on the sidelines, wondering what NSPS is all about, let me refresh your memory.

### What is NSPS?

It's a new management system that provides the Department of Defense and the Navy with the tools necessary to hire, compensate and reward employees within the program. The system is results oriented, has detailed

accountability and is flexible enough to make sure that supervisors can place the right people in the right jobs at the right time — and then compensate them accordingly. Also, under NSPS, managers and supervisors have more tools and flexibility to assign people where they are needed. This offers employees greater opportunities for professional development.

This new system creates a civilian workforce that is competency-focused and performance-based. The focus is on people, performance and employment decisions that are cost-effective and best for business practice, allowing DOD to better attract, recruit, retain, compensate, reward and manage employees.

All that said, then how does NSPS put you in the driver's seat?

Under NSPS, you have a vital role to play in establishing your performance objectives, monitoring your progress and evaluating your results. Your supervisor will be working much more closely with you. You'll have an input at the beginning of the performance cycle, during the middle, and at the end, before evaluations and payouts. You will be able to directly affect your performance rating.

In the past year, as a portion of our ashore civilian workforce has experienced NSPS, we've learned much and progressed well.

Now, we have lots of qualified people to mentor the employees who will be joining NSPS later this month. I'm confident this next round will go smoothly.

### What you need to do

At the end of this month, MSC's remaining civil service employees ashore who are not represented by a union will come under NSPS. Now is the time to make sure you're ready.

First, let me assure you that you will not lose any money in the conversion to NSPS. In fact, if you're eligible for a within-grade increase in salary, that will be factored into the conversion.

In a recent *FederalTimes.com* article, Stephen Losey said, "The Defense Department's pay-for-performance system is living up to its promise of tying bigger raises and bonuses to better performance on the job."

There are required training courses on the DOD Web site that you should have already taken. If you haven't, do so ASAP. Ask your supervisor or local NSPS representative for directions to the training. In addition, on-site training on writing your performance objectives and self-evaluations is taking place at your location.

NSPS requires plenty of up-front work and lots of collaboration between you and your supervisor on establishing measurable job objectives for you.

You will also be required to document your work against those objectives and provide a self assessment of your performance. This gives you a bigger role in identifying your job priorities — your deliverables. It also lets you highlight your achievements relative to the objectives to which you and your boss have agreed.

I firmly believe we have a highly capable, talented team of civil service employees ashore. I want NSPS to work for all of us — to create incentives for you to be rewarded for the hard work you do and the contributions you make to our mission.

The hard work and training on your part will be worth it. They will help put you in the driver's seat on your performance plan, objectives, monitoring and evaluations.

You need to take an active part in this new system to make it work for you. Your supervisor will help. It's a team effort aimed at benefiting you and MSC. Please give NSPS your full support.

Keep the faith,

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

## Chief of Navy Reserve visits MSC headquarters

By Meghan Patrick  
MSC Public Affairs

On Jan. 24 Vice Adm. Dirk J. Debbink, the highest ranking reservist in the U.S. Navy, visited Military Sealift Command Headquarters to show his support to and interest in MSC by meeting representatives from both the com-



U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Cmdr. Miguel Lake

Vice Adm. Dirk J. Debbink, the highest ranking reservist in the U.S. Navy, spoke to Military Sealift Command reservists during his visit Jan. 24.

mand's active and reserve forces.

Debbink, who became chief of Navy Reserve on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations in Washington, D.C., last July, provided remarks to more than 60 MSC personnel — praising their outstanding contributions in fighting the global war on terrorism.

MSC Deputy Commander Rear Adm. Robert Wray and seven MSC senior reservists briefed the vice admiral on the command's mission, the role of MSC reservists and upcoming changes.

Debbink, whose relationship with MSC dates back to 2003 when he was commander of MSC Far East (predecessor of Sealift Logistics Command Far East), commended MSC, which oversees 860 of the nation's 67,000 reservists, for its reserve readiness and effectiveness.

"[MSC] is a great business," he said. "It's delivering every day. The command is hitting on all appropriate cylinders."

Debbink discussed the importance of the reserves remaining an integral part of the Department of the Navy's total operation.

"Steady on course, increase speed when and where able," he said colloquially, explaining his philosophy on the importance of providing reserve operational support.

Debbink then spoke to members of MSC headquarters National Reserve Unit 106 and a few other local reservists, articulating the importance of reserve readiness.

"If you haven't mobilized yet, you should start planning for it because you will be," Debbink advised his audience. "Start thinking about where you want to go and put in your requests now, which will increase the chance of accommodating you and your family's needs."

"The day was a great opportunity for MSC's active and reserve components to come together," said Deputy Assistant for Reserve Affairs Navy Lt. Cmdr. Miguel Lake, who notes that the meetings "reflect the unification and strength the vice admiral believes in."

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# Indian dhow receives 3 days of MSC aid

By Meghan Patrick  
MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command missile range instrumentation ship USNS *Invincible* rendered assistance to 11 crew members aboard a 112-foot disabled Indian cargo dhow stranded in the North Arabian Sea, Jan. 21-24.

The Indian-flagged dhow, named *Al Farouki*, was traveling from Mumbai to the United Arab Emirates Jan. 20, when it experienced engine failure due to a faulty starter. Late that evening, *Invincible* master Capt. Kent Howell and his crew were conducting routine operations in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility when they were directed by Sealift Logistics Command Central to divert from their course immediately and proceed to relieve the captain and crew of the cruiser USS *Monterey*, the first ship to respond to the distressed vessel.

During the transit to the scene, Howell learned more about the situation via radio contact with the *Monterey* crew, which needed to leave the area due to another short-fuse tasking.

"We were informed that the dhow seemed to be seaworthy and that there was not an English speaker aboard," said Howell. "*Monterey* was using a Hindi-speaking translator who told us that the Indian crew members were frightened."

*Monterey's* outline was clear in the morning light, and the seas were calm as *Invincible* arrived on scene. When *Invincible* confirmed that the smaller vessel was also in visible contact, the cruiser quickly departed at full speed for another urgent mission.

"No English; speak Hindi?" and 'Help,' kept repeating over the static," said Howell.

Without the benefit of a Hindi-speaking crew member, *Invincible* crew members quickly brainstormed a way to overcome the communication barrier. They turned to the Internet for help and conducted a Google search that produced a language translation tool.

"We printed out questions in Hindi and English that could be answered with a 'yes,' 'no' or a number, such as 'how many days water aboard?' and 'is the

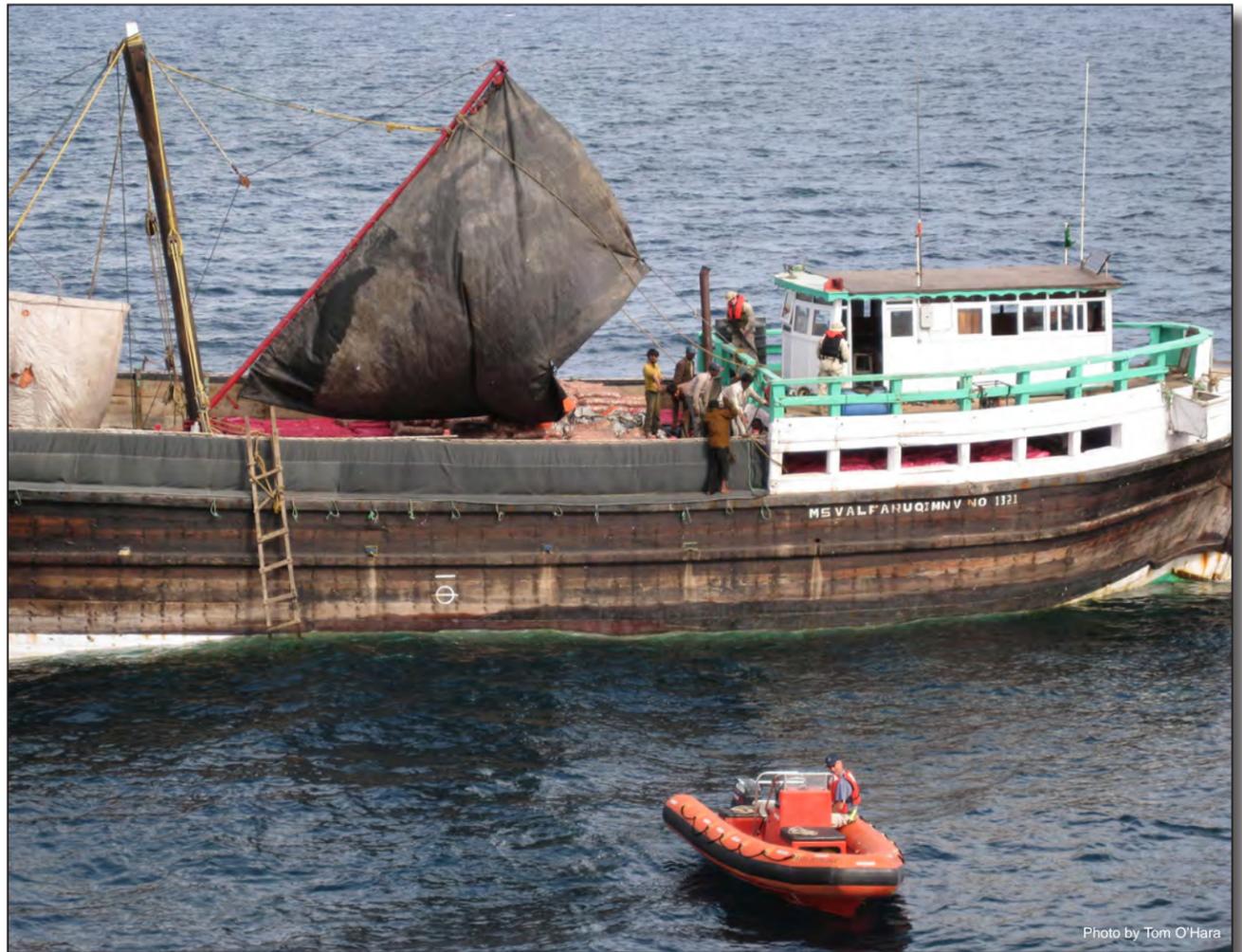


Photo by Tom O'Hara

A rescue boat from Military Sealift Command missile range instrumentation ship USNS *Invincible* leaves the stranded MV *Al Farouki* after transporting MSC mariners aboard to identify what caused the Indian ship to stop running.

crew in good health?" said Howell.

Under the direction of Chief Mate David Bobbe and Boatswain Andrew King, First Assistant Engineer Daniel Beard boarded *Invincible's* rescue boat with a list of questions, a travel dictionary and two armed U.S. Navy security personnel from Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron Three operating out of Bahrain.

Through translation and hand signals, the communication exchange was successful. Beard learned that *Al Farouki's* crew members were physically well and that the dhow had five days of provisions and water remaining.

Beard removed the defective starter from *Al Farouki* and brought it back to *Invincible* for further inspection. Back on board *Invincible*, Chief Engineer Mark Befort determined the mechani-

cal piece could be repaired and returned with it to *Al Farouki* the next day. Befort supervised the repair that evening and Beard installed the repaired starter on the Dhow's engine the next day. Unfortunately, the engine still would not start.

Disappointed, but still determined to succeed, Beard decided that there was not enough electrical output from the *Al Farouki* batteries. He removed all of the dhow's batteries to the rescue boat for transport back to *Invincible*, where they were charged overnight to full capacity. The next day Beard successfully started the engine, replaced the alternator with a spare on board and re-activated the bilge pump.

"The Indian crew was joyous," said Howell. "They wanted to keep First Engineer Beard."

The celebration was mirrored on the

*Invincible*.

"All hands involved experienced deep gratification for the opportunity to successfully assist a fellow mariner in need," said the captain. "Everyone was in good spirits when they saw the puff of black smoke blowing out of the *Al Farouki* exhaust pipe. We could all empathize with the dhow's crew during the three days we aided them. They had no propulsion; they were far from shore, low on water and unable to easily communicate for assistance."

Howell, proud of the *Invincible* crew members for their dedication to duty, praised them for their teamwork and innovative problem-solving in a crisis.

"Good communication made for a smooth, safe and effective performance," he said.

## Byrd rescues Indonesian fishermen

By Edward Baxter  
SEALOGFE Public Affairs

While operating in international waters in the Andaman Sea in January, James Byrne, dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS *Richard E. Byrd's* third mate, spotted a small fishing vessel and its three-man crew waving frantically for help. *Byrd* stumbled across the foundering vessel more than 400 miles off the island of Sumatra, Indonesia, while en route to a scheduled port call in Singapore.

Ship's master Capt. Mike Leahy ordered *Byrd* to slow its engines and dispatched Cargo Mate and Boat Officer Andrew Strosahl and five other *Byrd* crew members in the ship's rigid-hull, inflatable boat to investigate. In extremely limited English, the fishermen told *Byrd's* crew that the fishing vessel's propulsion shaft was heavily damaged.

The fishermen had been adrift without power for more than two days and had no food and little water.

"They seemed to have a look of relief on their faces as we approached," Strosahl said. "We brought them peanut butter sandwiches, milk, fruit

and bottled water right away."

"The fishermen were very hungry and ate what we brought them right away," Leahy said. The rescued seafarers were transferred to *Byrd* where they received a medical check up as well as a meal, hot shower and dry clothing. According to Leahy, the Indonesian crew was in good health but suffered from mild dehydration.

While the fishermen were on board, *Byrd's* crew took up a collection where they raised more than \$700, which was split evenly between the three fishermen. *Byrd's* crew also donated clothing and a few comfort items brought from the ship's store.

"I just can't say enough about this crew and their generosity," Leahy said.

Jan. 23, *Byrd* rendezvoused with an Indonesian marine police vessel near the Indonesian island of



Batam to transfer the mariners.

Vice Adm. John M. Bird, U.S. 7th Fleet commander, sent the crew a bravo zulu on Feb. 4 for saving the Indonesian fishermen.

"The response and assistance you provided in the recent rescue ... made a significant and positive impact to our relations in the region," he said. "You went above and beyond the requirements to render assistance at sea. My personal compliments on a job extremely well done."

# MSC supports major



Marine Corps cargo is offloaded from Military Sealift Command Maritime Prepositioning Ship SS MAJ Stephen W. Pless.

U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Margrette Hassler



Sailors from MSC Expeditionary Port Unit 111 paint the lunchroom of a school near Pattaya, Thailand.

U.S. Navy photo by Edward Baxter

**By Edward Baxter  
SEALOGFE Public Affairs**

In an Asian country slightly larger than the state of California, more than 8,000 U.S. service members joined forces with their counterparts from Japan, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand to conduct the largest multilateral exercise in the region.

Three Military Sealift Command ships participated in Exercise Cobra Gold 2009, which was hosted by the Kingdom of Thailand. Maritime Prepositioning Ship SS MAJ Stephen W. Pless, MSC-charter ship MV Cape Howe and fleet replenishment oiler USNS Rappahannock represented MSC for the command's 28th consecutive year in the exercise.

Although Cobra Gold didn't officially start until Feb. 4, MSC ships and reserve units began supporting the exercise in January.

"MSC ships and personnel are the first on the ground and are often the last to leave," said Brian Tully, director of plans and exercises for Sealift Logistics Command Far East. "As always, our MSC Navy reservists were on site to work with U.S. Marines, U.S. Army and the Royal Thai navy to bring in the cargo the Marines need for their participation."

## Marine Corps cargo

First to arrive was the Marshall Island-flagged Cape Howe, a commercial cargo ship under contract to MSC. The ship unloaded 30 containers of ammunition Jan. 20 at the port of Thung Prong in the Gulf of Thailand.

The same day, Cape Howe made a short voyage to Chuk Samet, where 240 pieces of cargo were unloaded for the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force. The Marine Corps cargo — including mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles; 7-ton trucks; generators; and containers carrying various supplies — was offloaded at the port by a team of Marines, soldiers, Thai navy sailors and eight U.S. Navy reservists from MSC Expeditionary Port Unit 111.

The MSC EPU are highly mobile units that can quickly deploy to a contingency, establish port operations and manage the arrival and departure of cargo ships in port. Exercises like Cobra Gold provide an ideal training environment.

"We've been preparing for the exercise over the last four months," said EPU 111 executive officer Navy Cmdr. Ted Seago. "This is a great opportunity to take our classroom training and execute what we've learned at the port in a real-world operation."

A joint color guard representing Indonesia, Thailand, the United States, Japan and Singapore march towards the stage for the opening ceremony of Cobra Gold 2009 in Chiang Mai, Thailand.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Crista Yazzie

Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Rappahannock refuels amphibious dock landing ship USS Tortuga, left, and amphibious assault ship USS Essex, right.



# multinational exercise

EPU 111's Cape Howe cargo operations wrapped up on the evening of Jan. 22.

Four days later, Pless arrived in Laem Chabang, carrying more Marine Corps cargo for the exercise. Pless, along with 14 other Maritime Prepositioning Ships, or MPS, strategically position U.S. Marine Corps equipment and supplies at sea, making them ready for rapid delivery to Marines ashore.

Pless's offload required close coordination between the ship's 28 civilian mariners who work for a private company under contract to MSC and Marines embarked on the ship. Pless's cargo was selectively discharged using the ship's on-board ramps and cranes because the Marines were only using 100 of the 197 pieces of equipment on board for Cobra Gold.

"Since [the Marines] were selecting pieces from various parts of the ship, my role was to ensure the stability of the ship," said Darrell Jones, Pless's chief mate. "We needed to make sure that when the weight shifted, it didn't overstress the ship."

Marines from Combat Logistics Regiment Three offloaded the final piece of 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force equipment in the late afternoon hours of Jan. 30.

After offloading the equipment, Conner and his Marines on shore scanned each piece of equipment – to verify what had been delivered – and inspected it before deploying it to the Marine units that would use it for the exercise.

"This exercise gives the Marines realistic training at what they would be doing in a combat zone," said Marine Master Sgt. Frederick Conner, the arrival assembly operations echelon staff noncommissioned officer in charge.

"It allows us to exercise skills, work with the equipment and better develop the knowledge and skills needed to do this type of operation in a real-world combat situation."

Upon completion of its offload, Pless sailed about four miles offshore Jan. 31, where it served as a platform for seven sailors from Navy Cargo Handling Battalion One to train in deploying and operating lighterage, a type of floating barge used to ferry cargo from ship to shore. These barges are used to offload cargo at sea when port facilities are underdeveloped or unavailable.

"When we have real-world opportunities to conduct training at sea, we'll take advantage of it," said Navy Senior Chief Boatswain's Mate John Neal, operations officer for Navy Cargo Handling Battalion One.

Pless remained off Thailand's coast until Cobra Gold was completed Feb. 17 and the Marines' cargo was ready to be reloaded for at-sea repositioning.

## **Fleet logistics support**

While the Army and Marines were conducting field-training exercises with their counterparts on land, the Navy was active with ships from other countries in the waters surrounding Thailand.

The U.S. Navy's Commander Task Force 76, based in Okinawa, Japan, participated in the exercise with Thai navy vessels, and MSC's Rappahannock was nearby to provide fuel and supplies to the ships.

Feb. 6, Rappahannock simultaneously resupplied amphibious assault ship USS Essex and amphibious dock landing ship USS Tortuga in a replenishment at sea.

Throughout its time supporting the exercise, Rappahannock transferred more than 750,000 gallons to the combatant ships in Cobra Gold.

## **Reserve support to the community**

In the little downtime exercise participants had, MSC reservists chipped in to leave Thailand a little better than they found it.

Eighteen EPU sailors painted lunch rooms at Pattaya area schools with a bright coat of lime green paint. Pattaya's Navy League President Peter Thoran worked with Tully to set up the community relations events. Thoran provided brushes and rollers, as well as paint trays, while sailors pitched in to buy paint from a local hardware store.

EPU 111 sailors spent more than five hours painting the walls and ceiling of a large lunch room at the Ban Thung Kha school, which enrolls more than 500 students.

"This is the best part of the job," said Navy Storekeeper 1st Class Tom Hennigh from EPU 111. "It's great to give something back to the local community."

Ten sailors assigned to EPU 112 and 117 painted a lunch facility, Feb. 4, at the Ban Thung Lahan School, which enrolls more than 160 students.

"The American people are so kind, and we appreciate the sailors giving up the little free time they have to paint this lunchroom," said Ban Thung Lahan's Head Master Panpit Apicitpongchai.

"We project the Navy's core values, not just in uniform, but also by going out to help local communities around the globe," said Seago.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Gabriel S. Weber



Marine Cpl. Jason O'Hearn, Combat Logistics Regiment Three, guides a 7-ton truck onto a tractor-trailer Jan. 28 during the Maritime Prepositioning Force offload operation.

U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Margrette Hassler

## HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

Military Sealift Command honored 25 employees at an awards ceremony held in Washington, D.C., Jan. 28. Receiving length of service awards for their years in the federal government were **Shirley Scribner**, contracts and business management, for 35 years; **Gary Davis**, Prepositioning Program, and **Shelley Wallace**, commander's office, for 30 years; and **Pearson Best**, Sealift Program, and **William Delgado**, operations, were awarded for 10 years in the federal government.

MSC also recognized **Marilyn May**, contracts and business management, as civilian of the quarter for third quarter 2008; Navy **Intelligence Specialist 1st Class Stefanie Crawford**, operations, as the Senior

Sailor of the Year for MSC headquarters; and Navy **Yeoman 2nd Class Josh Cochran**, commander's office, as Junior Sailor of the Year for MSC headquarters.

The ceremony concluded with a presentation of medals. Navy **Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Ray Ellison**, command, control, communications and computer systems, and Navy **Operations Specialist 1st Class Antonio Her-ring**, operations, were each awarded Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal Gold Stars in lieu of fourth awards. Receiving a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal Gold Star in lieu of a fifth award was Navy **Cmdr. Michael Corsey**, contracts and business

management; and Navy **Lt. Timothy O'Connell**, operations, and Navy **Chief Information Systems Technician David Twyman**, command, control, communications, and computer systems, received Navy Marine Corps Commendation medals.

MSC employees not in attendance at the ceremony, but honored for their federal government length of service were **Stephen Ruschmeier**, Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force, for 40 years; **Vernice Lee**, command, control, communications and computer systems, for 35 years; and for 30 years, **Glenda Hunter**, Sealift Program, and **Bradley Taylor**, strategic planning. Honored for 25 years were **Patrick McMahon**, Sealift Program, and **Suzanne Bewick**, contracts and business management; **Sharon Laroche**, command, control, communications and computer systems, and **John Madden**,

commander's office, were honored with 20-year awards; and recognized for 10 years of federal service were **Renee Desrosiers**, maritime forces and manpower management, and **William Carroll**, engineering.

MSC welcomes **Joshua Hunt**, as the fourth and final MSC employee assigned to MSC's Strategic Sealift and Prepositioning detachment at the U.S. Transportation Command Scott Air Force Base, Ill. This permanent civilian and military detachment, established July 31, 2008, serves to maintain the lines of communication between MSC and USTRANSCOM.

MSC bids farewell to **Brehanna Edwards**, maritime forces and manpower management; Twyman and Ellison, command, control, communications and computer systems; and **Rajendra Doni**, contracts and business management.

## COMPASS • HEADING

Military Sealift Fleet Support Command selected Navy **Electronics Technician 1st Class Matthew Courser** as the command's 2008 Sea Sailor of the Year and Navy **Information Systems Technician 1st Class Ronald McClarin** as Shore Sailor of the Year.

Civil service mariners and sailors aboard Military Sealift Command com-

bat logistics support ships received kudos from Navy Rear Adm. Kevin Quinn, USS Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group commander. "Sacagawea ... displayed flexibility and professionalism in conducting replenishment at sea ... was instrumental in enabling the strike group to increase its readiness and attain its subsequent combat operations

efficiency certification," he noted after a composite training unit exercise. "Take pride in a job well done."

MSFSC welcomes Navy **Capt. Paul Burmeister**, as chaplain. Burmeister will act as chaplain for MSFSC and MSC.

Fair winds and following seas to the following civil service mariners as they retire: **3rd Assistant Engineer Jan Harmon**, **Steward Utilityman Ildelfonso Sapinosa** and **Boatswain Lawrence Lueras**. The command also thanks **Peggy Lawhorn**, employee/

labor relations; **Loo Jones**, civil service mariner training; and **Frank Jackson**, contracting, who also retired.

MSFSC sends condolences to the families of three civil service mariners who passed away: **Supply Utilityman Donald Carpenter**, **Steward Utilityman Raymond Bryant**, and **Second Officer Stanley Sternberg**.

For more news of about civil service mariners and MSFSC, view the online newsletter at [www.msc.navy.mil/msfsc/newsletter](http://www.msc.navy.mil/msfsc/newsletter).



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Walter M. Wayman

## USNS PECOS

Using a laser-range finder, Navy Quartermaster Seaman Alyssum Richards determines the distance between aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis and Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Pecos Feb. 6, as a helicopter picks up supplies during a replenishment-at-sea. Stennis and Carrier Air Wing 9 are on a scheduled six-month deployment to the Western Pacific Ocean.

## EUROPE • NEWS

Military Sealift Command-chartered ship MV Ocean Atlas loaded Naval Mobile Construction Battalion cargo in Rota, Spain, Feb. 4-6. The ship off-loaded this cargo in Douala, Cameroon, in late February, marking the first-ever visit by an MSC or MSC-chartered ship to the West African nation. The construction equipment delivered by Ocean Atlas will be used by Navy Seabees to conduct humanitarian-aid projects in Cameroon as a part of U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa's continu-

ing commitment to enhance maritime partnerships in the region.

Navy **Capt. Nick Holman**, Sealift Logistics Command Europe commander, embarked on Navy frigate USS Robert G. Bradley Jan. 30 as commander of the inaugural Africa Partnership Station cruise to Southeast Africa. During his month-long deployment aboard Bradley, Holman oversaw APS activities in South Africa, Mozambique, Comoros, Tanzania and Kenya.

## CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Laramie departed the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations in January following a successful deployment, supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom, the World Food Program, Standing NATO Maritime Group Two, and maritime security and interdiction operations. Laramie supported the USS Ronald Reagan and USS Theodore Roosevelt strike groups, USS Iwo Jima Expeditionary Strike Group and other coalition naval forces. Navy **Capt. Joe**

**Hennessy**, Task Force 53 deputy commander, praised Laramie with a bravo zulu for conducting 49 incident-free underway replenishments and transferring more than 7.5 million gallons of fuel. MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Patuxent replaces Laramie.

The command welcomes Navy **Lt. j.g. Elijah Black**, who relieves Navy **Lt. Terri Gabriel** as fleet logistics support officer. Gabriel is transferring to Fleet Industrial Supply Center in Norfolk.

## PACIFIC • BRIEFS

In February, Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy and dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Amelia Earhart hosted 60 people from the 2009 Executive Leadership Development Program. The program is designed to identify future Department of Defense executives, providing them with leadership development and preparing them to ultimately support

warfighters and combatant commanders. The group received a tour of both ships and received briefings on MSC operations and Mercy's recent humanitarian mission to the Pacific.

**Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly Jr.**, MSC commander, visited large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ships USNS Piliilau and USNS Brittin and submarine tender USNS

Emory S. Land in the Pacific Northwest cities of Portland, Ore., and Bremerton, Wash. While visiting the ships and crews, Reilly addressed issues such as the challenges of operating in the Pacific Northwest region, changes within DOD, the newly proposed MSC seaman-to-officer program, crew manning and environmental concerns.

MSC fleet ocean tug USNS Navajo received a bravo zulu from Navy **Capt. David Kiehl**, Sealift Logistics Command Pacific commander, for supporting the recovery

of an AQS-22 dipping sonar Jan. 20-23. The equipment was lost during integrated training operations in late 2008 off the Southern California coast. Navajo provided a launch platform for Deep Submergence Unit One in San Diego to retrieve the AQS-22, which is the primary undersea warfare sensor of the MH-60R multi-mission helicopter.

Fair winds and following seas to **Patricia Settles**, contract specialist with Ship Support Unit San Diego. Settles retires following 34 years of government service.



U.S. Navy photo by Sarah Burford

*Capt. David Kiehl, commander Sealift Logistics Command Pacific, presented the Sealift Logistics Command Headquarters Reserve Unit with the inaugural Commodore's Cup Reserve Unit Excellence Award during a ceremony Jan. 10. SEALOGPAC HQ Reserve Unit distinguished itself by providing manpower, planning, watch standers and individual augmentee support to major Military Sealift Command and Navy operations and exercises, such as Operation Enduring Freedom, the war on terrorism, joint-logistics-over-the-shore operations and the Rim of the Pacific exercise. "We are extremely excited and proud to have been recognized for the support we give to MSC, SEALOGPAC and the entire Navy. We are just one example of what all the Reserve units are out there doing," said Capt. Kyle Freitas, SEALOGPAC HQ Reserve Unit's commanding officer. Founded by Kiehl in 2008, the award recognizes the excellence of Reserve units that support MSC and SEALOGPAC over a calendar year based on three principles: outstanding mission support, unit readiness and esprit de corps.*

## ATLANTIC • LINES

Sealift Logistics Command representative in Port Canaveral, Fla., **John Gregov**, supported Military Sealift Command tanker USNS Paul Buck loading fuel in support of Naval Station Guantanamo, Cuba, Jan. 12-13.

**Richard Bolduc**, SEALOGLANT representative in Jacksonville, Fla., supported dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Sacagawea while the ship was

in port there for the loading of fresh frozen vegetables in January. Bolduc also assisted Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS 1STLT Baldomero Lopez, which discharged U.S. Marine Corps cargo.

SEALOGLANT's representative in Charleston, S.C., **Tom D'Agostino**, assisted MSC-chartered ship SS Westward Venture in January. The ship

loaded 64,000 square feet of cargo, including more than 100 mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles, destined for use in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

SEALOGLANT welcomes Navy **Chief Petty Officer Colin Oates**, military administrative specialist; and Navy **Cmdr. Adrian Garcia**, who took command of Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic Headquarters Reserve Unit 106.

Congratulations are extended to SEALOGLANT outstanding em-

ployees of the year and quarter. **Jack Davis**, marine transportation specialist in Beaumont, Texas, was selected as Outport Specialist of the Year. **Mike Menchaca**, port services officer, was named Civilian of the Year, and **Tom Howser**, supervisory marine transportation specialist for combat logistics force and special mission ships, was named Supervisor of the Year. **Jimmy Boy Dial**, marine transportation specialist, was selected as civilian of the quarter.

## FAR • EAST • HAILS

**Rear Adm. Robert Wray**, Military Sealift Command deputy commander, visited to Sealift Logistics Command Far East in Singapore Feb. 6. Wray met with SEALOGFE Commander Navy Capt. Jim Romano and command staff members before conducting an office call with Navy Rear Adm. Nora Tyson, commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific, and commander, Task Force 73. Wray also met with Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Mike Little**, officer in charge of Ship Support Unit Singapore, and his staff. Later, the admiral toured the nearby Sembawang shipyard where he visited MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Walter S. Diehl and MSC missile range instrumentation ship USNS Observation Island, both of which are undergoing repairs. The ad-

miral also visited dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Richard E. Byrd, which was making a routine port call at Singapore's Sembawang Wharves.

Tyson visited oceanographic survey ship USNS Bowditch at Singapore's Sembawang Wharves on Jan. 23. Ship's master **Capt. Grey Chisholm** and SEALOGFE special mission ship officer Navy **Lt. Jerry Daley** led the admiral on a tour of the vessel.

Navy **Cmdr. Chris Cruz**, Military Sealift Command Office Korea commanding officer, met with Korean army Col. Lee Jong-Goo, commanding officer of the Republic of Korea's Port Operations Group in Busan in January. They discussed port security as well as future operations

between their respective units.

Cruz and Busan's United Seamen's Service center director Walt Christiansen donated \$900 to the Miewon Orphanage in Busan Jan. 13 on behalf of their respective organizations. "These funds will be used to pay for heating oil for the cold winter months and were raised through various private fundraisers," Cruz said.

Cruz and operations officer **Xavier Monroy** from MSCO Korea attended the 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command's noncombatant evacuation operations rehearsal of concept drill Jan. 30. The drill focused on the planning involved with the movement of noncombatant evacuees from the Korean peninsula in the event of a real-world crisis.

MSCO Korea welcomes command chief and senior enlisted advisor, Navy

**Chief Boatswain's Mate Albert Henderson**. Henderson, who reports from Southeast Regional Maintenance Center in Mayport, Fla., relieved Navy **Senior Chief Boatswain's Mate Ken Wasserman**, who left the command in December.

SEALOGFE's chief staff officer Navy **Cmdr. Curtis Lenderman** presented Navy **Warrant Officer Charles Briggs** with a Navy Commendation Medal Jan. 28, recognizing Briggs' outstanding three-year tour with the command. Briggs reports next as operations officer at Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Two based in Diego Garcia.

Relieving Briggs as SEALOGFE's assistant force protection officer is Navy **Lt. Del Toney**, whose last assignment was assistant operations officer aboard amphibious assault ship USS Essex.

# Preventing pirate attacks

## MSC partner in effort to assist commercial industry

By Laura M. Seal  
MSC Public Affairs

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. This is the idea behind a new initiative developed by Military Sealift Command and other key defense, maritime and law enforcement agencies to reduce the vulnerability of U.S.-flagged cargo carriers to piracy attacks.

Working together, representatives from numerous entities within the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security and Department of Transportation have pooled their anti-piracy ship security best practices and trained representatives to – if requested by a shipping company – visit a specific U.S.-flagged ship in port, conduct a thorough shipboard walk-through, evaluate the ship's vulnerability to piracy and offer recommendations.

MSC's role in the process has been to coordinate the military participation in the process and represent the U.S. Transportation Command, which uses the commercial shipping industry as one of many transportation options to move Department of Defense cargo overseas. Now that the teams are in place, MARAD has taken control as the program administrator and the interface of the program to the shipping industry as part of its security and training mission area for the U.S. merchant marine.

The ship visits will be conducted by Anti-Piracy Assistance Teams made up of one representative from the U.S. Maritime Administration and one from the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. Occasionally, the teams will include a third member from the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

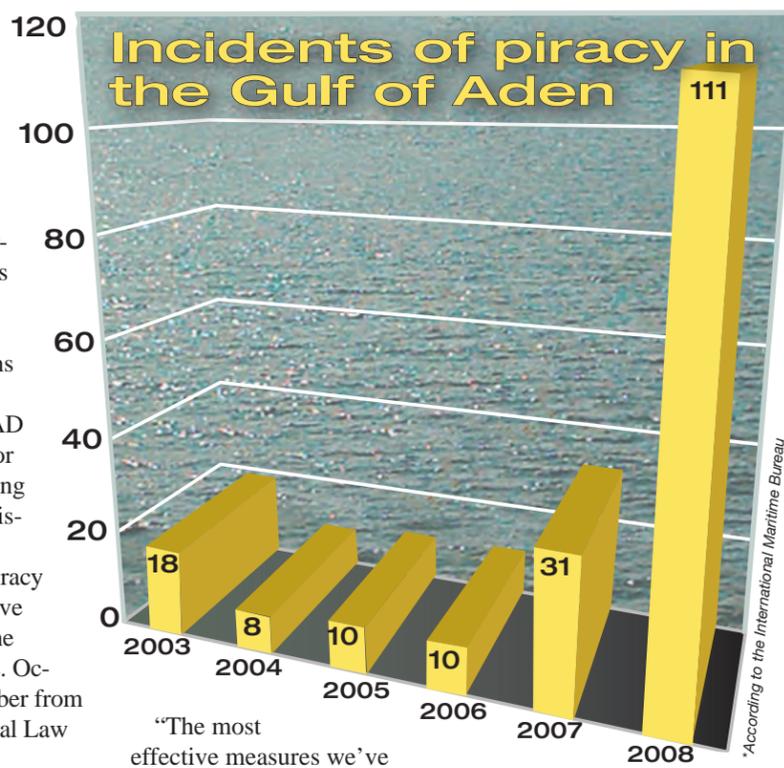
"These teams bring assets and knowledge that we have in the military to the commercial industry and reinforce the U.S.'s ongoing efforts against piracy," said Joe Harriss, of MSC's operations division, who leads the command's participation in the development of the anti-piracy teams. "This initiative demonstrates to U.S. industry that the military and Maritime Administration are doing everything we can to help protect U.S.-flagged ships."

International incidents of piracy reported to the International Maritime Bureau increased from 263 to 293 between 2007 and 2008. The increase was most dramatic in the Gulf of Aden where piracy attacks increased from 31 in 2007 to 111 in 2008 – more than 50 of those in the last four months of the year. An estimated 23,000 ships traverse those waters annually.

The world's navies have responded. The United States, China, India, Russia and the European Union are among those that have sent ships to patrol the wa-

ters off of the Somali coast. The recently established multinational force, Combined Task Force 151, is currently operating in the Gulf of Aden with the aim of coordinating all anti-piracy efforts.

Though patrols of these lawless waters are increasingly frequent and more organized, not every bit of ocean can be protected. It would take an estimated 61 ships to control the internationally designated shipping route through the Gulf of Aden, which is only a fraction of the 1.1 million square miles where pirates have attacked.



"The most effective measures we've seen to defeat piracy are defensive in nature," said Vice Adm. Gortney, Combined Maritime Force's commander. "The merchant ships have been doing a great job stepping up and utilizing these methods to defeat piracy attempts."

And this is where the Anti-Piracy Assistance Teams come in. Working from a checklist of about 100 items developed by the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, U.S. Maritime Administration, Navy Criminal Investigative Service and Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (with additional input from industry), these teams are prepared to thoroughly assess a ship and crew's preparedness to detect, deter, disrupt and delay pirate attacks.

Items on the list range from the tangible such as the ship's physical infrastructure to the intangible such as the status of vessel security plans and crew awareness of the latest anti-piracy tactics, techniques and procedures.

A visit from one of these specially trained teams is vol-

untary, as is the implementation of any recommendations provided. The ship visits are also provided to commercial shipping companies at no cost and may be requested from the U.S. Maritime Administration, which administers the program. A copy of the assessment checklist is then provided to the ship's master and the company's chief security officer so that they can conduct their own review prior to the team's arrival on board.

When the team boards the ship, it will spend about 90 minutes with the master and shipping company's chief security officer to discuss and review any vulnerabilities identified, as well as any additional concerns noted by the visiting team. Before departing, the team will debrief the master and the chief security officer with its findings. A written report containing an analysis of vulnerabilities and possible solutions will later be presented to the company chief security officer. At this point, the chief security officer will be equipped to conduct the assessment on the rest of the ships in that company's fleet.

"The main benefit of this program is the information sharing," said Harriss. "Industry has already developed and implemented its own piracy prevention measures, which we are able to enhance through these teams by bringing in expertise from the military, which has a different perspective and therefore perhaps other useful information to share."

Training for the Anti-Piracy Team members was conducted in early February aboard two Ready Reserve Force ships in Newport News, Va. After perfecting their approach in practice sessions aboard the government-owned ships (with input from industry), the newly trained teams conducted an assessment aboard a privately owned and operated U.S.-flagged ship.

"We have had formal and informal discussions with international and U.S. shipping industry on the idea of creating these Anti-Piracy Assistance Teams as a means of sharing best practices since late in 2008," said Kevin Tokarski of MARAD. "Our commercial partners have been both receptive to and supportive of the idea."

MARAD has already received industry requests to work with the teams and anticipates that ship visits will begin before spring 2009.

"We all recognize that the merchant mariner crews know their vessels and vulnerabilities best," said Tokarski. "However, with this program we can share the latest anti-piracy techniques being developed by the U.S. military, and that exchange of information will, hopefully, result in safer commercial shipping."

As the program moves into the execution phase, MSC will continue in an active role, providing assistance in evaluating and updating both the content of the checklists as well as procedures for the teams.

## MSC wins U.S. Navy small business award

By Meghan Patrick  
MSC Public Affairs

The Secretary of the Navy recently selected Military Sealift Command as the Navy's outstanding small business program for fiscal year 2007.

Rear Adm. Robert D. Reilly Jr., MSC commander, Bradley D. Taylor, MSC associate director of small business, and Navy Capt. Mark Stiles, MSC director of contracts and business management, will accept the "Secretary's Cup Award" on behalf of MSC at a private ceremony held at the Pentagon this spring.

This is the first time MSC has received the award, which was created in 2002 to recognize a command's success in meeting its small business program targets and the implementation of its small-business-improvement plan.

Small businesses, which comprise 99.7 percent of U.S. businesses and employ about half of all private sector employees, are "vital to our country

because of the sheer number of them," said Taylor, who serves as MSC's small business advocate.

"Small business is the foundation of all business in the United States," Taylor continued. "Without small businesses, we can't fight a war, ship our goods or survive at the level that we are; they serve as the basis for the entire U.S. economy. Ultimately, an increase in our small business industrial base results in an increase in competition and lowers our overall cost."

MSC awards approximately \$400 million of its \$3 billion annual budget to small U.S. businesses. These firms fulfill MSC's critical requirements, such as ship repair, vessel-operating contracts and charters, harbor tugs, port services, engineering and information-technology services, and layberths.

All Navy contracting commands are considered for this annual award and are judged based on a comparison with their previous year achievements. Judging

criteria includes a performance evaluation of the quality and quantity of actions taken to increase small-business participation, training and outreach initiatives and the command's progress in implementing the Department of the Navy's Small Business Improvement Plan.

Taylor says that he was surprised when MSC received notice of the award because of the command's relatively small size and the outstanding competition of the other Navy commands.

"We were shocked, but thrilled," said Taylor. "MSC is very supportive of small business and is committed to supporting the Navy's small business program. We are proud of what we have accomplished and excited about the direction we are headed in."

Taylor reports that he is particularly pleased with MSC's most recent accomplishments. In fiscal year 2008, the command beat its total previous year small business goals by 35 percent, including a 94 percent performance

increase in service-disabled-veteran-owned small business firms.

"In a time of diminishing budgets, it's about doing more with less," said Taylor. "Small business helps us do that. It promotes the advancement of technology, service and competition."

Deputy Small Business Program Manager Sandra Tyree of Military Sealift Fleet Support Command, MSC's subordinate command, agrees.

"Putting money aside, we should always be mindful that small businesses are vital to maintaining the strength of our nation and our naval forces," said Tyree. "For this reason alone, we must do all we can to maximize small business participation if our warfighters are to succeed."

To learn more about the small business opportunities at Military Sealift Command and Military Sealift Fleet Support Command, contact Brad Taylor at (202) 685-5565 and brad.taylor@navy.mil or Sandra Tyree at (757) 443-2717 and sandra.tyree@navy.mil.