December 2020

SEALIFT

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

The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Donald Cook (DDG 75) and Military Sealift Command's dry cargo and ammunition ship USNS Medgar Evers (T-AKE 13) participate in a replenishment-at-sea as a part of Exercise Joint Warrior 20-2, Oct. 6 (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Will Hardy)

United Kingdom-Led Exercise Joint Warrior 20-2 Concludes

From U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs

More than 6,000 personnel, 81 aircraft, 28 ships, and two submarines from 13 nations concluded the United Kingdom-led multinational exercise Joint Warrior (JW) 20-2 in the Atlantic Ocean, Oct. 15.

Exercise JW 20-2 had one of the largest ever concentrations of allied and partner forces in one integrated training event, addressing the full spectrum of maritime and joint warfare mission areas.

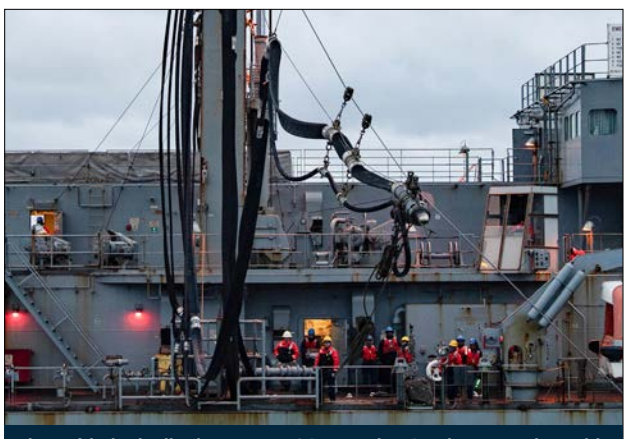
The exercise scenarios focused on maritime security and included small boat attacks, boarding operations, air defense, and anti-submarine warfare tactics. Scenarios also included allied and partner force responses to simulated intelligence to successfully accomplish their mission.

"As a forward-deployed force, our Rota-based destroyers depend on our allies to keep our ships trained to fight," said Capt. Joseph Gagliano, commander, Task Force (CTF) 65. "The fact that we conducted this training exclusively using NATO procedures means that we are even more ready to fight alongside our NATO allies."

Participating nations were Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the U.K., and the U.S.

"With U.S. and UK F-35B jets exercising together over our shores for the first time as part of a group featuring 6,000 personnel from 11 nations, this UK-led exercise underlines the leading role we play in upholding European security through NATO," said U.K. Minister for the Armed Forces James Heappey.

U.S. participants included Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Ross (DDG 71) and USS Donald Cook (DDG 75); two P-8A Poseidon Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft (MPRA); and Military Sealift Command's Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo, ammunition ship USNS Medgar Evers (T-AKE 13), along with U.S. Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II aircraft assigned of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 211 and a detachment from 2d Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company embarked aboard the Royal Navy aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth (R 08). Florida-based Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS The Sullivans operated as part of the Queen Elizabeth Carrier Strike Group.



The guided missile destroyer USS Ross (DDG 71) comes alongside the dry cargo, ammunition ship USNS Medgar Evers (T-AKE 13) to receive fuel and supplies via replenishment-at-sea during Exercise Joint Warrior 20-2. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Christine Montgomery)

The guided missile destroyer USS Ross (DDG 71) comes alongside the dry cargo, ammunition ship USNS Medgar Evers (T-AKE 13) to receive fuel and supplies via replenishment-at-sea during Exercise Joint Warrior 20-2. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Christine Montgomery)

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Military Sealift Command Pacific Welcomes New Commander

By Sarah Burford, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command Pacific (MSCPAC) welcomed its new leader, Capt. Kendall G. Bridgewater. Bridgewater assumed command, Oct. 9 from Capt. Gabe Varela, who has served as commander of MSCPAC since 2019.

Bridgewater joins the MSC team following a position as the prospective Commanding Officer facilitator at the Navy Leadership and Ethics Center in Newport, Rhode Island.

A native of Carrollton, Illinois, Bridgewater's military career began with the Army where he served in the enlisted ranks, on active duty from 1985 to 1989 as a Cannon Crewman in the 1st Armored and 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Divisions. He was commissioned into the Navy through Officer Candidate School after graduating from Lindenwood College in 1996, with a Bachelor of Arts in Human Resource Management. He also holds a master's degree in National Security Policy and Strategic Studies, from the Navy War College.

Throughout his career, Bridgewater has served at a number of at-sea commands, and in a variety of positions including; Naval Surface Squadron FIVE in Bahrain, where he lead his team through the reorganization from Patrol Coastal Squadron ONE, and LCS Crew 104, USS Fort Worth (LCS 3), USS Milwaukee(LCS 5), as the commanding officer during their commissioning USS Decatur (DDG 73), USS Pearl Harbor (LSD-52), USS McFaul (DDG-74) and officer in charge of LCS Anti-Submarine Warfare Detachment Two, and Destroyer Squadron Two One Combat Systems Officer.

Bridgewater's shore duty assignments include, lead instructor for DDG Engineering at Surface Warfare Officer's School, as a volunteer for a Global War on Terror support assignment completing an 11 month tour in Baghdad with Multi-National Forces-Iraq, Combined-Joint Operations Division, as a Liaison Officer to the Iraqi Prime Minister's National Operations Center, OPNAV staff as the lead action officer for Navy to Navy Strategy Talks and the Afghanistan/Pakistan Strategy Cell in the Strategy and Policy Division (N51); and as a Federal Executive Fellow with the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), a Washington, D.C. think tank.

"I am extremely fortunate to be joining this esteemed team of professionals," said Bridgewater. "I look forward to working alongside everyone at MSCPAC, to ensure our ships are provided with the required support to accomplish their missions."

During the brief ceremony at the MSCPAC Headquarters Building in San Diego, Bridgewater relieved Varela, who since assuming command, has overseen a wide range of operations and exercises, including the Operation Deep Freeze resupply mission to Antarctica, Arctic Expeditionary Capabilities Exercise 2019, the deployment of hospital ship USNS Mercy to Los Angeles, in support of COVID-19 relief efforts, and the 2020 Rim of the Pacific exercise.

The ceremony also marked the end of Varela's 33-year Navy career.

Military Sealift Command Pacific (MSCPAC) welcomes its new leader, Capt. Kendall G. Bridgewater. (U.S. Navy photo by Sarah Burford)

"Team PAC, this has been an amazing tour! Where do you go after this?" said Varela, "I have been incredibly fortunate to work for this terrific group of professionals, who rise to any challenge that is thrown at them. Particularly the last few months have reinforced that fact. You have always impressed me! The successes of MSC Pacific truly rest with this dedicated staff as you all are the connective tissue that cements our shore facilities and afloat forces with our mission. As I head off to my front porch in sunny Oceanside, I leave this command with a bitter sweet sense of where I was and where I'm going, but I know that Commodore Bridgewater will be in good hands and that you are as well. Fairwinds and following seas shipmates and shoremates, after over 33 years, Varela out!"

U.S. Fleet Forces Unveils New Interactive, User-Friendly Websites

From U.S. Fleet Forces Command Public Affairs and Outreach

U.S. Fleet Forces (USFF) Command completed a migration, consolidation and modernization strategy of more than 400 official public-facing websites to the Defense Media Activity's Department of Defense Public Web (DoDPW) web hosting and content management system, American Forces Public Information Management System (AFPIMS), Oct. 1.

USFF's strategy to reorganize and consolidate web content under AFPIMS, aligns with other Department of Defense and Department of Navy public websites, including the Navy's flagship website, www.navy.mil. AFPIMS is a common platform that streamlines workflow processes and increases efficiencies for the public affairs mission.

"Our new websites offer the enhanced capabilities we need to meet our communication and content delivery goals," said Capt. Sarah Self-Kyler, director, USFF public affairs and outreach. "We now have a single highly-efficient tool that unites our content, giving our Sailors and content staff a faster, more secure and fiscally smarter process to keep the fleet informed."

The new website design and user improvement initiative is the first complete overhaul in more than 10 years. One of the main goals of the migration is to align with the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act (IDEA) that will improve the digital experience for government customers and reinforces existing requirements for federal public websites. These include responsive web design, consistent branding, authoritative information, searchable content, legal and regulatory compliance, and real-time updating with digital technology and capabilities.

"When developing the layouts for the websites, we kept the end-user in mind," explained Bobbie A. Camp, USFF web and social media manager. "We focused on an accessible, easy-to-navigate interface where users can easily find what they are looking for."

The command's public affairs and outreach directorate worked diligently with its operational and support staffs over the past six months to relocate thousands of documents and images, and to refresh content from the previous web platform to its new and improved version.

"At Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic, we strategically planned the coordination with all of the subordinate commands to be folded into the overall planning process," said Cmdr. Jennifer Cragg, the command's public affairs officer. "We systematically reached out to more than 80 commands about 30 to 40 days beforehand to inform them we were migrating information, and that they would have time to review and make changes before the site was launched."

Through AFPIMS, public affairs teams are able to share content across 800-plus DoD websites, and seamlessly integrate with the Defense Visual Information Distribution Service (DVIDS), YouTube and other social media platforms. In addition, the platform offers easy-to-use modules to display news stories, press releases, publications, fact sheets, photo and video galleries, and podcasts.

All subordinate sites have been consolidated under a USFF subdomain for coherent organizational purposes based on the Standard Navy Distribution List (SNDL).

Please take a moment to bookmark our new sites:

- U.S. Fleet Forces Command, https://www.usff.navy.mil
- Commander, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 4, https://www.csg4.usff.navy.mil
- Commander, Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, https://www.necc.usff.navy.mil
- Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic, https://www.airlant.usff.navy.mil
- Commander, Naval Submarine Force Atlantic, https://www.sublant.usff.navy.mil
- Commander, Naval Surface Force Atlantic, https://www.surflant.usff.navy.mil
- President, Board of Inspection and Survey, https://www.insurv.usff.navy.mil
- Military Sealift Command, https://www.msc.usff.navy.mil
- Naval Information Forces, https://www.navifor.usff.navy.mil
- Navy Warfare and Development Command, https://www.nwdc.usff.navy.mil
- Navy Meteorology and Oceanography Command, https://www.cnmoc.usff.navy.mil

The carrier strike groups and Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 2 were also migrated and consolidated under Commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet.

Partnerships with Small Business, Industry are Vital to Military Sealift Command Success

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Leah Baker, Military Sealift Command's Director of Small Business Programs, addresses prospective small business partners during the command's Virtual Small Business Industry Day, Oct. 22. The event, hosted remotely to reduce the spread of COVID-19, was held to provide industry with information about conducting business with MSC. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

Military Sealift Command hosted prospective small business industry partners, to its inaugural Virtual Small Business Industry Day, Oct. 22. The event included over 450 registered attendees, which included approximately 300 small business representatives.

The event was designed to connect prospective small businesses and industry representatives with MSC key leaders and subject matter experts in an effort to forge mutually beneficial partnerships.

"Our mission at MSC is to support the joint warfighter across the full spectrum of military operations," Rear Adm. Michael Wettlaufer, Commander, Military Sealift Command, said during his opening remarks. "This includes support for the current global environment, which has been described as the 'Great Power Completion,' and to responding to crisis and conflict if required. We provide agile logistics, strategic sealift, and specialized mission support anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year."

Capt. Susan Ayers, Military Sealift Command's Director of Contracts and Business Management, addresses prospective small business partners during the command's Virtual Small Business Industry Day, Oct. 22. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

"MSC is a $2 billion plus annual obligating organization supporting operations in all 24 time zones," according to Leah Baker, Military Sealift Command's Director of Small Business Programs, and lead coordinator for MSC's Virtual Small Business Industry Day. "We provide services to the U.S. Navy, U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Transportation Command, the Missile Defense Agency and other U.S. government agencies."

MSC's workforce of approximately 7,600 people includes Civil Service Mariners (CIVMARs), active duty and reserve service members, federal civil service employees and contractors. An additional 1,400 commercial mariners support MSC's prepositioning, sealift and special missions.

"MSC's small business strategy is to promote small business as our first option throughout all of the phases of the acquisition life-cycle," said Capt. Susan Ayers, Military Sealift Command's Director of Contracts and Business Management. "We believe that a healthy industrial base is vital for the continued success and affordability of the U.S. Navy as well as our national security."

"Nearly half of all the contracts executed by MSC are awarded to small businesses; over $1 billion every year," continued Ayers. "MSC has uniquely emphasized small business programs throughout its history."

MSC's mission leads to routine year-to-year spending which falls into three common categories.

"MSC's annual spending requirements include ship charters, including ocean going vessels, harbor tugs as well as our operation and maintenance contracts for our government owned, contractor operated ships," according to Ayers.

"Our second routine spending requirement is ship repair," she continued. "This includes ship maintenance and repair which is vital to MSC to sustain our capabilities and lethality for MSC's missions."

MSC's ship repair requirements include voyage repairs, mid-term maintenance availabilities, ship dry docking, and emergent repairs to include casualty reports (CASREP) and service support.

"Service contracts also fall under MSC's ship repair spending requirement," said Ayers. "We require training for MSC's service members, civilian support staff as well as specialized training for our CIVMARs."

"Logistics support, an array of services which include warehousing, material receiving and audit-ability, is the third MSC annual spending requirement," Ayers said. "Engineering service support, information technology as well as both ashore and afloat systems fall under our logistic support requirements."

Commodity requirements, such as paint, lube oil and chemicals, are additional MSC logistics support spending needs.

For small business and industry interested in conducting business with MSC, the command's Office of Small Business Programs is the best place to start.

"We are the small business advocacy and advisory office responsible for ensuring small business concerns are afforded maximum practicable opportunities to participate in MSC's acquisition requirements as prime contractors and subcontractors," said Baker. "Our role as the command's small business professionals include implementing the overall Department of the Navy Small Business Program, advocating to maximize small business opportunities and advising and assisting MSC personnel on small business matters."

Baker also addressed the role of her office's team of Small Business Professionals, which includes the Deputy Director, Ms. Jacqueline Alford.

"Small Business Professionals are in a unique position as we interact with stakeholders, both within and outside the command," she said. "If you are in need of assistance in locating a requirement or you are having trouble communicating with a contracting officer, we can assist. Our Small Business Professionals can assist with counseling, payment issues, reviewing a small business' capabilities for potential future requirements and answer basic contracting questions."

Military Sealift Command's Virtual Small Business Industry Day included presentations from MSC's Small Business Office, the Virginia Procurement Technical Assistance Center, the Small Business Administration Procurement Center and the Department of the Navy Mentor Protégé Program.

Key MSC Teammates also addressed the qualifications for items which are critical for shipboard safety, additive manufacturing needs, MSC's logistics gaps and needs and the command's "Taluga Group."

The event offered prospective small business industry partners the opportunity to meet individually with key MSC subject matter experts during virtual 'matchmaking' sessions.

"We offered a limited number of virtual vendor pitch sessions for MSC's first VSBID because they allowed small businesses to pitch their capabilities which could assist MSC with meeting our mission," according to Baker. "The one-on-one sessions were very effective. However, the slots available filled up quickly and we were unable to accommodate all requests."

Rear Adm. Michael Wettlaufer, Commander, Military Sealift Command, addresses prospective small business partners during the command's Virtual Small Business Industry Day, Oct. 22. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

If you are a small business representative who is interested in connecting with MSC, please contact the Office of Small Business Programs at comsc_osbp@navy.mil.

Military Sealift Command is always in search of new small business industry partners. Prospective partners who are interested in conducting business with MSC should start by visiting https://www.msc.usff.navy.mil/ and MSC's Small Business web site https://www.msc.usff.navy.mil/Business-Opportunities/Small-Business-Opportunities/ for more information about conducting business with MSC.

Feedback from those who attended the event indicated that the prospective small business, industry partners found the virtual occasion to be very helpful.

One small business representative stated that the MSC Virtual Small Business Industry Day was, "well organized and informative. We really learned a great deal and received useful information."

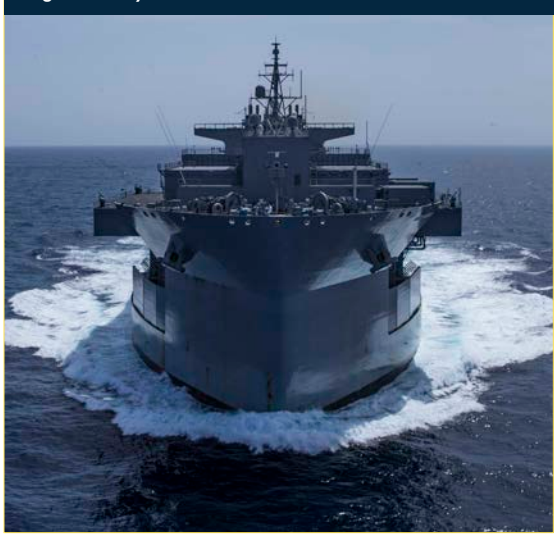
This year's Small Business Industry Day was hosted virtually to limit the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Military Sealift Command intends on hosting future Small Business Industry Days which will either be held in person or virtually depending on the state of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Information about future events will be provided to the public.

"We were all sad at MSC that we were not able to meet with our prospective small business partners in person this year," concluded Baker. "Yet we were overjoyed to be able to connect with so many of you in this virtual environment."

USS Hershel "Woody" Williams Joins Allies, Partners for Exercise Grand African NEMO

From U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa Public Affairs

A view of the expeditionary sea base USS Hershel 'Woody' Williams (ESB 4) at sea. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Sgt. Megan Roses)



The expeditionary sea base USS Hershel "Woody" Williams (ESB 4) joined NATO Allies and partners for French-led exercise Grand African Navy's Exercise for Maritime Operations (NEMO) 2020 in the Gulf of Guinea, Oct. 5-9.

More than 30 ships and aircraft from 14 nations participated in the week-long exercise, which included more than 20 scenarios on combating illegal fishing, piracy, drug trafficking, and pollution, as well as rescue at sea.

"Participating in Grand African NEMO alongside our Allies and partners has been an incredibly rewarding experience," said Capt. David L. Gray, commanding officer, Hershel "Woody" Williams, Blue Crew. "It is vitally important for our countries to work together in the Gulf of Guinea to improve maritime domain awareness in order to fight malign activity, ensure the maritime security, and protect the blue economies of our West African partners."

The French Navy conducts three to four regional naval exercises annually as part of the African NEMO exercise series, which culminates in the major annual exercise Grand African NEMO. Starting in 2013, the exercise series trains on the collective efforts to establish maritime security and stability in the Gulf of Guinea.

"Thanks to a painstaking preparation and a high level of involvement, we collectively achieved most of the objectives at stake," said Vice Adm. Olivier Lebas, commander in chief of the French Navy in Atlantic (CECLANT). "I want to salute all the participating units for their outstanding performance."

Grand African NEMO 2020 participants included Benin, Brazil, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, France, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Italy, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo, and the United States.

The United States serves as co-secretariat of the G7++ Friends of Gulf of Guinea Group for 2020, with Gabon serving as co-secretariat. The G7++ Friends of Gulf of Guinea Group helps secure the Gulf of Guinea against the threats of piracy, armed robbery, and other illicit maritime activities. By creating the conditions for improved maritime security, this group fosters prosperity and economic growth for all countries along the Gulf of Guinea.

No boardings or personnel transfers were conducted during the training evolution as a precaution against the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

The U.S. Navy routinely trains with allied and partner nations in order to enhance maneuverability capabilities and interoperability by establishing communication and safety standards that strengthen regional maritime security.

Blast From the Past: USNS Mission San Fernando

By Shevonne Cleveland, MSC Public Affairs

Named for Mission San Fernando Rey de España in Los Angeles, California, the SS Mission San Fernando was a tanker built for the United States Maritime Commission during World War II. After the war, the ship was acquired by the U.S. Navy and named USS Mission San Fernando (AO-122).

Mission San Fernando's keel was laid down on Aug. 26, 1943, under a Maritime Commission contract by Marine Ship Corporation, Sausalito, California; launched Nov. 25, 1943, and delivered Feb. 29, 1944. SS Mission San Fernando served the remainder of the war carrying fuel to Allied forces in the western Pacific and was awarded the Battle Efficiency Award and the National Defense Service Medal. The ship remained in service until May 1946 when it was returned to the Maritime Commission and laid up in the Reserve Fleet at Olympia, Washington.

In October 1949, Mission San Fernando was transferred to Military Sea Transportation Service and re-designated USNS Mission San Fernando (T-AO 122), serving until 1955 when it was returned to the Maritime Administration and laid up in the Maritime Reserve Fleet until reacquired by the Navy on June 21, 1956, and placed in service with MSTS operating under charter by Marine Transportation Lines until Sept. 4, 1957, when it was again returned to the Maritime Administration until reacquired by the Navy in 1964.

On Sept. 28, 1964, USNS Mission San Fernando began conversion to a missile-range instrumentation ship by General Dynamics for extensive modernization and rebuilding in Quincy, Massachusetts. While under conversion the ship was renamed and reclassified USNS Muscle Shoals (T-AGM 19).

On Sept. 1, 1965, Muscle Shoals was renamed USNS Vanguard (T-AGM 19) where it would go on to participate in the Apollo Project, the Skylab program and the joint U.S./Soviet Apollo Soyuz Test Project.

In 1980, the ship was reconfigured removing the large missile tracking antennas and was reclassified (T-AG 194). USNS Vanguard was replaced by USNS Waters (T-AGS 45) and stricken from the Navy Registry on Dec. 12, 1999. In November 2001, it was transferred to the United States Maritime Administration. Following historical review, the vessel was cleared for disposal by the Virginia State Historic Preservation Office Nov. 15, 2006.

(Pictured: USNS Vanguard (T-AGM 19) seen here as a NASA Sky Lab tracking ship)

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U.S. Transportation Command Supports Rapid Deployment Exercise to Deploy Forces Anywhere in the World

By Michelle Gigante, U.S. Transportation Command

U.S. Transportation Command's (USTRANSCOM) mission is to transport troops and cargo around the world on a short or no-notice deployment requires many moving parts.

Vice Adm. Dee Mewbourne, deputy commander, USTRANSCOM, and other distinguished guests traveled to the port of Port Arthur, Texas, Sept. 26, to support an annual exercise, Joint Readiness Exercise (JRE) 20. While there, they witnessed soldiers off-loading equipment from the Military Sealift Command's large, medium-speed roll-on/roll-off ship USNS Fisher (T-AKR 301).

"USTRANSCOM's number one priority is warfighting readiness, in this case making sure soldiers are trained and ready to conduct the full spectrum of operations," said Mewbourne. "This exercise is all about getting Army forces into an environment where they can conduct realistic, relevant, and challenging training."

The exercise tested the Army's ability to rapidly deploy a brigade combat team, U.S. Forces Command and U.S. Army Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command's (SDDC) ability to prepare a BCT for deployment, and USTRANSCOM's capability to activate organic assets needed to move personnel and equipment.

The U.S. Army's 2nd Infantry BCT, 25th Infantry Division, was directed to deploy to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), Fort Polk, Louisiana. The deployment order was published mid-August and the first ship, USNS Brittin (T-AKR 301), left Sept. 1, from Schofield Barracks, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, to begin the sealift deployment readiness exercise.

The units were assessed on their ability to respond to a published deployment order, how quickly and accurately they could prepare cargo for deployment, and how well they coordinated their arrival to the seaport.

"An important aspect of these events is to exercise the ports," said Mewbourne. "We rely on multiple strategic ports throughout the country in order to take the joint forces that reside within the continental United States, load them on ships, and sail wherever those forces are needed."

SDDC on-loaded equipment on the vessels in Hawaii and the 7th Transportation Brigade Expeditionary's (7TBX) 10th and 11th Terminal Battalions off-loaded equipment in Texas.

"SDDC plays an extremely large role as we work through the Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise," U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Heidi Hoyle, SDDC commander, emphasizing the importance of the exercise.

The JDDE Planning and Operations establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for the JDDE in support of the development, improvement, and sustainment of deployment and distribution capabilities.

An M105 Load Handling System Compatible Water Tank Rack, (Hippo) leaves the large, medium speed, roll-on/Roll-off ship USNS Fisher (T-AKR 301) ship after a download of cargo during the Joint Readiness Exercise 20, at the port of Port Arthur, Texas, Sept. 26. (USTRANSCOM photo by Michelle Gigante)

"We integrate and synchronize not only our Army's three components, but also what the transportation community calls the 'Fourth Component,' our commercial industry partners, to execute operations across the globe," said Hoyle.

The JRE consisted of five deployment activity phases. The first phase was to provide alert and fort-to-port operations, the second phase addressed leaving home station, the third phase was port to port as the ships left Hawaii en-route to Texas, fourth phase was arrival at Port of Port Arthur, and the fifth phase established the central reception, staging and onward movement of the 2-25 IBCT equipment to JRTC, Fort Polk, Louisiana.

The 7TBX executed phase four in the download of cargo off the two ships, LMSR Brittin at Port of Beaumont, Texas, Sept. 25, and USNS Fisher at Port of Port Arthur, Texas, Sept. 26. The 7TBX is the Army's globally responsive force that conducts terminal operations to include Army watercraft operations in support of contingencies or humanitarian aid and disaster relief operations.

"Our mission here is to safely discharge the cargo from this particular vessel [USNS Fisher] to be able to prepare the stages for onward movement, and then battle track it to its final destination," said Col. Timothy Zetterwall, commander, 7TBX.

Additionally, Zetterwall discussed measures taken during the seaport deployment exercise to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus. "We have ensured that all our soldiers are wearing masks, maintaining six feet distance,

USTRANSCOM continued on page 8

Tippecanoe Resupplies Fleet and International Partners in Advance of Keen Sword

From Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific

Military Sealift Command Far East's Henry J. Kaiser-class underway replenishment oiler USNS Tippecanoe (T-AO 199) routinely conducts replenishments at sea (RAS) for both U.S. ships and those from partner and ally nations – almost on a daily business.

"USNS Tippecanoe's Civil Service Mariners have shown fortitude, skill and dedication while providing much needed food, fuel, supplies and cargo to U.S. Navy, coalition and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force ships operating in the 7th Fleet," said Capt. Kylie Howard, Tippecanoe's ship's master. "They have created a culture of safety and professionalism that is second to none, working tirelessly to ensure that the needs of our customers are met anytime and anywhere."

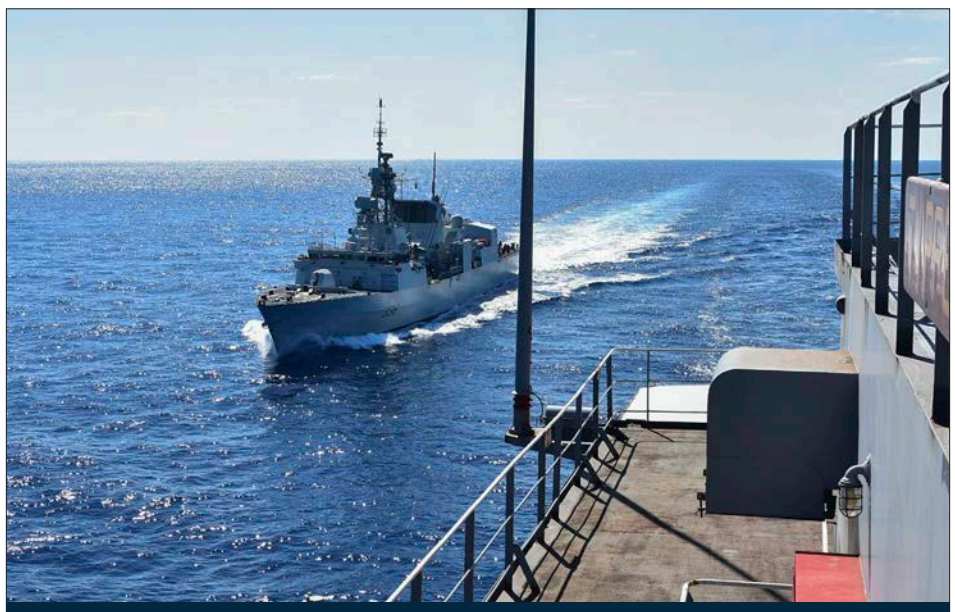
"Tippecanoe maintains a heavy workload ensuring warfighter readiness, earning her nickname 'The Beast of the East,' USNS Tippecanoe; ready, willing and able," Howard added.

During a recent busy three-day period, Tippecanoe replenished fuel and supplies for ships from Canada and Japan, in addition to three ships from the U.S. Navy.

The resupply of the international ships took place just before Keen Sword, a biennial exercise designed to increase combat readiness and interoperability of the Japan Self-Defense Force and U.S. forces. This year, the exercise, which has taken place since 1986, includes the Canadian ship. Tippecanoe will also participate in this year's Keen Sword.

"Our schedule stays pretty full," said Christopher Bosch, operations officer aboard Tippecanoe.

"It's all part of our commitment to deliver on-station logistical support so partner and ally countries' ships conducting maritime security operations can stay on task, without worrying about when and where they will receive critical supplies."



The Royal Canadian Navy Halifax-class frigate HMCS Winnipeg (FFH 338) approaches the U.S. Navy Military Sealift Command Henry J. Kaiser-class fleet replenishment oiler USNS Tippecanoe (T-AO 199) in preparation for an underway replenishment-at-sea prior to participating in Keen Sword. (U.S. Navy photo by Christopher Bosch)

Tippecanoe launched a hectic 72-hour period of underway replenishments with a RAS alongside HMCS Winnipeg (FFH 338), a Halifax-class frigate in the Royal Canadian Navy fleet. During the evolution, the ships were tethered together by fuel lines and steamed together with just a couple hundred feet between them while fuel was transferred from MSC's fleet replenishment oiler to the Canadian frigate.

In addition to resupplying Canadian partners, Tippecanoe delivered fuel to four Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF) ships, including three destroyers, JS Shiranui (DD 120), JS Makinami (DD

USNS Tippecanoe continued on page 8

U.S.-Brunei Partnership Remains Strong During CARAT 2020

From U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa Public Affairs

The U.S. military and Royal Brunei Armed Forces (RBAF) took part in the 26th annual Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) maritime exercise, commencing off the coast of Brunei, Oct. 5.

The 26th anniversary of Exercise CARAT Brunei, the first CARAT to take place this year, symbolizes the longstanding U.S.-Brunei maritime partnership. CARAT expands bilateral and multilateral exercises; ensures maritime security, stability, and prosperity; and highlights the United States' commitment to the region and to a free and open Indo-Pacific.

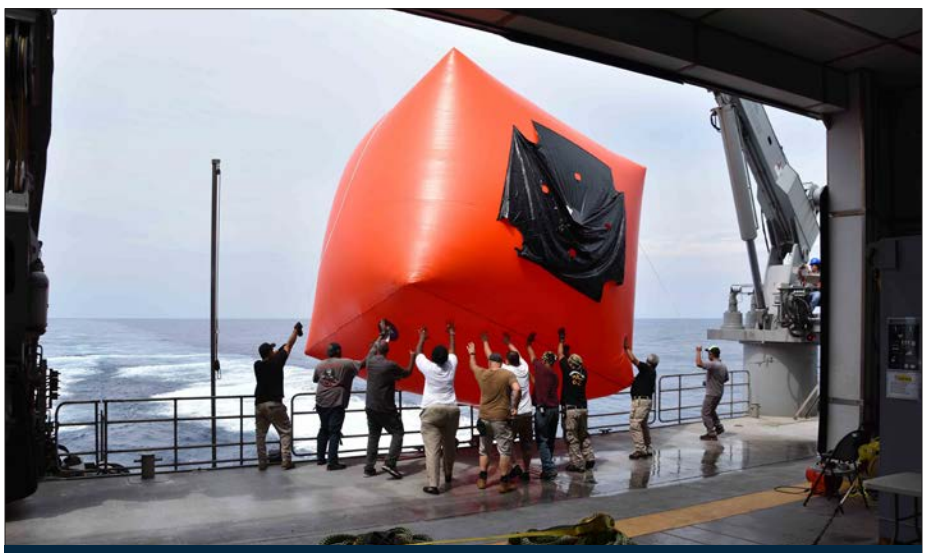
"Beginning the 26th iteration of CARAT with our Brunei partners is a superb way for us to build on our interoperability and readiness, as we work together to maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific," said Rear Adm. Fred Kacher, Commander, Expeditionary Strike Group 7. "Even though we cannot meet face-to-face this year, this does not affect our strong partnership. Meeting both virtually and at sea to exchange Navy and Marine Corps skills with our Brunei partners helps us build relationships so that we can communicate and operate together in good times, as well as challenging ones."

Exercise events were planned virtually and conducted with COVID-19 mitigation measures in place.

Historically, CARAT exercises involve people-to-people interactions and relationships through a variety of professional exchanges and symposium, subject matter expert exchanges (SMEEs), and social events. In order to mitigate COVID-19 risks, however, SMEEs will took place on-line, using both real-time virtual meetings and per-recorded webinars, for U.S. and Brunei to share best practices. This is an excellent opportunity to safely exercise with our partners in the region in a COVID-constrained environment.

RBAF Joint Forces Headquarters Chief of Staff, Lt. Col. Saifulrizal Bin Abdul Latif, highlighted the first Special Operations Force SMEE milestone during this year's CARAT, and stressed the importance of continued partnership between the two countries.

"In light of these extraordinary circumstances, I hope that it neither changes nor dampen the spirit of cooperation between our two forces," said Saifulrizal. "It would be of great value to know that despite the difficulties we may face on the 26th iteration of CARAT, we would still be able to achieve its objectives and further enhance our abilities to operate together in response to traditional and non-traditional maritime security challenges in the Indo-Pacific Region."



Civil Service Mariners assigned to the expeditionary fast transport USNS Millinocket (T-EPF 3) release a 'killer tomato' target before a gunnery exercise with Royal Brunei Navy and Air Force during Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Brunei. (U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Alexander Laabs)

The virtual SMEE events featured a variety of joint training opportunities, to include vessel interdiction and boarding training, U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) and Royal Brunei Land Force (RBLF) cooperation, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) training, riverine security training, replenishment-at-sea (RAS) best practices, the Women Peace & Security symposium, and more. Other virtual exchanges will included maritime domain awareness (MDA), unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and anti-terrorism force protection, among other topics.

The at-sea phase will took place in the South China Sea with ships and aircraft from both partner militaries, with events designed to enhance interoperability between the two militaries. During the sea-phase of the exercise, both countries demonstrated their ability to work together through numerous events including divisional tactics designed to enhance communication as ships sail together in complex maneuvers, a tracking exercise aimed at increasing both navies' ability to track and pursue targets through the coordinated deployment of surface ships and maritime patrol aircrafts, and search and rescue exercises.

During the virtual opening ceremony, Capt. Ann McCann, Commodore, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 7, emphasized that the foundation of U.S.-Brunei cooperation and training rests in friendships made during time the two nations spend together.

"While 2020 has been a unique year, it has not deterred the opportunity for us to come together during our CARAT events," said McCann. "I look forward for our forces to do what they have always done so well - strengthen bonds and exchange military best practices."

Aviation events during the exercise focused on MDA, search and rescue, UAV, and interoperability, with participating units from RBAF and a U.S. P-8A Poseidon from Patrol Squadron (VP) 1.

"The crew of VP 1, Combat Aircrew-10 are looking forward to professional discussions with our Royal Brunei Armed Force partners, to strengthen our friendships and exchange both aviation and maritime best practices between our nations," said Lt. Cmdr. Christopher Brass, detachment officer in charge. "Training together and improving our interoperability skills is a unique opportunity, and the U.S. Navy Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Force takes pride in enhancing our partnerships within the region."

CARAT, the U.S. Navy's oldest and longest continually running regional exercise in South and Southeast Asia, strengthens partnerships between regional navies and enhances maritime security cooperation and interoperability throughout the Indo-Pacific. It builds on other engagements in the region, including Pacific Partnership, Maritime Training Activity, and Pacific Griffin. These engagements bring like-minded naval forces together, routinely based on shared values and maritime security interests.

U.S. assets participating in CARAT Brunei included staff from Commander Task Force (CTF) 72, CTF 73, CTF 75, CTF 76, DESRON 7, EOD Mobile Unit Five, USMC III Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), Special Operations Command Pacific, the U.S. 7th Fleet Band and a P-8 Poseidon aircraft. Afloat units included Military Sealift Command's Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport USNS Millinocket (T-EPF 3).

Twelve Ways of Healthy Holidays

From Leighanne Gerstbrein, Military Sealift Command Health Coordinator

1. **Manage Stress.** Give yourself a break! You earned it. The holidays can be a stressful time for both your health and your wallet, but do not have to be. Keep spending and commitments in check, rely on family and friends, maintain an optimistic and calm outlook, and make sure to get proper sleep.

2. **Prevent injuries.** Use proper form, a step stool instead of furniture, and always wear your helmet.

3. **Stay active!** Aim for 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity aerobic activity a week.

4. **Wash your hands frequently.** Its flu season and washing your hands with soap and clean water for at least 20 seconds can help prevent the spread of germs.

5. **Get exams and screenings.** Ask your health care provider what exams and screenings you need and when to get them.

6. **Eat healthy.** Keep your diet high in fruits and vegetables, which are loaded with nutrients to help lower the risk for certain diseases. Limit portion sizes and foods high in sugar, salt, and fat.

7. **Buckle up!** Did you know that drunk driving is at its all-time highest between Thanksgiving weekend and New Year's weekend?

8. **Be aware of fire safety.** The majority of residential fires occur during the winter. Have an emergency plan in place and do not leave fireplaces, space heaters, food on stoves, or candles unattended.

9. **Stay updated on your vaccinations.** Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine once a year.

10. **Bundle yourself and your children up.** Appropriate outdoor clothing is a necessity this time of year. Stay warm with hats, warm layers, gloves, scarves, and waterproof boots.

11. **Plan ahead.** Doing too much at once often leaves us feeling overwhelmed. Start ahead of time and plan a schedule to stay one-step ahead when juggling holiday tasks.

12. **Relax.** Remember to breathe and designate time for yourself. Everyone benefits from a stress-free you.

For more questions about this or other MSC Health Promotion Programs, contact one of your Health Promotion Coordinators:

CSU-East: Leighanne.gerstbrein.ctr@navy.mil
CSU-West: kkutina@millenniumenterprises.net

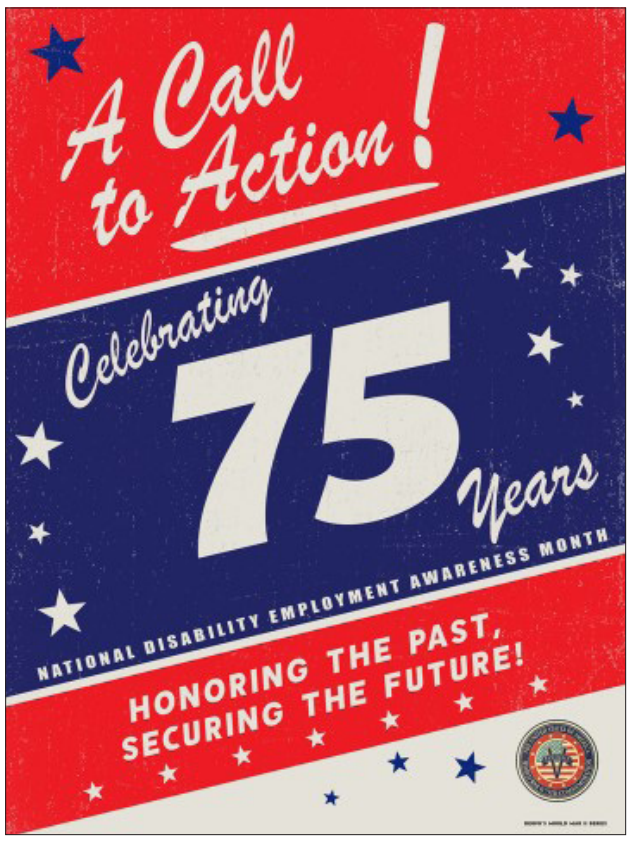
Military Sealift Command Hosts Virtual Special Observance in Honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Service members and civilian teammates assigned to Military Sealift Command gathered virtually for a special observance held in honor of National Disability Employment Awareness Month, Oct. 15.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is a nationwide campaign which celebrates the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities.

"National Disability Employment Awareness Month is an opportunity to re-affirm the Department of Defense's commitment to recruit, retain and advance individuals with disabilities throughout our workforce, and to recognize the important contributions American's with disabilities make each and every day," said Information Systems Technician 1st Class Michelle Gonzalez, mistress of ceremonies for the special observance and member of the command's Special Observance Committee. "The theme for the 2020 NDEMA is 'Increasing Access and Opportunity.'"



In 1945, Congress originally declared the first week of October as "National Employ the Physically Handicap Week." Later, in 1962, the observance dropped the word 'physically' to acknowledge that not all disabilities are physical. Federal legislature expanded the observance to a month in 1988, and officially changed the name to National Disability Awareness Month.

Gonzalez read part of President Harry S. Truman's 1945 presidential proclamation for the original observance which stated, "Whereas the people of this nation are determined to foster an environment in which those of their fellow citizens who have become physically handicapped can continue to make their rightful contribution to the work of the world and can continue to enjoy the opportunities and rewards of that work."

MSC's NDEAM special observance provided insight about two commonly asked questions in regards to employees with disabilities.

What is assistive technology?

A: The Assistive Technology Act of 1998 defines Assistive or Adaptive Technology as: products, devices, or equipment, whether acquired commercially, modified or customized, that are used to maintain, increase or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

What is a reasonable accommodation?

A: Reasonable accommodation is any modification or adjustment to a job or the work environment that will enable a qualified applicant or employee with a disability to participate in the application process or to perform essential job functions. Reasonable accommodation also includes adjustments to assure that a qualified individual with a disability has rights and privileges in employment equal to those of employees without disabilities. The provision of reasonable accommodations is the responsibility of the employing agency.

The keynote speaker for the special observance was Michael Young, a senior program analyst from the Department of Defense's Computer/Electronic Accommodation Program (CAP).

"Established by the Department of Defense (DoD) in 1990, the Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program is a centrally funded program that provides assistive technology (AT) and reasonable accommodations to DoD employees with disabilities and wounded service members," according to Young. "CAP's mission is to ensure that DoD employees with disabilities and wounded service members have equal access to the information environment and opportunities throughout the DoD. CAP provides assistive technology and services to people with disabilities throughout the DoD."

"We (at CAP) provide assistive technologies and associated training at no cost to individuals or the employing agency," Young continued. "CAP also conducts comprehensive needs assessments, as needed, for technology for technology demonstrations."

"CAP also provides training on disability program management and creating an accessible work environment," he added. An employee with a disability may be provided with all the assistive technology tools they need to perform their job. But if the electronic network on which they work is not accessible, the tools are of no benefit to the employee, the agency, nor the mission.

CAP can also assist DoD agencies with ensuring they are in compliance with federal regulations and serve as a centrally funded resource to help agencies met their obligations to accommodate.

"CAP doesn't alleviate an employing agency's obligations, but we are here to serve as a resource," according to Young.

Since its inception, CAP has provided over 212,000 accommodations to over 88,000 individuals. CAP provides assistive technology and accommodations to support individuals with disabilities and wounded, ill and injured service members throughout the DoD in accessing information and communication technology.

For questions regarding CAP and its services, please contact the CAP outreach team at outreach.cap@mail.mil. You can also contact cap at cap@mail.mil, by phone at 703-614-8416 and 833-227-3272, and by videophone at 571-384-5629.

For the latest information and news about CAP, please visit www.cap.mil or like, follow, and subscribe to any of their social media feeds.

Military Sealift Command Launches New MSC EEO App

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command's Equal Employment Opportunity team has launched a new app, MSC EEO.

The MSC team operates around the globe, often in remote environments, and the new MSC EEO app is designed to allow its members better connect with the MSC EEO program. The new app is live as of Oct. 1.

"MSC teammates are now able use the MSC EEO app to access the latest information about the EEO program, learn about filing an EEO complaint, tips and strategies to improve workplace environments and EEO news," said Sarah Kelly, MSC's Deputy Director, Equal Employment Opportunity Program. "Our teammates can use the app to become educated about the EEO program, watch informative videos and browse helpful guides. The resources available on the new app can assist our teammates with everything from conflict in the workplace, EEO policy, hostile work environments, work life balance and working stress free."

The new MSC EEO app functions on both Android and Apple operating systems and can be downloaded by searching for MSC EEO on Google Play or the Apple App Store.

"We launched the new app to be able to deliver real-time information to the MSC workforce world-wide, and ensure access is not delayed by lack of network connectivity as the app allows for continued access regardless of connectivity," Kelly added. "All MSC teammates are now able to download and access the MSC EEO app. MSC contractors are also able to download and benefit from the app, keeping in mind that EEO laws differ for contract personnel."

Kelly concluded by encouraging the MSC team to, "Explore the MSC EEO app, educate and inform yourself about EEO, check out the tools and features which can be used to foster a better workplace and all the EEO resources which are available to you."

Military Sealift Command remains committed to supporting an inclusive professional workforce that develops all of its teammates and thrives on their contributions.

For more information about the new MSC EEO app, contact Sarah Kelly at sarah.green3@navy.mil or phone 757-443-3073.

USTRANSCOM from page 5

have hand sanitizer, and we have set up the sleeping quarters with the cots, 72 square feet per soldier," said Zetterwall.

JRE has been conducted annually since 2016. Daniel Dryden, USTRANSCOM program manager for the training and readiness division, explained lessons learned from past deployments.

"In past deployments such as those during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, troops received equipment in theater rather than deploying all their organic equipment from home station," said Dryden.

For JRE 20, Dryden said approximately 2,000 pieces of cargo were loaded on the two ships and about 5,000 total personnel participated in the exercise.

"I am greatly appreciative of all the mitigation efforts being taken from the various levels within the community, the industry that supports this exercise, as well as the members in uniform, to be able to safely conduct this exercise in the face of a global pandemic," said Mewbourne.

USTRANSCOM exists as a warfighting combatant command to project and sustain military power at a time and place of the nation's choosing. Powered by dedicated men and women, we underwrite the lethality of the Joint Force, we advance American interests around the globe, and we provide our nation's leaders with strategic flexibility to select from multiple options, while creating multiple dilemmas for our adversaries.

USNS Tippecanoe from page 5

112) JS Yamagiri (DD 152), and IS Mashu (AOE 425), Japan's lead replenishment ship in a class by the same name.

U.S. and Japanese forces have a long history of training together and learning from each other while improving the readiness of forces involved. Exercises like Keen Sword provide the Japan Self-Defense Force and U.S. military opportunities to train together across a variety of mission areas in realistic scenarios, enhancing readiness, interoperability, and building credible deterrence. The global maritime environment is too large and too complex for any one nation to safeguard. Including Canada in this bilateral exercise helps participants foster and sustain the cooperative relationships that are critical to ensuring the safety of sea lanes and security on the world's oceans.

The underway replenishments-at-sea took place in advance of the exercise, optimizing the time the navies will spend training.

While Tippecanoe provided necessary support to a longstanding international partner and an ally in Asia, the crew also supported U.S. Navy ships afloat, resupplying the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), and two Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruisers, USS Antietam (CG 54) and USS Shiloh (CG 67).

"We are proud to support not only our own ships but our allies and partners as well who are operating in this vast region," said Emmett Meyer, watch officer aboard Tippecanoe. "The logistical support we provide to U.S. Navy and other ships from around the world demonstrate our longstanding commitment to security and stability in the region."

Each replenishment-at-sea can take up to several hours to complete. During underway replenishments with the fleet oilier, the two ships involved steam alongside each other while Tippecanoe transfers fuel via connected fuel lines.

It's an afloat gas station, so to speak, but it's much trickier than just pulling up to the pump. The underway evolution requires the ships to cruise alongside one another only yards apart, all while maintaining the same speed and course. If one of the vessels makes the slightest move, it could present challenges for either crew.

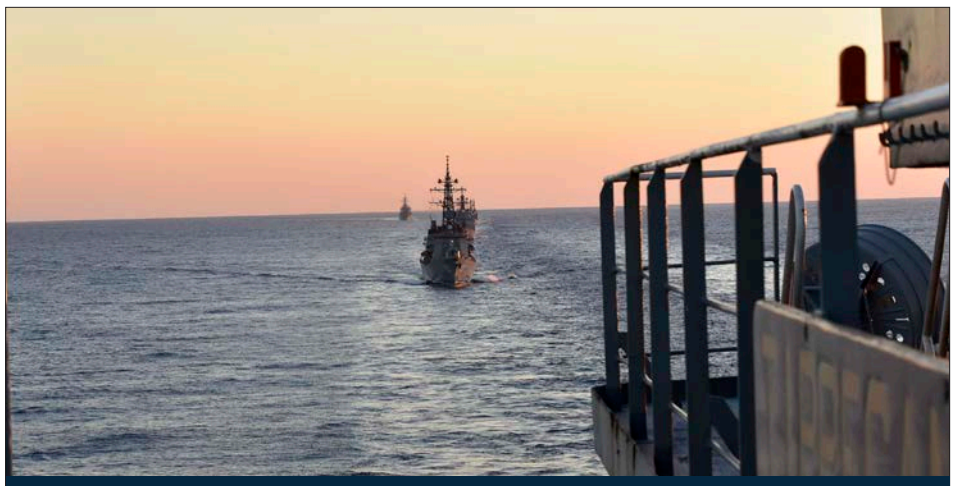
Safety is paramount.

"Each time we conduct a replenishment-at-sea, we have to be on our A-game, with absolutely no errors," said Chief Mate Arne Plathan.

"Our crew is top-notch, maintaining professionalism and adhering to strict protocols.

"This is a very risky business. If one ship changes course of speed, it could result in someone getting hurt, a collision at sea or a fuel line breaking away."

That's why Plathan and the crew take extra precautions and strictly follow all safety guidelines and requirements.



The Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Takanami-class destroyer JS Makinami (DD 112) approaches the U.S. Navy Military Sealift Command Henry J. Kaiser-class fleet replenishment oiler USNS Tippecanoe (T-AO 199) in preparation for an underway replenishment prior to participating in Keen Sword. (U.S. Navy photo by Christopher Bosch)

ANYDAY

SINGAPORE BAHRAIN NORFOLK GUAM ROTA

The guided-missile destroyer USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60), left, breaks away from the Military Sealift Command dry cargo and ammunition ship USNS Matthew Perry (T-AKE 9), center, and the guided-missile destroyer USS Ralph Johnson (DDG 114), right, after completing an underway replenishment-at-sea. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Matthew F. Jackson)

Civil Service Mariners assigned to the Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Guadalupe (T-AO 200) transfer pallets of supplies to the amphibious transport dock ship USS Somerset (LPD 25) during an underway replenishment-at-sea. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Brendan Mullin)

SEALIFT

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