February 2011

S·E·A·L·I·F·T

The U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command

Prepo preps for no piers

Maritime prepo team assembles an at-sea cargo platform off Saipan in preparation for Southeast Asia exercises

USNS 1ST LT Harry L. Martin

USNS 1ST LT Jack Lummus

U.S. Navy photo by Ensign Justin Bennett

Commander's perspective

Providing ships ready for tasking

We've built a reputation here at MSC for delivering what we promise – wherever, whenever. That's what our customers see. That's what our bosses hear. That's what our industry partners say. In 2011, one of my four strategic priorities is to continue honoring that promise by making sure our ships are ready for whatever tasking our customers require.

Here are some of the areas we're going to concentrate on as part of providing ships ready for our customers' needs.

Being efficient

You all know the mantra – do more with less. That means we have to look at how we can most effectively maintain our ships in a mission-ready condition. We also have to determine what we can do now to economically extend the operating life of those of our ships that are nearing the end of their originally planned service lives.

Managing maintenance

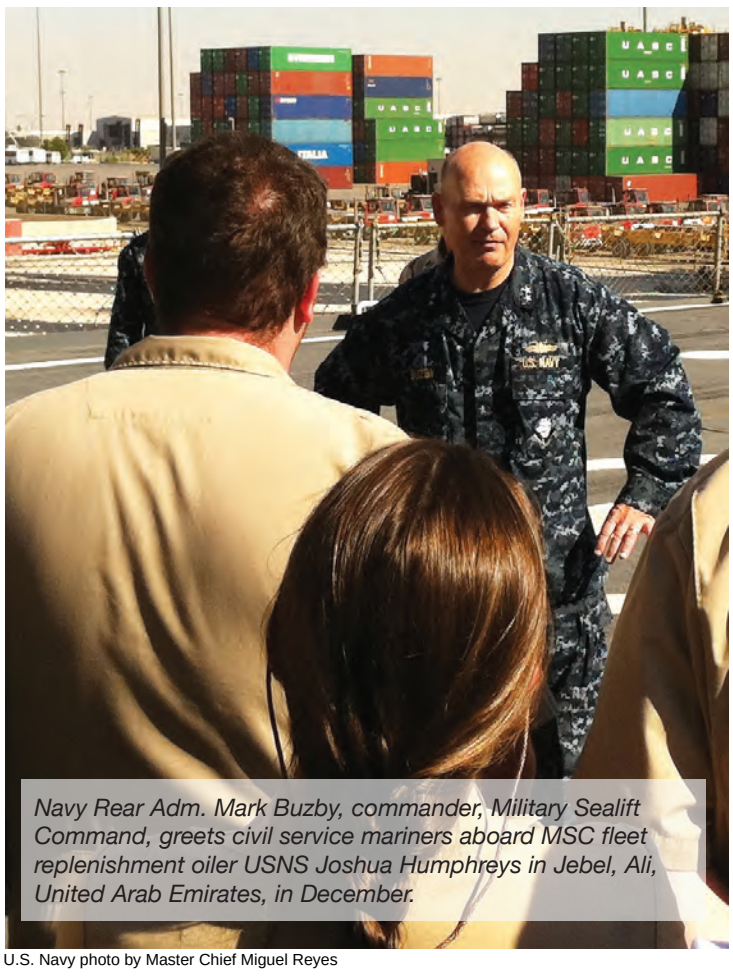
We've established a class maintenance management plan for the dry cargo/ammunition ships that now allows us to pursue reliability issues quickly and effectively. That concept is being expanded across other ship classes in our Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force. At Military Sealift Fleet Support Command, this work is being facilitated by the engineering support department, which is developing engineering policies that keep our ships mission ready, while making sure they are operated in the most efficient and cost-effective manner. MSFSC has developed principal port engineer training programs and created electronic tracking tools for the port engineers' change requests and standard work items. This frees up engineers, both on the deckplates and in the graving docks, to keep our ships repaired, maintained and ready for duty.

Inspecting effectively

Ship Material Assessment and Readiness Testing, or SMART, has been an MSC program since 1997 for our CIVMAR-operated ships. On board Condition Inspections is a similar program we use on our contract-operated ships. We use these programs to assess and report on the material condition of our ships, ensuring readiness for tasking when called upon by customer demand. The assessment includes a comprehensive material condition survey and operational testing. Any deficiencies found are ranked by severity and criticality of equipment, then the deficiencies are tracked until they are corrected. This helps us identify problems that might affect an entire class of ships so we can quickly determine the best method of fixing the problem and avoiding it in the future.

Competing maintenance contracts

Aggressively competing maintenance contracts gets us the best repair value for our ships. We want the best repairs we can get, at the lowest cost, but in the best possible time so our ships spend less time in maintenance facilities and more time at sea, meeting our customers' needs. MSFSC conducted a complete review and scrub of boilerplate templates for shipyard contracts. For the past year they have been using innovative dual-ship contracts to reduce costs and reduce source selection workload while still achieving excellent performance.



Navy Rear Adm. Mark Buzby, commander, Military Sealift Command, greets civil service mariners aboard MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Joshua Humphreys in Jebel, Ali, United Arab Emirates, in December.

U.S. Navy photo by Master Chief Miguel Reyes

Focusing maintenance funds

We're making better choices on how to focus our maintenance and repair funds on upgrading and modernizing those key systems that give us the most cost-effective capabilities. That includes things such as installing Electronic Chart Display and Information Systems, or ECDIS, aboard our ships. ECDIS is a computer-based navigation information system that complies with International Maritime Organization regulations and displays the information from electronic navigational charts with integrated position information from the Global Positioning System and other navigational sensors, such as radar and automatic identification systems.

Upgrading control systems

We're also upgrading the control systems in our rescue and salvage ships and our fast combat support ships, integrating propulsion, power production, heating, ventilation, air conditioning and alarm systems to make them more efficient and manageable for our CIVMAR crews. When operated by the Navy, these ships had more crew members to deal with totally separate systems and control functions. MSC has been successful in obtaining National Defense Sealift Funding for these upgrades and conversions, which will also include a prototype heavy underway replenishment station for fast combat support ship USNS Arctic.

Each ship class uses a portion of its maintenance and repair funding to replace obsolete and unsupportable equipment with modern, state-of-the-art commercial equipment. One example is the fleet replenishment oiler radar replacement.

Influencing future ship design

We're ensuring strong participation by MSC masters and chief engineers in establishing design specifications for our next-generation ships. MSFSC hosted a meeting of senior MSC mariners with fleet replenishment oiler experience in December to discuss the characteristics we felt made the current oilers successful and those that needed improvement. The assembled mariners represented approximately 400 years of combined mariner experience. The ideas generated were passed to Naval Sea Systems Command's future oiler design group. As the scope of the Navy's oiler recapitalization project is communicated to the maritime industry, MSC continues to provide information briefs and engage mariners in the process to influence the design as much as possible. Similar processes will be applied to other ship recapitalization projects.

Crewing JHSVs

For new ship classes, such as the joint high-speed vessel, we need to determine the most economic way to operate the ships while providing effective service. The first 10 JHSVs are under contract, with 18 ships eventually anticipated. MSC will crew the first ships with civil service mariners to gain operational experience and develop the best standard operating procedures. The next few ships will be operated by commercial mariners working for maritime companies under contract to MSC. We'll then compare and determine the best crewing concept to operate these ships in the long run. Right now, we're developing operational concepts for the ships, qualification factors for CIVMARs assigned to the JHSVs and the maintenance plans for the vessels.

Providing secure C4S capabilities afloat

MSC is working on a massive improvement of afloat network security for command, control, communications and computer systems. This will include the Afloat Network Operations Center and its backup at MSFSC. Among other things, the upgrade involves removing Windows NT and upgrading all Windows XP systems with new security improvements, as well as installing the Host-Based Security System on both the classified and unclassified nets for MSC ships. Upgrade deployment begins this month. We're estimating completion aboard all MSC ships by the end of 2012.

Next month, I'll talk about developing, enhancing and enabling the workforce: our people initiatives.

Changing of the guard

The end of an era is upon us. Rick Haynes, MSC's executive director since 1997, is retiring after being the business and maritime industry advisor to 11 MSC commanders. I'm proud to have known him. I'm thankful for his solid advice and counsel. My wife Gina and I wish Rick and his wife Ruthie all the best as they chart a new course, but want them to know that they'll always be part of the MSC family.

Rick's departure leaves a big pair of shoes to fill. But, we've found the right person to do just that. I'd like all of MSC to welcome the command's new executive director, John Thackrah.

You can find out all about Rick's amazing career and details about John on page three of this issue.

Yours aye,

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

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MSC bids farewell to longstanding top civilian leader, Welcomes new executive director

By Frank Randall, MSC Public Affairs

Since 1985, Rick Haynes has been partner to a succession of 11 U.S. Navy admirals leading the Navy's Military Sealift Command, providing steady, sound advice and counsel as one of the nation's foremost experts on maritime government contract law and the military's interaction with the U.S. ocean transportation and maritime labor. Haynes turned over responsibilities to his successor in late January after serving as MSC's executive director and senior-most civilian since 1997, and after a distinguished 35-year federal career, including 25 years as a top MSC leader and member of DOD's Senior Executive Service.

Rick Haynes

U.S. Navy photos by Barry Lake

Most recently, Haynes oversaw MSC's global business operations and advised Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby, MSC's commander, on all aspects of military ocean shipping in partnership with the U.S. maritime industry. Widely known and respected as a U.S. maritime authority on legal and business matters, Haynes personally represented MSC before members of Congress, senior military leaders and other senior executives in government and industry. For a quarter century, Haynes' leadership and dedication were central to MSC's successful delivery of millions of square feet of time-sensitive combat equipment to deployed U.S. warfighters and critical humanitarian aid to millions of disaster victims around the world.

From 1985 to 1997, Haynes served as the command's senior legal counsel, advising MSC commanders and overseeing a global staff of 24 MSC attorneys who provided expert legal opinions on many highly sensitive, complex issues pertaining to national security, maritime law and the operation MSC's government-owned and chartered ships. Haynes' leadership led to the successful resolution of several high-level national defense issues affecting MSC's global shipping operations, which included a 9,000-strong workforce, more than 110 active ships and an annual operating budget of more than $3 billion.

Haynes earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in economics from the University of Maryland in 1972, a Juris Doctor cum laude from the University of Baltimore in 1975 and a Master of Law Degree from George Washington University in 1978.

Beginning his federal career as an assistant counsel with the Naval Electronic Systems Command – now the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command, or SPAWAR – in 1975, Haynes became a trial attorney in the Navy General Counsel's Contract Appeals Division in 1977. He returned to SPAWAR as Associate Counsel for Major Programs in 1978 and was selected as SPAWAR Deputy Counsel in 1981.

Haynes was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in 1985 when he was hired as Counsel for MSC. Since then, he has been recognized many times for exceptional service to the nation and the Navy.

Haynes twice received the Presidential Meritorious Executive Rank Award, in 1991 and again in 2001, and DOD awarded him the Distinguished Civilian Service Award in 2003.

Former President George W. Bush presented Haynes with the federal government's highest civilian award, the Presidential Distinguished Executive Rank Award, at a White House ceremony in April 2008. Less than one percent of the more than 7,500 members of the federal government's senior executive workforce are awarded this honor.

"I'm the fortunate beneficiary of the dedicated work of the entire MSC workforce afloat and ashore," said Haynes about the award.

Honors also came to Haynes from outside of the government. The National Defense Transportation Association awarded Haynes its DOD Distinguished Service Award at a banquet in Nashville, Tenn., in September 2009. The award citation read in part, "Haynes is a key player in the massive sealift efforts in support of the Global War on Terrorism and operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom." The citation noted Haynes' leadership in the program that resulted in civilian mariner crewing of ships that had previously been operated by Navy service members, thus freeing up those military billets for more warfighting-related duties. Haynes was also cited for his groundbreaking work on initiatives that improved MSC readiness while reducing operational costs.

In 2010, the United Seamen's Service, a charitable organization that provides support to U.S. merchant mariners around the globe, honored Haynes with its Admiral of the Ocean Seas Lifetime Achievement Award. Buzby helped present the award in New York City in a Nov. 12 ceremony.

"In the 41 years of the United Seamen's Service AOTOS awards, this is only the 10th time such an honor has been given," said Buzby. "It is an honor that is reserved for those people or entities that do not necessarily operate ships, run terminals, plan ports or oversee mega-unions. This award is reserved for those who work in the background, without much fanfare, providing the human engines that make our industry run. The constant, driving force behind Military Sealift Command comes from my executive director, Rick Haynes."

Military Sealift Command shipmates around the world join Buzby in wishing Haynes and his wife, Ruthie, fair winds and following seas.

John Thackrah

By Adrian Schulte
MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command officially welcomed its new executive director Jan. 24. John Thackrah filled the Senior Executive Service position held by Rick Haynes at MSC headquarters in Washington, D.C. Thackrah will oversee MSC's business operations and will serve as a senior advisor to MSC's commander.

Thackrah comes to MSC from the Navy's Strategic Systems Program, where he served as the principle deputy. He began his career with the Navy in 2005 serving as the deputy assistant secretary for management and budget. Thackrah also served as acting assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development and acquisition, and as chief of staff to the assistant secretary of the Navy.

"This is a huge thrill for me," Thackrah said. "The reputation of this command precedes it, so being able to come here is really a treat. I'm looking forward to it. It's a great group of people, a great command and a great mission that it accomplishes across the spectrum."

Thackrah recognizes that there is a steep learning curve inherent in any new position and he looks forward to exploring the command's long-term strategic plan and missions.

"There's a lot to learn, and I'm anxious to get up to speed," he said.

Prior to joining government service, Thackrah was a senior executive at United Technologies Corporation.

Thackrah has a Master of Business Administration Degree from Renssalaer Polytechnic Institute and a bachelor's degree in mechanical and aerospace engineering from the University of Delaware.

U.S. Navy photo by Lt. James Ferron

Snow tires in coastal California?

Future ice mission begins in sunshine

A tractor outfitted with snow tires is loaded on to Military Sealift Command-chartered dry cargo ship BBC Ems at Port Hueneme, Calif., in preparation for the ship's voyage to Antarctica in support of Operation Deep Freeze, MSC's annual resupply of the U.S. National Science Foundation's McMurdo Station. The ship departed Port Hueneme Jan. 6 for New Zealand to load bunkers and additional cargo before proceeding south for McMurdo in early February. The tractor will be used to tow a personnel carrier at McMurdo. Other ships supporting the operation include MSC tanker USNS Richard G. Matthiesen and Swedish ice breaker Oden.

PRACTICE

For Freedom Banner/Cobra Gold

Maritime Prepositioning Force gets ready for Southeast Asia exercises

By Edward Baxter, SEALOGFE Public Affairs and Laura M. Seal, MSC Public Affairs

Near the historic site of a key World War II amphibious landing off Garapan Harbor in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, clear skies and calm, rich blue waters enveloped two massive Military Sealift Command ships Dec. 2-10 as embarked personnel and the units they support prepared for Exercise Freedom Banner in late January. For this exercise, equipment and supplies in support of the Okinawa-based 3rd Maritime Expeditionary Force will be off-loaded to platforms at sea and then delivered ashore for use in the 30th annual, multinational Cobra Gold exercise held off Thailand in February. In preparation for the upcoming offload, the giant at-sea cargo-staging platform was assembled in early December.

Center stage was USNS 1ST LT Jack Lummus and 1ST LT Harry L. Martin, MSC Maritime Prepositioning Ships measuring 673 feet and 754 feet respectively and each laden with Marine Corps combat cargo. Although no cargo was moved in early December, 230 embarked civilian mariners and military personnel practiced the complex offload, assembly and operation of smaller vessels and related equipment that are used to shuttle equipment and supplies to shore when a suitable port isn't available.

Lummus and Martin are two of 15 container and roll-on/roll-off ships within MSC's sixteen-ship Maritime Prepositioning Force that strategically position combat cargo at sea, enabling rapid delivery ashore to Marines who are flown into a theater of operations. Exercises like Freedom Banner and Cobra Gold allow shipboard personnel and the units they support to work together, honing the skills necessary for crisis response in wartime and other contingencies.

All of the cargo ships in MSC's MPF carry equipment aboard that makes it possible to offload cargo miles from shore and then shuttle it via smaller vessels to Marines ashore.

"We can't assume good port access next time the Marines need their cargo," said Keith Bauer, Prepositioning Program technical director at MSC headquarters. "Our ability to move even the heaviest, most outsized military equipment across the beach continues to be one of our key missions."

A roll-on/roll-off discharge facility, or RRDF, serves as an area for loading aration for Freedom Banner/Cobra Gold 2011, includes nine connected

The specialized vessels and related equipment that are used to move cargo between ship and shore are collectively called the Improved Navy Lighterage System, or INLS, and includes two components. The roll-on/roll-off discharge facility, or RRDF, is a large, floating platform positioned at the base of a ship's ramp so that wheeled and tracked vehicles can be easily driven out of the cargo holds onto this temporary at-sea staging area. Causeway ferries are the motorized watercraft used to transport the offloaded vehicles or containerized cargo from the RRDF to shore.

The components of the RRDF and the causeway ferries include multiple floating platforms that are carried aboard the MPF ships' weather-decks and assembled at sea using small boats called warping tugs. The components are offloaded and reloaded using shipboard cranes.

The MPF ships operate with other MSC prepositioning ships in three Maritime Prepositioning Squadrons. In each squadron, there is one ship – the flagship – that carries the RRDF modules, while the other MPF ships carry the causeway ferry modules.

The highly complex and dangerous evolution of assembling and employing the RRDF and causeway ferries requires specialized skills and practice, which is best done in calm waters so that operators can master the equipment before being tested by the elements.

"The calm sea state of Garapan Harbor was one of the reasons why we chose this location for this important training," said Navy Capt. Herman Awai, commander of MSC's 11-ship Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three, or MPS Squadron Three, which had command and control for the exercise and operates off of Lummus, the squadron's flagship. "This training will allow for new personnel to meet their training needs."

In addition to MPS Squadron Three, the exercise involved sailors from three different units, each with a different responsibility set. San Diego-based Naval Beach Group One commanded day-to-day operations while Williamsburg, Va.-based Navy Cargo Handling Battalion One was responsible for the offload and backload of INLS from both ships. Sailors

Freedom Banner/ Cobra Gold Highlights

This year will mark the 30th consecutive year that the United States has participated in Cobra Gold, an international, joint-service exercise in Thailand scheduled for February. The exercise focuses on maintaining and improving military-to-military relationships among the U.S. and allied forces operating in Southeast Asia.

Cobra Gold's roots can be traced back to 1965 and Operation Team Work, a naval exercise featuring combined Thai-U.S. surface and anti-submarine operations, underwater demolition team operations, and mine warfare. This operation also featured a Thai-U.S. Marine Corps amphibious operation as these key allies in the Vietnam conflict recognized the importance of military coordination.

The first combined exercise, designated as Cobra Gold, occurred in 1982. Today the exercise involves all the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, member states.

Military Sealift Command has a vital role to play in Cobra Gold exercises. Every year, MSC conducts Exercise Freedom Banner exercise prior to Cobra Gold. Freedom Banner provides the opportunity for MSC ship crews to interface with the military units they support – all in an effort to practice the loading, off-loading, transport and delivery of combat equipment and supplies needed for Cobra Gold. Months of preparation precede Freedom Banner and Cobra Gold to maximize the training benefit that these two back-to-back exercises offer.

U.S. Navy photos by Ensign Justin Bennett

PLATFORM

2011

g and off-loading cargo at sea. The RRDF, assembled off Saipan in prep- modules, which are powered by two warping tugs and a power module.

from Coronado, Calif.,-based Assault Craft Unit One operated the powered causeway modules, small boats and warping tugs.

Civilian mariners working for private companies under contract to MSC operated and navigated Lummus and Martin. During at-sea offload operations, mariners assisted sailors with safe operation of shipboard cranes, offload-related operations such as lowering the ships' ramps onto assembled RRDF and stowage of INLS cargo.

The exercise began Dec. 2 with the sailors using shipboard cranes to offload nearly 20 pieces of INLS-related equipment, each weighing as much as 110 long tons.

Lummus offloaded three causeway ferry power modules, one utility boat, one warping tug and one beach module. USNS Martin offloaded one warping tug, nine modules forming the RRDF, one utility boat and three shipping containers. All cargo was offloaded by Dec. 5.

The cornerstone of the Saipan-based training involved the assembly of the RRDF, which comprises nine floating sections that assemble to form the 240-foot by 72-foot platform, almost twice the length and width of two basketball courts. Once the RRDF was assembled, sailors lowered Lummus' stern ramp onto the floating platform. Although no cargo was offloaded during the training, the RRDF was held in position for the next 48 hours to test its stability and to practice connecting the causeway ferry to the RRDF.

The sailors backloaded the cargo and wrapped up the exercise Dec. 9-10.

"The exercise provided an invaluable training opportunity for all participants as we prepare for real-world operations in Thailand," said Awai at the close of the training.

The new and improved INLS was installed on board MSC's fleet of MPF ships beginning in the summer of 2007, providing two significant advantages over the equipment it is replacing: The INLS can operate up to a Sea State Three – defined by winds of 14-15 knots and waves 3.5 to four feet – and its causeway ferries can travel at speeds up to 12 knots, 8.5 knots faster than previous ferries.

Left: Step One - U.S. Navy sailors aboard USNS 1ST LT Jack Lummus attach lifting straps to a power module, which connect to other pieces to form a causeway ferry. This keeps the RRDF in position so that cargo can be transported onto the causeway ferry.

Below: Step Two - Navy cargo handlers operate the shipboard crane aboard Lummus to lift an Improved Navy Lighterage System power module into the water. The INLS is a floating system designed to offload combat equipment and supplies where conventional port facilities may be damaged, inadequate or nonexistent.

Below: Step Three - Sailors detach lifting straps and prepare to reposition the INLS power module at sea to form the causeway ferry.

Below: Step Four - Lummus' stern ramp is lowered to the RRDF to provide an instream offload capability.

EUROPE • AFRICA • NEWS

Navy **Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby**, commander, Military Sealift Command, made site visits to Rota, Spain; and Gaeta and Naples, Italy, Dec. 15-17 to meet with leaders from the various commands with whom Sealift Logistics Command Europe and MSC interact and support. He also visited MSC command ship USS Mount Whitney, which operates out of Gaeta. Buzby reviewed upgrades to several systems on the ship's bridge and engineering main control, and he toured renovations in progress on the crew's galley.

SEALOGEUR excelled with a higher-than-normal number of underway replenishments as an influx of MSC and other Navy ships transited into the command's operating area during the past month.

Four MSC ships conducted 16 replenishments at sea with eight U.S. Navy ships belonging to the USS Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group in the Mediterranean Sea Dec. 1-13, delivering nearly double what they would normally deliver in an average month.

MSC fleet replenishment oilers USNS John Lenthall and USNS Big Horn, and dry cargo and ammunition ships USNS Lewis and Clark and USNS Sacagawea, delivered 40,000 pounds of mail and cargo, 22,038 pounds of food and 2.5 million gallons of diesel and jet fuel. Lewis and Clark relieved Lenthall as the region's duty combat logistics force ship Dec. 1.

Members of MSC's Sealift Program arranged to swap Mount Whitney's H-60 helicopter with a new helicopter in December, allowing the original helicopter to return to the United States for maintenance. A helicopter is kept on board the ship for use by the U.S. 6th Fleet commander.

MSC tanker USNS Richard G. Matthiesen transited the Suez Canal Dec. 17 to load cargo in St. Theodore, Greece, for Operation Deep Freeze, an annual U.S. military operation to resupply McMurdo Station, Antarctica.

MSC oceanographic survey ship USNS Henson, operated by MSC for the Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command, served in partnership with NMOC and Nigerian hydrographers as the primary platform for survey operations off the coast of Nigeria. The operation was completed Dec. 19 and the results of the survey operations will be of lasting importance to update nautical charts for safe navigation of the area's waterways.

SEALOGEUR bids farewell to Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Beth Travis**, tactical logistics officer, who transferred from the command.

ATLANTIC • LINES

Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic's Jacksonville, Fla., office marine transportation specialist **Dean Doolittle** helped the crew of OSG Navigator offload nearly 230,000 barrels of fuel Dec. 7. On Dec. 13, Doolittle and fellow MTS **Richard Bolduc** assisted Maritime Prepositioning Force ship USNS LCPL Roy M. Wheat test ramp operations on an Improved Navy Lighterage System, a causeway system incorporating a floating pier made up of powered and nonpowered floating platforms used to transfer cargo from sealift ships to shore areas where conventional port facilities are compromised. Bolduc and Doolittle also assisted Wheat with loading operations that concluded Dec. 15. Nearly 1,000 pieces of equipment totaling more than 127,000 square feet and 25,000 barrels of bunker fuel were loaded. Wheat later departed Jacksonville to return to prepositioning duties in the Mediterranean Sea.

Bolduc and Doolittle also helped with the discharge of more than 1,100 pieces of equipment totaling nearly 200,000 square feet and 25,000 barrels of fuel from MPF ship USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon Dec. 15-23. Marine Corps Brig. Gen. David Berger, director of operations at U.S. Marine Corps headquarters, visited Obregon Dec. 21. Shortly after Berger's visit, the U.S. Army and Marine Corps tested three models of their new joint light tactical vehicle – the slated replacement for the Humvee – for space in the cargo holding areas aboard the ship. All three models passed the test.

Three Military Sealift Command ships returned to the SEALOGLANT area of operations in December in time for the holidays. MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Sacagawea returned to Naval Weapons Station Earle, N.J., Dec. 13 and MSC fleet replenishment oilers USNS Big Horn and USNS John Lenthall returned to Naval Station Norfolk, Va., Dec. 20 and Dec. 21, respectively. All three ships were greeted at the pier upon arrival by SEALOGLANT Deputy Director **Robert Jackson** and Navy Rear Adm. Clifford Sharp, commander, Carrier Strike Group Eight.

Combatant ships returning to the United States for the holidays fill most of the available berthing at Naval Station Norfolk every December. Finding berths for MSC ships also returning in this timeframe is a challenge for SEALOGLANT's Port Services Officer **Michael Menchaca**, who starts planning and preparing for the ships' return months in advance by coordinating with the naval station's port operations office. This year Menchaca negotiated berths for Sacagawea and five MSC fleet replenishment oilers.

SEALOGLANT welcomes **Samantha Harris**, antiterrorism force protection division.

PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Sealift Logistics Command Pacific's marine transportation specialists **Larry Larsson** and **Bob Almiro** represented the command at a San Diego Port Readiness Committee military offload meeting Nov. 30. The meeting provided an opportunity for waterfront and law enforcement stakeholders to review the arrival, discharge, staging and transfer of cargo to the National Training Center in Central California, which is conducted at San Diego's commercial 10th Avenue Marine Terminal. The meeting provided SEALOGPAC and the U.S. Army, both of which are involved in planning the cargo offload, with useful contacts and information about cargo operations and force protection.

MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Wally Schirra provided an ordnance load to Navy aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson Dec. 11 in waters off Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, as part of Vinson's pre-deployment preparations for a seven-month Western Pacific deployment, which it departed for Dec. 16. MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser departed San Diego Dec. 20 to accompany and support the strike group throughout the duration of its deployment.

Congratulations to Navy **Lt. Florence "Bok" Beato**, SEALOGPAC's logistics officer on his re-designation to the Supply Corps.

SEALOGPAC welcomes **Ray Estrada**, contract specialist with the Ship Support Unit San Diego's contract department. Estrada joins the MSC team from the Fleet Industrial Supply Center San Diego.

COMPASS • HEADING

Military Sealift Fleet Support Command continued its initiatives to assign civil service mariners to shipboard billets formerly staffed by Navy sailors. **Second Officer Robin Goettsch** and **Radio Electronics Technician James Blount** successfully assumed the duties previously performed by the military department aboard Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Joshua Humphreys. Transferring the billets to civilian control freed up three military personnel, allowing them to rejoin the combatant fleet.

Navy **Information Systems Technician Chief Ronald McClarin** was awarded a Navy Commendation Medal Dec. 15 at MSFSC headquarters. During the same event, Navy **Personnel Specialist 1st Class Coy Jones** received a Navy Achievement Medal.

Congratulations to Navy **operations specialists 2nd class Byricus Tyson** and **Nahyira Soriano**, who sail aboard MSC dry cargo/ammunition ships USNS Matthew Perry and USNS Amelia Earhart, respectively; and Navy **information systems technicians 2nd class Christopher Schneider** and **Ezekiel Vasquez**, MSC high-speed vessel HSV 2 Swift blue and gold crews, respectively, for their selection for advancement under the Navy's Command Advancement Program.

"Their selection is a testament to the exceptional dedication and hard work these sailors give every day to MSC and the U.S Navy," said MSFSC Director **Jack Taylor**.

Civil service mariners aboard MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Laramie were recognized at a ceremony for their contributions in the Global War on Terrorism. During the ceremony held aboard the ship Dec. 22, 32 medals were presented, including one to the ship's civil service master **Capt. Walter Nullet**.

Personnel aboard MSC rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard completed the tow of MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Alan Shepard, arriving in Singapore Dec. 25. Shepard then entered a drydocking period in Singapore for repairs.

MSFSC held its annual holiday gathering Dec. 3, which was attended by more than 200 shoreside staff and civil service mariners.

Fair winds and following seas to **Information Technology Specialist Howard Littlefield**; **Deck Engineer Machinist Johnny Mondejar**; **Pumpman Arthur Spencer**; **Yeoman Storekeeper Rogelio Valdez**; marine surveyor **Kenneth Satcher**; mechanical engineer **Robert Schiesser**; and financial technician **Angelita Simbulan** as they retire. MSFSC wishes them the best of luck and happiness as they enter a new phase of life.

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

HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

Johanna O'Neill, office of strategic planning administrative assistant, and Navy **Yeoman 3rd Class Erika Cash** were recognized by Naval District Washington Dec. 16 for their support of NDW volunteer initiatives. O'Neill served as MSC headquarters' Navy Community Service Program coordinator in 2010, repeatedly ensuring that MSC provided a robust response to calls for volunteers in the Washington, D.C., metro area, many times on short notice. Cash was recognized for the photograph she took at a volunteer event, which was published on the cover of Navy Volunteer magazine.

Sixteen members of the MSC headquarters community attended and staffed a booth at the annual Surface Navy Association National Symposium in Arlington, Va., Jan. 11-13. The symposium included professional seminars for the Navy's surface warfare community, as well as exhibits featuring the latest and future technology in support of the surface warfare community. Headquarters employees provided information on MSC to symposium guests, raising awareness and understanding of the command's missions.

MSC bids farewell to **Michael Salter**, office of counsel; **Rowland Smith**, Special Mission Program; **Tyrone Ware**, contracts and business management; **Johanna O'Neill**, office of strategic planning; and **Billy Bushey**, human capital development group.

MSC welcomes **Tracy Sims** and **Destiny Pinson**, Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force and Special Mission Program; **William Wright**, engineering; and **Robert Hoffman**, human capital development group.

Middle East logistics command changes leadership

By Navy Lt. Aaron Freymiller, SEALOGCENT/CTF-53

The command responsible for providing air and sea logistics to the U.S. Navy in the Middle East changed leadership Jan. 9 in Manama, Bahrain.

Navy Capt. David A. Geisler took command of Military Sealift Command's Sealift Logistics Command Central from Navy Capt. Donald D. Hodge, who has held the position since August 2009.

Geisler reports to SEALOGCENT from U.S. Joint Forces Command, Standing Forces Headquarters, where he served as the operations chief.

In his new role as SEALOGCENT's commander, Geisler will also serve as commander, Task Force 53 and commander, Logistics Forces, U.S. Naval Forces Central. In these roles, he is responsible for coordinating the air and sea delivery of personnel, mail, cargo, fuel, ammunition and provisions to a fleet of more than 40 U.S. and coalition ships operating in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility.

"I'm happy and honored," said Geisler. "These people work countless hours to support the missions out at sea and in the air. I want to be their advocate and support the overall mission."

U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Cynthia DeLeon

Navy Capt. Donald D. Hodge (right), commander of Military Sealift Command's Sealift Logistics Command Central, welcomes his relief Navy Capt. David A. Geisler, at a change of command ceremony held Jan. 9 in Manama, Bahrain.

Under Hodge's leadership, the command oversaw the distribution of 120 million gallons of fuel to ships in theater during 1,256 underway replenishments and delivery of an additional 490 million gallons of fuel to DOD fuel distribution depots. The command also supported more than 6,400 air logistics missions and managed a daily average of 50 ships and seven aircraft in theater. In addition, the command's aviation unit coordinated and moved more than 19,700 tons of cargo, 8,000 tons of mail and 42,300 passengers during Hodge's tour.

"It's been my great privilege to work with this team," said Hodge. "You met every mission, every time. The fleet depends on us, and you make it happen."

Following his tour at SEALOGCENT, Hodge will report to commander, Navy Region Europe, Africa, Southwest Asia, Detachment Bahrain, as commanding officer of a new command located at Isa Air Base, Bahrain.

SEALOGCENT provides at-sea logistics and strategic sealift services to U.S. and coalition troops operating throughout the U.S. Central Command theater. In its strategic sealift capacity, the command is responsible for overseeing the delivery of nearly 90 percent of all cargo being used by troops operating in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere in the Middle East.

CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Sealift Logistics Command Central and Commander Task Force 53 remained steady with Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force ships delivering nearly 17 million gallons of fuel to U.S. and coalition ships in December. SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 oversaw 446 missions, delivering 1,201 tons of cargo and 224 tons of mail supporting U.S. 5th Fleet operations, which included operations Partnership Strength Presence, Struggle Against Violent Extremists, Enduring Freedom and New Dawn, and maritime security operations.

SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 bid fair winds to MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Big Horn and dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Lewis and Clark, which departed the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations in December after successful deployments to the area. While in theater, Big Horn and Lewis and Clark supported the USS Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group, USS Kearsarge and USS Peleliu amphibious ready groups, as well as numerous other U.S. and coalition ships. Big Horn conducted 57 underway replenishments and delivered more than 14 million gallons of fuel, while Lewis and Clark conducted 52 underway replenishments and transferred more than 5 million gallons of fuel during their six-month deployments. Big Horn and Lewis and Clark received bravo zulus from SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 commodore, **Navy Capt. Donald Hodge**.

December also marked the return of **Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby**, commander, MSC, to the U.S. 5th Fleet to greet mariners, give awards and wish MSC crews a happy holiday season. Buzby visited four ships, including fleet replenishment oilers USNS Joshua Humphreys and USNS Walter S. Diehl, fast combat support ship USNS Rainier and oceanographic survey ship USNS Bruce C. Heezen.

SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 warmly welcomes its newest sailors, Navy **Aviation Crewman Mechanical Senior Chief Steve Ager**, Navy **Electrician's Mate 1st Class Charlie Eng** and Navy **Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Yong Hu**.

The command bids a fond farewell to Navy **Master of Arms 1st Class Luke Chima**, Navy **Logistics Specialist 2nd Class John Horansky**, Navy **Logistics Specialist 1st Class Nigel Blandin**, Navy **Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Darnisha Smith**, Navy **Logistics Specialist 1st Class Larry Dawson**, Navy **Logistics Specialist 3rd Class Deangelo Howard**, Navy **Logistics Specialist 1st Class Jeffrey Nelson** and Navy **Logistics Specialist 1st Class Charito Belt**.

FAR • EAST • HAILS

Navy **Rear Adm. Brian LaRoche**, deputy commander, Military Sealift Command, visited submarine tender USS Frank Cable, one of MSC's three combatant ships that operate with hybrid military and civilian mariner crews, in Guam Dec. 3. LaRoche toured the ship, including the repair department, remodeled crew mess, MSC berthing areas, bridge and ship-support areas. Cable conducts maintenance and support of submarines and surface vessels deployed to the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility.

LaRoche traveled to Saipan Dec. 3-4 to meet Navy **Capt. Herman Awai**, commander, Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three, and squadron staff members. While aboard Maritime Prepositioning Force ship USNS 1st LT Jack Lummus, LaRoche observed an MPF training exercise in preparation for January's Exercise Freedom Banner in Thailand. While in Saipan, LaRoche also visited MPF ships USNS MAJ Stephen W. Pless, USNS Dahl, USNS Soderman and USNS 1ST LT Harry L. Martin.

Sealift Logistics Command Far East hosted **Eileen Roberson**, director of MSC's Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force and Special Mission programs, in Singapore Dec. 12-15. Roberson met Navy Rear Adm. Ron Horton, commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific and commander, Task Force 73; Navy **Capt. Chip Denman**, commander, SEALOGFE; and Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Mike Little**, officer-in-charge, Ship Support Unit Singapore. Roberson also visited MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Rappahannock and MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Richard E. Byrd.

Denman hosted a conference in Singapore Dec. 7-9, where more than 20 MSC leaders joined forces to discuss current events and issues affecting the SEALOGFE area of responsibility. Participants included Navy **Capt. Jerry Hamel**, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Pacific; Navy **Capt. Donald Hodge**, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Central; **Pat Tully** from MSC headquarters' joint plans, strategic studies and wargaming office; and leaders from Ship Support Units in Guam, Japan and Singapore. Commodores from MPS Squadrons Two and Three, and commanding officers from MSCOs Korea, Okinawa and Diego Garcia attended.

"There was outstanding dialog, which was our overarching goal," said Navy **Cmdr. Mike Snoderly**, SEALOGFE's operations officer who organized the conference.

MSC ammunition ship USNS Shasta crossed the international date line for the last time Dec. 17, as the ship left the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility for Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, to prepare for deactivation in April. Shasta served the U.S. Navy's fleet for more than 38 years, both as a commissioned U.S. Navy ship and as a noncombatant ship in the service of MSC. The 22,000-ton Kilauea-class ship provided underway replenishments for all types of ammunition – from missiles to bullets – to U.S. Navy ships at sea.

"Shasta has been a stalwart in fleet operations with a can-do attitude and excellence in service," Horton said. During an awards ceremony held aboard the ship Dec. 1 in Okinawa, Japan, Denman presented Shasta's master and civil service mariners with Global War on Terrorism medals – symbolizing the important contributions of civil service mariners in combating terrorism around the globe.

MSCO Korea Commanding Officer Navy **Cmdr. David Bartell**, and command staff members hosted a holiday party Dec. 10 for children from Busan's Maewon Orphanage, at Busan's United Seamen's Service Center. Children were treated to a magic show and received holiday gifts. MSCO Korea has supported the orphanage for more than 50 years.

At the invitation of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, Awai addressed more than 100 high school students from Saipan High School Dec. 1, speaking about the MPF mission in the region.

Denman visited the masters and crew of MSC oceanographic survey ships USNS Mary Sears, USNS Bowditch and USNS Sumner while all three ships were in port at Subic Bay, Philippines, Dec. 21.

During a ceremony held on board MPS Squadron Two flagship USNS SGT William R. Button, Navy Capt. Wesley Brown, squadron commander, presented administrative officer Navy **Yeoman Chief Gregory Smith** with a Navy Achievement Medal marking the end of his outstanding tour with MSC. During a Dec. 8 ceremony held at Sembawang Wharves, Denman administered the oath of office to newly-promoted Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Dan Harvey**, a Merchant Marine Individual Ready Reserve Group officer on a two-week annual training assignment at SEALOGFE.

Henson refuels from tanker

By Kim Dixon
SEALOGEUR Public Affairs

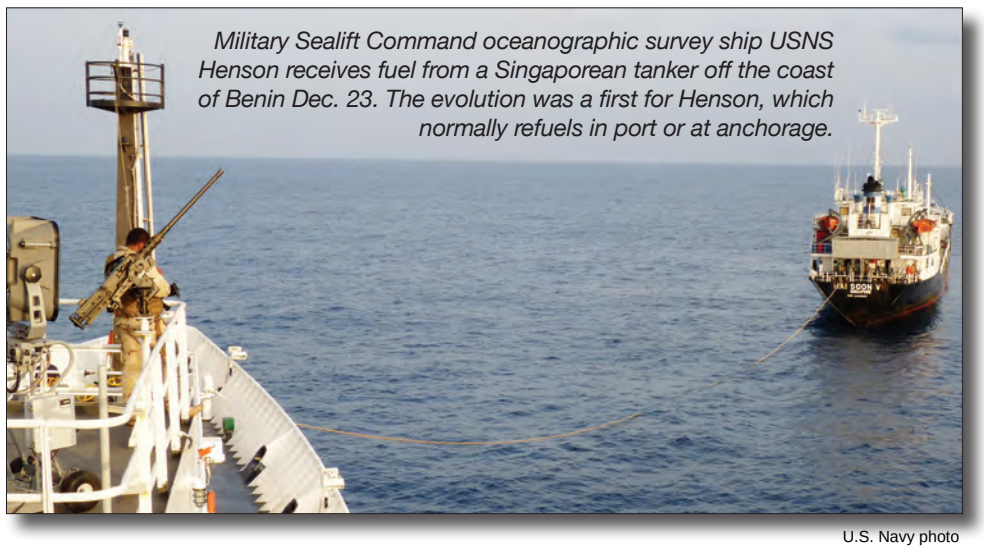
Military Sealift Command oceanographic survey ship USNS Henson took on fuel in an unconventional offshore refueling evolution with Singaporean tanker MV Hai Soon VIII Dec. 23 off the coast of the West African country Benin. Instead of receiving fuel while in port or from an offshore fueling station while moored as Henson normally does, the ship refueled from a tanker moored at sea that pumped fuel to the ship.

After completing survey operations in the Gulf of Guinea as part of a routine deployment to the Naval Forces Africa area of responsibility in mid-December, Henson was scheduled to refuel during a port visit to Lome, Togo, before continuing to its next port of call in Cape Town, South Africa.

Henson would have needed an estimated three days in port and away from its seagoing mission to take on the necessary 60,000 gallons of fuel in Lome. So the ship's operating company suggested offshore refueling in international waters from a tanker. This was a procedure that neither the ship's civilian master nor the ship had ever done.

"This is the first I had heard of this type of refueling," said Henson's civilian master Capt. Joseph Goodwin.

Henson is crewed by 24 civilian mariners working for a ship operating company under charter to MSC who operate and navigate the ship, while up to 27 civilian surveyors from the Naval Oceanographic Office conduct survey operations.



Military Sealift Command oceanographic survey ship USNS Henson receives fuel from a Singaporean tanker off the coast of Benin Dec. 23. The evolution was a first for Henson, which normally refuels in port or at anchorage.

U.S. Navy photo

Many Navy combatant and noncombatant ships take on fuel during connected underway replenishments with ships in MSC's Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force. Henson and the other ships in MSC's Special Mission Program, however, operate primarily in remote areas where underway replenishment ships are not always available. For that reason, special mission ships regularly halt their missions and travel into ports or anchorages to refuel.

"Most [of our] refueling happens either during anchorage with two ships tied alongside each other, or by connecting to an offshore refueling station while the ship is moored."

In this case, instead of returning to a port to refuel, Henson met up with a tanker at sea and conducted the operation with the two ships moored together.

"This was our first time to do this evolution, but we trained and prepared for it," said Joseph Gierbolini, civilian boatswain aboard Henson.

The day of the operation, a southwesterly breeze, light ocean swell, mostly clear skies and excellent visibility greeted Henson at its 6 a.m. rendezvous with Hai Soon VIII.

The ships moored together at a distance of 110 yards with mooring line stretching from Henson's bow to Hai Soon VIII's stern. A cargo mate from Hai Soon VIII boarded Henson to coordinate the evolution and facilitate communication between the ships.

Hai Soon VIII's crew passed its fuel hose to Henson, while Henson used its stern thrusters to maintain a safe separation distance. After inflating the hose to check for leaks, Hai Soon began pumping fuel into Henson's tanks.

The fueling took about two and a half hours, and the entire evolution was complete in fewer than five hours.

"What I found easier about the offshore refueling is that you don't have to be tied up. Once you finish, you just have to let one line and the hose go and get underway," said Gierbolini.

As soon as Henson and Hai Soon VIII completed the refueling, Henson resumed course to its next mission.

Tow training opportunity for mariners

By James Marconi, MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command's four fleet ocean tugs, sometimes known as workhorses of the fleet, are often underway more than 50 percent of the year in support of the U.S. Navy's global fleet. These 226-foot tugs and their 16-person civil service mariner crews stand ready to respond to a broad variety of contingencies. These range from service as salvage diving platforms, to towing disabled and deactivated ships to their final resting places.

Diverse taskings, no-notice missions and the high operating tempo of fleet ocean tugs and MSC's four 255-foot rescue and salvage ships demand that crews be thoroughly trained and ready to respond instantly. Preparation is crucial for the crews, especially amongst the officers who direct and oversee complex towing maneuvers.

For ships serving in a towing capacity, which include MSC's four fleet ocean tugs and four rescue and salvage ships, the U.S. Coast Guard requires that deck officers have a towing endorsement on their Coast Guard-issued licenses.

Mark Helmkamp, ocean tug and salvage ship class manager for Military Sealift Fleet Support Command, instituted a program in 2009 to provide tow training annually for CIVMAR deck officers to meet and exceed the Coast Guard standards. Helmkamp, who has 30 years of experience with rescue and salvage operations, wants to test and refine the capabilities of CIVMARs aboard the tugs and rescue and salvage ships so they can meet the challenges of any situation.

"Our tug and rescue and salvage ships are like fire engines or ambulances; they are always there when there's an emergency," said Helmkamp. "We really work these tug and salvage guys hard. For more than 200 days a year, they are out there doing this kind of work, and it's essential for us to make sure they receive the training they need to get the job done safely, efficiently and in a timely manner in a variety of conditions."

Demonstrating one of the many duties of Military Sealift Command fleet ocean tugs, USNS Navajo tows amphibious assault ship USS Belleau Wood to its final resting place in open waters off Hawaii.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Brandon A. Teeples

The tow training exercises demand a level of shipboard expertise that goes above and beyond Coast Guard criteria for towing endorsements. The Coast Guard requires towing vessel officers to successfully demonstrate competence in specific skill sets, as outlined in a towing officer assessment record book. Demonstrating their towing skills and expertise in a controlled environment, the CIVMAR officers work through a checklist of requirements and are certified by designated MSFSC examiners who are approved by the Coast Guard.

One of the challenges is fitting a training exercise into the ships' hectic operational schedules. Ships are selected for training evolutions based on their anticipated deployment and overhaul schedules. In 2010, training took place Dec. 13-17 aboard fleet ocean tug USNS Sioux while the ship was in Everett, Wash. Four of Sioux's CIVMAR officers were joined by five additional CIVMAR officers from other MSC ships to receive at-sea and classroom training.

"The people that actually did the training were very happy for the opportunity," said Capt. Emigdia Esqueda, Sioux's civil service master. "For my officers receiving this extra training, it reinforced their previous training aboard the ship and allowed them to maneuver the vessel in an MSC-controlled situation. The training covered just one piece of a pie of what is involved in towing, but it let crew members experience what it meant to maneuver with another vessel, connecting them to us."

Capt. Jose Delfaus, civil service master of rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp, is one of MSC's designated examiners who oversaw the training and assessments. The five days of training were broken into three phases. The first phase was classroom training, which focused on safety and the mechanics behind the tow hitch hook-up and the disconnect of a towed vessel. Delfaus, Esqueda and two additional experts from Naval Sea Systems Command conducted the lectures.

On the second day, participants trained on Sioux's deck, determining towing calculations and practicing the operation of the tug's tow machine. Demonstrations of tow rigging were performed by the NAVSEA towing experts and other experts.

Finally, Sioux spent two days performing maneuvers encountered during regular towing operations. Training participants had to guide Sioux to and from the pier; navigate the ship out to sea and back; maneuver with a barge on board the ship and alongside the tug's stern. One by one, each CIVMAR officer performed all the maneuvers successfully. On the last day of the training, Delfaus debriefed individual participants and reviewed their performances as documented in their assessment record books.

"The weather cooperated, and we were able to get all our ship handling done," Delfaus said. "All of those being tested met the criteria to get signed off for the different skills they demonstrated. To get their towing endorsements, some of them, depending on their sea time, will just need to complete 60 days on a towing vessel when they go back to their ships."

In 2011, MSFSC's tow training will take place on the East Coast with fleet ocean tug USNS Apache and rescue and salvage ship USNS Grapple.

Sarah Burford, SEALOGPAC Public Affairs, contributed to this story.