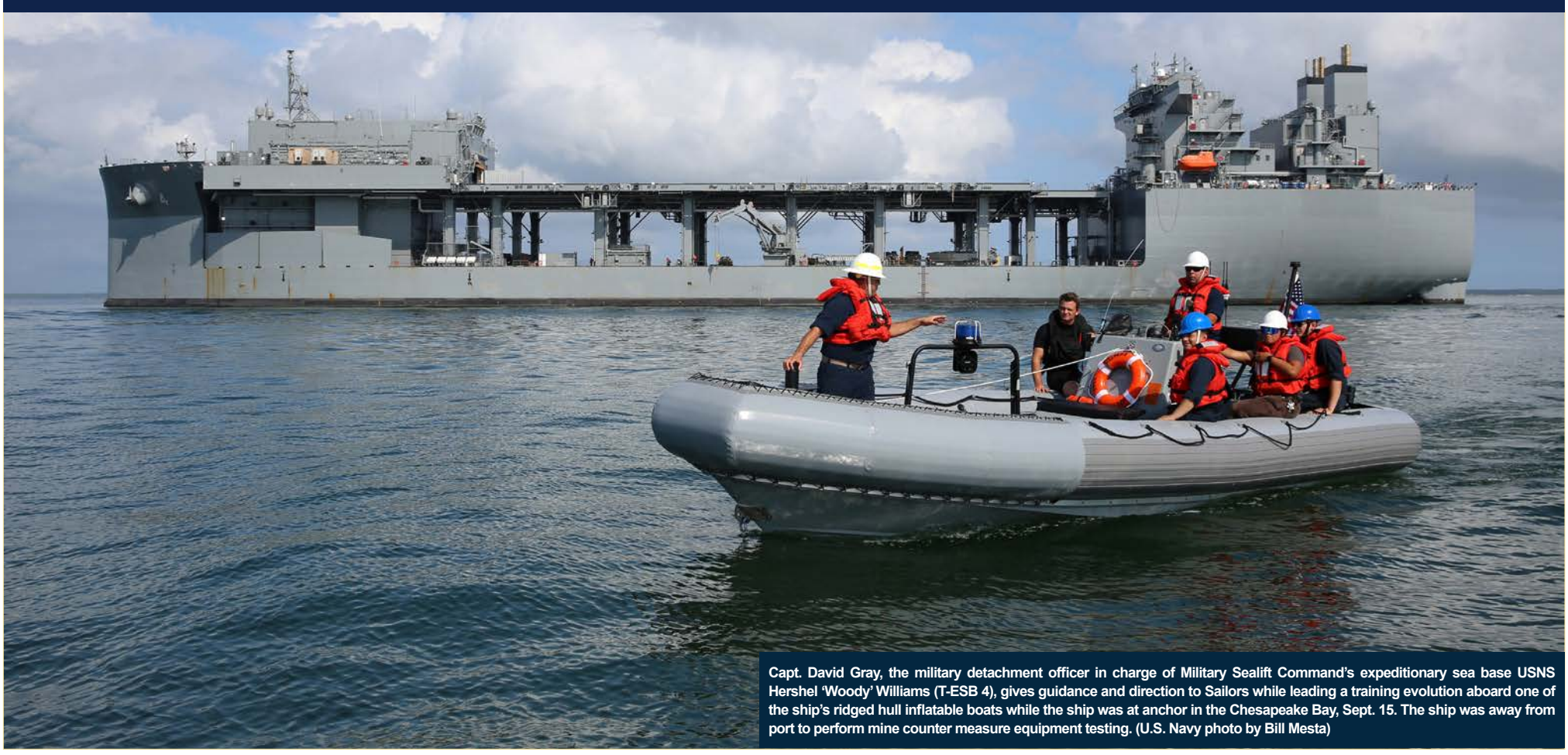
November 2019 ISSUE

SEALIFT

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



Capt. David Gray, the military detachment officer in charge of Military Sealift Command's expeditionary sea base USNS Hershel 'Woody' Williams (T-ESB 4), gives guidance and direction to Sailors while leading a training evolution aboard one of the ship's ridged hull inflatable boats while the ship was at anchor in the Chesapeake Bay, Sept. 15. The ship was away from port to perform mine counter measure equipment testing. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

USNS Hershel 'Woody' Williams Makes Mine Counter Measure History

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

The crew of Military Sealift Command's expeditionary sea base (ESB) USNS Hershel 'Woody' Williams (T-ESB 4) completed a historic underway by pulling into Naval Station Norfolk, Sept. 16.

While away from the naval station, the Hershel 'Woody' Williams' crew performed the first ever launch and recovery of an unmanned surface vessel (USV) and an unmanned underwater vessel (UUV), Knightfish, from an ESB, Sept. 14.

The USV and UUV are mine counter measure capabilities and the ship went to sea to determine the feasibility of operating these vessels from an ESB.

"Considering the contested environments which our ships sail in, counter-mine capabilities are very important because we have to be able to keep the enemy at bay," said Capt. David Gray, USNS Hershel Woody William's officer in charge. "Mines of today are very inexpensive to make. Our adversaries can produce mines for a few hundred dollars and inflict a tremendous loss of life while causing millions of dollars of damage. So we need the assets out there to detect and destroy these threats, ahead of time, and keep the world's shipping lanes open."

A team of U.S. Navy Sailors, civil service mariners (CIVMAR) and civilian technical experts carried out the task of launching and recovering the USV and UUV in to the Chesapeake Bay, Sept. 14-15. The two-day USV and UUV evolution required shipboard personnel to transport each unmanned vessel from its storage area inside the mission bay to the designated launching point next to the side of the ship. The ship's crane was used to lift each unmanned vessel off the deck and into the ocean. Once each vessel was launched, they were recovered from the ocean with the ship's crane and returned to the mission deck. In total, the USV was successfully launched

HWW continued on page 8

A view of an unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV), Knightfish, being recovered by Military Sealift Command's expeditionary sea base, USNS Hershel Woody Williams (ESB 4), while the ship was at anchor in the Chesapeake Bay, (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

A U.S. Navy Sailor and civilian technicians monitor an unmanned surface vehicle (USV), after it was launched from Military Sealift Command's expeditionary sea base, USNS Hershel Woody Williams (T-ESB 4). (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

IN THIS ISSUE

- All Hands Call
- Newest EPF
- SS Petersburg
- USNS Comfort
- Turbo Activation
- Ex-Ford Tow
- Leading Up
- Hispanic Heritage
- We Are MSC
- Any Day

Military Sealift Command Hosts All Hands Call

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Rear Adm. Mike Wettlaufer, commander Military Sealift Command, addresses an audience of Military Sealift Command active duty military and civilian personnel during an All Hands Call, Oct. 2. (U.S. Navy photo by Jennifer Hunt)

Rear Adm. Mike Wettlaufer, commander Military Sealift Command, hosted his first all hands call for MSC service members and civilian support staff attached to the headquarters, Oct. 2.

The event, held on board Naval Station Norfolk was the first opportunity for Wettlaufer to address his staff since assuming command of MSC.

"It was great to see the ecosystem of MSC here today," said Wettlaufer. "There is a lot of great work going on at MSC."

Wettlaufer emphasized this point by presenting the audience a 23-page report which lists all of MSC's current efforts and the command's accomplishments over the last three years.

"Today, like every day, MSC has our ships at sea, around the world providing support for our forces working forward in defense of our homeland," he added "Every day, you provide solutions for hard problems. Every day, you are running towards the hard problems; these are the things that we do. And this is what we need to keep doing to solve problems."

Wettlaufer credited MSC for some of its current and recent efforts including supporting U.S. Transportation Command's turbo activation, the S.S. Petersburg's successfully deployed and recovered an 800-ton, single-anchor leg mooring (SALM) buoy while sitting in a 12-degree list and repair and modification effort to the Sea-Based X-Band Radar (SBX-1).

"Just today, MSC has numerous ships underway, multiple ships in overseas ports, surge sealift ships at sea all around the country, prepositioning ships all over the world," according to Wettlaufer. "Today we are loading and unloading supplies, equipment and repair parts on our ships, managing the contracting for our fleet, and we have multiple ships in major planned overhaul. Not to mention, you are delivering all of the petroleum products to our deployed forces overseas."

"These are solutions to hard problems and these are the things you do every day," he said.

"In addition to our daily headquarters tasks, we are responsible to support our area commands, MSC Atlantic, MSC Pacific, MSC Far East, MSC Europe/Africa and MSC Central," said Wettlaufer. "These are our local operational commanders. They are responsibilities include managing scheduling, manning and maintenance for our ships and people in their areas of responsibility and we are responsible for supporting them."

"At the headquarters we are also responsible for recruiting and training the folks who are on our ships at sea," he added. "And most importantly we support our civil service mariners every single day."

During the all hands call, Wettlaufer presented MSC's four pillars, people, platforms, processes and partners, with descriptive explanations to the audience.

Military Sealift Command's Pillars:

-People- MSC believes in a diverse and talented workforce who are empowered to execute.

-Platforms- MSC conducts safe global operations at sea in support of joint forces, and is focused on our ships' life-cycle management.

-Processes- MSC supports good stewardship and promotes innovation, collaboration and transparency in all of its processes.

-Partners- MSC is enabled by its partners with the ability to solve common problems because our relationships matter and they provide our fleet with an operational advantage.

"You have been working hard across all of MSC's pillars," explained Wettlaufer. "What we have found out is that the common factor that enables us to succeed with our pillars, and that is effective communication."

"We need personal interaction, human-to-human communication between our people to move the ball forward and reach our goals," he said.

Wettlaufer asked his teammates to, "challenge their perspective," when it comes to finding the solutions that make MSC successful.

"When we are talking about perspective we are talking about how we think," Wettlaufer said. "This is about when we are in a situation are we going to sit there and accept it. Or do you reach out to your teammates for another opinion or find someone in a different specialty, someone who can look at the situation from a different angle. And we need to be looking at situations from different angles to solve our problems, find solutions and become more effective."

Secretary Names Navy's Newest Expeditionary Fast Transport Ship Cody

From Secretary of the Navy Public Affairs

Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer has announced the newest Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF) ship will be named USNS Cody (T-EPF 14).

The future USNS Cody is the first ship named in honor of the city of Cody, Wyoming. At least 28 other U.S. Navy ships have been named after the state of Wyoming's cities, places and people.

"The people of Cody are staunch supporters of a strong Navy and Marine Corps team and it is fitting to name a ship in honor of this great city," Spencer said. "I am pleased that the spirit of Cody will live on in the future USNS Cody (T-EPF 14)."

T-EPFs transport personnel, equipment and supplies. They can transport 600 short tons of military cargo with a crew of 26 civilian mariners (CIVMARS) – equipped with airline-style seating for 312 embarked troops, along with a fixed wing berthing outfitted for an additional 104 personnel. With a shallow draft under 15 feet, a flight deck for helicopter operations, and vehicle offload ramp, EPFs can support a wide range of operations – from port access to littoral operations.

MSC Headquarters Personnel
Find Your Award Photos on the Portal!
https://msc.navy.deps.mil/Award%20Gallery/Forms/Thumbnails.aspx

Follow Our Twitter Page!
www.twitter.com/MSCsealift

Military Sealift Command Concludes Support of Southern California Leg of Arctic Expeditionary Capabilities Exercise 2019

By Sarah Burford, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs

The Military Sealift Command tanker ship SS Petersburg (T-AOT 9101), sits in a 12-degree list as it successfully deploys a single-anchor leg mooring (SALM) buoy, the first of this type of exercise conducted in Southern California. The ship is participating in Arctic Expeditionary Capabilities Exercise 2019 off the coast of San Diego. (U.S. Navy photo by Sarah Burford)

Military Sealift Command (MSC) has completed its support of the Arctic Expeditionary Capabilities Exercise (AECE) 2019 off the coast of San Diego.

Over the course of two weeks, MSC exercised operational control of the Maritime Administration (MARAD) tanker ship SS Petersburg, at anchor offshore. During the course of operations, Petersburg successfully deployed and recovered an 800-ton, single-anchor leg mooring (SALM) buoy while sitting in a 12-degree list. The SALM was then connected to an offshore petroleum discharge system (OPDS), that delivered water via hoses to shore. This process can deliver fresh, drinking water to areas where local infrastructure has been damaged or a beach is inaccessible by conventional methods, such as following a natural like a hurricane or earthquake.

The Military Sealift Command Pacific (MSCPAC) team, along with Petersburg civilian crew, worked alongside Navy Seabees from Amphibious Construction Battalion 1, and Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One, ensuring a successful deployment and recovery of the SALM.

"It has been amazing being out here and working with such a diverse group of professionals." said Julie Flaherty, MSCPAC's liaison officer on Petersburg. "The knowledge base of everyone, from the Seabees to the civilian contractors aboard, was vast and watching the groups get together, work, share information, and carry out a successful deployment and recovery of the SALM was incredible. It really shows the dedication and professionalism of the Navy and of the civilians who support the Navy and MSC's missions."

Exercises like AECE, provide effective training, ensuring forces are capable, interoperable, and deployable on short notice. In addition, working together across the commands increases the ability of all participants to plan, communicate and conduct complex amphibious and expeditionary combat support operations. These same skills would be critical to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations.

"We have learned so many lessons over this past two weeks," said Capt. Gabe Varela, Commander, MSCPAC. "Exercises like this one really put concepts into a real-world scenario and to allow us to learn in a constantly changing environment alongside the subject matter experts where we can ask questions and improve techniques, so we will be ready and confidant in an actual deployment of OPDS during a contingency or a humanitarian mission."

AECE is one in a series of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command exercises in 2019 that prepares joint forces to respond to crisis in the Indo-Pacific. AECE specifically test joint expeditionary force logistical transfer capabilities in the Arctic environment, including wet logistics over the shore, expeditionary mine countermeasures, mobile diving and salvage and an offshore petroleum discharge system. Navy and Marine Corps participants will conduct operational and tactical actions to validate the littoral operations in a contested environment and the expeditionary advanced base operations concepts.

The Military Sealift Command (MSC) tanker SS Petersburg (T-AOT-9101) successfully deploys a single-anchor leg mooring (SALM) during Arctic Expeditionary Capabilities Exercise (AECE) 2019. Approximately 3,000 U.S. Navy and Marine Corps personnel participated in AECE 2019, a joint training exercise that tests expeditionary logistical capabilities in the Arctic region and prepares joint forces to respond to crises across the Indo-Pacific. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Casey S. Trietsch)

Comfort Staff Exchanges Medical Strategies with Colombian Counterparts

By Petty Officer 3rd Class Maria Llanos, U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command & U.S. Fourth Fleet

Hospitalman Juni Roscado, from Norcross, Ga., discusses his experiences with Colombian nurses during a subject matter event at the University Hospital Julio Mendez Barreneche. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jacob Gleich)

Medical staff assigned to the hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) met with Colombian military and civilian medical personnel to collaborate in subject matter expert exchange's (SMEE) at Battalion Cordoba military base and University Hospital Julio Méndez Barreneche, recently.

Over 90 medical personnel attended the discussions that aimed to increase cooperability between both the U.S. and Colombian militaries and health care professionals by exchanging information, best practices and treatment techniques.

"The intent is to ensure that we are an enduring partner with these nations and to build up interoperability, so that we can continue to work together in the future," said Lt. Cmdr. Connie Johnson, officer in charge of the Comfort preventive medicine unit. "I think it's a really good foundation that can be built upon."

The SMEEs focused on a variety of practices such as military health protection that included measures the Comfort medical professionals take to protect the health of service members and maintain mission readiness.

"It's an event of supreme importance because the U.S. military is teaching us many ways to prevent epidemic illnesses that all under-developed countries, like Colombia, have to confront," said Lt. Col. Janeth Rosero Reyes, Colombian army director of general medicine at Battalion Cordoba. "My entire team learned a lot of techniques and we will begin to share them with the goal to generate an impact in our foundation."

Other important topics discussed included sanitation standards at medical sites and the importance of clean water.

"It's imperative for us to have high sanitation standards such as clean bathroom facilities, floors and walls, and clean water that is free of toxins and safe to drink and use for medical procedures," said Ensign Jason McCain, environmental health officer assigned to Comfort. "We have those standards not only to protect force health, but also to protect and ensure health and safety for the patients we see."

Mental healthcare professionals discussed the causes and effects of stress in the military and shared techniques to help reduce stress including breathing exercises during tense situations.

"These exchanges end up having a much larger effect than just on the people who are attending," said Cmdr. Ken Sausen, psychologist assigned to Comfort. "Those people pass on that information to their students and to other providers, perhaps to other generations of providers, which then has a much longer and stronger effect."

During another SMEE, U.S. Navy nurses discussed their process for training within their community. This included evaluating their use of devices such as IV pumps, methods of infection prevention, and how well they communicate to other medical caregivers or patients.

Surge Sealift Ships and Ready

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command Large, Medium-Speed Roll-on/Roll-off (LMSR) vessel USNS Benavidez (T-AKR 306), departs Lambert's Point Shipyard alongside USNS Mendonca (T-AKR 303) for Turbo Activation. (U.S. Navy Photo By Jennifer Hunt)

Capt. John Regina, the master of Military Sealift Command's roll-on/roll-off surge sealift ship USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon (T-AK 3006) guides the ship as it transits to the Atlantic Ocean, Sept. 22. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

Strategic Sealift Officers Ens. Charles Lomax (left) and Lt. Kenneth Filiaggi (right) discuss the Turbo Activation exercise schedule with Ship's Master Capt. Alfred Murray (center) aboard Military Sealift Command Large, Medium-Speed Roll-on/Roll-off (LMSR) vessel USNS Benavidez (T-AKR 306). (U.S. Navy Photo by Jennifer Hunt)

Able Bodied Seaman Tyree Watkins and Able Bodied Seaman Chris Green, contract mariners attached to Military Sealift Command's roll-on/roll-off surge sealift ship USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon (T-AK 3006), secure the ship's anchor while the vessel operates in the Atlantic Ocean, Sept. 23.(U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

Five of Military Sealift Command's East Coast-based and one West Coast-based surge sealift ships successfully completed a turbo activation by pulling into their homeports, Sept. 25.

The East Coast-based, MSC large, medium speed roll-on/roll off ships USNS Benavidez (T-AKR 306), USNS Gilliland (T-AKR 298) and USNS Mendonca (T-AKR 303) got underway for the short-notice activation. They sailed with the container and roll-on/roll-off ships USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon (T-AK 3006) and USNS SGT Matej Kocak (T-AK 3005) into the North Atlantic Ocean for the at-sea portion of the turbo activation, Sept. 21. On the West Coast, MSC's large, medium-speed roll-on/roll-off surge sealift ship USNS Fisher (T-AKR 301) supported the exercise.

The turbo activation, led by U.S. Transportation Command, involved getting ships of MSC's surge sealift fleet and the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD) national defense reserve fleet to sea for training and inspections with minimal notice.

"The turbo activation was an exercise to prove that the material readiness and crews' skill level of our surge sealift ships make it possible to respond to world events on a short notice," said Cmdr. Vincent D'Eusanio, the tactical advisor (TACAD) aboard USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon and the MSC TACAD program manager. "We had to know if our ships would be capable of delivering supplies and equipment to our deployed troops serving overseas, when required."

The exercise was a critical test of the surge sealift fleet's ability to rapidly respond should its capabilities be required to transport combat troops, and their armored vehicles and equipment overseas. "The biggest thing that was different about this exercise than those we have done in the past was the sheer number of ships which got underway," said Capt. Hans Lynch, Military Sealift Command Atlantic's commodore and the exercise's East Coast officer in charge. "The turbo activation was a really good test for the union halls' ability to provide enough civilian mariners to get all the ships underway simultaneously."

Lynch was in command of 17 MSC and MARAD ships, which activated off the East Coast. On the West Coast, Capt. Gabe Varela, the MSC Pacific commodore was in command of 11 MSC and MARAD ships. Nationally, 33 surge sealift ships activated for the turbo activation.

"The exercise was also a good test for our certifying authorities, the American Bureau of Shipping and the U.S. Coast Guard, to see if they would be able to attend to all of the vessels at the same time," Lynch added. "The other concern was bringing aboard technicians and subject matter experts needed to get the ships to sea, short notice. Everyone did really well. None of the ships had major issues due to not being able to be inspected or getting people required to the vessels."

This is important given the vital role of our surge sealift ships.
"If there were a situation, such as war or a humanitarian crisis, and the Navy needed to provide logistical support overseas, our surge sealift ships would, come out of reduced operating status, be 'crewed-up,' inspected for material readiness and sail to a designated port to on-load cargo," added D'Eusanio. "The ship would then sail overseas to our deployed forces and deliver the equipment and supplies required for the mission."

The East Coast underway portion of the turbo activation included five MSC ships rendezvousing at a designated location in the North Atlantic Ocean, Sept. 24. While sailing in a simulated contested waterway, the five ships executed tactical formation maneuvers designed to prevent enemy attacks on a convoy.

"When our ships are sailing in a contested environment, the threats they could face are evolving all the time," Lynch said. "The biggest threats we face include hostile submarines and mines, and these are the threats we were training for during the turbo activation."

"We were also training the crews to sail their ships as quietly as possible to counter electromagnetic ship's signatures because our vessels also could face anti-ship ballistic missiles, cruise missiles fighter aircraft and enemy bombers," he added.

The ships sailed in formation with USNS Benavidez in the lead followed by USNS Gilliland, USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon, USNS Mendonca and USNS SGT Matej Kocak.

"All five of MSC's (East Coast) surge sealift ships were able to form-up, single file, as planned," according to D'Eusanio. "As the formation of ships executed each tactical maneuver, each ship ended up back where they were supposed to, lined up in formation."

Each of MSC's surge sealift ships sailed with a TACAD, who are surge sealift officers (SSO), and surface warfare officers (SWO).

y Reserve Ships Turbo Activate

They are critical liaisons between Navy leadership and the civilian mariners who crew the ships.

"The TACAD program is a relatively new concept, but it is based off of years of experience and past lessons learned," said D'Eusanio. "During World War II we lost lots of merchant ships and mariners. Some of this was a result of not knowing how to sail a merchant ship in a hostile environment. When the Navy began to train mariners to counter threats, like German U-boats, our losses dwindled."

"In 2017, MSC initiated its TACAD program," he said. "Our TACADs are Navy reservists. We employ our TACADs aboard MSC's civilian mariner crewed ships to educate and inform them about how to sail in a contested environment. We answer questions, provide tactical advice and facilitate communications with the combatant fleet allowing our mariners to successfully operate in unfriendly waters."

Most of MSC's TACADs are Navy reservists who sail as mariners in their civilian careers. D'Eusanio is a licensed chief engineer who sails for the Staten Island Ferry, when not mobilized for the Navy.

"The SSO forces are civilian mariners by nature; the majority of them having graduated with their U.S. Coast Guard licensing from one of our maritime academies," according to D'Eusanio. "So having one of our SSO Naval reservist walk aboard one of our ships, and speak with the crew while in uniform, helps to set the tone and bring credibility to the program. The additional support we bring to the table has been very well received by the mariners."

"The biggest contribution of our TACADs was that they brought reliable and secure means of communicating between the ships," added Lynch. "They are not more experienced than our mariners but they possess a solid military background which allows them to interact better between the ships' crews and the active duty military and the combatant fleet."

While MSC's surge sealift ships completed the turbo activation with TACADs, the MARAD vessels completed all of their evolutions without the military advisors, according to Lynch.

"We really need to continue to apply energy to the TACAD program," Lynch continued. "I think we need to expand what they are being exposed to. During the turbo activation, they focused on the surge sealift fleet. But I think there is value in them getting out and exposed to other platforms and the combatant ships and aircraft, to better understand what they bring to the table and broaden their experience."

The day prior to the simulated convey formation sailing, each ship conducted independent training designed to strengthen the crews' ability to sail in environments impacted by enemy threats such as torpedoes and mines.

According to D'Eusanio, each East-Coast based ship was required to establish secure communications with the exercise flagship, USNS Benavidez, and act on guidance and direction provided by Lynch.

Additionally, the ships' bridge teams sailed their ships through a simulated mine field, established 'darken ship,' (the defensive process of ensuring that no light emanates from a ship at night) and ensured there was no unauthorized transmissions emanated from personal devices such as cellular phones and laptop computers.

"The service members and mariners who conducted the turbo activation did great," Lynch said. "The mariners who sailed aboard the MSC ships had performed similar training evolutions in the past so they were familiar with the requirements and executed very well. All of the people who were in command and control of the exercise were Navy reservists, and they did fantastic as well."

Before the tactical, at-sea portion of the exercise, each ship completed 'sea trials,' which were designed to inspect the vessels' material readiness and ability to be crewed and able to get underway on an abbreviated time-line. The sea trials inspection began Sept. 16 while the ships were still in port.

"The first step of the turbo activation was to notify the ships and shipping companies who crew these ships that the ships would be getting underway and when they were scheduled to leave," D'Eusanio said. "For USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon, the ship was in reduced operating status five, which meant the ship had five days to be ready to go. During the five days, the ship brought aboard the full crew, got the engines up and running, and made sure that all of their deck gear was ready to go."

Prior to getting underway, each ship tested its generators and auxiliary systems, main engines, mission essential cargo gear secure communications systems and platform habitability.

TURBO ACTIVATION continued on page 7

Cmdr. Vincent D'Eusanio, the tactical advisor attached to Military Sealift Command's roll-on/roll-off surge sealift ship USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon (T-AK 3006), establishes secure communications while the ship sailed in the Atlantic Ocean, Sept. 23 (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

Contract mariners attached to Military Sealift Command's roll-on/roll-off surge sealift ship USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon (T-AK 3006) pull aboard mooring lines as the ship gets underway from Newport News, Virginia, Sept. 22. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

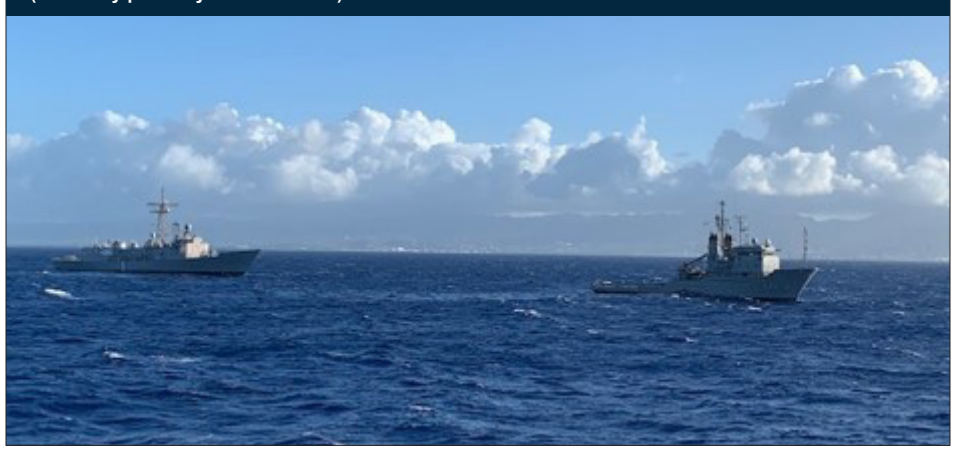
Military Sealift Command (from left to right) Large, Medium-Speed Roll-on/Roll-off (LMSR) vessel USNS Mendonca (T-AKR 303), container and roll-on/roll-off ship USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon (T-AK 3006), and Large, Medium-Speed Roll-on/Roll-off (LMSR) vessel USNS Gilliland (T-AKR 298), participate in a group sail during Turbo Activation. (U.S. Navy Photo by Jennifer Hunt)

A view from USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon (T-AK 3006) of (left) USNS Mendonca (T-AKR 303) and USNS SGT Matej Kocak (T-AK 3005) as they perform tactical formation manuvers in the North Atlantic Ocean, Sept. 24. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

MSC Ships Conduct Successful At-Sea Transfer of Ex-Ford Tow

By Sarah Burford, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command fleet ocean tug USNS Sioux (T-ATF 171) arrives on site with the the decommissioned Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigate USS Ford (FFG 54) tow for at-sea exchange with the MSC rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp (T-ARS 51) off the coast of Hawaii. (U.S. Navy photo by Sarah Burford)



Military Sealift Command's fleet ocean tug USNS Sioux (T-ATF 171) and rescue salvage ship USNS Grasp (T-ARS 51) conducted a successful at-sea transfer of the decommissioned Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigate USS Ford (FFG 54) in the Pacific Area of Operation off the coast of Hawaii.

The tow of Ex-Ford began in Bremerton, Washington. Prior to being released for tow, Ex-Ford was stripped of everything considered contaminants, that could compromise sea life or the ocean's environment. Items such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), transformers and capacitors, trash, floatable materials, mercury or fluorocarbon-containing materials and readily detachable solid PCB items were stripped from the ship leaving nothing more than a shell. Petroleum was also cleaned from tanks, piping and reservoirs. The Navy Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) Inactive Ships Office conducted inspections throughout the process to ensure the all preparations were in line with guidelines set-up by the Environmental Protection Agency under a general permit the Navy holds pursuant to the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act.

Once cleared by NAVSEA, Sioux began the first leg of Ex-Ford's final journey to Guam.

Due to environmental restrictions in Hawaii, a decision to hand-off Ex-Ford to Grasp in open waters, five miles off the coast was made. While transferring a tow at sea is not normally how MSC conducts this operation, it is something familiar to the civilian mariner crew.

"This isn't something we do very often, but it is something we can do, if we have to," said Michael Howell, MSCPAC Combat Logistics Force Tow and Salvage Ship scheduler. "In this case, we couldn't bring Sioux and the tow into Hawaii because of environmental concerns, so we had to go with the decision to transfer at sea. It's not normally how we would do this, but protecting the reefs and the marine wildlife in Hawaii is important to everyone, and we respect that. Transferring a tow from one ship to another at sea has its challenges, but both crews are well trained and have a lot of experience with handling tows, so we had a lot of confidence in our ability to be successful with this one."

The larger ship, Grasp, will take Ex-Ford to Guam for a sinking exercise later in the year.

"Operations, such as this one between Sioux and Grasp, are examples of how flexible and adaptive MSC can be," explained Capt. Gabe Varela, commander MSCPAC. "Our ability to problem solve and our willingness to think out of the box and to try a more unconventional approach to completing our mission objectives really exemplify the professionalism and dedication of our CIVMARS and our staff."

Military Sealift Command Expanding Team 'U' to Junior Staff

By Cathryn Lindsay, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Civilian support staff teammates attached to Military Sealift Command perform a team building exercise at 'Leading Up,' an MSC initative designed to provided professional training and development for its workforce. (U.S. Navy courtesy photo)

In an effort to develop future leaders, Military Sealift Command is expanding the leadership course Team 'U' to the journeyman-level shore and afloat personnel coined "Leading Up."

"The goal of Leading Up is to develop future MSC leaders by following the Navy and Department of Defense learning continuum of leading self, leading teams and projects, and leading people, explained Mike Kishbaugh, MSC's Training and Workforce Development Branch Director and coordinator for the program. The training supports MSC's Civilian Workforce Development Strategy.

The weeklong course débuted in September 2019 and hosted 27 MSC mid-level personnel from general schedule ranks of 11 through 13, second and third-level civil service mariners and senior enlisted service members.

"Ideally, the classes will be filled with a healthy mixture of ashore, afloat and military staff," Kishbaugh said.

"(The training) helps bridge the gap between our unique employee structure of mariners, military and civilian employees," said MSC's Command Master Chief Rick Dyksterhouse. "The objective is to create a baseline to help attendees understand the differences and commonalities among employees at MSC."

Leading Up teaches leadership theories, principles and barriers, Dyksterhouse explained. Instructors also engage students with practical application exercises of management processes.

"The course is for us, by us," Dyksterhouse said. "Many of the presenters are leaders from MSC who have attended the executive-level Team 'U' course."

The course also featured a business chemistry assessment to help attendees identify their specific leadership style and learn how to best interact with other leadership and personality styles, Kishbaugh explained.

Culminating the course was a day of off-site team building hosted at Virginia Wesleyan University, which included hands-on team building and leadership events.

"The off-site is designed to be fun and engaging," Dyksterhouse said. "The goal is to build communication skills. Some will learn without even knowing what the lesson was."

Team "U" and Leading Up are designed as intentional leadership development, and is not focused on developing job-specific skills, Dyksterhouse explained.

"This is a great experience to learn leadership skills from MSC leaders, and be exposed to different elements of the MSC command, enhancing individuals understanding of our mission," Kishbaugh said. "We are putting resources into growing our next generation of leaders here."

"If we want MSC to excel as an organization of choice we have to be invested in our people," Dyksterhouse said. "We want to build an organization that cares about developing our employees and unifies the workforce through our united core values."

For more information regarding Leading Up or Team "U," contact Kishbaugh at (757) 341-6503. Further details will be announced as they become available. Interested applicants must be nominated by their supervisor.

MSC Recognizes the Service of Latinos During Hispanic Heritage Month Observance

By Shevonne Cleveland, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Olga Torres, the keynote speaker at Military Sealift Command's Hispanic Heritage Month special observance, addresses service members and civilian teammates during the event Sept. 25. (U.S. Navy photo by Brian Suriani)

Military Sealift Command joined the nation Sept. 25 in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month, with the theme "Hispanic Americans: A History of Serving Our Nation." Military and civilian teammates gathered for the observance at Ely Hall on Norfolk Naval Station.

The nation recognizes and celebrates the contributions made, and the important presence of Hispanic and Latino Americans to the United States, Sept.15 to Oct.15.

Guest speaker of the event, Olga Torres Baker, is a Senior Marketing Consultant at La Selecta Radio in Hampton Roads, and serves as the president of the Hispanic Leadership Forum of Hampton Roads. Her presentation focused on how Hispanic American culture influences the ever-changing landscape of America.

"Within the U.S. we have subcultures, Torres Baker said."

"If you were born in New York City that's a culture in itself. If you were born in Texas, as big as it is, there are different subcultures within the state. Whether it's New England, or California there's something about being part of that subculture that we don't even think about, that comes as second nature. Pizza from New York, or hotdogs from Chicago, we all have subcultures within a culture, and that's how we love and enjoy representing ourselves."

According to the U.S. Census Bureau the estimated Hispanic population of the United States is over 50 million, or 18.1 percent of the U.S. population and Hispanics are the nation's largest ethnic or racial minority. More than 43,000 people of Hispanic origin are Sailors and civilians serving with the U.S. Navy.

Petty Officer Second Class Michelle Gonzalez of Military Sealift Command, was also a speaker at the event, and shared her experiences and pride as a Mexican American.

"In my opinion, it is not because of Hispanics that America continues to thrive, but because of our diversity and our insatiable ambition beyond skin color, accents or last names, and our ability to recognized the valuable contributions that we all support our humanity with."

Military Sealift Command has three ships bearing the namesakes of Latinos. USNS 1st LT Baldomero Lopez (T-AK 3010) was named after a first lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps during the Korean War, who posthumously received the Medal of Honor for smothering a hand grenade with his own body during the Inchon Landing on Sept. 15, 1950. USNS Benavidez (T-AKR 306) is named after Master Sergeant Raul Perez "Roy" Benavidez, a member of the United States Army Special Forces who received the Medal of Honor for his valorous actions in combat near Loc Ninh, South Vietnam, on May 2, 1968. USNS Cesar Chavez (T-AKE 14) is named after Mexican American civil rights leader and activist Cesar Estrada Chavez.

Hispanic Heritage Week was established by legislation sponsored by Rep. Edward R. Roybal and first proclaimed President Lyndon Johnson in 1968. The commemorative week was expanded by legislation sponsored by Rep. Esteban E. Torres and implemented by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period.

We Are MSC: Steward Baker Sheryl Farmer

By Jennifer Hunt, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

I was fortunate enough to have a first-hand dining experience aboard the USNS Benavidez (TAKR-306) during a recent underway for Turbo Activation. The ship's galley was run by contract mariner (Maersk) Sheryl Farmer, who is currently the ship's steward baker. Sheryl ensures the galley and mess run efficiently daily, serving delicious meals for crew and embarked personnel such as myself. More so than Sheryl's amazing baked goods, her welcoming personality added a touch of warmth and sweetness to the short underway.

What do you do aboard USNS Benavidez?

I really love my role because I'm a leader, I love cooking, and I love training people in a positive way. Even more, the right way. A lot of people know their job, but they may not always know the right procedures. Safety is always first.

What do you love most about your job?

Making the crew happy. I love making everyone happy. I love feeding them because I show love through my food. If I can make them smile by making great food, then I'm happy too. That's what I love to do.

What's your favorite thing to cook for the crew?

I like baking for them the most. I love sweets like cakes and pies. I really put my love in baking.

Are there any special moments from your career that stand out to you?

I was on the USNS Stockham for three years. We had a large exercise last year where I was the steward, and I had to cook for 250 people. We went through 36 dozen eggs a day for breakfast. I loved it. It's all about planning and getting a routine down.

What are some words of advice you have for other mariners?

Be patient. We all start from somewhere. In my years of sailing, I've learned to set my people up the right way and to be understanding. We look out for each other.

Civilian mariner Sheryl Farmer, steward baker aboard Military Sealift Command's large, medium speed roll-on/roll off ships USNS Benavidez (T-AKR 306), poses alongside a prepared meal. (U.S. Navy photo by Jennifer Hunt)

HWW Continued from page 1

and recovered twice and the UUV four times over the two-day period.

According to Gray, the Sept. 14 evolution was the first time a USV has been successfully launched and recovered from any Naval ship. USVs have been launched from other Navy ships, but not recovered, as of yet.

After the conclusion of the evolutions, Capt. George McCarthy, USNS Hershel 'Woody' William's master, recognized the crew's efforts during the underway.

"Thank you to everyone aboard the vessel for conducting a safe, efficient and effective evolution here over the last couple of days," he said. "Most importantly, we were able to successfully demonstrate the concepts we set out to."

"There was a lot of hard work across the spectrum of people aboard the ship; civilians, Sailors and CIVMARs," he added. "My thanks to everyone for a great job."

The Hershel 'Woody' Williams is the second ESB configured for mine counter measure missions and a ship designed to facilitate expeditionary forces' missions.

"USNS Hershel "Woody Williams has two primary missions; airborne mine counter measures and support of special operations forces," according to Gray.

Representatives from Program Executive Office for Ships (PEO Ships) and Program Executive Office for Unmanned and Small Combatants (PEO USC) had overall responsibility for the planning and execution of the integration event, with support from the Naval Sea Systems Command's Engineering Directorate, Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City and Carderock Combatant Craft Divisions, and Mine Countermeasures Detachment 22. Personnel from Military Sealift Command (MSC) and ship's force conducted ship operations, navigation and maintenance of the ship systems during the demonstration.

"This demonstration highlighted the inherent modularity of the Mine Countermeasure Mission Package," said Capt. Godfrey Weekes, Littoral Combat Ships Mission Modules Program Manager, PEO USC. "The ability to deploy the MCM capability from this ship is a true force multiplier."

Initial assessments showed positive results and will help inform the feasibility of integration on ESB as well as other vessels of opportunity. This integration demonstration represents the potential to provide increased agility to our operational forces as they respond to the growing complexity of sea-mines while shifting to a broad-spectrum cross-domain, expeditionary approach.

The ship is crewed by a hybrid team of civil service mariners and U.S. Navy Sailors who operate and maintain a large flight deck, berthing and messing accommodations and provide command and control support for embarked forces.

"We currently have 101 Sailors who make up the ship's military detachment," said Gray. "Some of the Sailor specialties we have include aviation specialist, information technology experts, culinary specialist and deck department personnel, who provide support for our embarked personnel."

Approximately 35 CIVMARs serve aboard Hershel 'Woody' Williams and their responsibilities include navigation, ship's propulsion and deck services.

TURBO ACTIVATION Continued from page 5

"The ship's crew on USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon was phenomenal," said D'Eusania. "A big part of our successful underway is a testament to the mariners who crew the ship while it is in reduced operating status. They have kept this ship's material readiness at a level which allows the ship to be activated."

Once underway, the ships performed an eight-hour operational speed run, an anchor windless underway test, a bow thruster test, distilling plant test and a test of the ships' steering systems.

"I felt like this exercise was a success," said D'Eusanio. "We got all five of our ships underway, on short notice, and met all of our requirements."

Each of MSC's five ships that sailed off the East Coast, were crewed by approximately 30 civilian mariners employed by Crowley, Ocean Shipholdings Inc. or U.S. Marine Management Inc. The mariners' responsibilities aboard these surge sealift ships include propulsion, navigation, culinary services and deck department requirements. The overall turbo activation included approximately 500 mariners.

Once the exercise was complete, all six of MSC's ships returned to their ports in Baltimore, Norfolk, Virginia, Newport News, Virginia and Bremerton, Washington.

"I felt like the underway went really well," said John Ratcliffe, USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon's chief mate. "Our critical equipment all worked, as it was supposed to, and the training our mariners received was realistic and effective."

Each of MSC's ships involved in the turbo activation are capable of offloading cargo onto floating barges, or lighterage, when operating in ports that have been damaged or do not possess cargo cranes.

"I think that this turbo activation was just the beginning," concluded Lynch. "I hope that we continue doing these exercises. From a material readiness perspective, these ships are 40-plus years, so I think it is important that we continue to test this capability and perhaps perform even longer and more comprehensive testing and see how these ships will perform."

Fallen MSC Teammates

The Lord is my Pilot;
I shall not drift.
He leadeth me across the dark waters
and steereth me in the deep channels.
He keepeth my Log
and guideth me by the star of holiness
for His Name's sake.
Yea, though I sail amid
the thunders and tempests of life,
I shall dread no danger,
For Thou art with me;
Thy love and Thy care, they shelter me.
Thou preparest a harbor before me
in the homeland of eternity;
Thou anointest the waves with oil,
and my ship rideth calmly,
Surely sunlight and starlight
shall favor me all the days of my voyaging,
and I will rest in the port of my Lord forever.

Captain J. Rogers
Source: The Mast, September 1948

Clarence A. Sealey
Junior Supply Officer
MSC Service:
2010-2019

Rodolfo Bantug
2nd Electrician
MSC Service:
2009-2019

Elijah Rumble
2nd Cook
MSC Service:
2010-2019

SEALIFT

Sealift is an authorized publication for members and employees of the Navy's Military Sealift Command. Contents of this publication are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Navy. Sealift is published monthly by the Military Sealift Command Office of Public Affairs as authorized under NAVPUBINST 5600.42A. Submission of articles and letters should be addressed to:

Editor, Sealift, Military Sealift Command
471 East C Street
Norfolk, VA 23511-2419
Commercial: 757-443-2839
DSN: 646-2890
EMAIL: lewis.w.mesta@navy.mil

Commander.....Rear Adm. Mike Wettlaufer, USN
Director, Public Affairs.....Tom Van Leunen
Deputy Director, Public Affairs.....Jillian Morris
Editor..... Bill Mesta, Norfolk, VA
Visual Information.....Brian Suriani, Norfolk, VA
Visual Information.....Jennifer Hunt, Norfolk, VA
Writer.....David Griesmer, Norfolk, VA
Writer..... Wayne Perry, Norfolk, VA
Writer..... Shevonne Cleveland, Norfolk, VA
Writer.....Cathryn Lindsay, Norfolk, VA
Writer..... LaShawn Sykes, Norfolk, VA
Writer.....Sarah Burford, San Diego, CA

Military Sealift Command reports to the Commander, U.S. Transportation Command for defense transportation matters, to the Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command for Navy-unique matters and to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition for procurement policy and oversight matters.