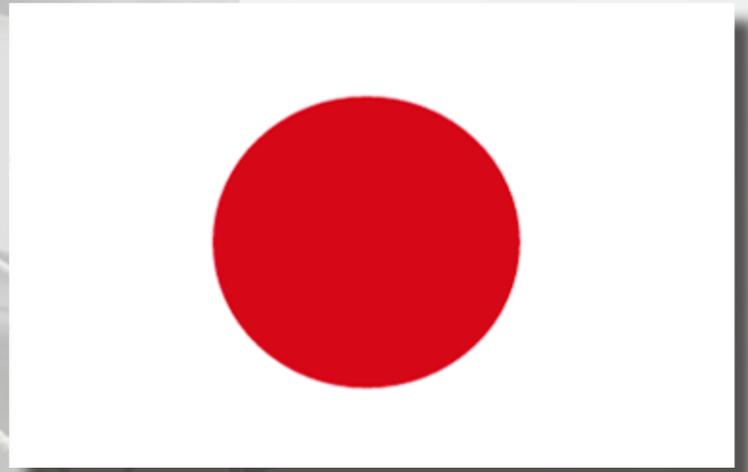
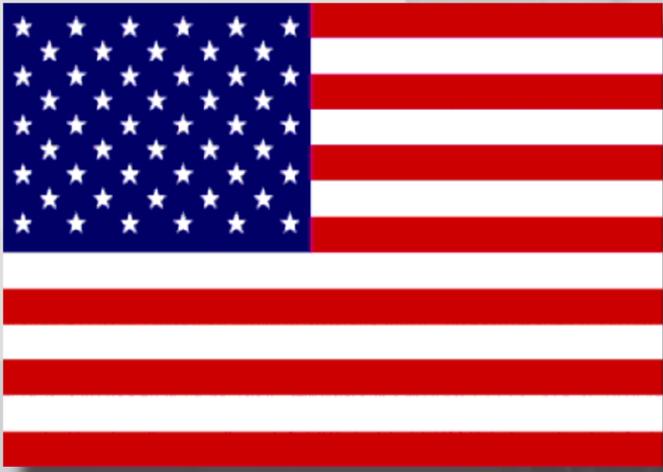


January 2010

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

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND



## West meets East for ANNUALEX 21G

USNS Carl Brashear • USNS Rappahannock • USNS Alan Shepard  
support U.S. and Japanese forces



U.S. Navy photo by Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Nardello Geravacio

INSIDE — Grapple contributes to Africa Partnership Station Mission • Navajo serves as platform for U.S.-Indian dive exercise

# MSC Milestone:

## T-AFS class completes nearly five decades of service

Happy 2010, shipmates! I hope all of you had an enjoyable holiday season whether you were at sea with your MSC family or at home surrounded by loved ones. Even in these challenging economic times, we all have much to be thankful for, and I see positive signs for MSC in the coming year and beyond.

I personally am particularly thankful to have fallen in with the remarkable men and women of MSC who literally do our country's heavy lifting every day at sea around the world. You, and those who support you ashore, make it happen so reliably and seamlessly that you can easily be taken for granted.

Part of my aim in the coming year is to make sure your sacrifices and contributions are better understood by those who rely on your dedicated efforts. My New Year's resolution!

### End of an era

This month marks the end of an era. After 46 years of service, the final crew will depart from the last combat stores ship to serve the Navy fleet. Before January is over, my Kings Point classmate Capt. Keith Walzak and his crew on USNS San Jose will have the honor of pulling fires for the last time, making the final deck log entry, and saying good-bye to the T-AFS class as their ship is deactivated and stricken from the Navy rolls.

For almost five decades, combat stores ships have been providing the food and supplies needed by Navy sailors and American embassies around the world. It all began in 1963 when USS Mars was commissioned and began delivering fresh and frozen food and repair parts to Navy combatants wherever they sailed. Mars was operated by Navy sailors and had six sister ships: USS Sylvania, commissioned in 1964; USS Niagara Falls, commissioned in 1967; USS Concord and USS White Plains, both commissioned in 1968; USS San Diego, commissioned in 1969; and USS San Jose, commissioned in 1970.

As the Navy expanded during the Reagan era, the demand for replenishment at sea increased, so the Navy purchased three Sirius-class ships from the British Royal Fleet Auxiliary in the early 1980s, complete with their bathtubs for officers and the padded leather bars in the messes. Military Sealift Command began operating the renamed USNS Sirius and USNS Spica with civil service mariner crews in 1981, followed by USNS Saturn in 1983. The next time you meet



MSC combat stores ship USNS San Jose is offloaded by crew members at U.S. Naval Base Guam. The ship visited the island for several days before heading to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, where it will officially deactivate in January.

U.S. Navy Photo by Jesse Leon Guerrero

someone who served aboard Saturn, ask them about the "rubber ducky stop" for public tours.

By 1994, all the combat stores ships still in commission were operating with CIVMAR crews, serving the Navy on every ocean, providing food and supplies to sailors and Marines in peace time, during contingencies, in war time and for humanitarian missions.

From Vietnam to Libya; from Operation Desert Storm to Operation Iraqi Freedom – our combat stores ships and their dedicated crews have steamed in harm's way wherever the Navy has gone. Bosnia, Kuwait, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Haiti... combat stores ships delivered.

### Service with a smile

Growing up in the cruiser-destroyer Navy during my career, getting alongside the T-AFS for our monthly "hit" was always a greatly anticipated event, because it meant fresh milk, ice cream and no more brown lettuce and mushy tomatoes! It also meant the ship's store would have a fresh supply of "gedunk" – sodas, coffee and smokes – all those things that keep sailors going. San Jose and her sisters brought us a little bit of "home" whenever Romeo was closed up and the spanwire passed – no matter where we were sailing.

The exemplary service provided by combat stores ships and the lessons learned by their crews were prime reasons for our newest underway replenishment ships being designed from the keel up for operation by MSC and CIVMAR crews. The Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo/ammunition ships are the beginning of a new era as they take over the bulk of the replenishment at sea missions, incorporating many of the innovations suggested by you. The new ships are already making a positive impact in the fleet, but they've got a hard act to follow. There is no doubt

in my mind that their ultimate success will be a result of the many T-AFS mariners who are now crewing up the T-AKEs.

### Thanks for the memories

So, thanks to all of you T-AFS sailors out there. From Mars to San Jose, you delivered and wrote some great history for MSC in the process. As Captain Walzak and the last crew of the last T-AFS head down the gangway for the last time, I know that many of you will be right there with them in spirit – as well you ought to be.

Sail safe, and carry on!

Yours, aye,

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

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## Emory S. Land changes homeport

**Commander,  
Submarine Force,  
U.S. Pacific Fleet Public  
Affairs**

Military Sealift Command submarine tender USS Emory S. Land will change homeports in spring 2010. The ship's move from Bremerton, Wash., to Diego Garcia will occur in accordance with submarine defense agreements between the U.S. and British governments.

Land, which provides at-sea

repairs for submarines, is currently completing maintenance at Naval Base Kitsap in Bremerton, where the ship has been homeported since the commissioned ship was transferred to MSC in February 2008. The ship will forward-deploy to Diego Garcia upon completion of its maintenance, which is scheduled for spring 2010.

The 649-foot ship, one of two MSC ships whose hybrid crew of civil service mariners and uniformed Navy personnel is commanded by a Navy captain, will provide an expeditionary main-

tenance capability to fast-attack submarines and guided missile submarines in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility.

"Forward-deploying USS Emory S. Land to Diego Garcia will dramatically reduce transit time for our submarines operating in U.S. 5th Fleet that require intermediate-level maintenance, emergent repair or logistics support," said Commander Submarine Force U.S. Pacific Fleet Rear Adm. Douglas McAneny when making the announcement that Land will be changing homeports.

# Navajo is platform for U.S./Indian diver training

By Adrian Schulte,  
MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command's civil service mariner-crewed fleet ocean tug USNS Navajo was the at-sea operating platform for an exercise that nurtured international maritime relationships and cooperation. Twenty-seven divers from an Indian navy dive team and the U.S. Navy's Pearl Harbor-based Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One met in Hawaii Nov. 8-19 for the first ever Salvex 2009, a dual-nation dive training exercise.

The exercise was a chance for U.S. sailors to train with their Indian counterparts. MDSU One's mission is to deploy, conduct harbor clearance, salvage, underwater search, recovery and underwater-emergency repair in any ocean environment.

The main goal of the exercise was to gain experience working alongside American allies, said Navy Chief Warrant Officer Randy E. Duncan, MDSU One's diving and salvage officer. The 15 American and 12 Indian divers worked side-by-side to perform a unique operation called Hot Tap, a method the Navy uses to de-fuel sunken ships. The environmentally-friendly method consists of divers drilling holes into the hull of a sunken ship, hooking up hoses to the fuel compartments inside the ship and removing any remaining fuel. The divers accomplish this without spilling any fuel into the surrounding environment.

Throughout the exercise, both dive teams gained experience in video photography, lift-bag training, antiterrorism dives, underwater hand-held sonar techniques. They also performed light salvage operations by lifting old plane fuel tanks to the surface.

All of the dives were conducted off of Oahu's reef runway in 110-feet of water. The divers were able to submerge to great depths by using a diving method called mixed-gas diving, which consists of breathing in a gaseous mixture other than air or nitrogen/oxygen. The breathing tactic allows Navy salvage divers to go to depths of up to 300 feet without feeling the effects of nitrogen narcosis, Duncan said. The divers also performed scuba dives. The two teams spent a total of 36 hours interacting beneath the surface throughout the course of the exercise.

International exercises are nothing new to the divers of MDSU One. The divers regularly travel the globe working with U.S. maritime allies including South Korea, Thailand and the Philippines.

Most joint U.S.-Indian naval exercises take place off the coast of India. This is believed to be the first time the Indian navy has come to the U.S. to train with American divers. The waters off Hawaii were ideal for the joint-training exercise.

U.S. rescue and salvage training assets are more advanced than those the Indian navy has access to, Duncan said. In addition, the waters off Hawaii are much



Left: A Navy diver assigned to Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One performs a Hot Tap, a method the Navy uses to de-fuel sunken ships.

Below: Civil service mariners from Military Sealift Command fleet ocean tug USNS Navajo assist U.S. Navy and Indian navy divers as they enter the water off Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, during bilateral exercise Salvex 2009.



U.S. Navy photos by Chief Warrant Officer Randy Duncan

clearer than the waters off India. Good visibility enables divers to rely on a sense other than touch, which they are forced to do near India. Indian waters are a light-brown color because of the river delta run-off into the sea, which creates little to no visibility in most areas.

The exercise allowed the divers from both countries to work on building valuable relationships with their counterparts, in addition to advancing their technical skills.

"We gain partnerships and eventually friendships with our allies in the event we have to work with them in the future for real-world operations," Duncan said.

Navajo's crew of 16 civil service mariners and a four-person military department worked diligently throughout the mission to ensure that the divers could focus on their exercises.

Navajo's crew members set up a two-point anchor moor and positioned the ship to provide the divers with the depth of water they required and to provide a lee, or barricade, from the prevailing wind and waves so that the divers could enter the water in calm conditions, said Capt. Jesse Fletcher, Navajo's civil service master.

Navajo had to recover and re-lay the moor a couple of times during the exercise. Navajo's deck crew provided crane support and worked with the divers to expeditiously change out the dive and mooring equipment, allowing for training to continue with minimal interruption.

MSC makes diving exercises "very convenient for us," said Duncan. "We load up our portable dive systems and gear, and MSC does the actual ship driving. It's nice. I have nothing but great things to say about working with the captain and crew of USNS Navajo."

One of the biggest challenges Navajo's crew overcame was accommodating the new guests aboard. Navajo's three stewards made the necessary adjustments to ensure that life aboard the ship went on as planned.

With nearly 50 personnel on deck at one time, the stewards needed to feed a much larger shipboard contingent every day of the exercise, said Fletcher. The staggered diving schedule complicated the task.

Navajo was an outstanding stage for two maritime allies to build upon an already-strong relationship. Divers from both the U.S. and Indian navies left the exercise with a better understanding of each other because of the successful training environment provided by Navajo's master and crew. In the event a real-life scenario calls them back together, they will be well prepared.



Photo by United Seamen's Service

## 2009 AOTOS AWARDS

Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby, commander, Military Sealift Command, presents the Mariner's Plaque to Capt. James White, master of MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Lewis and Clark, at the Admiral of the Ocean Sea Awards banquet in New York City Nov. 13.

The master accepted the award on behalf of his crew for actions taken to avoid a pirate attack May 6 off the coast of Somalia. The ship's crew fended off an attack by two pirate skiffs using evasive maneuvers. The crew was also commended as an example for both commercial and military vessels of how to prevent a successful pirate attack.

The AOTOS awards are presented annually by the United Seamen's Service. They recognize the crews or individuals of U.S. government-owned and other U.S.-flagged ships who have risked their lives to save others or have demonstrated exceptional seamanship.

# A SHOW OF P

## MSC ships operate with U.S./Japanese fleets in 7th Fleet's largest exercise

By Edward Baxter,  
SEALOGFE Public Affairs

MSC dry cargo/ammunition ships USNS Alan Shepard and USNS Carl Brashear, and MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Rappahannock provided logistic support to U.S. and Japanese warships during ANNUALEX 21G off the coast of Okinawa, Japan, Nov. 10-18. ANNUALEX, the 21st exercise of its kind, is the U.S. 7th Fleet's largest annual naval exercise.

Fifty ships, including 17 U.S. Navy ships and 33 Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force ships, participated in the exercise, which is designed to strengthen military relationships and provide cross-training in complex operational scenarios and communications.

U.S. 7th Fleet ships included the Navy's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier, USS George Washington, and its 13-ship carrier strike group.

Although Brashear was not originally scheduled to participate in the exercise, the ship responded to a request to provide 82,000 gallons of diesel fuel to Japanese destroyer JS Asayuki and 95,000 gallons to Japanese destroyer JS Haryuki, Nov. 14.

### Brashear brings ...

"Brashear was heading to Okinawa for a routine port visit at the time and was in the best position to support the Japanese ships, so she was tasked to support," said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Mike Rodman, replenishment officer for Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific and Commander, Task Force 73.

"All of the MSC ships showed great professionalism by responding so well to the frequent requirement changes throughout the exercise," said Rodman.

Capt. Mike Grogan, Brashear's civil service master, said that working with the Japanese crews was easy. "In technical terms, there is very little difference between working with a U.S. ship or a Japanese ship," he said.

### Rappahannock refuels ...

Rappahannock conducted underway replenishment operations with 15 Japanese ships during the exercise. On Nov. 12, Rappahannock provided 216,000 gallons of fuel to two Japanese destroyers. The next day the ship delivered a total of 525,000 gallons of fuel to four Japanese destroyers. On Nov. 15, Rappahannock passed 124,000 gallons to one destroyer, and on Nov. 16, Rappahannock supported seven Japanese destroyers, delivering a total of 625,500 of gallons of fuel. Rappahannock completed her role in the exercise on Nov. 17, when the ship passed

206,000 gallons of fuel to destroyer JS Chokai.

In only 15 minutes, a Japanese ship was able to come alongside Rappahannock, attach its hoses and commence pumping, said Rappahannock's civil service master Capt. Rob Seabrook. "The Japanese ships executed each approach and replenishment operation with extreme precision," he said. The smoothness of Rappahannock's at-sea replenishment operations with Japanese vessels was all the more remarkable since all these evolutions occurred at night, between 6 p.m. and midnight.

During the exercise, Rappahannock provided a total of 585,000 gallons of fuel to four U.S. ships.

### Shepard supports ...

Shepard also kept busy providing supplies and fuel to participating ships. Shepard completed 11 at-sea replenishment evolutions with nine different U.S. warships and Brashear. In total, Shepard delivered more than 625 pallets of stores and 755,000 gallons of diesel fuel.

ANNUALEX included both connected and vertical replenishment operations. Capt. Mike Flanagan, Shepard's civil service master, described the exercise as high tempo. "The entire operation required focus and attention to detail from every member of the crew," Flanagan said, speaking from on board Shepard.

Shepard completed six replenishment at-sea operations on Nov. 15 alone. Cargo Officer Alex Munz and Assistant Cargo Officer Brian Hughes worked around the clock to safely execute the delivery of cargo to the U.S. ships. Flanagan said the Shepard crew members were dynamic in the performance of their duties.

"They count ammunition down to the last bullet, and, once that is done, man the flight deck," Flanagan said. "They just never stop."

Navy Rear Adm. Kevin Donegan, commander, Battle Force, U.S. 7th Fleet and Commander, Carrier Strike Group Five, said MSC ships contributed greatly to the success of the exercise. The efforts of the MSC personnel "will have a tremendous impact on enhancing the already superb interoperability we have with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force," he said.

The Japanese Maritime Defense Self-Defense Force, was formed following the dissolution of the Imperial Japanese Navy after World War II. The Japanese fleet is strictly defensive in nature and protects the Japanese mainland from potential aggressors by patrolling its waters.

In addition to ANNUALEX, Japan participates in several major international exercises each year, including exercises Rim of the Pacific and Pacific Shield. The Japanese also support Operation Enduring Freedom and anti-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class John M. Hegeman



Leading the way ...

A Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force helicopter destroyer leads the formation of U.S. Navy and Japanese ships during ANNUALEX 21G.

# ANN

# POWER:

## ABOUT THE JAPANESE MARITIME SELF-DEFENSE FORCE

- The Imperial Japanese Navy was dissolved after World War II. The Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force, or JMSDF, was formed in 1954 as a branch of the Japanese Self-Defense Force following the passage of the 1954 Self-Defense Forces Law.
- The primary missions of the JMSDF are to maintain control of the nation's sea lanes and to patrol territorial waters. The JMSDF serves a vital role for Japan, which relies heavily on imported natural resources.
- The first ships in the JMSDF were former U.S. Navy destroyers, transferred to Japanese control in 1954.
- Today, the JMSDF, which is commanded by a four-star equivalent admiral, includes approximately 46,000 personnel, operating 166 vessels to include 16 submarines and 44 destroyers. The force also has 128 fixed-wing aircraft and 114 helicopters.
- Following the end of the Cold War, the mission of the JMSDF expanded to United Nations-led peacekeeping operations. The force has also been active in joint naval exercises and has dispatched a number of its destroyers on a rotating schedule to the Indian Ocean in an escort role for Operation Enduring Freedom.
- The ship prefix for JMSDF ships is JDS (Japanese Defense Ship) for all ships commissioned before 2008. Ships commissioned on or after 2008 use the prefix JS (Japanese Ship) to reflect the upgrading of the Japanese Defense Agency to the Ministry of Defense.

-Information from [GlobalSecurity.org](http://GlobalSecurity.org), [Jane's Fighting Ships](http://Jane's Fighting Ships) and [JMSDF homepage](http://JMSDF homepage).



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Adam K. Thomas



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Nardello Gervacio



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Marcos Vazquez

Cover: A fuel probe is passed from Military Sealift Command dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Alan Shepard to refuel destroyer USS Mustin off the coast of Okinawa, Japan, during ANNUALEX 21G, Nov. 16. Shepard was a key part of the bilateral exercise, which is conducted by the U.S. Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and is the largest U.S. 7th Fleet exercise held each year.

Top Left: USNS Alan Shepard and aircraft carrier USS George Washington are underway together during a replenishment at sea during ANNUALEX 21G.

Middle left: Sailors aboard the guided missile destroyer USS Mustin man the phone-and-distance line during an ANNUALEX 21G underway replenishment with Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Rappahannock.

Bottom left: A helicopter from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25, deployed aboard Shepard, transfers cargo to USS George Washington during an ANNUALEX 21G replenishment at sea.

Background: Twenty-six U.S. Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force ships transit in formation off the coast of Japan during ANNUALEX 21G.

# ANNUALEX 21G

## HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

MSC's Joint Plans, Strategic Studies and Wargaming Directorate (N5) was the winner in headquarters' first Admiral's Cup Tournament and staff members received their trophy at Headquarters' annual holiday luncheon Dec. 8. MSC's Strategic Planning Directorate (N9), Front Office (N00) and Command, Control, Communication and Computer Systems Directorate (N6) tied for runner-up, and MSC's Contracts and Business Management Directorate (N10) came in 3rd/5th. The year-long competition included 19 headquarters offices. Events included sports competitions, Karaoke, a trivia contest, a holiday-door decorating contest, dessert and chili contests, and other events. Points were awarded based on performance and percentage of office staffs participating in the event. With the success of the 2009 Admiral's Cup competition, plans are underway for the 2010 contest.

On Nov. 24, Military Sealift Command celebrated Native American History Month with a program highlighting the achievements and impact that American Indians have had on American culture. The program featured Dawn Baum, an attorney from the Native American Rights Fund. She presented a short video, which showcased her organization's role regarding American Indian affairs, spoke about the relationship between the military and Native Americans and discussed the importance of self-governance on Native American reservations. Maritime Forces, Manpower and Management Analyst **Phillip Brannon** was master of ceremonies, and **Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby**, commander, Military Sealift Command, provided remarks. The ceremony included two performances by the Maru Montero Dance Company, one of which was inspired by an Aztec warrior dance.

**Melissa Morgan**, Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force, attended the final contract trials in Norfolk for MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Wally Schirra.

Navy **Cmdr. Bob McWhorter**, Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force, put together a cost-saving surge capability plan as part of an MSC initiative to reduce rig-team manning on NFAF ships.

Members of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Kings Point women's volleyball team visited MSC headquarters while in Washington, D.C., to compete against the Catholic University of America in November. Several Kings Point alumni headquarters staff members, including **Renee Desrosiers**, **Christina Zarate-Byers**, **Erin Gantt** and **Beth Bogart**, hosted the team. The visit was an opportunity to brief the team on current operations, employment and internship opportunities.

MSC bids farewell to **John Ratcliff**, office of the comptroller; **Carlos Vito-cruz**, engineering directorate; Navy **Cmdr. Michael Corsey**, office of contracts and business management; and **James Foy** and Navy **Lt. Bob Hanson**, operations.

MSC welcomes **Richard Higgins** and **Carl Welborn**, Sealift Program; Navy **Operations Specialists 2nd Class Adam Schwegel** and **Kevin Bass**, Navy **Lt. Kurt Davis**, operations; and Navy Information System Technician 3rd Class **Donald Smith**, command, control, communications and computer systems.

### Shipboard Bandwidth

MSC senior leadership's update on shipboard bandwidth: MSC and the Defense Information Systems Agency are currently seeking a new contract for satellite services scheduled to be awarded in June 2010. Technology may allow an increase in the usable bandwidth, however, market demand may drive up costs, limiting the number of channels MSC can afford. New equipment and services are expected to start deploying through the fleet in fall 2010. Bandwidth availability at the ship/unit level should improve, but the degree of improvement is still to be determined, based on the market prices at the time of the acquisition. MSC continually seeks improvements in both the quantity and efficiency of ships' bandwidth. Stay tuned for more details.

## PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon returned to MSC operations Nov. 13, following a three-month mid-term availability period at the Cascade Shipyard in Portland, Ore. Yukon is expected to continue its operations as the Southern California duty oiler through mid-January. MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry

J. Kaiser is preparing to relieve Yukon as the Southern California duty oiler. MSC hospital ship USNS Mercy welcomed Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Manpower and Reserve Affairs, **Juan Garcia** on Nov. 20 in San Diego. As part of a larger tour of San Diego's Navy facilities, Garcia toured Mercy's medical facilities and was given a brief on the

ship's participation in U.S. Pacific Command's Pacific Partnership humanitarian missions.

**Rear Adm. Robert Wray**, deputy commander, Military Sealift Command, visited San Diego Nov. 12-14. While there, Wray spent time on board fleet replenishment oiler USNS Guadalupe. In addition, Wray was a guest speaker at the Reserve Commanders' Conference, an annual meeting for operational leaders from MSC Reserve units in Sealift Logistics Command Pacific and Sealift Logistics Command Far East. Wray was also the keynote speaker for their traditional Reserve Unit dining out, a formal dinner held

the second night of the conference.

SEALOGPAC and Military Sealift Fleet Support Command represented MSC at the Commander Task Force 73 Maintenance Scheduling Conference Dec. 9-11 held in Pearl Harbor. The conference is normally held in Singapore, but this time Pearl Harbor was selected as a way to encourage participation from MSFSC class managers and supervising engineers. The conference gave MSC the opportunity to provide input to the CTF-73 representatives who will attend the upcoming 7th Fleet Scheduling Conference.

## ATLANTIC • LINES

Military Sealift Command dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Wally Schirra arrived in Norfolk for the first time on Nov. 17. The ship, which is scheduled to achieve full operating status in May 2010, is currently undergoing sea trials and engineering tests in the Atlantic.

MSC oceanographic survey ship USNS Henson located the sunken wreckage of an aircraft missing since late October in the waters off Netherlands Antilles in the southern Caribbean Sea Nov. 30. The small passenger airplane crashed into the sea Oct. 22. All nine passengers escaped, but the pilot remains missing. Henson, which was conducting survey operations in the area at the time, received direction from U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command and U.S. 4th Fleet to search for the aircraft in response to a request for help from the government of the Netherlands Antilles.

**Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby**, commander, Military Sealift Command, was accompanied by Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic's commander, Navy **Capt. Michael Graham**, when Buzby visited MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Robert E. Peary on Nov. 4, during the ship's refueling at Craney Island, Va. Buzby then visited MSC fast combat support ship USNS Arctic to present awards to the ship's crew in recognition of their quick and heroic actions after an Army Blackhawk helicopter crashed into the ship on Oct. 22.

Fla. Sen. George LeMieux toured the cargo bay of Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS PFC DeWayne T. Williams during a visit to the U.S. Marine Corps' Blount Island Command in Jacksonville, Fla., on Nov. 12. The senator was greeted by **Richard Bolduc**, senior marine transportation specialist from SEALOGLANT's Jacksonville office, and various Marine Corps representatives. LeMieux was briefed on how Williams is operated, loaded and unloaded in support of the Marine Corps. At the completion of his visit, the senator thanked everyone in attendance for their service and expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to visit, learn from and interact with the personnel associated with MSC's Prepositioning Program.

In the eight days following the senator's visit, the crew of Williams – with the assistance of Bolduc – discharged 897 pieces of cargo, which displaced 167,617 square feet and 7,500 barrels of petroleum products.

On Nov. 24 Bolduc organized another tour of Williams, this time for Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Carl B. Jensen, commander, U.S. Marine Corps Installations East.

**Tom D'Agostino**, SEALOGLANT's senior marine transportation specialist in Charleston, S.C., assisted with the arrival and cargo offload of large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Pomeroy on Nov. 22 and Nov. 30.

MSC fleet replenishment oilers USNS Laramie and USNS Patuxent returned to Norfolk on Nov. 20 and Nov. 23, respectively, after assisting with Navy exercises. Laramie participated in a high-tempo two-month deployment supporting exercise Joint Warrior 2009. The ship steamed 14,267 miles and performed 53 underway replenishments, delivering nearly 4.6 million gallons of fuel. Patuxent supported two back-to-back composite-training unit exercises for amphibious-assault ship USS Nassau and aircraft-carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower. The exercises are designed to rehearse a ship's operational specialty prior to departing on six-month deployments. Patuxent performed 66 underway replenishments and delivered more than 8.8 million gallons of fuel to the ships of the strike groups.

**Richard Caldwell**, SEALOGLANT's lead marine transportation specialist, was responsible for securing MSC's large, medium speed, roll-on, roll-off vessels USNS Watkins and USNS Charlton as training exercise platforms for 28 participants from the U.S. Army National Guard, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Secret Service and New York City Fire Department Nov. 18-20 in Newport News, Va. The exercise, coined Cold Steel, trained participants in finding or assisting teams tasked to find chemical,



U.S. Army Maj. Ron Flood, a medical officer assigned to the 24th Civil Service Team from Brooklyn, N.Y., makes use of the Jacob's ladder aboard MSC large, medium speed, roll-on, roll-off ship USNS Watkins to board the vessel in a mock emergency scenario during civil support team training on Nov. 18.

biological, nuclear or radioactive threats on board commercial vessels. The training, which was designed primarily for National Guard civil support teams, also drew participants from other agencies that respond to defense support to civil authority emergencies. The training included an orientation to maritime operations, ship architecture, down proofing and ship boarding via Jacob's ladder.

"This has been a great opportunity to train on an MSC ship," said Army Lt. Col. Carl Hietela, commander of the 24th Civil Service Team from Brooklyn, N.Y. "USNS Watkins mimics conditions one might find on a commercial vessel. This has been an incredible confidence-building experience for those of us who have had little opportunity to work in a maritime environment."

## EUROPE • AFRICA NEWS

Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Kanawha returned to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations in November, following two months of logistics support in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations as the duty oiler for U.S. and NATO assets.

MSC high-speed vessel HSV 2 Swift carried a load of Seabee equipment from Rota, Spain, to Douala, Cameroon, in support of ongoing construction operations there. Swift then loaded several pieces of Seabee equipment in Douala for transfer back to Rota.

MSC tanker USNS Samuel L. Cobb departed the U.S. European Command area of operations in November, after five months of service moving fuel throughout the region in support of the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency's Defense Energy Support Center logistics plan.

Sealift Logistics Command Europe welcomes Navy **Lt. Alan Presley** to the command. Presley comes to SEALOGEUR from USS Taylor, where he served as damage control assistant.

## COMPASS • HEADING

Military Sealift Command dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Wally Schirra departed its construction shipyard in San Diego, Calif., and arrived in Norfolk in mid-November. While en route, the ship made a brief port stop in Port Canaveral, Fla., to give ship tours to National Aeronautic and Space Administration personnel on Veteran's Day.

MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Walter S. Diehl civil service master **Capt. Lawrence Carley** and his crew supported the needy during a recent port visit to Thailand. Military Sealift Fleet Support Command Navy **Chaplain Lt. Kenny Lee**, who is currently serving at MSC Ship Support Unit Singapore, coordinated the event and arranged for Diehl crew members to deliver donated items to the Karunyawei House for the Disabled. While visiting with the residents, crew members volunteered to complete some building-maintenance chores. Other crew members traveled to the Banglamung Home for the Aged, where they repaired several wheelchairs and ceiling fans throughout the residents' sleeping quarters.

Navy Rear Adm. Nora Tyson, commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific, praised current and past crew members of MSC combat stores ship USNS San Jose as the ship departed the Western Pacific and began its final voyage to the United States. Tyson remarked in a Bravo Zulu message that "Throughout her history, San Jose has

been a stalwart in fleet operations with a justifiably well-earned reputation for a can-do attitude and excellence in service. ... Please accept my sincere gratitude for the 39 years of extraordinary contributions to our nation's maritime readiness. Well done!"

MSC Ship Support Unit Guam welcomes its new commanding officer, Navy **Cmdr. Norm Maples**. He reported to Guam in November from Destroyer Squadron 22, where he was embarked as chief staff officer aboard USS Theodore Roosevelt for an extended U.S. 5th Fleet deployment.

To help kick off the holiday season, 25 MSFSC staffers volunteered on Nov. 21 to help pack 10,000 pounds of nonperishable food for delivery to 13 nonprofit organizations that house the homeless and victims of domestic violence. The event was conducted as part of the city of Norfolk's Family Volunteer Day.

Fair winds, following seas and much appreciation go to the following individuals as they enter into retirement roles: **Boatswain's Mate Robert Chin, Boatswain's Mate Richard Collins, Able Seaman Patrick Cunningham, Medical Services Officer Lonnie Hawkins, Mechanical Engineer Arthur Levesque, Able Seaman Johnny Rodriguez and Yeoman Storekeeper Claudius Taylor.**

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

## CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Lenthall provided significant support to U.S. 5th Fleet in November. This included 126 underway replenishments and delivery of 12.2 million gallons of F76 fuel, 356,000 gallons of F44 fuel and 1,495 pallets of cargo. Most of Lenthall's time was devoted to working in the Gulf of Aden and the Horn of Africa, where the ship served as the primary logistics platform for the European Union, NATO and Combined Maritime Forces counter-piracy efforts. Lenthall's support was also crucial to the success of the USS Bonhomme Richard and USS Bataan amphibious ready groups. Lenthall's crew safely and successfully supported operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, Partnership-Strength-Presence, Struggle Against Violent Extremism and maritime security operations.

Lenthall was relieved by MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Kanawha, which joined the U.S. 5th Fleet in late November.

The rest of Sealift Logistics Command Central's fleet, including MSC fast combat support ship USNS Bridge, MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Amelia Earhart and MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS

Tippecanoe, continued to provide outstanding support to coalition ships throughout the U.S. 5th Fleet. MSC's replenishment fleet continues to receive compliments from nearly every ship and task force it is assigned to due to the hard work of the civil service mariners and sailors on board.

SEALOGCENT welcomed two ships from MSC's Prepositioning Program on Nov. 8. With Maritime Prepositioning Ships USNS SGT Matej Kocak and USNS 1st LT Baldomero Lopez now operating in the Persian Gulf, ships from all four of MSC's ship programs are in theater supporting the warfighter – a great testament to the flexibility of MSC's ship assets.

MSC fleet ocean tug USNS Catawba entered a dry-dock modernization period in Dubai in November after completing outstanding support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as the Iraqi Defender Boat training platform. The maintenance availability is expected to be complete in January. Catawba, nicknamed 'Desert Cat' for its versatility in the Persian Gulf operating area, received several laudatory comments for the service the ship's crew and temporary master **Capt. Sean Tortora** provided.

## FAR • EAST • HAILS

At a ceremony held at Seoul, South Korea, Nov. 4, Army Gen. Walter L. Sharp, commander, U.S. Forces Korea, presented Military Sealift Command Office Korea's Operations Officer **Xavier Monroy** with the U.S. Forces Korea Civilian Supervisor of the Year award. MSCO Korea's Commanding Officer Navy **Cmdr. Chris Cruz** and the MSCO Korea staff were in attendance.

The annual award, which was created in 1991, is presented to individuals who exemplify the dedicated service, accomplishments and contributions of U.S. and Korean national civilian employees toward U.S. Forces Korea's mission. More than 80 employees were nominated for seven award categories: manager, supervisor, professional, administrator, technician, clerical and customer-service employee of the year. Winners at each command's installation level advanced to the local level. Winners at the local level advanced to the U.S. Forces Korea level. This is both Monroy's first nomination and first win.

"Monroy's contributions to the USFK mission have been immense," said Cruz. "Xavier is also a real ambassador of goodwill. He never misses an opportunity to make a positive impact or a favorable impression on the local community."

Navy **Capt. Geoffrey Pack**, commander, Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron Three, hosted 10 senior Republic of Palau government officials, including Palau Minister of State Sandra Pierantozzi and Palau Minister of Justice John Gibbons, on board MPS flagship USNS 1st Lt. Jack Lummus, Nov. 20. The ship was making a routine port visit to the Pacific island nation, Nov. 18-25. The group ate lunch on board the ship before ship's master **Capt. David Hagner** led the group on a tour.

Navy **Capt. Jim Romano**, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Far East, attended a luncheon held in honor of Navy Adm. Patrick Walsh, commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, during a Dec. 2 visit to Sembawang Wharves in Singapore. Several other Singapore-based area commanders

attended the luncheon, which was hosted by Navy Rear Adm. Nora Tyson, Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific. Walsh was then briefed by SEALOGFE's chief staff officer Navy **Cmdr. Paul Grgas** on MSC's operations in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations.

Navy Vice Adm. John M. Bird, commander, U.S. 7th Fleet, paid a visit to MPS Squadron Two's flagship USNS SGT William R. Button, Nov. 7, at Diego Garcia. Navy **Capt. Anthony Martin**, commander of MPS Squadron Two at the time of the visit, and ship's master **Capt. Dave Eddie** led the admiral on a tour of the ship and briefed him on Maritime Prepositioning Force operations in the Indian Ocean. Bird visited Naval Support Facility Diego Garcia and other tenant commands Nov. 6-8.

Cruz spoke at a World War II memorial ceremony, Nov. 14, honoring 11 U.S. Army Air Corps crew members who were killed when their B-24 Liberator bomber crashed after being shot at by Japanese anti-aircraft fire near the summit of South Korea's Mangwoon Mountain in August of 1945. South Korean resident Kim Duk Hyung found the crew members' bodies in the wreckage and later began an annual memorial service to honor their service and sacrifice. In 1956, Kim led efforts to fund and build a memorial statue in their honor. Cruz paid tribute to these heroes and others killed in past conflicts during his address.

On Nov. 19, MSCO Korea's executive officer Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Jon Marlar** hosted Navy **Rear Adm. Peter Gumataotao**, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Korea. Marlar briefed Gumataotao on MSC's operations off the Korean peninsula. Gumataotao then met MSCO staff members before touring MSC's Pier Eight Busan facility.

**Capt. Paul Davis**, master of oceanographic survey ship USNS Bowditch, visited SEALOGFE, Dec. 4. Davis met with Grgas and command staff members during a one-day orientation visit to the command at Singapore's Sembawang Wharves.



U.S. Army Gen. Walter L. Sharp, commander, U.S. Forces Korea, presents Military Sealift Command Office Korea's operations officer Xavier Monroy with the U.S. Forces Korea Civilian Supervisor of the Year award Nov. 4 in Seoul, Republic of Korea. The prestigious award recognizes U.S. and Korean national civilian employees for dedicated service, accomplishments and contributions toward U.S. Forces Korea's mission.

# Grapple hosts Africa Partnership Station Mission

By Laura M. Seal,  
MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Grapple arrived in Mombasa, Kenya, Nov. 18, beginning a nearly two-month long international outreach and maritime security mission.

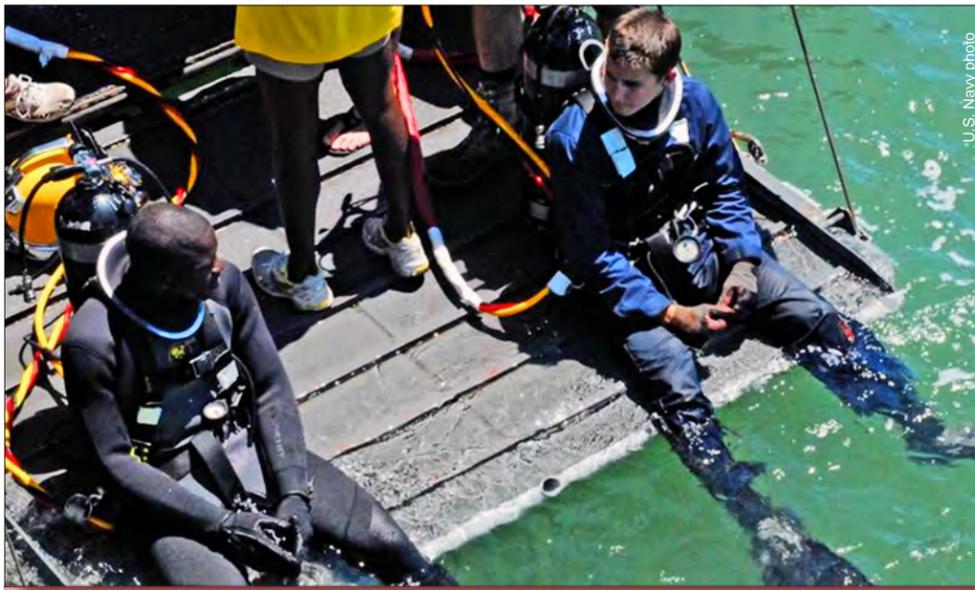
The mission supports Africa Partnership Station, or APS, a U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa initiative designed to enhance the continent's maritime security through partnership and collaboration. Grapple is specifically deployed as part of APS East, which encompasses Africa's eastern and southern regions.

During this part of Grapple's mission, the ship's crew, including 26 civil service mariners, or CIVMARs, and five Navy sailors, supported 12 embarked Navy divers who are part of Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit Two out of Little Creek, Va. The divers shared their diving and salvage expertise with their counterparts from partner country defense forces. Grapple's sailors are permanently assigned to operate the ship's communications suite.

Grapple is slated to visit four cities in as many countries along the East African coast. The mission's first stop was in Kenya Nov. 18 to Dec. 5. Grapple then continued to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, arriving Dec. 7. The ship is also scheduled to visit Djibouti and Seychelles before completing the mission in early January.

"This is a unique mission for us," said Capt. Curtis Smith, Grapple's civil service master. "I've been working aboard these ships for many years, and this is the first time I've been part of a mission that wasn't strictly geared toward towing or salvage."

Grapple is one of MSC's four rescue and salvage ships. Typically these ships, their crews and – in the case of salvage operations – embarked Navy divers



Kenyan and American navy divers interact while waiting to enter the water in a surface-air-supplied dive off Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Grapple.

operate at sea to recover objects from the ocean floor, towing stranded vessels and providing firefighting assistance.

For this mission, however, Grapple's crew and embarked divers traveled from port to port, working both ashore and at sea to conduct dive training, exercises and operations with host-country defense forces. The goal of Grapple's mission is to improve maritime-security collaboration and increase the rescue and salvage capabilities of all participants. Collaboration of this kind is especially important to ensure preparedness for real-world rescue and salvage operations – like recovering downed aircraft and dealing with other rescue and salvage missions in international waters.

In the summer of 2008, MSC rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp conducted a similar deployment to Latin America and the Caribbean. Grasp's mission included two main components: trading diving procedures with host nation divers and completing maritime security projects in each nation.

At each stop on its African mission, Grapple's

divers conducted classroom and hands-on training and information-sharing sessions with their host nation counterparts. Topics included diving safety and medicine; diving techniques for both surface-air-supplied dives and scuba dives; anti-terrorism and force-protection diving procedures; recompression-chamber operations and dive-equipment maintenance.

In Kenya, 20 host country divers participated. "We're enjoying the unique opportunity to share our diving and salvage expertise with our African partner-nation dive units," said Navy Chief Warrant Officer William "Toby" Turner, company commander of Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit Two, Company 2-2 – the dive unit assigned to Grapple for this mission. "This is the first Theater Security Cooperation engagement that our unit has been

involved with. We have enjoyed it tremendously."

Outside the classroom, Grapple's CIVMARs played an important role in mission success. The seasoned maritime professionals operated and navigated the ship and provided food, lodging and other support services for the embarked Navy divers. In addition, the CIVMARs connected the divers with their dive sites by providing small-boat support, operating a 35-foot workboat used to transport the divers' salvage gear and providing maintenance, launch and operating support for the rigid-hull inflatable boat, or RHIB, that transports divers to their operation sites.

The relationship between the CIVMARs and divers is a close one, and not just because of the tight quarters aboard the 255-foot ship. "The teamwork between the CIVMAR crew and the divers is integral to the success of our mission," said Smith.

Turner agrees. "We enjoy an excellent working relationship with the CIVMARs and greatly appreciate and rely on their professionalism and many years of experience."

## Change at helm for MPS Squadron Two

By Ed Baxter,  
SEALOGFE Public Affairs

In a time-honored U.S. Navy tradition, Navy Capt. Gene "Fred" Harr relieved Navy Capt. Anthony "Tony" Martin to become the 25th commander of Military Sealift Command's Indian Ocean-based Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron Two during a Nov. 19 ceremony held on board MPS Squadron Two flagship USNS Sgt. William R. Button.

The ceremony featured the traditional honors for the official party, presentation of colors by a Navy honor guard and the singing of the National Anthem by Navy Yeoman Chief Derrick Walls.

Guest speaker, Navy Capt. Jim Romano, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Far East, spoke highly of Martin's accomplishments over the past 15 months. MPS Squadron Two includes nine government-owned and chartered ships that strategically place combat gear at sea to enable fast delivery to warfighters ashore.

"Tony is one of those guys whose enthusiasm and positive attitude affects everyone around him," Romano said to an audience of 120 people assembled on the ship's flight deck. "This is exactly why he is a world-class leader."

Ceremony guests included Naval Support Facility Diego Garcia's commanding officer Navy Capt. Hugh Flanagan, British representative to Diego Garcia Royal navy Cmdr. Richard Stevens, and masters and crew members from seven MPS Squadron Two ships.

Romano praised Martin for initiating pioneering programs which will have long-lasting benefits.

Martin's cornerstone program was his initiation of a group-sail program, which requires MPS Squadron Two ships to routinely get underway and train in convoy op-



Navy Capt. Gene "Fred" Harr becomes the 25th commander of Military Sealift Command's Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron Two in a formal change of command ceremony held Nov. 19.

erations. The program began as a simple communication and maneuvering exercise, and evolved into a complex, scenario-driven exercise. Thanks to Martin's close work with MPS Squadron Two ship masters, training now includes a special focus on responses to geopolitical tensions and a diverse array of tactical situations.

"The ship masters provided me with wisdom and sound recommendations on a constant basis," said Martin during the ceremony.

Romano also commended Martin for initiating and implementing an anti-piracy training program that included real world, at-sea exercises with small-craft simulation attacks on the vessels. He then introduced a program to

regularly train crew members in small-arms defense. The training helped qualify 160 mariners on three different weapons.

To familiarize Diego Garcia's tenant commands with the U.S. merchant marine and to enhance camaraderie among the differently uniformed people living on the island, Martin instituted "around the island" cruises and invited individuals from tenant commands to spend time on board a merchant vessel.

Romano presented Martin with a Legion of Merit medal to recognize his "superior tenure with the command." Navy Gunners Mate Chief Harold Williams, MPS Squadron Two's senior enlisted advisor and weapons officer, then presented Martin with the squadron pennant. Martin and Harr then read their orders and exchanged salutes with Romano to mark the formal change of command.

"Captain Martin leaves a tremendous legacy and a firm foundation to build upon," said Harr. "I very much look forward to working with the finest merchant mariners in the world."

Harr reports to Diego Garcia from Imperial Beach, Calif., where he served as commanding officer of Maritime Expeditionary Security Group One. Harr is a native of Rockville, Md., and a 1985 graduate of Old Dominion University. He has served on board USS Enterprise, USS Barney, USS Virginia, USS John Paul Jones and USS Chancellorsville, and commanded Navy destroyer USS O'Brien. Ashore, Harr has served as chief staff officer of Destroyer Squadron 15, First Battalion Officer at the U.S. Naval Academy and as an instructor of Naval Science at the University of Mississippi.

Following the change of command ceremony, Martin returned to the United States and will soon retire from active duty following 30 years of Naval service.