

July 2012

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

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

Snapshots

from

Africa Partnership Station 2012



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jonathan Garcia



U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Martin Wright



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jonathan Garcia

INSIDE — Kaiser loads biofuel for RIMPAC • Conference aids Korean security

MSC key to Navy strategy: Forward deployed and ready

When Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert said today's Navy needs to be forward deployed and ready to meet any mission challenges, anywhere around the globe, he was describing MSC perfectly! Just look at some recent headlines of the news of the world.

Pacific Partnership conducts life-changing surgeries in Indonesia

SIAU, Indonesia (Navy News Service) – Patients aboard USNS Mercy were preparing to return home June 6 after receiving life-changing surgery, thanks to the Pacific Partnership 2012 mission....

We've had a role in Pacific Partnership missions since they began seven years ago as an annual U.S. Pacific Fleet humanitarian and civic assistance mission for U.S. military personnel, host and partner nations, non-governmental organizations and international agencies. The missions are designed to build stronger relationships and develop disaster response capabilities throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Hospital ship USNS Mercy has become a symbol of hope to countless thousands of people all around the Pacific Rim.

U.S. Navy High-Speed Swift departs Simon's Town for East London, continues visit to South Africa

PRETORIA, South Africa (U.S. Embassy News) – High-speed vessel Swift arrived June 2 in East London, making the second stop in a planned visit to three ports in South Africa. Swift departed Simon's Town after six days of events, which included a reception on board the vessel, a community relations project at Kethuphila youth center and several performances in town by the U.S. Naval Forces Europe Band....

MSC operates HSV Swift with commercial mariners who provide deck, engineering and navigation, while embarked U.S. military personnel oversee theater security cooperation efforts. Swift has visited Namibia, Republic of Congo and Cote D'Ivoire and will visit other ports during this Africa Partnership Station mission. Virginia Palmer, Charge d'affaires at the U.S. Consulate South Africa, said our crew of civilians, Sailors and Marines were excellent ambassadors for the United States during their visit.

U.S. Marines land at Paldiski Harbor

PALDISKI, Estonia (Estonian Defense Forces News) – U.S. Navy transport ship USNS Bobo arrived at Paldiski Southern Harbor, transporting armored vehicles, supplies and U.S. Marines, who will take part in the BALTOPS military exercises. At noon on June 14, the U.S. Marines will demonstrate the disembarkation of vehicles and supplies from USNS Bobo using a system of lighters. The operation can be seen by the public from viewing areas near Paldiski.

MSC has participated in BALTOPS for years. Led by U.S. Naval Forces Europe, this is the 40th BALTOPS exercise. Since 2010, our role has increased from deploying equipment ashore to amphibious maritime off-load operations. The commercial mariners aboard our Prepositioning Program ships have delivered – time after time!

International teams cooperate in Eurasia Partnership Dive 2012

CONSTANTA, Romania (Navy News Service) – Diving teams from Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Ukraine and the United States met in Constanta, Romania for Eurasia Partnership Dive 2012 May 28-June 8. The exercise, co-hosted by the Romanian and U.S. navies, helped evaluate progress made by NATO allies and partners toward diving interoper-



Secretary of Defense Leon E. Panetta is escorted by USNS Richard E. Byrd (T-AKE 4) Chief Mate Fred Cullen in Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam, June 3. Cullen took Panetta on a short ride out to Byrd.

ability, standardization of procedures and equipment familiarity....

USNS Grasp, one of MSC's rescue and salvage ships, provided the platform for the various countries' dive teams to learn from each other and improve their skills. MSC has been a vital part of these programs that reach out to our partners and allies. The professionalism of our CIVMARs provides a guiding light for the other navies involved.

Ponce deploys to CENTCOM as Interim Afloat Forward Staging Base

NORFOLK (Navy News Service) – The amphibious ship USS Ponce deployed from Norfolk, Va., on June 1 to serve as an Afloat Forward Staging Base for U.S. Central Command, marking the end of a quick turnaround for the Navy to address an urgent operational need. The ship, formerly LPD-15, had been scheduled for a March 2012 decommissioning, but was spared when U.S. Fleet Forces Command and several Navy officials decided instead to refurbish it to meet a longstanding need from CENTCOM.

Shipmates, this is one of the biggest success stories for MSC yet. When Adm. Harvey, Commander, Fleet Forces Command asked me just before Christmas if MSC could modify and refurbish USS Ponce for deployment as an interim afloat forward staging base, I immediately called Jack Taylor, MSC's director of government-operated ships. Jack said "Yes, Sir!" so I told Adm. Harvey MSC was ready to take on the project. His response was, "Good. Oh, by the way, I need it June 1!"

The MSC team made that daunting task happen. Working in concert with Sailors from COMNAVSURFLANT, USS Ponce was made ready for her new mission and logged "last line" five minutes ahead of schedule on June 1. Under way's the only way!

USNS Richard E. Byrd hosts Defense Secretary Panetta in Cam Ranh Bay

CAM RAHN BAY, Vietnam (Defense News) – Senior U.S. officials were once a familiar sight at this deep-water port on the South China Sea. But that was during the Vietnam War, which is why Defense Secretary Leon Panetta's visit to an American ship moored in the harbor here is historic. Panetta touched on history, but spoke of the future to the men and women of USNS Richard E. Byrd – a Military Sealift Command dry cargo/ammunition ship. Panetta later held a joint press conference with Vietnamese minister of defense Gen. Phung Quang Thanh.

Wherever the United States shows the flag, MSC is there! Our people and ships are very much a part of the diplomatic presence of America around the world. Byrd's Chief Mate Fred "Spike" Cullen, met the secretary at the pier and rode out to the ship and back with him. Spike and the secretary come from the same area near Monterey, Calif.

MSC on the Web

And that's not every ocean, MSC is part of the CNO's forward-deployed and fully ready Navy. The people of the world are reading about it almost every day. We're even

reaching out to the world through the Internet. Robbin Laird, a contributing reporter for AOL's Defense Beat, is doing a series of commentaries about the U.S. strategy in the Pacific. In the first of his articles, he highlighted MSC as the key to sustainability, noting that, "...whether that support comes from underway replenishment, from ships at sea or air assets, the more than 100 MSC ships are the lifeblood of our fleet."

Mr. Laird highlighted MSC's readiness and ability to support U.S. objectives when called up, citing USS Ponce and the T-AKE dry cargo/ammunition ships as examples. Mr. Laird concluded by saying "MSC provides a key element for sustained forward deployment. And folding this into the discussion about what is needed for the Asian pivot is part of what professionals need to do."

I couldn't have said it better myself. Thanks to all of you – afloat and ashore – who enable our Navy and our nation to operate forward every day. MSC delivers!

Sail safe and yours aye,

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

Sealift is an authorized publication for members and employees of the Navy's Military Sealift Command. Contents of this publication are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Navy. Sealift is published monthly by the Military Sealift Command Office of Public Affairs as authorized under NAVPUBINST 5600.42A. Submission of articles and letters should be addressed to Editor, Sealift, Military Sealift Command, 914 Charles Morris Court, S.E., Washington Navy Yard, D.C. 20398-5540; phone (202) 685-5055 or DSN 325-5055; fax (202) 685-5067; or via e-mail to sealift.editor@navy.mil. All photographic submissions must be sent via e-mail, express mail or parcel service.

COMSC Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby, USN

Director, Public Affairs Tom Van Leunen

Editor James Marconi

Writers Edward Baxter, Singapore
Bill Cook, Norfolk, Va.
Susan Melow, Norfolk, Va.
Meghan Patrick, Washington
Jessica Alexander, Washington
Sarah Burford, San Diego
Kim Dixon, Naples
Masha Rumer, Washington

Art Director Dale Allen, Washington

Graphics Susan Thomas, Washington

Military Sealift Command reports to the Commander, U.S. Transportation Command for defense transportation matters, to the Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command for Navy-unique matters and to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition for procurement policy and oversight matters.



Printed on recycled paper



Moving forward with **ONE MSC**



As of the middle of June, the MSC Total Force Management team has completed approximately 70 percent of the paperwork needed to officially realign supervisory chains for MSC headquarters and MSC Norfolk. All directorates are complete except N7 Engineering and P01 Government Operations, including PM1 Combat Logistics Force, PM4 Service Support Ships and class managers/staff. They should be complete by early July. All that remains is revising several position descriptions. Those will be reviewed in July.

The next steps will see N8 Comptroller folks adjusting the supervisory hierarchies in SLDCADA, the automated time and attendance system, and revising the Defense Travel System approval routing to match the realignment. N6 Command, Control, Communications and Computer Systems will revise the personnel locator and Outlook information.

This all sounds like a lot of complicated steps, but they're all necessary to make the realignment work as seamlessly as possible in terms of our primary mission – delivering the warfighters' needs wherever, whenever.

As always, for information and answers to questions about the ONE MSC realignment process, send an e-mail to MSC-Future@navy.mil. Or, you can visit the blog, Thackrah's Thoughts, on the MSC portal at <https://www.mysealift.msc.navy.mil/sites/n01mscfutures/default.aspx>.

Kaiser loads RIMPAC biofuel on board

By Sarah E. Burford
MSCPAC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command (MSC) fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser (T-AO 187) commenced the load of 900,000 gallons of a 50/50 blend of advanced biofuels and traditional petroleum-based fuel June 13 at Defense Fuel Support Point, Manchester, Wash. Kaiser will deliver the biofuel to the platforms participating in the Great Green Fleet demonstration, which will take place in July during the 2012 Rim of the Pacific exercise. This demonstration allows the Navy to test, evaluate, and demonstrate the cross-platform utility and functionality of advanced biofuels in an operational setting, and will achieve one of the five energy goals established by Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus: to demonstrate a Great Green Fleet in local operations by 2012.

"The Navy has been at the forefront

of energy innovation throughout its history," said Mabus. "From sail to coal-fired steam to oil and nuclear powered submarines and carriers, we have sought and achieved technological advancement in how we power the Fleet because it has made us better warfighters. The Great Green Fleet demonstration is a significant milestone in the Navy's progress to greater energy security."

Kaiser will take on 700,000 gallons of hydro-treated renewable diesel fuel, or HRD76, and 200,000 gallons of hydro-treated renewable aviation fuel, or HRJ5. Both fuels are a 50/50 blend of traditional petroleum-based fuel and biofuel comprised of a mix of waste cooking oil and algae oil.

While underway, Kaiser will transfer the HRJ5 fuel to U.S. Navy aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68), and the HRD76 fuel to the Navy's guided-missile cruiser USS Princeton (CG 59) and destroyers USS Chung-Hoon (DDG 93) and



U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Chris Brown

Two crew members from USNS Henry J. Kaiser (T-AO 187) pull a fueling hose to begin a biofuels transfer in Manchester, Wash., June 13. The ship transferred 900,000 gallons of a 50/50 blend of advanced biofuels in preparation for delivery to platforms in the Great Green Fleet demonstration during Rim of the Pacific exercise 2012.

USS Chaffee (DDG 90).

"Our mission is service to the fleet," said Navy Capt. Sylvester Moore, commander, Military Sealift Command Pacific. "Delivering advanced biofuel to the fleet is a great opportunity to demonstrate our capabilities, and to be a part of

the continued efforts of the Navy to develop new technologies that will advance mission capabilities."

For more information on RIMPAC visit: <http://www.cpf.navy.mil/rimpac/2012/> and for more information on DoN energy initiatives visit: <http://greenfleet.dodlive.mil/>.

MSC logistician earns prestigious award

By James Marconi
MSC Public Affairs

Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics, Vice Adm. Philip Cullom, presented Mike Robinson, Military Sealift Command, with the Navy's most prestigious award for logisticians during a June 7 ceremony.

Robinson, MSC's Combat Logistics Force load management division direc-

tor, received the Admiral Stanley R. Arthur Award for Logistics Excellence as 2011 Civilian Logician of the Year. The award is one of three given annually for outstanding performance in Navy logistics.

The award, presented at the Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C., recognizes both military and civilian personnel who "have illustrated innovative methods and logistics professionalism that establish a benchmark or model by which to measure the accomplishments of logisticians throughout the Navy," according to a 2007 CNO instruction.

Robinson's logistics contributions are significant, as he spearheaded the development of MSC's new cargo load management system. The command's 30 Combat Logistics Force ships are the logistics backbone of Navy operations at sea, providing the fuel, food and ammunition to keep these combatant ships operating forward.

Thanks to the new cargo load management system, ship inventories worldwide can now be monitored from six global, centralized locations ashore. Latest state-of-the-art computer technology enables both seagoing personnel and a shore-based management team to see accurate, up-to-date inventories. As a result, combatant commanders can better direct supply-laden CLF ships to provide the necessary underway replenishments.

"We basically have taken a program that was just an idea in October 2007, and since that time we've established an entire network," Robinson said.

Smoothly implementing the new system, which encompasses new personnel in six shoreside locations, in addition to adding technological upgrades to the CLF ships, represented a challenge to Robinson and his team. In the upcoming year, they aim to develop a robust metrics package that will more accurately measure the system's increased efficiency. One of the most important measures of success to date; however, is that the entire transition was an "invisible process," Robinson said. Navy customers at sea continued to receive supplies on schedule, with no interruptions in service.

"The new business model is quite revolutionary for naval logistics support as

it enables us to operate in a standardized and synchronized global support network making sustainment of deployed forces by CLF ships adaptive, responsive and cost efficient," said Pete Budi, director of MSC's logistics directorate. "We are all extremely proud of Mike's accomplishment and his ability to deliver on a very difficult and challenging initiative. He is truly an exceptional leader."

The last two CLF ships are scheduled to receive a software upgrade, called the Shipboard Load Management Module, by mid-July. The upgrade allows ships to transmit cargo inventory data in real time to centralized management locations ashore.

By October, additional civilian billets for shoreside locations in Norfolk, Va., and San Diego will be fully staffed, supporting the Combat Logistics Officers currently managing the new systems.

"Even though this is an individual award, it really represents the efforts of a very large team," Robinson said. "It's a significant recognition for an achievement that was pretty significant as well."

Robinson, a former Supply Corps officer who retired as a captain after 27 years on active duty, joined MSC in 2009 and assumed his current position in 2010.



U.S. Navy photo by Barry Lake

Vice Adm. Philip Cullom, deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics, presents MSC's Mike Robinson with the Navy's most prestigious award for logistics excellence.

New top doc reports aboard Comfort

By Meghan Patrick
MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort's Medical Treatment Facility changed leadership May 25 as Navy Capt. Kevin J. Knoop assumed command from Navy Capt. David K. Weiss during a ceremony aboard Comfort at Canton Pier in Baltimore.

Comfort's primary mission is to serve as an afloat, mobile, acute-surgical medical facility to the U.S. military, with a secondary mission of providing hospital services for disaster relief and humanitarian operations worldwide. Comfort's Medical Treatment Facility, or MTF, is crewed and maintained by medical personnel from the U.S. Navy's Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

Knoop comes to Comfort's MTF from III Marine Expeditionary Force in Okinawa, Japan, where he served as force surgeon.

"I am ecstatic to be taking one of the best jobs in Navy medicine," Knoop said in his ceremony remarks. "It rounds out my valued naval career and I feel prepared to fill the big shoes I'm now wallowing in."

Knoop's past tours also include assignments to U.S. Naval Hospital, Guantanamo Bay; Guantanamo Bay Naval Air Station; Fleet Composite Squadron 10; Naval Medical Center, Portsmouth; the Taqqadum Surgical Shock Trauma Platoon during Operation Iraqi Freedom; and U.S. Naval Hospital, Yokosuka, Japan.

Navy Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby, commander, Military Sealift Com-

mand, served as guest speaker for the change of command ceremony and presented Weiss with a Legion of Merit Award for his outstanding performance as commanding officer of Comfort's MTF.

"Can you imagine a more noble and fulfilling mission than to be handed the keys to a 1,000 bed, 12-operating room hospital, with a helicopter pad and two helos as well as two waterborne ambulances, staffed by 900 military and civilian healthcare professionals, and told go forth and heal people?" said Buzby to the ceremony's audience of nearly 150 people. "It sends chills up my spine that someone would be able to go do that and that's what Capt. Weiss had the opportunity to do while in this position."

After assuming command of Comfort's MTF in July 2010, Weiss led

900 personnel through nine countries in the Caribbean and Latin America in support of Continuing Promise 2011, Comfort's six-month humanitarian and civic assistance deployment to the region. Under Weiss' supervision, more than 68,000 patients were treated and 1,100 medical procedures took place in shipboard operating rooms.

Weiss will next report to Stuttgart, Germany, where he will serve as command surgeon for U.S. Africa Command.

"This has been the most unique and exciting job I've ever had," said Weiss. "Serving aboard Comfort has been the greatest honor of my life so far, so it's with sadness that my tenure comes to an end today. But what remains on this ship as people like me come and go is the good that always comes of this platform."

Swift showcases

By Jessica F. Alexander, MSC Public Affairs

HSV Swift (HSV2), a U.S. Military Sealift Command-chartered high-speed vessel, is providing critical support to the U.S. Navy's partnership mission in Africa this year.

Since January, the U.S. Navy has been deployed to Africa as part of an ongoing international effort to improve regional maritime safety and security during a mission called Africa Partnership 2012.

APS is an international security cooperation initiative aimed at strengthening global maritime partnerships through training and collaborative activities in order to improve maritime safety and security in Africa. Training activities focus on counter-piracy, illicit trafficking, and energy and resource security.

In the past five years, APS has brought together more than 30 African, European, North and South American countries. The mission is in part motivated by the belief that effective maritime security and safety will contribute to development and economic prosperity.

Swift arrived in Africa May 4 after a fuel stop in Dakar, Senegal. Once on station, the ship's crew conducted brief port visits in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, Lome, Togo and Pointe Noire, Republic of Congo before heading further south to Namibia and other locations in South Africa.

There are currently 60 total crew members aboard the ship, including contracted mariners, U.S. Sailors and Marines and the Embarked Security Team.

HSV Swift is a mission-critical element to APS 12, providing a versatile, agile platform for a variety of subject-matter expert exchanges with host nations.

In remarks aboard Swift, Capt. Susan Dunlap, Navy Africa Region Director, talked about the impact of the APS mission commitment in terms of resources.

"It is a huge task to schedule ships, hold conferences, make plans and do everything that needs to be done to bring off an event of this magnitude," said Dunlap.

Partner nations benefit because the concerns of the maritime environment today are global.

"Piracy affects all nations that transport goods on the ocean. Drugs trafficked through most of Africa mostly reach European shores. Terrorism is exported to the United States and all over the world. So it is in our own interest to help Africa improve maritime security," Dunlap said.

APS bolsters maritime safety and security by increasing African nations' capabilities to secure their own territorial waters and enforce their own economic exclusive zones.

However, true mission success is also dependent upon the friendships and partnerships that are built along the way, and maritime security in Africa is a long-term effort.

Ensign Joe Keiley, the public affairs officer aboard Swift, reflects on his time aboard the ship and the value of the APS mission:

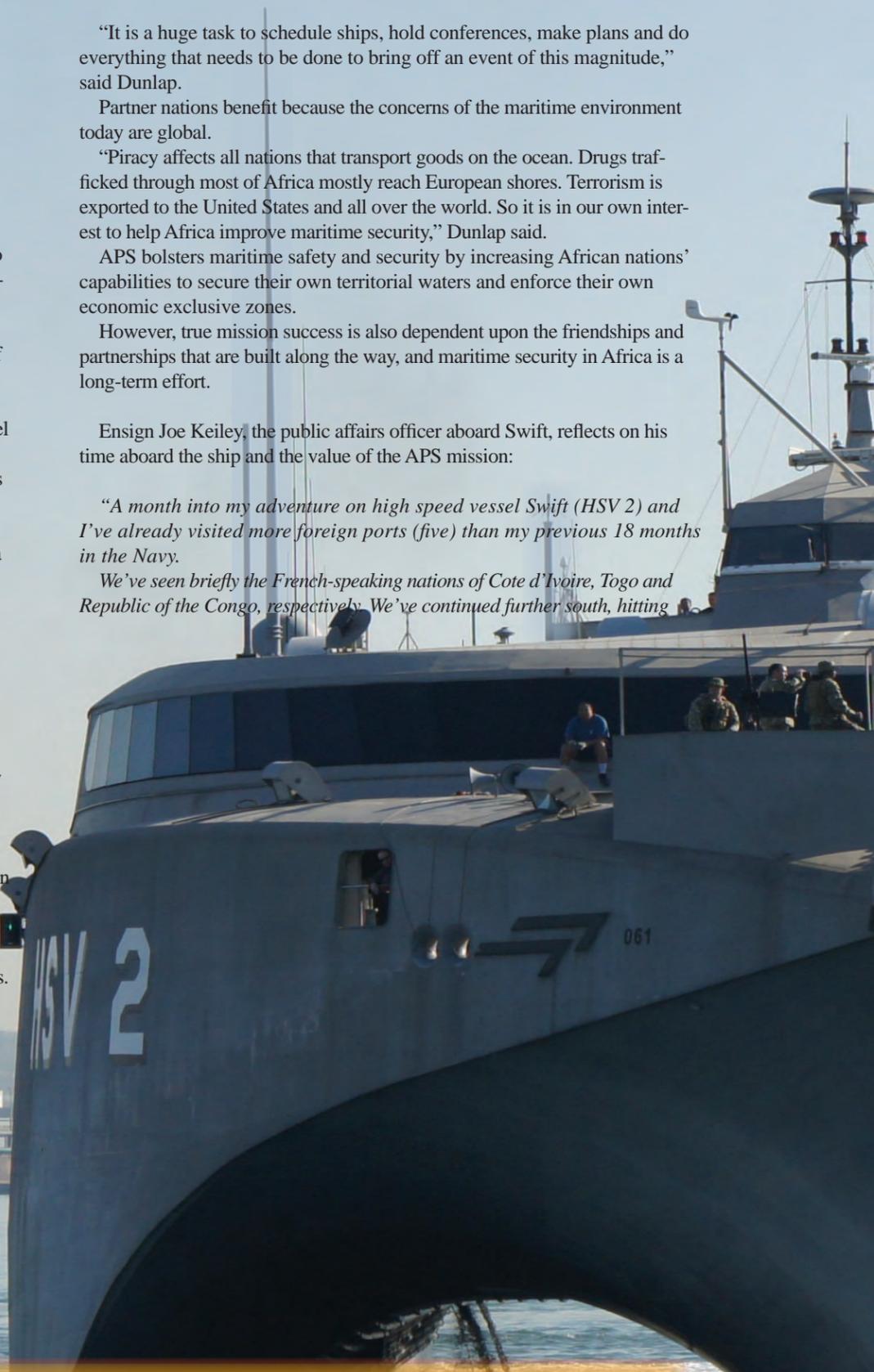
"A month into my adventure on high speed vessel Swift (HSV 2) and I've already visited more foreign ports (five) than my previous 18 months in the Navy.

We've seen briefly the French-speaking nations of Cote d'Ivoire, Togo and Republic of the Congo, respectively. We've continued further south, hitting



U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Cmdr. Suzanna Brugler

Sailors dig a hole for a new fence post May 22 during a community service project in Walvis Bay, Namibia.



U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Cmdr. Suzanna Brugler

Cover, top left: Sailors aboard HSV Swift (HSV 2) practice hose-handling techniques during damage control training May 8.

Cover, bottom left: Boatswain Ray Tinay touches up the paint while Swift is in East London, South Africa, June 2.

Cover, right: U.S. Marine Sergeant Oscar Gallegos, right, shows Congolese service members a security training video May 17.

Background: Swift pulls into Durban Harbor, South Africa, June 5 for a two-day port visit.

Left: Two embarked Marines demonstrate how to move an injured patient to Congolese service members on Swift's flight deck May 18.

s skills & goodwill

Namibia and South Africa.

The weather has been a bit more winter-like, but both have been absolutely beautiful places to see and the whole time, Swift has been connecting with local leaders, military, civilian, and the public, many who have gotten a chance to see the ship and learn about the chances to share knowledge and our interests in protecting the seas, deterring piracy and keeping trade flowing in and out of Africa.

Visiting so many different places in a short period of time, getting a chance to have a variety of service members, civilians, and diplomats all involved in the Africa Partnership mission is encouraging to see, and Swift is perhaps the most unique and capable ship that can pull these varied opportunities off.

It takes a lot of people working together, but hopefully our continued presence will give the chance to really see the growth in new friendships across the continent.”

“...hopefully our continued presence will give the chance to really see the growth in new friendships...”

Ensign Joe Keiley, public affairs officer aboard Swift

Another U.S. Navy Sailor aboard Swift, Logistics Specialist 1st Class Shane Mitchell, reflects on the community relations aspect of the APS mission:

“I had a tremendous experience traveling to an orphanage in Pointe Noire, Congo. The children, along with their instructors, were singing to us as we arrived. Their faces were aglow, and they were singing from their hearts. Smiles often go long distances, and I can say with great certainty that they touched my heart and continue to touch it today.”

The Navy musicians we have had on board have been spectacular. It was an honor to be with them as they entertained the faculty and children. An even more astounding portion was to watch as the children danced and sang along with the songs.

I had the distinct privilege of giving an APS water bottle to a young teenage boy. He received it with a heavenly smile. To bring a pleasant experience into this young man’s life was rewarding and enriching.

APS is about touching people’s lives in tangible ways. To make a child’s day is something that should be strived for daily, and I was certainly glad to have contributed to that young man’s life. Our friendship is one that I always remember.”

During the month of June, Swift continued the mission in Mozambique, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and Kenya before the APS East mission concludes and heads to the west coast to begin APS West with visits in Nigeria, Cameroon, Benin.

The ship’s gold crew and blue crew plan to turnover in July, and APS 12 is scheduled to conclude in September.

For more information and to join the conversation visit: <http://www.facebook.com/hsv2swift>.

Musicians assigned to U.S. Naval Forces Europe perform May 10 at the Centre Pilote pour la Petite Enfance in Abidjan, Cote D’Ivoire.



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jonathan Garcia

MSC celebrates National Maritime Day

By Masha Rumer
MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command celebrated National Maritime Day in Washington May 22. Air Force Gen. William M. Fraser III, commander, U.S. Transportation Command, and Navy Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby, commander, Military Sealift Command, headlined the annual ceremony honoring U.S. merchant mariners at the Washington Navy Yard.

Government and maritime industry leaders were among the more than 200 guests attending the commemoration.

Merchant mariners have been the backbone of U.S. security and prosperity since the nation's founding, capturing the first British vessel in the War of Independence and delivering vital supplies during virtually every conflict since. Today, more than 80 percent of MSC's nearly 10,000-member strong workforce are civil service and contract mariners operating more than 100 ships around the globe on a daily basis.

"I can't think of a better place to be to celebrate Maritime Day," said Fraser. "America is grateful for your commitment to excellence and devotion to duty... We absolutely depend on you."

The formal military ceremony included the presentation of wreaths to commemorate those mariners who perished while serving the nation. Guests stood and a member of the U.S. Navy Band Brass Quintet played "Taps," accompanied by a gun salute.

Information Systems Technician Seaman Apprentice Timothy Shirley, MSC Sailor of the Quarter; Apprentice Jason Knapp from Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education at Piney Point, Md. and Midshipman Christopher Bernard from U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, N.Y. served as wreath tenders.

The wreaths were later placed at the mariner bronze relief sculpture at the Navy Memorial in downtown Washington.

"We at MSC are proud of our civilian mariners, so it is fitting that today is set aside to acknowledge the great debt of



Air Force Gen. William Fraser, commander, U.S. Transportation Command, and Rear Adm. Mark Buzby, commander, MSC, salute as they honor America's merchant mariners.

gratitude we owe to the dedicated men and women of the U.S. Merchant Marine," said Buzby.

Army Lt. Col. Timothy D. Walls, command chaplain, U.S. Transportation Command, read the invocation, while Capt. Robert T. Wiley, MSC ship's master, led the responsive reading. The memorial prayer and the benediction were led by Capt. Paul

L. Burmeister, MSC force chaplain.

During the ceremony, the U.S. Navy Band Brass Quintet played the national anthem and "God Bless America." Erin C. Gantt from MSC's Prepositioning Program sang "The Navy Hymn" and closed the ceremony with the official merchant mariner song, "Heave Ho, My Lads, Heave Ho," joined by Buzby.

FAR EAST • HAILS

Navy **Cmdr. Stefan Wusstig** relieved Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Patrick Haney** as commanding officer of Military Office Diego Garcia May 22. Wusstig, a reservist with Kansas City, Mo.-based MSC Far East Reserve Unit 102, will serve as acting commanding officer until a permanent replacement is assigned by the Navy's Bureau of Personnel. MSC Far East commander Navy **Capt. Chip Denman** presented Haney with a Meritorious Service Medal recognizing his outstanding one-year tour of duty.

Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three changed leadership when Navy **Capt. Richard Rainer** relieved Navy **Capt. Deidre McLay** at the American Memorial Park on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, May 25. Guests included representatives from the Saipan Chamber of Commerce and the U.S. National Park Service. Denman presented McLay with the Legion of Merit, recognizing her outstanding one-year assignment with the squadron.

Finally, in Busan, Republic of Korea, civilian master **Capt. Patrick Rathbun** and the crew of USNS Red Cloud (T-AKR 313) hosted a change of command ceremony where Navy **Cmdr. Thomas Plott** relieved Navy **Cmdr. David Bartell** as commanding officer of MSC Office Korea. More than 150 guests attended, including U.S. Army personnel, port officials, Republic of Korea military personnel and members of the local community. Denman presented Bartell with a Meritorious Service Medal for outstanding service during his two-year assignment.

Capt. Ryan White, prospective civilian master of USNS Henson (T-AGS 63) visited Denman and MSC Far East staff members during a one-day orientation visit to the command before reporting aboard the ship.

Maritime Day celebrations

On the pier at Singapore's Sembawang Wharves, MSC Far East staff members joined crewmembers from USNS Tippecanoe (T-AO 199) May 23,

where each attendee placed a Singaporean flower in the water to honor and remember those merchant mariners who have fallen in the line of duty.

In the Republic of Korea, MSCO Okinawa joined civilian master **Capt. Jon Skoglund** and the crew of MV Vice Adm. K.R. Wheeler (T-AG 5001) pier side, where Skoglund placed a wreath



Navy medical personnel perform reconstructive surgery on an Indonesian patient June 2 aboard USNS Mercy (T-AH 19). The surgery is one of many performed aboard the ship during Pacific Partnership 2012, a humanitarian and civic assistance mission throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

in the water honoring the U.S. Merchant Marine and seafarers worldwide.

At Diego Garcia, Navy **Capt. David Tidwell**, commanding officer, Naval Support Facility, Diego Garcia; and MV LTC John U.D. Page Chief Mate **Kevin Smith** spoke at a ceremony that included more than 200 guests.

At Okinawa, Japan, MSCO Okinawa operations officer Boatswain's Mate **Senior Chief Gene Palabrica** and administrative officer **Yeoman 1st Class Hoang Nguyen** attended a ceremony at Okinawa's United Seamen's Service Center.

ATLANTIC • LINES

John Gregov, Military Sealift Command Atlantic marine transportation specialist managing the command's office in Port Canaveral, Fla., supported the discharge of an advanced dual optical tracking system from USNS Waters (T-AGS 45). This equipment tracks Tomahawk missiles launched from a Trident ballistic missile submarine.

Early in the month, Gregov conducted a cost analysis that resulted in shifting USNS Howard O. Lorenzen (T-AGM 25) to Port Canaveral from Norfolk, Va., for a cost savings of more than \$14,000 for each arrival and departure the vessel makes to port.

USNS Pathfinder (T-AGS 60) off-loaded cargo using U.S. Air Force cranes, forklifts and trucks May 9-13. Gregov further supported the loading of missiles on TB Megan Beyel/MOBRO 1210, destined for the Navy's Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center on Andros Island in the Bahamas for use during live ocean exercises.

Bill O'Neal, marine transportation specialist at MSCLANT's Jacksonville, Fla., office, and MSC's Jacksonville team supported USNS Big Horn (T-AO 198) and MSC-chartered ship MV Houston throughout the month. Big Horn made two stops in Mayport for cargo upload and fuel and one stop on Blount Island to pick up cargo for the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) Carrier Strike Group. Houston discharged more than 135,000 barrels of fuel in mid-May.

At MSC's office in Charleston, S.C., **Tom D'Agostino**, director of ship operations, assisted Houston in discharging 170,000 barrels of jet fuel. Marine Transportation Specialist **Mary Ann Liberto** coordinated port services for USNS John Lenthall (T-AO 189) for the ship's arrival at Detyen's Shipyard May 1.

USNS Patuxent (T-AO 201) returned to Norfolk May 31 after a nearly seven-month, high-tempo deployment to U.S. 5th and 6th Fleet areas of responsibility. Patuxent supported the USS John C. Stennis and USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Groups as well as the USS Makin Island Amphibious Ready Group. Patuxent also supported

multinational exercises Arabian Shark and Vigilant Mariner. The ship performed 95 replenishments at sea during that timeframe.

A security, training, assessment and assistance team from Naval Criminal Investigative Service conducted a triennial individual ship assessment on Pathfinder while the ship was moored at Port Canaveral in May. During the assessment, MSC ships are evaluated in all areas of anti-terrorism and force protection to determine their readiness to detect, deter and defend against asymmetrical threats. Pathfinder and crew passed with flying colors; NCIS inspectors noted only minor administrative discrepancies, which were corrected.

Also in May, MSC Atlantic anti-terrorism and force protection representatives conducted pre-deployment AFTP spot checks on USNS Sacagawea (T-AKE 2) and USNS Robert E. Peary (T-AKE 5). Both ships' programs were found to be well maintained.

The command welcomes **Eric Carter** as operations planning specialist in the command's logistics department and Navy reserve component **Lt. Fionna Boyle** to MSCLANT's AFTP team.



USNS Grapple (T-ARS 53) at anchor in Kingston Bay, Jamaica, one of the ship's stops during Navy Dive-Southern Partnership Station 2012. The mission fosters cooperation between partner nations and the United States.

CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Military Sealift Command Central and Commander Task Force 53 had a busy May. Combat Logistics Force ships in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations conducted 89 underway replenishments in May, including 47 replenishments with coalition, European Union and NATO ships. This logistic support provided by the ships of Commander Task Force 53 enabled 5th Fleet combatants to stay at sea for extended periods.

USNS Patuxent (T-AO 201) completed a successful five-month deployment to U.S. 5th Fleet, outchopping May 10. In May alone, Patuxent executed underway replen-

ishments with coalition navy ships from five different nations in support of counter-piracy operations off the Horn of Africa.

MSC Central and Commander Task Force 53 bid fair winds and following seas to Navy **Petty Officer 1st Class Kelli Weems**, who retired after 20 years of service. MSCCENT/CTF-53 also bid farewell Navy **Petty Officer 2nd Class Daniel Rustan**.

The command welcomes Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Mathew Geiser, Lt. j.g. Michael Perry, Senior Chief Petty Officer Israel Villones** and petty officers 2nd class **Namon Richardson** and **Michael Jones**.

U.S. Air Force photo by MC3 Travis Kuykendall



A Marine conducts a visit, board, search and seizure exercise May 22 aboard USNS SGT William R. Button (T-AK 3012) during Exercise Eager Lion 2012.

PACIFIC • BRIEFS

USNS Rainier (T-AOE 7) arrived in San Diego May 14 following an ammunition upload with aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68). While there, Rainier served as the standby oiler in the Southern California operations area throughout May.

Donald Williams, MSC Support Command Norfolk, traveled to San Diego May 14-18 to train MSC Pacific and MSC Pacific Reserve Sailors on the Mobile Sealift Operations Center van. The MSOC provides critical communications equipment for operating and managing port operations even when port infrastructure is damaged or destroyed, serving as a command post for MSC port opera-

tions exercises like Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore, as well as worldwide MSC operations.

Navy **Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby**, commander, MSC, sent a personal Bravo Zulu to **Phil Patton** and **Bob Almario**, MSCPAC's Force Protection Team, 2012 winners of the Griff Hume Anti-Terrorism Awards, Fixed Installation/Unit Small Category. The award is a tribute to the team's hard work in the force protection and anti-terrorism efforts within the command area of operation, at sea and in port.

Congratulations to Navy **Information Technologies Specialist 1st Class Michael Nagy** on his selection to that rank.

HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

Military Sealift Command headquarters honored Navy **Capt. Jim Romano**, MSC's former Chief of Staff, at his retirement aboard Display Ship Barry at the Washington Navy Yard in Washington, D.C., May 18. Romano enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1971 and served for more than 40 years. He is a veteran of Vietnam, Eastern Mediterranean and humanitarian campaigns, and his awards include two Legion of Merits, four Meritorious Service Medals, six Navy Commendation Medals and a number of other personal and unit commendations. Romano was an indispensable part of MSC in his role of Chief of Staff since arriving in April 2010.

The command also bids fair winds and following seas to Navy **Capt. Sybil Bradley**, reserve affairs and maritime forces, manpower and management; **James White III**, office of the comptroller; **Julianne Berens**, engineering; **John Henry**, contract operated ships program; and **Janet Thurman**, contracts and business management.

MSC headquarters welcomes **Christopher Burton, Don Frank** and **Allen Merrill**, all in command, control, communications and computer systems, as well as Navy **Yeoman Chief Garry Little**, maritime forces, manpower and management.

EUROPE/AFRICA • NEWS

Navy **Capt. Richard Soucie**, commander, Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa, joined Air Force Gen. William Fraser, commander, U.S. Transportation Command, in Rota, Spain, May 3 to visit HSV Swift (HSV 2) and USNS 2ND LT John P. Bobo (T-AK 3008). While in Rota, Soucie also visited USNS Bruce C. Heezen (T-AGS 64), deployed to the U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility to conduct survey operations.

USNS Kanawha (T-AO 196) continued its mission of keeping U.S. Navy and partner navy ships replenished, on station and ready. Customers during the month of May included USS Vella Gulf (CG 72), USS The Sullivans (DDG 68), USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51), USS New York (LPD 21) and USS Cole (DDG 67). Kanawha also conducted underway replenishments with international participants of Exercise Phoenix Express.

In May, USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) departed its homeport of Gaeta, Italy, for an underway period to participate in a European Command training exercise as well as for an underway period for local area training.

Transiting the Mediterranean Sea en

route to Commander Task Force 20 area of responsibility, USNS Patuxent (T-AO 201) stopped in Augusta Bay, Italy, May 13 to load 30 privately-owned vehicles being shipped to the United States as part of the opportune lift program.

MSC-chartered tankers MT Maersk Peary and MT Ardmore Centurion transferred DOD fuel throughout the region. In cargo operations May 4-9, MSC-chartered MV Schippersgracht loaded and discharged DOD containerized cargo in Nordenham, Germany, with additional distribution stops at Newport, United Kingdom, and Hammernesodden, Norway. MSCEURAF marine transportation specialists **Kathleen Pavarini, Matt Sweeney** and **Mark Bigelow** contributed to the success of the mission, including managing the on-hire and off-hire process for Schippersgracht and two MSC-chartered coasters, MV Maxime and MV Sun Bird, used to transfer cargo in Newport and Hammernesodden.

The command welcomes **Bruce Martin**, operations assistant, and congratulates **Pete Lewis**, force protection officer, on winning the MSC Anti-Terrorism/Force Protection Manager of the Year Award.

COMPASS • HEADING

USS Ponce (AFSB(I)-15), departed Naval Station Norfolk June 1, ready for tasking in the U.S. Central Command area of operations. MSC's project leader, Deputy Commander **Rear Adm. Brian LaRoche**, Deputy Project Lead **Mike Ricci**, and the entire MSC team worked with Navy counterparts to aggressively complete modifications in five months and meet the June deployment date. In a congratulatory message, LaRoche wrote, "You hit a grand slam! They say the two most important words in the English language are thank you. Today I thank you for your hard work, creativity solving hard problems, ability to work as a team with so many stakeholders, and most of all for your confidence in each other. You really did make history today and you did it together as One MSC."

Total Force Management Director **Eileen Roberson** congratulated Medical Services Officer **Nicole Shouder** for her selection as MSC 2011 Marine Employee of the Year during a ceremony held at MSC Norfolk's Breezy Point facility.

Selectees for the Navy Sea Service

Award (Arthur L. Johnson) Licensed and (Oscar Chappell) Unlicensed are civilian master **Capt. Curtis Smith** and **Medical Services Officer Nicole Shouder**, respectively.

Civil service mariner promotion boards selected mariners as qualified and best qualified for promotion to the following billets: assistant yeoman storekeeper, chief cook, able seaman (maintenance) and able seaman (watch), first radio electronics technician, second officer and second assistance engineer (watch).

Fair winds and following seas to **Assistant Storekeeper Efen Cunanan, Chief Radio Electronics Technician Steve Skelton, Able Seaman Manuel Briones, Third Officer Patric Gillmer, Utilityman Alejo Aragon, Yeoman Storekeeper Carlos Pampolina, Able Seaman Joseph Thomas, Pumpman Donnie Edens** and **Marine Placement Specialist Gus Manjavinos**, as they retire.

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



Rear Adm. Mark Buzby, commander, MSC, awards the Legion of Merit to Navy Capt. Jim Romano, former chief of staff, during a retirement ceremony May 18. The festivities honored Romano's more than 40 years of Navy service.

MSC ships aid Med security exercise

By Kim Dixon
MSCEURAF Public Affairs

Maritime security in the Mediterranean Sea has been a concern for millennia, continuing into the modern day. Threats have evolved, though, into a broader concept of security concerns encompassing terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, transnational criminality, illegal immigration and the environment.

The seventh iteration of exercise Phoenix Express – a two-phased maritime exercise conducted May 7-28 – brought together five Military Sealift Command ships, other U.S. Navy forces and 12 allied navies to focus on Mediterranean security issues by training in maritime interdiction operations.

MSC ships USNS SGT Matej Kocak (T-AK 3005), USNS LCPL Roy M. Wheat (T-AK 3016), USNS Kanawha (T-AO 196), USNS Grasp (T-ARS 51), MSC-contracted sea-going ferry MV San Marco and five MSC Europe and Africa reserve component members supported the underway phase of the exercise May 16-27 in the central Mediterranean. The ships participated in various scenarios, including role-playing high-value units in need of protection and target vessels suspected of illicit trafficking.

“Kocak was used as a target vessel for boarding teams to improve their skills at ship boarding,” said civilian mariner Benjamin Larrabee, Kocak’s second mate. “Due to the fact that the ship is similar to other cargo vessels, it gives the teams an opportunity to become more familiar with the layout of the ship and to improve on the difficulty of boarding such a large vessel.”

Boarding an unfamiliar vessel presents dangers even with a compliant boarding, where the crew of the vessel

cooperates fully with the boarding team. Phoenix Express mitigates those dangers through search and rescue scenarios, boarding drills, medical casualty drills, radio communication drills and information management techniques.

“The ship was able to see the interaction of personnel that our crew would normally not be exposed to,” said Capt. Christopher Begley, Wheat’s civilian master. “The crew learned that other countries have the ability to protect the rest of us who go to sea. We had the opportunity to work with helicopters and pilots from other navies as well as the sea-based boarding forces.”

Wheat and Kocak are government-owned vessels crewed by mariners who work for private companies under contract to MSC.

In addition to providing a physical training platform, the MSC ship crews also played the role of commercial crew members, adding increased realism to the scenarios.

“In role playing, I got an opportunity to see how other teams performed from a tactical standpoint,” said Andrew Carder, a contracted security officer assigned to Kocak. “Most of the time, I would be participating in tactical operations; for this, I was an observer and learned a lot. I’ve taken away some of the ideas and practices that the boarding teams use.”

As the underway phase was wrapping up May 27, Kanawha conducted underway replenishments with USS Simpson (FFG 56), Greek navy ship HS Navarinon (F 461), Italian navy ship ITS Bettica (P 492) and Turkish navy ship TCG Gelibolu (F 493).

MSCEURAF Navy Lt. Cmdr. Ruth Avelis, Lt. Cmdr. Beth Williams and Marine Transportation Specialist Robert Foster coordinated the participation of all MSC ships. In addition, five MS-

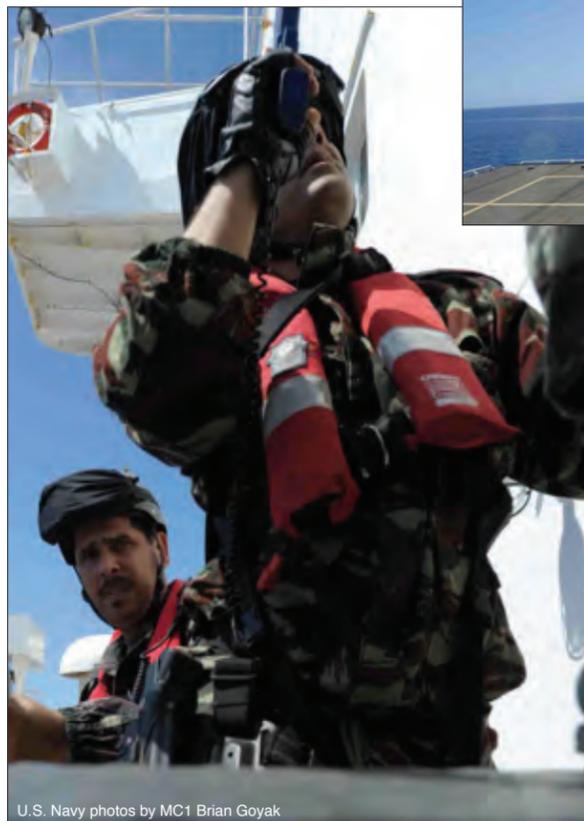
CEURAF reserve component members from Expeditionary Port Unit 104, operating out of Navy Operational Support Center Syracuse, N.Y., supported Phoenix Express. Navy Chief Boatswain’s Mate Shawn Reynolds and Lt. Jonathan Powell provided advanced planning for the ships in Souda Bay, Greece, the site of the exercise’s pre-sail conference; Lt. Christina Kasm embarked Wheat; Lt. j.g. Luke Leszyk embarked Kocak; and Lt. Cmdr. Dan Mack deployed to the Combined Maritime Operations Center in Oran, Algeria. Each worked to facilitate the interaction between MSC ships and the other exercise participants.

“I could use my civilian professional management skills in coordinating

among the several different people while leading the Navy personnel on board,” said Kasm. “I was proud to be part of MSCEURAF supporting the maritime interdiction operations mission in the Mediterranean, essentially making MSC ships operations safer as we helped partner countries better combat illicit trafficking.”



Above: Hellenic Navy special forces members fast rope onto USNS LCPL Roy M. Wheat during Phoenix Express 2012, a maritime security exercise.



Left: A Royal Moroccan Navy boarding team makes its way to Wheat’s bridge during a visit, board, search and seizure exercise May 23.

U.S. Navy photos by MC1 Brian Goyak

Conference strengthens U.S.-Korean partnership

By Ed Baxter
MSCFE Public Affairs

United States military forces, including Military Sealift Command, maintain an active partnership with the Republic of Korea, training annually to respond to potential crises on the Korean peninsula.

Both nations hone their cooperative defense capabilities through large-scale field and computer-simulated exercises, such as Ulchi Freedom Guardian and Key Resolve/Foal Eagle. The United States and South Korea also meet each year to ensure sealift assets are available to meet the potentially rigorous demands of resupplying U.S. troops with equipment and supplies.

Alternating between locations in the United States and South Korea, this year’s Korea Flag Shipping

Working Group Conference was held on South Korea’s scenic Jeju-Do Island May 15-17.

“This working group reinforces U.S. Forces Korea’s ability to support the warfighter,” said Dr. Hyon Sang Yu, a ROK Ministry of Defense civilian employee who works as chief of the Korean Transportation Support Office, Transportation Division, for Seoul-based U.S. Forces Korea headquarters.

The U.S. delegation included 15 representatives from MSC Far East, MSC Office Korea, U.S. Forces Korea, U.S. Pacific Command, Surface Deployment and Distribution Command, and Defense Logistics Agency Energy-Korea.

South Korean attendees included eight representatives from the ROK navy and marine corps, Ministry of National Defense, Ministry of Land Transportation and Maritime Affairs,

and Transportation Command.

The Korean Flag Shipping Program has its origins in the 1953 Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and South Korea, but was formalized by a memorandum of agreement signed by the commander of U.S. Pacific Command and the ROK chief of naval operations in 1981. The agreement enables MSC to assume full operational control of 59 South Korean-flagged, privately-owned cargo ships in the event of an emergency declared by the ROK government on the Korean peninsula.

These ships would, if activated, augment existing sealift capacity to support the shipment of wheeled and tracked vehicles, general supplies, ammunition, and aviation and diesel fuel to support U.S. bases, aircraft, ships and troops. The fleet of ships in the program currently includes container, break-bulk, roll-on/roll-off and petroleum product carriers.

“The complexity involved in activating, assigning ships and ensuring adequate sealift on this scale merits regular analysis to better understand the program,” said MSCFE commander and KFS Working Group conference co-chair Navy Capt. Chip Denman.

During the conference, attendees evaluated the various types of ships currently enrolled in the program while also discussing the types and capabilities of ships that might better suit tomorrow’s marine transportation requirements.

“We continually assess the number and type of KFS vessels needed to deliver

fuel requirements and assigned locations of the vessel to be used to support the United States Forces Korea in the event of a contingency on the Korean peninsula,” said Jeff Feltner, plans officer for DLA-Energy Korea.

Other discussions included various inspections and tests that are conducted to actively maintain the program’s viability. Each quarter, one ship in the KFS program is thoroughly surveyed to ensure mission readiness. All 59 KFS ships are also required to test their communications systems; this year, MSCO Korea reported a 100 percent success rate for both initiatives.

“Our agreement and the realistic discussions held over the last few days will reinforce the combined ROK/U.S. strategic posture. I am very glad to get fruitful results from Capt. Denman and all U.S. agencies,” said KFSWG co-chair Capt. Woo Eun Dong, director, Logistics Plans Division, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Logistics, ROK Navy.

A chemical/oil carrier was added to the KFS program this year during Key Resolve 2012 in early March. Reserve Sailors from Bronx, N.Y.-based MSC Far East Expeditionary Port Unit 102 conducted an on-hire survey of the ship at Onsan, South Korea.

Representatives from the ROK’s Ministry of Land Transportation, ROK 3rd Fleet, the ship’s civilian master and chief engineer participated in the survey, assessing the ship’s mission readiness and completed a signing ceremony officially designating the ship as a KFS asset.



The annual Korean Flag Shipping Work Group conference ensures that strong sealift assets are ready in the event of an emergency on the Korean Peninsula.