

May 2012

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

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND



MSC reservists are key to port communications in

## KEY RESOLVE 2012

Strategic  
sealift  
cooperation  
with Korea



MSC reservists from Expeditionary Port Unit 102 raise the MSC flag as the finishing touch to a Mobile Sealift Operations Center to handle port communications in Gwangyang, South Korea, during exercise Key Resolve 2012.

U.S. Navy photo by John Steinski

INSIDE — Simulator helps train USNS Spearhead crew • MSC presents food service awards

# Just another day with MSC...

That may be one of the biggest understatements of the year, but with all of us so busy working our own slice of the operation, I thought I'd share with you what I see on an average day as you, the people of MSC, execute our mission around the world.

I get to work in the morning about 0615 (after my 2 mile run!); the headquarters building is already humming. Of course, the Battle Watch Captain, perhaps Navy reservist Lt. Lee Thackston, and the crew of the MSC Global Command Information Center on the third deck have been at it all night, tracking our ships, people and missions on every ocean and sea, in every time zone, wherever we are executing our missions.

This particular morning, Rear Adm. Brian LaRoche, MSC deputy commander, is beginning his day with Mike Ricci and the staff at MSC Norfolk who are preparing USS Ponce, the interim Afloat Forward Staging Base operated by MSC civil service mariners, for deployment this summer.

Meanwhile, Navy Capt. Joann Fitzell, MSC's force nurse, is attending the fourth annual Warrior Resilience Conference in Washington, D.C., hosted by the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury.

Down in Fort Myers, Fla., members of the Special Mission Program technical staff are watching a demonstration of potential upgrades to the throttle controls for Victorious-class MSC ocean surveillance ships.

Farther south, MSC rescue and salvage ship USNS Grapple is working with U.S. 4th Fleet on a Navy Dive-Southern Partnership Station 2012 mission, helping share Navy know-how and expertise with our partners and neighbors in Central and South America and the Caribbean.

In Texas, MSC-chartered tanker MT Houston is arriving pier side to load cargo fuel destined for DOD installations in Florida.

By 1000 Navy Yard time, our maritime industry partners at General Dynamics National Steel and Shipbuilding Company in San Diego are coming to work, putting the final touches on MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Cesar Chavez prior to its christening and launch. Chavez is the last of the 14 T-AKES to be added to our fleet. The launch is scheduled for early in May, and I will be on hand as one of the platform speakers to welcome Capt. Keith Walzak and his crew to the MSC fleet.

At the same time, MSC is hosting an active duty career fair in Marysville, Wash., looking for transitioning Navy Sailors who might be interested in continuing to serve at sea as part of our seagoing team.

At sea, MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser is providing fuel to deploying and returning Navy combatants off the



U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Kathleen Gorby

MSC rescue and salvage ship USNS Grapple (T-ARS 53) serves as a platform for bilateral dive training as one of the many forward operations the command performs daily.

coast of California, while one of our newest ships, SBX-1, the Sea-Based, X-Band Radar vessel that looks like a giant golf ball sitting on top of a floating oil rig, sails west on its first operational mission.

Also at sea, the MSC-chartered integrated tug/barge ITB Strong Mariner is making steady progress to the Philippines with a load of cargo that the Marine Corps will use to participate in Exercise Balikatan 2012, improving combat readiness and interoperability with our partners in that region.

We are halfway around the world now on our trip, and it is barely lunchtime back here at headquarters, where Rob Swanbeck from the Special Mission Program is hosting a Master's Orientation course. This course prepares civilian masters who will command

Special Mission Program ships, detailing the issues and reporting requirements for these vessels.

In Singapore, where it is already early morning on the next day, public affairs officer Ed Baxter is giving the morning news brief to Navy Capt. Chip Denman, commander of MSC Far East. There is always a lot happening in Commodore Denman's area of responsibility, which covers the Western Pacific, Bering Sea, Sea of Japan, Yellow Sea, East China Sea, Philippine Sea, South China Sea and Indian Ocean to the east coast of Africa.

This vast expanse contains some of the largest island nations and island chains in the world, including Malaysia, where MSC submarine tender USS Emory S. Land is heading for a port visit. The combined crew of civil service

mariners and active duty Navy Sailors will support a U.S. Pacific Command commitment to theater security cooperation and partnership with allied navies. The visit will also help promote peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region, and MSC is right in the middle of it.

Moving up to the MSC Central area of responsibility, Navy Capt. Bob Gonzales and his staff work the day-to-day issues of moving MSC logistics ships in and out of port with the sustainment supplies and replacement equipment for U.S. forces deployed to the Middle East. Soon, their pace will pick up even more as U.S. troop draw-downs are phased in.

Through the Suez Canal to the Mediterranean Sea next where MSC Combat Logistics Force ships are providing food, fuel, spare parts and other gear to support Noble Dina, a 6th Fleet exercise with partnering maritime forces from Israel and Greece.

It is late at night back here at headquarters. I called it a day at 1830 after reviewing photos and video of a Marine Corps V-22 Osprey landing aboard MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Robert E. Peary for Exercise Bold Alligator. The landing paved the way for direct MSC support

**COMSC continued on Pg. 3**

## Moving forward with ONE MSC



On MSC's government-operated ships, the ship's master exercises overall command and management of the vessel, operations, supervision of the crew, safe navigation, physical security and safety. Realignment of the MSC shore infrastructure should not affect a master significantly on a day-to-day basis, but will result in better support to the master.

Jack Taylor is the senior executive responsible for the operation of all MSC government-owned/government-operated ships. He and his staff support MSC ship masters through budgeting for financial resources and planning and executing a life cycle maintenance plan for the ships, enabling reliable operations for the safety of the crews. The Combat Logistics Force program manager and the Service Support Ships program manager and their staffs carry out the day-to-day operations required. They, in turn, are supported by class managers, class and project engineers and support personnel from functional directorates such as logistics, IT, comptroller (budget) and contracting.

Eileen Roberson is the senior executive responsible for MSC's Total Force Management. She and her professional staff support MSC CIVMAR masters through several branches covering diverse areas. The deputy director for CIVMAR Manpower and Personnel hires, promotes, trains and details CIVMARs and provides timely reliefs for the ship's crew members. The deputy director of Military Personnel supports assigned military members. The Deputy Director of Medical Affairs is responsible for CIVMAR health and material readiness of the Medical Treatment Facilities aboard our two hospital ships. The deputy director of Manpower and Personnel/Director of Civilian Human Resources is supported by a full-service Human Resources Office and serves all MSC civil service employees.

Since CIVMARs comprise 85 percent of MSC's civilian workforce, most of the resources under the director of Civilian Human Resources are involved in employee relations/labor relations, staffing, workers' compensation, equal employment opportunity, government-wide training requirements, human resources systems, merit principles compliance and the like.

For information and answers to questions about the ONE MSC realignment process, send an e-mail to [MSC-Future@navy.mil](mailto: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>.

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## COMSC continued from Pg. 2

to Marine Corps units ashore. Peary's deck crew even refueled the Osprey at sea, another first for an MSC ship. That landing was featured on the cover of Sealift's March issue.

Even though it is late here, fleet replenishment oiler USNS Leroy Grumman is headed east on the dark waves of the Atlantic Ocean to support the USS Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group on its way to Exercise African Lion, a combined United States and Morocco exercise. Grumman will then turn north to Scotland for Exercise Joint Warrior and operations with our coalition partners in the UK.

Back closer to home, MSC fleet replenishment oilers USNS Big Horn and USNS John Lenthall are both underway off the coast of Virginia to support Commander Task Force 20. CTF 20 is responsible for planning, supporting, scheduling and conducting training and exercises of assigned maritime forces and providing combat-ready naval forces to support Service missions and global requirements. Also of note, CTF 20 is responsible for planning and execution of the Navy's participation in events associated with the Bicentennial of the War of 1812 – in which MSC will also participate.

As the sun climbs back into

the sky on the U.S. East Coast, our day with MSC around the world is just about done. Rick Caldwell and Judy Lee from MSC Norfolk head into the conference room for the final day of Joint-Logistics-Over-the-Shore planning at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek near Hampton Roads, Va. Rick and Judy will help DOD planners understand MSC capabilities in areas where port facilities are destroyed or non-existent.

Meanwhile, MSC-chartered tug and barge T/B Megan Beyel/MOBRO 1210 makes her routine weekly resupply mission to the Navy's Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center on Andros

Island in the Bahamas, and another normal MSC day begins.

Shipmates, we are everywhere, doing everything, and doing it well! Thanks to all of you, MSC delivers.

Sail safe and yours aye,

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

# Spearhead's crew trains on simulator

## Army-operated facility preps CIVMARs to drive JHSV 1

By Mike Souza  
MSC headquarters

Scheduled delivery for the first of Military Sealift Command's versatile joint high-speed vessels is more than a month away, but the ship's plankowner civil service mariner crew is already training for summer 2013, when USNS Spearhead (JHSV 1) is slated to become operational.

Fourteen CIVMARs participated in training on highly realistic simulators Feb. 13 to March 1 at the Army Transportation School in Fort Eustis, Va.

During the three-week period, Spearhead's deck and engineering crew members practiced a broad variety of ship evolutions using the simulator, which features a complete mock-up of the bridge and the engineering console that is on the bridge. Training maneuvers included docking, undocking, harbor maneuvering, channel transits, open ocean transit, day and night operations, fair and adverse weather operations to include maneuvering in fog, rain and snow, as well as high traffic scenarios and emergency situations with equipment malfunctions.

"We practiced pretty much everything conceivable," said Capt. Doug Casavant, Spearhead's prospective civil service master. "The controls and water jet propulsion systems on the JHSV are very different than what most MSC ships have, and maneuvering the ship takes training and practice. The simulator affords us the opportunity to develop these skills before taking possession of the ship so we are familiar with maneuvering capabilities and limitations."

Spearhead's aluminum, catamaran design allows for rapid intra-theater transport of troops and military equipment, even in shallow waters. The ship can transport 600 short tons of military personnel, vehicles, supplies and equipment 1,200 nautical miles at an average speed of 35 knots.

Due to Spearhead's distinctive technical specifications, unique handling characteristics and the placement of engineering personnel on the bridge rather than in traditional engineering spaces, the U.S. Coast Guard requires a specialized license endorsement for all officers assigned to this ship and to subsequent joint high-speed vessels. Unlicensed crew members are required to complete



Boatswain's Mate James Tymon, left, and 3rd Mate Gary Taylor, right, practice main navigation ship maneuvering as a simulated joint high-speed vessel approaches the piers at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Va.

separate training requirements.

"Maneuvering the JHSV in high-traffic areas at high speed stresses the need for increased interaction between all members of the navigation team," said Casavant. "Training with the engineers, who also stand watch on the bridge, helps to integrate all personnel toward the safe operation of the ship."

The Coast Guard license requires operations under the tutelage of a certified high-speed designated examiner and high-speed simulator training prior to receiving that endorsement.

Spearhead's crew will also have a dedicated at-sea training period with a designated examiner following the ship's delivery. The at-sea training will include extensive maneuvering and ship-handling instruction for all watchstanders. Eventually, the senior officers of the JHSV will become designated examiners and provide the necessary underway training for all new crew members.

When the JHSV program was first envisioned and authorized, it was truly a joint program where the U.S. Army was slated to receive five vessels, and the Navy was slated to receive five vessels. To train soldier-mariners to operate the Army's five vessels, the Army Transportation School embarked on a development program to build the JHSV vessel simulator.

In early May 2011, the Army and the Navy entered into a Memorandum

of Agreement to transfer the five Army vessels, and their mission, to the Navy. The agreement was made in part to reduce redundancies and operating costs. Since the development of the JHSV simulator at Fort Eustis was well underway, the Army decided to continue the program knowing MSC would be a potential customer. In December 2011, MSC agreed to send its JHSV crews to Fort Eustis to receive the first part of the High Speed Craft License endorsement.

The training program that has been established at Fort Eustis fulfills both the engineering and deck licensing requirement. Casavant, Chief Engineer Joe Semon and their senior crew

members have completed the first round of training.

Casavant said he was impressed with the capability, quality and professionalism of the Army trainers.

"The instructors at the Army Transportation School have a wealth of information and experience from operating the JHSV simulator and other high-speed vessels," Casavant said, and they have used this experience to build a thorough JHSV training program.

Overall, training that JHSV crews receive is designed to shorten the required at-sea training time, increase operational preparedness and improve mission readiness.



Chief Mate Duane Case maneuvers the simulated JHSV from the starboard bridge wing control station.

# MSC stages sim

## in annual defense exercise



U.S. Navy photo by John Sicinski

NORTH KOREA  
(DPRK)



Navy photo by Edward Baxter

Sea of Japan

SOUTH KOREA  
(ROK)

Top and bottom: Expeditionary Port Unit 102, working with U.S. Army personnel, set up the Mobile Sealift Operations Center in Gwangyang, South Korea. The MSOC is used to manage port operations where regular facilities are non-existent.

Middle: Navy Capt. David Cantrell, commander, MSCFE Reserve Unit 101; Sam Reynolds, director, Ship Support Unit Yokohama; Navy Capt. Charles Denman, commander, MSCFE; Army Lt. Col. Tony Aquino, officer-in-charge, Japan Support Coordination Center; and Army Maj. Kelvin Simmons, executive officer, 836th Transportation Battalion, cut the ribbon during the opening ceremony for the Japan Seaport Coordination Center in Yokohama.

Opposite page: Navy Lt. Cmdr. Neil Benoit, left, and Navy Lt. j.g. Andrew Brunhofer, right, work with two Republic of Korea army personnel at the Combined Seaport Command Center in Busan, ROK, to manage the simulated movements of ships around South Korea.

Yellow Sea

BUSAN



U.S. Navy photo by John Sicinski

# Simulated shipping

By Edward Baxter  
MSCFE Public Affairs

U.S. Navy reservists supporting Military Sealift Command worldwide have proven integral to the execution of MSC contingency operations. Reservists stay ready to forward deploy at a moment's notice for those contingencies, including training for such events through major joint and combined exercises.

Forty-one MSC reserve members forward deployed Feb. 27 to March 9 as part of exercise Key Resolve 2012, designed to test the United States' and the Republic of Korea's response in the event of a crisis on the Korean peninsula.

The MSC reservists trained during the computer-simulated exercise to support a massive influx of strategic sealift ships carrying dry cargo and fuel to allied forces. As needed, MSC could manage hundreds of cargo ships arriving and departing South Korean ports. MSC could also support the possible evacuation of thousands of civilians from the Korean mainland.

For nearly six decades MSC has played a crucial role in Key Resolve, which was renamed in 2008, and its predecessors. The computer-simulated exercise is one of two major exercises conducted each year in conjunction with South Korea. Defensive in nature, Key Resolve included more than 10,000 South Korean forces and 2,000 U.S. military personnel this year.

Based principally in South Korea, some parts of the exercise also took place aboard U.S. Navy ships at sea and at U.S. facilities in Japan and Singapore.

Overall, the computer-simulated exercise focused on the strategic, operational and tactical aspects of general military operations in the Korean theater of operations, to provide training for U.S. and ROK forces in the various aspects of reception, staging, onward movement and integration required for a potential defense of ROK.

MSC supported Key Resolve from multiple locations, including MSC Far East headquarters in Singapore, MSC Office Korea in Busan, Republic of Korea and MSC Ship Support Unit Yokohama, in Japan.

"After 26 years of service, I'm still impressed by the quality and commitment of service members," said Navy Capt. David Cantrell, commanding officer, MSCFE Reserve Unit 101. "Within a brief period of time, the amount of quality work, task accomplishment and problem resolution conducted was phenomenal."

## Singapore

At MSC Far East exercise headquarters in Singapore, six personnel from St. Louis-Mo.-based MSCFE Reserve Unit 101 augmented permanent staff members by manning an around-the-clock crisis action team. The team managed the simulated movement of MSC ships across the vast U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility, particularly ship movements to and from the Korean theater of operations.

MSC cargo, tanker and prepositioning ships were incorporated into the simulation. MSC personnel trained in a variety of challenging scenarios to ensure their safe passage and delivery of cargo. This year's exercise also included responding to humanitarian crisis by simulating the deployment of Maritime Prepositioning Force ships, which can store and transport supplies during a major humanitarian mission.

## South Korea

In South Korea, 24 Reservists deployed to MSC's office in Busan, and the port of Gwangyang.

Fourteen of those reservists, from Kansas City, Mo.-based MSCFE Reserve Unit 102, worked with the Army's 837th Transportation Battalion, as well as ROK army and navy personnel, to staff a combined seaport command center at MSCO Korea in Busan. Established in 1994, the CSCC is a centralized command and control center designed to manage cargo ships at ports throughout South Korea. MSC managed the simulated ocean transportation portion of CSCC operations. Once a simulated ship was pierside, Army personnel managed the off-load, staging and onward movement of cargo.

"The CSCC is a very important agency which is a critical aspect of our combined mission," said ROK Port Operations Group commander and co-chair of the CSCC, ROK army Col. Byong Kwan Jung.

Reservists also manned an around-the-clock crisis action center in Busan with their U.S. Army and ROK army counterparts, managing the communications hub for reservists deployed to Gwangyang.

In Gwangyang, 10 reservists assigned to New York City-based Expeditionary Port Unit 102, a highly mobile unit that can quickly deploy anywhere in the world to establish port operations, manned a Mobile Sealift Operations Center. The MSOC provides critical communications equipment for operating and managing port operations even when port infrastructure is damaged or destroyed.

EPU 102 trained in handling requirements for ships arriving and departing from an ROK port from the MSOC. Training included ship's husbandry, force protection, communication and liaison with U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps counterparts, port officials and local government officials.

EPU 102 Reservists also conducted an on-hire survey of a Korean-flagged chemical/oil carrier at the port of Onsan, which is part of the Korea Flag

Shipping program. KFS is a long-standing agreement between the governments of the United States and South Korea that allows MSC access to designated South Korean merchant ships in the event the ROK government declares a national emergency on the Korean peninsula.

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 completing a signing ceremony officially designating the ship as a KFS asset.



U.S. Navy photo by Edward Baxter.

## Japan

North Dock at Yokohama, Japan served as MSC's third site during the exercise where 11 reservists from EPU 102 and MSCFE 101 augmented Ship Support Unit Japan staff to help manage ports services and sealift operations on the Japanese mainland.

Part of an expeditionary port unit's role is to be capable of operating quickly at any port required, so EPU 102 personnel traveled from Yokohama to the Japanese ports of Hiro and Sasebo. Finding the quickest route and mode of travel was a key aspect of their training.

The stand-up of a fully-operational Japan Seaport Coordination Center was an important aspect of Key Resolve this year. During exercises and contingency operations, the JSCC serves as the single point of contact for sealift activities and cargo destined for Japan.

The JSCC has varied responsibilities including sealift, port services, cargo handling, communications, reception, staging and port clearances. The JSCC also works closely with its Busan-based counterpart, the CSCC, serving as Japan's single point-of-contact for coordination of sealift activities in support of the Korea theater of operations.

"This is an important day," said Navy Capt. Chip Denman, commander, MSC Far East, as he addressed members of the JSCC at a ribbon-cutting ceremony March 7. "We must have theater interface, and bringing SDDC and MSC personnel together in a unified environment makes that a reality."

Cantrell and Army Lt. Col. Tony Aquino, JSCC Battle Captain from the Hawaii-based 599th Transportation Brigade, joined Denman in cutting the ribbon. SSU Japan director Sam Reynolds and 836th Transportation Battalion executive officer Army Maj. Kelvin Simmons also participated.

"Standing up the JSCC in Yokohama with our Army SCCD counterparts was professionally rewarding experience, both personally and professionally," said Cantrell. "As a force multiplier in all of our previous exercise participation, we typically work among more seasoned subject matter experts. In Japan, we had the opportunity to lead."

JAPAN

## CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Military Sealift Command ships operating in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility conducted 85 underway replenishments in March, including 41 with coalition, European Union and NATO ships. This logistical support provided by the ships of Commander Task Force 53 enabled combatants to stay at sea for extended periods.

USNS Patuxent (T-AO 201) conducted an underway astern refueling event with USS Scout (MCM 8) in the Arabian Gulf Mar. 26, training the crews of both ships and enhancing astern refueling proficiency.

USNS Bridge (T-AOE 10) departed to U.S. 7th Fleet area of

operations April 3, concluding its successful deployment to U.S. 5th Fleet. Since Jan. 9, Bridge's crew has safely executed 38 underway replenishments with nine different ships.

MSC Central/Commander Task Force 53 bid fair winds and following seas to Navy **Cmdr. Tommy Fifer**, who retired after 25 years of dedicated service to the Navy. Navy **Lt. Carlos Sanchez**, Navy **Lt. Ryan Larivee** and Navy petty officers 1st class **Keenon Locus** and **Didra Raymond** also departed in March. MSCCENT/CTF 53 welcome Navy **Cmdr. Andrew Kirkland** and Navy **Petty Officer 1st Class Ravindra Bissessar**.



MSC fast combat support ship USNS Bridge (T-AOE 10) conducts an underway replenishment in the Arabian Gulf with guided-missile cruiser USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) and aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) March 6, 2012.

## COMPASS • HEADING

Civil service mariners at Military Sealift Command in Norfolk started moving into Norfolk Plaza, the new contract hotel, in downtown Norfolk, Va., March 14. The new hotel, situated within walking distance of many downtown shops and eateries, has generated positive feedback from the CIVMARs.

**Capt. John Little**, civil service master of USNS Robert E. Peary (T-AKE 5), was interviewed by Second Line of Defense senior analyst Robbin Laird Mar. 20, discussing the ship's participation in the Bold Alligator 2012 exercise.

**Frank Cunningham**, director, Manpower and Personnel Afloat, announced the acceptance of **2nd Officer Andrew Nottberg** and **2nd Officer Baron**

**Garvey** into the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College Intermediate-Level Education Course for 2012-2013.

MSC personnel in Norfolk participated in security exercise Solid Curtain/Citadel Shield Mar. 21-23. Coupled with this exercise, employees were directed to shelter in place as the Commonwealth of Virginia exercised its emergency wide-area tornado warning network.

Congratulations to Port Engineer **Arjune Derek Chatterpaul** for his selection as MSC employee of the week. Chatterpaul was recognized by Navy **Rear Adm. Mark Buzby**, commander, MSC, via a video teleconference for overseeing the change-out of shipboard cargo control consoles and upgrades onboard MSC fleet replenishment oilers.

Results of the masters' and chief engineers' promotion boards were released March 27. Names were announced by Buzby and posted on the command's Internet site.

Fair winds and following seas to **Able Seaman Robert Cason**, **Able Seaman James Cramer**, **Able Seaman Terry Johnson**, **1st Assistant Engineer Louis Lanier**, **Utilityman Jose Montano**, **Engine Utilityman Shannon Myles**, **3rd Officer Clifford Twaddell**, **2nd Officer Garrett Wanzor**, **Able Seaman Lawrence Wasley** and **Contract Surveillance Specialist Salvatore Spano** as they retire.

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

## HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

Military Sealift Command headquarters held a farewell and retirement luncheon for Navy **Capt. Dennis O'Meara** Mar. 26, honoring his 30 years of service with the Navy. He served aboard multiple U.S. Navy ships, including USS Laboon (DDG 58) in support of Operation Desert Strike and USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60), deploying to the Arabian Gulf. O'Meara has served since 2007 as COMSC HQ Maritime Prepositioning Squadron project officer for MSC's Prepositioning Program.

**Meghan Patrick**, public affairs, received two third place awards in the 2011 Chief of Information Merit Awards competition. Patrick was recognized in the news feature article and human interest feature article categories, for stories she wrote on USNS Guadalupe (T-AO 200) participating in a major drug bust and the USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) humanitarian and civic assistance deployment to Central and South America and the Caribbean Sea.

Joseph Cox, president and CEO of the U.S. Chamber of Shipping, kicked off Military Sealift Command's inaugural Marine Transportation Specialist Professional Speaking Series March 6. MSC headquarters Tower Conference Center at the Washington Navy Yard provided the backdrop for an information-exchange about the government and commercial maritime industries. Cox began his remarks with quick trivia about the U.S. Air Force Memorial, the Washington Monument and the genesis of the U.S. Chamber of Shipping. Discussion included current safety standards and avoiding complacency; environmental regulations; and the industry's response to piracy.

MSC headquarters successfully completed exercise Solid Curtain/Citadel Shield Mar. 22-23, with only mission-essential personnel reporting to the Navy Yard on those two days. Non-mission-essential personnel worked from home. Through technology use, MSC headquarters, area commands and

ships are prepared to operate reliably during increased levels of Force Protection readiness. This year's Solid Curtain/Citadel Shield, the broadest and most challenging to date, provided insight into the Navy's ability to respond to a variety of threats and clarify the challenges it may face during real-world events.

MSC bids farewell to **Christopher Byrnes**, engineering; **Shannon Harper**, Combat Logistics Force; **Jeffery King**, joint plans, strategic studies and wargaming; **Suzana Mladina**, command, control, communications and computer systems; **Margaret Sheatzley**, engineering; and **LaRhonda Stevenson**, office of the comptroller.

MSC headquarters welcomes **Thomas Van Leunen** and **Jessica Faller**, public affairs; **Vincent Colaizzi**, **Amanda Holloway** and **Matthew Miller**, engineering; Navy

**Lt. Kevin Laughary**, operations; and **Edward McNeil** and **Anthony Mertens**, command, control, communications and computer systems.



Navy Rear Adm. Mark Buzby, commander, MSC, presents Navy Capt. Dennis O'Meara with a certificate of retirement during a luncheon March 26 celebrating O'Meara's 30-year Navy career.

## PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Members of the Military Sealift Command Pacific ship support and sealift teams participated in the tri-annual Los Angeles/Long Beach Port Readiness Committee Tabletop Exercise Mar. 13. The exercise focused on a variety of incident scenarios relevant to military load-out operations. Representatives from the U.S. Army's 834th Transporta-

tion Battalion and U.S. Coast Guard Sectors Los Angeles and Long Beach also joined the exercise.

**Tim McCully**, deputy commander, MSCPAC, traveled to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, March 27-29 to coordinate requirements for the MSC Sea-Based X-Band Radar with Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam; Commander, Navy Region

Hawaii; and U.S. Pacific Fleet.

**Phil Patton**, MSCPAC force protection officer, and **Bob Almarrio**, MSCPAC deputy force protection officer, each received a Bravo Zulu for their preparation and implementation of security policies for Exercise Solid Curtain/Citadel Shield 2012. Patton and Almarrio secured force protection waivers for MV Empire State (T-AOT 5193) and MV Evergreen State (T-AOT 5205), allowing the ships to participate in the exercise and still

perform cargo operations.

The command welcomes Navy **Cmdr. Louis Costa**, the MSCPAC/Commander Task Force 33 logistics officer. Costa takes over leadership of the logistics department following a tour of duty at the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center.

MSCPAC also welcomes Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Ricardo Legaspi**, MSCPAC/Commander Task Force 33 deputy logistics director, who joined the command following duty aboard USS Emory S. Land (AS 39).

## FAR • EAST • HAILS



U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Brian Reynolds

A Seahawk helicopter approaches MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Kanawha (T-AO 196) March 27 during an underway replenishment with aircraft carrier USS Enterprise (CVN 65) in the Mediterranean Sea.

## EUROPE/AFRICA • NEWS

Military Sealift Command-chartered HSV 2 Swift arrived in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility for its first mission to support Marine Forces Europe participating in exercise Agile Spirit 2012. After stops in Cape Verde; Agadir, Morocco; Rota, Spain; and Souda Bay, Greece, for fuel and supplies, Swift transited the Turkish Straits to Poti, Georgia, Mar. 28. There, Swift loaded 280 tons of vehicles and equipment overnight.

Agile Spirit is an annual exercise between U.S. Marines from the Marine Corps Black Sea Rotational Force and Georgian Armed Forces designed to enhance capacity in counterinsurgency and peacekeeping operations.

Swift departed to Constanta, Romania, for a Mar. 30-31 cargo offload, saving the embarked Marines the arduous land trek around the Black Sea.

USNS Kanawha (T-AO 196) conducted 14 underway replenishments with U.S. Navy ships, including USS Enterprise (CVN 65), as well as two NATO and two partner-nation ships. Kanawha also participated in Exercise Noble Dina, a joint exercise with Israel and Greece operating out of Souda Bay, Greece, which ran Mar. 26 to Apr. 5, simulating air-to-air combat and anti-submarine warfare and focusing on search and rescue activities.

USNS Supply (T-AOE 6) joined Kanawha. Supply conducted eight underway replenishments of the Enterprise Carrier Strike Group ships and four with NATO ships.

USNS Pathfinder (T-AGS 60) contin-

ued survey operations in the South Atlantic, conducting ocean floor mapping.

USNS SGT Matej Kocak (T-AK 3005) loaded U.S. Marine Corps equipment at Blount Island Command, Fla., in anticipation of Exercise African Lion, and then transited to the U.S. Naval Forces Africa area of responsibility. Kocak completed a logistics stop in Rota, Spain, Mar. 19, while Navy Capt. Ricks Polk, commander, Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron One, transferred his command to Kocak for the exercise. African Lion is an annual combined U.S. Africa Command, Marine Forces Africa, and Morocco Royal Armed Forces training exercise that includes live-fire and maneuvering, peace support operations, aerial refueling/low-level flight training and medical and dental assistance projects.

MSC-chartered ships conducting sealift transited the Mediterranean Sea during the month. MSC-chartered cargo ship MV BBC Houston entered the U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility carrying cargo from Kuwait. The ship stopped in Kali Limenes, Greece and Rota, Spain, prior to departing for the United States, while MSC-chartered cargo ship MV Green Lake transited from Diego Garcia to the United States. Meanwhile, MSC-chartered tanker MT Maersk Peary was contracted to transfer Department of Defense fuel throughout the region.

USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) completed routine maintenance in Valetta, Malta, March 4-19 for ship work. The ship and crew returned to Gaeta, Italy, Mar. 30.

Navy Adm. Cecil D. Haney, commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, visited USNS Washington Chambers (T-AKE 11) at Singapore's Sembawang Wharves March 20, hosted by civil service master **Capt. Michael Flanagan**.

Navy **Capt. Calvin Slocumb** took command of Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Two from Navy **Cmdr. Delbert Yordy** during a ceremony March 5 aboard USNS SGT William R. Button (T-AK 3012) in Diego Garcia. Yordy served as MPS Squadron Two's interim commander since Jan. 16.

Three MSC ship masters visited Military Sealift Command Far East headquarters to conduct orientation visits prior to reporting aboard their vessels in March. **Capt. Kent Howell**, civilian master of USNS Observation Island (T-AGM 23) visited Navy **Capt. Chip Denman**, commander, MSCFE, and command personnel March 13. Civilian **Capt. Jennifer Brokaw**, master of USNS Impeccable (T-AGOS 23) and civilian **Capt. Barry Smith**, master of USNS Victorious (T-AGOS 19) conducted a single-day orientation visit to the command March 19.

Three MSC Far East reserve units participated in community service projects in the Philippines and Republic of Korea March 23-26. At the Tabacuhan elementary school

in the Philippines' Olongapo City, Reserve Sailors assigned to Oklahoma City, Okla.-based Expeditionary Port Unit 111 gave away school supplies, sweets and donated used items to the teachers and staff of the 1,500-student school. The Sailors proceeded with making donations at the Tacondo elementary school at Angeles City.

Denman served April 2 as a keynote speaker celebrating the inauguration of the chief petty officer rank on April 1, 1983.

Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific Command Master Chief **Robert Shannon**, Singapore-based chief petty officers, and tenant commanding officers, joined Denman in Singapore to celebrate. More than 40 guests attended the ceremony.

Sailors from Seattle, Wash.-based Expeditionary Port Unit 116 visited the Save Our Souls children's orphanage in Gwangyang, South Korea, providing gifts, snacks and sports equipment and playing baseball and soccer with the children March 26.

MSCFE welcomes Navy **Lt. Rocky Chang** as Combat Logistics Force officer. MSCO Korea welcomes senior enlisted advisor and assistant operations officer Navy **Boatswain's Mate Senior Chief William Combs**.



U.S. Navy photo by MCSA Samuel Souvannason

MSC civil service mariners secure the first line as submarine tender USS Emory S. Land (AS 39) moors in Sepangar, Malasia, April 1. Land's visit is part of the Navy's ongoing commitment to theater security cooperation and partnership with the Royal Malaysian Navy.

## ATLANTIC • LINES

Military Sealift Command Atlantic successfully executed the Solid Curtain/Citadel Shield 2012 exercise Mar. 19-24, testing the U.S. Navy's ability to respond to a nationwide threat.

MSCLANT's anti-terrorism/force protection directorate spearheaded the command's involvement. Training in advance of the actual exercise included numerous tabletop exercises within the command as well as in concert with Naval Station Norfolk. Command ATRF personnel conducted force protection validation spot checks of ships in the local area, and MSCLANT port representatives assisted in spot-checking ships at Charleston, S.C.; Port Canaveral, Fla.; Violet, La.; and Corpus Christi, Texas.

Marine transportation specialists at the command's Beaumont, Texas, office hosted 10 Navy reservists

from Houston, Texas-based Expeditionary Port Unit 110, Houston, for their monthly training Mar. 24-25.

**Jose Guivas**, Beaumont's lead marine transportation specialist, coordinated with the Maritime Administration for launch service for and a tour aboard roll-on/roll-off

ship MV Cape Victory and provided classroom instruction. Marine Transportation Specialist **Recep Ugraskan** coordinated with the Port of Beaumont to secure a tour of the port for the reservists.

At MSCLANT's port office in Charleston, S.C., **Tom D'Agostino**, director of ship operations, assisted MSC-chartered tanker MV Houston in discharging 191,000 barrels of fuel Mar. 25-26. Marine Transporta-

tion Specialist **Mary Ann Liberto**, also of the Charleston office, coordinated the receipt and storage of two 310-class propeller hubs earmarked for storage in the MSC shore-based spares warehouse. The storage operation was unique because the size and weight of hubs required them to be moved into the warehouse using a special roller system.

The command welcomes Marine Transportation Specialist **Kemmeh Orji**.



U.S. Navy photo by MCS Billy Ho

MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Big Horn (T-AO 198), center, simultaneously refuels guided-missile destroyers USS Oscar Austin (DDG 79), left, and USS Jason Dunham (DDG 109) March 25 in the Atlantic Ocean.

# EPU 107 trains in port opening ops

By Kim Dixon  
MSC public affairs

Military Sealift Command Expeditionary Port Unit 107 joined the U.S. Army Surface Deployment and Distribution Command's 688th Rapid Port Opening Element for a day of Joint Task Force-Port Opening familiarization training March 17 at Joint Base Eustis - Langley, Va.

JTF-PO forces are trained to rapidly deploy, open, and operate an aerial port of debarkation and a seaport of debarkation in a location where there is little or no port infrastructure. This work provides the Department of Defense and geographic component commanders an immediate strategic capability, typically in a non-hostile or secured environment.

"On this day of familiarization training, the objective was to establish a foundation for future EPU-RPOE interoperability training," said Navy Capt. Paul Pender, commanding officer, EPU 107. "We each provided a presentation on our units, with Lt. Cmdr. Friedrich Rochleder from my unit giving a brief on the EPU and Mobile Sealift Operations Center capabilities, followed by the 688th briefing us on the JTF-PO concept of operations and explanation of RPOE structure and capabilities."

MSC has delegated responsibility for JTF-PO support to its reserve expeditionary port units, while the Army has created three rapid port opening element



U.S. Navy photo

Justin Schambach, center, a civilian communications technician in the U.S. Army's 688th Rapid Port Opening Element, briefs MSC Expeditionary Port Unit 107 on a communications suite.

units. Working together as a joint expeditionary logistics force, the Navy and Army JTF-PO efforts aim to establish an aerial port or seaport of debarkation. These ports provide a forward distribution node, in-transit visibility and clearance and distribution capabilities. The RPOE would also receive and load cargo as an initial-entry port-opening force until relieved by or integrated into follow-on sustainment forces.

EPU 107, operating out of Navy Operational Support Center Raleigh, N.C., is assigned to MSC Europe and Africa to be a JTF-PO "core" unit for 2012, joining EPUs 109, 110 and 113. The highly flexible expeditionary port units can be ready to deploy within 96 hours after given an

order to execute a port opening.

One of the roles that MSC's expeditionary port units would play within JTF-PO is to facilitate communications via the MSOC, providing critical communications equipment for managing port operations at the scene of the aerial port or seaport.

As with all military operations, training together in a joint environment ensures the teams are ready to operate seamlessly when the teams deploy simultaneously during a crisis event. EPUs must participate in JTF-PO classroom training and exercises worldwide to prepare for such an event.

During the training Justin Schambach, the 688th RPOE civilian communica-

tions technician, briefed their own communications suite, called Scalable Port Operations Communications, and set up a stationary display of the equipment with assistance from information technicians from EPU 107. Brian Hill, an MSC Atlantic marine transportation specialist, briefed Joint Assessment Team responsibilities and port surveys. The 688th RPOE also set up the tent structure to demonstrate the layout and functionality of the Joint Operations Center.

"This is simply the beginning as we have plans to participate in an RPOE communications exercise in June, and potentially a Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore exercise at Fort Story, Va., in July," said Pender.

## MSC ships lauded for food service excellence

By Sarah E. Burford  
MSCPAC public affairs

Military Sealift Command presented its 2012 annual David M. Cook Food Service Excellence awards at the International Food Service Executives Association's Joint Military Awards Ceremony in San Diego, Calif., March 31.

This year's recipients are USNS Sacagawea (T-AKE 2), USNS Richard E. Byrd (T-AKE 4) USNS Kanawha (T-AO 195) and USNS Guadalupe (T-AO 200). Byrd received an award for the second consecutive year.

Rear Admiral Brian LaRoche, deputy commander, MSC, and Navy Capt. Sylvester Moore, commander, Military Sealift Command Pacific, attended the event and presented the awards during a ceremony with more than 600 attendees, including commanding officers, food service directors, command representatives and food management team members from the U.S. Army, MSC and other components of the U.S. Navy.

MSC's Food Service Excellence awards are presented in four categories: East Coast large ship (Sacagawea), West Coast large ship (Byrd), East Coast small ship (Kanawha) and West Coast small ship (Guadalupe).

Guadalupe also received the inaugural Commander's Outstanding Afloat Nutrition Award, which is based on the promotion of quality, healthy diets. Entries were judged on healthy meal preparation techniques and the incorporation of healthy meal choices into menu cycles.

Each of the winning ship crews was represented at the awards banquet by MSC civil service masters, chief stewards and other members of the food service teams.

"This is a great honor for the Richard

Byrd," said Capt. Thomas Guidice, the MSC civil service master representing Guadalupe. "I'm here to receive the award on behalf of the ship, but the honor goes to the chief steward and the whole cook staff. Their hard work and dedication to what they do is the reason they won this award and I am honored to represent them here today."

Accolades also came from MSC's senior leadership.

"I take great pleasure in commanding all of the food service personnel who participated in this year's awards program," said Rear Adm. Mark Buzby, commander, MSC, when announcing the award winners earlier this year. "Your ex-

ceptional efforts keep morale and quality of life at peak levels. Congratulations and Bravo Zulu for a job well done."

The award is named for the late Capt. David M. Cook, MSC's director of logistics from 1995 to 1998. He launched a focused effort to improve all aspects of the food service operations aboard MSC ships.

Since 1992, Military Sealift Command has singled out several of its East and West Coast ships annually for excellence in their food service operations. For the last 14 years, honors for the winning ships have been part of the IFSEA program.

"We're already looking toward next

year," said Frank Porter, Sacagawea's chief cook. "We're really focusing on the Healthy Heart Program and continuing to decrease the amount of fat and salt in our menu items. We're looking at what restaurants do and trying to incorporate those practices into how we prepare and serve our food. We're really going to have to step up our game if we want to win again next year. This is a very competitive award and there are some really good cooks out there on our ships."

Contributing food service personnel aboard each winning ship will receive a performance award and a one-week shipboard culinary training session provided by a certified executive chef.



U.S. Navy photo by Sarah Burford

Frank Porter, part of a team of MSC food service professionals, prepares vinaigrette for a salad during the Bistro Challenge.

## Meeting the Bistro Challenge

As part of the International Food Service Executives Association conference March 30, an MSC culinary team participated in the Bistro Challenge, a food preparation competition similar to the popular Food Network program Iron Chef.

A team of six MSC food service specialists went head to head with teams from the Army, Navy and the culinary colleges Johnson and Wales University and the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

Rikk Panzera, MSC culinary instructor, headed the team. He led Jerry Holley, port steward Norfolk, Va.; Roy Guillermo, port steward San Diego, Calif.; Chris Jones, port steward Norfolk, Va.; Frank Porter, Sacagawea's chief cook and Clifford Liferidge, Sacagawea's chief steward.

Together, they competed in a portable kitchen set up for the challenge.

Each team's kitchen was equipped with a preparation area, a single burner hot plate and a clean-up/dishwashing area. The teams were given 90 minutes to prepare a three course meal using the mystery items - pineapple, black cod and pepper - and what was available to them from the communal pantry.

The team created a red wine vinaigrette composite salad, seared black cod with chive creamed sauce and sautéed mushrooms, grilled pineapple and a medley of fresh fruit with zabaglione. Preparation time came down to the final seconds as the last plates were filled and sent to the judges.

In the end, MSC took home an honorable mention.