

December 2010

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

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

Safeguard shows its many facets in the

Far East



COOPERATION AFLOAT READINESS AND TRAINING



Seawaves Magazine and U.S. Navy photos

INSIDE — MSC human capital development group update • American Tern delivers critical cargo for Saber Strike

Commander's perspective

New ships, new programs, new heroes

Where did 2010 go? Here we are in December getting ready for the holidays already, with the New Year right around the corner, so it's a great time to talk about new ships, new programs and new heroes at MSC.

Ships

On Oct. 21, General Dynamics-NASSCO shipyard in San Diego began construction of the last Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo/ammunition ship, T-AKE 14, which has not yet been named. The ship will deliver to MSC in 2012. Fourteen of these new high-technology and highly capable ships will be the core of our service to the fleet and our sister services. Our old combat stores ships are all deactivated, and the ammunition ships will soon follow. The high-voltage power and propulsion systems on the T-AKEs are a prime example of why we need tech-savvy mariners and modern training courses and facilities.

Another milestone was award of a contract modification to Austal USA Shipyard in Mobile, Ala., for construction of the fourth and fifth joint, high-speed vessels, or JHSVs. These shallow-draft, 338-foot, intra-theater transport ships are designed to operate at speeds of 35 knots and can carry up to 600 tons of cargo. The first vessel, USAV Spearhead, is being built for the Army. The second ship, USNS Vigilant, will come to the Navy for operation by MSC CIVMARs. We'll also get the fourth vessel for operation by CIVMARs. The other three that come to the Navy will be operated by civilian mariners working for a company under contract to MSC.

Programs

I hosted a meeting for all the maritime union presidents in November. We meet every six months to keep each other up to date on issues and initiatives that affect all of us. The discussions were frank and productive, and we exchanged lots of good information. I would say that the atmosphere between MSC and the unions is good and getting better. Trust is a word now frequently used by the union leadership when they talk to and about us.

Our commitment is to work with our labor partners to find collaborative solutions to labor-management issues. Our goals are to improve the delivery of service to our customers, support our CIVMARs and become a more efficient and effective organization in a time of diminishing resources. It's not easy, but I think we can reach our goals by working together. For instance, we make use of union training courses and facilities. Many of the union courses are certified for MSC CIVMARs, from basic security watchstander to helicopter fire fighting and damage control.

I know that afloat bandwidth continues to be a key issue. Implementing a "white list" of approved, low-bandwidth-hogging websites last month was not popular with many of you, but until I can physically purchase the extra bandwidth – which is something

that we are trying to do – we had to take some positive action to ensure we did not crash the network, which we were very close to doing. My information technology office is working hard to respond to your requests for access to certain sites which are important to your quality of life, but some that take up too much bandwidth will have to stay off until we get that additional capacity. As I mentioned, we are attempting to increase bandwidth to ease restrictions on use of the Internet.



Navy Rear Adm. Mark Buzby, commander, Military Sealift Command, stands with MSC fleet ocean tug USNS Apache civil service master Capt. Peter Long, left, and Apache Chief Engineer Frank Weels, at the Navy League National Convention in Jacksonville, Fla., Oct. 22. Apache was the sole Navy ship on display at the convention.

This is a tough nut to crack, especially with cyber-security threats on the rise. You may have noticed that DOD has tightened access controls and increased patching and infrastructure upgrades. This all strains our existing resources, but you have done an excellent job of supporting all this. Tighter controls mean some sites are blocked because they harbor known malicious activity. Other sites are blocked for content. Also, some file transfers are blocked for size restrictions. The trick is managing mission requirements with quality of life desires. Again, not easy, but we're working it. I remain committed to providing you the most bandwidth we can afford.

On the positive side, I've been informed that all Navy Exchanges in CONUS have now received the message that CIVMARs are authorized access. Production of the special ID cards that will grant you entrance is in progress at CIVMAR support sites East and West right now: Just in time for the holidays.

There are other programs and initiatives being worked by Chief Engineer Ray Blanchett and his people in the Human Capital Development shop here at headquarters. For an update on the Top 50 Initiatives, read Ray's article in this issue of Sealift.

Heroes

I got to attend this year's national Navy League convention

in Florida recently. During the awards ceremony, the Navy League honored two of you for your outstanding performance. Chief Mate Victor Martino from fast combat support ship USNS Arctic was honored for his leadership in response to the helicopter crash aboard Arctic last October. In the same ceremony, Chief Steward Ricardo Bautista was honored for his performance in the final mission and deactivation of our last combat stores ship, USNS San Jose. Both mariners are excellent representatives of MSC. But they're not alone.

Fleet ocean tug USNS Apache, with Capt. Peter Long commanding, was the sole Navy ship present at the convention, and the ship looked great. At 3 a.m. the day the ship was to depart, an inebriated civilian attempted to gain access to Apache by working his way hand-over-hand up the forward mooring line. The man fell into the water and was in such a state that he could not swim to shore or grab the life ring thrown to him. At this point, Third Mate Michael Smith, a 2010 graduate of Maine Maritime Academy, jumped in and saved the drowning man. This is just another example of the quality, integrity and capability of our CIVMARs. I've already initiated action to have this gallant mariner recognized for his lifesaving actions.

My wife Gina and I send you and your families our very best wishes for a blessed holiday season and the best-ever New Year. For those of you at sea over the holidays, you have my enduring gratitude for your service and sacrifice. My thanks, shipmates.

Sail safe, and yours aye!

Mark H. "Buz" Buzby
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Commander, Military Sealift Command

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Sunlight catches the stern of Military Sealift Command high-speed vessel HSV 2 Swift as it pulls into Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Nov. 8. Swift stopped in Cuba to load supplies and fuel to support the ship's five-month Southern Partnership Station 2011 mission, which will go through April. SPS is an annual deployment of U.S. ships to the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility in the Caribbean and Latin America. This year Swift will conduct training and subject-matter exchanges with partner nations including Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru.

MSC Human Capital Development Group status update

By MSC N00H

Military Sealift Command's Human Capital Development Group, better known as the N00H team, was formed in April to focus on caring for MSC employees worldwide. The five-person team has been busy developing and executing a wide range of initiatives launched in the past few months. Work has included researching laws, policies and instructions; interviewing subject-matter experts, shore staff, military members and civil service mariners across the fleet; and responding to email queries from the MSC family.

As November drew to a close, N00H continued to zero in on 50 initiatives, which cover five key categories: employee quality of life; afloat work continuum; diversity and women's issues; training and professional development; and health and wellness. Each of these categories has 10 initiatives associated with it, and each initiative has several tasks tied to it.

N00H has been working on 47 of the 50 initiatives since the team stood up in April. Some of them have been completed and put in motion. Below is a progress report on key steps taken in each of N00H's areas of focus.

Employee Quality of Life: Within this category is a new program that will make it possible for every MSC shore-side employee to meet with MSC's commander or deputy commander annually. Of course, where possible, the two leaders will seek opportunities to visit at-sea members of the workforce, too. N00H has reviewed schedules and coordinated with MSC leadership to ensure that each logistics command will be visited at least once every calendar year. This face-to-face interaction is intended to create better two-way communication between top leaders and the global workforce, creating a better forum to discuss quality of life issues as they arise.

Afloat Work Continuum: A new initiative put in motion in this arena centers on a decision to increase the number of MSC placement officers for MSC's civil service mariners. This step will reduce the ratio of mariners to placement officers from 300:1 to 200:1. Four of six new placement officers have already been hired.

Diversity and Women's Issues: Greater emphasis will be placed on these issues by establishing waterfront focus groups for women at MSC, both ashore and afloat, providing continuous feedback on issues facing women in the MSC workplace, both at sea and ashore. In addition, there will be MSC representation at all applicable women's forums and conferences. More than a dozen female employees from MSC, including licensed and unlicensed civil service mariners and ashore personnel, attended the Maritime Administration's fourth annual Women on the Water Conference in Galveston, Texas, Nov. 4-6. This forum brings civilian female leaders from MSC and other maritime government agencies together with hundreds of female cadets from U.S. maritime academies to highlight seagoing

careers for women.

Training and Professional Development: A new initiative will focus on ashore training with the goal of permitting each shoreside employee one week of training and/or professional development per year. This initiative will require that all training requests which are disapproved and not rescheduled be routed to the pertinent functional director or program manager at MSC headquarters for endorsement and copied to the headquarters executive director. By focusing higher-level attention on these denied requests, the goal is to help ensure alternate training options are scheduled. Although training denials are not presently a problem, this initiative prevents future issues of this type from occurring.

Health and Wellness for the MSC Family: N00H is working with the assistance of force medical officers to examine the out-port medical facilities available to mariners, with the goal of increasing the number of facilities to include clinics used by labor unions and other facilities approved by the Coast Guard. The new list of approved medical facilities has been provided to the medical service officers afloat. This is explained in the updated out-port medical process available at <http://www.msc.navy.mil/civmar/medical/outportmedicalnotice.htm>.

N00H will continue to work with all departments at MSC headquarters and its subordinate commands to ensure that the global workplace is in compliance with all applicable human resources, federal regulations and maritime rules and laws. In addition, the N00H team and representatives from MSC's labor and employee relations office will continue to work with MSC labor partners to continue building trust between management and labor, and to ensure adherence to required labor laws and rules.

"Although progress may sometimes appear to be slower than hoped for, the N00H team is working each and every initiative as hard as possible," said N00H task force director Chief Engineer Ray Blanchet. "I'm encouraged by the positive change that is beginning to happen."

"Our goal is to find a simple, well researched expedient solution for every issue after careful, thoughtful analysis by subject experts," Blanchet said. "This takes perseverance, a great deal of patience and a lot of hard work. I am grateful for the energy and dedication that my team is devoting to several highly important and complex human capital issues here at MSC, and I look forward to seeing more positive results in the months ahead."

N00H is continuing to work hard to identify and respond to challenges, developing and executing initiatives that will foster a continuously improving work environment for MSC employees worldwide. Members of the N00H team are always open to concerns, questions or comments from the MSC community. They can be reached at MSCHQ_N00H@navy.mil.

MSC recognized at annual AOTOS award ceremony

By Adrian Schulte
MSC Public Affairs

The crews of two hospital ships and a senior leader in the Military Sealift Command community were recognized at this year's Admiral of the Ocean Sea Honored Seafarer awards Nov. 12 in New York City.

The awards, given by the United Seamen's Service, commend heroism of American seafarers who have risked their lives to save others, and the outstanding seamanship of officers and crews of vessels participating in rescue operations.

This year USS honored the officers and crews of MSC hospital ships USNS Comfort and USNS Mercy, and MSC's executive director.

Comfort was recognized for providing medical and humanitarian aid to Haiti as part of Operation Unified Response following the Jan. 12 earthquake there. Under the direction of the ship's late civil service master, Capt. Bob Holley, Chief Mate Dave Lieberman and Chief Engineer Steve Starr, the crew aboard Comfort worked night and day to activate the ship from reduced operating status in 77 hours – nearly two days less than the five days the ship is expected to take to activate – to bring help to the devastated people of Haiti as quickly as possible. Vital to the quick departure was a quickly-formed team of current and former chief engineers led by Joseph Watts, port chief engineer west. Members of this team remained on the ship until it reached Haiti to make sure the engine room was functioning at its greatest capacity for the mission ahead. While in Haiti, the CIVMARs provided vital support to the embarked medical team, maintaining a reliable supply of fresh water and electricity to Comfort's operating rooms and patient wards. While many of the patients were airlifted, the mariners transported 45 patients by boat from shore to the ship's anchorage at sea and another 445 patients back to shore following their treatment. The mariners also ensured the delivery

of cargo, ranging from blood supplies and medication to fuel. They maintained the ship as a livable space for as many as 1,800 people.

Medical personnel aboard Comfort treated 871 patients and performed 843 surgeries during the ship's 50-day mission to Haiti. The deployment was the first time the ship reached full operational capacity, utilizing all operating rooms and beds, since the ship was delivered to the Navy in 1987. USS awarded an AOTOS Mariners' Plaque to the master and crew of Comfort.

three hours alongside the tug until it was put out. USS awarded an AOTOS Mariner's Plaque to the master and crew of Mercy, and AOTOS Mariner's Rosettes to Bush, Begley, Rafol and Jones.

USS also recognized one of MSC's top leaders at the ceremony. MSC Executive Director Rick Haynes, who has helped lead MSC since his appointment to the Senior Executive Service by the Secretary of the Navy in 1985 to serve as the general counsel of MSC, was presented with a special AOTOS award for his invaluable contributions to the American maritime industry. Rear Adm. Mark Buzby, commander, MSC, presented Haynes with the award, which has only been given 10 times in the 41-year history of AOTOS ceremonies.

"What you may not be aware of, is that the constant, driving force behind MSC comes from my executive director Rick Haynes," Buzby said to the audience.

Haynes serves as principal advisor to MSC's commander and has authority over all aspects of the command's mission and business operations. He exercises management direction of the MSC senior staff and advises the commander on all issues involving MSC's interaction with the maritime industry.

Haynes is also recognized in the maritime community as one of the Navy's leading experts on the military's relationship with the ocean transportation industry, including the maritime labor unions. He has helped develop critical programs, which enable DOD to leverage the capabilities of the entire maritime industry to support its objectives.

"I am the fortunate beneficiary of the dedicated work of the entire MSC workforce afloat and ashore," said Haynes. "I'm honored to be working with such a talented team, and I truly believe their efforts are the reason I received this award."

The USS AOTOS Award Committee, Board of Directors, Officers and Trustees who selected Hayne for this recognition acknowledged his significant service to America's presence on the world's oceans and his many contributions to the maritime industry.



Photo by Dominick Totino

Navy Rear Adm. Mark Buzby, commander, Military Sealift Command, stands with some of the MSC civil service mariners and a petty officer who were recognized for outstanding seamanship at the 2010 Admiral of the Ocean Sea Honored Seafarer awards Nov. 12 in New York City. From left, Chief Engineer Steve Starr; civil service master Capt. Randall Rockwood; Rear Adm. Buzby; U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer Ryan Dewitt; civil service master Capt. David Bradshaw and Boatswain's Mate Cromwell Rafol.

Mariners aboard Mercy were recognized for fighting and extinguishing a fire aboard Indonesian passenger ferry MV Wetar off the coast of Indonesia July 29, while the hospital ship was anchored off the port of Ambon, Indonesia, in support of Pacific Partnership 2010.

The morning of July 29, Mercy's chief mate, Matthew Bush, observed flames coming from the ferry berthed at the port complex. The ferry was set adrift, endangering other vessels in the area, and the local firefighting efforts weren't sufficient to fight the blaze. Mercy's civil service master, Capt. David Bradshaw, ordered one of Mercy's rigid-hull, inflatable boats with a fire-fighting pump to deploy and assist. Bush deployed with Second Officer Grant Begley, Boatswain's Mate Cromwell Rafol and Able Seaman Anthony Jones to join local firefighting efforts to help extinguish the blaze.

The arrival of Mercy's boat allowed the local firefighting tug to break from its firefighting effort and tow Wetar away from nearby vessels, ensuring their safety. After completing the tow, the local tug rejoined the firefighting effort. Mercy's RHIB and crew fought the fire for

COOPE

Safeguard team in CARAT 2010



By Edward Baxter, SEALOGFE Public Affairs

When Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Gary Roughead released his guidance for 2011 in mid-October, he addressed the future of naval operations. “We will evolve and establish international relationships to increase security and achieve common interests in the maritime domain,” Roughead wrote. “We will continue to work closely with our allies and international partners around the world by participating in international exercises.”

When Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard departed Sihanoukville, Cambodia, Oct. 31, its crew of 26 civil service mariners and 17 Navy divers had done just that and more.

Sihanoukville was Safeguard’s last stop in CARAT, a marathon, five-month bilateral maritime training exercise that began in May and was conducted by the U.S. Navy and eight Southeast Asian countries both at-sea and ashore in several Asian countries. Longstanding participants from the United States, Brunei, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore navies continued their roles in the exercise, while welcoming new participants from the Cambodian and Bangladeshi navies.

CARAT, short for Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training, is an annual exercise that began in 1995 to strengthen regional military alliances through bilateral training and a wide-range of community relations activities. Safeguard’s role was to conduct dive exercises and professional exchange visits in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Cambodia.

“CARAT’s mission was essentially two-fold,” said Safeguard’s civil service master Capt. James Driver. “While we coordinated with foreign militaries and shared information and ideas, we also helped people who needed it the most.” Community engagement activities were a large part of this year’s CARAT exercise.

Throughout the exercise, 15 ships, including Safeguard, and 5,000 sailors and Marines participated in the military exchanges and shoreside projects, fostering friendships and laying the groundwork for future operations. CARAT training focused on a wide range of maritime security areas, including diving and salvage operations; port security; small boat handling; maritime interdiction; visit, board, search and seizure operations; maritime aircraft operations; and engineering and medical civic action programs. Ashore work included medical, humanitarian and civic assistance projects.

Indonesia

Safeguard stopped in Surabaya, Indonesia, May 26 to June 2. During this professional exchange visit, Indonesian navy divers toured the ship, and divers from Safeguard’s embarked Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One, Company Six, led classroom training in dive-and-salvage techniques. The U.S. divers also discussed safety procedures such as decompression and emergency response.

“We now know more about Indonesia’s diving capabilities, and they, in turn, now have a much clearer picture of our capabilities,” said MDSU One officer-in-charge Navy Lt. Jon Corkey. “It’s about sharing ideas and techniques and fostering a partnership will last long into the future.”

Malaysia

After visiting Indonesia, Safeguard’s civil service mariners, or CIVMARs, made the three-day voyage to Malaysia’s eastern coast for the ship’s second CARAT engagement event, June 6-12. MDSU One divers repeated the classroom training they conducted in Indonesia, with additional instruction on dive equipment and dive safety and health procedures, such as learning how to conduct post-dive neurological exams to identify signs of nitrogen narcosis due to rapid ascent from deep dives. Divers then brought the training to the water.

Safeguard’s CIVMARs, the MDSU One divers and the Malaysian navy participants practiced their skills by salvaging a Royal Malaysian navy rigid-hull, inflatable boat that had sunk in shallow waters in a few years before. U.S. and Malaysian divers then scuba dived to conduct side-scan sonar surveys of the partially submerged KD Sri Inderapura, a Malaysian navy tank landing ship that was damaged during a fire near Malaysia’s Pangkor island in 2009.

Communication and cooperation between the dive teams and the CIVMARs was excellent, said Navy Lt. Matt Lindsay, officer-in-charge of MDSU One Company Five, which was embarked on Safeguard in Malaysia and remained aboard until September when Company Six divers returned for the second half of the exercise.

Safeguard returned to its routine operations as the U.S. 7th Fleet’s forward-deployed rescue and salvage ship from June until early October, when CARAT duties resumed again.

Philippines

Safeguard hosted 15 divers from the Philippine navy during a professional exchange visit to Subic Bay, Oct. 5-12.

Filipino divers toured the ship and participated in classroom training for the first three days of its Philippines visit to discuss Safeguard’s mission and capabilities, dive medicine and hyperbaric chamber recompression therapy. Safeguard and MSC’s three other rescue and salvage ships carry hyperbaric chambers to treat decompression sickness when necessary after deep-water dives.

U.S. and Filipino divers conducted 32 ocean-bottom training dives using a KM-37 diving helmet, which supplies air to submerged divers through an umbilical cord from the surface, in depths from 70 to 95 feet.

The divers used Safeguard’s embarked marine sonic side-scan sonar to survey three ship wrecks, including the fast-armored cruiser ex-USS New York, which was scuttled by U.S. forces in 1941 – 10 years after it was decommissioned – to prevent the ship’s massive 17-inch guns from falling into Japanese hands during World War II.

Safeguard then traveled to nearby Sangley Point to support scuba dives and surveys of the hull of partially-beached World War II-era tank landing ship BRP Kalinga Apayao, which was part of the U.S. fleet as USS Garrett County before transferring to the Philippine navy in 1973. Divers used handheld, side-scan sonar devices to survey the ship and deployed MDSU One’s remotely operated vehicle to capture visual imagery of the vessel.

While Safeguard’s CARAT mission did not require CIVMARs and divers to participate in community relations activities, several volunteered their time during their non-work hours to give something extra to the nations they were working with.

Driver, Safeguard’s master, has sailed in Southeast Asia for more than 30 years. Because of his frequent stops in the Philippines, Driver has built a relationship with a Rotary Club in Olongapo.

“Whenever I come through, I find out what’s going on and try to assist on the projects they’re working on in any way that I can,” Driver said. In his past four visits on different ships, Driver has

U.S. Navy photos by Capt. James Driver



CARAT

in trains with Far East navies

helped with a big project: the renovation of Olangapo City National High School, which enrolls 7,500 students.

When Driver visited the school Oct. 16, he brought some help: Able Seaman Eddie Brandes and several MSDU One divers joined him, spending six hours painting passageways. In addition, the group donated \$350 collected from the ship's crew for the ongoing renovations. Divers also helped deliver sporting-goods equipment to nearby Miguel National High School.

The side projects embody the aim of CARAT, said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Derek Peterson, U.S. 7th Fleet diving and salvage officer based in Singapore. "CARAT is designed to improve interoperability between the U.S. and participating nations. Safeguard's active duty and civil service crew members continue to not only train in diving and salvage techniques, but to spread goodwill throughout the local communities by engaging in community relations projects."

Safeguard's Navy Diver Senior Chief Robert Evans, one of the volunteer painters, agrees. "One of the best parts about being involved in CARAT is getting out and talking to the local population."

Cambodia

Safeguard completed its final CARAT commitment in Sihanoukville, Cambodia, where the ship conducted a professional exchange visit with 15 Cambodian navy sailors, Oct. 26-31. Classroom training included equipment demonstrations and preventive maintenance, diving medicine fundamentals and diving safety.

Cambodian divers toured the ship and participated in bilateral talks about future dive operations. In addition, Safeguard's CIVMARs and the MSDU One divers conducted routine maintenance on Cambodian navy dive equipment that was not in working order.

To help, some of Safeguard's CIVMARs took an active role in the repairs.

Safeguard's Chief Engineer Scotty Robinson and Engine Utilityman Angel Menes fixed the fuel line and other parts of a 24-foot-long Cambodian navy rigid-hull, inflatable boat, or RHIB. The CIVMARs educated Cambodian navy Lt. Col. Sdong Ravuth and other Cambodian sailors about maintenance of the RHIB as the Cambodians observed during the repair. When the RHIB was fixed, Robinson and MDSU One's Lt. Cmdr. Daniel Gavigan took it out for sea trials to ensure the boat was running correctly before returning it to Cambodia's Ream naval base.

While in Sihanoukville, several of Safeguard's crew members visited the Cosette's Hope Children's Home to donate school supplies, sports equipment and toys to the children.

"Safeguard's crew, both active duty and civil service mariners, showed a great amount of flexibility in carrying out their mission throughout CARAT," said Navy Rear Adm. Ron Horton, Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific and Commander, Task Force 73, CARAT's senior commander. "Safeguard is a model for the CNO's maritime strategy of fostering increased security and building partnerships in strategic areas of the world."

"We're already seeing advancements in our interoperability and in the friendships we're building," said Navy Rear Adm. Richard Landolt, commander, Amphibious Force U.S. 7th Fleet and the senior on-site commander for CARAT in Cambodia.

Following CARAT, the 255-foot, 3,282-ton ship sailed to Yokohama, Japan, for scheduled maintenance.

Cover background: Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard departs Hong Kong during multinational exercise Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training, or CARAT, 2010.

Cover left: Safeguard Engine Utilityman Angel Menes disassembles a fuel line from a broken Cambodian navy rigid-hull inflatable boat. Menes and Safeguard's Chief Engineer Scott Robinson fixed the boat, which later passed sea trials conducted by Robinson and Lt. Cmdr. Daniel Gavigan (centerspread top and bottom left).

Cover center: A Navy diver from Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One working aboard Safeguard gives a thumbs up sign to a Cambodian diver after helping him put on a MK-21 dive helmet.

Cover right: Cambodian divers aboard Safeguard practice giving neurological exams, which test touch sensitivity in extremities following deep dives to identify signs of nitrogen narcosis.

Left: Safeguard civil service master Capt. James Driver, far right, poses with two MDSU divers and two Filipinos in front of a high school where members of Safeguard's crew volunteered their free time to paint hallways.

Bottom right: MDSU divers lower Filipino divers into the water during a CARAT exercise.



U.S. Navy photos by MC2 Jason Tross

FAR • EAST • HAILS

Six helicopters from Military Sealift Command chartered ship MV Combi Dock III brought relief supplies to areas of Luzon Island, Philippines, that were devastated by Typhoon Juan, Oct. 18-25. Combi Dock III was in the Philippines for bilateral Exercise PHIBLEX, when the exercise was ended early so participants could help distribute aid. The ship's helicopters delivered more than 170,000 pounds of food and other supplies donated by the Philippine government and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Navy Rear Adm. Ron Horton, commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific and commander, Task Force 73, visited Sealift Logistics Command Far East Oct. 21 to meet with SEALOGFE's commander, Navy **Capt. Chip Denman**. Horton addressed command staff members regarding a wide range of issues in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility.

Denman and SEALOGFE's chief staff officer, Navy **Cmdr. Paul Gragas**, briefed Kate Fitzpatrick – a staff member from the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee for Defense – Oct. 19 on MSC operations in the Far East. Fitzpatrick was conducting a familiarization tour of U.S. military facilities in Japan and Singapore.

Capt. Dana Leonard and **Capt. Kirk Rhoda**, civilian masters of ocean surveillance ships USNS Victorious and USNS Able, respectively, visited SEALOGFE headquarters at Sembawang Wharves Oct. 18, for an orientation visit to the command before reporting aboard their ships.

From the Northern Marianas Islands, Navy **Capt. Herman Awai**, commander, Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three, hosted Army Maj. Gen. Donald Goldhorn, adjutant general of the Guam National and Air National Guard Oct. 6 aboard squadron flagship USNS 1ST LT Jack Lummus. As the adjutant general, Goldhorn is the principal advisor to the governor of Guam on all military matters and directly responsible for the readiness, management and combat

effectiveness of more than 1,100 men and women of the Guam Army and Air National Guard. Lummus' civilian master **Capt. Rich Horne** escorted the general on a tour of the ship, and Awai briefed him on Maritime Prepositioning Force operations in the Western Pacific Ocean.

MPS Squadron Three staff members participated in a U.S. National Park Service-sponsored Halloween festival at Saipan's American Memorial Park Oct. 21. The staff members sponsored a booth and handed out treats to local children. "The day was a huge success and our costumes brought smiles to local kids," Awai said.

From the land of the morning calm, the Republic of Korea, MSC Office Korea commanding officer Navy **Cmdr. David Bartell** hosted Mark Tokola, deputy chief of mission from the U.S. Embassy in Seoul, during a visit to the command's Pier Eight facility in Busan, where they discussed MSC operations on the Korean peninsula.

While in the Port of Gwangyang, South Korea, MPF ship USNS 1ST LT Harry L. Martin served as a training platform for U.S. Army UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters from the Yongsan, Seoul-based Army 2nd Cavalry Brigade Oct. 27. The helicopters conducted a combined 45 touch-and-go landings on the ship's flight deck. The deck-landing qualification training for U.S. Army pilots is part of a U.S. Forces Korea initiative to cross-train pilots to land their aircraft on a vessel at sea should they be required to do so in an emergency.

During an Oct. 12 awards ceremony, Denman presented Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Chris Cassano**, SEALOGFE's Reserve support officer, with a Navy Commendation Medal marking the end of his tour with the command.

SEALOGFE welcomes Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Al Munoz**, who relieved Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Richard Preston** as MPS Squadron Three's chief staff officer. The command bids fair winds and following seas to **Information Technology Specialist 2nd Class Nina Ritchie**, who departed in late October.

CENTRAL • CURRENTS

October's pace of operations for Sealift Logistics Command Central and Commander Task Force 53 remained steady, with Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force ships delivering almost 4 million gallons of fuel to U.S. and coalition ships. NFAF ships also discharged 1,329 tons of cargo and 597 tons of mail supporting U.S. 5th Fleet lines of operation: Partnership-Strength-Presence, Maritime Security Operations, Struggle Against Violent Extremists, and operations Enduring Freedom and New Dawn.

In October, SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 bid fair winds to Military Sealift Command's fleet replenishment oiler USNS Rappahannock after a successful deployment to U.S. 5th Fleet. While in theater, Rappahannock provided dynamic support to the USS Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group, the USS Kearsarge and Peleliu expeditionary strike groups and numerous U.S. and coalition navy combat ships. Rappahannock enhanced the readiness of naval combat ships by conducting 151 underway replenishments and delivering more than 25 million gallons of fuel during

its six-month deployment. Rappahannock's ready relief was MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Walter S. Diehl.

In November, MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Amelia Earhart and fast combat support ship USNS Rainier arrived in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility to support the fleet.

SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 welcomes Navy **Lt. Cmdr. John Callahan**, SEALOGCENT medical service officer; Navy **Logistics Specialist Chief Monique Graves**, requirements expediting chief petty officer; Navy **Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Trillshun Bacon**, lead cargo petty officer at forward logistics site Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates; Navy **Logistics Specialist 1st Class Wilson Dacasin**, requirements commodities petty officer; and Navy **Operations Specialist 2nd Class Tyre Heyward**, air logistics scheduler.

The command bids a fond farewell to Navy **Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Terry Bynum**, as he departs to work for the Aviation Support Division at Naval Air Station Oceana in Virginia.

COMPASS • HEADING

Military Sealift Fleet Support Command hosted Navy **Rear Adm. Brian LaRoche**, deputy commander, Military Sealift Command, to an MSFSC tour and overview brief Oct. 18. LaRoche toured MSC fast combat support ship USNS Supply and participated in a Global War on Terror awards ceremony where civil service mariners received medals in recognition of their service.

To better support the fleet, MSFSC has relocated the civil service mariner employment staff to Naval Station Norfolk's Building 312. According to Human Resources and Manpower Director **Phyllis Spano**, "This move puts the staff closer to the CIVMARs and provides the ability to have regular and recurring discussions and training sessions with CIVMARs in the pool regarding the merit promotion process. In addition, this location provides outstanding training classroom space for CIVMAR new employee orientation sessions."

MSFSC recently honored six staff members for length of service: **James Peters**, a member of the command's repair contracts branch, was recognized Oct. 6 for 40 years of service. Five members of the force medical office received awards Oct. 13: **John Peck** and **Larry East**, 40 years; **Glen Schaefer** and **Terrence Stone**, 30 years; and **Wanda McSwain**, 10 years.

In recognition of National Disabili-

ties Employment Awareness Month, MSFSC and U.S. Fleet Forces Command's equal employment opportunity offices hosted an awareness program called the Deaf and Hearing Impaired Awareness and Basic Sign Language class Oct. 19.

Ship Support Unit Naples announced **Emerita Hooker's** promotion to the unit's financial management analyst position. According to SSU Naples Director **Mike Ragonese**, "throughout the years, [Hooker] has taken the initiative to learn all aspects of financial management and has been promoted rapidly in recognition of her work ethic, technical expertise and dedication to MSC. She is recognized internally and to our customers, suppliers and all who work with her as an expert in the field."

Fair winds and following seas to **Pumpman Rogelio Beltran**, 3rd Assistant Engineer **Artemio Cespedes**, Medical Services Officer **Larry Denney**, Engine Utilitymen **Roger Houston**, **Ramon Josue** and **Concanso Ramilo**, Able Seamen **Bernard Ejdowski**, **Douglass Elden** and **Benny Mafnas**, Chief Engineer **Edwin Post** and Chief Radio Electronics Technician **Philip Toney** as they enter into their retirement roles. Thank you for your service.

For more MSFSC and civil service mariner news, view the on-line newsletter at www.msc.navy.mil/msfsc/newsletter.

PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Military Sealift Command dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Matthew Perry completed its inaugural ammunition load Sept. 29-30 in the Pacific Northwest, where more than 1,500 lifts of ordnance were loaded safely onto the ship in two days. Following the load, Perry departed for ordnance cargo operations in Hawaii.

Tim McCully, Sealift Logistics Command Pacific deputy commander, and Navy **Capt. Jeffrey Paulson**, commanding officer of MSC hospital ship USNS Mercy's Medical Treatment Facility, gave tours and briefs on Mercy's May-to-September humanitarian mission to Southeast Asia for the staffs of Tim Prince and Brooke Boyer of the House Committee on Appropriations Oct. 6 and Oct. 20, respectively. The tours and briefs focused on Mercy's mission but also covered other issues and potential future mission requirements.

Navy **Capt. Jerome Hamel**, commander, SEALOGPAC, attended a San Francisco Fleet Week conference focused on Defense Support of Civil Authorities Oct. 7. The meeting brought representatives from FEMA, DOD, the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard, and California state and local authorities to lay the groundwork for effective coordinated responses to potential disasters in the San Francisco Bay area.

MSC Office Seattle representative **Steve Busby** joined Navy **Cmdr. Michael Perlow** and Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Sarah McGann** from Expeditionary Port Unit 116 in participating in a Coast Guard Sector Seattle Military Out Load table-top exercise at the University of Washington Oct. 14. The exercise examined security constraints, clarified information sharing and tailored the framework to meet decision-maker information needs.

Navy **Rear Adm. Mark Buzby**, commander, MSC, and Hamel attended the keel laying of dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Medgar Evers Oct. 27 at the NASSCO Ship Yard in San Diego. Evers is the 12th ship in the Lewis and Clark class of ships built by NASSCO for MSC, and is scheduled for launch in mid-2011.

Hamel gave the opening remarks at the MSFSC-sponsored T-AKE Lessons Learned Conference Oct. 27-28 in San Diego. The conference provided participants from MSC, Naval Sea Systems Command, NASSCO and other maritime industry partners the opportunity to discuss the successes and challenges of the T-AKE program.

Navy **Rear Adm. Brian LaRoche**, deputy commander, MSC, attended the Reserve Commander's Conference in San Diego Nov. 5. The visit was LaRoche's first trip to San Diego since becoming MSC's deputy commander. While there, LaRoche held an admiral's call with SEALOGPAC staff members, visited with area Navy commands and toured MSC's Afloat Network Operations Center global communications facility.

Navy **Capt. Kurt Storey** assumed command of SEALOGPAC's headquarters unit during a change of command ceremony held in San Diego Nov. 7. Hamel was the featured speaker during the ceremony. Storey relieves Navy **Capt. Kyle Freitas**, who had commanded the unit since 1998. During his time as commander, Freitas led the unit in many exercises and projects, including this summer's Rim of the Pacific Exercise.

Best wishes to **David Spilholtz**, SEALOGPAC deputy logistics officer, as he transfers to his new assignment at SEALOGFE. Fair winds and following seas to **Lisa Turlington**, SSU San Diego contracts department.

HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort's Medical Treatment Facility received the Association of Military Surgeons United States 2010 Humanitarian Assistance Award for "exceptional humanitarian assistance during Operation Unified Response, saving lives and bringing hope to Haiti." The award was presented to Navy **Capt. James Rice**, Medical Corps, MSC force surgeon, and Navy **Capt. Jim Ware**, Medical Corps, Comfort MTF commanding officer for Haiti, who accepted the award on behalf of Comfort's MTF and civil service mariner crew. The plaque was presented at the 116th annual AMSUS meeting held Nov. 3 in Phoenix, Ariz.

MSC logistics management specialist **Fred Colston** was presented an Item Unique Identification Contribution Award during the Unique Identification Forum 2010 in Orlando, Fla., in September. Colston was recognized for his contributions in the implementation of DOD's Item Unique Identification program on MSC ships, an asset management program designed to track selected equipment throughout its life cycle.

MSC headquarters recognized 35 members of the workforce Oct. 28 for their length of government service and extraordinary performance. **Reynold Schuttler** was recognized for 40 years of service. **Gladys Fisher**, **Jim Singleton** and **Brenda Hunter** were recognized for 30 years of service. **Linda Fitzpatrick** and **Sandra Ortega** were recognized for 25 years of service. **Garrett Rissing** was recognized for 20 years of service. **Bruce Belden**, **Kenyetta Greene** and **Jay Standing** were recognized for 15 years of service. **Christopher Cole**, **Kevin Kohlmann**, **So-Chung Lee**, **Jennifer Weger**, **Matt Clifford** and **Peter Fejeran** were rec-



Navy **Capt. James Rice**, Military Sealift Command force surgeon (far left), and Navy **Capt. Jim Ware**, MSC hospital ship USNS Comfort medical treatment facility commanding officer for Haiti, (far right), stand with former surgeon general, retired Navy Vice Adm. **Michael Cowan** and Surgeon General Navy Vice Adm. **Adam Robinson**, after accepting the Association of Military Surgeons United States 2010 Humanitarian Assistance Award for Comfort's exceptional medical response following Haiti's January earthquake.

ognized for 10 years of service. Also during the ceremony, **Jim Tran**, Command, Control, Communication and Computer Systems, was recognized as the MSC Civilian of the Quarter.

Ten MSC headquarters representatives attended the third annual T-AKE Lessons Learned conference in San Diego Oct. 27-28. The conference was a chance for more than 175 T-AKE stakeholders to discuss overall class status, individual ship status, vendor status and shipyard status. Some of the key accomplishments discussed this year included disaster relief in Haiti and Pakistan, and the delivery of T-AKEs 9 and 10. In attendance from MSC headquarters were: **Willie Barnhill**, **Edmond French**, **Melissa Morgan**, **Kevin Baetsen**, **Matt Clifford**, **Chris Adams**, **Gary Fields**, **Rene Fry**, **Marc Bromante** and **Michael Touma**.

Members of the MSC headquarters community celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month Oct. 13. Maryland State Delegate **Joseline Pena-Melnyk** spoke at the event, and there was music and Hispanic food to sample.

Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force representatives **Larry Urban**, **Sam Shattock** and **Fred Woody** attended the International Military Single-Hull Tanker Conference in the United Kingdom Oct. 26-27. Seven allied nations met there to share lessons learned and best practices regarding military single-hull tanker operations, which became more restrictive in early 2010.

MSC bids farewell to **Robert Kenney**, engineering, and **Kijuana Young**, operations.

MSC welcomes **Kenneth Green**, military affairs and protocol; **Jacqueline Wourman**, Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Robert Lewis** and Navy **Lt. j.g. Roy Klotzbach**, maritime forces, manpower and management; Navy **Lt. j.g. Richard Ilczuk**, operations; Navy **Lt. j.g. Lloyd Regas**, contracts and business management; and Navy **Hospitalman Leopold Brandenburg**, office of medical programs.

ATLANTIC • LINES

Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic hosted a ship masters' conference Oct. 7 in Norfolk. Nine civil service masters, two chief engineers and one first officer attended, along with representatives from various Military Sealift Command offices and local support staff members. Conference topics included fleet readiness enterprise initiatives, N00H initiatives, environmental protection and special-incident reporting.

Navy **Capt. Michael Graham**, SEALOGLANT commander, spoke at the conference, sharing that the Navy's trust in MSC is at an all-time high. Graham urged the ship masters to continue the display of professionalism that earned the trust. "To that end, the first impression made by the appearance of your ships and crews is important and I need your continued focus on both," said Graham.

MSC fleet ocean tug USNS Apache was a static display during a 'Salute to Sea Services' celebration sponsored by the National Navy League at the Jacksonville, Fla., city dock, Oct. 22-24. Highlights of Apache's visit included a media embark and transit from Mayport, Fla., to pierside in Jacksonville, as well as a visit to the ship by Navy **Rear Adm. Mark Buzby**, commander, Military Sealift Command, and former Secretary of the Navy **J. William Middendorf**.

Capt. Peter Long, Apache's civil service master, described the port visit as successful and credited part of that success to SEALOGLANT's marine transportation specialist representatives in Jacksonville, **Richard Bolduc** and **Dean Doolittle**.

Doolittle reports that personnel from SEALOGLANT's Jacksonville office

assisted MSC high-speed vessel HSV 2 Swift during its Sept. 29 to Nov. 2 layberth-maintenance period in Jacksonville, as well as the loading of military department mission-essential equipment and 220 pallets of Project Handclasp donations onto the ship. Also in Jacksonville, the SEALOGLANT staff assisted MSC with the loading of nearly 117,000 barrels of fuel and 243 pallets of supplies onto fast combat support ship USNS Arctic Oct. 18-20, to support aircraft carrier USS Enterprise's composite training unit exercise. Arctic's civil service master, **Capt. John Pritchett**, and crew were thanked by the exercise commander for "their consistently brilliant performance and professionalism alongside."

Short-term chartered integrated tug and barge OSV Navigator discharged nearly 130,000 barrels of fuel Oct. 19-20 in Jacksonville with the assistance of Doolittle.

MSC Rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp towed ex-USNS Saturn from the Navy's Inactive Ship Maintenance Facility in Philadelphia, Pa., to a northern Virginia Capes area of operation to serve as the target for a U.S. 2nd Fleet combined surface/air sink exercise for the USS George H.W. Bush carrier strike group Oct. 26.

SEALOGLANT Marine Transportation Specialist **Mark Bigelow** assisted with the loading of 14 new U.S. Army CH-47F Chinook helicopters, four flight simulators and nine containers onto MSC large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off vessel USNS Mendonca as part of a lift of opportunity Oct. 26 in Baltimore. Mendonca delivered the equipment to Pearl Harbor, before transiting to its new layberth location in Bremerton, Wash., where the ship will remain to support West Coast operations.

Congratulations to Doolittle, who was named SEALOGLANT's Civilian of the Fourth Quarter for his outstanding performance during the one year he has been with the command.

EUROPE • AFRICA • NEWS

Military Sealift Command oceanographic survey ship USNS Henson turned a three-day port visit Oct. 17-19 to Casablanca, Morocco, into an experience with lasting impact on theater security cooperation goals for Navy Africa. During the visit, 16 members of the Royal Moroccan navy toured the ship. Later, in conjunction with the Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command, Henson hosted a reception for 80 people, which brought together representatives from the U.S. Embassy in Rabat, the U.S. Consulate in Casablanca, the Royal Moroccan navy, various defense and naval attaches, and local business and maritime industry personnel from Casablanca.

"It was an honor and a pleasure to host this important event aboard Henson," said Henson's civilian master **Capt. Gregory Gillotte**. "The crew really enjoyed the short visit to Casablanca, and we hope this event will open the door to many future visits to Morocco in support of international hydrographic cooperation."

Navy **Capt. James Tranoris**, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Europe/Task Force 63, and Navy **Cmdr. Mark Hegarty**, SEALOGEUR surface operations, visited Henson Oct. 8 while the ship was pier-side in Portsmouth, England.

MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Leroy Grumman participated in Exercise Joint Warrior 10-2 from Oct. 3-14 in the Irish Sea off the coast of Scotland. Joint Warrior, a two-week, multinational training exercise designed to improve interoperability between allied navies, included simulated attacks from subma-

rines, aircraft and small boats.

Grumman provided at-sea replenishment to U.S. Navy and NATO ships participating in the exercise, including guided missile destroyers USS Stout, USS Bainbridge, USS Nitze, British navy destroyer HMS York and frigate HMS Monmouth, and Danish navy HDMS Absalon. Grumman conducted 30 replenishments at sea, delivering approximately 3 million gallons of diesel fuel marine, 80,000 gallons of aviation fuel, and 26 pallets of food, cargo, and supplies.

In other support to U.S. Navy forces, MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Lenthall conducted a lift of opportunity for Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit Eight as it shifted its homeport from Sigonella, Sicily, to Rota, Spain. Lenthall moved more than 244,000 pounds of vehicles and equipment for the unit from Sigonella to Rota, delivering its cargo Oct. 14.

The Strategic Sealift Officer Program, formerly known as the Merchant Marine Individual Ready Reserve, continues to support port operations in Rota, Spain, by serving on two-week active duty for training orders providing harbor pilot assistance. Navy **Capt. William Scott Frailey** provided support Oct. 4-15, and three others in the program were scheduled to follow him.

SEALOGEUR welcomes its new deputy of surface operations, **Robert Kenney**, from MSC headquarters in Washington, D.C., and Navy **Lt. Beth Williams**, tactical logistics officer.

Conference highlights opportunities for aspiring 'women on the water'

By Meghan Patrick, MSC Public Affairs

Women play a vital and growing role in the U.S. maritime arena. That was the recurring theme at the fourth annual Women on the Water Conference in Galveston, Texas, where Navy Rear Adm. Mark Buzby, commander, Military Sealift Command, delivered his keynote address to a sea of faces, including those of nearly 200 female U.S. maritime academy cadets.

More than a dozen of MSC's female civil service mariners and shoreside staff members joined Buzby at the Maritime Administration-sponsored conference, held Nov. 4-6 at the Texas Maritime Academy. The event brought cadets from all seven U.S. merchant marine academies into contact with leading professional women in the maritime industry. Throughout the course of three days, the attendees participated in panels, workshops and networking receptions to discuss the opportunities and challenges for women in seagoing jobs.

Buzby gave an overview of MSC and women who are in leadership roles at sea today. He highlighted that about 8 percent of MSC's mariners are women, and that percentage has been steadily rising from just 3 percent in 1992. He also noted that MSC current has more than 380 female civilian mariners, including 64 officers, 33 of whom are licensed officers.

Buzby recognized some of the key women who are part of MSC's seagoing leadership team. They included civil service master Capt. Amy Esquida, a Texas Maritime graduate who is in command of MSC fleet ocean tug USNS Sioux; four first officers; 20 second and third officers; nine second and third assistant engineers; 14 pursers; three supply officers, four boatswain's mates and others in all of MSC's unlicensed ratings.

Buzby left some advice with his audience. "I think it is very important to have a cadre of trusted confidants that you can turn to for advice and counseling," he said. He urged them to heed the leadership advice he was given early in his career. "I was taught three pillars of service when I first went to sea: People first, be a professional and be a good shipmate."

Airica Dryden, a 2002 California Maritime Academy graduate and the operations officer aboard MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser, represented civil service mariners during a panel discussion at the conference, and two Military Sealift Fleet Support Command human resources specialists were present to discuss MSC career opportunities with attendees.

"I'm pleased to participate at this year's WOW conference and rub shoulders with inspiring professional mariners," Dryden said. "I'm happy to showcase MSC and my personal experience within our fleet among such diverse industry representation."

Other notable speakers included Coast Guard Rear Adm.

Lessons learned: Career advice from female CIVMARs



First Officer Sarah Daleo, USNS Richard E. Byrd:

Try sailing on your license immediately after you graduate – even if you aren't sure it's the career path you want to pursue. There are few jobs that give you as much responsibility so early in your career. Getting to sea sooner rather than later will create a better set of options for you.

Laila Linares, engineer at MSC headquarters:

Stay on the cutting edge of technology. As we become more dependent on technology, some crew members are less comfortable or willing to go in that direction. But it's necessary to learn, especially on new ships, like MSC's new T-AKE class, where there's no other option.

First Officer Michelle Stark, USNS Charles Drew:

Get as much training completed as early as you can.

Second Officer Jennifer Dago, USNS Mercy:

Set goals and maintain your determination.

Third Assistant Engineer Jennifer Swanson, USNS Washington Chambers:

Stay connected to the graduates of your alma mater who have gone before you. They can be a wealth of information and experiences that can guide and help you in your career.



Second Officer Airica Dryden, USNS Henry J. Kaiser:

Know your goals for your sailing career. Once you reach your goals re-evaluate your life, giving thought to both professional and personal goals.

First Officer Tiffany Brockman, USNS Ericsson:

Value your friends. Your peers share a common set of experiences with you – things other people who don't sail may never understand. Your peers are a strong group of allies, and they'll be your friends for life.



U.S. Navy photos

Mary Landry, the incident commander during this year's Deepwater Horizon accident and oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico; Capt. Sherry Hickman, a Houston ship channel pilot; Capt. Joy Manthey, a towing vessel captain for Kirby Inland Marine; Master/Chief Engineer Dana Woodruff, the Houston branch agent for the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association; and Capt. Michelle Gorman, the master/offshore installation manager aboard Diamond Offshore Drilling's SSDV Ocean Courage.

Buzby concluded his speech by acknowledging the diverse individuals and organizations that work together closely for success and safety in the maritime world.

"Let me just say 'thanks' to all of you for what you do every day in our industry," he said. "Whether you are actively sailing, working ashore in support of those who sail, or in training to work in our industry, you are making a commitment to the better of our country. The rewards are many, and few jobs place you as close to the awesome splendor and raw power of Mother Nature as a career at sea."

Susan Melow, MSFSC Public Affairs, contributed to this story.

American Tern delivers equipment for Exercise Saber Strike

By Kim Dixon, SEALOGEUR Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command's chartered container ship MMV American Tern delivered mission-critical equipment belonging to the Pennsylvania National Guard's 56th Stryker Brigade Oct. 7 to the Port of Riga, Latvia, laying the groundwork for a multinational military exercise.

Equipment was loaded on board U.S. merchant mariner-crewed American Tern at the Port of Philadelphia Sept. 16-17 and transported to the Vecmilgravis Terminal in Riga. Despite a four-day delay due to Hurricane Igor, American Tern's crew delivered their critical cargo to port on schedule. The cargo's discharge set the stage for Exercise Saber Strike 2011, which training forces from the United States and the three Baltic States conducted Oct. 18-31 at the Adazi training area in Latvia.

In addition to operating the ship, several of American Tern's crew members played key roles during the offload, demonstrating the mariners' versatility and expertise.

During this type of operation, equipment is typically off-loaded from the ship by ashore crane operators and port cranes. But when plans changed close to load-out day, the Army's Surface Deployment and Distribution Command – which worked with MSC to facilitate the offload – did not need to scramble to find replacements. Instead, four members of American Tern's crew stepped to the plate and offered crane support and stevedore supervision services, using skill sets outside of what they are required for their jobs.

Able Seamen Raudeo Panganiban and Christopher Jensen operated the ship's on board cranes, instead of using a port crane, to off-load the cargo under the direction of Chief Mate John Ciastkewicz and Boatswain Christofer Bryan. Ciastkewicz and Bryan also guided the contracted

stevedores on safely and efficiently handling the cargo and preparing it for transportation to the training range.

The cargo discharge was coordinated by SEALOGEUR with SDDC's 950th Transportation Company. The good relationship between MSC and SDDC helped ensure a smooth



A Stryker is offloaded from Military Sealift Command long-term charter dry cargo ship MV American Tern in Riga, Latvia, for interoperability Exercise Saber Strike 2011.

coordination of efforts with American Tern's crew during the equipment offload.

In the span of eight short hours, American Tern's crew discharged 17 Stryker vehicles; eight containers holding the unit's gear, weapons, communication equipment, and maintenance items for the Strykers; Humvees; trailers; and support trucks belonging to the National Guard unit,

Mueller said.

The offload was remarkably quick, considering the offload's unique circumstances, said American Tern's civilian master Capt. Brian O'Hanlon. He credited the evolution's successful completion to his crew's ability to adapt, stating that "everybody chipped in and got the job done." In particular, O'Hanlon commended the "expertise of the chief mate, who is a very experienced cargo man and knew what to do to direct all of the people."

After the equipment was discharged from the 521-foot long ship, SDDC arranged for its transportation to the training area by rail and road. Exercise Saber Strike was designed to tune interoperability procedures and to improve the integration of land and air operational ability among the participants. The exercise was conducted with the prospect of having participants eventually support International Security Assistance Force operations in Afghanistan and other future multinational operations.

"The reception of cargo at the port and inland movement of cargo to the Adazi training area posed no challenges because of the well-established relationship and integrated planning leading up to the execution of the event," said Army Maj. Gina SanNicolas, commander, 950th Transportation Company, located in Bremerhaven, Germany. "Because of the communication among Latvian logistics officers, U.S. Army Europe and European Command planners, this set the tone for the successful reception and integration of cargo."

James Marconi, MSC Public Affairs, contributed to this story.