MSC SEALIFT

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

April 2018 ISSUE

Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) departs Naval Base San Diego in support of Pacific Partnership 2018 (PP18). (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kelsey L. Adams)

USNS MERCY DEPLOYS IN SUPPORT OF PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP 2018

By Sarah Burford, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command's hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) departed San Diego recently in support of the humanitarian mission to Southeast Asia, Pacific Partnership 2018.

The ship's crew, composed of MSC civil service mariners, who operate the ship, and Navy medical and support personnel who staff and oversee the ship's hospital, will visit countries throughout Southeast Asia to include Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam.

In addition to the U.S. Navy and CIVMARs, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and regional partners are providing maritime security, conducting humanitarian assistance, and strengthening disaster response preparedness during the mission.

Mercy will provide medical, dental, veterinary, public health services, engineering and disaster response to host countries who have invited the ship to visit and provide services to the local population.

Mercy is joined on the Pacific Partnership mission by MSC expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Brunswick (T-EPF 6). Brunswick will make separate mission stops in Yap, Palau, Borneo-Malaysia, and Thailand, supporting public diplomacy, community outreach, and theater security cooperation initiatives.

"Being a part of the Pacific Partnership mission is really an amazing experience," said civil service mariner Barron Garvey, Mercy's cargo officer.

"What we do touches so many lives and you can't walk away from this deployment without having been impacted by the people we help and the experiences of the mission," said Garvey. "People always talk about making a difference, but this is where that really happens; on a Pacific Partnership mission. I think about the other PP missions I have been on, and I look forward to the next one. This really is one of the best things I have been a part of since coming to MSC."

Following its four month deployment, Mercy will return to San Diego.

Pacific Partnership is the largest annual multilateral humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific Region.

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MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND ANNOUNCES MARITIME EXCELLENCE SHIP AWARD PROGRAM

From Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command is proud to announce the Maritime Excellence Award Program for its civil service mariner (CIVMAR) manned ships.

Each year, Maritime 'E' awards will be presented to two government-owned, government-operated ships for attaining the highest standards of readiness within their respective ship program.

"The Maritime 'E' ship award promotes competition and recognizes ships that achieve the highest degree of operational readiness, performance, efficiency, reliability, productivity, and safety during the fiscal year," said Rear Adm. Dee Mewbourne, Commander, Military Sealift Command. "Recipients of this award will have demonstrated day-to-day excellence in addition to superior achievement throughout the competitive period."

"Area Commanders, program managers and identified 'N-code' heads will provide ship assessment data by the end of the calendar year to the selection committee for ship award determination," added Mewbourne. "The program will recognize a 'Blue Team' award and a 'Gold Team' award, with ships divided into competitive and program categories."

The following competitive categories have been established for MSC's Maritime 'E' award program:

Maritime Excellence, continued on page 8

DIVERSITY + INCLUSION = OPTIMAL MISSION READINESS, MARITIME EXCELLENCE AWARD, TALUGA GROUP

From Commander, Military Sealift Command

With unified resolve, we boldly sail the world's oceans to provide essential assured logistics and service support to the warfighter as the nation's premier maritime transportation organization.

That's our vision at MSC. We strive to realize that vision through implementing sound Equal Opportunity (EO) programs for military and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) programs for civilians and optimizing overall workforce diversity and inclusion efforts. Military and civilian managers at all levels must be committed to supporting EO/EEO.

The Department of the Navy Human Capital Strategy states that people are the Department's most valuable asset. Further, it recognizes that people bring different talents and abilities, any of which could prove decisive for victory. Adherence to the principles of inclusion, non-discrimination and equal opportunity contributes to readiness by promoting respect, trust and cohesion among members of the workforce. Diversity also enhances readiness by inviting new perspectives and improved ideas to solve problems.

Diversity and inclusion stretch beyond the traditional thoughts of diversity in the workplace. More than visible characteristics, diversity speaks to the uniqueness of each of us, including our backgrounds, personalities, life experiences, and beliefs. All these similarities and differences form the foundation of diversity of thought and perspectives; all make us think, react, and approach challenges differently. We all see and solve problems through different lenses. Success in leveraging the diversity and inclusion in the workforce gives our organization greater flexibility to adapt to changes and challenges.

The MSC Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan guides our actions in promoting diversity and inclusion in our workforce. Our plan has three lines of effort:

LOE 1: Recruitment and Outreach. We will recruit and access from a diverse group of applicants to secure a high-performing and innovative workforce that reflects all segments of society;

LOE 2: Cultivate Inclusive Culture. We will cultivate an inclusive culture that accelerates opportunities to empower each individual's maximum impact, encourages innovation and collaboration, enhances developmental opportunities, and retains the best talent to enable uniformed and civilian personnel to contribute their full potential to mission success; and

LOE 3: Program Management and Accountability. We will develop strategies to equip leaders with the ability to effectively manage diversity, be accountable, measure results, and refine approaches to engender a sustainable culture of inclusion.

Every team member at MSC has a role to play in supporting equal opportunity, equal employment opportunity, and the diversity strategic plan. Together, let us maximize our appreciation of the diverse attributes, experiences and backgrounds that our Sailors and civilians bring to MSC and create innovative ways to leverage the thoughts and skills critical to achieving mission success.

Maritime Excellence Award

Our people are the lifeblood of our organization. We sustain our ships through acquiring, valuing and developing human excellence.

I am excited and eager to announce a new recognition program for our Mariners and ships. Beginning this year, we will implement an annual Maritime Excellence Ship Award Program for Military Sealift Command civil service-manned ships. Our program, called the Maritime 'E' ship award is similar in concept to Navy's Type command Battle Efficiency or Battle 'E' recognition.

The Maritime 'E' ship award promotes competition and recognizes ships that achieve the highest degree of operational readiness, performance, efficiency, reliability, productivity, and safety during the fiscal year. Recipients of this award will have demonstrated day-to-day excellence in addition to superior achievement throughout the competitive period. Area Commanders, program managers and identified N-code heads will provide ship assessment data by the end of the calendar year to the selection committee for ship award determination. The program will recognize a "Blue Team" award and a 'Gold Team" award, with ships divided into competitive and program categories.

I look forward to announcing the results of our first Maritime 'E' award recipients in January 2019. Award winners will be authorized to display the approved Maritime 'E' ship award pennant from sunrise to sunset for one year from the date of the award, and paint an appropriate logo on the ship. Crew members will receive a ball cap with "Maritime 'E' Award" and the ship name on it.

The instruction that governs this program can be found on the iNavy portal or your supervisor can provide you with additional details.

I look forward to recognizing our Mariners who maintain our government ships at the highest possible levels of holistic readiness thus ensuring they are ready for tasking and can perform in the full spectrum of maritime operations.

Taluga Group

During World War II in what is now known as "The Battle of the Atlantic," convoys of Allied merchant ships, escorted by naval combatants, struggled to supply Europe and Africa against a deadly German submarine blockade. During this six-year struggle, over 3,500 merchants ships and 175 warships were sunk against the loss of 783 enemy submarines.

While most Mariners and Sailors were focused on the mission of delivering supplies, small groups of individuals were thinking about how to defeat the threat to Allied shipping, through innovation, experimentation, and strategic thinking. That work ultimately led to the development of anti-submarine tactics and technology such as new radars to better protect the Allied fleet and enable victory in Europe.

Throughout the history of warfare, it has been the side that is able to craft a forward thinking strategy, and rapidly act on that strategy, that wins both the battle and eventually the war. In that same spirit we are standing up the Taluga Group at MSC. The primary mission of the Taluga Group will be to search for innovative operational ideas and practices, allowing MSC to best meet its mission requirements in the contested environment. The group will look at all aspects of MSC operations and will fall under the direction of the Executive Director. The group will also explore opportunities to gain competitive advantage, investigate and uncover challenges or vulnerabilities not yet seen, and to generate solutions to questions not yet asked.

Our think tank is named after USNS Taluga (T-AO 62), an oiler that served our nation in WWII, the Korean War, and Vietnam earning four battle stars. She was the first oiler turned over to MSC after its reorganization in 1970. She was the pilot platform that experimented with a mostly civilian crew, leading to many of the manning doctrines we still use to this day.

Initially, the Taluga Group will be a small cadre of three personnel assigned full time duties in research, analysis, and development of technologies, tactics, and techniques to gain competitive advantage for MSC and NAVTRANS missions. Of course, opportunities and ideas and potential solutions are resident throughout the command. The Taluga Group will serve to facilitate the exchange of those ideas across all of the command and enable the staff's implementation and execution of innovative solutions.

As we continue to posture MSC to better support contested environment operations, it is critical that we continually self-assess, creating any advantage that we can gain against potential enemies. The Taluga Group will be incubator for new ideas, looking to identify and avoid obstacles to success, and keeping our planning focused on the future.

United We Sail,

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

SAILORS SAVE A SHIPMATE'S LIFE

By Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Naval Air Crewman (Helicopters) Airman Danny Sawitski was presented with a Navy Achievement Medal for his role in coming to the aid of a shipmate who collapsed while exercising. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

Rear Adm. Dee Mewbourne, Commander, Military Sealift Command, recognized the lifesaving efforts of three U.S. Navy Sailors for saving the life of a service member assigned to Military Sealift Command.

Naval Air Crewman (Helicopters) Airman Dean Combos, Naval Air Crewman (Helicopters) Airman Danny Sawitsky and Logistical Specialist First Class Harrison Hartig received Navy Achievement Medals for coming to the aid of a U.S. Navy captain who had collapsed while exercising at a gym aboard Naval Station Norfolk.

"The captain is an extremely valuable member of the MSC family, and I was so grateful to hear that these Sailors were nearby, with the knowledge and training to aid our shipmate. They knew exactly what to do when he collapsed and they saved his life," said Rear Adm. Mewbourne. "These Sailors demonstrated tremendous fortitude and gumption during this emergency. They ran to the problem instead of running away."

According to reports, several aircrew students, assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron Two, were exercising at a base gym on February 5, when they discovered a man lying face down on the floor with his head against a wall.

The Sailors hurried to the patient and checked him for consciousness but he was unresponsive. The Sailors then checked his breathing and pulse and found both were shallow.

A call was then placed to emergency first responders while one of the Sailors retrieved an automated external defibrillator (AED).

While waiting for emergency first responders, the patient stopped breathing and those on scene were unable to find his pulse. The Sailors immediately began to apply cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and set up the AED.

The Sailors continued their lifesaving efforts until emergency first responders arrived. The emergency first responders were required to administer defibrillation.

The patient was then transported to a local hospital.

"These Sailors demonstrated exactly why we always need to be ready," said Cmdr. Joe Torian, commanding officer, Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron Two. "The training that our Sailors receive makes them not only an asset to the United States Navy, but an asset to our society. You never know when you are going to be called to render assistance to someone."

"Because of their training and because they were ready, we have a U.S. Navy captain who is alive today," said Cmdr. Torian.

The Sailors who stepped in to rescue the MSC captain are currently students at Helicopter Sea Combat Weapons School Atlantic.

Naval Air Crewman (Helicopters) Airman Dean Combos was presented with a Navy Achievement Medal for his role in coming to the aid of a shipmate who collapsed while exercising. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

Logistical Specialist 1st Class Harrison Hartig receives a Navy Achievement Medal from Military Sealift Commander Rear Adm. Dee Mewbourne for his role in coming to the aid of a shipmate who collapsed while exercising. (U.S. Navy Photo by Jennifer Hunt)

MARINERS HONOR SHIPMATE DURING BURIAL AT SEA

By Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

The crew of USNS Robert E. Peary (T-AKE 5) gathered on the dry cargo/ammunition ship's flight deck, Feb. 13, 2018, to perform a burial at sea service for Ship's Fire Marshall William Dave Holland, United States Military Sealift Command.

Holland, a native of Rockville, Connecticut, was born on November 22, 1955 and departed this life on July 14, 2017.

"During his career, Dave received numerous awards including four 'on the spot' recognitions, two 'time off' awards in addition to many others," said Capt. John Little, USNS Robert E. Peary's master. "He served aboard four mighty ships in our fleet including USNS Tippecanoe (T-AO 199), USNS Supply (T-AOE 7), USNS Grasp (T-ARS 51) and finally this ship, USNS Robert E. Peary."

"Burial at sea is a means of final disposition of remains that is performed on United States Navy vessels," according to Military Sealift Command Chaplain Vito Crecca. "The committal ceremony is performed while the ship is underway. Therefore, family members are not allowed to be present. Furthermore, Committal at sea of remains shall be conducted outside the three-mile limit, off the continental shelf, and a depth greater than 100 fathoms (600 feet)."

Holland's burial at sea was presided over by Chaplain Crecca.

"We stand before you today to honor a man whose life was lived in dedication to service of his country," Crecca said during a prayer. "Bless this moment and the entry point of these cremains. Mark them both in the record books of heaven. May the moment be of comfort and closure for his family."

After words of remembrance, Holland's cremains were ceremoniously placed in the ocean by two of his fellow civil service mariners Supply Utility Svetoslav Valchev and Ship's Fire Marshall Kevin Liss.

"Burials at sea are performed with honor, with respect, and with humility," said Crecca. "Commanders at all levels recognize the importance of paying final tribute on behalf of a grateful nation to honor our nation's veterans." Crecca added that a burial at sea ceremony is often in response to a last request by the deceased.

To be eligible for burial at sea on a U.S. Navy vessel, one must be an active duty members of the uniformed services, retiree or veteran who was honorably discharged, a U.S. civilian mariner attached to Military Sealift Command or a dependent family member of active duty personnel, retiree, or veterans of the uniformed services, according to U.S. Navy Mortuary Affairs Burial at Sea Program.

"It was our great privilege, and my great honor, to respect Dave's love for the ocean by fulfilling his request to have his cremains scattered at sea," concluded Little.

Holland served his country and Military Sealift Command as an Able Seaman for over fourteen years.

For more information, please contact the U.S. Navy Mortuary Affairs Burial at Sea Program at 1-866-787-0081.

The crew of USNS Robert E. Peary stands in formation during a burial at sea service held in honor of civil service mariner William Dave Holland, Feb. 13. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

ACTIVE SHOOTER; TRAIN LIKE YOU FIGHT

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command held an active shooter drill at the Civil Service Mariner Support Unit East on board Naval Station Norfolk, Feb. 7.

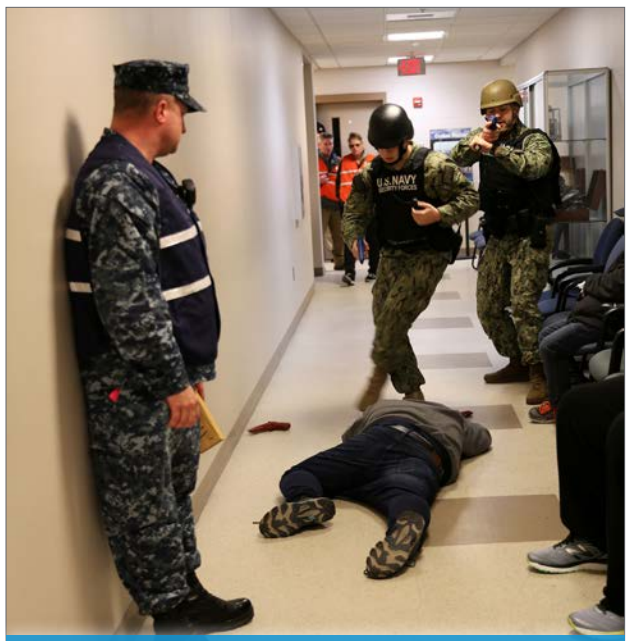
The drill was part of exercise Citadel Shield-Solid Curtain 2018 and was held to practice the command's response should it come under attack by an active shooter.

"There were 427 mass shootings in 2017 and 35 so far in 2018 across America," according to Chief Master-at-Arms Michael Brandon, MSC's Anti-Terrorism Officer. "So one can see how important this training is based on the frequency of events."

The drill included the role playing of an MSC civilian shore staff teammate who brandished two simulated pistols and attacked the Civil Service Mariner Support Center which was filled with mariners.

"Our Security Training Team makes great attempts creating the most real world environment of what an active shooter incident would look and feel like," said Brandon. "Had this drill been a real world event, 60 mariners would have been killed and three mariners would have been wounded."

All MSC teammates receive annual, mandatory in-seat training on how to respond to an active shooter situation.



Master-at-Arms Second Class Shane Reulecke disarms a gunman while Master-at-Arms Third Class Stefan Carlson secures the area and during a simulated active shooter situation held on board Naval Station Norfolk. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

The MCS teammates were offered three recommended responses to an active shooter situation; run, hide or fight. Based on the training, running is the best option during an active shooter crisis.

According to the training, if you can, get out of the building. Always try to evacuate, even if others insist on staying. Encourage others to leave with you. But don't let them slow you down with indecision.

"Distance is your best friend in an active shooter scenario. The further away you can get the better," said Brandon. "If you are approaching the building from the parking lot and you hear gunshots, do not attempt to investigate. Go back to your car and leave."

If you are able to evacuate the building, get as far away as possible.

"When we muster for a fire drill, we all go to a designated spot," according to Brandon. "This is not a good practice for an active shooter situation. A large group of people in a single spot would create a tempting target for the shooter."

"If a group of evacuated personnel grows beyond four or five people, the group needs to split up and find other hiding places," said Brandon, "Don't allow the group to grow into a large target."

"If you can leave, leave. Get in your car and leave the area," said Brandon. "Go as far away from the active shooter scene as necessary to ensure your safety. After the situation is under control, we will contact everyone and perform a muster."

"Remember what is important when you are escaping the building. You, not your stuff," added Brandon. "Leave your belongings behind and try to find a way to get out safely."

Trying to get yourself out of harm's way needs to be your number one priority. Once you are out of the line of fire, try to prevent others from walking into the danger zone.

"Also, call the police at 911 or the Naval Station Norfolk base dispatch at 444-3333 to report the incident," said Brandon. "You might be the first person to have heard the gunshots or to report the incident."

If you can't get out safely, you need to find a place to hide. Act quickly and quietly. Try to secure your hiding place the best as you can. According to the training, one should turn out the lights and if possible, lock the doors. Also, silence the ringer and vibration modes on your cellular phone.

"If the shooter finds a locked door he will likely move on," said Brandon. "They generally want to kill as many people as possible with the least amount of resistance."

If you cannot find a safe room or closet, try to conceal yourself behind large objects which may protect you. Do your best to remain quiet and calm.

"If you have an individual office, make sure you have a key to your door so you are able to lock that door," added Brandon. "If you don't have a key to your individual office, please visit the Physical Security Department as soon as possible."

"Don't lock the exterior doors to your building," added Brandon. "Ultimately we want the first responders to access the building. If the exterior doors are locked, this creates a barrier and delays the police response."

As a last resort or if your life is at risk, fight.

If you must fight an attacker, act with aggression. Improvise weapons and do everything you can to disarm the gunman, according to the training. Commit to taking the shooter down, no matter what.

"Most of us, in the heat of the moment, our hearts beat 100 miles-per-hour. Adrenaline kicks in. Fear kicks in," said Brandon. "If your only option is to fight the gunman, you are going to have to control your emotions. You must shift from fear to a 'we are going to win today' mentality."

"We all work in different areas. Think about things you have in your area to use as an effective weapon against an attacker," added Brandon.

"We need to think outside of the box to improvise weapons. None of us are armed with firearms or knives," said Brandon. "If we are going to fight the gunman we will need to use items from our work-centers such as chairs and small end-tables to subdue the attacker."

If the only option available is to fight, greater numbers of people will increase the likelihood of eliminating the gunman.

"In many of our buildings, we work in wings with multiple people stationed in each area. A group of people in a wing fighting a gunman will have a much greater chance of success of subduing the threat than an individual," said Brandon.

"Your first thought should be to run or hide," Brandon reiterated, "The last option is to fight."

Military Sealift Command civilian shore support teammate Shawn Baughman brandishes replica firearms during a simulated active shooter situation held on board Naval Station Norfolk. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

Once the police and first responders arrive, it is important for MSC personnel to respond appropriately.

According to the training, the first responders to the scene are not there to evacuate personnel or tend to the injured. The police are highly trained and their priority is to stop the shooter.

Once the situation has stabilized, medical professionals will attend to the wounded.

When directed, those personnel who stayed during the crisis will evacuate the building.

"Everyone must remain composed and exit the building calmly," said Brandon. "Everyone should exit their building single file with their hands raised."

Don't bring any items with you as you exit," said Brandon. "Leave all of your personal effects in the building. You will be able to retrieve your possessions later."

During an active shooter scenario, your installation's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be activated to provide crisis control and smooth communication throughout the crisis. One action you can take is to provide information detailing the incident to the EOC.

If you are on Naval Station Norfolk and an active shooter situation is developing, information about the shooting can be e-mailed to navstanorfolk.eoc@navy.mil. Any information and detail you provide to the EOC could be extremely valuable in shaping the response to an active shooter situation.

"The information for the EOC could be as simple as the number of gunshots you heard," said Brandon. "Make sure to let them know your location. Give them your building number, office number and wing so the EOC knows where you are."

In regards to an active shooter crisis, try to be aware of your environment. Always have an exit plan. Know that generally in an active shooter incident, victims are chosen randomly. The situation is unpredictable and may evolve quickly.

In an actual active shooter crisis, your survival will depend on whether or not you have a plan. The time to formulate your plan is before an incident occurs.

"Today's training exercise was a first of its kind for MSC," according to Brandon. "In the future, MSC will continue to conduct active shooter training exercises so all personnel can practice how to respond to this threat."

"The teamwork and exposure between MSC personnel and the installation Security and Fire Departments partners was invaluable," concluded Brandon.

MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND'S USNS PILILAAU DELIVERS COBRA GOLD 18 ESSENTIALS

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East

Military Sealift Command's (MSC) maritime prepositioning ship (MPS) USNS Pililaau (T-AK 304) arrived at the port of Laem Chabang, Thailand, Feb. 5 and offloaded equipment marked for various locations in Thailand to support Exercise Cobra Gold 2018.

Cobra Gold 2018 is a Thailand and United States co-sponsored exercise conducted annually in the Kingdom of Thailand.

The Pililaau, a large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off (LMSR) platform, was the first of three ships to arrive and offload equipment for CG18. The other vessels were operated under a U.S. Army Pacific contract to deliver additional CG18 equipment.

"We originated from Saipan, traveled to Okinawa (Japan) and picked up the Offload Preparation Party (OPP) Marines; then traveled to Thailand for the discharge of equipment," said civilian mariner Capt. Thomas P. Madden, master of the USNS Pililaau. Over the course of about three days, the OPP Marines and ship's crew discharged about 265 pieces of gear from the Pililaau.

The USNS Pililaau is part of Maritime Prepositioning Ships Squadron THREE (MPSRON-3), which consists of a fleet of government-owned ships operated by MSC and is based in the Guam-Saipan area of the Western Pacific Ocean.

In addition, a second fleet, MPSRON-2 based out of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, combine to deliver a strategic power-projection capability for the Marine Corps, Army and Air Force, known as the Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF).

MPF ships deliver a forward presence and rapid crisis response capability by pre-positioning equipment and supplies to various locations at sea.

"Put together a few of these ships and you can sustain 15-18 thousand Marines for 30 days. Everything from fuel, food, water, the whole nine yards," said Madden. "With this program, your footprint is a lot less."

Aside from the common pier-side offloads, the Pililaau can also function during unconventional logistics operations such as in a seabasing scenario when cargo is discharged from ship-to-shore while at sea. In a seabasing operation, cargo is transferred offshore through an in-stream offload. Off-loaded equipment and supplies are then connected with the Marines and Sailors staged at nearby land bases.

"It's terrific if you can come into a port to offload cargo, but if those ports are contested or not available, these ships have the capability to anchor off shore and discharge cargo," said Madden. "By marrying up with an ESD (expeditionary transfer dock) and LCACs (landing craft air cushions), we're able to do a little bit more over-the-horizon logistics and discharge cargo at sea."

The MPF is scalable to meet the needs of the geographical combatant commanders, or can support exercises such as CG18 with one LMSR.

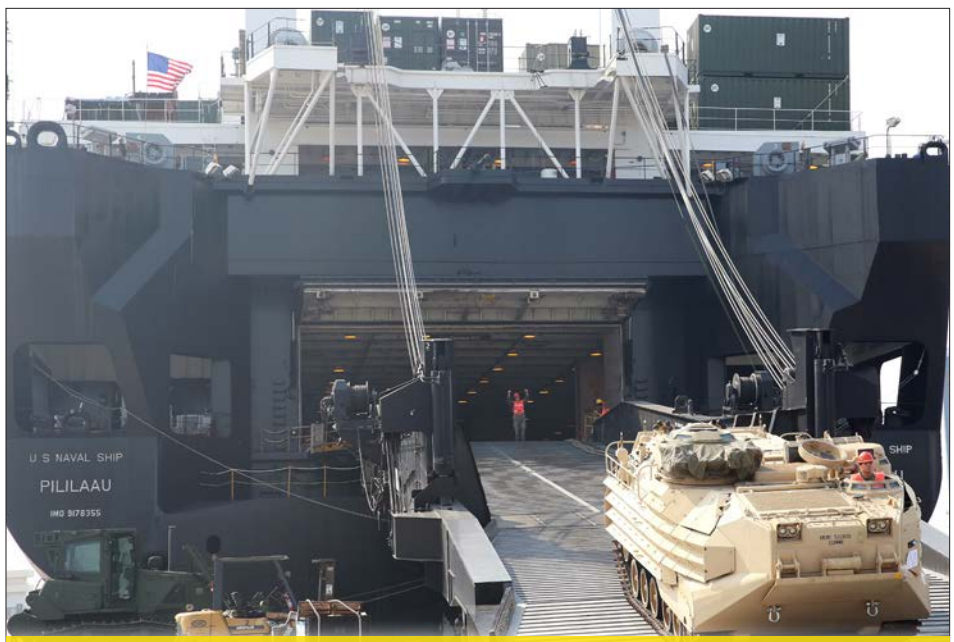
"We have eight football fields worth of cargo," said Madden. "If we were to discharge the entire ship, we could fill eight football fields. With enough drivers, this vessel can offload all the RO/RO (roll on/roll off) cargo in less than 24 hours."

However, during CG18 only select items were required for the exercise while some of it lay deep in the cargo decks of the Pililaau.

"This involved an offload and backload of a number of (additional) vehicles in order to get to the specific items that the Marines needed," said Lt. j.g. Will Contarino, supply officer, MPSRON-3. As a result, the offload took the OPP three days to complete.

Contarino is serving as the MPSRON-3 liaison officer during Cobra Gold. The MPSRON-3 personnel represents MSC as the link between the ship's crew and the Marines.

At the conclusion of the discharge operation, the Pililaau moved to a site off the coast of Thailand and will remain there until the completion of CG18. The ship will then return to port and reload the equipment prior to embarking on their next assignment.



An amphibious assault vehicle rolls off the ramp of Military Sealift Command's (MSC) large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Pililaau (T-AK 304) during an offload at the port here to deliver equipment in support of Cobra Gold 2018. (U.S. Navy photo by Grady T. Fontana)

NAVY ACCEPTS DELIVERY OF USNS HERSHEL "WOODY" WILLIAMS

By Team Ships Public Affairs

The Navy accepted delivery of its second Expeditionary Sea Base (T-ESB) ship, USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams (T-ESB 4), on Feb. 22.

Delivery marks the official transfer of the ship from the shipbuilder to the Navy. ESB 4 will be owned and operated by Military Sealift Command (MSC).

"The delivery of this ship marks an enhancement in the Navy's forward presence and ability to execute a variety of expeditionary warfare missions," said Capt. Scott Searles, Strategic and Theater Sealift Program Manager, Program Executive Office, Ships. "Like the ship's namesake, USNS Hershel 'Woody' Williams will exemplify the Navy's commitment to service."

USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams is named for Medal of Honor recipient, Hershel Williams. During the battle of Iwo Jima, then-Corporal Williams bravely went forward alone against enemy machine gun fire to open a lane for the infantry. Mr. Williams continues to serve his fellow men and women in uniform through his foundation, the Hershel Woody Williams Medal of Honor Foundation, established to honor families who have lost a loved one in service to their country.

ESBs are highly flexible, modular platforms that are optimized to support a variety of maritime based missions including Special Operations Force (SOF), Airborne Mine Counter Measures (AMCM) operations, humanitarian support and command and control of traditional military missions. The ESBs include a four spot flight deck, hangar, and a versatile mission deck; and are designed around four core capabilities: aviation facilities, berthing, equipment staging support, and command and control assets. The ESBs will operate as the component commanders require, providing the U.S. Navy Fleet with a critical access infrastructure that supports the flexible deployment of forces and supplies.

USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams was constructed by General Dynamics NASSCO shipyard in San Diego. NASSCO is also constructing the future USNS Miguel Keith (T-ESB 5).

As one of the Defense Department's largest acquisition organizations, PEO Ships is responsible for executing the development and procurement of all destroyers, amphibious ships, special mission and support ships, and boats and craft.

An undated artist rendering of the future expeditionary sea base USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams (T-ESB 4). (U.S. Navy photo courtesy of General Dynamics)

MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND 'DROPS-IN' THAI KIDS CENTER DURING COBRA GOLD 2018

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East

Members of Military Sealift Command's Expeditionary Port Unit 111 visited the Drop-In Center of the Human Help Network Foundation to interact with children during a community relations event, Feb. 9.

Members of EPU 111, out of Oklahoma City, are reserve-component Sailors who are here conducting ship support activities for MSC as part of Exercise Cobra Gold 2018. EPU 111 is also joined by a member of MSC's Strategic Sealift Unit 102, out of Fort Dix, New Jersey.

"The event was a good opportunity for these kids to interact with Sailors and for us to show the human side of the U.S. Navy," said Navy Lt. Travis Christensen, strategic sealift officer, MSC Far East. "But it was equally rewarding for these Sailors to get to spend time with the children. Kids are just so much more interactive and these Sailors were exposed to various cultures on a more personal level. It enriches our experience abroad when we see more than just military operations."

EPU 111 conducts expeditionary port operations in support of operations and contingencies. During CG18, the EPU's role was to ensure that proper contacts were made at the shipping port, to direct the ship on berthing, and to prepare for the ship's arrival.

The large, medium-speed, roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Pililaau (T-AK 304) just completed an offload of equipment for CG18. During a lull in operations, the MSC team visited the Drop-In Center and learned more about the local culture.

The Drop-In Center is a non-governmental organization and is one of the projects of the Human Help Foundation in Pattaya. The center hosts about 85 children a day from neighboring nations, whose parents are day laborers here.

"We are helping these children by looking after them during the day," said Cissah Cañaveral, a volunteer at the center. "Otherwise, they have nowhere to go. We give them basic classes and provide them free food and snacks every day."

The three-hour visit consisted of a variety of playground-type games that often led to many laughs, cheers and yells of encouragement. But the culminating event was when Christensen offered to get a haircut from two children who volunteered.

"I looked at it as an opportunity to build trust," said Christensen. "When I found out that these kids get regular in-house haircuts, I thought it would be fun to allow a kid to cut my hair. I saw how excited they were and I figured why not. It will grow back and it will probably be an experience everyone comes away from with a good memory."

U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Mark Medvetz, strategic sealift officer, Strategic Sealift Unit 102, Military Sealift Command, hands out balloons to kids at the Drop-In Center of the Human Help Network Foundation during a community relations event in Pattaya, Thailand. (U.S Navy photo by Grady T. Fontana)

The events of the day proved to be a prime example of how quickly games and team interaction can bring people together.

"I was really surprised by how pleasant these kids were," said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Mark Medvetz, strategic sealift officer, SSU 102. "The highlight for me was getting to know some of these kids and learning how they are so athletic and smart."

After lunch and an impressive English language demonstration by the kids, the MSC team departed with a sense of deep satisfaction.

"The main thing this experience has taught me is that children, no matter where they are from, have a universal resilience and innocence about them," said Christensen. "Despite different circumstance in life, they can still warm a heart with their upbeat energy. That's what these kids have done for us."

MSC operates approximately 120 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.

USNS SALVOR, MDSU DIVERS TEAM UP WITH DPAA TO RECOVER WWII PILOT'S REMAINS NEAR PALAU

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East

Master Chief Navy Diver Joshua Dumke prepares to dive off the coast of Koror, Palau, during a Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency led underwater recovery operation searching for personnel who went missing during WWII. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Tyler Thompson)

A recovery team aboard Military Sealift Command's USNS Salvor (T-ARS 52) completed an excavation, Feb. 25, of multiple aircraft losses shot down in 1944 near Ngerekebesang Island, Republic of Palau.

Although remains potentially associated with the losses were recovered by the team, the identity of those remains will not be released until a complete and thorough analysis can confirm positive identification and the service casualty office conducts next of kin notification.

The project was headed by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), which deployed an Underwater Recovery Team (URT) comprised of U.S. Army, Navy, and Air Force service members and Department of Defense civilians that were embarked aboard the USNS Salvor.

"It's very labor intensive work and they've had a large amount of bottom time making this operation successful," said Lt. Cmdr. Tim Emge, 7th Fleet Salvage Officer. "The Mobile Diving and Salvage Company 1-6 divers for this job have been pulling more than 12-hour-days for the past two months. The URT spent weeks excavating the area using a variety of archaeological tools and meticulously inspecting the bottom sediment in their search and recovery of the missing personnel from World War II."

The USNS Salvor is a rescue and salvage ship and was the ideal platform to support the recovery mission.

"The biggest advantage the Navy has with us on the Salvor is that we are standing by for them with a decompression chamber on board for divers, and we have heavy-lift capability," said Capt. Mike Flanagan, a civilian mariner and master of USNS Salvor. "It's just a robust ship. With our 40-ton-lift crane we can bring large and heavy objects off the bottom of the ocean."

The Salvor embarked the diving team at Guam and the DPAA personnel at Palau. Once the team was on board, the Salvor got underway to various recovery sites until they reached the excavation area where the pilot was recovered.

"We did a four-point moor on top of the aircraft and then it really got busy," said Flanagan. "The aircraft had been untouched for about 74 years. It's been a long time since I've seen a military detachment working this hard for this long, seven days a week."

Excavation was the primary duty of the URT, but MSC mariners were also at hand assisting. In addition to operating the cranes that moved the lift baskets, some crew members assisted sifting through sand while looking for any evidence. The mariners were trained by the embarked archaeologist on how to sift through the sand.

"We helped out moving the ship and shipboard equipment around but we also helped screening some of the sand," said civilian mariner Jean Marien, chief mate of the USNS Salvor. "It's a very meticulous process. There was a lot of sand—a never ending supply."

USNS Salvor, continued on page 8

SINGAPORE AREA COORDINATOR CELEBRATES AFRICAN AMERICAN AND BLACK HISTORY MONTH

By Marc Ayalin, Navy Region Center Singapore

The Singapore Area Coordinator (SAC) celebrated African American / Black History Month during a community luncheon and presentation at its Terror Club Feb. 8, 2018. This year's theme, "African Americans in Times of War," recognizes the contributions African Americans have made to the nation during times of war.

The community event, with more than 200 in attendance, included guest speakers from the Sembawang military community and opening remarks from Capt. John Wilshusen, commanding officer, Military Sealift Command Far East (MSCFE).

Wilshunsen recollected his earliest experiences in the Navy in the early 80s. He explained how his lack of exposure with African Americans while growing up in Central Missouri didn't prepare him for the world and how enlisting in the U.S. Navy did prepare him.

"The Navy gave me a framework to begin to understand that there is a different world out there and it gave me a context to put that in," Wilshusen said. "It gave me a discipline system to understand that and sometimes it takes that."

Senior Chief (SW/AW) C.J. Eison, of Military Sealift Command, Ship Support Unit, drew a standing ovation after having described the events that took place during Operation Iraqi Freedom, in which he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V" and a Purple Heart. (U.S. Navy photo by Marc Ayalin)

For guest speaker Commander Joel Harvey, the chief staff officer for MSCFE, celebrating African American / Black History Month was about remembering the people of past and present. He described certain events in military history in which African Americans experienced strife in paving the way for African Americans as a whole. Yet despite this 'paving of the way' for African Americans, Harvey highlighted the fact that there are still strides to be made towards acceptance.

"We've come so far that we can't go back," Harvey said. "The world is the way it is, especially for African Americans and other ethnicities like Hispanics; it's not over."

After Harvey's speech, the SAC Diversity Heritage Committee members honored past and present African American service members by describing their past contributions. These included, Master Chief Carl Brashear, Chief Gunner's Mate John Henry Turpin and Phyllis Mae Dailey to name a few.

The highlight of the event came when keynote speaker and Purple Heart recipient Senior Chief (SW/AW) C.J. Eison, of Military Sealift Command, Ship Support Unit, drew a standing ovation. Eison kept in step with this month's theme of "African Americans in Times of War," by describing the events that took place during Operation Iraqi Freedom II, in which he earned the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V" and a Purple Heart.

In 2004, Eison served as Platoon Corpsman for 1st Platoon, Company B, Battalion Landing Team 1/4, 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operation Capable). He was awarded the Bronze Star for risking his own safety on several occasions to render aid to wounded Marines while under constant enemy fire during a battle which took place in a cemetery in the Iraqi city of An Najaf from August 5-6, 2004. During the first two days of battle, Eison saved the lives of several Marines and Sailors who were wounded in combat. However, during the third night of battle, his platoon was attacked by heavy mortar fire. One mortar round struck only a few feet from Eison and wounded him and a few Marines.

Capt. John Wilshusen, commanding officer, Military Sealift Command Far East (MSCFE), recollects on his earliest experiences in the U.S. Navy in the early 80s. He explained how his lack of exposure with African Americans while growing up in Central Missouri didn't prepare him for the world and how enlisting in the U.S. Navy did prepare him. (U.S. Navy photo by Marc Ayalin)

According to Eison, the wounded Marines were calling to him for help, but he was unable able to render aid due to severe shrapnel wounds to his lower extremities. In Eison's award citation it goes on to describe that, "...he maintained his composure and assisted the platoon sergeant in finding the necessary medical supplies to treat the other wounded Marines, then instructed the platoon sergeant in how to treat his own wounds."

TRAFFIC IN HAMPTON ROADS CAN BE A CHALLENGE; THE GUARANTEED RIDE PROGRAM IS HERE TO HELP

By Herb Pittmann, Navy Region Mid Atlantic Transportation Incentive Program Manager

An estimated at 60,000 vehicles enter Naval Station Norfolk daily, according to the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission. As we deal with hot lanes, Downtown and Midtown Tunnel tolls, adverse weather conditions, gas price spikes, road construction, and just traffic congestion itself, our daily commutes can be extremely stressful.

The Department of Defense Instruction 1000.27 establishes a mass transit benefit program for outside the National Capital Region. In accordance with this Instruction the Department of the Navy (DON) has implemented the Transportation Incentive Program (TIP) for DON employees to help reduce their daily contribution to traffic congestion and air pollution, as well as expand their commuting alternatives.

What would you say if a government benefit paid your way to and from work? If there is a way for you to reduce maintenance on your vehicle, If there were a way to reduce stress from the morning and evening Commute. Furthermore, if this benefit reduces maintenance costs on your vehicle, minimizes your stress from the morning and evening commutes, well why not consider the Transportation Incentive Program (TIP).

Effective January 1, 2018, DON members are eligible for transit benefits up to $260.00 per month (parking fees are not included) for specific pre-approved commuter mass transit transportation costs not to exceed actual expenses.

All U.S. Navy Type Commands are on board with the Transportation Incentive Program (TIP). Commands such as the USS Truman, Navy Information Forces Command Suffolk, Fleet Forces Command, AIRLANT, SUBLANT, and SURFLANT personnel are enrolled. In addition, sailors working at the Newport News and Norfolk Naval shipyards, NEXCOM, local PSD's, are taking advantage of the TIP program.

TIP is used Navy Wide by Military and DoD Civilians to commute to and from work.

ELIGIBILITY

TIP is designed to pay for mass transit costs incurred by personnel in their local commute from residence to permanent duty station. Participants must accurately claim an amount that reflects their actual commuting cost. Failure to do so will result in a fraudulent certification on the application and is subject to criminal prosecution. This program is a benefit, not an entitlement; thus, there is no retroactive reimbursement.

Active Duty Military, Reserve Military, DoD Civilians, and NAF employees are eligible for the Transportation Incentive Program. After joining the TIP program, eligible members will receive a METABANK debit card that is used to purchase your bus passes or pay for Van Pools (Transportation Cost). This does NOT come out of your pay.

Funds will be automatically loaded to the debit card and available for use on the 10th of each month. Participants will be able to use the funds through the 9th of the following month and reloads the next day.

Incentives for participating in TIP include:

1. Savings of over $50.00 a week in gas.
2. Reducing vehicle maintenance.
3. Reducing vehicle insurance.
4. Reducing stress from being stuck in the morning and evening traffic allowing your commute time to be relaxing.

For those living in an areas not serviced by HRT (Areas of Portsmouth, Suffolk, Poquoson, Parts of Williamsburg, and Gloucester etc.), TIP also sponsors Van Pools. Some Van Pools are out of pocket, however, TIP covers the majority of its cost if not all of it. Like the bus service, Van Pools save on gas and wear and tear on your POV.

Information or registration, please visit: https://tips.navy.mil

GUARANTEED RIDE PROGRAM:

HRT sponsors a Guaranteed Ride Program. This program guarantees you a way to your POV is you miss the bus for only $5.00. Once enrolled in the TIP program, simply visit: http://www.gohrt.com/services/traffix/programs/guaranteed-ride/ to register for the Guaranteed Ride Program.

Maritime Excellence, continued from page 1

"Blue Team" Award

Group 1: T-AO (Underway Replenishment) ships.

Group 2: T-AKE (Dry Cargo/Ammunition-hull numbers 3-14) and T-AOE (Fast Combat Support) ships.

Group 3: Hybrid Ships-AS (Submarine Tenders) and LCC (Command) ships.

According to the MSC's Maritime 'E' awards instruction, COMSCINST 3590.2, the hybrid ships in 'Group 3' are crewed by both CIVMARS and service members. Evaluation for the award in this category will be based solely on the actions of the ship's CIVMARS.

"Gold Team" Award

Group 4: T-ATF (Towing) and T-ARS (Salvage) ships.

Group 5: EPF (Expeditionary Fast Transport) ships.

Group 6: T-AH (Hospital), T-ARC 7 (Cable Laying/Repair) T-AKE (Pre-Positioning-hull numbers 1 and 2) and T-ESB (Expeditionary Sea Base) ships.

Both Maritime 'E' award winners will be announced each year no later than Jan. 31.

Each ship who wins their Maritime 'E' Award category will receive a commendation letter from Commander, Military Sealift Command and a plaque engraved with the ship's name and year of accomplishment. Also, the crew of winning ships will receive Maritime 'E' baseball caps with their ship's name on them.

Additionally, ships which are selected as the annual winner of their prospective category are authorized to display the approved Maritime 'E' pennant from sunrise to sunset, daily, for one year from the date of award, while in port.

To qualify for consideration for the Maritime 'E' award, a ship must be government-owned and operated and must have been in a 'Ready for Tasking' status for eight months of the calendar year.

Ship's performance factors which will be considered for those platforms nominated for the Maritime 'E' award include shipboard operational execution, command and control, logistics management afloat, purchase card program compliance and ship safety. The time period to be evaluated for this award begins on Oct. 1 thru Sept.

Mewbourne concluded, "I look forward to recognizing our mariners who maintain our government ships at the highest possible levels of holistic readiness thus ensuring they are ready for tasking and can perform in the full spectrum of maritime operations."

For more information about MSC's Maritime 'E' program, please refer to COMSCINST 3590.2.

USNS Salvor, continued from page 6

The sifting box was a 4-by-8-feet basket that was about 4-and-a-half-feet high. It took about five hours to sift through each basket. The basket was submerged to the bottom of about 90-feet of water and filled with sediments dispersed over a large area.

"It took multiple dives to fill a sifting basket. Each dive lasted about an hour and the baskets took 5-to-6-hours to fill it up," said Marien. "Sometimes we had two baskets going at the same time."

The recovery operation had the support of the Koror State Government, the Bureau of Cultural and Historical Preservation, the Environmental Quality Protection Board, and other Palauan authorities.

According to DPAA, the recovery team is highly specialized and diverse and consisted of a forensic archaeologist, diving officer, master diver, forensic photographer, explosive ordnance disposal technician, and noncommissioned recovery specialists.

The United States remains committed to recovery of missing personnel from World War II as DPAA continues their mission to provide the fullest possible accounting for missing personnel to their families and the nation.

ANYDAY

Civil service mariners attached to Military Sealift Command's dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Robert E. Peary (T-AKE 5) bring aboard retrograde supplies and material from the amphibious assault ship USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7) during an underway replenishment at sea. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

READY FOR ACTION

A group photograph of civil service mariners attached to the fleet replenishment oiler USNS Rappahannock (T-AO 204) Left front: 2/O (Cargo) Albert Said. second row, left to right: 3 A/E Jerry Gurtiza, 1 A/E Bradley Schatz, 2 A/E Michael Severn, CH/Mate Brice Behringer, Chief Engineer John Brasher.Third row, left to right: Wiper George Antoine, Master James Orsini, DEMAC Dan Espino. Back row, left to right: 3 A/E Robert Roy, MSO Mario Mannarino and EU Rudolf Littleton. (Courtesy photo)

NEXT ISSUE: HAM RADIOS AT SEA

SEALIFT

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Editor, Sealift, Military Sealift Command
471 East C Street
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Commercial: 757-443-2890
DSN: 646-2890

EMAIL: lewis.w.mesta@navy.mil

All photographic submissions must be sent via e-mail, express mail or parcel service.

Commander Rear Adm. Dee Mewbourne, USN
Director, Public Affairs Tom Van Leunen
Deputy Director, Public Affairs Jillian Morris
Editor Bill Mesta, Norfolk, VA
Visual Information Brian Suriani, Norfolk, VA; Jennifer Hunt, Norfolk, VA
Writers David Griesmer, Norfolk, VA; Wayne Perry, Norfolk, VA; Nathan Potter, Norfolk, VA; Shevonne Cleveland, Norfolk, VA; LaShawn Sykes, Norfolk, VA; Grady Fontana, Singapore; Sarah Burford, San Diego, CA; Matthew Montgomery, Naples, Italy

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