



# SEALIFT

THE U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND

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Military Sealift Command's fast combat support ship USNS Supply (T-AOE 6) pulls alongside the Royal Navy aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales (R09) to conduct an at-sea resupply mission in the Atlantic Ocean, Sept. 19. (Royal Navy photo by Leading Hand (Photographer) Finn Stainer-Hutchins)

## HMS PRINCE OF WALES RECEIVES FUEL FROM USNS SUPPLY DURING RESUPPLY OPERATION

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

The British Royal Navy's largest Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales (R09) received fuel from Military Sealift Command's fast combat support ship USNS Supply (T-AOE 6) via underway replenishment-at-sea (UNREP), while the vessels were sailing in the Atlantic Ocean, Sept. 19.

MSC's Combat Logistic Force vessels, like Supply, provide UNREP re-supply services to U.S. Navy and allied combatant ships at-sea, allowing these ships to remain on-station without pulling into a port for fuel, food, ammunition and repair parts.

"Allied ships refer to this evolution as replenishment-at-sea or RAS," according to Capt. Andrew Lindey, USNS Supply's Master. "The ability to receive fuel, stores and ordnance underway allows the warfighter to remain at sea indefinitely."



Sailors aboard the Royal Navy aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales (R09) perform line handling during a resupply mission with USNS Supply (T-AOE 6), Sept. 19. (Royal Navy photo by Leading Hand (Photographer) Finn Stainer-Hutchins)

"USNS Supply is one of only two U.S. Navy fast combat support ships that have the unique capability to provide substantial fuel, refrigerated stores, dry stores and ordnance," Lindey added. "The ship's gas turbine propulsion allows her the ability to 'keep up' with the warships unlike most supply vessel which are limited in speed; thus the 'fast' designator."

During the 3.5-hour RAS, Prince of Wales received approximately 350,000 gallons of diesel fuel for the aircraft carrier's propulsion plant.

"HMS Prince of Wales is a fifth Generation aircraft carrier, designed to operate a variety of aircraft from the F-35 Lightning jet to a variety of helicopters," stated Chief Petty Officer (Seamanship Specialist) Samuel Hadcroft, HMS Prince of Wales' Bosun. "We benefit by conducting RAS as these evolutions enable Prince of Wales to stay on task longer and enabling us to conduct whatever mission is tasked to us."

UNREPs are challenging evolutions by nature. However, both Supply and Prince of Wales are equipped with NATO-standard fueling equipment which allows the vessels to re-supply seamlessly.

One of the challenges allied Sailors and mariners encounter is a difference in vocabulary. One of the terminology differences is the Royal Navy refers to the evolution as replenishment-at-sea (RAS) as opposed to UNREP.

"Terminology differs slightly between our two nations, but not enough to cause an issue," according to Hadcroft. "There are some slight differences in skills and drills, the Royal Navy never pass lines under the



Civil Service Mariners aboard the fast combat support ship USNS Supply (T-AOE 6) pose for a photo during a resupply mission with the Royal Navy aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales (R09), Sept. 19. (Royal Navy photo by Leading Hand (Photographer) Finn Stainer-Hutchins)

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# SECNAV NAMES SHIP AFTER AMERICAN ABOLITIONIST, SOCIAL ACTIVIST HARRIET TUBMAN

From Secretary of the Navy Public Affairs

Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Carlos Del Toro announced today that he named a U.S. Navy ship after American abolitionist and social activist Harriet Tubman, Sept. 17.

SECNAV Del Toro made the announcement during an Emancipation Celebration at Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center in Church Creek, Maryland. National Park Service Director Chuck Sams, who is also a U.S. Navy veteran, joined Secretary Del Toro for the announcement at the park.

The future USNS Harriet Tubman (T-AO 213) follows the tradition of naming John Lewis-class oilers after civil rights leaders and is the second vessel to bear her name. The first was a Liberty ship built in the United States during World War II.

“It’s an honor to maintain the naming tradition for our John Lewis-class oilers, and Harriet Tubman is more than deserving of this recognition,” said Del Toro. “She was born into unimaginable circumstances, but she dedicated her life to facing great danger and adversity, becoming a ‘conductor of freedom’, helping others escape slavery. In addition, during the Civil War, Tubman was the first African American woman to serve formally in the military. Her legacy deserves our nation’s continued recognition, and our fleet benefits from having her name emblazoned on the hull of one of our great ships.”



A portrait photograph of American Abolitionist and activist Harriet Tubman. (U.S. Library of Congress)

Born into slavery on Maryland’s Eastern Shore, in 1822, Tubman was named Araminta by her enslaved parents, Ben and Rit Ross. She changed her name to Harriet after marrying freeman John Tubman in 1844. Tubman escaped slavery in 1849, when her enslaver died and she was to be sold. Sept. 17, 1849, marks the day Harriet Tubman made the important decision to self-liberate. It was this date that she and her brothers Ben and Henry ran away; however, after a couple of weeks into their journey her brothers “disagreed with her about directions” and succumbed to the fear of being captured and convinced her to return with them. Tubman left a second time later that fall (exact date unknown) and reached freedom in Philadelphia.

In the ensuing years, she undertook numerous missions to help at least 70 men, women, and children escape slavery. Known as “Moses,” Tubman became an iconic figure during the American Civil War, serving as a Union spy, scout, nurse and cook. In June 1863, she helped plan and execute a successful raid on Combahee Ferry near Port Royal, South Carolina, guiding Union naval steamships carrying 300 Black troops of the 2nd Carolina Volunteer Infantry Regiment (Colored). The raid resulted in the liberation of more than 750 enslaved people. After the war, she continued to advocate for the rights of African Americans and women, speaking at a number of women’s suffrage events alongside Susan B. Anthony. Tubman died in 1913 and was buried at Fort Hill Cemetery in Auburn, New York.

“This tribute commemorates the powerful legacy of one of our country’s most selfless heroes,” said National Park Service Director Chuck Sams. “The Underground Railroad’s most famous conductor was devoted to the cause of ensuring freedom for all despite personal sacrifice and risk. A true role model for the sailors who will serve on the USNS Harriet Tubman, her passion, courage and intelligence empowered her to overcome extreme obstacles for the benefit of others.”

Along with the ship’s name, Del Toro also announced that the ship’s sponsor will be Tina Wyatt, the great, great, great grandniece of Harriet Tubman. The ship’s sponsor represents a lifelong relationship with the ship and crew. Wyatt has spent her life helping others as a nurse and also educating and sharing the legacy of Harriet Tubman.

“Harriet Ross Tubman is a symbol of faith, freedom, family, democracy and love. Aunt Harriet’s legacy is an inspiration to a higher calling within us all, and overall, how we are enabled by sharing love for others and self. It is her supply from God that she had been able to supply others throughout her lifetime and still, her footprint lives on and supplies us now. Such a strong and dazzling example of symbolism in her honor, the naming of an oiler, a ship that supplies other ships with fuel and cargo to function at its highest level, is an example of what she gave in life and continues to give,” said Wyatt.

The future USNS Harriet Tubman is the ninth ship of the John Lewis-class. The class and lead ship are named in honor of the late civil rights icon Rep. John Lewis from Georgia.

The ships are designed to supply fuel to the Navy’s operating carrier strike groups. The oilers have the ability to carry a load of 162,000 barrels of oil and maintain significant dry cargo capacity.

# AUSTAL USA CUTS ALUMINUM ON FINAL NAVY EXPEDITIONARY FAST TRANSPORT

From Austal USA

Members of Austal USA’s EPF team and representatives of the Navy’s Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Gulf Coast, were present in Austal’s module manufacturing facility to watch the router begin cutting aluminum for the U.S. Navy’s final Expeditionary Fast Transport, T-EPF 16. This is the third EPF Flight II ship built by Austal USA in Mobile, and the 16th EPF contracted to Austal USA by the Navy.

“Austal USA is proud of the accomplishments of the shipbuilders that have worked on the EPF program and made it such a successful shipbuilding program – both from an acquisition perspective and an operational perspective,” said Dave Growden, vice president of new construction. “The EPF is an important component of the Navy’s fleet and provides the ability to rapidly deploy military personnel and equipment around the world. The program has been successful in delivering ships on-time and on-budget, and Austal USA is committed to continuing this trend with future deliveries.”

EPF Flight II provides a Role 2E (enhanced) medical capability which includes, among other capabilities, basic secondary health care built around primary surgery; intensive care unit; ward beds; and limited x-ray, laboratory and dental support. The EPF’s catamaran design provides inherent stability to perform underway medical procedures in the ship’s operating suite. Enhanced capabilities to support V-22 flight operations and launch and recover 11 meter Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats complement the ship’s medical facilities. These Flight II upgrades along with EPF’s speed, maneuverability and shallow water access are key enablers for mission support of future Distributed Maritime Operations and Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations around the world. Flight II retains the capability of the Flight I to support other missions including core logistics missions.

T-EPF 16 is one of three EPF Flight II ships under construction at Austal USA. EPF Flight II ships will augment the future Expeditionary Medical Ships.



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# UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT TRAINING STRENGTHENS PARTNERSHIP, LOGISTICS COMPATIBILITY IN PREP FOR SAMA SAMA

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East Public Affairs



Military Sealift Command’s fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon (T-AO 202) sits anchored at Subic Bay, Philippines, prior to a training event with the Philippine Navy, Sept. 14. Maritime Training Activity Sama Sama is a multilateral exercise including forces from Philippines, the United States, Australia, France, Japan, Canada and the United Kingdom designed to promote regional security cooperation, enhance maritime interoperability and, maintain and strengthen maritime partnerships. (U.S. Navy photo by Grady Fontana)

In preparation for the seventh iteration of Maritime Training Activity (MTA) Sama Sama 2023, the crews of U.S. Navy (USN) fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon (T-AO 202) and Philippine Navy (PN) guided missile frigate BRP Antonio Luna (FF 151) conducted familiarization training at Subic Bay, Philippines, Sept. 15.

MTA Sama Sama 2023 is a multilateral engagement that includes a sea and shore phase that will incorporate medical, engineering, logistics and symposiums, while diving and explosive ordnance disposal teams, naval vessels and maritime surveillance aircraft conduct exercises focused on anti-submarine, surface and air warfare, and maritime domain awareness.

One of the at-sea events will include a replenishment-at-sea (RAS) between a USN replenishment oiler and a PN frigate that will highlight combined PN-USN interoperability.

A team from Afloat Training Group Western Pacific (ATGWP) traveled to Subic Bay to support the qualifications training between U.S. and Philippine Navies.

“Today, we coordinated with USNS Yukon to conduct familiarization for BRP Antonio Luna crew on what a USNS is, its capabilities, and what services they can provide,” said USN Lt. Cmdr. Jason D. Calata, team leader, ATGWP, Detachment Sasebo, Japan. “It’s

important for (PN) to see what the oiler is expecting from the receiving ship, as far as coming alongside, taking on fuel, and emergency break-away procedures, amongst other things.”

The RAS preparation is being conducted in three phases over the course of about one month. This first phase is a test in compatibility between the two platforms.

“We are having this training in preparation for Sama Sama,” said PN Lt. Paolo Dominic M. Regis, Combat Information Center officer, BRP Antonio Luna. “This will be the first time for the Philippine Navy to conduct a RAS with the U.S. Navy. We’ve had briefing of procedures: we shared our procedures and US Navy shared their procedures. ATGWP also shared best practices during RASs for us to consider or adopt, if necessary.”

During last year’s Sama Sama, PN frigate BRP Jose Rizal (FF 150) took on about 30,000 liters of fuel from Royal Australian Navy replenishment oiler HMAS Stalwart (A 304), which marked the first time ever the PN has conducted a RAS with an allied or partner nation.

Underway replenishments of allied partners present a unique opportunity to strengthen partnerships and exercise compatibility of logistics systems.

“During phase one we had a meet-and-greet, and questions-and-answers session between the Philippine

Navy ship’s crew and the officers of Yukon,” said Military Sealift Command’s (MSC) civilian mariner Capt. Robert A. Duckworth, master of USNS Yukon. “We gave a general brief about RAS procedures, the equipment, and the logistics of it. We made sure the gear is compatible.”

Commander, Task Force 73, in coordination with MSC Far East, refuels and resupplies deployed naval forces, along with regional Allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific. Although MSC conducts hundreds of replenishments-at-sea a year, these events are inherently dangerous and replenishing a foreign vessel presents its own unique challenges.



Military Sealift Command Civil Service Mariner Gil Fernandez, Boatswain’s Mate aboard fleet replenishment oiler USNS Yukon (T-AO 202), right, explains elements of the refueling station aboard Yukon to a Philippine Navy Sailor during a familiarization tour, Sept. 15. (U.S. Navy photo by Grady Fontana)

## NEW MSC COMMANDER VISITS SAN DIEGO

By Sarah Cannon, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs

Rear Adm. Philip Sobeck, Military Sealift Command’s new commander, paid a visit to Military Sealift Command Pacific, several ships, and key stakeholder during his first week on the job.

Sobeck’s visit signaled an emphasis on MSC’s operations in the Pacific Area of Responsibility, its support to Naval operations in U.S 3rd Fleet, and the importance of partnering with other force enablers to support our fleet ashore and at sea.

While in San Diego, Sobeck visited the fleet replenishment oiler USNS Harvey Milk (T-AO 206), MSC hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) and expeditionary mobile base USS John L. Canley (ESB 6). Aboard Milk, Sobeck pointed out the importance of MSC’s newest ship and emphasized the importance of ensuring long-term readiness during the post-delivery testing and trials phase. To that end, he engaged with NAVSEA and industry partners to address post-delivery challenges. Aboard Mercy, he focused on the ship’s preparations for its upcoming Pacific Partnership 2024 deployment, touring the Medical Treatment Facility (MTF) and speaking with leadership from the ship and the MTF. Speaking with the Civil Service Mariner crews, and listening to their questions and concerns, he repeatedly used the phrase “no mariner left behind,” a mantra used to highlight the importance of MSC’s afloat workforce and highlighted ongoing initiatives to improve work-life balance and reduce overdue relief situations.

Focusing on our building blocks during this visit, Sobeck met with leadership in the San Diego area including U.S. Navy Third Fleet, Navy Information Warfare Systems Command, Navy Region Southwest, and U.S. Navy Surface Forces Pacific. In addition, he met with the MSCPAC senior staff to discuss his vision moving forward, the challenges on the horizon, and the area command’s role in future operations.

“This visit was unprecedented,” said Leonard Bell, MSCPAC’s deputy to the commander. “In my time with MSC, I don’t recall having a new MSC Commander visiting an Area Command this early after taking command. It also reflects the importance he places on the Pacific.”

Capt. Micah Murphy, Commander, MSCPAC, added, “I appreciated his vision of operationalizing MSC forces in the Pacific, his recognition of the importance logistics



Rear Adm. Philip Sobeck, Commander, Military Sealift Command, meets with Civil Service Mariners aboard the fleet replenishment oiler USNS Harvey Milk (T-AO 206) during his visit to San Diego. (U.S. Navy photo by Sarah Cannon)



# MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND’S LEADERSHIP AT YOKOHAMA OPERATIONS HUB CHANGES HANDS

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command’s (MSC) operations hub in Yokohama, Japan, changed Officers-in-Charge (OIC) during a Change-of-Charge ceremony at Yokohama North Dock, Aug. 31.

At the ceremony, Lt. Cmdr. Shawn Tagan assumed the authority of Command OIC from Lt. Cmdr. Eric Topor for MSC Ship Support Unit (SSU) Japan.

Officer-in-Charge of MSC SSU Japan is the commanding naval officer responsible for leading and directing U.S. and Japanese forces or representatives tasked with execution of MSC shipboard operations, supply, maintenance, repair functions and overall mission accomplishment in the Japan area of responsibility (AOR).

“I’m really excited to be here [and have] the opportunity to come to Yokohama and work with such dedicated and inspiring people, who have so much experience,” Tagan said to the members of the organization.

Before assuming responsibilities of the OIC, Tagan served as acting chief-of-staff and executive assistant of Surface Warfare Schools Command, in Newport, Rhode Island, Topor will serve as the OIC of MSC SSU in Singapore.

Tagan’s sea assignments include tours aboard USS Gary (FFG 51) home-ported in Yokosuka, Japan, and San Diego; USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) home-ported in Bremerton, Washington, and USS Antietam (CG 54) as weapons, combat systems, and executive officer, forward deployed to the western Pacific U.S. 7th Fleet AOR.

Tagan also served on Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka in Japan, as operations officer.

MSC SSU Japan is part of MSC Far East and is the forward deployed command directly supporting all MSC operations within the mainland of Japan and facilitating logistics and operational requirements for U.S. 7th Fleet.

This past fiscal year, MSC SSU Japan supported 152 MSC ship visits for 1,024 total in-port days and 284 ship support actions.



# USS MOUNT WHITNEY, U.S. 6TH FLEET SUPPORT LARGE SCALE EXERCISE 23

From U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs



Recently, the Blue Ridge-class command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) and embarked U.S. 6th Fleet staff conducted operations in the Mediterranean Sea while participating in Large Scale Exercise (LSE) 2023.

LSE 2023 was a scenario-driven, globally integrated exercise providing high-end training at sea and ashore against a challenging, simulated adversary force. The exercise is taking place in the Mediterranean Sea, Atlantic Ocean, and Pacific Ocean from August 9-18.

“LSE 2023 was the ultimate test and demonstration of the U.S. Navy’s global operational capability,” said Adm. Stuart B. Munsch, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa. “It showcased our capacity to rapidly employ combat forces in any theater, bringing to bear our Navy’s full maritime mission capabilities to defend the U.S. homeland, our allies and our partners around the world.”

The goal of Mount Whitney’s participation in LSE 2023 was to practice and demonstrate the inherent flexibility of Distributed Maritime Operations, Expeditionary Advanced-Base Operations, and Littoral Operations in a Contested Environment (LOCE). These are high-end warfare techniques that demonstrate the U.S. Navy’s ability to meet global operational commitments, while continuing to operate, sail, and meet mission capabilities in the dynamic environments of the modern world.

“The foundation of our service and commitment to a ready and able force rests on the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps’ ability to effectively command and control

our forces at sea and in the littorals,” said Vice Adm. Thomas Ishee, Commander U.S. 6th Fleet. “LSE 2023 was a test of our tactics and strategies, as we continue to integrate modern warfare concepts on a global scale - a core competency we have been working hard at. Over the past year, we have demonstrated our ability to conduct distributed maritime operations with our Allies and Partners in Neptune Strike, Formidable Shield and Baltic Operations 2023. But these last two weeks have tested our ability to operate in a worldwide combat environment, ultimately evolving our capability to bring the integrated fighting force of the Navy and Marine Corps to the forefront of tomorrow’s combat.”

LSE 2023 was primarily supported by Sailors, Marines, Government civilian and contract employees assigned to command and training staffs throughout multiple theaters, but also includes naval assets, ranging from aircraft carriers to submarines, and an array of simulated constructive units. Participating units will span 22 time zones to include six naval and Marine Corps component commands, seven U.S. numbered fleets and two Marine Expeditionary Forces.

LSE 2023 continued the situational and training objectives of LSE 2021, enhancing fleet readiness while demonstrating how U.S. Military’s proficiencies have exponentially increased over the last two years. LSE 2021 was the first naval and amphibious large-scale exercise conducted since NATO’s Ocean Venture exercise in 1981 during the Cold War.

Mount Whitney is the U.S. 6th Fleet flagship and operates with a combined crew of U.S. Sailors and Military Sealift Command Civil Service Mariners.



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# CONTINUING PROMISE 2023 MISSION CONCLUDES

By Lt.j.g. Nickolas West, U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command / U.S. 4th Fleet



During the Continuing Promise 2023 mission, medical personnel provided care to over 6,100 patients, administered more than 950 vaccinations, and dispensed over 8,750 prescriptions. They also engaged in subject matter expert exchanges with local medical personnel, working side by side in host nation medical facilities to share knowledge and discuss differences in medical practices.

Additionally, the Continuing Promise 2023 team conducted humanitarian assistance and disaster relief exercises, Women, Peace, and Security initiative events, and provided basic first aid training to host nation military personnel, first responders, community leaders, and local citizens in each country.

The U.S. Navy Biomedical Equipment Repair team collaborated with host nation medical personnel to repair and troubleshoot medical equipment valued at over \$500K. Meanwhile, the U.S. Navy Seabees undertook various reconstruction and engineering projects, benefiting host nation schools, hospitals, and community centers.

Throughout the deployment, the U.S. Fleet Forces Band delivered 26 distinct engagements and concerts for an audience of over 5,000 people. These performances were attended by the general public, U.S. and foreign military officials, U.S. Ambassadors, and other host nation leaders.

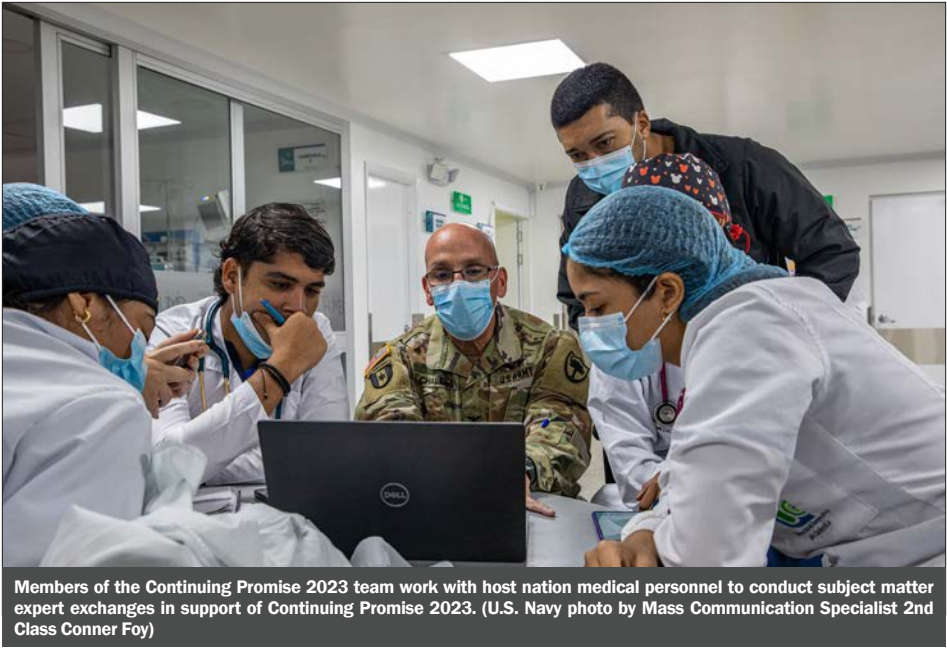
The Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Burlington (T-EPF 10) completed its fourth and final stop of the Continuing Promise 2023 mission in St. George’s, Grenada, Sept. 23. The Burlington also visited Almirante, Panama, Santa Marta, Colombia, and Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago over the course of the deployment.

Throughout the entirety of the Continuing Promise 2023 mission, the team collaborated closely with host nation medical personnel, first responders, and military personnel. The Continuing Promise 2023 deployment bolstered regional interoperability, disaster response capabilities, security, and stability within the region while fostering new and enduring friendships. The Burlington brought a medical engagement team to provide direct patient care in community clinics and host nation medical facilities.

The Continuing Promise 2023 team was made up of U.S. Navy medical personnel who worked in host nation medical facilities, U.S. Army veterinarians who tended to animals and led various trainings, U.S. Navy biomedical technicians who repaired medical equipment in host nation facilities, U.S. Navy Seabees who conducted small engineering and reconstruction projects, and the U.S. Fleet Forces Navy Band Detachment, who entertained audiences with musical performances.



The Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Burlington (T-EPF 10) arrived in St. George’s, Grenada on Sept. 12, in support of Continuing Promise 2023. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Conner Foy)



Members of the Continuing Promise 2023 team work with host nation medical personnel to conduct subject matter expert exchanges in support of Continuing Promise 2023. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Conner Foy)

“Continuing Promise 2023 was an unforgettable journey. It was my first deployment in the Navy, and I couldn’t have asked for a better experience. We visited beautiful countries, engaged in enlightening cultural exchanges, and met amazing people,” said Lt.j.g. Justin Johnson, U.S. Navy participant in Continuing Promise 2023. “It was great to witness the medical teams from four different nations working together hand in hand to provide care and learn from each other.”

Continuing Promise 2023 marks the 13th mission to the region since 2007 and the first involving USNS Burlington. The mission will also foster goodwill, strengthen existing partnerships with partner nations, and encourage the establishment of new partnerships among countries, non-government organizations, and international organizations.

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet supports U.S. Southern Command’s joint and combined military operations by employing maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships in order to enhance regional security and promote peace, stability and prosperity in the Caribbean, Central and South American region.

## USS HERSHEL ‘WOODY’ WILLIAMS ARRIVES IN TEMA, GHANA

By 1st Lt. Rebekah Harasick, Communication Strategy and Operations Officer, USS Hershel Woody Williams

The Lewis B. Puller-class expeditionary sea base USS Hershel ‘Woody’ Williams (ESB 4) arrived in Tema, Ghana, for a routine port visit, Oct. 2.

While in port Tema, the ship will on load stores and conduct routine maintenance. This port visit is the ship’s second stop while deployed to the U.S. Africa Command area of responsibility.

The U.S. and Ghana share a strong history of promoting maritime peace and stability in the Gulf of Guinea. Ghana participated in the 2023 iteration of exercise Obangame Express, the largest multinational, maritime exercise in Western and Central Africa. These types of exercises strengthen partnerships and allow countries to work closer on shared transnational maritime challenges. Additionally, in August 2022, Ghana hosted the joint-led U.S. and Danish Maritime Operations Planning Workshop (MOPW), giving junior officers from 14 African nations the opportunity to exchange operational planning experiences and plan real-world exercises.

The U.S. shares a common interest with African partner nations in ensuring security, safety, and freedom of navigation on the waters surrounding the continent, which are critical for Africa’s prosperity and access to global markets.



A view of the expeditionary sea base USS Hershel ‘Woody’ Williams (ESB 4) at sea. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communications Petty Officer 1st Class Fred Gray IV)



# MSCEURAF VISITS DENMARK MTS/EPU MISSION

By Christina Johnson, Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa Public Affairs



Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa (MSCEURAF) Marine Transport Specialist Steven Drexler (left) waits on the pier with Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Albert Sawyer, a Navy Reservist who is part of a deployed EPU team, as the MSC-chartered ARC's M/V Endurance, a roll-on/roll-off cargo carrier pulls into the pier at Port Esbjerg, Denmark, for delivery of U.S. Army cargo. (U.S. Navy photo by Christina Johnson)

Capt. Kenneth Pickard, U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa (MSCEURAF) Commodore/Task Force 63 Commander, made an initial visit to a command Marine Transportation Specialist (MTS) mission of receiving U.S. Army cargo at Port Esbjerg, Denmark, via MSC-chartered ARC's M/V Endurance, a roll-on/roll-off cargo carrier.

MSCEURAF/U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) MTS missions have double from 2022 in 2023, and they are critical to the success of Operation Atlantic Resolve. Additionally, these missions are essential for training and hands-on experience of U.S. Navy Reserve personnel as Expeditionary Port Unit (EPU) team members.

Several EPUs, including 104, 105, 106 and 117, arranged for a total of six reservists, including Boatswain's Mates (BM), Logistics Specialists (LS), Hospital Corpsman (HM), and Information Systems Technician (IT), to arrive at the port earlier in the week to prepare for the arrival and offloading of Endurance. The Navy Reserve mission for MSC is to provide EPUs for operations that require additional manpower required for surge mission sets, and half of the team was receiving training and gaining EPU experience for the first time.

"Hands on experience is imperative for our Sailors in their training pipeline," said Cmdr. Martha Adams, MSC Expeditionary Port Unit 104 commanding officer. "Sailors are required to perform under instruction watches to learn core concepts and equipment, tasks and processes, and reporting relationships and procedures as part of their JQR (Job Qualification Requirement). This builds their experience, knowledge, and confidence as an EPU watch stander for real-world operations.

EPUs traditionally have a variety of enlisted rates and Sailors will have received their required rate training. The hands on experience allows for each Sailor to apply their rate training in an MSC scenario that may be new and different."

This was also a first visit to an MTS/EPU mission for Pickard since assuming command of MSCEURAF in Jan. 2022. He was able to meet with the EPU team members, receive a tour of Endurance from the ship's civilian U.S. merchant marine Captain, Chief Mate and Chief Engineer, and have the opportunity to view the U.S. Army cargo that was delivered to the port.

Also at the port was the U.S. Army equivalent to MSCEURAF/TRANSCOM, Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) personnel/839th Transportation Battalion from Camp Darby/Leghorn Army Depot in Italy, who were working closely with MSCEURAF and a multi-national team to coordinate the expeditious and safe off-loading of Army cargo to be transported via train and truck to various locations in Europe.



Capt. Kenneth Pickard, Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa (MSCEURAF) Commodore/Task Force 63 Commander (center) poses for a group photo on ARC's M/V Endurance, an MSC-chartered roll-on/roll-off vessel. From the left, Endurance's Chief Mate; Steven Drexler, MSCEURAF MTS; Endurance's Capt. Shawn Hagerty; Capt. Kenneth Pickard, MSCEURAF commodore; LSCM Noel Navidad, Task Force 63 Senior Enlisted Leader; Endurance's Chief Engineer; and BM2 Albert Sawyer, EPU team member. (U.S. Navy photo by Christina Johnson)

## USNS GRASP SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES TOW OF DECOMMISSIONED LAKE CHAMPLAIN

By Sarah Cannon, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp (T-ARS 51) successfully delivered the decommissioned Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Lake Champlain (CG 57) to the Naval Inactive Ship Maintenance Facility in Bremerton, Washington, Sept. 18.

The journey of the two ships began in San Diego Sept. 8. In the San Diego Bay, Grasp connected to Lake Champlain and began the tow journey that would conclude in Bremerton.

The Navy decommissioned Lake Champlain on Sept. 1 at Naval Base San Diego, after more than 35 years of service.

The ship, which was originally commissioned in 1988, supported Operations Enduring Freedom and Southern Watch, the Global War on Terrorism, maritime security operations in the North Arabian Gulf, and counter-piracy operations during its service.

The ship's name honors American success defending waters of Lake Champlain and the lakeside town of Plattsburg, New York, during the War of 1812 against the British forces. It was the third Navy ship to bear the name.

With its arrival at the Inactive Ship Yard, Lake Champlain will be in a Logistic Support Asset (LSA) status. Grasp will return to San Diego where it will conduct the tow of USS Bunker Hill later this fall.



A view of the rescue and salvage ship USNS Grasp (T-ARS 51) underway. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE DATA ANALYTICS ENVIRONMENT

By Hendrick Dickson, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

The DAE is here! MSC launched its new data analytics platform, Data Analytics Environment, in Nov. The cloud-based data hub will change the way MSC employees collect, ingest and interpret data to allow them to perform their jobs easier. The DAE initiative began in 2021 under the management of MSC's N9 Directorate and contracted through the N6. We spoke with Senior Operations Research Analyst Clark Capshaw to find out what to expect from the game changing platform and how it will impact MSC's mission.

**Sealift: Who benefits the most from DAE?**

**Clark Capshaw:** Immediate benefit will be to those directorates (N Codes) whose data will be fed into the DAE initially, i.e. N4 and N7, however we anticipate that

additional data will be fed into the system from other codes during the quarterly maintenance releases. We do not know the full impact of having this data available to all at this time, but the point is to share data, to do cross-functional analysis, and to focus on being a data-driven organization.

**How will the DAE impact MSC's efficiency?**

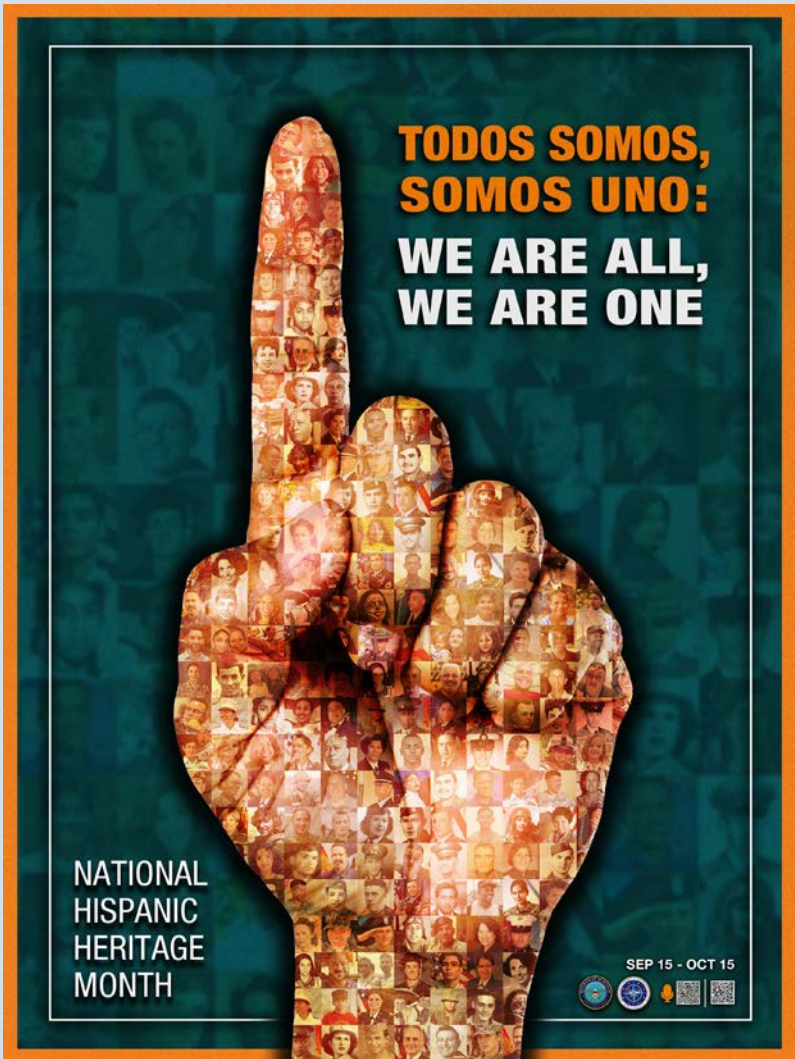
Data that is hard to access or whose quality is dubious can impact the organization negatively. In addition to making the data available throughout the organization, there will be a renewed emphasis on data quality, which will make people more confident in the data and the business analyses that flow from it.

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# SPECIAL OBSERVANCE: MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND HONORS NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs



Civilian teammates and service members assigned to Military Sealift Command gathered virtually for a special observance held in honor of National Hispanic Heritage Month, Sept. 28.

Each year the Department of Defense, along with the rest of the Nation, recognizes the important contributions and rich culture of Hispanic Americans.

“This year’s theme is ‘Todos Somos, Somos Uno: We Are All, We Are One.’ The theme reflects the diversity inherent within the Hispanic community, as well as the strength that comes with unity,” said Senior Chief Information Systems Technician Tina Rivera, Mistress of Ceremonies for MSC’s NHHM special observance. “Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from Sept. 15 through Oct. 15, by celebrating the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.”

NHHM coincides with important dates in many communities and encompasses independence days for several Latin American countries.

“Sept. 15 was chosen as the starting point for the celebration because it is the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua,” Rivera added. “In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on Sept. 16 and Sept. 18, respectively. Hispanic Heritage Month began as Hispanic Heritage Week in 1968 when President Lyndon Johnson signed the observance into law to cover a 30-day period. It was enacted into law on Aug. 17 1988, by the approval of Public Law 100-402.”

NHHM is the only Department of Defense cultural observance that always spans over multiple months.

Neil Lichtenstein, Military Sealift Command Deputy Director of Ship Management, provided remarks at the special observance

“We’d like to recognize the significant contributions of Hispanic Americans throughout history to help the United States attain and remain a cornerstone for democracy, civil rights and security around the world,” said Lichtenstein. “The Hispanic community represents so many things, many cultures, many skin colors, many points of view. And yet we are together as one community, one people and one vision.”

This month the Department of Defense joins the nation in honoring the generations of Hispanic Americans who have influenced and enriched our nation and society.

# NOVEMBER IS NATIONAL DIABETES MONTH

By Stephanie Rusnak, Military Sealift Command Health Promotion Program

November is National Diabetes Month, this is a time when communities come together to bring attention to diabetes. This year, diabetes detection is more important than ever. During Covid-19, there was a spike in the cases of children diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes.

### Types of Diabetes

**Type One Diabetes;** the pancreas produces little to no insulin. Insulin is the hormone that helps the body take up sugar, or glucose, from the blood into the cells and use it for energy. Without this insulin, people can experience damage to the heart, kidneys, eyes, nerves, and circulatory system.

**Type Two Diabetes;** the body produces insulin but is resistant to its effects. Without enough insulin available to move sugar, or glucose, from the blood into cells for energy, blood sugar levels rise.

### Knowing the Signs and Symptoms:

- Increased thirst
- Increased urination
- Weight loss
- Increased appetite
- Dehydration
- Blurred vision
- Persistent nausea and vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Excess drowsiness or fatigue
- Irritability and mood changes
- Yeast infections for women



Always consult with your physician if you suspect that you or someone you know has diabetes.

**MSC has resources available for you. The Health Promotion program at MSC offers the following free services to its civilian mariners:**

- InBody Screenings (measures percentage of body fat, muscle mass, basal metabolic rate, or how many calories you burn at rest in a day, and more)
- Individualized Health Coaching.
- Online health education and exercise classes.
- Subscription to Weekly Wellness newsletters, covering a variety of health and wellness topics.
- Health Risk Assessment and subscription to on-line wellness portal.
- SHIP FIT: A workout plan distributed quarterly with all bodyweight exercises that can be done while underway or at home.

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HMS Prince of Wales from page 1

rig, where the U.S. Navy does, but having previously RAS'd with the Americans before, we knew about this and adapted accordingly.”

Supply’s crew of Civil Service Mariners (CIVMAR) perform all functions aboard the ship to include navigation, propulsion, hotel services and food services. UNREPs are an all-hands evolution for the CIVMARs aboard Supply.

“The Engine, Supply, Deck, Communications department are all actively involved UNREPs; while Medical ‘Doc’ and the Purser play supporting roles,” said Lindey. “On the UNREP station there is a rig captain, normally a Boatswain’s Mate, while all departments make up the UNREP team. The Yeomen account for the fuel and stores delivered.”

The Prince of Wales RAS Team is also made up of various crew specialties and rates.

“The Seamanship Team were on deck and on the bridge in the Tactical Control System role,” Hadcroft Stated. “We have Marine Engineers who received and check the fuel into the tanks, and the evolution includes a whole host of rates from the Captain to the lowest Able Seaman, and is very much a team effort.”

Previous to this RAS, Prince of Wales performed an UNREP with MSC’s fleet replenishment oiler USNS Leroy Grumman (T-AO 195).

“This was the first RAS between the Prince of Wales and Supply, said Lindey and the crew did great,” Lindey stated. “The Brits are amazing seaman and as expected they did a great job.”

Hadcroft also reflected on the two crews’ performance during the RAS.

“The Prince of Wales crew performed satisfactorily; as always there are lesson identified and we always look to continue and develop our skill sets,” according to Hadcroft. “From a Deck Department prospective, the Supply performed really well, they were professional and engaging and really a pleasure to work with.”

MSC’s fleet of CLF ships provide RAS services for U.S. Navy and allies ships 24/7, around the world.

Hadcroft concluded by stating, “This was probably the most enjoyable RAS I have done to date whilst on Prince of Wales, the weather was good, the Supply was excellent and we got lots of fuel without incident; that’s always a good day in the seamanship world.”



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How and where can the DAE be accessed?

We are establishing the access rules right now. There will be a process for establishing accounts, which will include a training element before getting an account. Then, the system itself will be menu driven, easy to use, and will incorporate visualization tools like Tableau to make it easy to visualize the data in a meaningful way.

Is DAE an open platform available for all MSC employees?

It will be open with some caveats. Personnel will have to apply for an account and will have access to the data they need. There will be protections for PII, PHI, and other kinds of data that need to have access controls.

How will DAE progress over the next few months?

The “Go Live” date in November will be the first step. Once we get familiar with the system, we anticipate others will want to add their data as well, which will be handled through quarterly maintenance releases which will begin after the “Go Live” date.

What are some of the important tools in the DAE that you expect to be most used?

Tableau, a data visualization and analysis tool, will be very prevalent. Many of us in the command are becoming familiar with this tool and how it can benefit MSC. In addition, the DAE will be linked to Advana/Jupiter, a Navy-wide data lake, and that will extend its usefulness.



For employees who don’t understand the benefits of using data as a tool, what can you tell them?

The best decisions are those that are made with practical experience AND data to confirm that experience. When experience tells you one thing and

data another, that means that one should dig deeper for the right answer. Having data available to do that can enable us to make better decisions.

How can employees learn more about DAE?

We are sending out “Do You Know” newsletters on a regular basis, we will have some training centered on DAE, it will be briefed to MSC leaders, and articles in Sealift and other publications will ensure information is widespread. And we are composing a DAE User Guide to help new users navigate the system.

Do you have any other thoughts?

It is a new age in business and government, where data is available in a wide profusion. In some places they call this “Big Data.” The problem is that many organizations do not know how to take advantage of this wealth of data – and are overwhelmed by it. Managing data well means dealing with this wealth of data in a way that is helpful to the organization. That is what DAE is all about.

# MSC anyday

USNS TIPPECANOE (T-AO 199)



Military Sealift Command

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