

January 2011

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

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND



## *HSV 2 Swift delivers*

with U.S., Central and South American navies in

## SOUTHERN PARTNERSHIP STATION 2011



INSIDE — MSC delivers patrol boat for Iraqi navy • MSC expands Cadet Shipping Program

# 2011 - Charting the course

I hope 2011 is off to a good start for all of you. By the time you're reading this in January, if you are like me, you are still trying to remember to write "11" vice "10" for the date, and have already begun to be challenged by maintaining New Year's resolutions made with such great intention Jan. 1. Thus begins another year!

## 2010 in Perspective

At the end of the year, we compiled a bunch of numbers and accomplishments and published them in a document called, appropriately enough, "2010 in Review." Copies will be circulating around soon and can be found on the MSC website. When you flip through the pages and read about all that MSC accomplished last year, I think that you will be impressed with what we accomplished as a 9,300-person team, with strong efforts from those of you serving both afloat and ashore. Beyond the big numbers we tend to throw around to describe ourselves: 110 ships active on any given day, 8 million square feet of combat cargo delivered and 2.7 billion gallons of petroleum products pumped, I'm most proud of a statistic that doesn't have a firm number attached: lives positively impacted. By executing your part of the MSC mission – "to support our nation by delivering supplies and conducting specialized missions across the world's oceans" – you've made a very real contribution to our Navy's ability to be a global force for good last year. In 2010, we saw increasing participation by MSC in missions directly contributing in this area with planned deployments of hospital ship USNS Mercy and high-speed vessel HSV 2 Swift, and the unplanned contingency deployment of hospital ship USNS Comfort. I see much more opportunity for us in this area in the future.

## Where we go in 2011

One of the more important parts of my job as the commander is to figure out what our MSC goals will be for the coming year, and how to prioritize resources to get those goals accomplished. While all that stuff is important to me and those who have to move money around and execute programs, I recognize that most of you aren't significantly affected day to day by my strategic masterminding; you stand your watches at sea

and deliver the goods, or come to work every morning regardless of my "grand plan." I've got that.

Still, you all need to know the general direction that I intend to lead us in this year, including areas that I will explain in more detail in the coming months. For now, here are the four strategic priorities that will shape our decision-making in 2011:

- Provide ships ready for tasking – "We Deliver;"
- Develop, enhance and enable the workforce – continue working the "50 initiatives;"
- Focus on the customer by delivering capability as efficiently as possible while maintaining effectiveness; and
- Manage organizational change and growth – continue to evolve our organization to meet coming challenges.

As you can see, those four priorities cover a lot of area. I believe that focus in these areas is absolutely vital to keeping us as the Department of the Navy's model for a lean, efficient organization that does not sacrifice effectiveness.

The primary reason we have, can and will continue to do this is our people. That's you, shipmates. My thanks for an excellent 2010 and I look forward to shouldering – with you – the great responsibility and living up to the tremendous trust that the Navy and our nation have placed in us for the coming year.

Yours aye,

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



Navy Rear Adm. Mark Buzby, commander, Military Sealift Command, presents Global War on Terrorism Service medals to mariners working aboard MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Richard E. Byrd during his visit to the Far East in November.

U.S. Navy photo by Grant Greenwell

## Navy Reservists: Key to U.S. CENTCOM Operations

By Navy Lt. Aaron Freymiller  
SEALOGCENT/CTF-53

Like the forces that make up today's U.S. military, the Reserve component of Sealift Logistics Command Central, headquartered in Bahrain, is woven seamlessly into the day-to-day operations at U.S. Central Command, or CENTCOM.

Approximately 3,300 Reservists support U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, also known as NAVCENT, in all missions as the U.S. Naval component commander under CENTCOM.

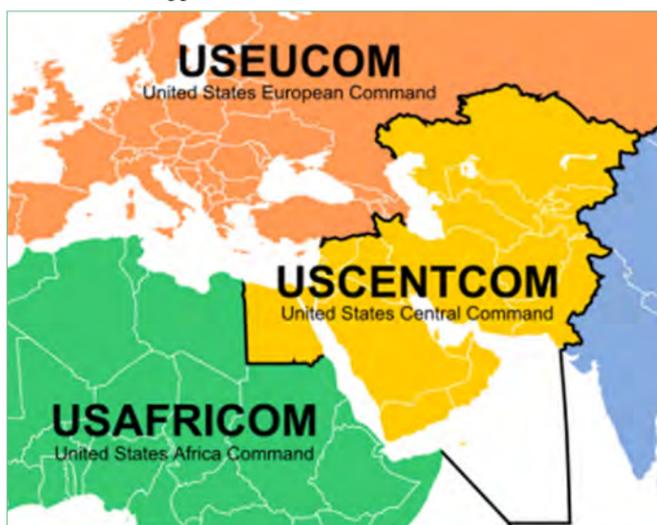
SEALOGCENT and Commander Task Force 53, part of NAVCENT, are led by Navy Capt. Donald Hodge. Together, these co-located commands have served as the primary logistics hub for the delivery of combat equipment and supplies to the nation's warfighters who support CENTCOM. This vast area of responsibility encompasses all of the Arabian Gulf, Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden and Red Sea.

The concept of 'One Navy' – a well-integrated union of active duty and Reserve forces – is demonstrated in this high op-tempo portion of the world.

The Navy Reserve sailors assigned to SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 do not fit the pattern of many typical drilling Reserve units a few decades ago, which required one weekend per month, plus another two weeks per year. Today, Reserve component sailors join forces with 163 members of the SEALOGCENT/CTF-

53 staffs to keep the pipeline of critical equipment and supplies flowing to deployed troops without interruption.

"The wonderful thing about the Reserve community is that they bring a myriad of talent from both their military and civilian backgrounds," said SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 Operations Support Officer Linda Harman. "The



ability to have a boatswain's mate work in information technology or have a culinary specialist move cargo gives our command a much broader range of support."

The new 'normal' for Reserve sailors at SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 is 17- to 29-days of annual training, with some members on active duty for training or active duty for special work staying for as long as six months. This is in addition to individual augmentation support, which can last up to a year.

In addition to supporting

SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 in Bahrain, SEALOGCENT Reserve units, via mobilization orders, rotate ownership of MSC Office Kuwait. Since 2003, this office has provided MSC oversight in Kuwait. Reservists provide a strategic role in ongoing U.S. and coalition operations in that region by facilitating the arrival and departure of high-value assets through the sea ports at Kuwait Naval Base and Ash Shuaybah, Kuwait. Since its establishment, MSCO Kuwait has supervised the movement of more than 700 vessels carrying critical equipment and supplies to support U.S. and coalition forces operating ashore.

According to Capt. Jim Leach, the commanding officer of SEALOGCENT's headquarters unit, "The mission of the Navy Reserve is to provide strategic depth, or stated differently, a deeper bench of players with the right skills at the time they are needed. I see that concept being well executed in the SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 daily operations." He cited a few examples, including logistics specialists helping with cargo movements throughout the U.S. 5th Fleet, merchant mariners leading naval cooperation and guidance for shipping activities, and surface warfare officers who request assistance with planning, executing and analyzing NAVCENT exercises.

Reservist story continued on Pg. 3

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# MSC adds logistics cadets to Cadet Shipping Program

By James Marconi  
MSC Public Affairs

Today's cadets at U.S. maritime service academies are preparing for service as future leaders within the maritime industry and are likely to become big contributors to Military Sealift Command's future shipboard leadership. Many of these aspiring merchant mariners will become part of the professional officer corps that keeps MSC ships operational worldwide.

More than 5,300 civil service mariners currently crew many MSC ships, and of these mariners, about 860 are officers licensed by the U.S. Coast Guard – including both deck officers and engineering officers. Most of these officers are graduates of the nation's maritime service academies.

Since the late 1990s, MSC has collaborated with the maritime academies on a program that gives future officers a taste of life at sea aboard MSC ships. Called the MSC Cadet Shipping Program, the initiative brings cadets from the academies aboard MSC ships for at-sea tours that last from 45 to 120 days, helping cadets meet the varying requirements for at-sea training prior to graduation and U.S. Coast Guard licensing. Cadets are hired as temporary government employees, and they can embark on a winter cruise, which begins Oct. 1, or a summer cruise starting March 1.

MSC's Cadet Shipping Program has traditionally offered tailored shipboard training for both deck cadets and engineering cadets. While aboard MSC ships, deck cadets take their specialized classroom knowledge and use it in a real-world environment. They get hands-on navigation experience on the bridge and deal with many other tasks that comprise a deck officer's job. Engineering cadets get to know the inside of a ship's engine room and how to deal with maintenance and repairs of engineering equipment, and assisting with fuel and water loads and transfers.

In November, Military Sealift Fleet Support Command expanded the Cadet Shipping Program to include maritime logistics majors. This will provide valuable shipboard experience to cadets pursuing logistics-related careers without receiving a Coast Guard license.

The first logistics cadet to take advantage of this new opportunity is from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy – Kings Point and began his cadet cruise Nov. 17 aboard MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser, which operates in the Pacific. Four more cadets – one from Kings Point and three from Massachusetts Maritime Academy – were assigned to other ships as 2010 drew to a close.

The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy – Kings Point, Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Maine Maritime Academy, California Maritime

Academy, Texas Maritime Academy and the State University of New York Maritime College offer logistics-oriented majors. These teach the cadets supply chain management and international logistics worldwide, which is useful to the maritime community as a whole.



U.S. Navy photo by Meghan Patrick

Charlie Judge, a third-year student at California Maritime Academy, works in the engine room aboard Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy. Judge is one of 190 engineering and deck cadets from U.S. maritime service academies who served aboard MSC ships in 2010. A new part of MSC's Cadet Shipping Program is the addition of logistics cadets who are pursuing international business degrees.

"The [logistics] program lends itself directly to our International Maritime Business degree, a non-license track major," said U.S. Maritime Service Capt. John Dooley, assistant director of Professional Seagoing Services at Massachusetts Maritime Academy. "Having the maritime experience to complement the shoreside background is a great foundation for students earning a business degree."

Logistics cadets will spend their time at sea observing, gaining knowledge and performing supply duties alongside MSC crew members – primarily supply officers and junior supply officers – based on a predefined checklist. When cadets complete their 60- to 90-day tours, they will have valuable, well-rounded experience in the logistics environment.

"I was amazed by how much the crew wanted to teach me," said Bryan O'Donnell, a fourth-year Massachusetts Maritime Academy cadet who served

for 63 days aboard MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Lewis and Clark the summer of 2010, when the ship sailed from Norfolk, Va., to Souda Bay, Greece, and the United Arab Emirates. "They knew I was a cadet, so they wanted me to learn. They constantly tested

me on different equipment and went through training manuals with me. Because each mariner wanted to pass on their expertise to me, I feel like I walked away from the experience knowing more than anyone else on the ship."

Two areas of specialization, outlined on the checklist, will consume much of the logistics cadets' time. As part of supply management and automation programs, cadets will learn ShipCLIP, which stands for Shipboard Configuration and Logistics Information Program. This is the software used to keep track of consumables, equipment and repair parts on board MSC ships. Cadets will also gain a working knowledge of Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force load management and associated automation programs, keeping track of materiel stored and distributed to support operations on Navy ships.

"I'd say that many cadets enjoy MSC because MSC is working with the military," said U.S. Maritime Service Lt. Cmdr. Ian Jones, the academy training representative at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy – Kings Point. "That gives them a different aspect of the business than they would with a commercial vessel. MSC has different missions than the commercial merchant ships do. It's not just about the cargo; It's about supporting the operations at hand."

For the past five years the MSC Cadet Shipping Program has provided hundreds cadets the opportunity to serve aboard MSC

ships. Since 2006, the number of cadets serving aboard MSC ships each year has jumped from 145 to 190, with a 19-person gain last year alone. The benefit to MSC is that greater numbers of today's maritime academy cadets are aware of and understand MSC's leadership opportunities at sea.

"MSC is committed to ensuring its workforce has the requisite skill set for the positions its employees hold," said MSFSC's Human Resources and Manpower Director Phyllis Spano. "External applicants, including these students and the current workforce, bring both necessary and required education and experience to the table. All candidates, no matter the source, who are interested in MSC employment will receive fair and equal consideration for future positions and vacancies."

## Reservist story continued from Pg. 2

MSC's Reserve support for CENTCOM is divided into three principal types of units: the SEALOGCENT Headquarters Augment Unit; Expeditionary Port Units; and the Strategic Sealift Readiness Group, formerly referred to as the Merchant Marine Individual Ready Reserve Group.

Eighteen enlisted sailors and 13 Navy officers support SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 through the SEALOGCENT Headquarters Augment Unit. These individuals conduct their two-week annual Reserve training at CENTCOM by augmenting SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 staff. The annual training is spread out throughout the year, with three-to-five Reservists doing their annual training at one time.

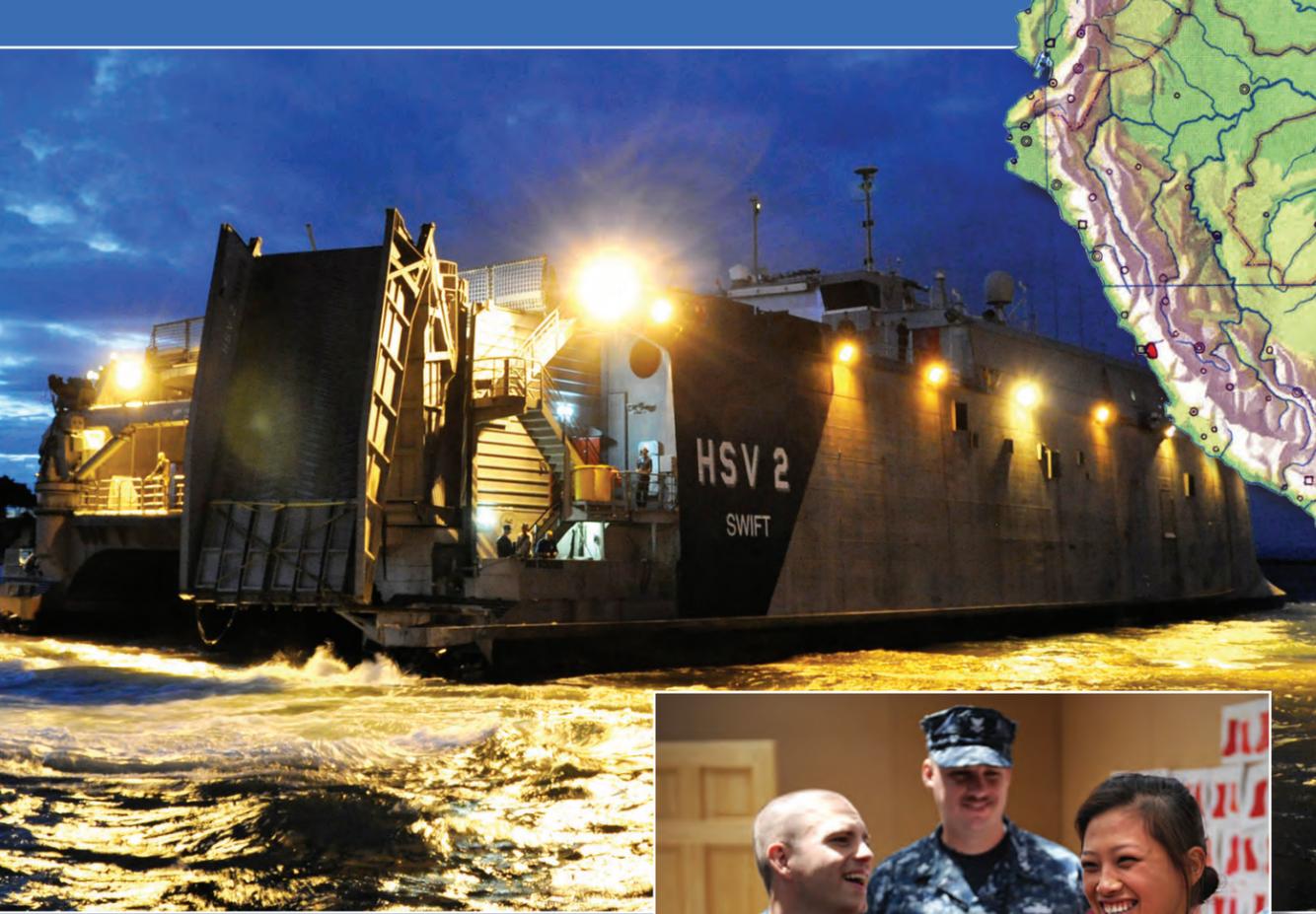
During fiscal year 2010, EPU's supporting SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 provided more than 900 days of support in watch, administrative department, IT and supply duties, and assisted in NAVCENT exercises. The EPU's also gave more than 1,900 man-days moving in excess of 14,000 pounds of cargo and 31,000 passengers throughout U.S. 5th Fleet. Strategic Sealift has also been an excellent source of surge support to the SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 mission providing harbor-pilot coverage in Kuwait.

MSC EPU's prepare their sailors to provide support to sea transportation, Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force and special mission ships in the CENTCOM area of responsibility. Seventy-two MSC Reservists are assigned to the units supporting this area. MSC EPU's include: MSC EPU 101 Quincy, Mass.; MSC EPU 103 Pittsburgh; MSC EPU 106 Baltimore; and MSC EPU 108 Atlanta.

The Strategic Sealift Readiness Group has been a vital part of the SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 mission for many years. A typical merchant mariner's job includes being at sea for months at a time, which prevents them from participating in regular monthly drills as a selected reservist. Their professional experience, however, gives the Navy an opportunity to reach out to well-qualified merchant marine personnel for specific skills, such as with approximately 20 qualified bar pilots who perform their annual duty for training at Kuwait Naval Base, piloting high-value assets in and out of restricted waters in Kuwait and other ports of the world. The mariners' expertise and their ability to take primary roles in Navy exercises and operations make them a valuable asset to the Navy.

"Without our Reserve sailors, we could not do our mission," said Hodge. "They are valued members of the team and are a true pleasure to work with."

# A Swift return to *Central & S* AMERICA



U.S. Navy photo by MC Bill Mesta



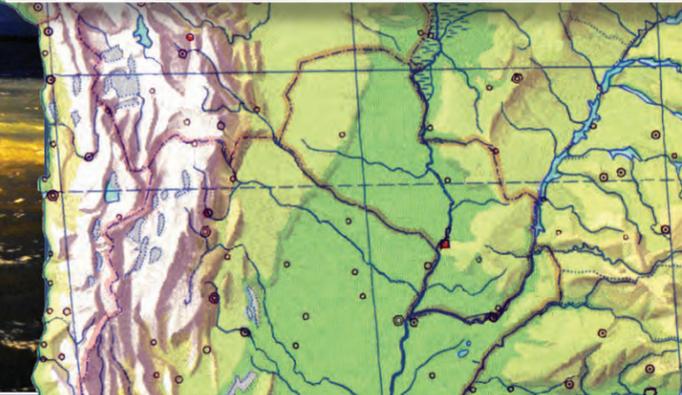
U.S. Navy photo by MCT Ricardo Reyes

*Above Left:* MSC-chartered high-speed vessel HSV 2 Swift pulls into Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Nov. 8, to load supplies for Southern Partnership Station 2011, an annual deployment to Central and South America.

*Above Right:* Swift's civilian master Capt. Rhett Mann reviews navigational procedures from the bridge with members of China's People's Liberation Army navy during an international naval expo in Chile. A significant goal of the deployment is to exchange information with foreign navies.

*Above:* Three sailors from Military Sealift Fleet Support Command, left to right: Hospital Corpsman 1st Class Michael Loeffler, Electronics Technician 3rd Class Hong Li and Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Christopher Schneider, who are assigned to Swift's military department, bring stuffed animals for children at the Los Hijos del Mar daycare center in Chile. The toys were donated as part of Project Handclasp, a U.S. Navy program.

*Right:* A mobile medical clinic offering humanitarian aid to Haiti is off-loaded to a pier in Port-au-Prince from Swift's stern ramp.



U.S. Navy photo by Chief MC Aaron Strickland

By Adrian Schulte, MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command high-speed vessel HSV 2 Swift, a ship that has become a symbol of partnership and goodwill, is once again serving as the platform for a mission aimed at sharing, building and strengthening U.S. relationships with maritime allies around the globe.

The MSC-chartered catamaran is operated and crewed by 17 U.S. merchant mariners who work for a private company under contract to MSC. The mariners are responsible for the operation and navigation of the ship. In addition, 21 Navy sailors comprise Swift's military department and are responsible with Swift's interface with the Navy fleet, providing the ship's command and control functions, and performing communication and supply functions.

These sailors are part of MSC's Military Sealift Fleet Support Command and are based in Norfolk.

Swift, along with embarked Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force units, departed Blount Island Marine Terminal in Jacksonville, Fla., Nov. 6, for a five-month deployment in support of Southern Partnership Station 2011. SPS is an annual deployment of various specialty platforms to the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility in the Caribbean and Latin America.

The mission's primary goal is information sharing with international navies, coast guards and civilian services throughout the region.

Swift's high operating tempo in recent years – plus the short-fuse turn around between SPS missions – has kept Swift's two alternating crews extremely busy. This deployment marks the fifth time in less than three years that Swift has embarked on a mission of this kind. Swift participated in SPS missions in 2009 and 2010, and similar missions on the west and east coasts of Africa for African Partnership Station 2009 and 2010. The high-speed vessel had only a one-month maintenance period between the completion of SPS 2010, Sept. 29, and setting sail for its first of eight country stops planned for SPS 2011.

During the SPS 2011 deployment, U.S. Navy sailors and Marines embarked on Swift will conduct training and subject-matter expert exchanges with SOUTHCOM partner nations Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru.

"During this mission we are focused on knowledge and expertise exchanges, as well as the opportunity for joint operations with our partner nations to improve and strengthen our communication and working relationships," said SPS 2011 mission commander, Navy Cmdr. Mark A. Becker, who is embarked aboard the ship. "These

relationships ensure greater cooperation and coordination in the event of a crisis requiring a multi-national effort."

Over the years, SPS has supported community relations projects and provided humanitarian aid when possible. This year's mission launched with the latter at the forefront, with unique visits to Haiti and Chile, both of which suffered from earthquakes in 2010.

Since the first earthquake struck Haiti in mid-January 2010, 250,000 people were killed and 547,000 people were displaced from their homes. Haiti continues to struggle with a growing cholera epidemic that has killed more than 2,000 people as of late December and has fueled violent demonstrations against United Nations peacekeepers.

Swift pulled into Port-au-Prince Nov. 8, loaded with a 40-ton, fully-equipped mobile medical clinic and 39 pallets of water filters from Project Handclasp, for distribution through relief efforts. The clinic contains 148 boxes of clothes, medical supplies, water and school supplies. The mariners unloaded the pallets and mobile medical clinic by moving them down Swift's loading ramps to waiting trucks.

Project Handclasp is a Navy program that accepts and transports donated educational, humanitarian and goodwill materials on a space-available basis aboard Navy ships for distribution to foreign recipients in need. The water filters were donated by

Pure Water for the World, a nonprofit organization that helps rural poor inhabitants in developing countries by providing clean, safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene education. The simple water filters have no moving parts and combat the leading causes of death and disease in the developing world by reducing parasites, bacteria and viruses found in contaminated water.

"We were happy to start out this mission with Haiti," said Capt. Rhett Mann, Swift's civilian master. "Anything we can do for the Haitians makes us feel good. They have so many strikes against them. In light of the cholera epidemic, it felt especially good to bring something to help purify their water. Also, Swift's ramp and cargo-handling structure make it one of only a few feasible platforms for transporting the mobile medical clinic."

"The coordination with Haitian officials and the U.S. Embassy here has been amazing, and that's the reason why we were able to make this delivery in support of Project Handclasp," said Becker.

Dr. Phillippe Avril, special projects coordinator for Pure Water for the World Haiti Project, was on hand in Port-au-Prince to welcome the crew and supplies shortly after Swift moored at one of the two barges that became temporary docks after the earthquake destroyed the harbor's permanent docks.

"This was a wonderful sight to start my morning off," said Avril. "We looked forward to this delivery, so we can provide schools, clinics and orphanages here with the clean water they deserve."

The task was rewarding for Swift's mariners, said Jeffrey Dixon, second mate aboard Swift.

"To know that my actions, along with the actions of others, got those items where they needed to be to help people is very satisfying," he said.

From Haiti, Swift sailed to Chile to support other facets of Swift's SPS mission.

Upon arriving near Concepcion Nov. 21, 17 U.S. military personnel from Naval Station Norfolk who are embarked aboard Swift were able to start the mission helping Chileans who were affected by the 8.8-magnitude February earthquake that took place 65 miles northeast of Concepcion. The service members painted nine temporary homes as part of a community relations project to help some of the 1.5 million Chileans displaced by the earthquake.

"This was just another opportunity for us to support one of our partner nations and display some teamwork," said Chief Boatswain's Mate Robert Frost, who led the painting crew. "It felt great to be out here with our Chilean brothers and sisters working together to make the best of what was unfortunately a bad situation."

The painting project was one of several SPS endeavors that took place during Swift's one-week stop in Concepcion and included subject-matter expert exchanges in security, medicine and civil affairs; information-sharing ventures and joint operations exchanges with local military and government agencies.

From Concepcion, Swift sailed north to its second Chilean port stop in Puerto Valparaiso, for the 7th Expo Naval, a one-week international exhibition and conference of technologies, equipment and services hosted by Chile for the Latin America naval defense industry the first week in December. Sixty countries sent representatives to the conference, including all of the South American countries.

During the expo, Swift hosted a group of senior officers and distinguished visitors from China's People's Liberation Army navy, and other foreign navies and coast guards. Twenty-six guests were welcomed by Becker and Mann, who gave a comprehensive tour of Swift, its various capabilities and how its unique design enables the Navy to contribute to SPS.

Swift's unique catamaran features, which include a futuristic, sleek-lined hull, and the illusion of floating above the water when the ship is underway, garner more attention than other ships they have sailed on, say those aboard.

"The design of Swift always seems to generate a lot of curiosity and questions from passer-bys, which has been a great way to start a conversation and get SPS's message out there," said Dixon.

"This interaction is good for all parties involved," said Chinese Naval Academy of Armament Director Rear Adm. Zhao Yongfu, when he toured the ship. "This is my first time on an American Navy ship."

For the next several months, through the mission's end in early April, Swift will continue the mission many of its mariners have grown accustomed to throughout the past few years. Most members of the two contract crews that cycle through the ship at 90- to 120-day intervals have sailed on the ship before. Mann, for example, has sailed for part of two previous SPS missions and one APS mission.

Days aboard Swift are long, with varying levels of traffic and number of people on board. But the crew rises to the challenge, from navigating on the bridge to cooking in the galley, where Swift's stewards must quickly adjust, sometimes on little notice, to feed upward of 105 people. Despite the high-tempo environment, members of the crew remain cheerful.

"My day-to-day job on board Swift is very interesting and exciting," said Rafael Chow, Swift's chief steward. "I have sons and a daughter about the same age of most of the military personnel on board, and I treat them all as if they were my own kids."

"Swift has been a great experience," said Dixon, who has sailed on three SPS missions and one APS mission.

"I've worked with a lot of great people, make a lot of important deliveries and work a wide range of mission types. It's been a very rewarding vessel to work on and I look forward to the continued success of the platform."

MCI Jeffery Tilghman Williams, HSV-2 Swift Public Affairs, contributed to this story.

# South

# A

U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Jeffery Tilghman Williams



## EUROPE • AFRICA • NEWS

Military Sealift Fleet Support Command Director **Jack Taylor** and Military Sealift Command Special Mission Technical Director **Rusty Bishop** visited U.S. 6th Fleet command ship USS Mount Whitney in Port Gaeta, Italy, to present Global War on Terrorism medals to several MSC civil service mariners assigned to the ship.

In another port across the Mediterranean, U.S. Transportation Command Air Force Gen. Duncan McNabb visited civilian mariners on MSC Maritime Prepositioning Ship USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon Nov. 19. Gen. McNabb thanked the mariners and the Navy military members assigned to MSC for the work they do to further TRANSCOM's support of U.S. warfighters through efficient and effective delivery of equipment, wherever and whenever it is needed. Obregon's civilian master, **Capt. Don Agold**, led McNabb, Navy **Capt. James Tranoris**, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Europe and Task Force 63, and Navy **Capt. Michael Ott**, commander, Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron One, on a tour of the ship and a discussion of the ship's capabilities.

"This was a great opportunity for the general to be briefed on the MPS Squadron One and Maritime Prepositioning Ships and what they bring to the fight," said Tranoris.

MSC-chartered container ship MV American Tern returned to Riga, Latvia, to redeploy Philadelphia National Guard equipment used in October for Exercise Saber Strike 2010. Later in the month, MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Sacagawea arrived in theater to conduct replenishment at sea with Navy destroyer USS Gonzalez.

SEALOGEUR coordinated the sealift transport of Commander Task Force 68 Naval Mobile Construction Battalion cargo from Sao Tome to Rota, Spain. Demonstrating increasing value to SEALOGEUR operations, Navy **Lt. j.g. Michael Hahn**, a Reservist volunteer for active duty, facilitated the on-hire charter of container ship MV Noble Star, while Navy **Capt. Bruce Cumings** extended his active duty for a training period in Rota to assist with the off-hire of the same ship.

## ATLANTIC • LINES

While operating off the Virginia Capes operating area Nov. 22, Military Sealift Command dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Robert E. Peary performed an underway replenishment with guided-missile destroyer USS Jason Dunham. Peary transferred nearly 142,000 barrels of fuel during the evolution.

MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Laramie returned to Naval Station Norfolk Nov. 24 after an eight-month deployment supporting U.S. 5th and 6th fleets. Laramie also supported navy vessels from 12 coalition countries. During the deployment, which began April 5, the ship provided nearly 19 million gallons of fuel and more than 4,500 pallets of cargo and supplies, while steaming nearly 59,000 miles.

Navy Rear Adm. Nora Tyson, commander, Carrier Strike Group Two, welcomed Laramie on its return to Norfolk. **Capt. Sean Tortora**, Laramie's civil service master, provided a brief tour of the ship for Tyson after she addressed the crew.

**George Pearson**, marine transportation specialist at Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic's Sunny Point, N.C., office, assisted SEALOGLANT's Charleston, S.C., office with the discharge of 162,000 barrels of fuel from short-term chartered integrated tug and barge

OSV Navigator November 3-4.

Senior Marine Transportation Specialist **Tom D'Agostino** of SEALOGLANT's Charleston, S.C., office, assisted MSC large, medium-speed roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Charlton with the loading of nearly 300,000 square feet of military cargo comprising more than 1,600 pieces during its port call Nov. 16-24. Marine Transportation Specialist **Mary Ann Nobles**, also of SEALOGLANT's Charleston office, acted as the ship's agent. During the loading operation Nov. 16, two South Carolina state senators visited the ship to observe operations.

MSC large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Pomeroy, berthed at Newport News, Va., was filmed Dec. 5 for a documentary by Road Works Pictures about Korean War and Medal of Honor recipients. Members of the ship's namesake's family were also interviewed. The documentary will include a vignette about the ship's namesake, the late Pfc. Ralph E. Pomeroy, who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions in Korea in 1952. Protecting his platoon's flank, Pomeroy opened fire on enemy soldiers. When he ran out of ammunition, he used the gun as a club in hand-to-hand combat until he was mortally wounded.

## HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

The Military Sealift Command headquarters community mourned the loss of one of their own Thanksgiving weekend. **Griff Hume**, who most recently served as the acting director of operations for MSC, passed away while visiting his family in Georgia. Hume served as a Navy surface warfare officer for 20 years and later served for 17 years in various leadership roles at MSC headquarters as a civil service employee.

"Throughout his time at MSC, he has been a guiding force in prepositioning, strategic sealift, force protection and operations," said **Rear Adm. Mark Buzby**, MSC commander. "His loss is felt by the entire MSC family."

MSC conducted a hospital ship tabletop exercise Dec. 7-8. Representatives from MSC headquarters, the Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, and MSC hospital ships USNS Mercy and USNS Comfort participated in the exercise that focused on simultaneously activating both hospital ships to react to a natural disaster scenario. The goal was to identify seams, challenges and problems within the activation process, which stakeholders could then work to resolve. Representatives from the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Military Sealift Fleet Support Command, sealift logistics commands Atlantic and

Pacific, the Defense Supply Center Philadelphia-Troop Support and the Naval Medical Logistics Command also participated.

MSC and the Seafarers International Union completed a productive negotiation session Nov. 2-4 as part of the ongoing revision of Civilian Marine Personnel Instruction 610. The MSC representatives were **David Townsend**, office of counsel, and **Renee Desrosiers**, **Kathleen Giacalone** and **Andrew Lefebvre**, maritime forces, manpower and management. The discussions centered on the movement of cargo, explosives and trash. A change in the negotiating structure has benefited the labor-management relationship and has contributed to greater collaboration during the negotiations.

Navy **Lt. Brendan Kelly**, MSC's operations security program manager, made a 19-day trip in November to SEALOPAC and sealift logistics commands Far East, Central and Europe. He reviewed each command's self-assessment results; conducted training for the command's operational security officers; shared ideas for improved communications between the SEALOGs and headquarters; and exchanged training material and shared operational security best practices.

MSC welcomes **James O'Neill**, operations. MSC bids farewell to **Walter Sheppard**, engineering.

## FAR • EAST • HAILS

Navy **Rear Adm. Mark Buzby**, commander, Military Sealift Command, visited Diego Garcia, Singapore and the Republic of Korea Nov. 16-21. While in Diego Garcia, Buzby met with Naval Support Facility Commanding Officer Navy **Capt. Anthony Chatham** and British representative to Diego Garcia Royal navy **Cmdr. Christopher Moorey**. After an office call with Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Robert Rosales** and the staff of MSC Office Diego Garcia, Buzby visited MSC-chartered dry cargo ship MV Mohegan and met with ship's civilian master **Capt. J. Belet**.

Buzby's next stop was Maritime Prepositioning Force ship USNS SGT William R. Button, where he met Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Two Commander Navy **Capt. Wesley Brown** and other squadron staff members. Buzby toured MPF ships USNS 1ST LT Baldomero Lopez, USNS Lawrence H. Gianella, USNS SGT Matej Kocak, USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham, MV MAJ Bernard Fisher, MV LTC John U.D. Page and MV SSG Edward A. Carter, Jr.

Buzby visited Sealift Logistics Command Far East at Sembawang Wharves, Singapore. His first stop was dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Richard E. Byrd, where he met civil service master **Capt. Robert Jaeger** and the ship's crew. During an award ceremony held in the ship's galley, Buzby presented Byrd's civil service mariners with Global War on Terrorism medals. Next, Buzby visited fleet replenishment oiler USNS Rappahannock, where he met ship's civil service master **Capt. David Murrin** and presented more GWOT medals.

Buzby then met Navy **Capt. Chip Denman**, commander, SEALOGFE, and Navy Rear Adm. Ron Horton, commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific and commander, Task Force 73.

Buzby's next stop was Busan, Republic of Korea, Nov. 20-21, home of MSC Office Korea, to meet commanding officer Navy **Cmdr. David Bartell** and his staff members. At a luncheon held at Pier Eight's United Seamen's Service Center Nov. 20, Buzby met ROK Army Brig. Gen. Kye Sung Lee, commander, Republic of Korea's transportation command. Buzby presented an MSC plaque to Lee to show appreciation for the ROK armed forces' support of MSC ships.

Buzby presented awards to three sailors from dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Carl Brashear with awards at the USS Center: **Operations Specialist 1st Class Christopher Gilmore** received a Navy Achievement Medal; **Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Derek Jordan** earned a certificate recognizing him as Brashear's Junior Sailor of the Year; and **Operations Specialist 2nd Class Kyiem Dyson** received a Good Conduct Medal.

Buzby visited offshore petroleum distribution system ship MV VADM K.R. Wheeler and large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Watson, both pierside at Busan's Pier Eight. The admiral met the ships' respective

civilian masters, **Capt. Dave Fahey** and **Capt. Christopher Larkin**.

Navy Vice Adm. Scott R. Van Buskirk, commander, U.S. 7th Fleet, visited missile range instrumentation ship USNS Observation Island Nov. 5 at Yokohama, Japan. Van Buskirk met the ship's civilian master **Capt. Robert Weichert**.

During a port call to the Kingdom of Brunei Nov. 16, oceanographic survey ship USNS Mary Sears' civilian master **Capt. Richard Gordon** and embarked Senior Naval Oceanographic Office representative James Duke led seven Brunei Ministry of Defense officials on a tour of the ship.

Navy **Cmdr. Bill Ellis** was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal Nov. 20, marking the end of his outstanding tour as MSCO Okinawa's commanding officer, which began in March 2009. Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Jason Sparks**, assigned to Fleet Activities Okinawa, will act as commanding officer until a permanent civilian director is named.

Navy **Capt. Herman Awai**, commander, MPS Squadron Three, presented Navy **Logistics Specialist 1st Class Gordon Rudolph** with both the Navy Commendation Medal and the Volunteer Service Medal, marking the end of his tour as assistant supply officer. Rudolph's volunteer efforts included working at a veterinary clinic on Palau and working with Naval Junior Reserve Office Training Corps students at Saipan high schools.

Denman and the staff of SEALOGFE hosted the prospective master of ocean surveillance ship USNS Loyal **Capt. Peter Wilisch** Nov. 12, and the prospective master of ocean surveillance ship USNS Impeccable **Capt. Philip Knauss** Nov. 29.

On Nov. 4, Diego Garcia-based MPF ship USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham offloaded Warping Tug 16, which is a powered, floating barge used to deliver cargo from the ship to shore. Warping Tug 16 entered a dry dock facility ashore which, according to MPS Squadron Two commander Navy **Capt. Wes Brown**, was the first time that maintenance was conducted on MPS Squadron Two's integrated Navy lighterage system on Diego Garcia.

During a routine port visit to the Pacific island nation of Palau, Navy **Capt. Herman Awai**, commander, MPS Squadron Three, led a group of sailors and civilian mariners assigned to MPF ship USNS 1st LT Jack Lummus in painting a local high school in the city of Koror on Nov. 23. Lummus' sailors and mariners painted the upper floor of the two-story facility, removing a large amount of graffiti collected over the years as well as painting the hand rails.

Congratulations to Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Delbert Toney**, SEALOGFE's Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force officer, who was promoted to his current rank Dec. 1. SEALOGFE welcomes **David Spilholz**, logistics management specialist, and Navy **Cmdr. Glenn Macario**, officer-in-charge of SEALOGFE's Strategic Sealift Officer Program.



Five new and updated videos featuring Military Sealift Command and its four mission areas are now available on MSC's website, Facebook page and YouTube channel. Visit <http://www.msc.navy.mil/N00P/movie/> or search for "MSCdelivers" on Facebook and YouTube. Download the videos on MSC's website for presentations, or, for a CD, email [Sandra.graham@navy.mil](mailto:Sandra.graham@navy.mil).

## PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Military Sealift Command large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Bob Hope provided a training platform for Naval Beach Group One in San Diego Nov. 10. During the training,

Bob Hope lowered its stern ramp, allowing NBG-One sailors to practice approaching with the roll-on/roll-off discharge facility and its side-loading warping tug. The training simulated maneuvers used in at-sea operations, such as Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore.

**Dave Coulter**, a marine transportation specialist with Sealift Logistics Command Pacific's operations department, attended an oil spill tabletop exercise Nov. 17 at the U.S. Coast Guard Station in San Diego. The exercise was part of a planning session for a Coast Guard oil spill exercise, which will be held in San Diego in May. The exercise also included participants from Commander Naval Region Southwest, state and local emergency management teams, California Fish and Wildlife, and oil spill-response companies. The May exercise's objective is to evaluate area contingency plans and oil spill response coordination for U.S. 3rd Fleet and the naval region.



*U.S.-flagged commercial tanker MT Evergreen State sails off the coast of San Diego during sea trials Nov. 16. The tanker, which was christened at the General Dynamics NASSCO shipyard in San Diego Dec. 7, is expected to come under charter to MSC for up to almost five years beginning in early January and will operate as part of the Sealift Program transporting refined petroleum products for DOD. Evergreen State is the second State-class tanker to come under charter to MSC. MT Empire State began working for MSC in July, first under a short-term charter and then under a new charter for up to five years. These ships are beginning to replace MSC's long-serving T-5 tankers.*

NASSCO photo

MSC large, medium-speed roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Mendonca arrived in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, Nov. 17. While there, Mendonca discharged Army CH-47F helicopters and aviation cargo for the 25th Aviation at Wheeler Army Air Field through Nov. 19. Then, Fleet Industrial Supply Center Pearl Harbor facilitated the loading of nearly 200,000 square feet of 25th Infantry Division rolling stock, equipment and supplies onto Mendonca before it departed Pearl Harbor Nov. 24. The cargo was delivered to the 10th Street Marine Terminal in San Diego, where the cargo was offloaded and then forwarded to the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif., in support of 25th ID training.

The San Diego Military Advisory Council honored MSC hospital ship USNS Mercy at its Annual Achievement Awards Breakfast Dec. 8. The ship was recognized for its participation in the 2010 Pacific Partnership humanitarian mission to Southeast Asia.

Navy **Capt. Jerome Hamel**, commander, SEALOPAC, attended Sealift Logistics Command Far East's Leadership Conference Dec. 6 in Singapore.

SEALOPAC welcomes **Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Michael Nagy**, who reported for duty as SEALOPAC's information technology duty officer. Nagy joins the SEALOPAC team following duty aboard Navy amphibious transport dock ship USS Cleveland.

Good luck to **Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Phil Ho**, who departs SEALOPAC for duty at the White House Communications Office.

Best to **Tom E. Brown**, marine transportation specialist with the SEALOPAC operations department, as he retires following 45 years as a federal employee, including 25 years at MSC.

## COMPASS • HEADING

In early November, Military Sealift Command civil service mariner **Able Seaman Michael Henry** received an unusual visit from his son, Navy Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Corey Henry, in the middle of the Arabian Gulf. Navy aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, to which the younger Henry is assigned, was connected via fuel lines to his father's ship, MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Joshua Humphreys, for underway replenishment. Corey was flown by helicopter to Humphreys to visit with his father during the evolution.

MSFSC's 2010 Principal Port Engineer Conference was held at Naval Station Norfolk Nov. 2-4. **Rick Albert**, director of engineering, **Harley Peterson**, engineering analyst, and other members of MSFSC's engineering department arranged speakers and presentations for the three-day conference. MSC leaders and maritime industry representatives took part in the event, which included a small business exposition coordinated by **Sandra Tyree**, MSFSC's small business deputy.

Crew members from dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Matthew Perry volunteered their time Nov. 10 at the Kirara Community Home in Sasebo, Japan, during the ship's port visit there. The community outreach effort was organized by Perry's community relations coordinator Navy **Logistics Specialist 1st Class Rene Macias** and other ship personnel. The Perry crew members performed sev-

eral facility maintenance tasks, worked alongside residents of the home and tilled an area where a vegetable garden will be planted.

"There is nothing more gratifying than seeing the bonding between the crew and the staff and children of Kirara Community Home," said Navy **Ensign Alexandra Deguzman**, assistant officer-in-charge of the military department. "I really look forward to more community relations opportunities in the future."

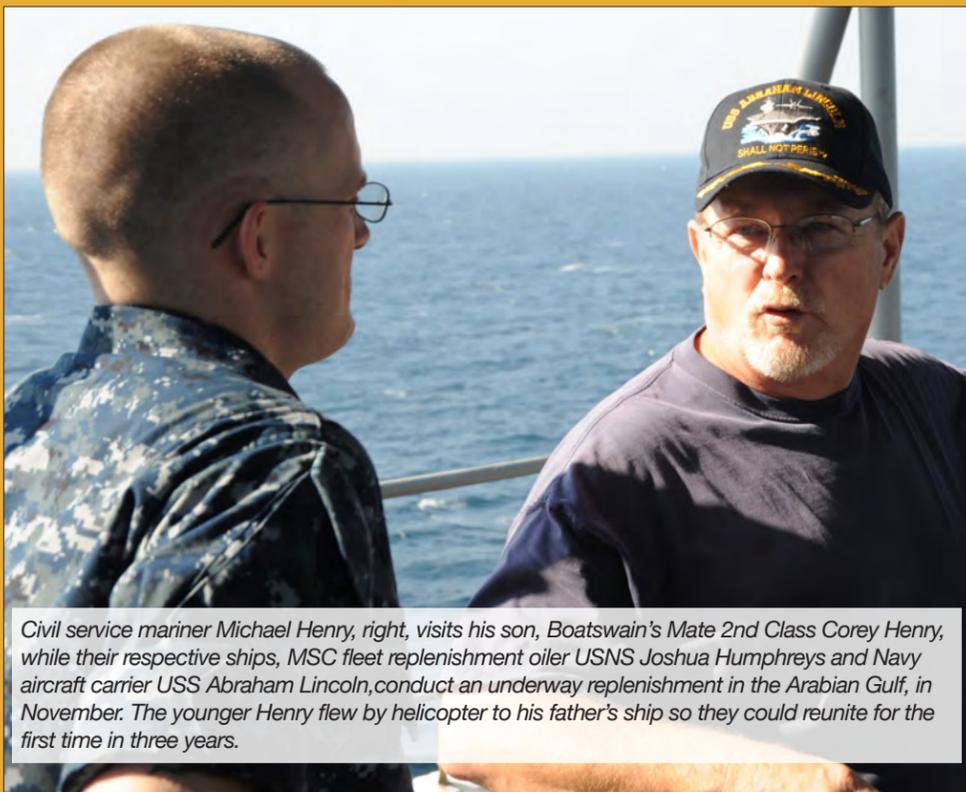
Continuing the effort to recognize civil service mariner contributions, Navy **Capt Michael Graham**, commander, Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic, presented Global War on Terrorism medals to CIVMAR personnel from MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship Robert E. Peary while in port Nov. 17 at Naval Station Norfolk.

Congratulations to **Seaman Chrystle Majure**, dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Wally Schirra; **Seaman Adam Rogers**, high-speed vessel HSV 2 Swift blue crew; Navy **Logistics Specialist 3rd Class Charles Knight**, dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Sacagawea; and Navy **Gunner's Mate 2nd Class Andrew Downs**, Swift gold crew, for their selection for advancement.

Kudos to ship support units Singapore and Guam, Class Manager **Frank Cunningham** and members of MSFSC's T-AKE class manager, for their support of emergent stern tube bearing repairs to MSC dry cargo/ammunition ships USNS Alan Shepard and USNS Richard E Byrd.

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

## Father/son reunion at sea



*Civil service mariner Michael Henry, right, visits his son, Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Corey Henry, while their respective ships, MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Joshua Humphreys and Navy aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, conduct an underway replenishment in the Arabian Gulf, in November. The younger Henry flew by helicopter to his father's ship so they could reunite for the first time in three years.*

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Christopher Dollar

## CENTRAL • CURRENTS

U.S. Central Command's high operational tempo continued in November. With two aircraft carriers and their escorts operating in theater, Sealift Logistics Command Central's Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force ships delivered more than 3.5 million gallons of fuel and more than 9,000 pallets of cargo and mail to U.S. and coalition ships. SEALOGCENT was also responsible for 383 flights that delivered 1,192 tons of cargo, 167 tons of mail and 3,169 passengers in support of U.S. 5th Fleet maritime security operations, and operations Enduring Freedom and New Dawn.

SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 bids fair winds to the crew of Military Sealift Command dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Sacagawea after the ship's successful deployment to U.S. 5th Fleet. While in theater, Sacagawea provided support to USS Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group; the Kearsarge

and Peleliu amphibious groups and their marine expeditionary units; and numerous other coalition navy combat ships. Sacagawea conducted 83 underway replenishments, delivering more than 10 million gallons of fuel during her six-month deployment.

SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 extends a warm welcome to the command's newest sailors: Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Daven Wilson**, logistics aircraft liaison officer, and Navy **Operations Specialist 2nd Class Tyre Heyward**, air logistics scheduler. SEALOGCENT/CTF-53 bids farewell to Navy **Lt. Christopher "Doc" Sharpe**, Navy **Chief Chris Nawrocki**, operational leading chief petty officer, Camp Mirage; Navy **Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Marlon McDonald**, day shift cargo supervisor; and Navy **Logistics Specialist 3rd Class John Sales**, air traffic operations center duty officer.

# MSC delivers patrol boat for Iraqi navy

By Laura M. Seal  
MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command-chartered heavy-lift crane ship MV Ocean Titan delivered a U.S.-built Iraqi patrol boat to Bahrain Dec. 22. This patrol boat, destined for Iraq, will be used by Iraq to patrol its territorial coast and provide security for its oil platforms, an important component in combined U.S./Iraqi efforts to reconstitute Iraq's ability to enforce its maritime sovereignty and security.

The patrol boat delivery capped a two-month effort by MSC to manage a chartering, engineering and logistics evolution of vital importance to Iraq's maritime security.

The four-week transit from Louisiana featured the 115-foot-long patrol boat piggy-backed on top of the deck of the 390-foot-long Ocean Titan. Because the patrol boat is designed for operation only in coastal waters, it could not make the 11,000-mile, open-ocean voyage under its own power.

While the patrol boat is in Bahrain, a team of U.S. Navy and shipbuilding company representatives will complete some work on the patrol boat before sailing it to Iraq for turnover to the Iraqi navy.

The patrol boat delivered Dec. 19 is the second of an expected 15 identical vessels being built for and delivered to the Iraqi navy as part of the U.S. Navy's Foreign Military Sales Program. The boat will be crewed by up to 12 Iraqi sailors.

"Our foreign partners rely on the U.S. Navy's expertise in combatant craft acquisition," said Rear Adm. David Lewis, who, as the Navy's program executive officer for ships, oversees the acquisition of all U.S. Navy surface ships. "This assistance represents a commitment for continued cooperation between the United States and our partners."

This is where MSC comes in.

"MSC has a long history of chartering specialized commercial vessels to transport U.S. Navy ships across the ocean and of overseeing those lifts from pick-up to delivery," said Timothy Pickering, cargo project officer in MSC's Sealift Program. "The most well-known of these moves was the lift bringing USS Cole home to the U.S. from Yemen

following the October 2000 terrorist attack that rendered the ship unable to sail."

MSC headquarters' Sealift Program received the requirement to transport the Iraqi patrol boat on Oct. 7 and awarded the contract for the lift to Ocean Titan just 10 days later following a competitive solicitation.

MSC personnel then turned their focus

— called a cradle — for the patrol boat's safety during transport.

Under Walters' supervision in Amelia Nov. 7, the patrol boat was loaded onto the barge and secured in the cradle that had been welded to the barge's deck. The tug/barge and its cargo arrived in Houston Nov. 11, where Ocean Titan's crane lifted the patrol boat out of the cradle so that

the supports could be transferred and welded to Ocean Titan's deck.

With the cradle installed aboard Ocean Titan, the patrol boat was then lowered and secured. MSC personnel — including Walters and marine transportation specialists Joe Guivas and Jack Davis — supervised the cradle's removal from the barge and installation onto Ocean Titan. Guivas and Davis work for MSC's Norfolk-based



A Military Sealift Command contracted tug/barge transports a patrol boat from Louisiana to Texas for delivery to Bahrain. The boat will be used by Iraq to provide maritime security for its oil platforms.



An MSC chartered heavy-lift ship transports the patrol boat for the ocean leg of its journey to Bahrain. The ship's crane holds the boat in a sling, as workers prepare a cradle to prevent damage to the boat during transit.

to coordinating the safe load, transport and offload of the patrol boat.

"Loading the patrol boat onto Ocean Titan took some significant planning," said Tom Walters, the marine transportation specialist with the Sealift Program who provided primary supervision for the overall process.

The first challenge: The shipbuilder's port in Morgan City, La., is too shallow to accommodate Ocean Titan, or any other ship large enough to transport the patrol boat. To resolve this, MSC chartered a tug/barge to transport the boat from nearby Amelia, La., to Houston, Texas, where it could rendezvous with Ocean Titan.

The second challenge: Ensuring that the boat is not damaged in the process of the load, transport and offload. This is a team effort, coordinated by Walters.

The company that built the boat designed and constructed specially designed supports

subordinate command, Sealift Logistics Command Atlantic.

Ocean Titan departed Houston for Bahrain Nov. 12, stopping briefly en route at Cheatham Annex, Va., to load patrol boat-related cargo.

About four weeks later, Ocean Titan and its cargo arrived in Bahrain, where Walters met the ship to oversee the offload that was coordinated by Kirkland Matthews, a dry cargo officer at MSC's command in Bahrain, Sealift Logistics Command Central.

The Iraqi navy christened the first of these 15 patrol boats Sept. 26 during an Iraq Navy Day ceremony at Umm Qasr Naval Base, Iraq.

MSC is slated to transport the next patrol boat in early 2011.

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

# USNS Kiska completes 38 years of service to Navy

By MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command ammunition ship USNS Kiska crossed the International Date Line Nov. 18, leaving the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility for the last time as the ship sailed to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, to begin preparations for deactivation.

Kiska, with a crew of 133 civil service mariners employed by MSC, is scheduled for deactivation in January. The ship will go into storage at the Naval Sea Systems Command Inactive Ships On-site Maintenance Office in Pearl Harbor, where it will wait to receive congressional authorization to be scrapped.

Kiska has served the fleet for more than 38 years, the past 10 years of which were spent as U.S. 7th Fleet's principal vessel for moving ordnance around 48 million square miles of the Pacific and Indian oceans. The 9,340-ton Kilauea-class Kiska provided underway replenishment of all types of ammunition, from missiles to bullets, for U.S. Navy ships at sea.

"Through the tremendous efforts of her countless sailors over the years, Kiska enabled our fleet to stay at sea and effectively perform our missions of power projection and sea control in the most challenging operational environment, thousands of miles from U.S. soil," said Vice Adm. Scott Van Buskirk, commander, U.S. 7th Fleet.

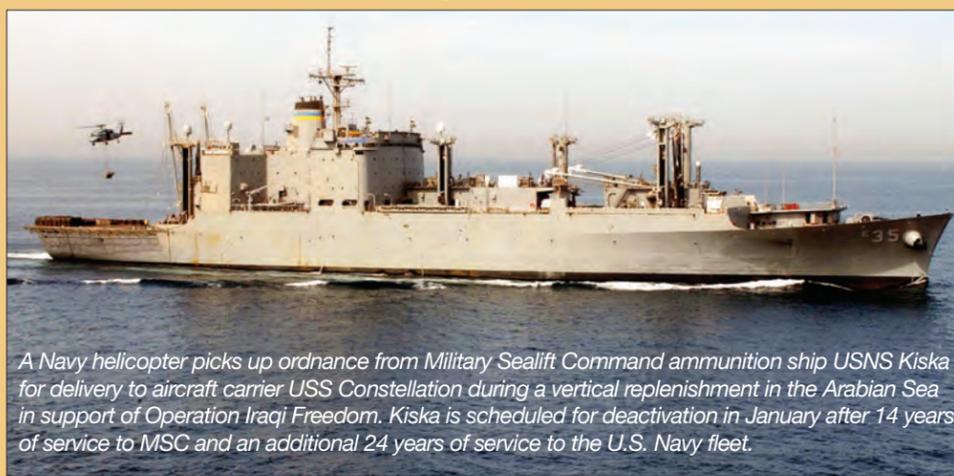
MSC's fleet of Kilauea-class and Mars-class combat stores ships are being replaced by MSC's new fleet of Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo/ammunition ships, which consolidate both ship missions by

providing multi-product, combat logistics support to U.S. Navy ships at sea.

"Kiska has been a workhorse in the Pacific, supporting the combatant fleet for the 14 years of its service as a Military Sealift Command asset," said Jack Taylor, director, Military Sealift Fleet Support Command. "Taking lessons learned from her operation over the years, and that of her sister ships of the AE class, we've incorporated those lessons into the improvements found in the new ships crewed by civil service mariners, ships like USNS Matthew Perry, which relieved Kiska in the fleet."

MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Matthew Perry took Kiska's duties in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility Oct. 30.

The primary goal of the T-AKE program, which calls for up to 14 ships at a budget of more than \$6 billion, is to provide effective fleet underway replenishment capability at the lowest life-cycle cost.



A Navy helicopter picks up ordnance from Military Sealift Command ammunition ship USNS Kiska for delivery to aircraft carrier USS Constellation during a vertical replenishment in the Arabian Sea in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Kiska is scheduled for deactivation in January after 14 years of service to MSC and an additional 24 years of service to the U.S. Navy fleet.

U.S. Navy photo by Airman John P. Curtis

"Kiska's tradition of service to the fleet has remained consistent throughout the years," said retired Capt. Robert T. Collins, who served as Kiska's commanding officer from 1992-1994. "I feel very fortunate to have been a part of her proud legacy and tradition of excellence."

Kiska was commissioned into the active U.S. Navy force as USS Kiska in 1972. The ship served during the

Vietnam conflict and deployed to the Arabian Gulf in support of operation Desert Storm from 1990-1991.

"Kiska is a legend in U.S. 7th Fleet and has truly epitomized our motto, ready power for peace," Van Buskirk said.

Kiska was decommissioned and transferred to the service of MSC in 1996. Kiska also deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003.

"Kiska is the finest ship and crew that I have commanded in my 21 years as a ship captain with MSC," said Kiska's civil service master Capt. Jeff Cook.

"To the crew members over the years who have walked Kiska's decks, I give thanks," Taylor said. "They've paved the way for our providing better support to the fleet today and well into the future."