



SEALIFT

U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND...*UNITED WE SAIL*

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Military Sealift Command's expeditionary sea base USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams (T-ESB 4) arrives at Naval Station Norfolk, July 5, after completing its maiden voyage from San Diego, California. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)



USNS HERSHEL "WOODY" WILLIAMS, NAVY'S NEWEST EXPEDITIONARY SEA BASE, ARRIVES AT NAVAL STATION NORFOLK

Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

The U.S. Navy's newest expeditionary sea base (ESB), USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams (T-ESB 4), arrived at Naval Station Norfolk, July 5, after completing its 15,000 nautical mile maiden voyage from San Diego, California.

USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams was delivered to the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command in February 2018 and is the Navy's second, purpose-built ESB. The first ESB is USS Lewis B. Puller (T-ESB 3) which is currently operating in the Middle East.

"Our voyage from California to Virginia was very unusual because most modern ships use the Panama Canal to travel from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean. Because of our ship's size, we were too large for the canal, so we went around the southern tip of South America through the Straits of Magellan," said Capt. George McCarthy USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams' master. "Also, we transited this region during the arduous South American winter, so this was a journey which deserves respect."

The Straits of Magellan are considered to be difficult to navigate due to the constriction of its sea-lanes and volatile weather and strong sea-currents.

"Pulling into Norfolk signifies the completion of the ship's two-month, 15,000 nautical mile maiden voyage," said Lt. Cmdr. Courtney 'Cory' Rank, USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams' military detachment officer in charge. "The time on this voyage gave our Sailors the opportunity to gel as a team with the civil service mariners. Being able to build comradery as a crew during this journey is of vital importance to its future as a team."

The 784ft.-long vessel features a 52,000 square-foot flight deck, fuel and equipment storage, repair spaces, magazines, and mission-planning spaces. Able to accommodate up to 250 personnel, USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams will support multiple missions, such as air mine counter measures, counter-piracy operations, maritime security operations, humanitarian aid and disaster relief missions and crisis response operations. The ship has hybrid-manned crew with a combination of military personnel and civilian mariners.

"Military Sealift Command has lots of experience sailing ships with hybrid crews," said McCarthy. "I believe the hybrid crews are very effective and we will see more of our future ships operated under this concept."

USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams is named after the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient from the Battle of Iwo Jima. Hershel "Woody" Williams joined the Marine Corps following the attack on Pearl Harbor. After serving in Guadalcanal and Guam, Williams joined the campaign in Iwo Jima. Two days after arriving on the island, Williams picked up a 70-pound flamethrower and walked ahead of his infantry's tanks for four hours clearing their path of enemy machine-gun fire. His actions resulted in President Harry S. Truman awarding him the Medal of Honor two years later.

USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams is the expeditionary sea base-variant of the expeditionary transfer dock (ESD) which includes USNS Montford Point (T-ESD 1), USNS John Glenn (T-ESD 2) and USS Lewis B. Puller (T-ESB 3). USS Lewis B. Puller was later commissioned as a U.S. Navy warship and currently carries the "USS" designation.

The third expeditionary sea base, USNS Miguel Keith (T-ESB 5), is currently under construction by General Dynamics National Steel and Shipbuilding Company (NASSCO) in San Diego, California.

MSC operates approximately 125 non-combatant, civilian-crewed ships that replenish U.S. Navy ships, conduct specialized missions, and strategically preposition combat cargo at sea around the world while moving military cargo and supplies used by deployed U.S. forces and coalition partners.

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HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS, LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM, COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

From Commander, Military Sealift Command

We are in the annual hurricane season for the Atlantic and Eastern Pacific through November 30. The announcement of the season helps to remind us of the preparatory actions we should take to ensure

we remain mission ready at work and prepared at home.

Last year provides a direct example of the importance of preparedness as we saw devastating hurricanes sweep through the Caribbean region and Gulf Coast causing significant destruction and forcing the dislocation of thousands of people. Four MSC ships, USNS William McLean (T-AKE 12), USNS Supply (T-AOE 6), USNS Comfort (T-AH 20), and USNS Brittin (T-AKR 305) provided support to military, federal and state response efforts. Whether combat logistics, fleet support, or surge sealift, any type of ship may be called upon to assist during the hurricane season or in support of a response to a natural disaster anywhere in the world.

And while we are taking the necessary steps to ensure our ships and crews are ready, we must also safeguard our family and property. If you are unsure how to prepare for a hurricane or natural disaster, start by discussing these five questions with your family:

- How will we receive emergency alerts and warnings?
- What is our shelter [plan](http://www.ready.gov/shelter)?
- Do we have a three-day supply of food and water for each household member?
- What is our evacuation [route](http://www.ready.gov/evacuation)?
- What is our my family/household communication plan [plan](http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan) ?

While we hope a weather incident won't affect us, we must prepare as if it will.

We may be called upon at any time to support a contingency or weather-related event. Maintaining a high state of readiness is key to our ability to provide assured maritime logistics.

Thank you to the staff and mariners who will conduct the planning and preparations needed to make ship movements or provide support, and to the entire MSC workforce for focusing on personal and family readiness during the hurricane season.

Leadership Symposium

Recently we hosted the MSC Leadership Symposium, bringing together our Senior Executive Service team, Area Commanders, Detachment OICs, Program Managers, N-code Directors, Masters and Chief Engineer representatives, and others charged with leading the MSC enterprise.

The theme for the conference was "solidify gains and press forward." The symposium provided a valuable opportunity to gather MSC leaders together to align and synchronize our current actions, make any needed course corrections, and depart with a common understanding of the intended path to bring us to our destination. We recognized our accomplishments over the past year, tracked our on-going objectives, and positioned the command to make possible next year's aspirations.

Topic areas for the symposium included: Comprehensive Review, headquarters reorganization and transformation, afloat leadership selection board process, training readiness, Area Command updates, and leveling briefs from the force development, force generation, and force employment teams.

We received perspective from higher headquarters, Gen. Darren McDew, Commander, U.S. Transportation Command, and Adm. Chris Grady, Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces, as well as from the Honorable Mark Buzby, Administrator, U.S. Maritime Administration. These leaders provided valuable insight into how MSC is delivering services to meet customer needs and areas we need to focus on to ensure

the best alignment with the Navy, joint warfighters, and government agency partners.

While we studied and conversed on many topics throughout the week, a common thread tied all the discussions together. There is acknowledgment that while we have a competitive advantage in maritime logistics today our lead is narrowing, and we need to move faster at making changes that will position us to remain relevant and essential in the future operating environment.

The deliberate work the command has been doing in the areas of training wholeness, holistic readiness, capability alignment and experimental learning are designed to propel us forward, reduce capability gaps, and put us on that path to achieve relevance into the future.

Thank you to the commanders and staff who participated in the leadership symposium. The prepared briefings, problem-solving breakout sessions, assisted discussions, and administrative support contributed to the success of the event.

Comprehensive Review

MSC recently completed its Comprehensive Review as directed by U.S. Fleet Forces Command. The review includes recommendations which will disrupt the normalization of deviation from practices that developed over years of high-tempo operations in an uncertain fiscal and uncontested operational environment.

The Navy suffered two collisions last summer in the Pacific, resulting in loss of life and significant damage to USS Fitzgerald (DDG-62) and USS John S. McCain (DDG-56). Navy leadership conducted a Comprehensive Review of surface ship operations and incidents at sea to inform and drive improvements Navy-wide. At MSC we conducted our own Comprehensive Review and developed a timeline to implement recommendations.

Based upon our Comprehensive Review, my assessment is that our fleet is operating above baseline acceptable risk due to the following factors:

- Personnel and skills gaps both ashore and afloat;
- Unit training shortfalls related to an emphasis on operations over other evolutions;
- A force generation model that places ships' maintenance and operations at risk;
- Equipment obsolescence and a degradation in configuration control due to accumulation of outdated ship drawings, engineering alterations awaiting approvals, and deferred maintenance; and
- Operational tempo issues attributed to over-scheduling and lack of fatigue management.

Now that we've identified the areas where we need to make change, we are purposefully attending to the issues through the following actions:

- Commissioning a study to better understand our mariner workforce manning requirements in the current environment and re-baselining the shore-side personnel who develop policy, provide guidance, and directly support our vessels;
- Creating a directorate-level Force Training Division along with an MSC Readiness Manual. The manual will consolidate all training requirements, on both an individual level and the unit level, into one overarching document; and
- Developing specific Force Generation (FG) models for each ship class. Each ship class must have a specific maintenance and training model to ensure long-term success of the platforms from a material and operational perspective.

We are called upon to operate at the highest levels of performance providing on-time fleet logistics, strategic sealift and special mission support to the joint warfighter. Making lasting improvements will require the dedicated efforts of all hands.

I would like to thank the cross-functional team, comprised of 14 members from across the enterprise, who reviewed the CNO's Comprehensive Review, the formal investigation on the sinking of the SS EL FARO, and input from all afloat Masters and Chief Engineers to develop the report and list of recommendations. I look forward to providing updates as we successfully make progress necessary to ensure the safety of our people, our operations, and the readiness of our forces through resolving the findings in our Comprehensive Review.

United We Sail,
Rear Adm. Dee L. Mewbourne, USN
Commander, Military Sealift Command

MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND HEADQUARTERS EARNS ISO 9001:2015 QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CERTIFICATION

From Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command's Headquarters announced its attainment of the ISO 9001:2015 QMS certification by the International Organization for Standardization having successfully fulfilled all the requirements for a Quality Management System (QMS), June 1.

ISO 9001:2015 QMS is an internationally recognized standard for quality management systems. It specifies the criteria to establish policies, processes and procedures required for the efficient planning and execution of the core business processes of an organization.

"Being certified to ISO 9001:2015 QMS means that MSC has obtained an internationally recognized level of excellence with its business model," said MSC's Director, Corporate Governance (N92) Beth Zukovsky, the lead for the headquarters' ISO 9001: 2015 certification effort. "This certification provides our partners assurance that when they work with MSC's headquarters, they will receive high quality service."

"MSC headquarters has gone through a number of significant changes over the last few years, including relocation from Washington D.C. to Norfolk and a command re-organization," said Zukovsky. "Considering the dynamic environment in which MSC's headquarters is managed, ISO 9001: 2015 QMS lays out the framework for the business policies and practices which are necessary to achieve our mission. The standard provides requirements that lead to a culture that is focused on the right things, is continuously improving, and is capable of making organizational changes in a controlled manner."

The 'ISO' in the certification title is from the Greek language and means 'equal.'

"The International Organization for Standardization has developed over 22,000 international standards, ranging from technology, business, aerospace and medical industries, that are recognized in 161 countries," said Zukovsky. "In order to attain certification, an organization must meet all of the minimum requirements of the standard. The

standard provides industries and organizations the means to level the playing field in terms of determining excellence."

The International Organization for Standardization, based out of Geneva Switzerland, was first founded in 1926 to facilitate the coordination of industry standards through international unification. The organization was suspended during World War II but was reconvened in 1946 and officially stood back up in 1947.



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- Beth Zukovsky, MSC's Director, Corporate Governance (N92)

"We require our operating companies to maintain certification so we have reasonable assurance that they have processes in place for safe operations to protect life, platforms, and equipment; are hiring employees with the appropriate training, experience, and skillset; and have security measures that protect privileged and critical information related to national security," said Zukovsky. "By obtaining the ISO 9001: 2015 QMS certification, our business partners will be confident that the MSC headquarters is managed at the same level of excellence that they are. We are 'walking the walk' so to speak in terms of requiring excellence and demonstrating a level of commitment to focus on our customers and continually improve the services we provide."

To earn the ISO 9001:2015 QMS certification, MSC was evaluated on seven key areas; context of the organization, leadership, planning, support, operation, performance evaluation, and improvement.

"A team of certified auditors from American Bureau of Shipping - Quality Evaluations (ABS-QE) audited randomly selected personnel from the

MSC headquarters staff to verify that we had met all the criteria for the certification," said Zukovsky. "Based on the results, MSC headquarters has earned the ISO 9001: 2015 QMS certification, which is valid for three years."

To ensure the MSC headquarters maintains its certification through 2021, the command will be the subject of annual surveillance audits. When the auditors from ABS-QE return to headquarters for the annual surveillance audit, they will perform interviews with randomly selected staff members to determine continued compliance.

"The effort to obtain ISO 9001: 2015 QMS certification began with the consolidation of MSC's headquarters in Norfolk," said Zukovsky. "Earning this certification was a team effort from the headquarters staff. The certification initiative was led by our N9 team, and we achieved this accomplishment due to the support from the entire headquarters staff."

"Everyone that the auditor evaluated performed very well," added Zukovsky.

"They demonstrated awareness of the certification initiative, an understanding of MSC's mission, a high level of mission focus, and an understanding of their role in the organization. This really was an 'all hands' achievement."

According to Zukovsky, other organizations that are ISO 9001: 2015 QMS certified include Federal Express, General Electric and Amazon Web Services.

"In order for our command to maintain its ISO 9001: 2015 QMS certification, it is important for the headquarters staff to maintain its culture of continuous improvement," concluded Zukovsky. "We also need to maintain our leadership and staff commitment, focus, and continue our efforts to mature our programs and processes. Most importantly, we cannot become stagnant. We must keep pushing forward and find innovative ways to improve the organization and the service we provide to our nation."

On the three-year anniversary of the certification, a full re-certification audit will be performed.

THE HEAT IS ON, STAY COOL

By Susanne Greene, Naval Safety Center Public Affairs

In the last five years, the U.S. Navy has recorded 698 instances of heat stress, two of which were fatal. Working or playing in hot weather can lead to illness or death if you're not prepared.

"To minimize the likelihood of heat-related illness, Sailors and civilians should familiarize themselves with the Heat Stress Index and avoid strenuous activity or the heaviest work during the hottest times of the day," said Capt. Paul J. DeMieri, M.D., the Naval Safety Center's Flight Surgeon. "They should hydrate frequently, about a cup of water every 15-to-20 minutes in extreme heat, and avoid consuming liquids with any caffeine or alcohol."

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the heat index takes into account both humidity and air temperature. The higher the heat index, the hotter the air temperature feels, since sweat does not evaporate and cool the skin. OSHA and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) report that most common heat-related illnesses are heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat rash, and heat cramps.

"It's important to become familiar with signs of heat illness and know the basics of how to start treatment," DeMieri said.

Heat Exhaustion is a serious heat-related illness. Symptoms include elevated body temperature, decreased urine output, headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, weakness, irritability, thirst, and excessive sweating. If you notice these signs in a shipmate, take them to a medical clinic or dial 911. While you are waiting for medical personnel to arrive, move the person to a cooler area and give them liquids to drink, remove all unnecessary clothing, place a cool compress on their head, neck and face or have them wash their head, neck and face with cold water.

Heat Stroke is the most dangerous heat illness and can lead to death if not treated immediately. Symptoms of a heat stroke are elevated body temperature, confusion, seizures, hot, dry skin or excessive sweating, or loss of consciousness. If you notice these symptoms in a shipmate, dial 911

immediately. Also, move the person to a cool area, wet them with cool water, place cold wet clothes, or ice on their body and stay with the person until help arrives.

DeMieri said it's important to take all heat illnesses seriously.

"Heat cramps are usually caused by exercise or heavy exertion in warm weather and most commonly affect localized muscle groups," he said. "They can be a precursor to more severe heat-related injury and can usually be managed with rest, decreased activity, and increased fluid intake."

Take the following steps to keep cool when working outdoors: drink water or sports drinks frequently, make sure to eat regular meals throughout the day, schedule frequent rest periods and create a buddy system so you and your shipmates can check on one another.



USNS TRENTON RESCUE AT SEA

By Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Katie Cox and Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Jonathan Clay



Sailors from the Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Trenton (T-EPF 5) render assistance to mariners in distress that they encountered while conducting routine operations in the Mediterranean Sea. (U.S. Navy photo)

The Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport USNS Trenton (T-EPF 5) conducted a passenger transfer of 41 people with ships from the Italian Coast Guard off the coast of the island of Lampedusa, Italy, June 17.

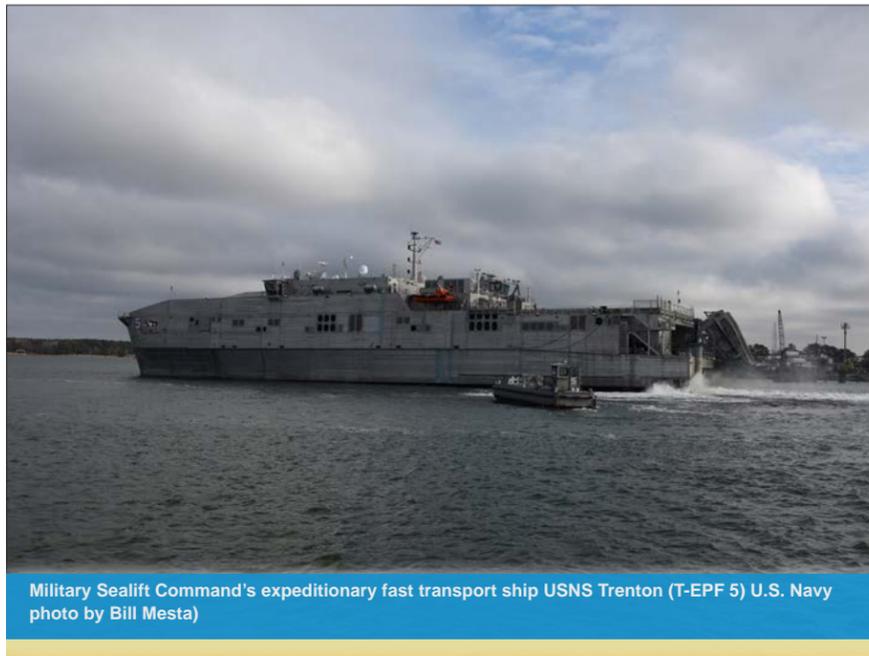
Trenton had encountered a vessel carrying 41 people in distress while operating in the Mediterranean Sea, June 12. During the operation, the Trenton crew initially observed approximately 12 bodies in the water that appeared to be unresponsive. The crew prioritized in recovering those who needed immediate help.

Rigid-hull inflatable boats and a fast rescue boat conducted a follow-on search for these bodies, but could not locate them or any additional persons at the scene.

After bringing them aboard the ship, the Trenton crew cared for their temporary passengers, providing them with food, water, clothing and basic medical care.

“Although it is seldom that we run into people in distress at sea, it is something we plan, practice and prepare for routinely,” said Susan Orsini, ship master aboard Trenton. “A rescue at sea involves all hands aboard the ship. I was so proud and impressed by the thoughtful resourcefulness of all hands on board USNS Trenton; it filled my heart with hope and gratitude.”

“The pivotal role the shore side units and personnel play in a rescue at sea cannot be minimized; the ship cannot do it alone,” said Orsini. “Their efforts involve intense and intricate coordination, timely and critical communications to all units and personnel involved. The reward for our efforts was seeing the rescued personnel transferred, in good spirits and good health, heading to their next destination.”



Military Sealift Command's expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Trenton (T-EPF 5) U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP 2018 CONCLUDES

By Petty Officer 2nd Class Kelsey Adams, Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific



Aviation Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Miranda Browning holds the chock and chains as an SH-60K Sea Hawk helicopter from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) takes off from USNS Mercy's flight deck during a bilateral medical training team drill between Mercy and JMSDF personnel. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kelsey L. Adams)

The 13th annual Pacific Partnership mission concluded June 21 after completing mission stops in Japan and throughout South and Southeast Asia.

The annual multilateral, multi-service mission featured partner nation counterparts working together in eight Indo-Pacific nations to improve disaster response preparedness and enhance relationships across the region.

“It has truly been an honor to lead the dynamic men and women of Pacific Partnership 18,” said Capt David Bretz, Pacific Partnership 18 mission commander. “This mission is something myself, along with our entire team from Mercy and Brunswick will never forget. We set out to strengthen the bonds with our host and partner nations, and we achieved this with resounding success. I could not have done it without the hard work and dedication of our entire team and it is something I will look back on fondly for the rest of my life.”

The Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) conducted mission stops in Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, and Japan while the expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Brunswick (T-EPF 6) made separate mission stops in Yap, Palau, Malaysia and Thailand. During these mission stops, the Pacific Partnership team conducted 765 host nation engagements covering four lines of effort; medical, Humanitarian and disaster relief (HA/DR), engineering and community relations.

“USNS Brunswick proved to be an incredibly valuable platform for Pacific Partnership,” said Royal Navy Capt. Peter Olive, Deputy Mission Commander of Pacific Partnership 2018. “The versatility of the ship allowed us to transit shallow waters and visit ports like Yap and Palau, places that wouldn't be able to accommodate Mercy.”

Pacific Partnership personnel partnered with more than 8,000 host nation medical personnel to hold 546 medical events, to include cooperative health engagements and subject matter expert exchanges. These partnerships allowed the mission to treat more than 12,700 patients and to conduct 62 surgeries on board Mercy. Civil engineering teams worked side-by-side with their host-nation counterparts to complete 19 renovation and construction projects on schools, health clinics, hospitals and community halls. HA/DR experts from the mission held 18 exchanges, six tabletop exercises and seven field training exercises to help host nation counterparts increase readiness for contingencies and natural disasters. The mission also conducted 168 community outreach engagements, including performances by the Pacific Fleet Band, sports exchanges and public outreach events that allowed mission personnel to interact with over 63,800 host nation citizens.

At the conclusion of the mission stop in Vietnam, the Brunswick crew disembarked the ship and rejoined the crew of the Mercy. Mercy then sailed to Japan, where the ship made separate port calls in Yokosuka and Tokyo. At these stops, service members participated in medical symposiums, HA/DR exercises and hosted tours for government personnel, media and the Japanese public.



Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force officers observe mock patients used for training during a tour aboard the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19). (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Joshua Mortensen)

MV OCEAN GRAND TRAVELS PACIFIC PATHWAYS, DELIVERS GEAR IN AUSTRALIA

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East



A military vehicle is offloaded from Military Sealift Command's voyage-charter MV Ocean Grand during discharge operations in support of exercise Hamel 2018 in Gladstone, Australia, June 15. (Navy photo by Lt. Travis Christensen)

Military Sealift Command's (MSC) voyage-charter ship MV Ocean Grand traveled through the Pacific Ocean as part of mobility operation Pacific Pathways 18-2 (PP18-2) and arrived Gladstone, Australia, to offload gear for exercise Hamel 2018, June 15.

During the two-day offload, the Ocean Grand discharged about 150 items and containers that will be used during exercise Hamel 2018.

The Ocean Grand is a commercial ship from Intermarine under contract by MSC to support PP18-2. PP18-2 is a U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) mobility operation that supports five USARPAC exercises and links them into a single operation by using a single MSC commercial vessel to carry a designated task

force and their force package equipment for the entire duration. This iteration of PP18-2 is supporting exercises' Hamel in Australia, Keris Strike in Malaysia, Garuda Shield in Indonesia, Hanuman Guardian in Thailand, and Orient Shield in Japan.

The ship is a heavy-lift, general cargo vessel that's equipped for carriage containers and strengthened for heavy cargo. It is equipped with three shipboard cranes: crane one, which is near the bow, can lift approximately 120 metric tons (265,000 pounds); and cranes two and three can each lift approximately 450 metric tons (about one million pounds). When cranes two and three are used as a single unit, the cranes combine for 900 metric tons of lift.

"The MV Ocean Grand fits this mission well due to its cargo handling capabilities, three ship cranes with crew that are capable of utilizing them if necessary, and long cargo hold spaces," said Navy Lt. Travis Christensen, strategic sealift officer, MSC Far East. "Also, its shorter length overall and breadth, compared to a larger vessel such as an LMSR (large, medium-speed, roll-on roll-off) ship, allow it to occupy less pier-space and affords access to ports and harbors with limited maneuvering area. The long cargo holds allow more room for stowage and reduces time spent opening or securing cargo hold hatches on more compartmentalized break-bulk vessels."

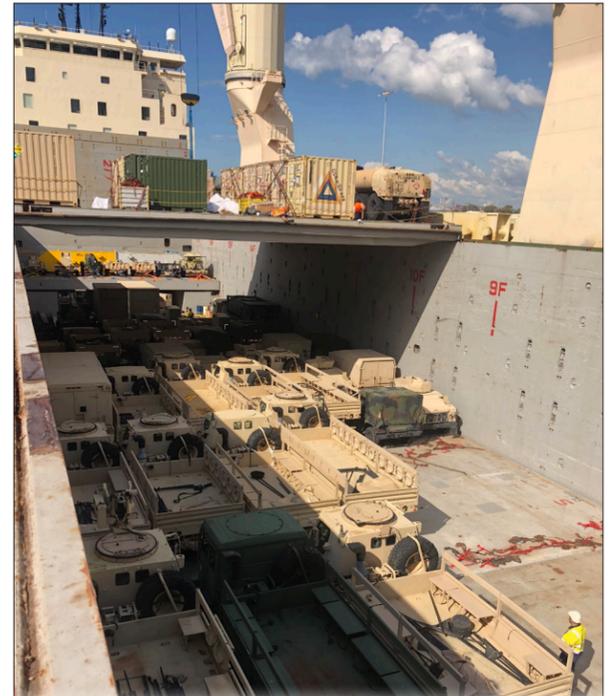
The Ocean Grand is a member of the Maritime Security Program (MSP), a series of American-flag ships that are assets the U.S. military can draw upon during contingencies.

According to www.globalsecurity.org, MSP was established by the Maritime Security Act of 1996 "to assure the continued viability of a U.S.-flag merchant marine capable of maintaining a role in international commercial shipping and supporting the national sealift policy of

maintaining assured access to U.S.-flag shipping to deploy unilaterally if necessary during national emergencies," and contingencies.

The Ocean Grand departed Tacoma, Wash., in mid-May from Joint Base Lewis-McChord (JBLM) with equipment and a detachment of ship riders, and arrived Australia in June to support exercise Hamel.

After exercise Hamel, the Ocean Grand will travel to Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Japan to support Keris Strike, Garuda Shield, Hanuman Guardian, and Orient Shield. At the conclusion of each exercise, the ship will backload all gear from each country before returning to JBLM.



Military vehicles in the cargo hold of Military Sealift Command's voyage-charter MV Ocean Grand during discharge operations in support of exercise Hamel 2018 in Gladstone, Australia, June 15. (Navy photo by Lt. Travis Christensen)

USS MOUNT WHITNEY FINISHES BALTOPS 2018

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Justin Stumberg

The Blue Ridge-class command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) concluded the 46th iteration of exercise Baltic Operations (BALTOPS) in Kiel, Germany, June 15.

During the two-week BALTOPS exercise, over 100 drills in surface, subsurface, air defense, mine countermeasures, maritime interdictions and joint personnel recovery were completed among the 43 maritime units, 60 aircraft, and approximate 5,000 maritime, ground and air force.

"The Mount Whitney performed as the flagship and communications platform for Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO," said Capt. Robert Aguilar, Mount Whitney's commanding officer. "Our motto, 'Vox Maris,' (voice of the sea) was never truer as we ensured that the commander's voice was heard timely and accurately."



Capt. Robert Aguilar, commanding officer of the Blue Ridge-class command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), participates in interviews with local Lithuania media outlets after arriving in Klaipeda, Lithuania. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Justin Stumberg)

The 46-year-old ship has been undergoing an extensive service life extension program, which will extend its active service life to 2039.

"It is my belief that for the next 21 years the Mount Whitney and BALTOPS will be inextricably intertwined," said Aguilar.

The annual joint maritime exercise is designed to improve flexibility and interoperability among the participants.

Although the exercise was large and complex, Vice Adm. Lisa Franchetti, commander, U.S. 6th Fleet and commander, Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO (STRIKEFORNATO), said that the exercise demonstrates the three key "C"s: commitment, capability and cohesion.

"By training together on a regular basis in this strategically important part of the world we enhance the interoperability and demonstrate the capability of NATO allies and partners to operate across the spectrum of maritime operations," said Franchetti.

Franchetti believes that no single nation can address today's challenges alone and knows NATO is stronger when they work together.

"The fact that this is the 46th occurrence of BALTOPS demonstrates our combined and enduring willingness to work toward our common goals of regional security and stability," said Franchetti.

The exercise trained in many familiar areas such as anti-surface operations, anti-submarine warfare and amphibious operations, but this year included new events to expand the participant's skill sets.

"Joint personnel recovery has been included for the first time, with a focus on recovery in the maritime domain," said Franchetti. "The mine countermeasures units also participated in several operations and technological experimentation measures, designed to advance our collective efforts in mine warfare."

This BALTOPS exercise also featured a particular focus on mission command and information sharing.

BALTOPS, continued on page 8



Civil service mariners Bosun Omari Miller (left), First Officer Rashid Rashid (center) and Bosun Jimmy Conner (right) secure the ship's anchor chain during an anchor drop test aboard Military Sealift Command's expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Spearhead (EPF-1). (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

USNS SPEARHEAD COMPLETES FIRST IN CLASS, MATERIAL READINESS INSPECTION

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs



A view of a countermeasure wash-down on the flight deck of Military Sealift Command's expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Spearhead (EPF-1) while the ship was at sea, June 14. Spearhead conducted the test as part of its Ships Material Assessment and Readiness Testing (SMART) inspection. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

Military Sealift Command's first expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Spearhead (T-EPF 1) completed its first Ships Material Assessment and Readiness Testing (SMART) inspection, June 14.

MSC's ships undergo a SMART inspection every five years to ensure their material conditions meet the standards required to qualify the vessels as operationally ready.

"A SMART inspection is a periodic material readiness evaluation conducted on MSC's ships to ensure that they can perform for their expected service life and to ensure they are capable of performing their mission," said Capt. Chris Wells, the director of inspections at the Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV). "During these inspections we check out all of the mission specific equipment including propulsion, safety gear, and damage control equipment. We check out everything from stem to stern."

Spearhead's SMART inspection lasted seven days and culminated in an at-sea demonstration of its material readiness.

"A SMART inspection is an 'as-is' evaluation, so there is no staging which results in a credible evaluation of our ship's material condition," said Mark Nisbett, a specialist with MSC's Expeditionary Fast Transport program. "Spearhead is going to deploy soon. This inspection ensures that the theater commander will receive a ship which has met operational standards and is ready to perform its mission."

Spearhead was the first ship in its class to undergo the SMART inspection.

"The inspectors who made up the SMART inspection team are the best of the best. This team is comprised of experienced licensed mariners,

naval officers, Master Chief Petty Officers and contractors," according to Nisbett.

The at-sea portion of Spearhead's SMART inspection included a one-hour, high power run at speeds of approximately 35 knots. The civil service mariners who crew Spearhead also conducted an anchor drop test, a flight deck counter measure wash-down and a test of the high expansion foam firefighting system during the underway portion of the inspection.

"We are fortunate on Spearhead to have a smaller crew size which has led to an at-sea family of sorts. As a result, everyone aboard is always ready to help everyone else," said Capt. Douglas Casavant, USNS Spearhead's master. "To become a member of Spearhead's crew requires lots of cross training so the members of each department have significant knowledge about the other departments throughout the ship, which is very valuable in terms of material readiness."

"We have limited organic major maintenance or repair capabilities aboard Spearhead, so we rely on a culture of excellence and the technical knowledge of the crew to make sure the ship is operational," Casavant added. "When we do have technical problems at sea, the ship is equipped with numerous back-up systems which allow us to keep operating until we can get to a facility for repairs."

Spearhead is crewed by approximately 25 civil service mariners who are responsible for all shipboard operations on the vessel.

Wells recommended, "In order for a ship's crew to maintain a high level of material readiness they should develop a culture which promotes ownership of the vessel. The crew needs to be proactive in maintaining their ship, equipment and gear in accordance to their prescribed maintenance system."

In order for an MSC ship to pass its SMART inspection it must earn an overall score of no less than 59. Also the ship must have zero oil or fuel leaks and zero safety discrepancies.

Upon pulling into Joint Base Little Creek-Fort Story, USNS Spearhead passed its first ever SMART inspection.



A view of the wake behind Military Sealift Command's expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Spearhead (EPF-1) during a high power run where the ship traveled at approximately 35 knots for one hour, June 14. Spearhead conducted the test as part of its Ships Material Assessment and Readiness Testing (SMART) inspection. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND HONORS LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER SERVICE

By Military Sealift Command Public Affairs



Michael Berlucchi, a representative from Hampton Roads Pride, addresses service members and civilian support staff at Military Sealift Command's LGBT Month 2018 special observance (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

Service members and civilian teammates attached to the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command gathered at Ely Hall on board Naval Station Norfolk to celebrate Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Month 2018, June 21.

The annual celebration was hosted by MSC's Equal Employment Opportunity program to honor the service of LGBT teammates.

"The dedication and contributions of our LGBT service members and LGBT civilians have made an immeasurable impact on our national security and the Department of Defense," said Information Systems Technician Second Class Alison Shorter, the mistress of ceremonies for the special observance. "Diversity of one of our nation's greatest strengths, and during LGBT

Pride Month, we celebrate this rich diversity and renew our enduring commitment to equality."

The special observance featured two keynote speakers; Fawn Faulks, the president of Hampton Road Pride and Michael Berlucchi, the former president of Hampton Roads Pride.

"As a member of the LGBT community, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all of you. Nothing that I care about would be possible without men and women like you, both service members and civilian support staff and your families," said Berlucchi. "You devote your lives protecting the freedom we all enjoy as Americans. Thank you very much."

According to Berlucchi, the LGBT community's culture and terminology is continuously evolving and the rapid pace of change can be confusing to some people. He went on to encourage everyone to approach all people with their hearts and minds and treat everyone with dignity and respect.

"I grew up in a military family as a 'military brat.' So, I grew up knowing not only how to respect the uniform but how to respect people in general," said Faulks "Through my upbringing and professional experience, I learned that it is okay to be different."

In 2016 Faulks was elected to the Board of Hampton Roads Pride and is now the President. She uses her knowledge of law enforcement and her love for community to better everyone including her LGBT community, according to her biography.

"Hampton Roads Pride exists to empower all LGBT and allied people," according to Faulks. "We encourage each other to stand up and be unique. We also serve to educate the public about LGBT community issues, personal stories and our feelings; with the hope our organization will give a better understand that we are just like everyone else."

Faulks' mission and vision is to see that there is truly diversity and inclusion where all are equally welcomed and valued, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

"June was selected as 'Pride' month to commemorate the events in June of 1969 known as the Stonewall Riots," according to Shorter. "The Stonewall Riots was a series of violent and spontaneous demonstrations spurred by a police raid targeting the LGBT community. The riots lasted three days and are recognized as the catalyst for the LGBT Pride movement in the United States."



Fawn Faulks, the president of Hampton Roads Pride, addresses service members and civilian support staff at Military Sealift Command's LGBT Month 2018 special observance (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND SHIPS TO SUPPORT RIMPAC 2018

By Sarah Burford, Military Sealift Command Pacific

Six Military Sealift Command (MSC) ships are participating in the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2018 multi-national, maritime exercise in and around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California.

MSC fleet replenishment oilers USNS Henry J. Kaiser (T-AO 187) and USNS Rappahannock (T-AO 204), auxiliary dry cargo/ammunition ships USNS Carl Brashear (T-AKE 7) and USNS Charles Drew (T-AKE 10) will provide logistics services including delivering aviation fuel, bunker fuel, dry, fresh and frozen food as well as machine parts and equipment to the 46 ships participating in the exercise.

MSC fleet ocean tug USNS Sioux (T-ATF 171) will provide tow support.

MSC hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) will participate in the exercise highlighting the ship's humanitarian and disaster recovery capabilities.

MSC Navy reservists are also in Hawaii supporting RIMPAC 2018. Cargo Afloat Rig Teams (CART) will work at-sea, aboard Kaiser, Brashear and Drew functioning as rig captains, winch booth operators, signalmen and line handlers during replenishments at sea. Military Sealift Command

Pacific's Headquarters Unit, augmented by Expeditionary Port Units 114 and 115 will man the Combined Task Force 173 MSCPAC battle-watch, coordinating and scheduling logistics support.

Twenty-five nations, 46 surface ships, five submarines, 18 national land forces, more than 200 aircraft, and 25,000 personnel are participating in the biennial RIMPAC exercise scheduled June 27 to Aug. 2.

This year's exercise includes forces from Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Colombia, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, the United Kingdom, the United States and Vietnam.

As the world's largest international maritime exercise, RIMPAC provides a unique training opportunity designed to foster and sustain cooperative relationships that are critical to ensuring the safety of sea lanes and security on the world's interconnected oceans. RIMPAC 2018 is the 26th exercise in the series that began in 1971.

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“We have empowered task group commanders and their subordinates with a challenging ‘free-play’ exercise, which has tested tactical cunning, initiative and cooperation with air and land forces,” said Royal Navy Rear Adm. Guy Robinson, OBE, deputy commander of STRIKFORNATO. “I have been most impressed with notably improved teamwork, interoperability and warfighting effectiveness that all participants have demonstrated over the last two weeks.”

This type of naval coordination, exemplified by the crew of the Mount Whitney and all the other vessels that were part of BALTOPS, underscores the critical importance of being prepared, said the U.S. ambassador to Germany, Richard Grenell.

Having served as the director of communications and public diplomacy for the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Grenell has a wealth of international relations experience in issues ranging from the war on terror to nuclear proliferation.

“The BALTOPS exercise is perfectly timed with the upcoming NATO Summit in Brussels in July,” said Grenell. “It highlights the U.S. commitment to defend all NATO territory and underscores the critical importance of interoperable forces from the alliance working across all services - land, air and sea - to ensure peace and freedom.”

Grenell said that the U.S. forces’ presence in Europe is of enormous strategic importance.

“It’s important that we join with our NATO partners to take further steps that will enhance the alliance’s deterrence and defense posture,” said Grenell.

Beginning in 1972, BALTOPS continues to be an excellent opportunity for NATO and regional partners to strengthen interoperability through a series of combined tactical maneuvers and scenarios.

USNS BURLINGTON COMPLETES BUILDER’S TRIALS

From Team Ships Public Affairs

The Navy’s tenth expeditionary fast transport vessel, USNS Burlington (EPF 10), successfully completed Builder’s Trials, June 29.

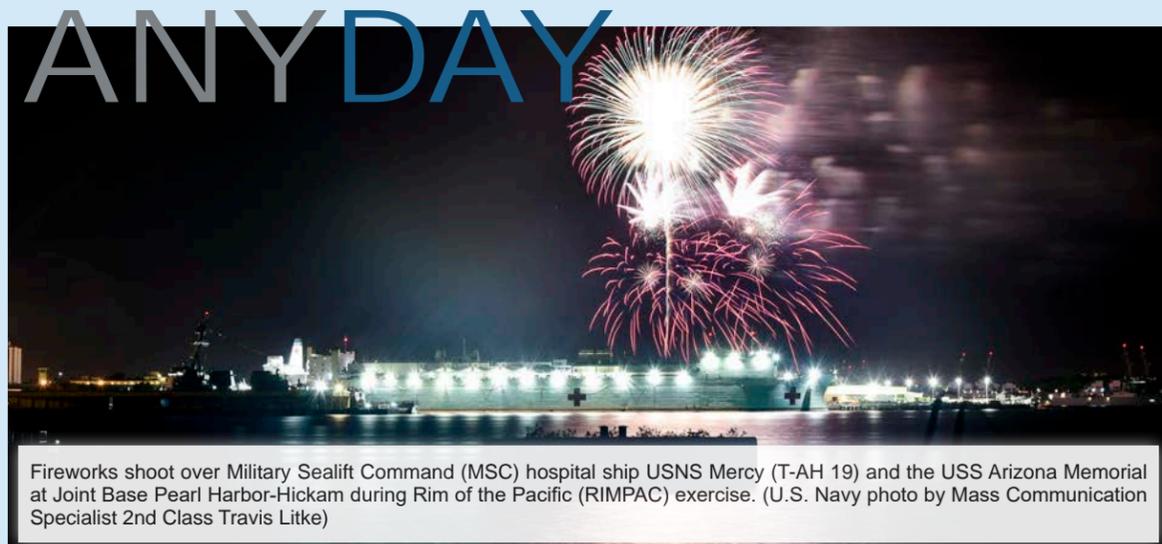
The week of trials began dockside at the Austal USA Shipyard in Mobile, Alabama. The ship engaged in pier side dock trials with the Supervisor of Shipbuilding Gulf Coast working with the shipyard to demonstrate ship equipment and system operation including fire protection equipment.

The ship then spent two days underway performing various tests to demonstrate the ship’s readiness, including calibration of communication and navigational systems, ship propulsion, ride control, and anchor handling. Maneuverability trials tested the ship’s four steerable water jets while a series of high-speed turns demonstrated the stability and agility of the EPF catamaran hull form.

“Burlington performed very well and is well on the way towards her delivery as the next Expeditionary Fast Transport vessel to the Navy,” said Capt. Scot Searles, Strategic and Theater Sealift program manager, Program Executive Office Ships. “The testing results achieved this week are a testament to the combined efforts of industry and Navy.”

The next step for Burlington will be Acceptance Trials, during which the Navy’s Board of Inspection and Survey will inspect and evaluate the ship to certify its readiness for delivery to the U.S. Navy. Burlington is scheduled to begin Acceptance Trials in late July.

EPF’s are versatile, non-combatant vessels designed to operate in shallow-draft ports and waterways.



Fireworks shoot over Military Sealift Command (MSC) hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) and the USS Arizona Memorial at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam during Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Travis Litke)



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WE DELIVER HISTORY

U-Boat Commander Takes Master of SS William King as Prisoner of War

January 21, 1944

War Shipping Administration, Washington D.C.

As their peril to United Nations shipping was reduced, German submarine commanders resorted to taking at gunpoint as prisoners the masters and chief engineers of merchant vessels which they are able to sink, the War Shipping Administration disclosed today. The obvious intent has been to deprive the Allies of the service of experienced ship officers so far as possible.

The latest reported victim of this practice is Captain Owen Harvey Reed, whose wife, Mrs. Vera Reed, lives at 1205 Market Street, Jacksonville, Fla. Reed was the skipper of the SS William King, sunk by torpedoes in the Indian Ocean. The attack occurred while the Liberty Ship was on her way from Arabia to South Africa, after discharging a cargo of war supplies for Russia at a Persian port. Early in one afternoon the first torpedo hit the fire-room bulkhead. Two lifeboats were blown to bits in the explosion. A second torpedo missed the ship by two feet, but a third sent the SS William King down within two minutes.

Two remaining lifeboats had been successfully lowered following the order to abandon ship, and when the vessel had disappeared beneath the waves the U-boat surfaced. A short machine-gun barrage was laid down around the lifeboats by the submarine. The SS William King’s master was ordered to identify himself and surrender.

Captain Reed complied. Bidding his men farewell, he went aboard the submarine. He is now reported interned in Java.

All others aboard the lifeboats, save two who died, from explosion injuries, were picked up by British naval craft after trying for several days to find land. Three crew members were killed when the torpedo exploded in the engine room of SS William King, while another was blown from the bridge and never seen again.

The SS William King was built in the yard of the New England Shipbuilding Corporation, South Portland, Maine, in 1942. She was operated for the War Shipping Administration by the Marine Transport Lines, Inc., of New York.

NEXT ISSUE: RIMPAC 2018