

January 2013

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

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND



“Until they are home”

USNS Salvor serves as search platform for
Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command

INSIDE — MSC profiles: Carolyn Hunter • Spearhead delivered to MSC

What sailing taught me about life, and vice versa

Happy New Year! I hope 2013 is off to a great start for you all.

Each year, new people join the MSC family worldwide and those numbers are on the rise, especially as more of our baby boomers begin to retire.

It's always good to know your family, so as we begin the new year, I'd like to share with some of our newer members the core values and standards that I think make Military Sealift Command what it is today – one of the best places to work in DOD. It's these core values combined with the skills you bring to our command that make us who we are and enable us to do what we do so well.

A few months back, I was asked to make a presentation at a Safety at Sea seminar at the U.S. Naval Academy for midshipman on the sailing team and civilian yachtsmen. As I put together my remarks, I called upon much of what I had learned from my own 50 plus years of experience on the water, including my time here at MSC leading our professionals at sea, and the afterguard ashore. I quickly realized that much of my lecture was truly reflective of the way we do business at MSC. This is what I shared with those young seafarers; see if any of this rings true for you too.

Respect the sea

"The sea is so vast, and thy ship so small." MSC ships do business on the great waters 24/7, 365. One of the first lessons I learned about respecting the sea was to understand the elements you face – wind and wave – and the powerful and sometimes unexpected effects they can have on your life. As a boy, the first time I took my 16-foot runabout out Great Egg Harbor inlet on the Jersey Shore and had a steep swell break over my bow, I learned very quickly that there were certain times when a small boat did not belong there! I hadn't bothered to note the strong onshore wind and the strongly ebbing tide combining to make some very sloppy seas. The more you understand your environment and the uncertainty of what you might face, the better able you are to function day to day and handle the bad stuff when it comes – because it **always** will.

Sound like something that might apply to work ashore? Or even to life at home?

Know your ship and yourself

Whatever your duties, afloat or ashore, knowing your "ship" is key to maximizing efficiency and effectiveness, as well as your safety and that of your shipmates or co-workers. Our full value to the Navy and our other customers is realized only when we know our ship and how to put it to best use. That includes knowing the rules and policies that govern our duties, or how a given piece of equipment operates in our ship. The more we know, the more effectively we can operate and the more passion we can pour into what we do, which makes us, those around us and MSC all the better.

Know your shipmates

I was told by an old sailing master years ago that "you never really know



Rear Adm. Mark Buzby, commander, Military Sealift Command, at the helm, with Zuzu alertly performing duties as aft lookout.

someone until you have been to sea with them." On the water, it becomes obvious pretty quickly that your life may depend on the people around you, especially during UNREPs and the many other inherently dangerous operations we execute every day. In the office, it may not be life and death, but it sure can affect your career when the team doesn't function the way it's supposed to. Getting to know your shipmates – their strengths and weaknesses – who you can trust in a stressful situation and who you can't – is an important part of forging a strong team. Our line of work is not for everyone, but your strengths can help build up someone else's weaknesses, and the other way around, too. It's a team effort at MSC.

Be cautious of shortcuts

During my presentation, I showed a picture of a "vessel" that had been assembled from a rusted out barge with a cabin fabricated from salvaged house parts and propelled by a paddlewheel made from a car rear end and a used diesel generator. The family band who built it ("The Flying Neutrinos") intended to drive it up and down the coast visiting various gigs. It didn't get very far. We all know, deep down inside, that cutting corners is risky business, whether we're at sea, in the office or at home. It comes home to roost sooner or later. Two band aids and a bottle of aspirin don't make a first aid kit, nor does several wraps of duct tape make a proper pipe patch. While "winging it" temporarily is sometimes required on short notice, doing it right, using the right materials and the right procedure is the professional way to do business. And we are professionals here at MSC!

Get your head out of the box

In this age of information and automation with enticing electronic displays, it is too easy to be drawn in to a very narrow view of the facts based solely on what that marvelous display is telling you – be it at your desk, driving in your car, or navigating a ship at sea. These systems are not infallible, though many of us seem to have total belief in

the information they are presenting us. (If it's on the Internet, it must be true, right?) Who hasn't been led astray by a car GPS that steers you off into the boondocks? The point is that a seasoned mariner uses all aids and sources available to him or her to ascertain the vessel's position and maintain situational awareness. Pulling your head "out of the box" – stepping back to see the bigger picture – will most often keep you from shoal water that may be plainly visible if you just had looked, rather than blindly following "the box." The same holds true ashore; more informational "lines of position" will usually result in a better "fix." If you haven't heard that, look it up – this is a nautical outfit!

It's not corny to plan and drill

In fact, it's professional! At sea, drills are a routine part of being ready to swiftly and effectively handle emergencies where safety of the ship may be at stake. Ashore, over the past several years, we've been working on our Mission Continuity Plan; how we would conduct MSC business in the event of a disaster that forces us to abandon our headquarters buildings. We've exercised mobile working. We've exercised mobile working. We've planned for relocating to alternate facilities. When Hurricane Sandy hit the East Coast in October, MSC business was virtually unaffected, even though the federal government in Washington closed down for two days. We could do that because we planned for it, rehearsed it, refined our processes and figured out how to get the mission done despite the unexpected foul weather.

Don't settle for minimums

Whether it's safety, quality or commitment, don't aim for "just enough." Aim to exceed your goals; provide a better service; write a better contract. That's what builds MSC's reputation as the place to go for maritime solutions, knowledge and expertise. That's why the Navy and the DOD place trust and confidence in MSC and continue to give us new classes of ships and new missions. It's not because we look

good, it's because we are good.

When in command, COMMAND!

That is to say, if you are charged with responsibility for something – whether it is to write a report or command an MSC vessel – I expect you to exercise the full extent of your authority to produce the best possible outcome. Whether it's your ship, your department, your task or your life, take charge and forge ahead. You can truly have an impact on much of what happens to you through your own actions. Take charge of yourself and make a difference for MSC, your office, your ship and yourself.

The new year, 2013, promises to be another busy year for MSC with new ships, new missions, and a new commander. Our continued success is assured thanks to folks like you who make it happen without fail every day. I look forward to steaming forward with you.

Sail safe and yours aye,

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

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MSC profiles: Carolyn Hunter

Carolyn Hunter is a veteran civil service mariner who has served with Military Sealift Command since 1998. In her more than 14 years with MSC, she has served aboard nine different Combat Logistics Force ships, including USNS Patuxent, USNS Big Horn and USNS Arctic. Hunter is currently a shoreside damage control officer at MSC Training Center East, where she teaches a variety of training courses.

Hunter is also a lieutenant commander in the Navy Reserve, holds a bachelor's degree in naval architecture, a master's degree in maritime systems and is a doctoral student in ocean engineering at Stevens Institute of Technology. The following is a portion of an interview with Hunter, initially posted on MSC's Sealift blog, about her life and career experiences.

MSC: What do you do for MSC?

Hunter: I have an unlimited master's license and currently work as a damage control officer at MSC's Training Center East, where I instruct many of the courses offered at the facility.

MSC: What does a typical day for you look like?

Hunter: A typical day? Get in at 7:30 a.m. and prepare for class. Depending upon what the class is, lecture and then conduct hands-on training, ranging from small arms to firefighting. It's been a very good experience teaching – interacting with the MSC mariners on a daily basis has been my favorite part of the job. It's not necessarily been the easiest transition from shipboard officer to classroom instructor, but it's been a very valuable transition. Publicly speaking every day is a skill set you can

take with you anywhere.

MSC: What opportunities has MSC offered to you, as a maritime professional?

Hunter: I have had the opportunity to travel around the world and work on multiple classes of ships, working from an able seaman to the officer in charge of the USNS Comfort. The best opportunity that has been offered to me, however, has been being able to work as a damage control officer. This has allowed me to continue to work within MSC as a CIVMAR while becoming a wife and mother of three children, ages four, two and one.

MSC: How has your Navy Reserve experience meshed with your work at MSC?

Hunter: There are a lot of parallels that assist you working with MSC and also in the Navy. As a CIVMAR, and as a Strategic Sealift Officer I always work hand in hand with Navy. The highlights of my time in uniform were working as MSC's Navy Liaison Officer for Joint-Logistics-Over-the-Shore 2012 and as a member of MSC's Expeditionary Port Unit 102. This allowed me to fully integrate both my Navy and civilian career with MSC.

MSC: What challenges have you encountered and overcome in your career?

Hunter: The largest challenge for me over the years has been trying not to become complacent at work. While sailing, if I hit a plateau on the learning curve, I always tried to shift to a different platform so I would continue to be challenged. I have been very fortunate throughout my career to work with some excep-



Lt. Cmdr. Carolyn Hunter participates in Joint-Logistics-Over-the-Shore 2012 aboard USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon.

tional people. Their guidance has assisted me to professionally and personally develop myself.

MSC: What does it take to work in the maritime industry?

Hunter: I believe it's something very much like the military. It's a profession that you need to want to be in. I enjoyed my time at sea very much, but there was a point where I decided I wanted to transition ashore to expand my family life, and working a damage control officer has allowed me to do that.

MSC: What advice would you give to young maritime professionals?

Hunter: I give this advice to

students all the time, you might go out and have a bad first experience on a ship – unfortunately, that sometimes happens – but don't limit yourself to one work experience before you throw in the towel. Go to another ship, and try working in a new environment before you make a career decision.

Another big one is setting short-term and long-term goals – achievable stuff. MSC is one of the few places where you can move up. Not everyone is going to go from steward utility to master, but it has happened; I know people who have done it. If you have the aptitude and the drive, it is available to you.

APS and Swift complete training in Ghana

**By MC2 Josh Bennett
Navy Public Affairs Support
Element East Detachment**

Ghanaian Navy sailors were presented certificates Nov. 24 in Sekondi during an award ceremony aboard high-speed vessel Swift (HSV 2) after completing training during Africa Partnership Station 2012.

The training in Ghana included amphibious operations planning, intelligence specialization, communications and maritime interdiction operations planning.

"I was pleasantly surprised by the motivation and professionalism of the Ghanaian sailors," said German Navy Cmdr. Martin Klemann, operations officer for APS 2012. "They came to class every day eager to learn."

The trainers for the courses

focused on the areas they felt were the most important topics for all sailors to know.

"These classes are essential for anyone working in maritime operations," said Ghanaian Navy Lt. Salifu Musah, instructor for APS 2012. "I would have liked to have seen even more junior sailors involved because these classes are a great resource for our navy."

The training was completely new to many of the sailors, a mixture of junior enlisted, senior enlisted and officers in the Ghanaian navy, but the sailors enjoyed the experience.

"The training was very good for me," said Ghanaian Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Emmanuel Kofi Hinson, student. "I feel like I learned a lot of things I can put to use here."

APS is an international securi-

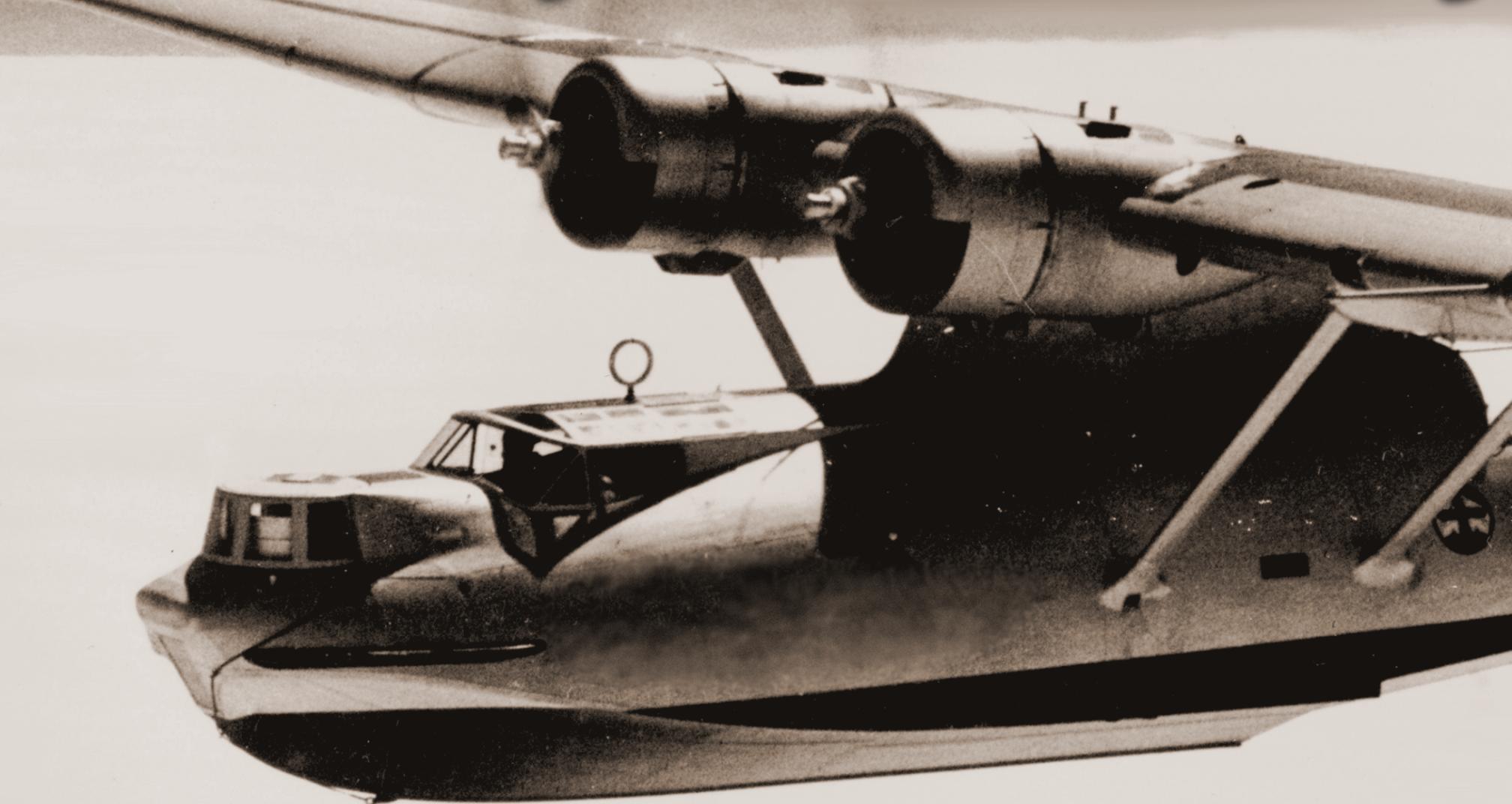
ty cooperation initiative, facilitated by Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, aimed at strengthening global maritime

partnerships through training and collaborative activities in order to improve maritime safety and security in Africa.



A Ghanaian navy sailor searches Logistics Specialist 2nd Class James Williams, left, aboard MSC-chartered high-speed vessel Swift (HSV 2) during a training exercise for Africa Partnership Station 2012.

MSC joins search



**By Edward Baxter
MSCFE Public Affairs**

A highly-specialized investigative team deployed aboard Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Salvor (T-ARS 52) participated in a first-of-its-kind underwater search mission for missing American World War II-era aircraft off the coast of Papua New Guinea Nov. 12 to Dec. 4.

Led by Hawaii-based U.S. Joint Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Accounting Command, a 50-person team surveyed two suspected crash sites near Simpson Harbor, New Britain Island and Hansa Bay off the main island of Papua New Guinea. JPAC conducts global search, recovery and laboratory operations to identify unaccounted-for Americans from past conflicts. The command has completed more than 30 search missions ashore on Papua New Guinea, but Salvor's mission is the first to investigate

suspected underwater crash sites.

Both Simpson Harbor and Hansa Bay were major Japanese naval bases during World War II. With large numbers of aerial engagements, both areas are abundant with the wreckage of ships and aircraft. More than 1,590 Americans are missing from World War II in and around Papua New Guinea with about half believed to have gone missing over water.

On board the 255-ft. Salvor, U.S. Army, Air Force and Marine Corps personnel from JPAC joined divers from the U.S. Navy's Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One and unmanned underwater vehicles specialists from the Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit One. Twenty-six civil service mariners employed by MSC navigate the ship and provide engineering, supply and food services. Two U.S. Coast Guard divers embedded with MDSU for the mission.

Before sailing towards the first survey location at Simpson Harbor, Salvor stopped in the capital city of Port Moresby Nov. 5-8 to load specialized equipment for investigation, recovery and underwater excavation. While in port, MDSU divers conducted recompression and safety drills and ensured all equipment was in good working order before deploying to the remote area. Representatives from Papua New Guinea's military and National Museum and Art Gallery also embarked the ship for the mission.

"I was impressed by the professionalism of all the team members, who, having never worked with one another came together and functioned like a well-oiled machine," said Navy Diver 1st Class Richard Hinds of MDSU One.

The ship sailed north

toward Simpson Harbor, arriving Nov. 12. For Salvor's civil service master Capt. Bradley Smith, and crew members, operating at such a remote location proved challenging.

"Many areas in this part of the world have few nautical charts or are un-surveyed entirely," Smith said.

Salvor's 26 civil service mariners worked around the clock to support divers throughout the mission, making sure shipboard equipment is in good working order before dive evolutions commence. Salvor's engineering team ensures generators are running to supply power for the cranes and the capstan as well as power for the recompression chamber, lighting and communi-



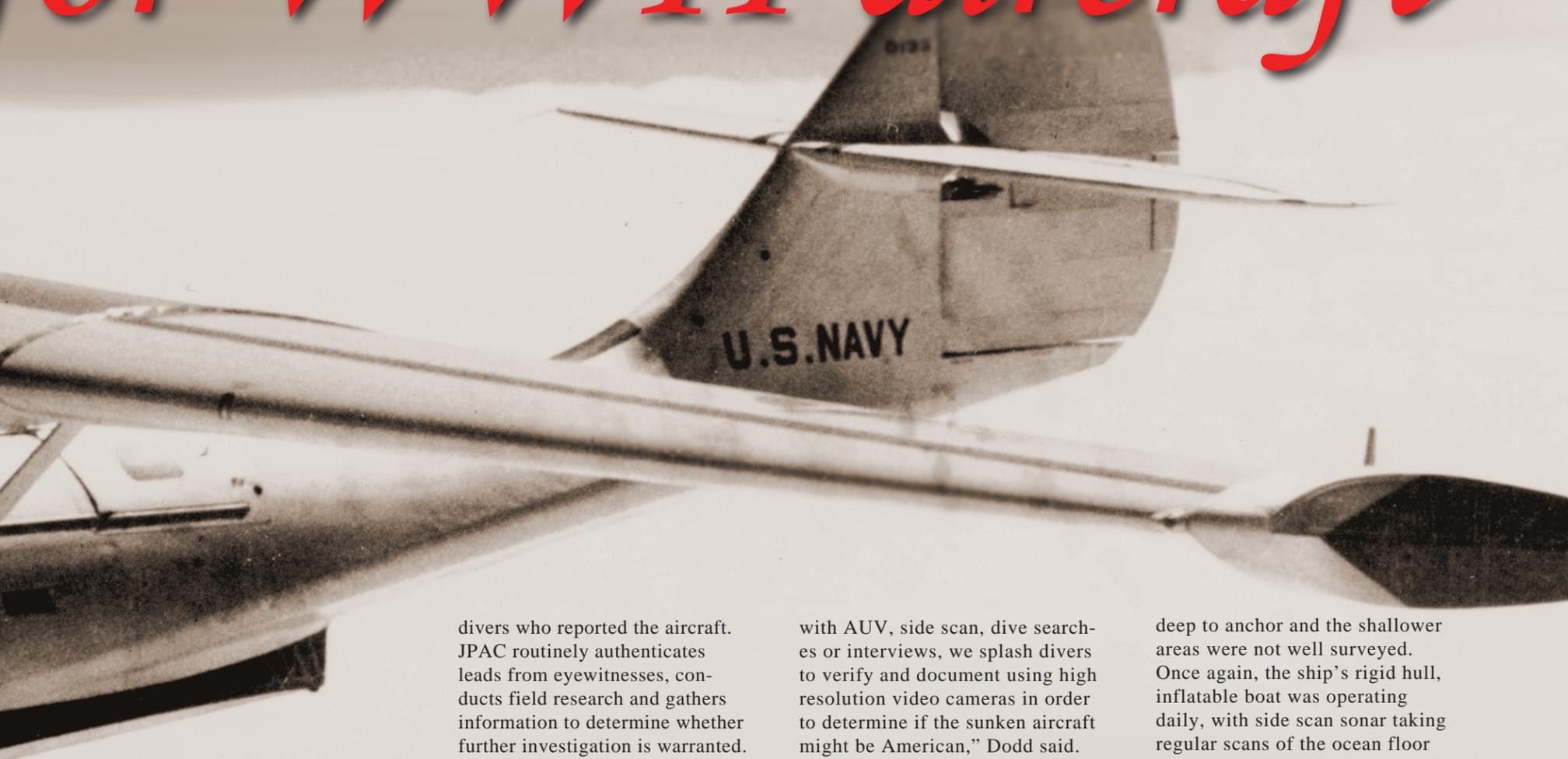
Left: MDSU-1 Navy Diver 2nd Class Josh Underwood operates the recompression chamber aboard MSC rescue and salvage ship USNS Salvor (T-ARS 52) while Navy Diver 1st Class Shawn Hinds supervises.

Right: Electronics Technician 2nd Class Joseph Block, a U.S. Coast Guard diver attached to MDSU-1 Company 1-6, does a front-step water entry for a scuba dive.



U.S. Navy photos by MC3 Taylor Smith

for WWII aircraft



cations. Salvor's steward department is working long hours to feed additional personnel deployed aboard for the mission.

"The embarked dive team offered to help out in scullery duties when not actively engaged in dive and salvage operations," said Smith. "The divers also offered their engine related ratings and skills to assist the engineering department and help out in certain areas of deck maintenance which fosters the one-team concept of MDSU divers and civil service mariners."

Investigating the sites

Operating aboard Salvor's 35-ft. rigid hull, inflatable boats, MDSU divers deployed side scan sonar to map the ocean bottom to identify uncharted reefs and shallow waters, ensuring a clear bottom with no obstructions which might have fouled the ship's anchor.

Next, divers went to work to investigate the first suspected crash site. JPAC selected the sites for underwater investigation based on information from recreational

divers who reported the aircraft. JPAC routinely authenticates leads from eyewitnesses, conducts field research and gathers information to determine whether further investigation is warranted.

Divers deployed autonomous underwater vehicles and a magnetometer, a high-powered metal detector which is towed behind a small boat to pinpoint the aircraft's exact coordinates on the seabed.

"Magnetometers register metal deposits embedded into the bottom soil, giving us a good target area to hone in our searches," said Army Sgt. First Class Tyler Dodd, JPAC Master Diver for its Investigation and Recovery Group.

MDSU scuba divers took the water multiple times to closely inspect underwater wreckage and document the site with underwater photography and video in waters up to 130 feet deep.

Throughout the search mission, Navy divers stumbled upon the wreckage of multiple Japanese WW II era "Zero" fighter planes in and around Simpson Harbor. Many were discovered utilizing AUVs and divers' side scans.

JPAC investigates all leads it encounters.

"Once we find a possible target whether it be

with AUV, side scan, dive searches or interviews, we splash divers to verify and document using high resolution video cameras in order to determine if the sunken aircraft might be American," Dodd said.

The investigation included an inspection of an unidentified engine in a surf zone 18 km. south of Simpson harbor. Personnel also deployed hand-held metal detectors to survey areas close to the shoreline in knee-deep waters.

The Simpson Harbor mission wrapped up Nov. 29 and Salvor made the one-day sail toward Hansa Bay near the city of Madang on Papua New Guinea's northern coast.

In Hansa Bay, Smith opted to remain underway, as opposed to anchoring, since the bay was too

deep to anchor and the shallower areas were not well surveyed. Once again, the ship's rigid hull, inflatable boat was operating daily, with side scan sonar taking regular scans of the ocean floor to ensure safe navigation.

Scuba divers took to the waters and examined a suspected crash site at depths of up to 70 feet.

The mission concluded Dec. 4 and Salvor got underway to off-load JPAC personnel and equipment at Port Moresby before returning to its mission as U.S. 7th Fleet's primary, forward-deployed, rescue and salvage ship. The JPAC team will closely examine data and evidence gathered from each crash site and determine whether future examination or excavation is necessary.

U.S. Navy photos by MC3 Taylor Smith



Above: Salvor operates off the coast of Papua New Guinea Nov. 12 to Dec. 4.

Cover: An MSC ship flies the POW/MIA flag during a JPAC mission in 2011.

Far right: Salvor launches Sailors from MDSU-1 Company 1-6 in Salvor's rigid-hull inflatable boat to locate missing WWII-era U.S. aircraft in Simpson Harbor, Papua New Guinea.

Right: Lt. j.g. Alex Burtness and Aerographer's Mate 1st Class Jonathan Pittman launch an automated underwater vehicle to conduct underwater side-scan sonar mapping of a possible JPAC site in Simpson Harbor.



EUROPE/AFRICA • NEWS

U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Cyrus Roson



USS New York (LPD 21) approaches MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Laramie (T-AO 203) for an underway replenishment in the Mediterranean Sea, Nov. 28.

Navy leadership extended the USS Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group deployment to the Mediterranean Sea in the middle of November, affecting the current underway replenishment support to all Navy ships in theater. Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa and Task Force 63 team rose to the challenge, rescheduling operations to expand the reach of USNS John Lenthall (T-AO 189) and to use the transiting USNS Laramie (T-AO 203) and USNS Patuxent (T-AO 201). As a result, Lenthall, Laramie and Patuxent supported USS Laboon (DDG 58), USS McFaul (DDG 74), USS Forrest Sherman (DDG 98), USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7), USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44), USS New York (LPD 21) and USS Robert G. Bradley (FFG 49) in November. Additionally, Lenthall conducted underway replenishments with U.K. Royal Navy ships HMS

Bulwark (L15) and HMS Northumberland (F238) participating in Exercise Cougar 12.

USNS Grapple (T-ARS 53) completed diving operations off the coast of Calvi, Corsica, Nov. 14, searching for an American who was lost when the B-17 aircraft he was aboard crashed in February 1944. Grapple, along with divers from Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit Two, conducted the mission, which began Oct. 2, in conjunction with Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command.

HSV Swift (HSV 2) continued supporting Africa Partnership Station, visiting Gabon, Cameroon, Ghana and Gambia. In Port Gentil, Gabon, Swift facilitated Spanish marine training, along with courses in maritime domain awareness and visit, board, search and seizure Oct. 23 to Nov. 9. The U.S. ambassador hosted a reception aboard Swift Nov. 7. While off the coast of Douala, Cameroon, Swift conducted maritime interdiction operations training with FS Siroco (L 9012) and GNS Ehwor (P 37). During the follow-on port visit Nov. 12-24 to Sekondi, Ghana, Ghana students received training in small boat

maintenance and maritime domain awareness. Spanish marines provided a familiarization course in amphibious operations planning, intelligence planning, communications, MIO planning and execution, while the U.S. Coast Guard conducted VBSS phased training. During the final port visit of the month Nov. 26 to Dec. 2 in Banjul, Gambia, Swift hosted a ship visit and tour for the defense minister, acting head of the Gambian Navy, and the commanding officer Banjul Naval Base at a Nov. 29 reception. Training events for Banjul included maritime domain awareness, boarding team operations, small unit infantry tactics, marksmanship, communications and MIO.

MSC-chartered ships BBC Seattle and MV Geise conducted cargo operations in Eemshaven, the Netherlands, Nov. 3-7. Seattle off-loaded 233 containers and loaded 262, departing Nov. 7 for transit to Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point, N.C. Geise loaded 26 containers Nov. 4 and returned to Newport, United Kingdom. MSC-chartered tanker MT Maersk Peary conducted DOD fuel transfers within the theater.

FAR EAST • HAILS

Navy **Capt. Jim Hruska**, commander, Military Sealift Command Far East, held an orientation visit Nov. 19 with **Capt. Pat Benda**, prospective civilian master of USNS Mary Sears (T-AGS 65) and command staff members.

Coast Guard **Capt. Mark McCadden**, commander of Yokota, Japan-based U.S. Coast Guard Activities Far East, met with Operations Officer Navy **Cmdr. Mark Roemhildt** and Deputy Operations Officer **Leonard Bell** at MSC Far East headquarters Nov. 26.

From Diego Garcia, Navy **Capt. Calvin Slocumb**, commander, Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Two, and USNS SGT William R. Button (T-AK 3012) civilian master **Capt. Lloyd Dorricott** provided a tour of the vessel to U.K. Royal Navy

Cmdr. Richard Marshall, British representative to Diego Garcia, Nov. 16.

Slocumb and USNS Seay (T-AKR 302) Master Civilian **Capt. Bruce Kregger** hosted Paul Lincoln from the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defense Nov. 27. Lincoln, the equivalent of a U.S. government senior executive service and MOD's director, Joint Force Command, Resources and Policy, conducted a familiarization tour of Diego Garcia.

From Guam and Saipan, Navy **Capt. Richard Rainer**, commander, Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three, and squadron staff members cleaned a mile-stretch of highway on Saipan Nov. 19 as part of an "Adopt-a-Highway" program to keep the central Pacific island clean from debris.

MPS Squadron Three staff members attended Saipan's Veterans Day memo-

rial ceremony at Saipan's American Memorial Park Nov. 11. Representatives from all branches of the U.S. military and U.S. Coast Guard also attended. Saipan was the site of a major World War II battle, costing thousands of lives before U.S. forces captured the island from Japanese occupation.

Navy MH-60S helicopter pilots from Guam-based Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 conducted 44 deck landing qualifications aboard USNS Dahl (T-AKR 312) while the ship was underway off the coast of Guam Nov. 19-20. Seven pilots

from HSC-25 participated in four hours of flight deck proficiency.

Ship Support Unit Guam welcomes Supervisory Contract Specialist **Keith Beem**.

The command bids fair winds and following seas to Assistant Combat Logistics Force Officer Navy **Lt. Joe Martin**. Hruska presented Martin with a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal for providing commodity support to U.S. 7th Fleet, processing more than 2,500 requirements in support of more than 300 replenishment events during a year-long assignment.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 William Pittman



MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Amelia Earhart (T-AKE 6) pulls alongside USS George Washington (CVN 73) in the Philippine Sea.

U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Ricardo Danan



Civil service mariners aboard MSC submarine tender USS Frank Cable (AS 40) release the anchor brake as the ship drops anchor in Victoria Harbor, Hong Kong.

PACIFIC • BRIEFS

USNS Navajo (T-AGS 169) supported dive training operations with Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One in San Diego. The ship arrived from Pearl Harbor Nov. 1 to prepare for the exercise. Navajo sat in a two-point mooring off the coast of Imperial Beach Nov. 5-9, providing MDSU 1 with a diving platform for training.

USNS Cesar Chavez (T-AKE 14) departed San Diego Nov. 5 on its post-delivery shakedown cruise. The ship returned to San Diego Nov. 7 and docked at the NASCCO shipyard to complete post-delivery inspections.

The Military Sealift Command Pacific logistics team coordinated and executed the loading of 1,389 pallets of food and supplies during four events supporting USS Nimitz (CVN 68) carrier strike group during composite unit and joint task force exercises in November. In

preparation, the team provided detailed shipboard briefs to the supply departments of the carrier strike group ships USS Princeton (CG 59), USS Higgins (DDG 76), USS Shoup (DDG 86), USS Stockdale (DDG 106), USS William P. Lawrence (DDG 110) and Nimitz. In addition, the Combat Logistics Force Officer team participated in the Commander Naval Air Forces sponsored pre-deployment brief. The briefings fostered intergroup coordination and communication during the loading.

The command bids fair winds and following seas to **Mike Sullivan**, director, Ship Support Unit San Diego, as he retires after 35 years of employment with MSC. **Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby**, commander, MSC, presented Sullivan with a Civilian Meritorious Service Medal for his outstanding accomplishments during his time with the SSU.

CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Military Sealift Command ships operating in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility conducted 103 underway replenishments in November, including 47 with coalition, European Union and NATO ships. The support provided by the ships of Commander Task Force 53 enabled U.S. 5th Fleet combatants to stay at sea for extended periods.

USNS Laramie (T-AO 203) departed the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility via the Suez Canal Nov. 19. During its six months in theater, Laramie conducted more than 70 underway replenishments in support of U.S. Navy operations and international counter-pi-

racy efforts, Laramie has been replaced by USNS Patuxent (T-AO 201).

MSC-chartered cargo ship MV Eagle delivered two offshore support vessels Nov. 6. The ships were transported from Texas to Bahrain and later towed into the BASREC shipyard, where they will be reactivated prior to being delivered to the Iraqi navy.

The command bids fair winds and following seas to Navy **Lt. Cullen Cowen** and Navy **Petty Officers 1st Class Elizabeth Roberts** and **David Teachey**. The command welcomes Navy **Lt. Jose Galvao** and **Senior Chief Petty Officer Marlon Arlanza**.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Kenneth Abbate



A Seahawk helicopter transports supplies to USS Mobile Bay (CG 53) during a Nov. 8 underway replenishment with USNS Bridge (T-AOE 10).

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Kenneth Abbate



USNS Bridge (T-AOE 10) pumps fuel to USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) during a late November underway replenishment in the Arabian Sea.

COMPASS • HEADING

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy cadets studying for deck and engineering U.S. Coast Guard merchant marine licenses started reporting aboard MSC ships in November for training cruises. Massachusetts Maritime Academy is scheduled to send 20 cadets in December. In January, the Webb Institute, a four-year engineering college specializing in naval architecture and marine engineering, will send seven engine cadets for hands-on afloat training at MSC.

Training Center East in Earle, NJ, resumed its training curriculum Nov. 19, initially impacted by Hurricane Sandy.

Civil service mariners aboard USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) rubbed elbows with royalty during the ship's port visit to the Principality of Monaco. Monaco's National Day reception was hosted by U.S. ambassador to France, the Honorable Charles Rivkin. Also in attendance were Vice Adm. Frank Pandolfe, Commander, U.S. 6th Fleet; as well as Monaco's Prince Albert Alexandre Louis Pierre Grimaldi II and his sister, Princess Caroline Louise Marguerite Grimaldi. The guests took photos with supply department personnel, headed by **Supply Officer Julia Green**.

CIVMAR Manpower and Personnel **Deputy Director Frank Cunningham** held two ashore/afloat teleconferences in late November. The leadership conference brought together ship masters and chief engineers from 24 MSC CIVMAR crewed ships to discuss human resources topics. Another teleconference is slated for January.

Military and civil service personnel from Norfolk's command, control, communication and computer systems code noted the advancement to the rank of **Information Systems Technicians 3rd Class Jennylynn Reyes** and **Andrew Delamater**, Nov. 30.

Fair winds and following seas to **Chief Radio Electronics Technician Billy Bittle**, **2nd Officer Peter Bourgeois**, **Chief Electrician Raymond Fox**, **Laundryman Jose Lao**, **Able Seaman David Peters**, **Engine Utilityman Ricardo Valencia**, **1st Assistant Engineer Wilson Vaught**, **Deck Engineer Machinist Peter Cullen**, **Mechanical Engineer Kevin Ryan** and **Special Assistant Kevin Cassidy** as they retire.

For more civil service mariner news, visit www.msc.navy.mil/msfsc/newsletter.

ATLANTIC • LINES

At Military Sealift Command Atlantic's port office in Charleston, S.C., **Tom D'Agostino**, director of ship operations, coordinated the offload of U.S. Army prepositioned cargo from USNS Charlton (T-AKR 314) Nov. 19-30. The cargo consisted of more than 1,600 pieces of equipment totaling 230,000 square feet. Marine Transportation Specialist **Mary Ann Liberto**, also of the Charleston office, acted as the ship's agent coordinating services for the duration of the ship's port call.

MSCLANT's anti-terrorism/force protection department began planning and preparations for Exercise Solid Curtain/Citadel Shield 2013, which will take place in late February 2013. During the exercise, simulated threats will be escalated to flex the command's ability to detect,

deter and counter asymmetrical terrorist attacks.

MSCLANT bids fair winds and following seas to Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Tracy Heggund** and welcomes aboard her relief, Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Philip Karg**. Heggund, who has been with the command for almost three years, retired from active duty after 22 years of service to the U.S. Navy. Heggund was feted at a retirement luncheon Nov. 29 with Navy **Capt. Samuel Norton**, commander, MSCLANT, offering words of thanks and farewell.

MSCLANT also welcomes Navy **Lt. Adam Schumann**, relieving Navy **Lt. j.g. Jennifer Holland**. Schumann will be Karg's understudy and serve as division officer for command and control, and as backup point of contact to U.S. 4th Fleet.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Patrick Ratcliff



Sailors aboard USS San Antonio (LPD 17) prepare to come alongside MSC fleet replenishment oiler USNS Leroy Grumman, as it refuels USS Carter Hall (LSD 50).

HQ • HIGHLIGHTS

The command welcomes **Terri Lynn Blair**, office of counsel; Navy **Capt. Andrew Cully** and **Natalee Haffner**, maritime forces, manpower and management; Navy **Lt. j.g. Blaise Cummo**, operations; and **Petty Officer 3rd Class Gustavo Guevara**, command, control, communication and computer systems.

The command bids fair winds and following seas to **John Cofrancesco**,

engineering; Navy **Lt. Roy Klotzbach**, maritime forces, manpower and management; **Operations Specialist 2nd Class Herbert Raymond**, operations; **Stephen Ruschmeier**, Combat Logistics Force Program; **Kevin Ryan**, engineering; **Antoinette Simms**, office of the comptroller; and **Master Chief Hospital Corpsman Todd Wende**, medical programs.

MSC's first MLP floated out of dry dock

By Sarah E. Burford
MSCPAC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command's first Mobile Landing Platform ship completed its first float out operation at the General Dynamics NASSCO shipyard in San Diego, Nov. 13.

Designated T-MLP-1, the ship will be named USNS Montford Point, honoring African American Marine Corps recruits who trained at Camp Montford Point, N.C., from 1942 to 1949. The first of three MLPs planned for construction at NASSCO, Montford Point is scheduled to be christened in March 2013 and delivered to MSC in May 2013.

"This ship and the others in its class will be imperative to MSC's role in supporting Navy and Marine Corps warfighters worldwide," said Rear Admiral Mark Buzby, commander, MSC. "It was exciting to witness this important milestone - getting MLP 1 into her element today brings us one step

closer to being mission-ready in 2013," he said.

The MLP is a new class of auxiliary support ship, scheduled to join MSC's Maritime Prepositioning Force. These ships will be the centerpiece of the Navy's "Sea Base" concept, and will serve as a transfer point for Marine Corps

amphibious landing forces between large ships and small landing craft. They will provide the capability to transfer vehicles and equipment at-sea, improving the U.S. military's ability to deliver equipment and cargo from ship to shore when land bases do not exist.

"The MLP class of ships will

fill a critical role in enabling U.S. forces to be delivered safely and effectively around the world using mobile, sea-based strategies in areas where secure harbor facilities ashore are not readily available," said Tim McCully, deputy commander, Military Sealift Command Pacific. "By remaining at sea as floating logistics support bases, these ships enhance the independence of U.S. forces to operate near global hot spots without entering their ports," he said.

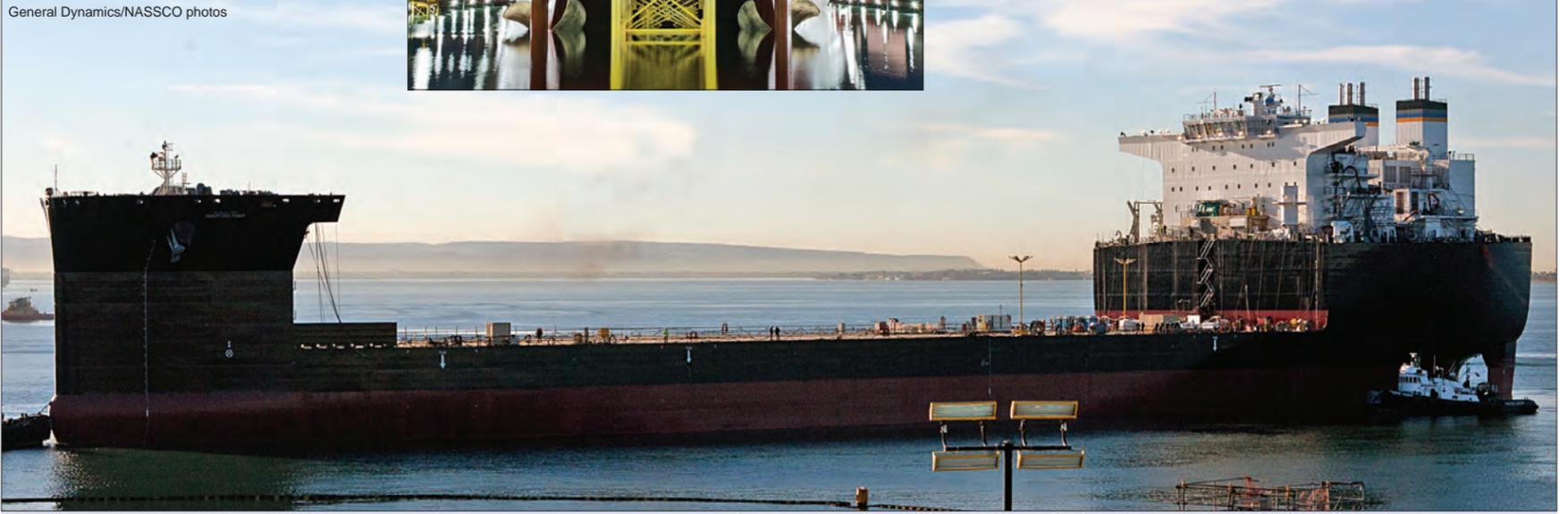
Unlike the traditional ship launch, the process for "un-docking" the 784-foot-long MLP is a slow, methodical and technical evolution. The launch consists of slowly flooding the building dock, stopping the flooding, balancing the ship, inspecting the ship and then balancing it again before continuing the flooding. The sequence is repeated several times until the ship is level to the water outside the dry dock, then completed by pulling the ship from the building dock and moving it pier side with tug boats.



The future USNS Montford Point, left, is slowly eased out of dry dock in a methodical process, which includes flooding the building dock, stopping flooding, balancing the ship and re-balancing before continuing flooding.

Below: Having successfully completed its float out, the ship moves into the open waters of San Diego Bay.

General Dynamics/NASSCO photos



First joint high-speed vessel delivered to MSC

By Meghan Patrick Henderson
MSC Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command accepted delivery of the Navy's first joint high-speed vessel at Austal Shipyard in Mobile, Ala., Dec. 5.

USNS Spearhead (JHSV 1), a joint high-speed vessel, or JHSV, is designed for rapid intra-theater transport of troops and military equipment.

MSC will own and operate Spearhead and the eight other JHSVs that are under contract, with the option of a ninth additional vessel, to be built for the Navy. Spearhead is crewed by 22 civil service mariners working for MSC who will operate, navigate and maintain the ship.

Retired U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer Four Kenneth Wahlman is the ship's sponsor. Wahlman was inducted into the Transportation Corps Hall of Fame in July 2004 after 38 years of distinguished contributions to the Army ranging from support to Naval Nuclear Power Unit at McMurdo Station in Antarctica, to assisting with the launch of the Army prepositioning fleet in 1987.

The Navy honored the ship's

original U.S. Army-chosen name and sponsor after the 2011 decision to transfer five JHSVs - originally slated to be owned and operated by the Army - to the Navy. Subsequent JHSVs will be named after U.S. counties, such as USNS Choctaw County (JHSV 2).

The 338-foot-long aluminum catamarans are designed to be fast, flexible and maneuverable, even in shallow waters, making them ideal for transporting troops and equipment quickly within a theater of operations.

"Flexibility may be the best attribute of this ship," said civilian Capt. Douglas D. Casavant, Jr., Spearhead's civil service master who has been sailing for MSC for 23 years. "Our 20,000-square-foot mission bay area can be reconfigured to quickly adapt to whatever mission we are tasked with, for instance, carrying containerized portable hospitals to support disaster relief or transporting tanks and troops."

The JHSVs are capable of transporting approximately 600 tons of military troops, vehicles, supplies and equipment 1,200 nautical miles at an average speed of 35 knots, and can operate in shallow-draft, austere ports and waterways, providing U.S. forces added mobility and flexibility.

The JHSVs' aviation flight deck can support day and night flight operations for a wide variety of aircraft, including CH-53 Super Stallions. Each JHSV has sleeping accommodations for up to 42 crew members and 104 mission personnel; and airline-style seating for 312 people.

As MSC assets, all of the JHSVs will be civilian-crewed. The first four of the 10 projected vessels, including Spearhead, will be crewed by civil service mariners, while each of

the next six are slated to be crewed by civilian mariners working for a private company under contract to MSC. Military mission personnel will embark as required by mission sponsors.

Following delivery to the Navy, Spearhead will participate in operational testing before sailing to its layberth in Little Creek, Va. The Navy expects the ship to begin conducting missions in the first quarter of fiscal year 2013.



Military Sealift Command accepted delivery of USNS Spearhead (JHSV 1), seen here during sea trials, Dec. 5. The ship is designed for rapid intra-theater transport.