

SEALIFT

Our U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command

USNS Sioux's

BIG TOW



INSIDE the April 2014 Issue — 'Call of Duty' actors visit Cable • Soderman commemorates WWII battle

Fleet Energy Training Forum

The following blog was written by Rear Adm. T.K. Shannon, Commander, Military Sealift Command. In an era of austere budgets and precious resources, energy conservation is more than just a fad. Shannon talks about MSC's contributions to our Navy's energy conservation program and support for our recent Fleet Energy Training Forum in Norfolk.

I love my job. I'm pretty sure there's no better place to work than MSC. Every day I get to work with the most amazing people on the planet, people who are forward thinkers and innovators.

Recently, our U.S. Fleet Forces Command hosted the Fleet Energy Training Forum in Norfolk, which included remarks by Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Energy, Installations & Environment) Dennis McGinn, and our FFC Commander, Adm. Bill Gortney. The forum gave MSC a couple of opportunities to showcase one of our most energy-efficient ship classes, our dry cargo/ammunition ships: first at the forum where USNS Robert E. Peary (T-AKE 5) received a Navy Energy Award, and later that evening when we enjoyed the honor of hosting an event aboard USNS Medgar Evers (T-AKE 13) that included ship tours with stopping points to show off our energy-saving efforts.

Secretary McGinn thoroughly enjoyed his personal tour around our ship with Medgar Evers Chief Engineer Jimmy Rhodes, who briefed the secretary on some of our truly innovative energy conservation programs as well as many of the other capabilities that make our T-AKEs such great ships.

Some of our energy initiatives highlighted by the tour included:

- Our cargo hold light switch installation project. We installed switches at the holds for watch standers to use, instead of relying on engineering personnel and circuit breaker panels. Previously, cargo hold lights were rarely turned off. Now, watch keepers can routinely turn the lights off when they're

not needed. Omitting all the engineering math, it cost us \$30,000 per ship to install the cables and light switches, yet the total savings in energy generation costs is \$40,000 per ship . . . per year. I love an upgrade that pays for itself, especially when it keeps on paying!

- Ever heard of a propeller boss cap fin? It's kind of a mini-propeller that we're attaching to the hub of the main prop on our T-AKEs. The boss cap fin breaks up the vortex generated behind the rotating prop, resulting in improved propulsion efficiency over a range of speeds. It costs \$70,000 per ship to install and saves \$75,000 per ship per year in fuel. Another no-brainer!

- Here's one that's a little more esoteric: engine room ventilation fan automation and variable speed drives. This system matches air supply and exhaust flow

to pressure, temperature, humidity and air exchange requirements in the engineering spaces aboard our T-AKEs. Estimated costs are \$50,000 to \$250,000 per ship with estimated savings of up to \$100,000 per ship per year. The program will pay for itself in one to three years and reduces crew workload while ensuring a proper operating environment. We're doing design studies to try this on our large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ships and our fleet replenishment oilers.

That's only three projects out of more than 30 our command is undertaking. We're doing our part to be good stewards of our nation's resources, and we're helping lead the way forward for our Navy brothers and sisters around the globe.

As I said, this is the best job ever!

Thanks for your service,

T.K. Shannon
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Commander, Military Sealift Command



Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Energy, Installations and Environment) Dennis McGinn, left, and commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Adm. Bill Gortney, present MSC Combat Logistics Force Program Manager Jim George with the Secretary of the Navy 2013 energy and water management award for USNS Robert E. Peary (T-AKE 5). (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Jonathan E. Donnelly)

Strategic Sealift Officer Program

The following blog was written by Rear Adm. T.K. Shannon, Commander, Military Sealift Command.

The Strategic Sealift Officer Program (SSOP) is an excellent choice for cadets at our U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and our state maritime academies. Shannon, who champions the program for our Navy, talks about the program requirements and rewards.

If you're under 25, looking for an exciting career and are attracted to the sea, read on, and please share this with your like-minded friends.

Three years ago, Vice Adm. Phil Cullom, deputy chief of naval operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics, approved revisions to our Merchant Marine Reserve Program, morphing it into our Strategic Sealift Officer Program. Here's what that could mean for you if you're headed for college and focused on your future.

Our SSOP supports national defense sealift requirements and capabilities, which MSC executes. Our program provides our Navy with officers who have expertise in sealift, maritime operations and logistics, and who hold U.S. Coast Guard credentials as Merchant Marine officers.

Our program provides the capability for emergency crewing of sealift ships and emergency shoreside support to Navy commands that require unique maritime expertise. It also gives young adults like you an opportunity to support and serve our Navy and our Nation.

Strategic sealift officers are aligned under MSC so they can provide the best use for their training as both Navy officers and licensed Merchant Marine officers. I am proud to be their flag sponsor for our Navy because the program helps ensure that our SSOs are ready for mobilization.

Back in the day, when I was a cadet at Maine Maritime Academy, I knew I wanted a maritime career. Today, Maine Maritime has embraced our new SSOP, as have our other state maritime academies and our national academy at Kings

Point. It's an excellent way to assist yourself in meeting the financial obligations of your college education, too!

To be part of this, you must be a U.S. citizen who is at least 17 but less than 25 years of age when you enroll. You must be physically qualified and have satisfactory records of academic ability and moral integrity – exhibiting the characteristics desired of a Naval Officer. You must have no moral reservation or personal conviction that prevents the bearing of arms, and you must be enrolled in a Bachelor of Science degree program leading to a U.S. Coast Guard Unlimited License at the maritime academy of your choice.

Degree programs include marine engineering operations, marine engineering technology, marine systems engineering and marine transportation operations, among others offered at Maine Maritime, Massachusetts Maritime Academy, SUNY Maritime College, U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, Texas Maritime Academy, Great Lakes Maritime Academy and California Maritime Academy.

Students who meet the qualifications at the above schools may apply for Midshipman status in our SSOP and apply to participate in our U.S. Maritime Administration's Student Incentive Payment Program. If selected, an incentive payment of \$8,000 per academic year is provided for up to a maximum of four years.

You will have to obtain a Coast Guard Unlimited License and apply for, and accept if offered, a Reserve officer commission in our Navy. You will also be obligated to serve as an employee in the maritime or maritime-related industry, and in times of national emergency, to serve as a Naval Officer aboard a U.S.-flagged merchant vessel.

If you are one of those special young people who find the allure of a life at sea to be attractive, please check out our maritime academies and our Strategic Sealift Officer Program. It could change your life!

Thanks for considering service to our nation.

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'Call of Duty' visits Frank Cable

By MC3 Jon Erickson, USS Frank Cable Public Affairs

POLARIS POINT, Guam -- Voice actors from the popular video game 'Call of Duty - Black OPS II' visited submarine tender USS Frank Cable (AS 40), March 4.

James Burns, the voice of Sgt. Frank Woods, and Kamar de los Reyes, the voice of Raul Menendez, portrayed in the video game, toured the ship and met with Sailors to thank them for their service overseas.

"I'm honored and humbled by the men and women who work here in support of our country," said Reyes. "This was an opportunity for us to come aboard and show our appreciation and our support."

Burns and Reyes received a demonstration of the ship's Firearms Training Simulation system in the ship's weapons department. The system simulates various live-fire exercises used to assist Sailors in maintaining firearm qualifications.

"Getting to see this system was really fun," said Burns. "I think it's such a brilliant idea to help keep the force on the ship up-to-date and ready if they ever need to use firearms."

The tour continued to various work centers onboard the ship, where Burns and Reyes were able to personally express their appreciation for the Sailors on Frank Cable, as well as offer autographs and photo opportunities for their fans.

"I think just about every time I go into a space where there is a video game system, nine times out of 10, they're going to be playing Call of Duty against each other," said Machinery Repairman



Left: Command Master Chief James Schneider describes the ship's navigation systems to Kamar de los Reyes, center, and James Burns, both voice actors from the video game 'Call of Duty - Black Ops II', on the bridge of USS Frank Cable (AS 40) during a USO-sponsored tour.

Below: Machinery Repairman 3rd Class Javier Terrones, assigned to USS Frank Cable (AS 40), explains to Burns and de los Reyes what Sailors create in the ship's machine shop. (U.S. Navy photos by MC3 Jon Erickson)

1st Class James Garrison, a fan of the video game. "To see the faces behind the voices is really cool."

Burns and Reyes both agreed that they were in awe with the efforts the Sailors aboard Frank Cable put into ensuring their mission is successful.

"This is by far the most prime example of what it takes to make the military run," said Burns. "People don't realize that the bulk of jobs in the military are the ones behind the scenes like the ones here. The workers here are the ones that make our Navy run smooth."

After touring all the work spaces, Reyes pointed out how enjoyable it was to see the ship and her crew.

"It was incredible, I'm still having a hard time wrapping my brain around it all," said Reyes. "The cohesiveness of this unit is really, really impressive. Watching all the Sailors work together, it seems like they're at the top of their game and it's been impressive to watch."

Frank Cable, forward-deployed to the island of Guam, conducts maintenance and support of submarines and surface vessels deployed in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility.



Ericsson's crew builds strong ties in Philippines



USNS John Ericsson (T-AO 194) civil service master Capt. Anthony Boudouin, center, joins Rolen Paulino, mayor of Olongapo City, left, and Lynn Habeck, director of the Wings of Change Foundation, in a ribbon cutting ceremony marking the completion of a small chapel at Olongapo City's Center for Youth. (U.S. Navy photo by Jeyh Janik, USNS John Ericsson)

The following blog was written by Ed Baxter, Military Sealift Command Far East public affairs.

Civil service mariners embarked aboard USNS John Ericsson (T-AO 194) participated in a community service project at Olongapo City, Philippines Feb. 18-20, donating supplies, performing maintenance and placing a fresh coat of paint at three shelters for homeless women, children and families.

Recognizing the ship's contributions to the citizens of Olongapo, Mayor Rolen Paulino presented Ericsson's civil service master Capt. Anthony Boudouin with a Certificate of Appreciation during a ceremony held at the city's Center for Youth Feb. 20. Ericsson was conducting a routine port call at nearby Subic Bay at the time.

"This partnership represents the close ties between our countries and its long standing friendship," said Boudouin.

Ericsson crewmembers donated 18 cargo pallets of supplies, including clothing, school supplies, board games, toys, bicycles, an office desk and filing cabinets to Olongapo City's Center for Youth, Social Development Center, and Center for Women. Most of the supplies were collected in Guam in partnership with a Guam-based private charitable organization called the Wings of Change Foundation.

Dozens of crewmembers formed working parties at the shelters painting the floor of a new chapel, along with a stairwell at the Center for Youth. Volunteers repainted the entire interior of the Social Development Center. Ericsson's crew donated paint, brushes and rollers for the projects. They also performed minor repairs to the centers' infrastructure such as fixing broken doors. Ericsson's communications officer Pablo Torres repaired more than 20 electrical outlets which had not been working because of faulty wiring.

Boudouin joined the mayor and Wings of Change charities foundation representative Lynn Habeck at a ribbon-cutting ceremony Feb. 20 to formally open the new chapel.

"The opportunity to help improve the living conditions for the women, children and families who call the shelters home has been very rewarding," said civil service mariner Joel Barnecut, Ericsson's operations officer.

Ericsson left Subic Bay, Philippines, Feb. 21 to return to its duties as U.S. 7th Fleet's primary fleet replenishment oiler. Ericsson performs underway replenishment of fuel and supplies to Navy ships at sea.

TUG to the

By Sarah E. Burford
MSCPAC Public Affairs

USNS Sioux (T-ATF 171) successfully towed Canadian oiler HMCS Protecteur into port in Hawaii, March 6 following an engine room fire, on the night of Feb. 27 that caused the Canadian ship to lose power approximately 340 nautical miles northeast of Hawaii.

Sioux was the primary towing asset and the third and final U.S. Navy ship that assisted Protecteur following a main engineering space fire that caused the ship to lose power during the ship's transit from Pearl Harbor to Esquimalt, British Columbia. USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112) was the first U.S. Navy ship to arrive on the scene, early in the morning Feb. 28. Shortly after, USS Chosin (CG 65) arrived and commenced towing operations while transporting food and water to Protecteur via embarked helicopter from Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron Thirty Seven. Sioux took over towing operations from Chosin March 2, following tow complications, and towed Protecteur for the remaining four days into port.

Sioux's response to Protecteur's situation began within hours of the fire. The tug was supporting dive operations with Mobile Salvage Unit One (MDSU 1) in the waters



“Throughout this emergency, the [Protecteur] support from our U.S. allies,” Auchterlonie sa

Rescue

off Pearl Harbor. Dive ops were suspended, the bulk of the dive gear was returned to port and preparations for the tow were made. Working with the divers, the crew off-loaded the dive gear, resupplied and got underway in less than five hours. Seven of the MDSU 1 divers departed with Sioux, having volunteered to provide their services in the event a diver was needed and to offer extra hands on deck.

The primary mission of the fleet ocean tugs is towing operations and the well-seasoned, experienced crew knows the challenges that can arise when providing tow services. In most situations, tow hook-ups are planned well in advance and are done in the controlled environment of port, where conditions are predictable and easily managed. In the case of Protecteur, the situation required a tow hook-up in open water, in challenging sea conditions. During the

transit to Pro-

protecteur, the crew of Sioux prepared for the tow, laying out the extensive rigging and towing equipment on deck. Constant communication with the Canadian crew as well as with Chosin played a big part in the mission planning.

“The reason this mission happened the way it did, with the success we had, is because of teamwork,” explained

Capt. Emigdia Esqueda, Sioux’s civil service master. “This was all about pre-planning, pre-planning, pre-planning.”

Environmental conditions factor into any operation on the sea. Sioux left Pearl Harbor and sailed into a storm. During the voyage, the ship confronted severe storm conditions with high winds and 12-foot seas. Weather conditions were expected to make the connection of the tow line to Protecteur challenging as conditions were getting worse by the hour as Sioux approached the scene.

Sioux reached Protecteur March 2 and began work to attach the tow line to the Canadian ship almost immediately. Working in the high seas, the tug completed the hook-up in 40 minutes and was quickly underway en route Pearl Harbor. Esqueda noted the speed with which the tow line was attached as extremely quick; a regular tow in port with no weather conditions takes about 60 minutes to complete.

“This was all about good planning with the captain and the

boatswain,” said civil service mariner Robert Kuskis, Sioux’s chief mate. “We got the deck ready. We got the tow connected and we brought her home. Everything was done professionally and as a team; a really good, highly functioning team.”

The crew of 226-foot Sioux were well aware that the size of the ship they were towing was nearly three times Sioux’s size and that a number of challenges lay ahead

on their journey. The crew focused special attention on the tow line, calculated for 1,900 feet with the distance slowly released to prevent the line from chaffing or breaking. At times, Sioux could only hold a speed of two knots due to weather conditions.

“Towing is our primary mission, but these were extreme circumstances for us,” explained Esqueda. “Training helps, but this was different than anything we could have expected. It kept us all alert and focused the entire time.”

Sioux – with Protecteur in tow and Chosin following behind – arrived in Pearl Harbor to the cheers of the Protecteur crew’s family members waiting on the pier, many of whom had been on board at the time of the fire as passengers participating in a tiger cruise. Michael Murphy transported them to Hawaii.

Royal Canadian Navy Commodore Bob Auchterlonie, Canadian Pacific Fleet commander, expressed his gratitude to the U.S. Navy, Sailors, and ships for their efforts in assisting HMCS Protecteur.

“Throughout this emergency, the [Protecteur] received exceptional support from our U.S. allies,” Auchterlonie said. “I can’t thank them enough for the great job they did helping our Sailors get back to port safely.”



Cover, this page background: USNS Sioux (T-ATF 171) tows Royal Canadian Navy HMCS Protecteur (AOR 509), following an engine fire at sea. The ship received assistance from Hawaii-based ships USS Chosin (CG 65), USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112) and Sioux. (U.S. Navy photos by MC1 Jay M. Chu)

Left: USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112) arrives at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam after providing assistance to Protecteur. Murphy returns with 19 civilians who were transferred from Protecteur. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Tiarra Fulgham)

Above: Most of Protecteur’s crew assembles on the flight deck as Sioux tows Protecteur off the coast of Hawaii. (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Johans Chavarro)

I received exceptional aid.

FAR EAST • HAILS



Sailors from USS Frank Cable (AS 40) and USS Key West (SSN 722) help build a playground for the Guahan Academy Charter School in Guam. The playground will be built of donated recycled materials. (U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Brandon Shelander)

Navy **Capt. Tim Callaham**, commander, Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Two, hosted **Robert Hannigan** from the United Kingdom's Foreign Office for a tour of USNS SGT William R. Button (T-AK 3012) at Diego Garcia's lagoon Feb. 5. Hannigan, the British Foreign Office's director of security and intelligence, visited the British Territory to conduct a familiarization visit with island-based U.S. Navy tenant commands.

Navy **Rear Adm. Tilghman Payne**, U.S. Defense representative to Guam, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of Palau, visited Navy **Capt. Leonard Remias**, commander, MPS Squadron Three aboard flagship USNS 2nd LT John P. Bobo (T-AK 3008) off the coast of Guam Feb. 24. Payne toured the vessel and held discussions with MPS Squadron Three staff members about maritime prepositioning force operations in the Western Pacific.

MSC Office Diego Garcia congratulates **Logistics Specialist 1st Class Celia Elwin** on her advancement to her current rank. The command welcomes **Boatswain's Mate Chief Cynthia Vanhorn** and **Yeoman 1st Class Levester Bryant**.

MSC Office Korea welcomes Navy **Logistics Specialist 1st Class Dennis Heath**.

MSC Far East operations directorate welcomes Navy **Lt. Raymond Lilly** and Navy **Quartermaster 2nd Class Jason Gibson**. Navy **Yeoman 2nd Class Christian Blom** reports aboard as the command's assistant administrative officer. MSC Far East logistics directorate bids farewell to assistant combat logistics officer **Peter Duggan** who returns to MSC headquarters' prepositioning program directorate.

Ship Support Unit Guam welcomes administrative officer Navy **Yeoman 1st Class Natalie Thomas**.

MPS Squadron Three welcomes assistant force protection officer Navy **Gunner's Mate Chief Nickolas Walker**.

EUROPE/AFRICA • NEWS

USNS Spearhead (JHSV 1), the Navy's first joint high-speed vessel, participated in maritime security efforts in the Mediterranean region throughout February. From its Norfolk departure in mid-January through the end of February, Spearhead traveled more than 9,000 nautical miles, making port visits to Rota, Spain, and Souda Bay, Greece.

USNS John Lenthall (T-AO 189) operated in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations as the Mediterranean Sea duty oiler. In February, Lenthall conducted 17 underway replenishments with 13 U.S. Navy and NATO assets, delivering more than 1.2 million gallons of fuel and transferring 239 pallets of cargo.

MV Cape Ray arrived in Rota, Spain, Feb. 11.

USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) got underway from Gaeta, Italy, and operated in the Mediterranean and Black seas Feb. 4 through the end of the month, in support of maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts.

BBC Seattle (T-AK 5272), a U.S.-flagged ship under long-term charter to Military Sealift Command, entered

the 6th Fleet area of operations Feb. 18, and stopped for fuel in Algeciras, Spain, Feb. 24.

MV SSG Edward A. Carter, Jr. (T-AK 4544) arrived in U.S. 6th Fleet Feb. 9, transited the Cape of Good Hope, and crossed into the MSC Atlantic area of responsibility Feb. 24.

USNS Laramie (T-AO 203) entered the 6th Fleet area of responsibility Feb. 5, and conducted a port visit in Souda Bay, Greece, Feb. 7-9, before departing the area of responsibility Feb. 22.

USNS Patuxent (T-AO 201) departed the 6th Fleet area of operations Feb. 4 for operations in U.S. 5th Fleet.

MSC-chartered oceanographic survey ship MV Ocean Victory departed the area of operations Feb. 7.

MSC Europe and Africa conducted sealift operations in February with Italian-flagged tanker MT Valle Di Siviglia, which discharged 182,500 barrels of fuel in Souda Bay and St. Theodore, Greece.

MSCEURAF/CTF-63 bids farewell to Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Stephen Wynfield**, air logistics, and Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Kevin McHugh**, future plans and policy.



Hull Maintenance Technician 3rd Class Rebekah Richey, right, shows Rear Adm. Larry Jackson, deputy commander, MSC, the carpentry shop aboard USS Frank Cable (AS 40). Jackson toured the ship while in Guam. (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Jon Erickson)

DC • HIGHLIGHTS

During a Feb. 25 all-hands call, Navy **Rear Adm. T.K. Shannon**, commander, Military Sealift Command, recognized several individuals for exemplary service. These included **Joan Gallaher**, Prepositioning Program, who retired after 37 years of government service; Navy **Cmdr. Craig Fay**, Combat Logistics Force, who received a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal for expertise supporting MV Cape Ray's pre-deployment; **Intelligence Specialist 1st Class Kelly Pritt**, operations, who received a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal for expertise supporting MV Cape Ray's pre-deployment; **Mimi Bolaffi**, **Jitesh Kerai**, and **David Lytkowski**, engineering, and **Art Clark** and **John Goering**, Sealift Program, recognized for their efforts to deploy Cape Ray; and **Mike Morris** and **Krys Skyler**, maritime forces, manpower and management, who received a commendation from the assistant secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. Shannon also presented several length of service awards, including **Susan Roy**, strategic planning, and **Glenda Hunter**, Sealift Program, 35 years; **Adrienne Clark**, maritime forces, manpower and management, 25 years; **William Anderson**, engineering, **Myra Butler**, contracts and business management, and **John Goering**, 10 years.

The command welcomes **Christopher Webster**, engineering.

Left: USNS Big Horn (T-AO-198) arrives in Souda Bay for a scheduled port visit. Big Horn is able to provide up to 31,200 tons of cargo to U.S. Navy assets during resupply operations. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Jeffrey M. Richardson)



PACIFIC • BRIEFS

Amphibious Construction Battalion (ACB) 1 conducts roll-on/roll-off and load-on/load-off evolutions from USNS Bob Hope (T-AKR 300) during exercise Brilliant Scepter 2014, which provides ship-to-shore transportation of combat cargo for Navy amphibious forces and the Marine Corps. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Scott Bigley)

USNS Navajo (T-ATF 169) supported the Undersea Rescue Command's submarine rescue dive training exercise off the coast of San Clemente Island in the Southern California area of operations, in early February. Navajo served as a platform for dive operations as well as embarking a shore crane to facilitate dive chamber deployment and recovery.

USNS Bob Hope (T-AR 300) was activated and transited to an anchorage site off the coast of San Diego Feb. 13-18. The ship enabled Navy Beach Group One to train with the Roll-on/Roll-off Discharge Facility in various sea states, as well as lift-on/lift-off operations. Working from Hope's stern ramp, the RRDF delivered military vehicles which were loaded onto the ship and then off-loaded and deployed back to the beach. Working during day and night operations, Navy and Marine Corps personnel were able to train for operations requiring the transportation of military and humanitarian cargo to shore from ships at sea with the RRDF.

The Military Sealift Command Global Review Team visited MSC activities in San Diego Feb. 24-27. The team conducted assessments of MSC Pacific and its site commands, as well as touring the Balboa Avenue Transshipment Center, Customer Support Unit West and the Afloat Network Operating Center. Special emphasis was placed on MSCPAC and Commander Task Force 33 missions, responsibilities, activities and resource requirements in the U.S. 3rd Fleet area of operations.

CENTRAL • CURRENTS

Navy Combat Logistics Force ships operating in U.S. 5th Fleet conducted 38 underway replenishment evolutions, including 30 events with coalition, European Union and NATO ships. This vital logistical support provided by Commander Task Force 53 enabled combatant ships to remain on station and complete their missions.

MV BBC Seattle (T-AK 5272) completed her February mission without incident while educating several U.S. Army, Navy and Marine Corps personnel in commercial ship operations. The Military Sealift Command Central Strategic Sealift Officer liaison, Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Lee Dortzbach**, coordinated a ship ride and tour for 22 personnel spanning three military services.

Submarine tender USS Emory S. Land (AS 39) entered U.S. 5th Fleet Feb. 4. Land brought unique forward repair capabilities that were used the minute the ship moored at Bahrain.

MSCCENT and CTF 53 bid farewell to Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Michael Greentree**. The command welcomes Navy **Cmdr. Richard Stout**, Navy **Lt. Daniel Teeter**, **Chief Petty Officer Raymond Steele** and **Petty Officer 1st Class Somchith Phommavongsa**.



ATLANTIC • LINES



Sailors move a patient for further treatment during a mass casualty drill aboard USNS Comfort (T-AH 20). The drill was the first of many in a two-year plan to make the hospital ship, which is layberthed in Norfolk, Va., mission ready. (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 D.J. Revell)

Military Sealift Command Atlantic welcomes home USNS Laramie (T-AO 203) following deployment to the U.S. European and U.S. Central Command areas of responsibility. Laramie's crew conducted more than 70 underway replenishments over the course of their deployment, delivering more than 7.6 million gallons of diesel fuel, 660,000 gallons of aviation fuel and 2,700 pallets of cargo. More than half of those replenishments were to coalition partners.

Bon voyage to USNS Big Horn (T-AO 198) and USNS Robert E. Peary (T-AKE 5) as they deploy to the U.S. 5th and U.S. 6th Fleet areas of responsibility in support of the USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77) Carrier Strike Group. The strike group will conduct maritime security operations, theater security cooperation efforts and missions for Operation Enduring Freedom.

MV Cape Race (T-AKR 996) activated Feb. 12 and deployed Feb. 20 in support of U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command's mission to transport two CV-22 Ospreys out of Djibouti. Nominated for her natural ability to secure and house the two aircraft safely, Cape Race is one of 31 Maritime Administration Ready Reserve Force ships that, when activated, transfers its control from MARAD to the MSC commander. During her activation, Cape Race also loaded U.S. Marine exercise equipment

from Beaumont, Texas and Charleston, S.C. and is currently in route to Agadir, Morocco, in support of Exercise African Lion.

Bravo Zulu to USNS Kanawha (T-AO 196) and the USNS Apache (T-ATF 172), which provided the resupply and service craft support that ensured a successful Independent Deployer Certification Exercise. The exercise consisted of 11 Navy ships that were performing their deployment workups.

Congratulations to the crew of USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) for successfully concluding a major command exercise known as COMFEX. The week-long exercise put the crew through the paces of simulating incoming patients in an operational environment. The quarterly exercise ensured Sailors understood their roles, and the ship's role.

"Our primary mission is to support the war fighter. Our secondary mission is to respond to disasters and other contingencies worldwide," said Navy **Capt. Rachel Haltner**, commanding officer of the ship's Medical Treatment Facility.

MSCLANT welcomes the newest member of the team, **LaShawn Sykes**, public affairs. The command also bids a fond farewell to **Josh Skinner**, operations.

JHSV 1 ready for partnering in Africa



USNS Spearhead's (JHSV 1) civil service mariners test hoses during a fire drill. (U.S. Navy photos by MCSN Justin R. DiNiro)

By MC2 Jeff Atherton, USNS Spearhead Public Affairs

ROTA, Spain (NNS) -- The U.S. Navy's first-in-class joint high-speed vessel USNS Spearhead (JHSV 1) departed Rota, Spain, March 2, for the waters off Africa to participate with Africa partners in a series of engagements and exercises.

Since leaving homeport in Virginia Beach, Va., Spearhead has traveled more than 9,000 nautical miles and made port visits to Rota and Souda Bay, Greece, and participated in maritime security efforts in

the Mediterranean region.

For the remainder of the ship's maiden deployment, Spearhead is slated to support partnership-building and maritime security efforts off the coast of West Africa and the Gulf of Guinea as part of Africa Partnership Station (APS).

APS, begun in 2007, leverages training and operational engagements to

enable skills and interoperability among regional partners through a continuum of efforts.

"We are looking forward to the next leg of this mission," said Navy Capt. Marc Lederer, Spearhead's mission commander. "We have a lot of important work to do off the coast of West Africa and we look forward to strengthening the existing relationships that the United States has with our partner nations."

As part of APS, Spearhead will participate in two U.S. Naval Forces

Europe-Africa-facilitated maritime exercises, Saharan Express and Obangame Express, where Spearhead will work alongside partners to increase maritime domain awareness and maritime security capabilities.

"We look forward to working with our partner nations, and sharing with them the capabilities of this versatile ship," said Capt. Douglas Casavant, the civil service master of the 338-foot-long aluminum catamaran.

With a rapidly reconfigurable 20,000 square-foot cargo stowage area, seating for more than 300 embarked personnel, and a top speed of 35 knots, Spearhead complements existing U.S. capabilities.

The ship can perform a wide range of missions from crisis response to humanitarian relief. Its speed enables it to be where it matters, when it matters, and will complement the U.S. Navy's destroyers and other

assets currently in theater.

While deployed, Spearhead is scheduled to visit and interact with more than 20 nations and sail more than 15,000 miles, highlighting U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet's commitment and emphasis to partnerships and operating forward.



Capt. Doug Casavant, Spearhead's civil service master, explains the ship's capabilities to members of the Liberian Coast Guard during a joint familiarization exercise.

Soderman pays tribute to WWII naval battle

By Edward Baxter, MSC Public Affairs

CHUUK, Federated States of Micronesia (NNS) -- One of the U.S. Navy's Maritime Prepositioning Force ships visited the Pacific island of Chuuk, FSM, Feb. 16-20.

During the visit, USNS Soderman (T-AKR 317) helped commemorate a key World War II naval battle and engaged with Chuuk officials and community leaders.

Soderman crew members joined President of the FSM Emanuel Mori, U.S. Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia Doria Rosen and Japanese Ambassador to the FSM Eiichi Suzuki in a wreath-laying ceremony Feb. 17 to honor the 70th anniversary of Operation Hailstone, fought between U.S. and Japanese forces at Chuuk Lagoon Feb. 16-17, 1944. Representatives from the governor's office, chief of police and the Chuuk Senate also attended.

"Your support of this important milestone occasion for FSM is greatly appreciated," said Rear Adm. Tilghman Payne, U.S. Defense representative to Guam, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of Palau. "It's a significant historical occasion and your engagement goes a long way in building relationships among our compact nation partners."

Following the ceremony, Soderman's civilian master Capt. Samaro Bannister hosted the U.S. and Japanese ambassadors, and other officials who attended the ceremony, at a reception and tour of the 950-foot ship.

Below: U.S. Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia Doria Rosen, center, and Navy Lt. Cmdr. Antonio Pinkston, chief staff officer of Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three, left, participate in a wreath-laying ceremony at Chuuk, FSM, remembering those who perished during a battle between U.S. and Japanese forces during World War II. (U.S. Navy photos by DC1 Daniel Ortega).

Right: Ambassador Rosen tries her hand at the helm of USNS Soderman (T-AKR 317) while the ship is at anchor just outside of Chuuk harbor.

"Soderman's presence provides the citizens of Chuuk with a visual reminder of the continuing U.S. commitment to security and defense of the region," said Lt. Cmdr. Antonio Pinkston, chief staff officer of Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three.

U.S. naval surface and air forces destroyed a vital logistics hub in Operation Hailstone, which had supplied Japanese garrisons located on islands and atolls throughout the central and south Pacific. Fifteen Japanese warships and 270 aircraft were destroyed during the battle.

During the port call, Soderman crew members also joined Rosen at Chuuk High School where they met with faculty and staff to discuss possible U.S. Navy or merchant mariner career options for their students. Next, a group of 13 local high school students boarded Soderman, at anchor just outside Chuuk Lagoon, where they toured the ship and stayed aboard for lunch.

Soderman is part of MPS Three, a fleet of 11 government-owned and commercially-contracted ships which move from port to port in many allied nations in the Pacific Rim. MPS Three comprises an afloat staff of 10 Sailors under the command of a U.S. Navy captain who maintains tactical command and control of the squadron. All MPS Three ships are crewed by merchant mariners working for private companies under contract to Military Sealift Command, who operate and navigate the ships.

Soderman got underway on the evening of Feb. 20 and returns to its forward-deployed location near Guam and Saipan.

