May 2019 ISSUE

SEALIFT

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

Military Sealift Command Total Force Management Director Mike Morris (left center) and Col. Stephen Riley, Assistant Commandant U.S. Army Transportation School (right center), officiate the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Military Sealift Command Center for Excellence, March 25. The Military Sealift Command Center for Excellence provides civil service mariners with MSC-centric, basic training required to serve in its fleet. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

Military Sealift Command Opens Center for Excellence

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony to signify the opening of its new Center for Excellence located on Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia, March 25.

The Military Sealift Command Center for Excellence provides MSC-centric basic training for newly employed civil service mariners (CIVMAR).

"Ultimately, the new Military Sealift Command Center for Excellence is replacing the MSC training center in Earle, New Jersey," said Military Sealift Command Total Force Management Director Mike Morris, who co-officiated the ceremony. "Over the next year all of the newly hired MSC civil service mariner training is transitioning from Earle to Joint Base Langley-Eustis."

"Shifting our basic training to our new facility will mean that our new CIVMARs won't have to be transported to the old training facility thus saving money while being more convenient and less stressful for our new teammates," Morris added.

All newly hired civil service mariners must complete the MSC-centric, basic training curriculum to be qualified to sail in MSC's fleet.

"The new training facility is ultimately going to be MSC's 'boot camp.' This is where all of our new CIVMARs will receive the required basic training to be able to sail with MSC," said Bill Kordyjak, Military Sealift Command's Afloat Training Team Director.

"Right now the facility is providing in-seat training such as trip hazard aboard ships and first aid. In the near future, we will provide hands-on laboratory training simulators to meet the practical requirements of MSC's training pipeline," added Kordyjak. "Also in the near future, current CIVMARs will be able to return to the new training facility to obtain required re-qualifications and re-certifications."

Soon, all laboratory training requirements such as firefighting and damage control simulators will be located at the MSC Center for Excellence.

Newly hired civil service mariner and student in Military Sealift Command Center for Excellence's first class Kiandra Wilson said, So far the training at the new facility is going really well and she is excited about her opportunities as a CIVMAR.

Military Sealift Command is responsible for the safe and efficient operation of 125 civilian-crewed ships that provide underway replenishment-at-sea for U.S. Navy and allies ships, conduct specialized missions, preposition combat cargo at sea around the world, provide a variety of support services and move military equipment and supplies to deployed U.S. Forces.

Military Sealift Command's Training Center East Director Bob Farmer, addresses civil service mariners (CIVMAR) during an introductory lecture at the Military Sealift Command Center for Excellence, March 25. The Military Sealift Command Center for Excellence provides MSC-centric, basic training for the command's new CIVMARs. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

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WORLDWIDE STAFF ENGAGEMENTS AND SHIP VISITS, VOYAGE PLAN AND NAVIGATION TRACK UPDATE, SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH

From Commander, Military Sealift Command

Recently I returned from a trip to visit our mariners, area commands and overseas offices. Accompanied by the Director, Total Force Management, Special Mission Program Manager and support staff we met with forward-deployed Mariners and staff, and talked with senior Navy leaders around the world about the work we are doing at MSC.

During the course of our 12-day trip we visited 10 ships, conducted 10 leadership office calls and 10 staff discussions or all-hands calls, visited a supply warehouse, and participated in two summits/symposiums. My top-line take-away from all these engagements is that the state of our enterprise is sound, morale is generally high, and mariners and ashore staff understand the challenges and requirements of the operating environment.

One area for further development, for both the headquarters and those located in the field or at sea, is too look for ways to improve our communication and connectedness with each other. We should feel comfortable, empowered really, to push good ideas and concerns to all levels of command, and to offer ways to improve current processes.

Working as a team elevates our individual performance, and leads to synergy where the work of the team is more effective than the sum of the individual efforts. Acknowledging that we are in an environment that requires us to adapt and operate at a faster pace, effective teamwork and collaboration will give us a competitive advantage over our adversaries.

During our last engagement of the trip, we participated in the Masters and Chiefs Symposium. Among this gathering of senior leaders representing the afloat staff, there was consensus that the operational environment has changed and that we need to adapt to remain relevant. These leaders suggested good ideas for ways to improve manning fit and fill for afloat billets as well as improving the general detailing process for our civilian mariner force. Our human capital management strategy is a priority and we are applying resources and innovative solutions in order to improve the way we hire, train, develop and assign our afloat workforce.

I'll close by extending my profound gratitude to ship Masters, Chief Engineers, Mariners and Area Command staffs who facilitated our trip and provided thoughtful and relevant feedback and new ideas during our ship visits and staff discussions.

Thank you for all the work you do each and every day.

Voyage Plan and Navigation Track Update

At the start of every year we review our strategic documents, Voyage Plan and Navigation Track. The Voyage Plan is our visioning document. It is a roadmap that keeps us moving in the right direction and includes our vision, mission, pillars of our organization, strategic themes and our guiding principles.

This year, our review was informed by the recent release of the Chief of Naval Operations' "A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority" version 2.0 and an accompanying Navy Strategy document. Like last year, this annual review was completed by staff members from across the headquarters organization and was focused on ensuring alignment with the messaging and directives from the Chief of Naval Operations, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Secretary of Defense.

Our review confirmed that we are headed in the right direction and our end state remains the same: to be the nation's premier maritime transportation organization. Our review further confirmed the joint warfighter depends on us to provide on-time logistics, strategic sealift, as well as specialized missions anywhere in the world, under any conditions, 24/7, 365 days a year. We are the only organization to accomplish this "no fail" mission.

At the bottom of each page in the Voyage Plan, we added a brief maxim that captures the spirit of each section. The four statements, when combined together, summarize our cultural beliefs.

At MSC:

-- Warfighting success defines us.

-- Victory is teamwork fulfilled.

-- Sustaining greatness in a changing world.

-- Inspire and empower excellence.

We have nearly completed our annual review of Navigation Track, the document that provides operational and tactical direction and guides our daily work. An updated version will be released later this month, and we should be proud of what we've accomplished as a team over the past two and a half years!

Please find the updated Voyage Plan on the iNavy portal at the Commander's Corner tab at https://msc.navy.deps.mil/shared%20documents/MSC_Voyage_Plan_2017-2020.pdf, or your supervisor can provide you the updated version.

The work we do is not easy and requires our best effort. I offer my sincere appreciation for the dedication and the energy each member of our great team contributes to ensure MSC remains relevant despite the challenges of this uncertain world.

Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month

April marked the beginning of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month or SAAPM. The goal of SAAPM is to raise public awareness about sexual violence and educate communities on how to prevent it. While one month alone isn't enough to solve the serious and widespread issue of sexual violence, the attention that SAAPM generates in April is an opportunity to energize and expand prevention efforts throughout the year.

Participation in SAAPM events can help us to achieve three important goals:

-Empower our Sailors and civilian team members to speak up whenever and wherever they see the behavior that can lead to sexual assault (online, at their workspace, amongst their peers/seniors/subordinates);

-Promote a Navy culture that is intolerant of sexual assault and online misconduct, and that encourages reporting of sexual assault, and supports those who report sexual assault.

-Position MSC as an organization that takes sexual assault very seriously and is implementing steps to eliminate it from our ranks.

We can take an active position in this continuing campaign by encouraging behaviors that foster a climate of dignity and respect. Importantly, learning and then implementing prevention practices can help to reduce the incidence of sexual assault. Our charge is to create the necessary culture to eliminate sexual assault; this requires a personal commitment from all service members and civilians at every level.

At MSC we continue to expand our Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program, with a focus on prevention, crisis intervention, comprehensive training, command-wide education, and support to victims and their families. Most importantly, the intervention portion of the program is designed to support victims and their families as they deal with the many issues following sexual assault trauma.

Thank you to those who participated in sexual assault awareness and prevention events during the month, either at your work location or in your local communities.

United We Sail,

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

Service members and civilian teammates participate in Military Sealift Command's 'Walk a Lap for Survivors' at the command headquarters, on Naval Station Norfolk, April 11. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

Force Master Chief Huben L. Phillips Visits Military Sealift Command

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command (MSC) hosted the Commander, Naval Air Forces' Force Master Chief, Huben L. Phillips, as part of the Waypoints Guest Speakers Series held at Ely Hall on Naval Station Norfolk, March 22.

Phillips addressed service members and civilian teammates attached to MSC about the current 'Great Power Competition,' and how our people are the key in being prepared to prevail in future military conflicts.

Phillips began his discussion by focusing on the development of Sailors and civilian teammates and their desire to serve in support of something bigger.

"I bring up service because that is what we do," according to Phillips.

"If I were to poll the room for why each of you serve we would all have different reasons as to why we continue to serve," he said. "No matter what your reason is, your 'why' you serve is fundamentally your purpose to show up every day."

"In addition to your personal 'why,' we also have a united 'why' and that is the current 'Great Power Competition'," said Phillips.

"The 'Great Power Competition' is when large nations vie for the greatest power and influence; not just in their own parts of the world, but also farther out. The United States enjoys a lead there now, but other nations are nipping at its heels," according to the U.S. Department of Defense web site.

Phillips stated that he believes the key to counter our potential advisories is the people who serve in, and in support of, the military.

"I believe that our asymmetric advantage over our adversaries is you," Phillips stated. "It is our people, our will and determination which gives us the advantage. It is that we are not going to quit, we are not going to give up [mentality] because we are going to do what needs to be done."

Phillips believes that now is the time to prepare our people in order to prevail in potential future conflicts.

"When that high-end fight comes, that is not the time when we start building things. That is not the time when we start forming relationships. That is not the time we start working through intrapersonal conflicts with each other," said Phillips. "Should the high-end conflict happen, we have to be responsive and we have to be ready."

Phillips emphasized that an important aspect of preparing for the potential of future conflicts is team building.

"We need to have an urgency in building teams [in the military] right now," said Phillips. "Teamwork does not happen by happenstance. Teamwork is developed through leadership."

"It is important to remember that the team you are on will always be more important than the team you lead," he added. "What I do to build teams, is spend a lot of time influencing and inspiring people. I spend a lot of time trying to give teams that nurturing and need to be successful."

Phillips addressed developing teammates who may not currently have organizational buy-in.

"I think 99 percent of leadership and building a team boils down to building relationships," he said. "If you really want to get the best out of people, it is important to establish relationships."

"Relationships take work," he added. "And in a professional setting, that work has nothing to do with if I like you or not. If we are set on the same mission, we are on the same team, we have the same end-state, and we share the same 'why' if we like each other really is not that important. However as professional relationships grow, we tend to develop commonality and we begin to work better together."

Phillips had some advice for leaders striving to build relationships within their team.

"When one has the power and control, it is easy to enforce your will," he said. "Instead of forcing your will, try to demonstrate and model the way. Our teammates are watching."

Commander, Naval Air Forces' Force Master Chief Huben L. Phillips addresses service members and civilian teammates, attached to Military Sealift Command, during the command's Waypoints Speaker Series, March 22. The Waypoints Speaker Series provides MSC teammates an opportunity for professional development by being exposed to relivant military, industry and community leaders. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

"We have an important mission to deliver lethality forward to our enemies," said Phillips. "It is critical that we develop the needed relationships now before we need them."

Commander, Naval Air Forces' mission is to man, train, equip and maintain a naval air force that is immediately employable, forward deployed and engaged. They support the fleet and unified commanders by delivering the right force with the right readiness at the right time with a reduced cost, today and into the future, according to the command's web site.

MSC's Waypoint Series is a monthly event that hosts a range of guest speakers with knowledge and background pertaining to sealift and merchant mariners.

Military Sealift Command is the leading provider of ocean transportation for the U.S. Navy and the rest of the Department of Defense; operating approximately 125 ships daily around the globe.

U.S. Navy Awards Austal USA Contract for Expeditionary Fast Transport Ships 13 & 14

From Secretary of the Navy Public Affairs

Austal USA was awarded a $261.8 million contract for the 13th and 14th Expeditionary Fast Transport ships (EPF) by the U.S. Navy recently.

This new contract not only expands Austal's current 12-ship EPF program, but sets the company and the U.S. Navy up for a potential transition to more medically based variants for the high-speed transport. The now slightly over $2 billion 14-ship total value of the EPF program underscores the ability of Austal USA to build highly capable ships at an affordable cost in its state-of-the-art manufacturing facility. As Austal USA prepares to execute these latest contracts, the company's advanced ship design division is looking at revolutionary designs for future warfighting capability and support from the EPF.

"This contract reflects the confidence the U.S. Navy has in Austal's talented workforce to build these highly-capable, cost-effective ships," said Austal USA President Craig Perciavalle. "It's exciting to see how the EPF ships are supporting the MSC fleet in so many different capacities. We look forward to continuing to strengthen the fleet with the addition of EPF 13 and 14 and beyond."

The EPF's large, open-mission deck and large habitability spaces provide the opportunity to conduct a wide range of missions from engagement and humanitarian assistance to disaster relief, and from maritime security support operations, to intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. The Expeditionary Fast Transport ships are performing valuable missions all over the world.

With a draft of only 13 feet and a unique propulsion system, its ability to access austere and degraded ports with minimal external assistance provides an overabundance of options to fleet and combatant commanders. Along with its draft, propulsion system, enormous mission bay and greater-than 40 knot speed, these ships have the potential to support future requirements in special operations, command and control, and medical support operations. Austal USA's EPF program is strong with ten ships delivered and two more under construction at its headquarters and ship manufacturing facility in Mobile, Alabama.

A view of the first in ship class, USNS Spearhead (T-EPF-1), as it gets underway from Joint Base Little Creek-Fort Story. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

Sealift Ships: Key Assets in Supply Chain during Balikatan 2019

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East

Military Sealift Command (MSC) ships completed discharge operations at Subic Bay, Olongapo, Philippines, March 24, and delivered equipment and personnel destined for various locations in the Philippines in support of exercise Balikatan 2019.

Balikatan 2019 is a military training exercise led by the Philippines between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and U.S. military along with participants from the Australian Defense Force. It features military-to-military exchanges through various training events, including joint and combined interoperability events, humanitarian and civic assistance projects, and a staff exercise.

To enable the large-scale exercise, MSC vessels conducted two separate deliveries to the New Container Terminal at Subic Bay.

Time-chartered ship M/V Cape Hudson (T-AKR 5066) conducted its offload March 15-16, while maritime prepositioning ship USNS Pililaau (T-AKR 304) discharged its equipment and personnel March 23-24.

"The Republic of the Philippines is a key U.S. ally that promotes peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region," said Navy Capt. Robert R. Williams, commodore, MSC Far East in Singapore. "Through engagements such as Balikatan 2019, we continuously improve our effectiveness in transportation and distribution activities with partnering nations. This discharge operation is a great example of our ability to provide on-time logistics and strategic sealift in an exercise, but also demonstrates our capabilities during a crisis or contingency."

Cape Hudson is a member of the Maritime Security Program, a listing of American-flag ships that are assets the U.S. military can draw upon during contingencies.

As a commercial ship that is also part of the Ready Reserve Force fleet of vessels, the Cape Hudson has supported many other military charters including Operation Iraqi Freedom deployments in 2003 and 2004. However, military missions are not a regular occurrence for most of the commercial mariner crew.

"This mission is not the cyclic routine that we have become accustomed to in a commercial cycle," said 2nd Mate David Roach, a commercial mariner on Cape Hudson. "Here, you get to work with military personnel from the Army and Marine Corps. We conduct a lot of interesting voyage planning here as opposed to that in commercial shipping because you get to go to these exotic places."

The time charter is part of a concurrent mobility operation for U.S. Army Pacific called Pacific Pathways 19-1, where the ship makes stops around the Pacific supporting follow-on missions.

Pacific Pathways is an innovation that links a series of U.S. Pacific Command-directed security cooperation exercises with allied and partner militaries to a single MSC chartered vessel on a single voyage plan that delivers equipment to support multiple exercises.

Pililaau, a large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off platform, is part of Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron Three (MPSRON 3), which consists of a fleet of government-owned ships operated by MSC and based in the Guam-Saipan area of the Western Pacific Ocean.

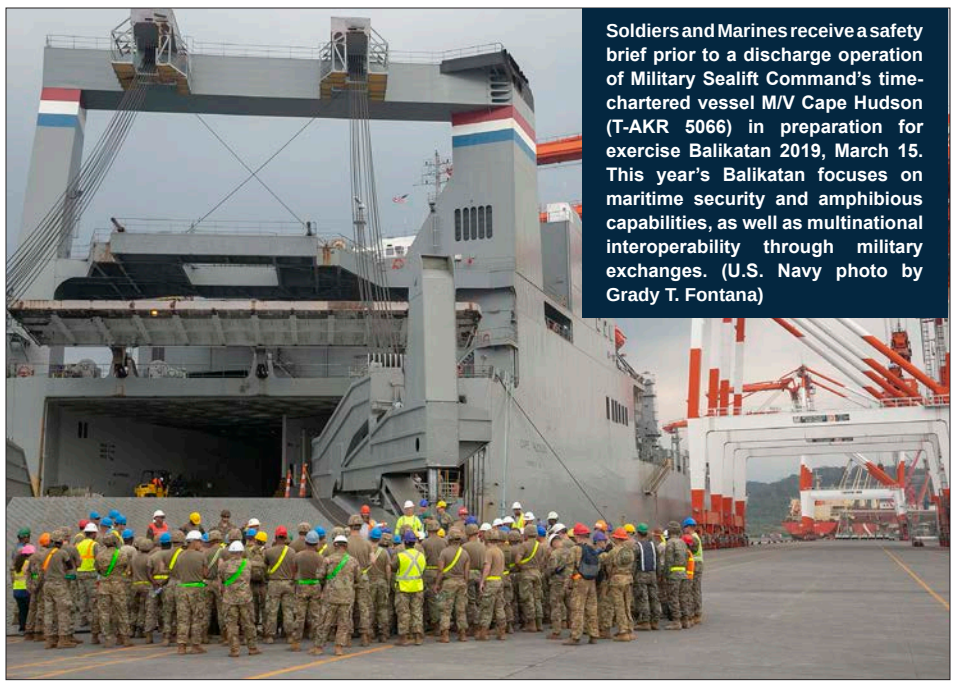
MPSRON 3 maintains tactical control of 16 ships carrying afloat prepositioned U.S. military cargo for the Marine Corps, Army and Air Force delivering a strategic power-projection capability known as the Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF).

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.

"The Maritime Prepositioning Force is a key component to Marine Corps readiness in the Indo-Pacific and is a prime example of Navy and Marine Corps integration and teamwork," said Navy Capt. Eric C. Lindfors, commodore, MPSRON 3. "As part of the MPF, USNS Pililaau delivers a forward presence and rapid-crisis-response capability by pre-positioning equipment and supplies to various locations at sea. Its ability to deliver military equipment ashore from the sea enables deployment flexibility and supports the Philippines-U.S. alliance with expeditionary logistics in a crisis response, if called upon."

At the conclusion of Balikatan 2019, both ships will return to the Philippine port and backload all equipment before conducting follow-on missions.

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



Soldiers and Marines receive a safety brief prior to a discharge operation of Military Sealift Command's time-chartered vessel M/V Cape Hudson (T-AKR 5066) in preparation for exercise Balikatan 2019, March 15. This year's Balikatan focuses on maritime security and amphibious capabilities, as well as multinational interoperability through military exchanges. (U.S. Navy photo by Grady T. Fontana)

USS Oklahoma City Conducts Mobile Logistics Demonstration with USNS Cesar Chavez

By Lt.j.g. Meagan Morrison, Commander, Submarine Squadron 15

USS Oklahoma City (SSN 723) conducted a mobile logistics demonstration with the Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ship USNS Cesar Chavez (T-AKE 14) in Apra Harbor, Guam, March 11 in the first of many evolutions designed to evaluate supply ships' ability to sustain submarine operations in an expeditionary setting.

The demonstration, which involved Oklahoma City mooring alongside Cesar Chavez was a first between a U.S. submarine and a dry cargo class ship. Dry cargo class ships routinely provide logistic lifts to deliver cargo (ammunition, food, limited quantities of fuel, repair parts and ship store items) to U.S. and allied ships at sea. The demonstration was completed to show that a submarine could safely go alongside a dry cargo class ship, which could facilitate the transfer of weapons, stores, critical repair parts, and provide the ability to support crew rest.

"Eventually we hope to expand on the demonstration to include large equipment transfers and parts," said Lt. Cmdr. Andy Valerius, the logistics demo planner. "The ability to moor alongside a supply ship is a critical capability. If we could get parts and food stores from a dry cargo ship, it would reduce our dependence on our two submarine tenders, create significant cost savings and greatly enhance our ability to operate for a longer period of time away from major ports."

"We frequently have to sacrifice opportunities for engagement with our allies and partners because of our inability to pull into a nearby port," said Cmdr. Steven Lawrence, commanding officer of Oklahoma City. "I am hopeful that this demonstration, which in the years to come will prove that submarines can be replenished at sea just like any other warship, will lead to more bilateral engagements with regional allies and partners and facilitate the ability of submarines to complete war and peace time missions."

USS Oklahoma City (SSN 723), a Los Angeles-class submarine, prepares to moor next to USNS Cesar Chavez (T-AKE 14) during an exercise in Apra Harbor, March 11. The exercise aims to assess the capabilities of USNS vessels to service submarines while in port and underway. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jordyn Diomede)

Oklahoma City is one of four Los Angeles-class attack submarines assigned to Commander, Submarine Squadron Fifteen, which is located at Polaris Point, Naval Base Guam in Apra Harbor, Guam. Also based out of Naval Base Guam are submarine tenders USS Frank Cable (AS 40) and USS Emory S. Land (AS 39). The submarines and tenders are maintained as part of the U.S. Navy's forward-deployed submarine force and are readily capable of meeting global operational requirements.

Pacific Partnership Wraps Up Mission in Marshall Islands

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Tyrell K. Morris, Pacific Partnership 2019 Public Affairs

Rear Adm. Joey Tynch lets a Marshallese child try on his cover at the Eniburr pier during Pacific Partnership 2019. Pacific Partnership, now in its 14th iteration, is the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Chanel Turner)

Pacific Partnership 2019 (PP19) recently conducted a series of exchanges centered on humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HADR) during their mission stop in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, March 11-28.

The Pacific Partnership mission began in response to one of the world's most catastrophic natural disasters, the December 2004 tsunami that devastated parts of South and Southeast Asia. The mission has evolved over the years from emphasis on direct care to an operation focused on enhancing partnerships through host nation subject matter expert and civil-military exchanges.

Subject matter expert exchanges create lasting bonds of friendship and trust that enable the mission to return to countries and build bridges for greater cooperation between the United States, mission partners and host nations.

The first official HADR event of PP19 was an incident command system subject matter expert exchange in Majuro sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service and the Office of the Telecommunications Authority, March 11-15.

The incident command system brings a standardized approach to the command, control, and coordination of emergency response, providing a common hierarchy within which responders from multiple agencies can be effective.

"While we can't control the disasters, we can control how we prepare and react," said U.S. Army Sgt. Christina Richardson, PP19 HADR team lead. "Collaborative efforts like these promote greater cooperation and partnerships that benefit everyone involved."

Next, the U.S. Coast Guard hosted a Search and Rescue Exercise in Majuro, March 20-22. This was a "train the trainer" evolution that began with a planning workshop and culminated with a simulated SAR exercise.

Local government officials from the Marshall Islands National Disaster Management Office, sea patrol and police department were in attendance, and in turn, traveled to Ebeye the following week to train their Kwajalein counterparts, March 25-26.

"These lessons in interoperability support a collaborative, rapid response to natural disasters in the Marshall Islands," said U.S. Navy Lt. Luke Carpenter, the officer in charge of the Republic of the Marshall Islands mission.

The final HADR event of this mission stop was a basic first responder symposium in Ebeye, March 27. Local police officers, firefighters, sea patrol, nurses and other first responders attended the event.

The symposium used the exchange of ideas and relationships among the participating countries and organizations to help strengthen response preparedness. Risk management and first responder training were discussed along with case studies from past disasters.

"Trainings like these are important because we are all in the same room learning from each other and going over scenarios so everyone is prepared when a disaster happens," said Harris Kaiko, Marshall Islands Sea Patrol.

The technical skills exchange focused on enhancing the capabilities of U.S. military forces to work together with their partners from Marshallese government agencies in the event of a natural disaster.

These HADR subject matter exchanges will be a recurring theme of Pacific Partnership 2019 as the mission continues.

Pacific Partnership, now in its 14th iteration, is the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific. Each year, the mission team works collectively with host and partner nations to enhance regional interoperability and disaster response capabilities, increase stability and security in the region, and foster new and enduring friendships in the Indo-Pacific.

USNS Fall River Arrives in Kuching for Pacific Partnership

Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific

USNS Fall River (T-EPF 4), a Military Sealift Command expeditionary fast transport ship, arrived in Kuching, Malaysia, March 27, as part of Pacific Partnership 2019.

Malaysia has participated each year since Pacific Partnership began in response to the December 2004 tsunami that devastated parts of South and Southeast Asia. The mission has evolved over the years from emphasis on direct care to an operation focused on enhancing partnerships through host nation subject matter expert and civil-military exchanges.

"A lot of hard work has gone into the planning process from both the Malaysian Armed Forces (MAF) and Pacific Partnership personnel," said U.S. Navy Lt. j. g. Kate Constantakis, Pacific Partnership 2019 officer in charge of the Malaysia stop. "I look forward to watching execution unfold and seeing how we can learn from the MAF about disaster preparedness and response and build off of each other's strengths."

The mission in Kuching includes training with local medical professionals, participation in civil engineering projects, Humanitarian Assistance-Disaster Relief readiness drills, in addition to outreach and band performances.

"Working together with our host and partner nations provides an outstanding opportunity for us to learn from each other and grow stronger together," said Royal Australian Navy Capt. Brendon Zilko, Pacific Partnership 2019 chief of staff. "We look forward to strengthening our partnership with Malaysia and improving our collective and individual ability to respond to any crisis in the region."

Pacific Partnership 2019 personnel stand at parade rest as the Military Sealift Command expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Fall River (T-EPF 4) arrives at the Port of Kuching. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Nicholas Burgains)

Working at the invitation of each host nation, Pacific Partnership brings together military and civilian personnel partner nations from Australia, Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Peru, the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Pacific Partnership, now in its 14th iteration, is the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific. Each year, the mission team works collectively with host and partner nations to enhance regional interoperability and disaster response capabilities, increase stability and security in the region, and foster new and enduring friendships across the Indo-Pacific.

MSC To Welcome New Class of Ships to Fleet

By Shevonne Cleveland, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

A new class of towing and salvage vessels, will join U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command (MSC) in fiscal year 2021.

"The new class replaces the Powhatan class T-ATF fleet tugs, which provide towing, diving and standby submarine rescue services for the U.S. Navy, and the Safeguard class T-ARS rescue and salvage vessels, which mission includes, salvage, diving, towing, and heavy lift operations," according to Tim Schauwecker, MSC Towing and Salvage Project Officer.

"MSC and the Fleet commanders will benefit by having new, state-of-the-art and highly capable platforms that can perform a wide range of missions ranging from towing and salvage, diving operations and submarine rescue," he said.

The primary mission of the fleet tug is towing and submarine rescue with the secondary mission of salvage. Rescue and salvage ships conduct salvage with a secondary mission of towing. According to Schauwecker, the Navajo class will combine the capabilities of both classes into a single class for greater efficiency.

"The major improvements include a significant bollard pull increase that will enable the ship to tow virtually any ship currently in the USN inventory. The new ships include additional deck space to account for the requirements of the submarine rescue diving and recompression system, including transfer under pressure, a 40-ton heave compensating crane to assist with underwater salvage operations such as lifting aircraft wreckage out of the water, dynamic positioning which provides the ability to automatically maintain position and heading in the water by using its propellers and thrusters despite the environmental conditions, and berthing for an additional 42 personnel (other than crew) in 2-6 person staterooms. The ship will also have modern automation and engineering systems that include environmentally friendly main propulsion diesel engines," he said.

MSC search and rescue vessels have contributed greatly to a variety of missions around the world including recovery efforts for John F. Kennedy Jr.'s plane crash, the USS Guardian grounding, TWA flight 800, Hurricane Katrina and the SS El Faro sinking. The introduction of dynamic positioning will greatly enhance the ship's capabilities.

"During the search for EL Faro by USNS Apache, the tether for the remotely operated vehicle (ROV) had to be cut and re-terminated nearly every day because the ship was not able to hold a fully stable position manually. The search depth was around 15,000 feet and the umbilical would get twisted due to the ship's movement. It took four hours for the ROV to get to the bottom and another four hours to get back to the surface. A dynamic positioning ship can hold heading and position within a couple of degrees and a few meters, making it a much more stable platform to operate from," said Schauwecker.

U.S. Navy Illustration

MSC took delivery of the Powhatan class of fleet ocean tugs between 1978 and 1981. These ships were designed and built based on commercial offshore towing vessels, and manned by civilian mariners. Salvor and Grasp were commissioned in 1985 and 1986 and were sailed as USS ships by U.S. Navy Sailors. The Navy decommissioned the Safeguard class of salvage ships 2006-2007, and transferred them to MSC where they were re-designated as T-ARS and manned by civilian mariners.

According to the Congressional Budget Office's 2019 ship building analysis, the procurement of the new Navajo class is in alignment with the Navy's plan to expand the fleet to 355 ships.

"This new ship class will bring a significant capability increase to the U.S. Navy and Military Sealift Command, and eventually restore the towing and salvage fleet to an end strength of eight hulls," said Schauwecker.

Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer announced in March, the new class of ships will be named Navajo, in honor of the major contributions the Navajo people have made to the armed forces.

"The Navajo people have fought and served our armed forces with honor and valor in nearly every major conflict since the birth of our nation, so it is fitting and right to name a new class of ship in their honor," said Spencer.

The lead ship will start construction in May of this year, with delivery of the first five ships in fiscal 2021 and 2022, followed by one ship per year through 2025.

Military Sealift Command Pacific Chartered Ship MV Ocean Giant Conducts Operation Deep Freeze 2019 Retrograde Offload

By Sarah Burford, Military Sealift Command Pacific

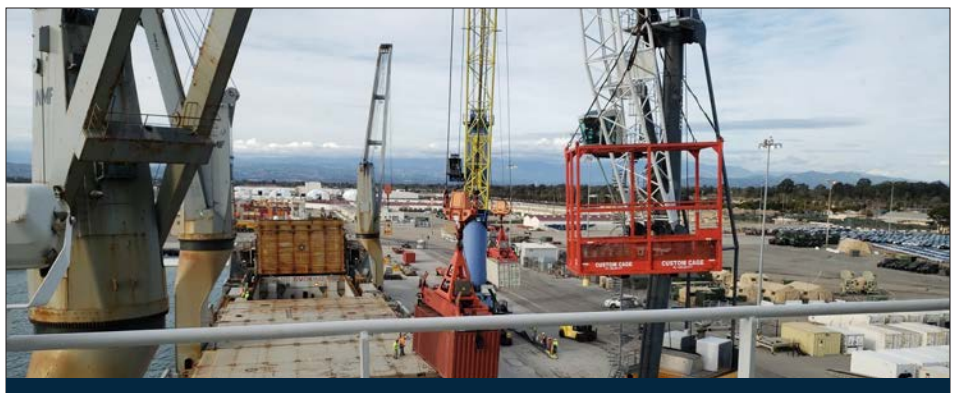
Military Sealift Command-chartered container ship MV Ocean Giant successfully completed Operation Deep Freeze (ODF) cargo offload operations in Port Hueneme, California. The operation was part of MSC's annual resupply mission in support of the Joint Task Force Support for Antarctica mission to the NSF-managed U.S. Antarctic Program.

A team from MSC, including Navy Reservists from MSC's Expeditionary Port Unit (EPU) 114, coordinated all aspects of the offload of 450 containers of retrograde, including station waste and recyclables, as well as ice-core samples for scientific study.

The offload is the final step in Ocean Giant's support of ODF. Their mission began in late December, with a loadout of dry cargo in Port Hueneme, California, where the cargo was loaded before delivery to Antarctica. The ship arrived at the NSF ice-pier on Feb. 3, with cargo offload conducted by Seabees from Navy Cargo Handling Battalion ONE beginning the following day. Over a 14-day period, 498 containers and various breakbulk equaling nearly seven million pounds of supplies such as frozen and dry food stores, building materials, vehicles, and electronic equipment and parts, were removed from the ship. For their efforts, the 19-member contracted civilian mariner crew were awarded the Antarctica Service Medal.

"This has been a very successful mission for MSC," said Cmdr. January Crivello, Military Sealift Command Pacific operations officer. "Our success is largely due to the professionalism of our mariners, our reservists and all of our staff on the ground. I am very proud of everyone's efforts and of our support of this very important mission."

ODF is a joint service, on-going Defense Support to Civilian Authorities activity in support of the National Science Foundation (NSF), lead agency for the United States Antarctic Program. Mission support consists of active duty, Guard and Reserve personnel from the U.S. Air Force, Navy, Army, and Coast Guard as well as Department of Defense civilians and attached non-DOD civilians. ODF operates from two primary locations at Christchurch, New Zealand and McMurdo Station, Antarctica. MSC has supported ODF since McMurdo Station was established in 1955, providing supplies and fuel to scientists operating from the remote base.


Military Sealift Command-chartered container ship MV Ocean Giant successfully completed Operation Deep Freeze (ODF) cargo offload operations in Port Hueneme, Calif., moving 450 containers of retrograde—including station waste and recyclables, as well as ice-core samples for scientific study. The operation was part of MSC's annual resupply mission in support of the Joint Task Force Support for Antarctica mission to the NSF-managed U.S. Antarctic Program. (U.S. Navy photo by Sarah Burford)

For More Information About Military Sealift Command
Visit us at www.msc.navy.mil

U.S. 6th Fleet Observes Women's History Aboard USS Mount Whitney

By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Jonathan Word, U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs

Vice Adm. Lisa M. Franchetti joined the Sailors aboard Blue Ridge-class command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), in celebration of Women's History Month to recognize the significant additions women have made to our history, heritage and society.

Women's History Month is recognized during March in the United States, The United Kingdom and Australia and traces its roots back to the first International Women's Day in 1911. In the U.S., congress voted in 1987 to designate the entire month as Women's History Month.

"Throughout history, the Navy has evolved and over time has changed to provide equal opportunities to women and other minorities. As a result, we have been able to capitalize on the strengths and contributions of all Sailors," said Franchetti. "I feel like I've had the chance to be a little bit of a pioneer, and maybe paved the way for some who are following behind me in my wake, just like I had a lot of people who broke down some barriers for me."

The very first women to serve in the Navy were nurses. In 1862 Sisters of the Holy Cross served aboard the Navy's first hospital ship USS Red Rover. They were considered nurses on a Navy ship, not actual members of the Navy. In 1908 Congress established the Navy Nurse Corps, and women have found ways to serve ever since. Today Hospital Corpsmen carry on the tradition of the original Navy nurses.

"I really liked the idea of being a hospital corpsman, and learning about the medical field rather than just going to nursing school and not knowing whether or not I would like it," says Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class (HM3) Carolyn Dunham. "I thought I would get the hands-on experience, then later decide if that's something I want to do. It was a big decision, but so far I am really happy with it."

World War I brought about the first large-scale enlistment of women into the Navy however, due to shortages, their jobs were mostly clerical and almost solely based in Washington, D.C. Mere months before the U.S. committed to entering World War II President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Navy's Women Reserve Program which opened the door for both officer and enlisted women to take on more roles and the responsibility of leadership.

"When I first got out high school, I don't think that I was really sure of myself, and I know that being in the military has made me more aware of the things that I can accomplish," says Aviation Electronics Technician First Class Aerial Lucky assigned to the "Ghostsriders" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 28 embarked aboard the Mount Whitney. "I was relied on heavily in my shop to make sure that others got the same training and knowledge that I received in the past to make sure that we could continue to have people for our mission and to carry out our operations. One day I was teaching someone the aircraft and I turned around and that someone turned into five or six people, and it just became more and more. That's when I realized that I was a leader."

Women's History Month, Continued on page 8

Commander U.S. 6th Fleet Vice Admiral Lisa Franchetti speaks with Sailors attending a celebration of Women's History Month aboard the Blue Ridge-class command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20). Mount Whitney, forward deployed to Gaeta, Italy operates with a hybrid crew of U.S. Navy Sailors and Military Sealift Command civilian mariners. (Photo by U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Jonathan Word)

Make the Commitment to End Sexual Assault

From Chief of Naval Personnel Public Affairs

The Navy joined the Department of Defense (DoD) and the nation in observance of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month (SAAPM) throughout the month of April.

The continuation of the theme "Protecting Our People Protects Our Mission," established by the DoD Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Office, underpins the idea that our people are our most important strategic resource and that operational excellence depends on supporting our personnel, protecting our shipmates and safeguarding team cohesion. "Make the Commitment" is the call to action for the Navy. The theme and call to action encourage all members of the Navy team to commit to promoting a culture that does not tolerate sexual assault.

"I am committed to eliminating the scourge of sexual assault and sexual harassment across the Department of the Navy," said Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer. "Sexual assault and sexual harassment are unacceptable threats to unit cohesion and cause long term physical and mental harm to those affected. We owe our Sailors, Marines, and civilians a safe, secure, and professional environment as they serve our Navy and nation. "

Tolerating toxic behaviors within our ranks impedes our ability to fight and win wars by eroding trust and degrading individuals who contribute to the mission. This awareness month is designed to enhance year-round efforts to eliminate the crime of sexual assault and ensure all Sailors are treated with dignity and respect.

"Sexual Assault is a toxic threat that harms us all. It must stop, and it will, with engaged leadership and teamwork—in our divisions, squads, and watch teams. There is no room for bystanders in the Navy," said Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson. "Our Navy Team makes itself stronger when we build each other up, when we encourage 'best ever' performance, and we strive for excellence. When we find and hold perpetrators accountable. When we destroy our enemies. Sexual assault is an enemy. And it's time to end it."

SAAPM provides the Navy with the opportunity to highlight programs and initiatives that educate Sailors, support victims, and encourage shipmates to take an active role in making a commitment to preventing, reporting, and eliminating sexual assault in the force. Sexual harassment and assault, in person or online, violates the Navy's core values and is not tolerated.

In an effort to eliminate instances of sexual assault, Navy leadership has issued guidance on online misconduct, established counselors within the Fleet in addition to family support centers, improved personnel management processes to better respond to occurrences of sexual assault, encouraged bystander intervention, and leveraged technology to remove stigma and barriers associated with seeking help following a sexual assault.

In addition to the programs and initiatives within the Fleet, Secretary of the Navy Richard Spencer is hosting, along with the Secretaries of the Army and Air Force, the National Discussion on Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment at America's Colleges, Universities and Service Academies at the U.S. Naval Academy this month. This forum will provide the opportunity to bring together leading experts and leaders from civilian higher education institutions to better understand and address the challenge of eliminating sexual assault and sexual harassment on college and university campuses across the nation to promote safe and healthy learning environments. Preventing, reporting and eliminating sexual harassment and assault, starting with midshipmen and cadets, strengthens the force by promoting professionalism, respect and trust within the Service Academy campuses and broader DoD communities.
The Navy's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) program falls under the purview of the 21st Century Sailor office, which exists to provide Sailors and their families with resources, training, and skills to overcome adversity and improve wellness.

For more information on SAAPM, including more information on how to prevent and report sexual assault, go to:

https://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/21st_Century_Sailor/sapr/Pages/SAAPM.aspx.

Sailors aboard the aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) stand in the shape of a ribbon holding teal paper to recognize Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month (SAAPM). The ribbon represents the crew's commitment to removing toxic behaviors like sexual assault from the ranks of the military. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Hank Gettys)

Women's History Month, Continued from page 7

In the post WW2 era The Women's Armed Forces Act of 1948 allowed women to serve in the peacetime military with some restrictions. Throughout the next decades women became more and more invaluable to the Navy, and in 1972 the Navy welcomed its first female admiral. 1974 would see the Navy designate their first female aviator. Many female pilots have joined the Navy since.

"I consider it extremely fortunate to be able to fly on a regular basis," says Lt.j.g. Sarah Black, a pilot assigned to the HSC-28 "Ghostsriders." "It is a lot of fun. It is a really great career. I am very lucky to be able to do what I get to do. You don't even notice the difference between male and female. It just ends up being one team."

The first orders assigning women to a combat vessel were signed in 1994 to the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN-69). The vessel was able to prepare temporary berthing and facilities for the newly embarked female Sailors but it wasn't ready to maintain full integration. Shortly after, the Mount Whitney became the first Navy combat vessel to make permanent accommodations for women.

"I think it is a great honor to be on the Mount Whitney," says Interior Communications Electrician 3rd Class Alicia Carlton. "Maybe for a woman who was one of the first female Sailors on this ship, it was an eye-opener and an experience she has probably never forgotten. For me, it is just a part of my everyday life. All the way back to women voting, in the military, the first nurses, the first pilots, the first admirals, all of those women have paved the way for the rest of us to come through."

The Mount Whitney currently maintains a crew that consists of twenty-six percent women, greater than the Navy-wide average of twenty percent. Although the Navy of the past may not have had the concerns of women at the fore-front of its priorities, that mind-set is rapidly changing, if not altogether evolved. Women serve in nearly every capacity in today's Navy, from pilots and admirals, to journalists and rescue divers.

"I am here and have always felt included with never any separation for gender, or differences in general," says Logistics Specialist Chief (LSC) Maritza Hernandez. "It makes you feel comfortable. It makes you not worry on any of this, you know, CMEO (Command Managed Equal Opportunity) related matters and lets you focus on what you have to focus on. Those issues are not a concern, so you can perform at one-hundred percent. Just having a SAPR (Sexual Assault Prevention and Response) program which, for many years, didn't even exist, those kind of issues were not even addressed, and now they are. It gives you so much room to get better and better."

The Navy continues to celebrate Women's History Month through the end of March, but the need to recognize and honor the contributions and sacrifices women have made for their rights and our nation has no time-frame.

"Women's History Month is just a time for us to pay tribute and homage to females in the military that had the honor and courage to join," said Lucky. "I am willing to do whatever I have to do to help the team, whatever I have to do to help the fight. I feel that is what this month is really portraying…the women who have come before us and paved the way for us to be here."

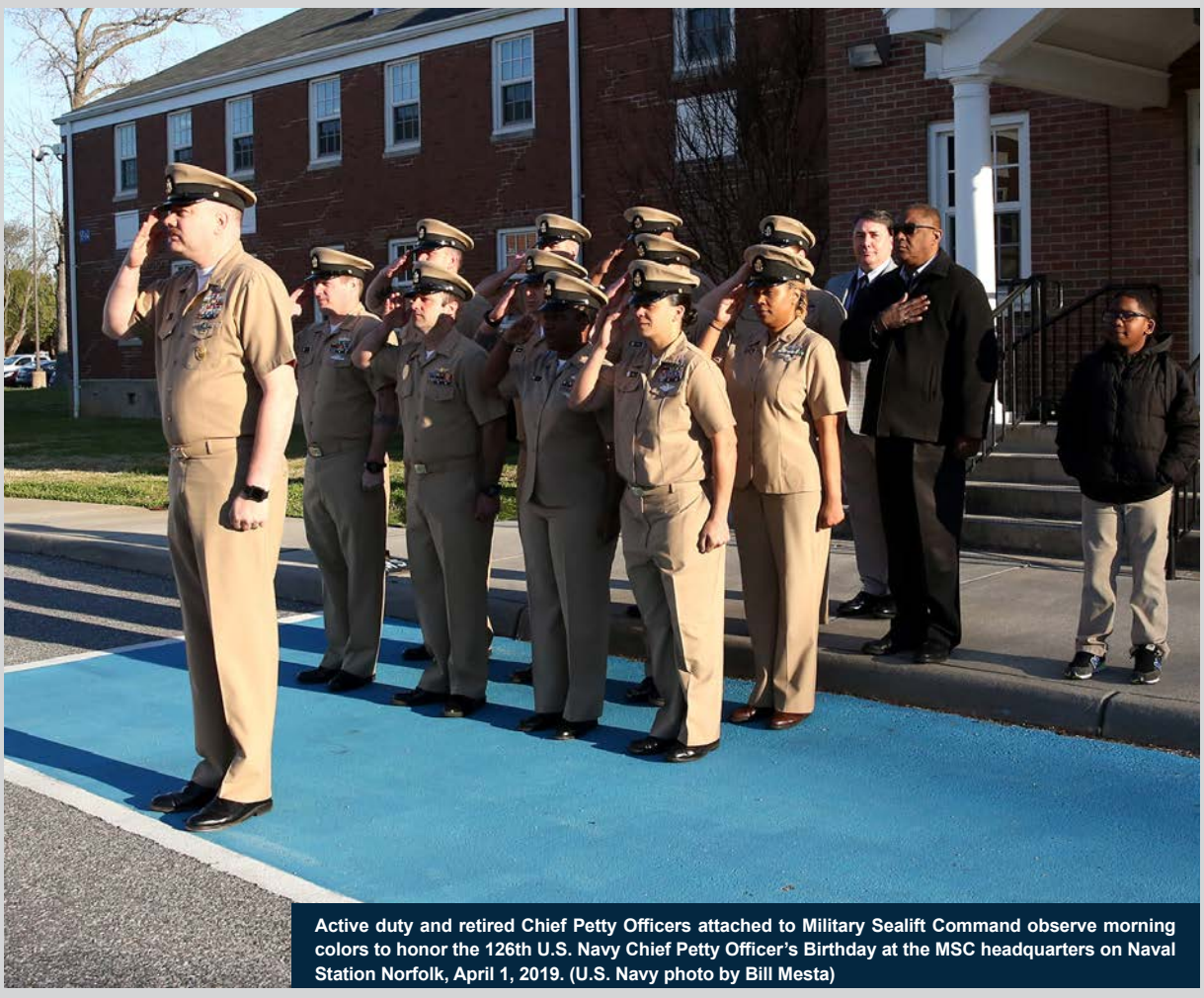
Mount Whitney, forward deployed to Gaeta, Italy, operates with a hybrid crew of U.S. Sailors and Military Sealift Command civilian mariners.

ANYDAY

SINGAPORE NORFOLK GUAM BAHRAIN ROTA SAN DIEGO HAWAII NAPLES

The Military Sealift Command expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Brunswick (T-EPF 6) transits the Pacific Ocean during Pacific Partnership 2019. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Chanel Turner)

USNS Seay (T-AKR 302) departs Jacksonville for a multi-year mission to support the United States Marine Corps. (U.S. Navy Photo by Dean Doolittle)



Active duty and retired Chief Petty Officers attached to Military Sealift Command observe morning colors to honor the 126th U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer's Birthday at the MSC headquarters on Naval Station Norfolk, April 1, 2019. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

Next Issue: USNS 2nd LT John P. Bobo

SEALIFT

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