

# SEALIFT

Our U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command

## JHSV 1

"This ship is different in every way."

INSIDE the July 2014 Issue — USN to dive on WWII wreck • Mercy heads to RIMPAC 2014

## Commander's perspective

An MH-60S Seahawk lifts dry cargo from USNS John Lenthall (T-AO 189) during a vertical replenishment with USS Bataan (LHD 5). (U.S. Navy Photo by MC3 Erik Foster)

Fleet Forces Command. Our MHQ will likely consist of a type-commander staff, led by our executive director. Our MHQ staff will be responsible for corporate governance, strategic planning policy, resourcing, data strategy and knowledge management. It will include Special Assistants and most of our N-Codes.

Our MOC will provide the structure for flowing operational information through the staff. Our Area Commanders will be responsible for and support operational missions on a regional basis. Built around N3/5, Operations and Plans and reporting to the Director of Maritime Operations, our MOC will include other elements of the staff and area commands, flexing as required by the mission.

# An update on MSC's Global Review

### Competency Alignment

We rolled this concept out two years ago, but it's not yet fully implemented. We are developing better documentation and guidance to make it work the way it should.

The following blog was written by Rear Adm. T.K. Shannon, commander, Military Sealift Command. Recently, MSC conducted a Global Review of its operations, locations and structure, looking for better ways to align resources and conduct business more efficiently to meet mission requirements. Shannon provides a summary view of the results.

Our talented Global Review team, encompassing more than 130 years of MSC experience among its members, embarked on their worldwide effort early this year, gathering data and impressions from MSC people everywhere. Then they came home and locked themselves away to deliberate and write. The results are in and MSC senior leadership has a much clearer picture of our diverse, globe-straddling operations thanks to our team's excellent work. Here are some of the highlights of their report.

Our team validated two basic types of improvement that need to be made: some relatively easy improvements that can be made in the short term, and some more complex improvements that need to be worked over a much longer period of time. We're very much aware of austere budgets, so we're moving carefully, and any improvements will be transparent and announced well in advance. It's not "getting to yes" that's driving us – it's "getting to right."

We're tweaking a world-class organization, not rebuilding anything from scratch. But we can't be complacent. Our world is changing, and so must we if we want to remain relevant. Our Global Review report is our roadmap to help us get where we need to go.

### Corporate Governance

This large area of potential improvement covers three sub-areas: internal processes – how we develop and document them and integrate our safety and quality management systems; corporate operations – how our "business" works and how it's integrated with internal and external taskers and our knowledge management system; and information management – how we physically deal with the digital data that MSC receives and generates.

For internal processes, we'll focus on documenting and improving our end-to-end processes as we combine Quality Management with Safety Management.

N9, currently our Strategic Planning division, will become Corporate Operations and meld knowledge management, tasker management, portal management and the combined QMS/SMS.

Enterprise-wide information management will fall to N6 to improve the systems we use to collect, store, handle and retrieve the vast amount of data that flows through MSC.

### MHQ/MOC

We're going to modify our command structure to a Maritime Headquarters (MHQ) and a Maritime Operations Center (MOC). This conforms with the direction of U.S.

### Procurement

Our Global Review team reported the perception by many MSC employees that our procurement cycle is slowing. Since our contracting authority is one of our recognized strengths, we don't want that jeopardized. We're looking at ways to ratchet up the process within the legal bounds of the Federal Acquisition Regulations and applicable U.S. Codes.

### OCONUS Maintenance Hubs

Our review team presented several ideas for improving our maintenance hubs outside the United States that would put our people where the work occurs and use current resources in more effective and efficient ways.

### Workforce Development

The last big area involved our workforce across the enterprise. There is a general feeling of not being empowered at the right level. Wherever possible, we need to push the decision-making process down to the appropriate level. This will require a renewed sense of responsibility, accountability and common sense. We also need to address training and travel, realizing it will be a challenge in these constrained budgetary times, but I fully support an active and well-trained workforce.

### Our Way Ahead

As we move forward on our team's recommendations, we'll put all their findings in our Quality Management System database as observations so we can track them. More work is needed, and whether it's short-term improvements or longer-term issues, specific recommendations will be brought to senior leadership for decision and guidance. Through it all, we'll keep everyone informed of what's happening, when it's happening.

Thanks for your service.

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

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## Rochford takes command of MPSRON 3

USNS 2ND LT JOHN P. BOBO (T-AK 3001) — Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three welcomed a new commodore May 30 while en route to Okinawa, Japan. Capt. R. A. "Rocky"

Rochford relieved Capt. Leonard V. Remias as commander, MPSRON 3.

The change of command ceremony took place on Bobo's flight deck. MPSRON staff, a Navy Cargo Handling Battalion

One detachment, representatives from III Marine Expeditionary Force and various Bobo crew members attended.

In his remarks, Remias thanked attendees for "superb execution to deliver thousands of tons of combat cargo and equipment – logging thousands of miles from Guam to Okinawa, Japan; Gwangyang, Korea; Darwin, Australia and Subic Bay, Philippines." This was "instrumental to fleet Marine objectives and more broadly U.S. Pacific Command." Remias also recognized the families for all the support and sacrifice enduring the hardships of deployment.

In keeping with the spirit of naval tradition, Remias and Rochford initiated the passing of command by reading their orders aloud.

After taking command, Rochford, a native of Scituate, Massachusetts, thanked Remias for "handing over a superbly oiled machine." In remarks to the crew he said, "I will draw my strength from you. As I lead, I will lean. I will rely, and I will demand. I will guide, and we will succeed."

MPSRON 3, operating in the western Pacific, maintains tactical control of the eleven ships carrying afloat prepositioned U.S. military cargo for the U.S. Marine Corps, the U.S. Army, and the U.S. Air Force. The squadron's mission is to enable force from the sea by providing swift and effective transportation of vital equipment and supplies for designated operations.



By MC3 Andrew Schneider  
Southern Partnership Station  
Public Affairs

**B**IG CREEK, Belize (NNS) -- Although Military Sealift Command joint high-speed vessel USNS Spearhead (JHSV 1) returned to homeport nearly a month ago, Spearhead is already moored to the pier in Big Creek, Belize.

Sailors, Marines, Soldiers and Airmen disembarked Spearhead here, June 1, to begin Southern Partnership Station 2014 (SPS-JHSV 14). SPS-JHSV 14 is a U.S. 4th Fleet deployment designed to strengthen civil and maritime capabilities with regional partner nations in the Central, South American, and Caribbean areas of responsibility.

"We are going to work with each of the countries' expertise and specialties and we will try to match it so we can both get mutual beneficial training," said Capt. Sam Hancock, mission commander for Southern Partnership Station 2014.

This is the first time Spearhead is dropping off its near capacity of adaptive force packages and military equipment.

The adaptive force packages are comprised of Riverine Squadron (RIVRON) 2, Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 202, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 3, Mobile Diving Salvage Unit 2, Naval Criminal Investigation Service agents, Engineering engagement teams, medical and dental teams and various Marine components.

Medical and dental teams will conduct Subject Matter Expert exchanges with

health officials in ministerial and regional hospitals in areas of humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, women's health, community health and preventative medicine.

"We are very fortunate that we are getting the privilege to go into these hospitals and work side-by-side with our host nation counterparts; I am really looking forward to working together," said Lt. Cmdr. Suzanne Maldarelli, medical officer in charge. "Our functional role in the hospitals is not to be in the lead position. We are there as the subject matter experts, helping lay the infrastructure, capabilities, and the education, if needed."

Navy Seabees, Belize Defense Force, and Light Engineer Company will work together to repair and reconstruct two schools and make improvements to existing structures.

Each unit will spend time working with host-nation partners to strengthen relationships and joint interoperability.

"Let's also ensure our host nation

USNS Spearhead (JHSV 1) crew and service members off-load gear and vehicles in support of Southern Partnership Station. (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Andrew Schneider)



## Southern Partnership Station kicks off in Belize

personnel admire us for the courtesy, dignity and respect we afford them," said Rear Adm. George Ballance, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet, at an all hands call. "There's much we can teach and train, but there's also much we can learn."

After transporting troops and military equipment, Spearhead is scheduled to depart Belize to conduct counter illicit trafficking operations and to conduct experimentation to explore the capability and capacity of JHSV to support innovative missions.

The AFPs are scheduled to remain in Belize working with the Belize

Defense Force until later this year when Spearhead will return to reload and transport service members to Guatemala to continue the SPS-JHSV 14 mission.

SPS-JHSV 14 is a U.S. Navy deployment focused on subject matter expert exchanges with partner nation militaries and security forces. U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command and U.S. 4th Fleet employ maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations in order to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships that foster regional security in the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility.

## Navy to dive on WWII wreck of USS Houston

By Commander, Task Force 73 Public Affairs

**S**INGAPORE (NNS) -- In a training evolution to be conducted as part of the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) 2014 exercise series, U.S. Navy divers, assisted by personnel from the Indonesian navy, will survey the World War II wreck of the cruiser USS Houston (CA 30) in June.

The purpose of the mission is to determine the vessel's current condition and provide real-world training to rescue and salvage divers in maneuvering around a sunken ship. Divers from both navies will also share best practices and diving techniques during a series of training evolutions on board the rescue and salvage ship USNS Safeguard (T-ARS-50).

Houston was sunk during the World War II Battle of Sunda Strait Feb. 28, 1942 with the loss of more than 700 souls. The ship remains sovereign property of the U.S. under customary international law, and is a popular dive site. Houston is located off the west coast of Java, Indonesia, one of nine partner nations participating in CARAT 2014.

Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit divers embarked in Safeguard will inspect the wreck to assess whether the ship has fallen prey to illicit salvage. They will be aided by Dr. Alexis Catsambis, an underwater archaeologist from the Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC) who will provide operations planning support in order for the mission to effectively document the state of preservation of Houston. Documentation methods will include personal inspection by divers, as well as the planned use of sonar sensing systems and a remotely operated vehicle (ROV).

Once the mission is complete, Catsambis and NHHC's Underwater Archaeology Branch will compile the expedition's findings into a formal report on the condition of the ship, which will be released when complete.

"Working with our Indonesian navy partners, CARAT 2014 offers an excellent opportunity to conduct this diving exchange as part of our shared training goals, while also allowing us to determine the condition of a ship that is an important part of the U.S. Navy's heritage in this region," said Rear Adm. Cindy Thebaud, commander, Task Force 73 and commander, Naval Forces CARAT.

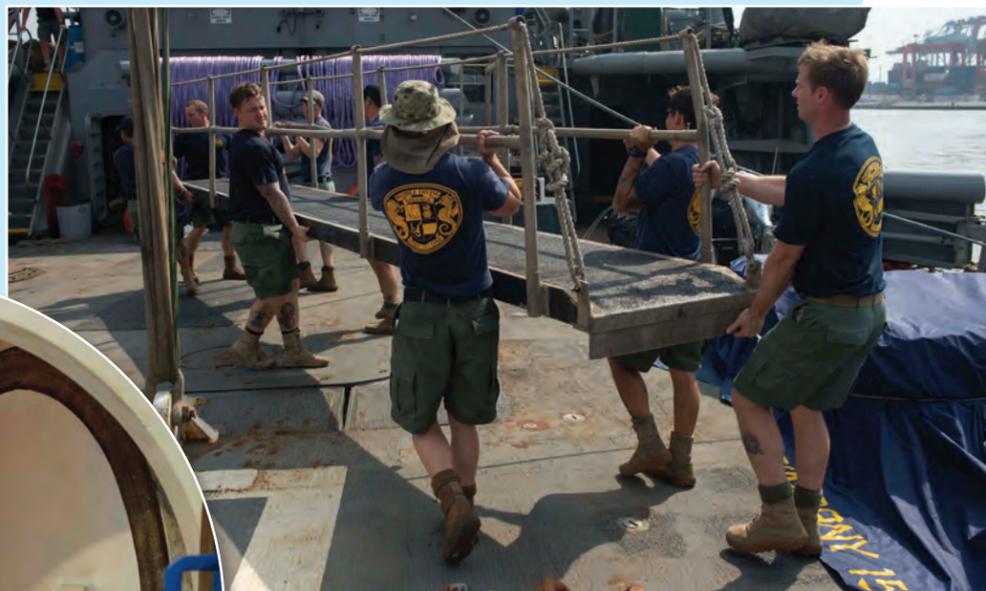
The Department of the Navy's sunken ship and aircraft wrecks represent a collection of more than 17,000 fragile, non-renewable cultural resources distributed worldwide. They often serve as war graves, safeguard state secrets, carry environmental and safety hazards such as oil and ordnance, and hold great historical value. While it is not feasible to conduct similar surveys of all sunken military craft, Navy leadership desires to ensure

the final resting place of those who made the ultimate sacrifice when the ship went down remains in a respected and solemn condition.

In its 20th year, CARAT, which continues through late 2014, is a bilateral exercise series designed to address shared maritime security priorities and concerns, strengthen navy-to-navy relationships and enhance interoperability among participating forces. It will focus on combined air, surface and anti-submarine operations at sea, maritime domain awareness, amphibious landing events and humanitarian assistance, disaster response scenarios. Additional skill areas exercised during CARAT include riverine operations, explosive ordnance disposal, combat construction, visit, board, search, and seizure, diving and salvage, search and rescue, military medicine and military law.

The Naval History and Heritage Command, located at the Washington Navy Yard, is responsible for the preservation, analysis, and dissemination of U.S. naval history and heritage. It provides the knowledge foundation for the Navy by maintaining historically relevant resources and products that reflect the Navy's unique and enduring contributions through the nation's history, and supports the Fleet by assisting with and delivering professional research, analysis, and interpretive services.

NHHC is composed of many activities including the Navy Department Library, the Navy Operational Archives, the Navy art and artifact collections, underwater archeology, Navy histories, nine museums, USS Constitution repair facility and the historic ship Nautilus.



**Above:** Sailors, assigned to Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit 1, move the gangway on USNS Safeguard (T-ARS 50). **Left:** Sailors enter a recompression chamber on Safeguard. (U.S. Navy photos by MC3 Christian Senyk)





# USNS Spearhead's

## "It's exciting to be



**Cover:** USNS Spearhead (JHSV 1) Third Engineer Aaron Mackie checks the engine oil during a port visit to Ghana. (All U.S. Navy photos by MGSN Justin R. DiNiro, unless otherwise noted)

**This page, background:** Spearhead arrives in Souda Bay. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Jeffrey M. Richardson)

**Counter-clockwise, from above:** A civil service mariner aboard Spearhead hoses down the deck during a fire drill.

Spearhead Able Seaman Jack Karg paints Gabon's national art school as part of a community outreach project.

Spearhead Sailors and civil service mariners heave mooring lines as the ship gets underway.

Spearhead Third Mate Matt Colla, helps offload goodwill materials as part of the U.S. Navy's Project Handclasp, which accepts and transports goodwill material aboard Navy ships for distribution to foreign nations recipients.



By Meghan Patrick Henderson, MSCEURAF Public Affairs

**A**sk Capt. Doug Casavant for a tour of joint high-speed vessel USNS Spearhead (JHSV 1) and he'll lead you through dynamic bridge wings, the 312 airline-style passenger seating with a dozen high-resolution television monitors mounted above, and a gigantic mission bay with enough room to transport 600 tons of cargo at an average speed of 35 knots.

Casavant's JHSV tours started in 2011 when he became Spearhead's master. Since then, hundreds of people have visited the ship to see the modern technology and features of the U.S. Navy's first JHSV.

Several months after Spearhead set sail on the first leg of its maiden deployment to U.S. 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea and West Africa, Casavant's tour now highlights more than ship architecture.

Now there are stories of countries visited, personnel embarked and the successful missions of one of the Navy's newest platforms. Casavant showcases this personality: a braided neck strap for the new bridge binoculars, handmade by a Navy sailor embarked for small boat operations. A mounted wooden tribal mask bought from a bazaar in Ghana by crew members on liberty. Stories about boarding exercises conducted in the mission bay by U.S., Ghanaian, Cameroonian and Nigerian Special Forces in the Gulf of Guinea.

"Everyone who is part of this first deployment gets an opportunity to leave something special behind," said Casavant of the 27 civil service mariners and more than 50 military personnel who embarked Spearhead between January and May 2014. "There are many challenges associated with the first ship in a class and therefore also the opportunity to leave a nice legacy. Years later we'll read about this ship class and we'll be able to say we're among the ones who paved the way for this platform. It's exciting to be part of something new."

#### First Deployment

Spearhead, designed to conduct rapid intra-theater lifts for personnel and cargo, demonstrated its organic capabilities during successful sea trials ending in 2013. The first deployment to U.S. 6th Fleet and U.S. 4th Fleet aim to test the potential for other mission sets.

"The biggest strength of this ship is its flexibility," said Navy Capt. John Rinko commander of Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa/Commander, Task Force 63, which had operational and tactical control during most of Spearhead's deployment. "We've just begun to tap into that resource. JHSV provides a very flexible option across a spectrum of operations, and I think it brings capabilities that fleet commanders are looking at outside the typical force sustainment function. Right now we're looking at what those capabilities might be."

Spearhead deployed from Little Creek Jan. 16. Over several months, the ship operated in the Mediterranean Sea and West Africa, where it joined several exercises and operations as part of Africa Partnership Station.

#### The CIVMAR story:

As Spearhead made its first waves underway, its CIVMARs adapted to the new experience of a ship class "very different from the oilers and supply ships most of us have spent our MSC careers aboard," said Jimmy Conner, Spearhead's boatswain's mate.



# Maiden Deployment

part of something new.”

“This ship is different in every way,” said Conner, who started working for MSC in 2006 after four years enlisted in the Navy. “The anchors are different; the deck is different; the mission is different. Even the locations we’ve sailed to are different; most CIVMARs have never traveled to Africa. But it’s very interesting and good change in daily tempo. I like being in a place where special operators come aboard for missions or I have the opportunity to mentor young Sailors or train them in deck operations.”

Many of the CIVMARs working aboard Spearhead volunteered for the JHSV class, the uniqueness of which requires extensive platform training for both licensed and unlicensed mariners. Because the ship is designed for a reduced crew, JHSV billets also include responsibilities beyond the primary job. Members of the galley are trained firefighters; the IT department assists with lines in and out of port; and everyone works together to keep the ship clean and maintained.

“I raised my hand and told them to put me on the list,” said Able Seaman Michael Strickland. “I wanted something different and I’m very excited to be part of it.”

“There are many opportunities to contribute and be active among a small crew on a physically large ship, everyone steps out of their comfort zone here,” said Third Officer Dustin Mailloux, who compares the crew mentality to that of rescue/salvage ships or fleet ocean tugs. “It’s an opportunity to become more personal with people you’re working with, to get to know their families and where they’re from, which is different from ships with bigger crews.”

Third Engineer Aaron Mackie jokes that Spearhead gave him the first Vitamin D exposure of his career. Aboard JHSVs, engineers uniquely work in the bridge alongside the ship’s deck operators, remotely managing all engineering and propulsion systems via an elaborate control panel, video monitors of various systems and a roaming engine utilityman.

“I thought my job was insurance that I’d never need sunscreen on the job,” said Mackie, pointing to his red hair and freckles.

“In all seriousness, the shared space has made the deck and engineering departments closer than on any other ship in our careers,” he said. “It’s nice to have more people to spend watch with and it makes our crew much more tight-knit.”

Spearhead’s camaraderie also extends to CIVMARs assigned to the next few JHSVs, as lessons-learned are frequently shared and many CIVMARs assigned to JHSVs 2 and 3 come aboard Spearhead as reliefs to gain experience for their own platforms which are scheduled to begin operating in the near future.

“Spearhead is my favorite MSC ship,” said Chief Radio Electronics Technician Greg Shergur. “I like the important work this ship does and I like the crew. We really get along with each other and trust each other to work hard to keep the ship running. We have to because there are only 27 of us. Everyone comes aboard with a willingness to learn and enthusiasm. It feels good to be part of something new and exciting as the Navy decides how these ships will best support its mission.”

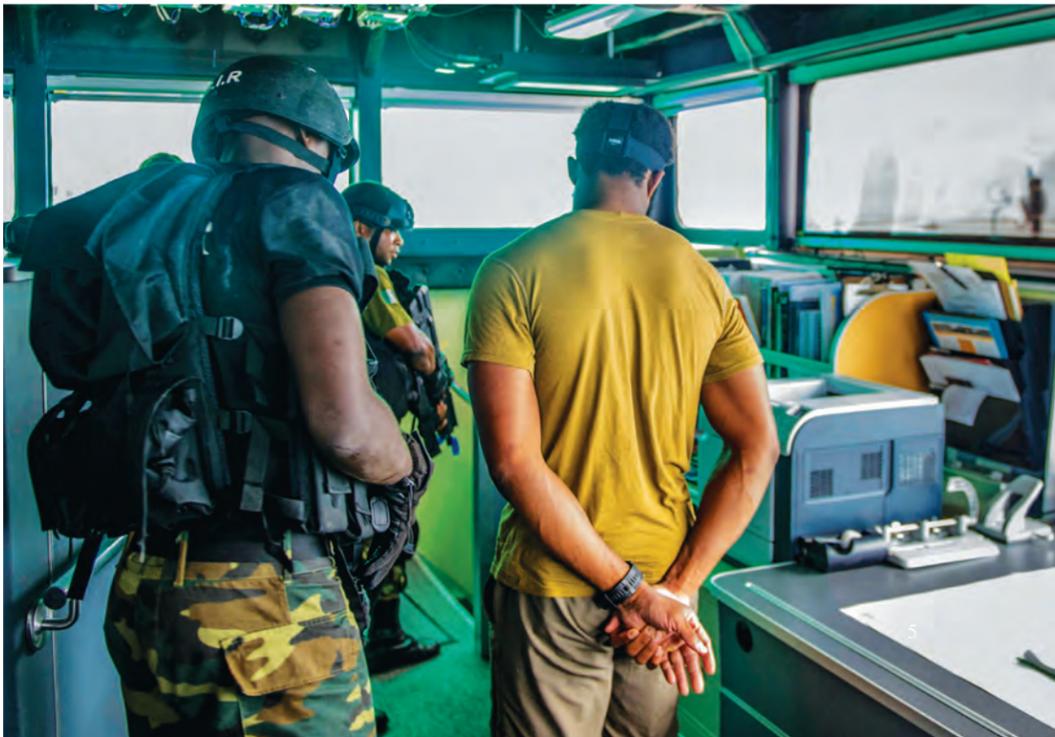


*Clockwise, from top: Capt. Doug Casavant, Spearhead’s civil service master places a firefighting jacket on a visitor during a ship tour.*

*Spearhead Sailors and civil service mariners heave a line during small boat operations.*

*U.S. Navy, Nigerian, Cameroonian and Netherlands personnel secure Spearhead’s bridge during a simulated boarding as part of Obangame Express 2014.*

*Spearhead Chief Mate James Regan explains the rescue boat propulsion system to members of the Liberian Coast Guard during a joint familiarization exercise aboard Spearhead.*



## FAR EAST • HAILS



Capt. Paul Harvey salutes during the MSC Far East change of command ceremony as he relieves Capt. Jim Hruska as commander.

Navy **Capt. Jim Hruska**, commander, Military Sealift Command Far East served as co-chair of the annual Korea Flag Shipping Work Group conference held in Seoul, Republic of Korea, May 27-29. Hruska joined his South Korean counterpart **Capt. Byung Mo Lee**, director, Logistics Plans Division, Deputy Chief of Navy Operations, ROK Navy, for discussions to reinforce a long-standing agreement to use up to 59 South Korean cargo vessels in the event of a crisis on the Korean peninsula.

MSCFE leadership changed hands June 6, when Navy **Capt. Paul Harvey** relieved Hruska as commander. During the ceremony, Navy **Rear Adm. Cindy Thebaud**, commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific, presented Hruska with the Legion of Merit recognizing his achievements over the past two years.

"Jim Hruska has been my sounding board, thinking strategically with incredible knowledge of the maritime and geo-political environments in the Far East, and then applying superior leadership and operational expertise towards gaining the maximum effect from 50-plus MSC ships, subordinate commands and personnel under his charge," Thebaud said.

MSCFE celebrated National Maritime Day throughout its geographic area of responsibility in late May. On May 22, staff members from MSCFE boarded USNS Charles Drew (T-AKE 10) at Singapore's Sembawang Wharves. Hruska addressed the crew of Drew on the historic contributions of merchant mariners to the Navy and to the Nation. Drew's civil service master **Capt. Ed Santillan** joined in cutting a ceremonial cake and MSCFE strategic sealift officer coordinator Navy Cmdr. Bill Hartman read the Presidential Proclamation on Maritime Day.

At Guam, May 22, Ship Support Unit Guam commanding officer Navy **Capt. Joe Casale** joined acting Governor of Guam **Ray Tenorio** in a ceremonial signing of a proclamation marking the day as "Guam Maritime Day."

"Today, we recognize the efforts of our mariners, here on Guam and throughout the world, who promote commerce and strengthen our economic security by keeping the oceans open to trade," Casale said.

In Diego Garcia, MSC Office Diego Garcia commanding officer Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Mansfield Stinson** co-hosted a ceremony with the United Seamen's Service Center. With about 160 attendees, Stinson highlighted the critical support provided by merchant mariners over the years.

"It is a privilege to have events like these to honor our mariner's hard work and dedication," Stinson said.

Diego Garcia-based MPS Squadron Two welcomes Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Chris Ylitalo**, who relieves Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Corey McCollum** as chief staff officer. The command welcomes **Operations Specialist Chief Alex Mirailh**.

Civilian masters **Capt. Kristin Mangold**, prospective master of USNS Henson (T-AGS 63) and **Capt. Robert Castoire**, prospective master of USNS Victorious (T-AGOS 19) visited with Hruska and command staff members during orientation visits to the command May 19 and June 2, respectively.

## EUROPE/AFRICA • NEWS

Throughout the month of May, USNS John Lenthall (T-AO 189), the U.S. Navy's duty oiler in the Mediterranean Sea, conducted 22 underway replenishments with 12 U.S. Navy and NATO assets, delivering more than 2.1 million gallons of F-76 and F-44 fuel and transferring 19 pallets of cargo.

MV Cape Ray, an activated Ready Reserve Force cargo ship, remained pierside in Rota, Spain, throughout the month of May. The ship conducted one-day of dock trials to test Cape Ray's regular operating systems May 13.

The U.S. 6th Fleet flagship, USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), participated in NATO Exercise Trident Jaguar in the Western Mediterranean Sea May 1-16. Trident Jaguar aimed to strengthen relationships between NATO partner nations and enhance their ability to collectively respond to crisis on short notice. The exercise also demonstrated interoperability between NATO allies as part of NATO's broader connected forces initiative.

MV Cape Race, an activated Ready Reserve Force cargo ship, transited the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations with a port stop in Rota, Spain, May 8-10, before departing the area of operations for return to Norfolk, Va.

MSC Europe and Africa conducted sealift operations in April with Maltese-flagged voyage charter MT Marvea, which loaded 270,000 barrels of fuel in St. Theodore, Greece, for delivery

to Souda Bay, Greece, May 22-24, and Augusta Bay, Italy, May 25-27. Antigua and Barbuda-flagged cargo ship MV Parida delivered cargo to Newport, the United Kingdom, in late May.

Cargo ship MV BBC Seattle (T-AK 5272) entered the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations May 9 to provide ammunition resupply to U.S. European Command for the remainder of the month. BBC Seattle made port stops in Talamone Bay, Italy, May 14-17 and Newport, United Kingdom, May 26-30. MSCEURAF maritime transportation specialists **Matthew Sweeney**, **Shaun Kanak** and **Bruce Martin** supported the sealift operations on the ground in Talamone Bay.

Vanuatu-flagged service vessels MV Markab and MV Antares supported Exercise Phoenix Express, a U.S. Africa Command-sponsored regional maritime exercise, in the central Mediterranean Sea, May 28-31. MSCEURAF maritime transportation specialist Bruce Martin supported the Sealift operations on the ground in Malta.

USNS Bruce C. Heezen (T-AGS 64) operated in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations throughout the month of May. Heezen made port stops in Reykjavik, Iceland, May 4-5; and Portsmouth, Great Britain, May 26-31.

USNS 1ST LT Baldomero Lopez (T-AK 3010) entered the area of operations May 11. The ship loaded fuel and personnel in Souda Bay May 20-21.



Ships from Baltic nations, U.S. 6th Fleet command and control ship USS Mount Whitney begin the underway phase of Baltic Operations 2014, which is an annual, multi-national exercise to enhance maritime capabilities and interoperability, and to support regional stability. (U.S. Navy photo by MCS3 Luis R. Chavez Jr.)

## CENTRAL • CURRENTS

MSC-Central and Commander Task Force 53 continued logistics support for U.S. 5th Fleet warships, reporting another successful month in May. They organized and oversaw 49 underway replenishment evolutions with U.S. Navy warships, and 4 evolutions with coalition ships. These efforts allowed the fleet remain on station, and defend American and coalition interests in the Middle East.

MSCCENT and CTF-53 extend a special thank you to the USNS Pecos (T-AO 197) for its unmatched support of U.S. and coalition ships. PECOS safely and efficiently conducted 100 underway replenishments and 19 in port replenishments, transferring more than 2,500 pallets of cargo, provision, and supplies; 13.25 million gallons of F76 fuel; and 2.94 million gallons of F44 fuel. Pecos' crew worked tirelessly to achieve these accomplishments, and is well deserving of praise for their efforts. MSCCENT and CTF-53 wish Pecos a fond farewell and look forward to its future return to U.S. 5th Fleet.

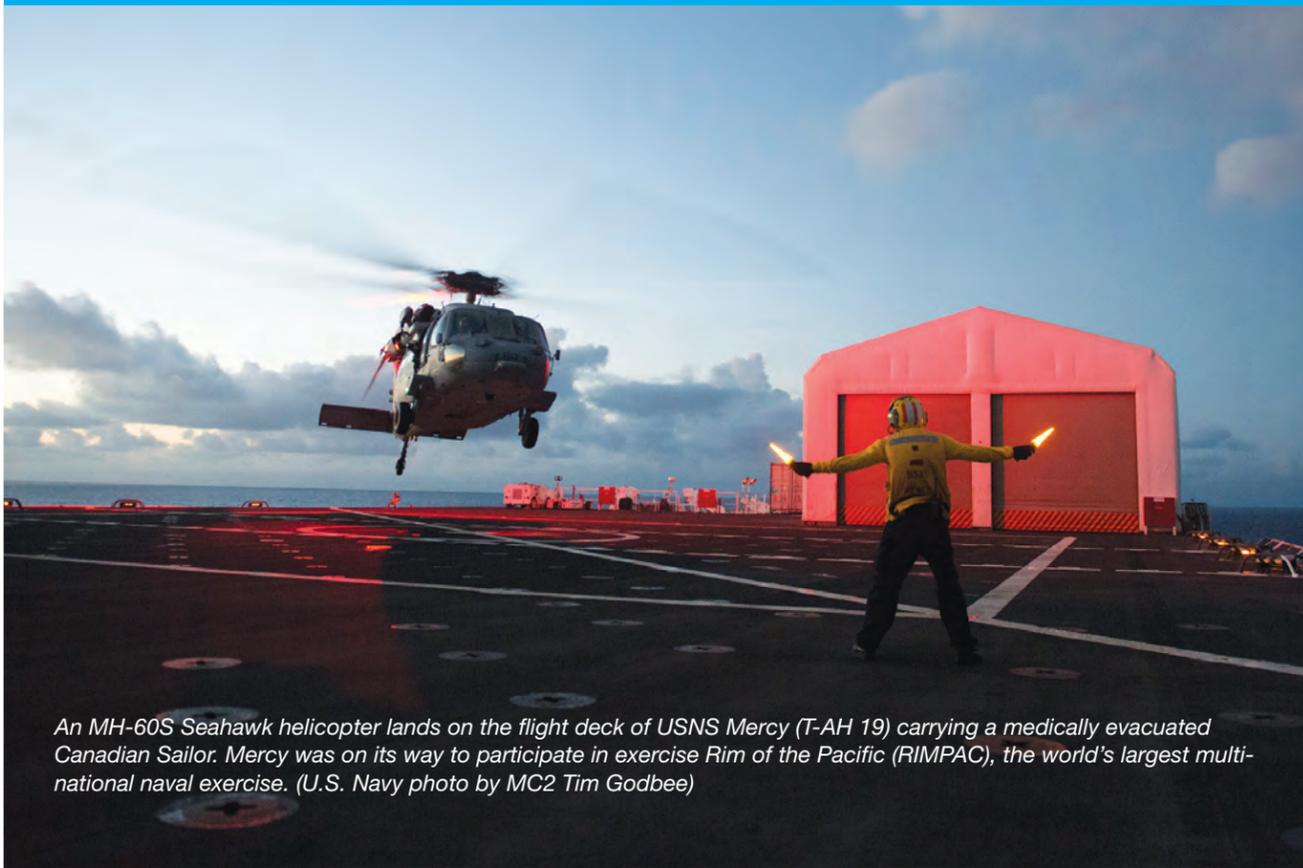
MSCCENT and CTF-53 would also like to bid farewell and following seas to several longtime members of its team: Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Matthew Geiser**, **Ameer Shakir**, **Parrish Guerrero**, Navy **Lt. Leah Moss**, **Senior Chief Israel Villones**, **Petty Officer Alfonso Cardenas**, **Petty Officer Timothy Glenn**, and **Petty Officer John Bariffe** all departed in May.

We are also pleased to welcome the arrivals of Navy **Cmdr. Douglas Faison**, Navy **Lt. Cmdr. Michael Garcia**, **Curtis McClure**, **Senior Chief Ramon Alcantra**, and **Petty Officer Willie Thompson** to the MSCCENT and CTF-53 team.

Sailors render honors aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51) as the amphibious transport dock USS Ponce (LPD 15) transits alongside. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Carlos M. Vazquez II)



## PACIFIC • BRIEFS



An MH-60S Seahawk helicopter lands on the flight deck of USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) carrying a medically evacuated Canadian Sailor. Mercy was on its way to participate in exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC), the world's largest multinational naval exercise. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Tim Godbee)



USS Spruance (DDG 111) pulls away as USS Rushmore (LSD-47) approaches USNS Rainier (T-AOE 7), center. USS Peleliu (LHA 5) is conducting a replenishment-at-sea with Rainier. The ships are en route to participate in Rim of the Pacific 2014. (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Dustin Knight)

**Rick Appling**, MSC Pacific's deputy operations officer, provided an MSC 101 brief during the Navy Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer meeting at Naval Air Station North Island, April 29. This gave the NEPLs a better understanding of MSC, and of the process for requesting a capability or capability set which may be resident in MSC through Federal Emergency Management Agency and Department of Defense.

**Bernie Donothan** and **David Carmody**, office of MSC Representative Pearl Harbor, attended the Commander Navy Region Hawaii's Hurricane Exercise 2014 May 5-9. The exercise, held on Ford Island, Hawaii, was a tabletop and base-wide preparedness workshop and training. During the tabletop exercise, Carmody coordinated the simulated sortie of USNS Salvor, and the simulated diversion of USNS Henry J. Kaiser (T-AO 187) and USNS Amelia Earhart (T-AKE 6). This year's exercise tested the unavailability of computer mustering, requiring players to contact employees via cell-to-cell with no land lines available.

USNS Salvor (T-ARS 52) arrived in Esquimalt, British Columbia, May 31 with Royal Canadian Navy oiler HMCS Protecteur in tow, after departing Pearl Harbor with Protecteur May 15. Salvor provided tow services needed to return the oiler to Canada after Protecteur was rendered powerless in February, due to a main engine space fire.

Fair winds and following seas to Navy Lt. **Cmdr. Dan Kuriger**, MSCPAC scheduling officer, as he retires following a 20-year Navy career. He has been part of MSCPAC since 2012.

Welcome aboard **Quartermaster 2nd Class Tristian Fortune**, who joins the MSCPAC operations department following duty with the Naval Assault Craft Unit 1, where he served as a navigator. He will work in the MSCPAC's Operations Department.

Congratulations to **Personnel Specialist 1st Class Adrian Falucho** on being frocked to his current rank.

## ATLANTIC • LINES

At this year's Navy annual Hurricane Exercise (HURREX) and Citadel Gale 2014, May 5-15, Navy Lt. **j.g. Patricia Greene** ran Military Sealift Command Atlantic's command and control center throughout the entire two-week scenario. Based on lessons learned from past hurricane exercises, the command now updates hurricane briefs daily, uses phones and e-mails instead of Naval messages to ensure data updates are received in a timely manner and sends self-generated weather messages a week prior to allow for the lead times necessary to activate ships in reduced operating status.

National Maritime Day is celebrated annually in the United States on May 22. This day was created to recognize the many great contributions and sacrifices the maritime industry has made and continues to make for our country during times of peace and conflict.

"This time-honored tradition is all about commemorating the merchant marine and those who have paid the ultimate price for keeping our sea lanes open to the world," said Navy **Cmdr. Christopher Anderson**, MSCLANT operations officer.

USNS Apache (T-ATF 172) successfully towed the ex-USS Memphis (SSN 691) from Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Virginia, through the Panama Canal. After transiting the Panama Canal, she turned the tow over to sister ship USNS Sioux (T-ATF 171) for further transit to Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

May was also an exciting time for MSCLANT's Charleston, S.C. office, supporting the May 17 arrival of USNS Watkins (T-AKR 315) which participated in the Joint Task Force - Port Opening (JTF-PO) "Heavy" Exercise, known as the EX-STEEL GATOR, May 17-22. This training included more than 100 military personnel who set up an encampment known as "Charliesport" in the fictional country of El Corona, simulating a humanitarian mission after an earthquake.

In total, 1,456 pieces of cargo - filling a 270,566 square feet area - was discharged. **Tom D' Agostino**, director of ship operations, coordinated with the JTF-PO exercise and MSCLANT's Expeditionary Port Units 109 and 110. Marine Transportation Specialist **Mary Ann Liberto** played an instrumental role in the

initial Joint Assessment Team meeting, coordinating the port services, ship husbandry and security requirements.

MSCLANT congratulates Lt. **Greene** for making the Women's ALL NAVY Volleyball team for the second year in a row. Although the spring season was a short one, May 4 - 29, Greene's contributions as an outside hitter were instrumental in the team completing another successful season, which featured a mixture of practices and high tournaments games. Having played in college for the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, Greene said she was honored to be selected on the team. "Since graduating from USMMA," she said, "it has been hard to find a team to play on and that has the caliber of players that are found on the Navy's Women's Volleyball."

Finally, MSCLANT bids fair winds and following seas to Marine Transportation Specialist **Kemmeh Orji**, who departed May 30.

## DC • HIGHLIGHTS

Military Sealift Command headquarters in Washington, D.C. celebrated Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month June 24, which honors the importance of diversity within the Navy and the core values that bind our Navy team. Navy **Capt. David Oravec**, chaplain, served as the keynote speaker about respect, dignity, and tolerance.

The command welcomes **Alexander Podlozhenov**, engineering, and **Brandy Thomas**, contracts and business management.

MSC bids farewell to **Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Danelle Hankins**, N3/5; **David Ranowsky**, office of counsel; **Nicholas DeAngelis**, engineering; **Capt. Michael Strano**, Prepositioning Program; **Robert Donaldson**, Service Support Program.



**Above left:** A vehicle is offloaded from USNS 1st Lt. Baldomero Lopez at the Port of Aqaba. (USMC photo by Sgt. Laura Gauna) **Center:** A tank is lifted aboard Lopez. (USMC photo by Master Sgt. Will Price) **Right:** A Navy lieutenant supervises operations as a tank is lowered from Lopez. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Master Sgt. Will Price)

## Lopez off-loads for Exercise Eager Lion 2014

By Cpl. Laura Gauna, 1st Marine Logistics Group

**A**QABA, Jordan -- More than 500 Marines and sailors with 1st Marine Logistics Group and I Marine Expeditionary Force embarked on a Maritime Prepositioning Force offload mission in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for Exercise Eager Lion 2014, from May 25-29, 2014.

The exercise focused on maintaining and strengthening military interoperability with the Jordanian Armed Forces and practicing current MPF concepts using existing platforms in support of expeditionary crisis action and contingency operations.

"Some of the big things we hope to accomplish here are really getting the Marines and sailors trained on MPF operations. It's something the Marine Corps hasn't really done a lot of over the last ten years, but we are really refocusing everyone back to the amphibious roots that the Marine Corps was founded on," said Capt. Christopher Tucker, Landing Support Company, company commander, Headquarters Regiment, 1st MLG.

During an MPF operation, equipment capable of supporting a regimental-sized mechanized Marine Air-Ground Task Force is unloaded, logged, inspected and repaired to ensure all gear is ready for future missions. Eager Lion personnel conducted the offload of the MPF ship at the Port of Aqaba, offloading more than 300 pieces of gear in a total of 16 hours.

Marines and sailors offloaded 72 7-ton trucks, 115 Humvees, seven medical vehicles, four M1A1 tanks, and 14 Amphibious Assault Vehicles.

The equipment for this mission arrived on USNS 1st LT Baldomero Lopez (T-AKR 3010), a Maritime Prepositioning ship, named for a U.S. Marine Korean War veteran and Medal of Honor recipient. One of 14 ships in the Navy and Marine Corps' prepositioning fleet, it carries a company of tanks, amphibious assault vehicles, light armored vehicles and a battery of howitzers.

Once the equipment was unloaded from the ship, it was taken to the arrival assembly operations echelon, where the equipment went through a limited technical inspection, was scanned to show it was received and then issued out.

"It's important to maintain the vehicles coming off the ships, said Sgt. Nelson Guevara, wrecker operator chief, Motor Transportation Company, 1st Maintenance Battalion, 1st MLG. If any of these vehicles go down, mechanics need to be ready to fix it and get it back to working conditions as soon as possible. The Landing Force Support Program is in charge of all the vehicles coming off the ships. Some trucks are dismantled to fit in areas of the ship so Marine mechanics rebuild them before sending them to their respective locations.

The MPF Program enables the rapid deployment, engagement, and retrograde of a fully capable MAGTF anywhere in the world.

"MPF operations are really key to the Marine Corps because it gives us the ability to get equipment expeditiously and conduct our mission fast and in a hurry," said Master Gunnery Sgt. Christopher A. Toten, airfield services chief, G-4, I MEF. "It's a lot of work and many of the Marines have never done it. It's also a good opportunity for the Marines and sailors to conduct operations out here and work with other allied nations."

Jordan is an important ally of the United States. It provides sea access to the U.S. military, which is vital for Marines to conduct MPF operations, added Toten. It's a perfect place to do it because it has similar terrain, language and ports and facilities Marines would use in a real world contingency, such as humanitarian assistance missions.

Exercise Eager Lion 14, which has been conducted annually since 2011, includes more than 12,500 service members from more than 20 countries. The exercise provides multi-lateral forces with the opportunity to promote cooperation and interoperability among coalition forces, build functional capacity, practice crisis management and enhance readiness.

"Any opportunity we have to train with our partners in the region is always of great value," said Lt. General Robert B. Neller, commander, Marine Corps Forces Central Command. "To do so with one of our very best and capable partners, the Jordanian Armed Forces, makes Eager Lion just that much more special. To the JAF, as always, we appreciate your professionalism and hospitality and look forward to continuing to build and develop the special relationship we have with you."

## USNS Mercy departs for RIMPAC 2014

USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) departs Naval Base San Diego for Rim of the Pacific 2014. (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 James Vazquez)



By MC3 Pyoung K. Yi,  
USNS Mercy Public Affairs

**S**AN DIEGO (NNS) -- The hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH19) departed for the biennial Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2014 exercise in Hawaii, June 16.

RIMPAC, officially scheduled for June 26 to Aug. 1, is the world's largest international maritime

exercise. This year, 23 countries, 47 ships, six submarines, more than 200 aircraft and 25,000 personnel are scheduled to participate.

"The purpose of Mercy's participation in RIMPAC is to further Pacific Fleet's goal of engagements across the Pacific Ocean," said Capt. Jeffery Paulson, commanding officer of the Medical Treatment Facility aboard Mercy. "In our case, it's to further health engagements where

we have an opportunity to interact with many of our international partners."

Mercy is traveling from its homeport of Naval Base San Diego to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, where it will train medical staff underway in casualty care. They will be simulating casualties and utilizing high-tech medical mannequins for training.

Mercy is scheduled to provide tours and conduct subject matter expert

exchanges with a number of partner nation medical personnel, civilians and other U.S. military representatives throughout its stay in Hawaii.

Mercy personnel are also scheduled to participate in a Canadian-led medical symposium with other nations ashore on July 1-2, and will participate in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief exercise events.

RIMPAC will be the first time at sea for many of the Sailors assigned to Mercy, which include a large group of medical officers and hospital corpsman assigned to Naval Medical Center San Diego.

"I'm really looking forward to my first deployment, my first time being on a ship, and seeing how ship life works," said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Justin Moore. "My father was in the Navy, and he told me that I'll learn how the Navy works on a ship."

This will be the first time that Mercy participates in RIMPAC, an exercise that began in 1971. RIMPAC provides a unique training opportunity for participants to foster and sustain cooperative relationships that are critical to ensuring the safety of sea lanes and security on the world's oceans.