



SEALIFT

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



Republic of Korea Ship Seoae Ryu Seong-ryong (DDG 993) conducts a replenishment-at-sea with U.S. Navy fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser (T-AO 187) during Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2020. (Republic of Korea photo by ROKN Petty Officer 1st Class Ho Nam)

Military Sealift Command Supports RIMPAC 2020

By Sarah E. Burford, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command's combat logistic fleet (CLF) oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser (T-AO 187) and the fleet ocean tug USNS Sioux (T-ATF 171) provided support to 22 multinational, surface ships participating in the biennial international maritime exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2020 off the coast of Hawaii.

Kaiser conducted 39 underway replenishments-at-sea (UNREP), delivering nearly 4 million gallons of diesel ship fuel, more than 65,000 gallons of aviation fuel and moved 183 pallets of food, supplies and retrograde materials.

MSC is known for its logistic support to ships at sea, but what makes RIMPAC significant is the sheer volume of the support provided. According to the Military Sealift Command Pacific Logistics and Operations department, a ship like Kaiser, serving as the duty oiler in the Hawaii area of operations, could normally perform between 10-20 UNREPs a month.



Live fire from ships and aircraft participating in the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise sink the decommissioned amphibious cargo ship ex-USS Durham (LKA 114), Aug. 30. (U.S. Navy courtesy photo)

While supporting RIMPAC, Kaiser performed 39 UNREPs over a 15 day period, sometimes as many as six in one day.

The key to meeting the demands of RIMPAC was MSC's ability to work in concert directly with U.S. 3rd Fleet and Task Force 173. The MSCPAC Combat Logistics Officer (CLO) coordinated the delivery of food and stores, as well as pier-side time at the correct pier for the load-outs of cargo to the specific ships scheduled for later UNREP.

"RIMPAC is one of the most challenging logistics moves for MSC," explained Capt. Gabe Varela, Commander, Military Sealift Command Pacific. "We were responsible for delivering fuel and stores to a large volume of ships at sea, both for the U.S. Navy as well as our international friends and allies. This can be very demanding on the CLF ship's crew, as well as the CLO and the operations teams. The only way we can make this happen is by ensuring good lines of communications are open and sustained, and that we are working as a team with all the players."

While Kaiser was supporting logistics operations, Sioux conducted tow operations, delivering a target for at-sea live fire exercises.

Sioux delivered the decommissioned Navy amphibious cargo ship USS Durham to the target area, via tow, in support of the sinking exercise (SINKEX).



The amphibious assault ship USS Essex (LHD 2) conducts a replenishment-at-sea with fleet oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser (T-AO 187) during Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2020. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Catie Coyle)

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MSC to Streamline Business Functions, Transition to Navy Enterprise Resource Planning Platform

By Cathryn Lindsay, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

In 1990, after years of what had been described as “seriously deficient systems of internal control,” and “haphazard and incomplete record keeping” the federal government passed a law requiring a comprehensive reform of federal financial management. The Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-576) established a leadership structure, provided for long-range planning, and required audited financial statements to strengthen accountability reporting for federal government agencies, according to the Government Accountability Office.

To help achieve the goals of the 1990 CFO Act and increase financial audit readiness, the Department of the Navy developed business software that consolidates the Navy’s business operations into a single platform - Navy Enterprise Resource Planning (NERP). Military Sealift Command will transition to NERP on Oct. 1, 2020 with the goal to achieve full functionality by January 2021, at which point all NERP functionality and user access is expected to have been established.

The NERP migration will consolidate more than 300 feeder systems into a single ledger across the Navy. By reducing the number of business systems, the Navy will be in a better position to meet audit requirements according to MSC’s August ERP Migration Newsletter. Once NERP is utilized department-wide there will be one authoritative source of financial information.

“Oct. 1 will not be the flip of a switch, but more of a dimmer going toward full operational tempo (FOT),” explained Glen Stafford, the director of Business Management for MSC. “We are the first operational command to switch (financial management systems) to NERP, and that will introduce some bumps in the road, but we will quickly find the best and most expedient ways to resolve any (issues).”

While a sudden change in how an organization does business may seem startling, the NERP Migration Team has been working diligently with MSC’s programs and codes over the past several months to move data, find and fix issues, and create a support infrastructure to assist end users during the transition when ERP goes live.

“Data migration efforts are underway to move financial information out of MSC’s (financial management systems) and into NERP, and all financial operations for fiscal year 2021 will reside in the NERP platform,” Stafford explained. “Elsewhere in this significant transition, user acceptance testing is ongoing to determine any remaining deficiencies that should be addressed prior to reaching FOT and end-user training is being rolled out across the command to support the various functionalities.”

The NERP platform will host all business functions, but for many MSC employees everyday work will be minimally changed. However, the platform for an employee’s time and attendance will shift from the Standard Labor Data Collection and Distribution Application, known commonly as SLDCADA, to the Workforce Management function of NERP.

The different functions in ERP are called modules and they include:

Workforce Management

- Personnel Administration
- Manager Self-Service
- Employee Self-Service
- Time Management
- Personnel Development
- Training and Events Management
- Organization Management

Materials Management - Procurement and Workflow

- Purchase Card
- Purchase Requests/Orders
- Military Standard Requisitioning and Issue Procedures
- Goods Receipt and Acceptance
- Invoice verification and Materials Requirements Planning

Project Systems/Project Management

- Project Structure and Work Execution
- Financial Reports
- Funds Management
- Performance of the year end close
- Processing transactions associated with budget and funds
- Automatic avail. control/checking

Business Information Warehouse

- Designed for large-scale transactional reporting and analysis

Sales and Distribution

- Incoming Funds Processing
- Order Fulfillment
- Reimbursable Billing
- Performance of the period and year end close and fiscal year start-up activities

Financial Accounting

- General Ledger
- Accounts Receivable
- Accounts Payable
- Financial Reports
- Special Purpose Ledger
- Performance of the year end close

Funds Management

- Performance of the year end close
- Automatic availability control/checking
- Processing transactions associated with budgets and funds

Controlling

- Cost Center Accounting
- Service Center Accounting
- Product Cost Controlling
- Working Capital Fund Profitability Analysis
- Activity Cost Management
- Internal Orders

Fixed Asset Management

- Depreciation of Capital Asset
- Asset Accountability
- Control and Monitoring of Capital Investment Program
- Property Disposal Tracking

Inventory/Warehouse Management

- Goods Receipt/Issue
- Transfer Posting
- Manage quantities, values, and location of materials
- Physical Inventory (part of a “phase two” follow-on effort in FY21)

“The Navy Enterprise Resource Planning platform migration will consolidate more than 300 feeder systems into a single ledger across the Navy”

In June the MSC’s NERP team, assisted by NAVSEA’s NERP Business Office, began training employees across MSC as NERP trainers, with the intent to ‘train the trainers.’ By training employees on NERP module functionality the migration team enabled the trainers to teach other MSC employees in their specific job sections to utilize the NERP platform needed to complete their job functions. Presently, end user training is ongoing and will continue through FOT.

In early September, to further help relay information for specific job functions, the NERP Migration Team sent out a request to create a network of “Change Agents,” with the goal of further facilitating across the command employees’ ability to provide the NERP migration team with their organizations’ feedback and concerns. Change agents will also receive migration information and resources to share with their teams, explained Francis Sanders, the NERP team supervisor.

“By establishing two-way communications with change agents across the command, the leadership and the migration will have a “pulse” on how the migration is going, what is working well, and what should be improved upon,” Sanders explained.

Every month, the ERP Migration also distributes an email ERP Migration Newsletter to MSC worldwide with the latest information on the transition, upcoming requirements and how to complete them, frequently asked questions, as well as, an employee spotlight featuring an ERP Migration Team member who is working hard to ensure a smooth transition.

“A successful migration to Navy ERP will result in real-time access to data, standardized business processes, and increased financial transparency and accountability over taxpayer dollars,” Sanders said. “As a result, we will be better positioned to support warfighting readiness and greater performance.”

For more information visit the MSC ERP SharePoint site: <https://msc.navy.deps.mil/MEBO/Pages/home.aspx>

Questions about NERP may be may emailed to msc_erp_bus_off.fct@navy.mil

While Oct. 1 represents the planned cut over date for MSC’s NERP migration, additional NERP interfaces for the Corrective Maintenance Logistics System and the Defense Medical Logistics Standard Support system will be incorporated in an October software release, and some additional functionality will in place in November prior to FOT, according to Stafford.

Finding Relief During the Pandemic

By Travis Weger, Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa Public Affairs

In the face of COVID-19, crew reliefs for mariners world-wide has been exceptionally difficult to complete. Crew changes have been taking longer than normal, which creates unique challenges for mariners and shore-side staff to get the relief needed for crew changes.

According to Seatrade Maritime News, out of 1.2 million merchant mariners, more than 300,000 are overdue in need of reliefs around the globe.

The team at Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa and Commander, Task Force 63, faced the challenge head-on: Get military detachment, Civil Service Mariners (CIVMAR) and contract mariners the reliefs they need during a global pandemic.

A Game of Chess

Moving personnel place-to-place requires a significant amount of coordination but is commonplace under normal conditions. During the pandemic, with countries shutting down ports and borders because of increased precautionary measures, the task becomes a high-stress game of chess.

One of the key factors for moving personnel during COVID-19 is the 14-day restriction of movement (ROM). During ROM, personnel self-isolate for two weeks in accordance with U.S. Navy and Center for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

Completing this at home is difficult but completing it in a hotel room is uniquely complicated. Acquiring basic necessities, such food and hygiene items can be a challenge, especially when mariners have unique requirements and are sometimes in foreign ports.

Completing a ROM provides further challenges due to the need to have a test performed at day 12 of 14 at a medical clinic or Naval Hospital. Since reliefs arrive at various times, coordinating transportation in a sanitized vehicle with a driver that has tested negative for COVID-19 provides additional complexities to an already complicated process.

Going Through Greece

At the onset of the pandemic, Greece locked down the country by restricting travel and closing hotels; as the country began to ease lockdowns, hotels slowly started opening under strict guidelines.

At Naval Support Activity Souda Bay, Greece, Marine Transportation Specialist Hugo Polanco and his team of Navy Reservists, Lt. Cdr. Joanna Bridge and Lt. Ryan Sullivan, began working to find available hotels for approximately 30 reliefs to start traveling in once local restrictions were lifted.

“Typically, MSC Souda Bay is a one-person shop,” said Polanco. “I am indebted to the outstanding support I received from the Navy Reservists that were assigned to us during the onset of the pandemic and beyond.”

To find rooms for the civilian and contracted mariners, Polanco and his team began calling different hotels to find a location that would not only provide three meals a day but was also at the government per diem rate. This proved difficult because of limited availability and increased protection measures at the local hotels.

After days on the phone, his team was able to successfully find an approved hotel that fit their needs for the CIVMAR and contracted mariners to complete their ROM.

The military has different rules, and members needed continuous oversight and accountability from military base officials. Under normal conditions, the members would check into the base hotel, but due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, it was full.

After several calls around base, the team found an available barracks. While the rooms had no Wi-Fi, television or extra amenities, they provided safe lodging for the members. Since this was not a hotel and did not have room service, it required meal deliveries from the base galley to individual rooms three times a day.

The team at Souda Bay gathered together to personally deliver all the meals, but the added work became increasingly difficult to complete on top of normal duties. After requesting assistance from base support staff, contractors from Navy Facilities Engineering Command stepped in to assist the team delivering meals to the barracks.

With the initial challenge of finding a place for the reliefs to ROM, the next challenge was to figure out how to provide COVID-19 testing.

This required enormous coordination with base medical and the air terminal for transportation of samples. Strictly following guidance, the Polanco’s team worked with medical specialists to test samples in Naples, Italy, and with local Greek doctors.

“Undoubtedly, the most impact from the COVID environment has been on the crews,” said Polanco. “They have shouldered a large burden specifically with delays in crew reliefs and with restrictions on disembarking and liberty.”

Reservations in Rota

Approximately 1,500 nautical miles away on the other side of the Mediterranean Sea, Spain was in a State of Emergency and also closed hotels and airports during the lockdowns, which extremely limited availability due to increased safety measures.

At Naval Station Rota, Spain, Marine Transportation Specialist Keith McDowell got the call to start preparing for 16 CIVMARs and military detachment members traveling in to provide reliefs.

The request came early in June for reliefs to be sent through Rota with the ship arriving at the end of the month, leaving enough time for a 14-day ROM period.

“For the ROM in Rota, I was asked to find a hotel with full room and board with three meals a day provided by room service,” said McDowell, “but most hotels were still closed.”

By mid-June, the members were on their way by Navy Air Logistics Office flight through NSA Rota. Throughout multiple changes due to COVID-based situations, McDowell worked with staff to find the best possible

methods to get them there on time to meet the ship.

The flight had also been labeled as a “bubble,” meaning that it had been deemed clean according to Navy standards. To maintain the bubble, the crew needed to be housed on base, which also raised the issue of how food would be delivered since the base hotel did not provide room service.

McDowell found rooms at the base hotel that met ROM requirements and coordinated to deliver meals from the base galley, using the assistance of active-duty Sailors. He also negotiated a bus that could pick the reliefs up from the airport that could provide a clean bubble to their destination.

“I didn’t have contract authority, a government credit card or a government vehicle here, so my options were very limited,” said McDowell.

When the personnel arrived, McDowell met with the senior traveler on board and confirmed they had been briefed on the rules of ROM and how meals would be delivered while in the hotels. The members began their ROM to prepare to meet their ships when they arrived.

Itinerary of Italy

Back at Naval Support Activity Naples, Italy, staff from MSCEURAF and Commander, Task Force 63, were working behind the scenes to coordinate the personnel movements.

Administration Department Leading Chief Petty Officer Senior Chief Marcus Perkins and Command Master Chief Noel Navidad with CTF-63, and Reserve and Military Detachment Coordinator Robert Bagbey with MSCEURAF, worked together to coordinate the incoming members to Naples through tracking incoming members and coordinate testing at the local naval hospital.

“Getting the reliefs to the ships was very challenging due to frequently changing travel restrictions and competing Department of Defense and host-nation requirements,” said Perkins. “This resulted in a myriad of last minute changes and leveraging of the staff to support, however, remaining flexible was key and we’ve continued to successfully execute personnel movements to support the mission.”

Operations Analyst Chris Bush had only been in Naples a few months as a new arrival to the team, arriving right before the COVID-19 lockdowns. As a new overseas employee, he was living in a hotel close to the office and his move out date had changed due to the Italian restrictions, requiring him to stay in the hotel for an extended period of time.



Civilian Service Mariner crew reliefs go aboard USNS Medgar Evers (T-AKE 13) in Naval Station Rota, Spain, after completing a restriction-of-movement period and testing for COVID-19. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Petty Officer Frances Oldfield)

UAE, U.S. Forces Conduct Aviation Live Fire Exercise in Arabian Gulf

From Staff Sgt. Anne K. Henry, Task Force 51, 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade



The United Arab Emirates Joint Aviation Command (JAC), U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT), U.S. Air Forces Central Command (AFCENT) and U.S. Special Operations Central Command (SOCCENT) conducted an air operations in support of maritime surface warfare (AOMSW) exercise in the Arabian Gulf, Aug. 9-12.

The exercise included Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTACs) directing live fires at simulated targets from an AC-130W gunship attached to SOCCENT and rotary and fixed wing aircraft attached to the JAC. It gave Emirati and U.S. pilots a chance to hone strike capabilities together against surface targets such as maritime infrastructure and fast attack craft.

“Interoperability is a key to success in any domain,” said U.S. Air Force Capt. Ashton Sawyer, chief of the AFCENT Air Warfare Center’s (AWC) Command and Control, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (C2ISR) branch. “Constant training ensures our combined forces are ready to defend against any enemy.”

The JTACs, assigned to Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force – Crisis Response – Central Command (SPMAGTF-CR-CC), AFCENT and SOCCENT, were stationed aboard a variety of aviation and surface assets, including USS Lewis B. Puller (ESB 3), Cyclone-class patrol coastal ships (PC) attached to NAVCENT Task Force (TF) 55, and MK VI patrol boats assigned to NAVCENT TF 56. Puller also served as an afloat staging platform for both UAE and U.S. aircraft.

“JTACs operate on the ground as the eyes providing a vital link between the air and surface,” said U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Brandon Tatum, an AFCENT AWC JTAC. “We are responsible for the safety of friendly aircraft while providing strike control of nearby assets.”

Prior to the exercise, UAE pilots prepared by successfully completing deck landing qualifications aboard the Puller.

This also follows joint integration exercises between U.S. Navy, Army, and Air Force assets in March, April and May, featuring shipboard JTACs directing live fires from AH-64E Apache attack helicopters and AC-130W Stinger II gunships.

Participating U.S. forces included NAVCENT TFs 55, 56 and 57, the USS Lewis B. Puller, SPMAGTF-CR-CC, SOCCENT, and the AFCENT AWC located at Al Dhafra Air Base, UAE.

Integration operations between UAE and U.S. maritime forces are regularly held to maintain interoperability and the capability to counter threats posed in the maritime domain, ensuring freedom of navigation and free flow of commerce throughout the region’s heavily trafficked waterways.

“Our robust, joint and combined training increases our skill sets to ensure regional security and remains an important pillar of our military relationship with the United Arab Emirates”, said Brig. Gen. Farrell J. Sullivan, commanding general, Naval Amphibious Force, Task Force 51/5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade.



USS Hershel “Woody” Williams Supports U.S. SOF Interoperability

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

The Expeditionary Sea Base USS Hershel “Woody” Williams (ESB 4) is conducting interoperability training with Special Operations Forces (SOF) assigned to Special Operations Command-Africa (SOCAF) in the Mediterranean Sea.

The training aboard Hershel “Woody” Williams enables the SOF to train in a shipboard environment in preparations of upcoming operations throughout the U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) area of responsibility.

“The interoperability training we have conducted with the teams from SOCAF and the 352nd Special Operations Wing in the Mediterranean has demonstrated our unique capabilities as an Expeditionary Sea Base,” said Capt. David Gray Jr., Commanding Officer of Hershel “Woody” Williams (Blue Crew). “We look forward to working alongside our African partners and allies and to demonstrate our commitment to maritime security in and around the Africa.”

The SOF training, which included small boat and aircraft operations, focused on team interoperability with the ship for a variety of missions.

“This interoperability training between our special operations forces, Navy, Air Force, and our partners shows the strength and flexibility of our joint force,” said Maj. Gen. Dagvin Anderson, Special Operations Command Africa commander. “This new joint capability for the AFRICOM theater will allow us to engage around the continent in ways far beyond what we’ve done in the past.”

Sailors aboard combatant craft assault boats conduct small boat operations with the expeditionary sea base USS Hershel “Woody” Williams (ESB 4) as part of U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF) interoperability training with the ship in the Mediterranean Sea, Aug. 27. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Conner Foy)



Hershel “Woody” Williams is on a regularly scheduled deployment to the U.S. Naval Forces Africa area of operations. The ship will be a long-term presence assigned to the AFRICOM mission set and will support security cooperation missions and operations in and around the African continent.

At 784 feet (230 meters) long, the ship features a 52,000 square-foot (4,830 square-meter) four-spot flight deck. Further features include a hangar, mission deck, and work and living spaces for hundreds of embarked personnel. Additionally, for the U.S. Navy crew, there is a Blue Crew and a Gold Crew, which will turn over periodically to allow for continuity while the ship remains forward-deployed.

Hershel “Woody” Williams, which is the second of a new class of sea-basing ships, departed Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, on July 27, for its inaugural deployment following its commissioning in March. Its crew consist of a mix of U.S. Navy Sailors and Military Sealift Command Civil Service Mariners.

The 352d SOW based at Royal Air Force Mildenhall, England, is part of Air Force Special Operations Command. The 352 SOW mission is to provide combat ready, responsive, specialized airpower and combat support to execute the full spectrum of SOF missions. The wing has more than 1,100 Air Force members assigned, as well as personnel associated through Joint Special Operations Air Component-Europe. The wing is the only Air Force special operations unit in the European Theater.

U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allied and interagency partners, in order to advance U.S. national interests and security and stability in Europe and Africa.



Military Sealift Command Supports Army Ships Transit Home

By Travis Weger, Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa Public Affairs



The U.S. Army Frank S. Besson-class logistics support vessel Major General Charles P. Gross (LSV 5) is escorted by a Naval Support Activity Souda Bay, Greece, tug boat as it arrives at the Marathi NATO Pier Facility, Aug. 4. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communications Specialist 2nd Class Kelly M. Agee)

When most people think of the U.S. Army, they may think of tanks, helicopters and troops. Aside from air and ground forces, the Army also has ships. Similar to Military Sealift Command, the Army has an operational and tactical sealift mission using vessels called Logistics Support Vessels (LSVs), which are designed to deliver vehicles and cargo and are the largest ships in their fleet.

Marine Transportation Specialist (MTS) John Myhre from Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa began working with Watercraft Traffic Manager Patrick S. May from U.S. Army Europe on scheduling the LSVs to transit back to the United States in the summer of 2019.

“We got in touch with their higher headquarters and realized they needed help with clearances and coordination to pull into port,” said Myhre.

Myhre, a former U.S. Army boat platoon leader and current drilling Army reservist, was familiar with the operations and requirements for the LSVs and leveraged his skills outside MSC to assist with the planning for these vessels.

“The LSVs have not operated here in this capacity since two of these vessels were deployed to augment air deployments in support of operations in Kosovo in the late 90s,” said May.

The LSVs have been overseas since 2001 and were returning back to the United States, which would be their first transit across the Atlantic in

almost two decades. They needed to stop in Europe to refuel and resupply on their way back to the states.

“Our team brought the idea of coaching the Army through the diplomatic clearance and logistics processes,” said Myhre. “We do diplomatic clearances frequently, so this was an opportunity to help them pass through Europe on their way home while preserving our relationships with the host nations.”

A diplomatic clearance is an approval from a country for a ship to enter their territorial waters and is a process worked through the U.S. Embassy and host-nation. Myhre assisted the LSVs and their higher headquarters through this process with the U.S. Embassy Defense Attaché offices in Spain and Greece.

In Souda Bay, Greece, MTS Hugo Polanco and Lt. Cmdr. Joanna Bridge, a U.S. Navy Reservist assigned to MSC Souda Bay, were working the back-end, preparing for the LSVs to arrive.

“The Army does things differently as far as contracting and money goes,” said Bridge. “It is not what we are used to, so this was a challenge.”

Upon arrival to Souda Bay, Polanco and Bridge coordinated between the Army, MSC and Commander, Task Force 63 to arrange the arrival time, pilots and tugs for the ships. The team also assisted the LSVs in coordinating with the local agent for parts and repairs.

“It was neat to relate to these seagoing soldiers,” said Polanco. “They are manned by U.S. Coast Guard-certified active-duty Soldiers that have the required skill set to operate a 83-meter vessel in open ocean, just like the Navy and our MSC Civil Service Mariners operating ships at sea.”

LSVs carry cargo and equipment throughout a theater of operations or inter-theater routes that are not serviced by MSC. They have bow and stern ramps for roll-on, roll-off cargo vehicles and specialize in over-sized and overweight payloads. These vessels are specifically designed to handle the over-the-shore delivery of any vehicle in the U.S. Army inventory and can carry up to 15 Abrams main battle tanks or 82 containers.

“We value the partnership with our seagoing brethren in the Army watercraft field,” said Myhre, “their purpose is logistics and so is ours, so it made sense for MSC to help. A lot of the credit goes to the team in Souda Bay, they did a great job.”

Three MSC Teammates to Attend Public Sector Leadership Program

From Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Three civilian teammates attached to Military Sealift Command have been selected by U.S. Fleet Forces Command (USFF) to attend Old Dominion University to work towards a graduate certificate from the school's Public Sector Leadership program.

Cory Gleason, from MSC's Maritime Operations (N-4), Andrea Orłowski from MSC's Command Action Group (CAG), and Fred Turgeon of MSC's Service Support Program (PM4) were all selected to attend the academic program.

“This certificate program is interdisciplinary in nature and is focused on organizational leadership within non-profit, military, governmental, and other public sector entities,” According to Old Dominion University's public web site. “Leadership theories, best practices, and competencies are addressed for students enrolled in this program. Four key competency areas within the scope of leadership are presented to those employed or seeking employment in military and other public organizations.”

The Graduate Certificate in Public Sector Leadership (GCPSL) at Old Dominion University is a 10-month program for middle and upper

management and a unique opportunity provided to broaden the experience and increase leadership capability for high potential civilian leaders below the executive level. The GCPSL includes four 10-week sessions in Financial Management, Contracting Principles, Strategic Management, and Cyber Security and is open to General Schedule (GS) employees from pay-scales 13-15 and equivalent.

“With its sixth cohort convening this fall, the Public Sector Leadership Graduate Certificate program represents a unique opportunity for Hampton Roads' civilians, to an academic cohort of Department of Navy personnel who will team together in developing a broad-base of knowledge and experience to lead organizations and programs across Federal, State, and local governments,” according Matthew Swarts, a Senior Executive Service member attached to USFF.

MSC Teammates interested in participating in future professional development opportunities should begin by discussing potential professional development opportunities with their immediate supervisor and chain of command.

MSC Blast From the Past:

USNS Mississinewa

By Shevonne Cleveland, MSC Public Affairs

USNS Mississinewa, one of the Navy's largest fleet oilers was transferred to Military Sealift Command in 1976. Mississinewa was the first of six Neosho-class oilers turned over to MSC to provide replenishment support for the Navy.

The Neosho oilers replaced the older and smaller fleet support oilers, like the USNS Marias and USNS Taluga, both built during World War II as Navy T-3 oilers.

Mississinewa operated primarily on the U.S. East Coast and the Mediterranean under 6th Fleet supporting operations in the Middle East including Operation Blue Bat, a response to the 1958 Lebanon crisis.

Mississinewa was decommissioned Nov. 15, 1976, and placed in service with Military Sealift Command as USNS Mississinewa (T-AO 144) continuing service with a crew of Civil Service Mariners until 1991 and was struck from the Naval Vessel Register in 1994.



USNS Mississinewa (T-AO 144) underway off the coast of Cuba, 1978 (U.S. Navy courtesy photo)

Beans, Bullets, Bandages and Care Packages: Fleet Logistics in the Indo-Pacific

By Petty Officer 2nd Class Christopher Veloicaza, Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific

The U.S. 7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy's largest forward-deployed fleet, with hundreds of ships, submarines and aircraft in the theater on any given day. That steady presence would not be possible without the responsive, resilient sustainment provided by the replenishment team at Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific (COMLOG WESTPAC) / Task Force 73 (CTF 73) and the Military Sealift Command's Combat Logistics Force.

COMLOG WESTPAC/CTF 73, located in Singapore, plans and executes the resupply of food, ordnance, fuel and repair parts for the U.S. Navy's surface ships in 7th Fleet. Their mission requires operating ships across the 52 million square miles of ocean that make-up the fleet's area of responsibility.

The fleet replenishment team is the focal point for the U.S. Navy's combatant ships – the “customers” – the supply ships, and the rest of the logistics chain to arrange replenishments-at-sea events (RAS). The Fleet Replenishment Officer, Lt. Cmdr. Cory Eggers, often works against time, weather and competing demands to ensure ships and Sailors remain ready and on station.

The modern approach to underway replenishments-at-sea (UNREPs) dates back more than 100 years, when the U.S. Navy began rigging hoses between ships to transfer liquid fuels. As a young lieutenant, Chester Nimitz, who would later become a fleet admiral, was a pioneer in the Navy's use of the concept.

As the Navy fully grasped the potential of UNREPs it grew to encompass the replenishment of not only fuel but ordnance, food, parts and personnel.

Capt. Chuck Dwy, the assistant chief of staff for logistics, said the ability to safely conduct UNREPs means that ships can remain on station longer

increasing the fleet commander's operational reach.

“Around the Navy, ships are breaking records for remaining at sea,” said Eggers. “I see that as a great reflection of the outstanding support from our Civil Service Mariners and MSC's Combat Logistics Force ships.”

Dwy said reliable and responsive sustainment in the form of replenishments-at-sea enable the U.S. Navy to be a global presence.

“Every U.S. Navy Sailor out there knows they can rely on our logistics team,” said Dwy. “No matter how rough is the sailing or in spite of a global pandemic, we will get you what you need, the food, the fuel, the ordnance, the parts, to stay in the fight.”

Responsive sustainment is a defining characteristic of CTF 73 and particularly the replenishment schedulers.

“Our goal is to plan out 60-90 days, so we can schedule maintenance, move assets into place and coordinate with foreign governments,” said Eggers. “But weather gets a vote, parts break, and tasking changes, so we are always ready to move on to plan B, C, D and so on.”

As professional problem solvers, the fleet replenishment team understands priorities and will respond to meet changing schedules and to support ship and Sailor needs.

Rear Adm. Joey Tynch, commander of Logistics Group Western Pacific, said whether it's a crucial repair part or a letter from home, every link in the chain is critical when Shipmates are counting on you.

“A great example of responsive logistics is our Christmas Eve mail delivery,” said Rear Adm. Murray Tynch, Commander, Logistics Group, Western Pacific. “One of our aircraft carriers hadn't been able to receive their mail for a few weeks and based on the schedule, wouldn't get a delivery before the holiday. Using everything at their disposal, our schedulers were able to brighten the day for a few thousand Sailors.”

Lt. William Contarino, fuels officer, works with Eggers on the replenishment schedules. The fuels officer is responsible for tracking fuel statuses of all U.S. Navy ships in the 7th Fleet and ensuring adequate inventories and fueling.

Contarino said that fuel's varying global standards and the Navy's stringent requirements make that class of supply one of the most challenging.



Logistics Specialist 3rd Class Cristin Turner sorts mail in the hangar bay of the aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) during a replenishment-at-sea with dry cargo, ammunition ship USNS Cesar Chavez (T-AKE 14). (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Erica Bechard)

Sailors, Civilians Discover Innovative Way to Promote Fitness

By Travis Weger, Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa

Commander, Task Force (CTF) 63's Command Fitness Leaders (CFL), Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Emily Bongolan and Logistics Specialist 1st Class Shilong Zhou, designed an innovative team-based fitness challenge that Sailors from CTF 63 and civilians from Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa could complete individually at home during their own time. (U.S. Navy photo by Travis Weger)



For many, maintaining a fitness routine during the pandemic is proving difficult. Oftentimes alongside inactivity comes unhealthy habits. As military gyms closed and running outside was restricted due to COVID-19 mitigations, maintaining a healthy lifestyle presented new challenges.

The team at Commander, Task Force (CTF) 63 came up with an innovative solution to combat inactivity, a team-based fitness challenge that members could complete individually at home during their own time.

CTF 63's Command Fitness Leaders (CFL), Logistics Specialist 1st Class Shilong Zhou and Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Emily Bongolan, came up with the idea after seeing Logistics Specialist Master Chief Noel Navidad, senior enlisted leader for CTF 63, inspire Sailors online to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

“Master Chief was posting his workouts on social media, and people were congratulating him asking what workouts he was doing,” said Bongolan. “We went to him with the idea of doing a command fitness challenge; he liked it, so we ran with it.”

Zhou and Bongolan put their heads together and developed a plan that was based on the Navy Physical Readiness Test (PRT): pushups, sit-ups, planks, biking and running. Points were awarded for number of sets done or miles completed, and the prize would be bragging rights for the winning team.

To promote inclusion, the team wanted to open the competition up to civilians in the workplace as well.

“It was really cool getting civilians to join since they do not have to complete the PRT,” said Bongolan. “Even though we all work in the same office we are in different workgroups, so this was a great way to get to know everyone outside of work and have some fun.”

Sailors from CTF 63 work side-by-side with civilians and U.S. Navy reservists from Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa, and even though they work in the same workgroup, this provided them an opportunity to bond in a different way.

“I think it was a much-needed activity, to have inclusion of military and civilian culture,” said Steve Drexler, a civilian with Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa. “It was a fun and friendly competition. The best part was to see people's different workouts on the group chat.”

When the team came up with the idea for the competition they thought they would get only a few people to join. After the invitation went out to the command, emails began pouring in asking to join. By the time the competition started 37 participants had joined, which accounted for 70% of people at the command.

Participants were split into blue and gold teams with one CFL per team as the lead. To track progress and inspire others to reach their goals, Zhou and Bongolan each started group chats with their respective teams.

“I would wake up and give small daily challenges to motivate my team,” said Zhou. “I would send them photos of my run to help challenge them.”

The first week, both teams pushed themselves with the blue team pulling ahead with the most points. This kicked the gold team into high-gear, and by the end of the challenge, the gold team won with most overall points.

Overall, the challenge was deemed a success with teams scoring more than 16,500 points, which equaled an average of 13 PRTs per person throughout the month.

Military Sealift Command Hosts Virtual Special Observance for Women's Equality Day

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Approximately 80 service members and civilian teammates attached to Military Sealift Command gathered remotely for the command's first virtual special observance, held in honor of Women's Equality Day, Aug. 24.

Women's Equality Day is celebrated annually in the United States to commemorate the adoption of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920, where women achieved the right to vote in U.S. elections.

"The Women's Right Movement made it possible for (American) women to earn the right to vote and cleared the way for women to be able to hold the same positions as men in the workplace," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Brandi Ziglar, the special observance's mistress of ceremony. "On Women's Equality Day, we commemorate the struggle of women to gain the right to vote."

"The movement for women's rights was launched on a national level in 1848 at what is now known as the 'Seneca Falls Convention,'" according to Ziglar. "Originally advertised as a women's rights convention, voting rights advocates Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony and other activists, or Suffragists as they were known, formed organizations that raised public awareness and lobbied the government to grant voting rights to women."

The theme for the 2020 Women's Equality Day special observance was 'Chipping Away at Inequality.'

"(The Suffragist) efforts culminated in making the right to vote a centerpiece of the Women's Rights Movement," Ziglar stated. "It would take 72 years after the Suffragist Movement began for these groups to emerge victorious with the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution on Aug. 18, 1920, which prohibited denial of any U.S. citizen the right to vote based on sex. On election day that same year, more than 8 million women across the nation voted for the first time."

MSC's Special Observance Committee hosted the special observance virtually to allow its teammates to honor the Suffragists' efforts, while reducing the spread of COVID-19 among the command's teammates.

"For decades, women pioneers have broken down barriers, created new opportunities, championed justice and risked their lives for the greater good of this entire nation," said Capt. Janice Smith, the first African American woman to hold the position of Commodore, Military Sealift Command Atlantic and keynote speaker for the special observance. "Sustaining and proving what these women have accomplished while creating new opportunities for the next generation is important to continue with our progress."

Capt. Janice G. Smith, Commodore, Military Sealift Command Atlantic, addresses service members and civilian teammates, remotely, during MSC's first virtual special observance, held in honor of Women's Equality Day, Aug. 24. (U.S. Navy photo by Bill Mesta)



"The importance of taking time to remember, to recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of women who paved the way for us, cannot be overstated," said Smith. "It is important that the younger generation of women, destined to blaze new trails, know the history of where we are coming from in order to chart the course of their future."

The special observance included a benediction presented by Chaplain Carla Barry, Military Sealift Command's Force Chaplain and a slide show featuring women who currently serve, or have served in the past, in support of MSC's efforts around the world.

"Today, we not only celebrate in remembering women's history, but we call attention to women's continued efforts towards full equality," Smith said. "Women's equality is not possible because of a single woman or a single event or a single moment in time. Every monumental event we have had in our history was preceded by several years of work in the trenches. Years of day-to-day grind with small accomplishments, over long periods of time."

The event also included a presentation produced by the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute to honor Women's Equality Day.

"Women have been serving in the U.S. military for over 245 years, dating back to 1775, during the American Revolutionary War," according to Smith. "Today, women are serving (in the military) in every rank and have the opportunity to serve in every job."

"We have been at this for a very long time," concluded Smith. "Hundreds of years of dedication and resiliency, in the face of unsurmountable odds, has resulted in freedom for women of my generation and future generations, to make our own choices about which careers we would like to pursue."

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

From Leighanne Gerstbrein, Military Sealift Command Health Coordinator

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which is an annual campaign to raise awareness of the disease. Here are a few things you should know...

- Most breast cancers are found in women who are 50 years of age or older. However, it still affects younger women. Approximately 10% of all new cases in the U.S. are found in women younger than 45 years of age.
- Mammograms are the most efficient way to detect breast cancer early. The earlier the better, as it is easier to treat and before it is big enough to cause or feel symptoms.

Most women who get breast cancer do not have history of the disease in their family and have no known risk factors. Check out what you can do to help lower your risk:

- Achieve or maintain a healthy weight
- Exercise regularly
- Do not drink alcohol, or limit alcoholic drinks to one per day.

- If you are undergoing hormone replacement therapy or taking oral contraceptives (birth control pills), talk with your health care provider about the risks and figure out if it is right for you.
- If possible, breastfeed your children.
- If you have a family history of breast cancer or inherited changes in your BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes, talk with your health care provider about other ways to lower your risk.

Remember, staying healthy throughout your life will not only lower your risk of developing all kinds of cancer, but will also improve your chances of surviving cancer if it does occur. We are here for you! For more questions about this or other MSC health promotion programs, contact one of your Health Promotion Coordinators:

CSU-East:
Email: Leighanne.gerstbrein.ctr@navy.mil

CSU-West:
Email: kkutina@millenniumenterprises.net



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Finding the reliefs a place to stay, the team came up with the solution of housing the transiting mariners in the same hotel Bush was staying in. This would give him the opportunity to assist by providing support to the members during their stay.

“As a new employee, being placed in a position to provide guidance regarding MSC’s newly implemented COVID-19 policy and to assist with CIVMAR repositioning was a great opportunity,” said Bush.

At the end of the 14-day ROM, Bush drove the mariners to get tested for COVID-19 at the local Naval Hospital. After all their tests came back negative, he took them to meet their ship in Gaeta, Italy.

A Massive Accomplishment

The team at MSCEURAF and CTF-63 worked closely with MSC Headquarters’ manpower department by submitting travel request approvals, which accounted for several variables including transportation, ROM, testing and logistics.

Travel requests were submitted for every person traveling and required precision logistics and communication between manpower, MSCEURAF and CTF-63 staff.

“Working in the COVID environment has been the most challenging environment I have ever worked in my nearly 30 years of working with MSC,” said Polanco. “I am very proud of the men and women of Military Sealift Command. In the most challenging times, they have done their best to ensure the support of the Navy and sponsors continues.”

The entire process was a lift for the mariners and staff that required constant coordination and support through the Navy Reserves, MSC headquarters, base staff and commanding officers, Naval Supply Fleet Logistics Center, Defense Attaché offices at U.S. Embassies and Greek and Spanish Navies.

With all members completing their ROM and testing negative, CIVMARs, CONMARs and MILDET were safely transported to their ships providing much-needed reliefs during an extremely challenging time.

“The entire process was an incredible amount of work to get everyone where they needed to be amidst ever-changing COVID-19 regulations,” said Commodore, Military Sealift Command Europe and Africa and Commander, Task Force 63 Capt. Frank Okata. “There was an unbelievable amount of teamwork to get our people to their ships. It was not easy but it is always worth the effort to continue our mission of providing outstanding support.” to the fleet.”

RIMPAC from page 1

Prior to tow to the target area, Durham was stripped of contaminants, that could compromise sea life or the ocean’s environment, such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), transformers and capacitors, trash, float-able materials, mercury or fluorocarbon-containing materials and readily detachable solid PCB items. Petroleum was also cleaned from tanks, piping and reservoirs. After several inspections by the Navy Sea Systems Command Inactive Ships Office, the ships were fitted with towing gear and then put into “Zebra” conditions, where all the water tight doors and hatches were opened to allow water to rush in at the time of sinking. All preparations were in line with guidelines required by the Environmental Protection Agency under a general permit the Navy holds pursuant to the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act.

While Durham was being reduced to a shell of its operational self, the crew of Sioux conducted training on hook-up and release procedures and equipment familiarization.

“For some of our crew members this was their first time towing which is why we spent lots of time training prior to the event,” explained Capt. Joel Bruce, Sioux’s civilian master. “We also conducted an inspection of our equipment to make sure it is in good order and conducted an inspection of the towed vessel. The inspection of the towed vessel was to verify safe and seaworthy condition of the vessel, primary and secondary towing arrangements, testing of flooding alarms, and to let some of our crew become familiar with the arrangement of the ship, in case they need to board it during transit.”

According to Bruce, the tow process began by getting Sioux underway and meeting the towed vessel near the Inactive Ships Yard, where the Durham and the tug boat conducted the initial hookup. Assisted by a pilot and other tug boats, Sioux moved into position to hook up the tow. Once connected, both vessels depart from Pearl Harbor. Once outside of the entrance to Pearl Harbor, Sioux payed out wire and slowly build up speed in order to reach the drop location at the appointed time. Once in the target zone, Sioux detached the

tow, ensured it would remain in the target area, and departed to a safe area to monitor Durham, ensuring it stayed in the target area until the SINKEX.

“We do not tow very often and most of the time there are personnel that have never been involved in a towing operation before on board,” said Bruce. “Experience towing is always a good thing. It also gives those who have never connected and disconnected a tow a chance to experience first-hand. RIMPAC happens once every 2 years and this is most often when we are assigned tow missions, so these opportunities really give tug crews hands on experience.”

Both Kaiser and Sioux completed all their missions successfully and without incident, shining a light on the experience, dedication and professionalism of MSC’s crews.

“The continued professionalism of our CIVMARs, our military members and our civilians really shines in exercises like this,” said Varela. “MSCPAC has a great team and I am very proud of the job they have done.”

Fallen MSC Teammates

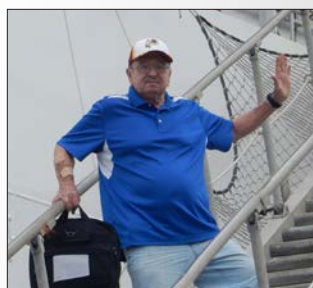


The Lord is my Pilot;
I shall not drift.
He leadeth me across the dark waters
and steereth me in the deep channels.
He keepeth my Log
and guideth me by the star of holiness
for His Name’s sake.
Yea, though I sail amid
the thunders and tempests of life,
I shall dread no danger,
For Thou art with me;
Thy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

Captain J. Rogers
Source: The Mast, September 1948



Service Utility
James Evans
MSC Service:
2010-2020



Third Assistant Engineer
Stephen Devlin
MSC Service:
2002-2020



Port Engineer
John Mosholder
MSC Service:
2013-2020



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