



# SEALIFT

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

FEBRUARY 2017 ISSUE

## FIRST DOWN-RANGE DEPLOYMENT FOR USNS TRENTON



Military Sealift Command's expeditionary fast transport ship, USNS Trenton (EPF 5), gets underway from Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Dec. 20. Trenton departed Virginia to begin its first forward deployment. Trenton deployed to support military operations in the U.S. Sixth Fleet's area of operation. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)

**By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs**

Military Sealift Command's expeditionary fast transport ship, USNS Trenton (EPF 5) departed from Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story to begin its first operational deployment, Dec. 20.

Trenton will be forward deployed to U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa Command's area of operation, supporting Sixth Fleet's efforts to conduct theater security operations and to promote peace, security, and preserve freedom of the seas.

"We are very excited about supporting the team down-range and we are ready to go," said the Trenton's Military Detachment Officer-in-Charge, Lt. Cmdr. Johnny Quilenderino.

"The deployment means a lot to us because this will be the first time the ship is able to perform operational missions and contribute to our military efforts," said USNS Trenton's Master, Captain Susan Orsini. "We

participated in lots of exercises and training evolutions in preparation for this deployment. We worked very hard to ensure we are prepared for this deployment."

The service members who are deployed on Trenton began to arrive on the ship in September and originated from 17 different commands.

"The Trenton team for this deployment came together in a very short amount of time with a highly compressed schedule," said Orsini, "The military detachment and the civil service mariners who crew the ship really 'hit the ball out of the park' getting ready to leave. They all really did a great job."

"Everyone is family aboard Trenton," added Quilenderino. "Our Sailors and CIVMARS all treat each other like family and work great together."

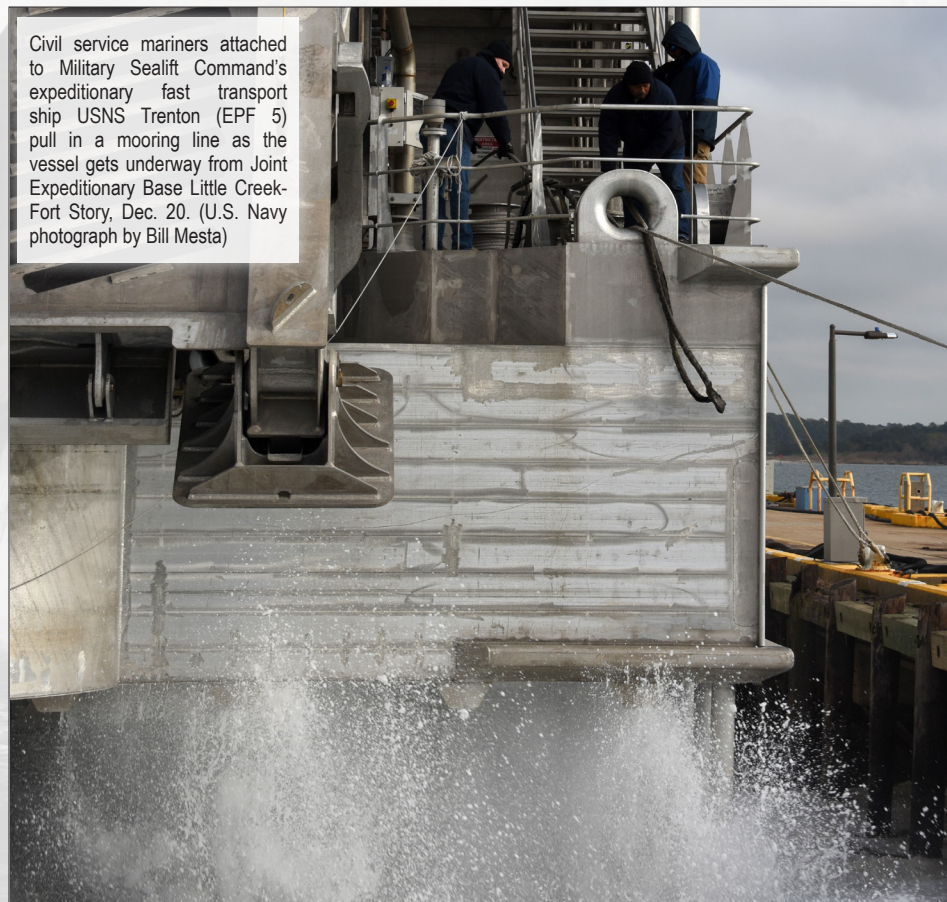
The Trenton is fifth of 12 expeditionary fast transport ships planned for Military Sealift Command.

"The Trenton is going to be operating primarily in the Mediterranean Sea supporting U.S. forces in any way we can," said Orsini. "The ship is going to primarily perform intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions on this deployment."

Expeditionary fast transport ships are versatile, non-combatant transport ships which are capable of transporting 600 short tons 1,200 nautical miles at an average speed of 35 knots. These ships are designed to operate in austere ports and waterways, thus providing added flexibility to U.S. warfighters worldwide.

"The Trenton is very well suited and up to the task to meet our military mission," said Quilenderino. "When the military detachment first arrived we had qualifications to complete and modifications to complete and now we are set to deploy."

The USNS Trenton is one of the Navy's Expeditionary Fast Transport vessels operated by Military Sealift Command. The ship is crewed by nearly 80 U.S. Navy Sailors and civil service mariners.



Civil service mariners attached to Military Sealift Command's expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Trenton (EPF 5) pull in a mooring line as the vessel gets underway from Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Dec. 20. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)

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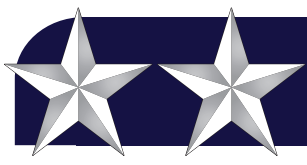
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## HIT THE GROUND RUNNING

From Commander, Military Sealift Command,

The New Year is our time to begin anew and “hit the ground running” in both our professional and personal lives. I am excited and optimistic about the opportunities in front of us this year and our ability to build upon our successes from last year. Right now is that brief opening where we can set a positive course for the coming year, so let’s make any needed adjustments and move forward.

All our actions should continue to support our mission to empower global warfighting capabilities. When we accomplish this mission we will be able to realize our vision of sailing the world’s oceans to provide essential assured logistics and service support to the joint warfighter as the nation’s premier maritime transportation organization. This is our shared vision; a vision every single member of the command should claim ownership of, and take great pride in.

As we step off into the New Year, the following are focus areas that should continue to drive our work efforts: operating in a contested maritime domain, cyber-readiness, the health of our surge fleet, the fiscal environment we are heading into, and ensuring our human capital is best positioned to enable our organization to succeed. Finally, safety should always be a priority focus area, the safety of our mariners at sea and the safe operation of our ships.

My recently released strategic guidance message, or Voyage Plan, is our roadmap to keep us moving in the right direction, and includes our vision, mission, pillars of our organization, strategic themes and our guiding principles. In the coming weeks I will release Navigation Track, or NAVTRACK, which provides operational and tactical direction.

I am firmly committed to transparency, collaboration, alignment, and unity of effort. These are the hallmarks of a great team. It is a unified team effort that will enable us to overcome obstacles in order to accomplish our mission.

It is important to remember that our work directly supports the safety and security of our nation. We can take great pride in knowing we are making a difference every day with our work at Military Sealift Command.

United We Sail,

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

## WHAT IS A QUALITY STEP INCREASE (QSI) AND HOW DOES IT AFFECT A WITHIN-GRADE INCREASE (WGI)?

A QSI is a faster-than-normal WGI used to reward employees at any General Schedule (GS) grade level who display high quality performance.

To be eligible for a QSI, employees must:

- Be below step 10 of their grade level;
- Have received the highest rating available under their performance appraisal system;
- Have demonstrated sustained performance of high quality; and
- Have not received a QSI within the preceding 52 consecutive calendar weeks.

A QSI does not affect the timing of an employee’s next regular Within Grade Increase (WGI) unless the QSI places the employee in step 4 or step 7 of his or her grade. In these cases, the employee becomes subject to the full waiting period for the new step--i.e., 104 weeks or 156 weeks, respectively--and the time an employee has already waited counts towards the next increase.

The employee receives the full benefit of receiving a WGI at an earlier date and has not lost any time creditable towards his or her next WGI.

For additional information on QSIs see: 5 U.S.C. 5336, 5 CFR part 531, subpart E, and <http://www.opm.gov/perform/articles/1999/apr99-7>.

## BEWARE OF FRAUDULENT SMARTDOCS EMAIL MESSAGES

Several myPay customers have reported that fraudulent SmartDocs email messages are being sent that could put your information and finances at risk.

The reported invalid emails contain what appears to be from a valid SmartDocs email address. The originators of these emails have “spoofed” their messages to hide their true origin and placed the SmartDocs address in the “From” line to make the email appear legitimate.

Valid SmartDocs messages from DFAS are always sent in plain text, do not include attachments and do not ask you to send any information in response.

Your email program may automatically convert a valid SmartDocs message into HTML and convert some text into clickable links. DFAS recommends that you do NOT click on any links within any email message. To access a site referenced in an email, open your browser and type the link (URL) directly into the browser.

Don’t get fooled. If you receive a SmartDocs message that contains a link, don’t click on it. If a URL is listed in the message, type it in manually within your browser. Delete unexpected or unsolicited messages that contain attachments or request you to send information back.

## IRS TAX SEASON UPDATE

### Defense Media Activity

Many taxpayers plan their holiday shopping and other purchases on the fact they will get their tax refund from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at the earliest possible date.

In 2017, that may not be the case.

The Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act, signed into law December 2015, requires the IRS to hold tax refunds which include Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC) until February 15, 2017. Also, new identity theft and refund fraud safeguards by both the IRS and individual states may mean some tax returns and refunds face additional review.

### Some Refunds Delayed in 2017

Beginning in 2017 the IRS, by law, must hold the entire refund - even the portion not associated with the EITC and ACTC - until at least Feb. 15. The IRS says this change helps ensure taxpayers get the refund they are owed by giving the agency more time to help detect and prevent fraud.

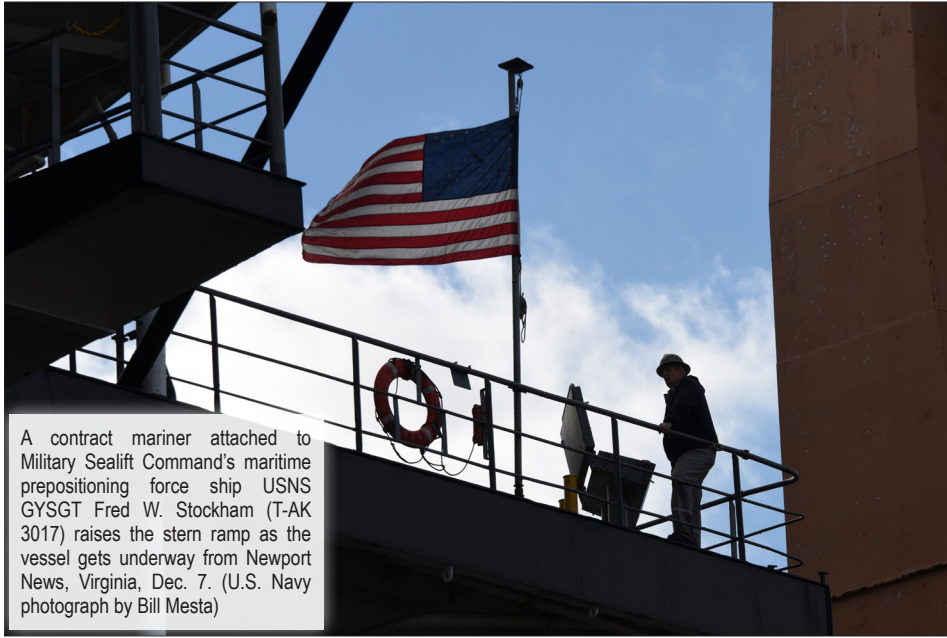
“This is an important change, as some of these taxpayers are used to getting an early refund,” said IRS Commissioner John Koskinen. “We want people to be aware of the change for their planning purposes during the holidays. We don’t want anyone caught by surprise if they get their refund a few weeks later than in previous years.”

As in past years, the IRS will begin accepting and processing tax returns once the filing season begins. All taxpayers should file as usual, and tax return preparers should submit returns as they normally do. Although early filers may not have their refunds issued until at least Feb. 15, the IRS reminds taxpayers most refunds will be issued within the normal time-frame: less than 21 days, after being accepted for processing by the IRS. The Where’s My Refund? tool on IRS.gov and the IRS2Go phone app remains the best way to get the status of a refund.

### Three Things You Need To Know About Your Tax Refund

1. If you file your tax return early and claim the Earned Income Tax Credit or the Additional Child Tax Credit, a new law requires the IRS to hold refunds until mid-February in 2017.
2. The law requires the IRS to hold the entire refund - even the portion not associated with the EITC and ACTC - until at least February 15, 2017.
3. New identity theft and refund fraud safeguards by the IRS may mean some tax returns and refunds face additional review.

# USNS GYSGT FRED W. STOCKHAM BACK IN ACTION



A contract mariner attached to Military Sealift Command's maritime prepositioning force ship USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham (T-AK 3017) raises the stern ramp as the vessel gets underway from Newport News, Virginia, Dec. 7. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)

**By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs**

Military Sealift Command's maritime prepositioning force ship USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham (T-AK 3017) got underway from the CSX piers in Newport News, Virginia, Dec. 7.

This was the first underway period for Stockham since completing its August to November shipyard period in Bayonne, New Jersey.

"While in the shipyards, USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham completed its five-year special survey," said Lora Caldwell of MSC's Strategic Sealift. "Stockham also completed major life cycle upgrades including a replacement of its fuel and ballast valve system, replacement of its engine room control and monitoring system and a gray water modification to provide additional holding capacity to meet environmental regulations in austere locations."

USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham is a maritime prepositioning ship supporting the U.S. Marine Corps.

"Depending on the cargo load-out, Stockham can carry over onethousandtwenty-foot equivalent (TEU) containers or over 253,000 square feet of rolling stock," said Caldwell. "Stockham also carries the improved U.S. Navy lighterage system on its weather deck to support an instream off-load."

"Her Stern ramp can launch assault amphibious vehicles, lighter, amphibious resupply, cargo crafts and is capable of accommodating the landing and refueling military helicopters," added Caldwell. "Stockham recently participated in Precision Aircraft Landing System training with the expeditionary transfer dock USNS John Glenn (T-ESD 2) and is capable of 'skin-to-skin' operations with the ESD class of ships."

Stockham is currently operated by Crowley Government Services and crewed by 30 contract mariners.

"The crew is fully responsible for the operation and maintenance of the vessel," said Caldwell. "This includes day-to-day preventive, corrective and predictive maintenance of all systems."

USNS GYSGT Fred W. Stockham is the oldest ship in the Maritime Prepositioning Force.

"For a ship over 35 years old, it runs exceptionally well and looks outstanding," said Caldwell. "Stockham will be relocating to Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron Three (MPSRON) when it returns to theater and will be immediately supporting exercise Cobra Gold in Thailand."

"Upon departure from Hampton Roads, USNS Stockham transited to Blount Island Command where it will be loaded with USMC prepositioning cargo and deploy to United States Pacific Command," concluded Caldwell.



Military Sealift Command's maritime prepositioning force ship USNS GYSGT Fred w. Stockham (T-AK 3017) gets underway from Newport News, Virginia, Dec. 7. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)

# SECRETARY MABUS NAMES NEW SHIPS



U.S. Navy photoillustration by Petty Officer First Class Armondo)

**USNS PUERTO RICO (T-EPF 11)**

**From SECNAV Public Affairs**

During a ceremony Dec. 14 at the District of Columbia city hall, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus formally announced the first ship of the new fleet ballistic missile submarines (SSBN), formerly known as the Ohio-class replacement, will be named USS Columbia (SSBN 826) in honor of the District of Columbia.

Ballistic missile submarines are critical, stabilizing and efficient elements of the U.S. nuclear deterrence and assurance policy, carrying the majority of deployed U.S. nuclear warheads. Columbia-class SSBNs incorporate advanced technology and will provide the most survivable leg of the Nation's strategic triad.

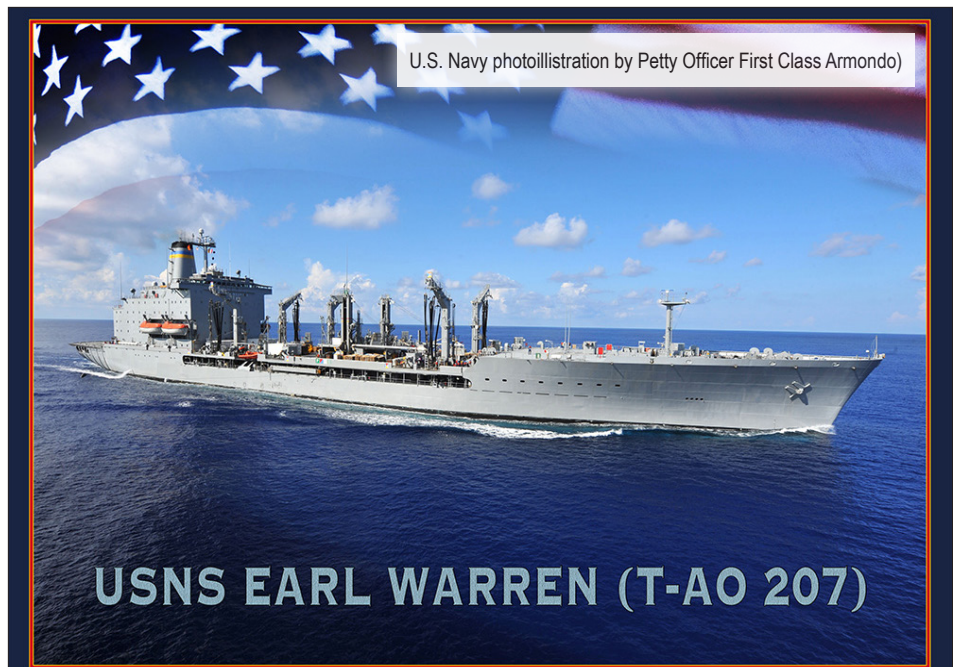
Mabus also announced that the next ship in the John-Lewis class of fleet replenishment oilers, named in honor of U.S. civil rights heroes, will be named USNS Earl Warren (T-AO 207).

The future USNS Earl Warren will be operated by Military Sealift Command and provide underway replenishment of fuel and stores to U.S. Navy ships at sea and jet fuel for aircraft assigned to aircraft carriers. Construction is expected to begin on the Earl Warren in 2019.

Born in 1891 in Los Angeles, Earl Warren served in the military during WWI and later became a county district attorney. He won election to his home state's governorship, holding that position from 1943 until 1953, and was then appointed chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Warren led the Court through many landmark cases dealing with race, justice, and representation. He is credited with helping end school segregation with the court's decision in Brown v. Board of Education in 1954, stating "in the field of public education, the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

The final ship named during the ceremony was the future USNS Puerto Rico (T-EPF 11). The Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF), formerly named the Joint High Speed Vessel (JHSV), is a shallow draft, all aluminum, commercial-based catamaran that is designed for High Speed Intra-Theater Surface Lift and serves in a variety of roles for the military branches to include support of overseas contingency operations, conducting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions and supporting special operations forces.

Austal USA in Mobile, Alabama, will build the new EPF, which will be 338 feet in length, have a waterline beam of 93.5 feet, displace approximately 2,362 tons and operate at speeds of approximately 35+ knots.



U.S. Navy photoillustration by Petty Officer First Class Armondo)

**USNS EARL WARREN (T-AO 207)**



A view of Military Sealift Command's container and roll-on/roll-off ship, USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon (T-AK 3006), conducting Joint Logistics over the Shore operations during the training exercise, Resolute Endeavor II, Dec. 5. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)

## OBREGON; LOGISTICS FROM THE SEA TO THE SHORE

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command's container and roll-on/roll-off ship USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon (T-AK 3006) got underway from Newport News, Virginia, Dec. 4 to support the Joint Logistics over the Shore (JLOTS) exercise, Resolute Endeavor II.

"JLOTS is a critical military logistic ability designed to transport both solid and liquid cargo to shore-side areas which don't have a fixed port facility," according to Brian Hill of MSC's Strategic Sealift. "These exercises work to improve logistics interoperability, communication and cooperation between military components."

During Resolute Endeavor II, Obregon used 20, 20-foot shipping containers and 45 Ro/Ro U.S. Army cargo handling vehicles with trailers.

"Obregon is capable of conducting roll-on/roll-off (Ro/Ro) operations using Gantry or Hungglund cranes to load cargo off shore on to lighterage causeway sections and the U.S. Army LCUs," said Hill.

USNS Obregon is crewed by 31 civilian contract mariners who perform all critical functions required to operate the vessel such as navigation, ship's equipment operation, food preparation and engineering.

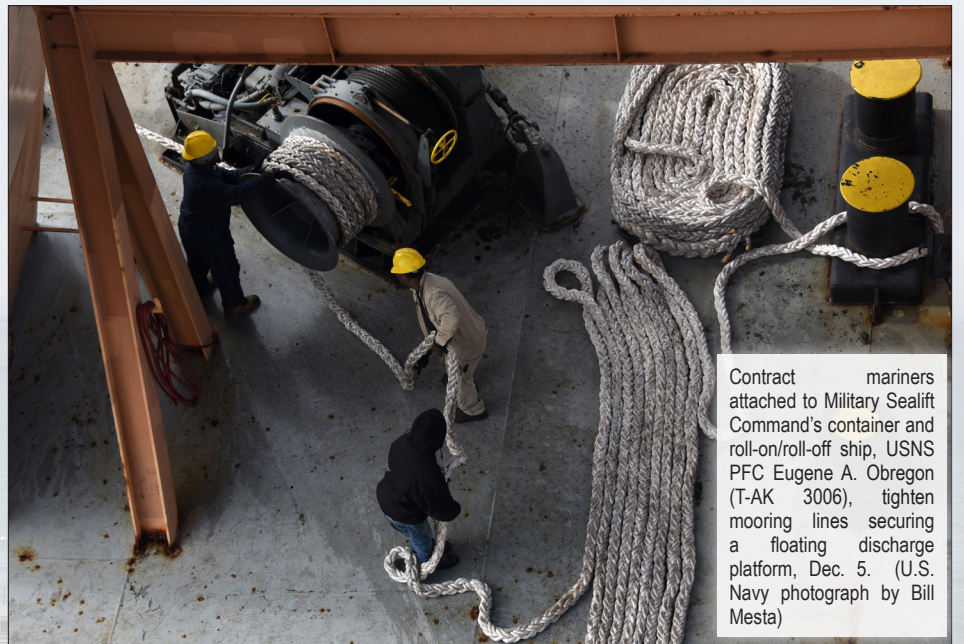
"The Obregon's master was over all in charge of the civilian contract mariners and other personnel aboard," said Hill. "The chief mate and his team managed usage of the Ro/Ro equipment operation and ensured the cranes were being utilized safely and correctly. The mates also ensured Ro/Ro was lashed on deck correctly to be ready for sea."

"The engineers kept all equipment used during JLOTS operation on-line," added Hill. "They were also able to correct equipment if there were any repairs required in a timely manner to avoid delays for the ship's underway time-line."

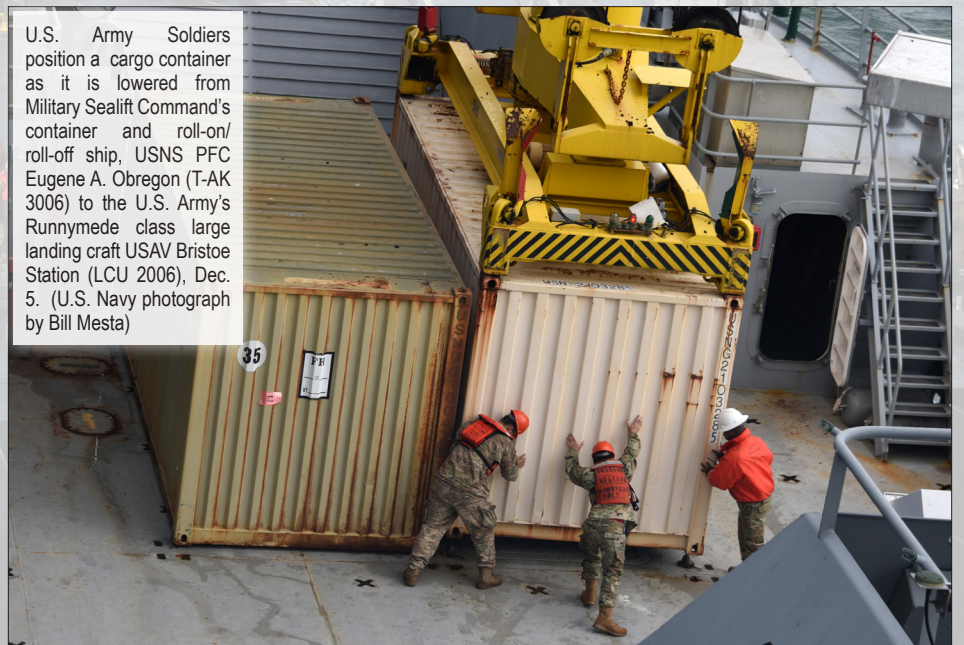
Obregon is one of MSC's prepositioning ships strategically positioned around the globe to support the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Defense Logistics Agency operations and training evolutions.

"Obregon's crew provided their outstanding support during Resolute Endeavor II's JLOTS operations," concluded Hill. "Our team was able to meet the training exercise's plan of action for the JLOTS' agenda and supported the Army and Navy's requirements as a joint effort."

The ship's namesake, Pfc. Eugene A Obregon, was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for sacrificing his life to save that of a wounded comrade during the Second Battle of Seoul during the Korean Conflict. On September. 26, 1950, Private First Class Obregon was fatally wounded by enemy machine gun fire while using his body to shield a wounded fellow Marine.



Contract mariners attached to Military Sealift Command's container and roll-on/roll-off ship, USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon (T-AK 3006), tighten mooring lines securing a floating discharge platform, Dec. 5. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)



U.S. Army Soldiers position a cargo container as it is lowered from Military Sealift Command's container and roll-on/roll-off ship, USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon (T-AK 3006) to the U.S. Army's Runnymede class large landing craft USAV Bristoe Station (LCU 2006), Dec. 5. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)



U.S. Navy Seabees position a floating causeway aft of the Military Sealift Command's container and roll-on/roll-off ship, USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon (T-AK 3006), Dec. 5. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)

# MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND SHARES FIRST-AID KNOWLEDGE WHILE ‘STAYIN’ ALIVE’

Story by Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East

“Ah, ha, ha, ha, stayin’ alive, stayin’ alive.” The sound of a popular 70s song by the musical group The Bee Gees was an unusual but fitting theme to a recent training course that was provided by members of Military Sealift Command Far East (MSCFE) to a Navy-friendly hotel staff here, Dec. 13.

“We provided first aid, first responder, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), automatic external defibrillator training to the staff of the hotel,” said Senior Chief Petty Officer CJ Eison, fleet medical liaison, MSCFE. “We went over all the steps for CPR, scene safety, heat injuries, choking hazards, and the Heimlich Maneuver.”

The hotel, which provides the load of housing support for military personnel here, was the venue for the training and was attended by about 15 members of the staff spread from various departments.

The training was partly facilitated by Monnpapat “Monn” Tudtanapun, who is an executive assistant manager at the hotel but is also a volunteer secretary for the past four years to the president of the Navy League here.

Monn is known within the circles of MSC ships that visit Thailand for either voyage repairs or port visits, as she, along with Peter Thorand, President of the Navy League Siam Council, help mariners and U.S. Navy Sailors organize community relations events and interpret interactions between ship crews and Thai nationals.

As a gesture of goodwill, the MSCFE provided a two-hour refresher course that covered first aid-related topics.

Although hotel staff receive their own annual CPR training, the supplemental course proved to be beneficial for all students who service a mostly international clientele and patron base.

“The training opened our eyes because we have different backgrounds; we may misunderstand (the injured) or maybe we have a different mindset; but with this training, it is clear because we have been practicing,” said

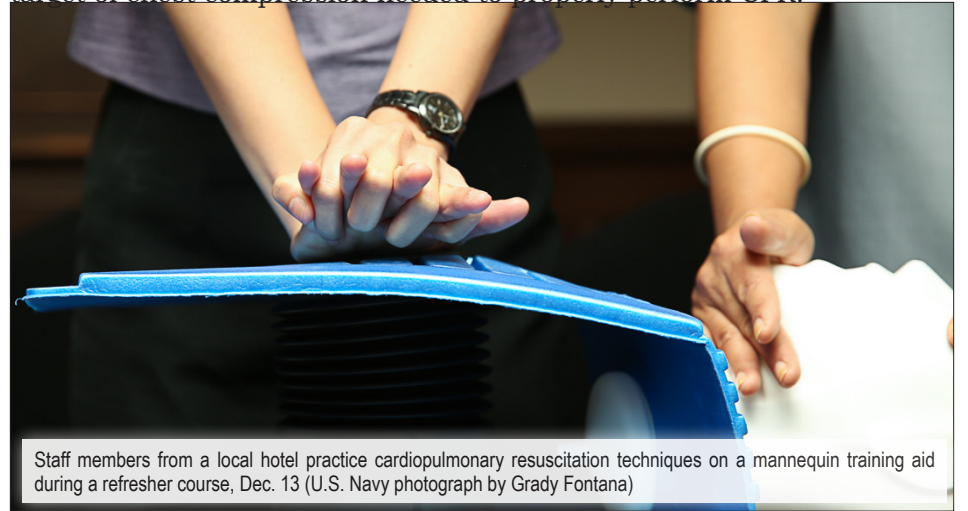
Terapan Chuaprasert, also an executive assistant manager at the hotel. “We learned by visual because we watched the video, we listened to the instructions, we practiced what we learned, and we took notes. I’m sure it will be long lasting for everyone because helping or saving one life is valuable.”

According to Chuaprasert, the course was also a lesson on cross-cultural communication.

“Most of the subject matter is the same from what we have already learned, but some of the wording is different,” said Chuaprasert. “Because we have to communicate with foreigners often, some of our wording and sentence construction may be different and lead to misunderstanding.”

On the beat to “Stayin Alive” students performed chest compressions on the mannequin aids, while chanting along to the chorus in order to achieve the tempo that is required for proper CPR technique.

“That’s one of the training techniques we use to try and get people used to the rhythm needed—how fast you need to do the chest compressions,” said Eison. “If they stick to that it’ll give them that 100-120 per minute target of chest compression needed to properly perform CPR.”



Staff members from a local hotel practice cardiopulmonary resuscitation techniques on a mannequin training aid during a refresher course, Dec. 13 (U.S. Navy photograph by Grady Fontana)



Military Sealift Command's chartered ship M/V Ocean Giant conducts cargo on load operations in Port Hueneme, Calif., in preparation for support of the Antarctica resupply mission, Operation Deep Freeze 2017 (U.S. Navy photograph by Sarah Burford)

## OPERATION DEEP FREEZE

By Sarah Burford, Military Sealift Command Pacific

In Port Hueneme, Calif., under the warm Southern California sun, cargo is being loaded onto the Military Sealift Command charter ship MV Ocean Giant in preparation for delivery to the remote Antarctica outpost of McMurdo Station, in support of the annual resupply mission; Operation Deep Freeze.

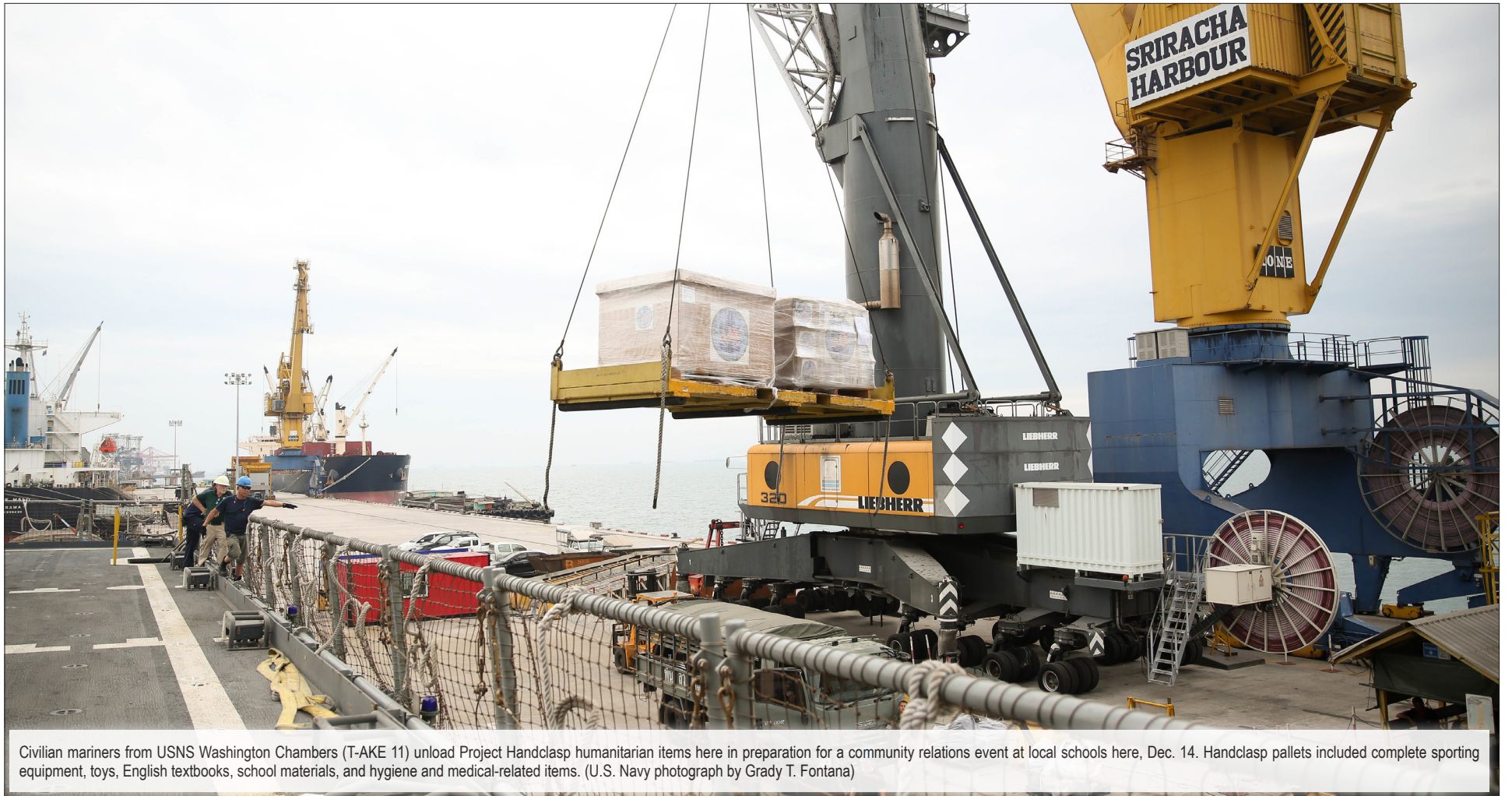
Working 24 hours a day, 444 pieces of cargo, or nearly 7 million pounds of supplies such as frozen and dry food stores, building materials, vehicles, and electronic equipment and parts will be loaded onto Ocean Giant. The cargo makes-up 80 percent of the materials needed by the personnel at McMurdo Station for the winter over period. Following a stop in Christchurch, New Zealand, where the ship will load additional cargo, Ocean Giant will travel to the ice-pier at McMurdo Station, where members of Navy Cargo Handling Battalion ONE will conduct the offload. Before departing McMurdo station, Ocean Giant will be loaded with ice core samples that will be stored on the ship in sub-zero freezer containers. The ice core samples will be delivered to the United States for

scientific study. In addition, retrograde cargo will be loaded onto the ship for transportation off the continent. These include trash and recyclable materials for disposal and equipment no longer required on the station.

On the other side of the world, MSC chartered tanker ship Maersk Perry has departed a fuel pier in Greece with 4.5 million gallons of diesel fuel and 500,000 gallons of jet fuel; 100 percent of the fuel needed for the year. Like Ocean Giant, Maersk Perry will deliver its cargo to the ice pier at McMurdo station.

Operation Deep Freeze is a joint service, on-going Defense Support to Civilian Authorities activity in support of the National Science Foundation (NSF), lead agency for the United States Antarctic Program. Mission support consists of active duty, Guard and Reserve personnel from the U.S. Air Force, Navy, Army, and Coast Guard as well as Department of Defense civilians and attached non-DOD civilians. ODF operates from two primary locations situated at Christchurch, New Zealand and McMurdo Station, Antarctica. An MSC-chartered cargo ship and tanker have made the challenging voyage to Antarctica every year since the station was and its resupply mission were established in 1955.

# MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND DELIVERS HANDCLASP, JOY IN TIME FOR HOLIDAYS



Civilian mariners from USNS Washington Chambers (T-AKE 11) unload Project Handclasp humanitarian items here in preparation for a community relations event at local schools here, Dec. 14. Handclasp pallets included complete sporting equipment, toys, English textbooks, school materials, and hygiene and medical-related items. (U.S. Navy photograph by Grady T. Fontana)

**By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East**

In a sea of children ages 3 to 12, civilian mariner (CIVMAR) volunteers from USNS Washington Chambers (T-AKE 11), Military Sealift Command Far East (MSCFE) Sailors and local Thai volunteers gathered at the Baan Banglamung public school in Chonburi Province, Thailand, to distribute U.S. Navy Project Handclasp humanitarian items during a community outreach event, Dec 15.

About 230 children received two pallets of items that included complete sporting equipment, toys, English textbooks and school materials.

MSCFE Chaplain Glen Kitman, a lieutenant commander in the Navy, and Peter Thorand, the tireless 71-year-old president of the Navy League Siam Council, organized the event.

The USNS Washington Chambers provided 18 CIVMAR volunteers and the opportune sealift delivering Project Handclasp items from a warehouse in Naval Base Guam to Sriracha, Thailand.

“Planning this event has been the biggest job I’ve done since 2000,” said Thorand with a sigh of relief and a chuckle. “I’ve never had this much Handclasp items brought into the country.”

Thorand, a Thailand resident, is involved in planning and executing most community relation (COMREL) events in Thailand associated with the U.S. Navy.

The volunteers from the Chambers were all eager to help; however, for one CIVMAR, volunteering with kids held a very deep meaning.

Cecilia Pena, a yeoman storekeeper on the USNS Washington Chambers and 16-year veteran of Military Sealift Command (MSC), is a native of Cavite, Philippines, which she admits was an environment much like here. When she looks at the children in the school, she sees a young Cecilia.

“My heart really goes out to the kids,” said Cecilia. “Some families really can’t afford certain things. Seeing these kids very happy...it makes me teary eyed. Because I love kids”

After an emotional pause, Cecilia explained a Philippine childhood with pressures of helping out her family, holding various jobs and going to school—all at the same time.

“I guess it’s because I really didn’t grow up being a kid,” said the mother of four adult children. “I missed being a kid.”

But beyond her reflection on the past, she views these COMREL events as an opportunity to bring joy.

“It’s a blessing to give,” said Cecilia, whose husband is a retired Senior Chief Petty Officer and a retired 25-year veteran of MSC. “When I can give, it makes me feel great in my heart.”

Chaplain Kitman shared a similar sentiment.

“My father, who served in the U.S. Navy in the Korean war, taught my brother and me to have a genuine love, concern and compassion for others, said Kitman. “We’re here to serve; not to be served, but to serve the needs of others.”

The event also allowed the U.S. crew to interact with the local kids. The team played schoolyard games and a friendly game of soccer.

After a strenuous game of soccer, which not surprisingly saw the talented and athletic kids victorious over the CIVMAR team, the school shared a lunch, comprised of local Thai food, with the team.

Despite months of planning and accommodating logistics requirements, the event yielded an overall minimal cost to MSC due to the Project Handclasp donated items and opportune sealift. The Washington Chambers is currently in Thailand conducting a scheduled voyage repair.

“This school is comprised mostly of fishermen and pier workers in Sriracha, so a lot of the parents that are represented here today by their children are the ones who are working with USNS ships when they come in for voyage repair status,” Said Kitman. “So we’re giving back to some of the parents and families that help support our ships.”

Baan Banglamun public school was the first stop in many following COMREL events at various schools in the region and local hospitals that provide low-cost care to the public. Throughout the course of a week, the MSC team will impact four other schools, two hospitals and a center for autistic children.



Civilian mariners on USNS Washington Chambers (T-AKE 11) unload Project Handclasp items during a community relations event at the Baan Banglamung public school here, Dec. 15. Handclasp pallets included complete sporting equipment, toys, English textbooks, school materials, and hygiene and medical-related items. (U.S. Navy photograph by Grady T. Fontana)

# GUAM NAVY COMMANDS WIN 2016 ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP FLAGSHIP AWARD

By JoAnna Delfin, Joint Region Marianas Public Affairs

Naval Munitions Command East Asia Division (NMCEAD) Unit Guam and the submarine tender USS Frank Cable (AS 40), home-ported in Guam, were named the 2016 Environmental Stewardship Flagship Award winners for small overseas and large sea categories, respectively.

The award is part of the Navy's Community Service Program and recognizes the best year-round volunteer supported program or special project that promotes education and good stewardship of environmental resources.

Cmdr. Christopher Hagen, NMCEAD Unit Guam commanding officer, said though his command is small, Sailors work hard to not only meet the mission, but to actively engage with the community to forge partnerships.

"The real key to our success is a crew of Sailors [who] truly care about the community and Guam," he said. "The Sailors get as much out of the events as who the events are for."

Command Sailors volunteered more than 1,300 hours of community service from July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016. Volunteers engaged with students from local elementary and high schools, non-profit organizations and village mayors to promote community stewardship, civic responsibility and educational excellence.

"It is always said the military is a big part of the Guam community," Haden said. "But our Sailors recognize that the Guam community is a big part of us. It's not about giving back to the community; it is about being an active part of the community."

During the 2015-2016 award-period, Sailors from Frank Cable engaged with 3,400 members of the local community with various projects from Guam's Department of Parks and Recreation to local villages and non-profit organizations.

Cmdr. Ed Callahan, Frank Cable executive officer, said command Sailors stay motivated during community relations projects because of the positive difference their efforts bring to others.

"Enjoying where you live, who you live near and the places you get to experience is important to the morale and well-being of our Sailors and that is where strong community support makes a positive difference for our Sailors," he said.

Callahan added the award only drives his command to continue to volunteer in the community in the future.

"We realize our work in the community and toward environmental safety is not close to being complete," he said. "We plan to continue to look for new community engagement events."



Yeoman 1st Class Erik Estrada, far right, assigned to the submarine tender USS Frank Cable (AS 40), helps local volunteers pack mulch into bags in the village of Dededo, Guam. Frank Cable Sailors teamed up with volunteers from Island Girl Power, a local community service program for young girls, to clean and renovate a series of parks. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Greg House)

## SECRETARY OF THE NAVY RELEASES NEW OPERATIONS SECURITY (OPSEC) GUIDANCE

By James Magdalenski, Director Naval OPSEC Support Team (NOST) Public Affairs

The Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Ray Mabus just issued ALNAV 072/16 to accompany the Department's new Operations Security (OPSEC) policy, which was released May 5.

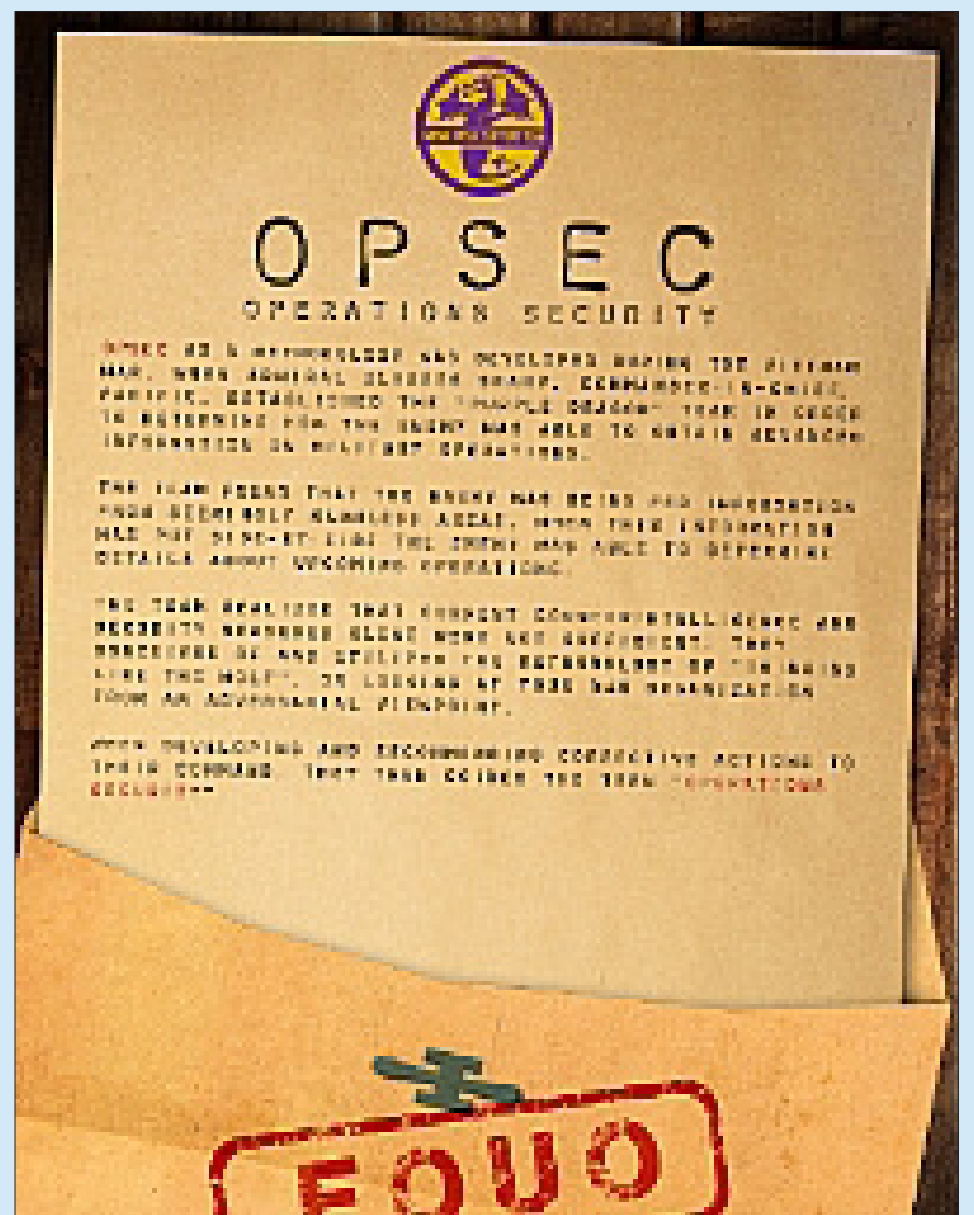
The ALNAV is intended to spread the broad-reaching implications of the new policy to the widest possible operational audience and communicated the provisions to personnel outside the traditional information warfare community.

For example, Navy units and commands that fail to maintain an effective OPSEC program are automatically disqualified from earning a "Battle E" or other operational awards.

Lt. Cmdr. Josh Segal, the department's program manager, stated "Today we face a whole host of new threats and we are our own worst enemy. We have very sophisticated adversaries who watch our every move, with the proliferation of smart phones and social media; we need to be significantly more vigilant in what we say and do."

Other significant highlights in the OPSEC policy (SECNAVINST 3070.2) and ALNAV include specific Commanding Officer responsibilities and accountability requirements for all higher commands to provide oversight of subordinate programs.

The new OPSEC policy includes two useful resources: a self-inspection tool and a DON Critical Information List (CIL). The self-inspection tool is intended to facilitate an internal assessment to determine compliance with Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of the Navy (DON) standards, as well as, provide higher level commands the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of subordinate programs. The DON Critical Information List (CIL) provides an overview of what the SECNAV considers "critical information" across the Department. Each Command is still expected to develop their own CIL based on local and specific operational threats.



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# NAVY LEADERS BRING BACK RATING TITLES

From Chief of Naval Operations Public Affairs

On Dec. 21, the Navy announced that effective immediately, Sailors may continue to be addressed by their Rating Titles.

Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Admiral John Richardson, with the support of Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Ray Mabus and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) Steve Giordano, made the announcement in NAVADMIN 283/16.

“Our Navy needs to be a fast-learning organization - that includes Navy leadership,” Richardson wrote in the NAVADMIN. “The Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority states that our most junior teammate may have the best idea and that we must be open to capturing that idea. We have learned from you, and so effective immediately, all rating names are restored.”

“The SECNAV, MCPON and I, along with other Navy leadership, have had the opportunity to speak with thousands of Sailors during our travels throughout the fleet. The feedback from current and former Sailors has been consistent that there is wide support for the flexibility that the plan offers, but the removal of rating titles was unnecessary and detracted from accomplishing our major goals.”

The rating modernization working group will continue its work on the substantive portion of the rating modernization effort.

“As we looked at rating modernization effort over the past few months, we saw that we could still achieve the positive results we want without changing rating titles right now,” said the Navy’s Chief of Personnel Vice Adm. Robert Burke. “However, modernizing our industrial-age personnel system in order to provide Sailors choice and flexibility still remains a priority for us. Our personnel system has not fundamentally changed since the 1970s, and just like our ships, aircraft and weapons systems, it needs updates to keep pace with a rapidly changing world. We must not shy away from adapting to meet the needs of a 21st century Navy -- including the way we manage our people.”

“As we move forward into the execution stages of the rating modernization, more and more Sailors will have multiple occupational skill sets or ratings,” Burke continued. “Before we get there, we will need to tackle the issue of managing rating names. We will involve Sailors throughout the Fleet and leverage the Rating Modernization working group to figure out how to best do that.”

Sailor 2025 is a set of initiatives collectively aimed at modernizing the personnel system, improving the training process and improving career readiness of the Navy’s Sailors. The program has been a major focus of effort for SECNAV and CNO as they seek to better prepare the workforce for the current and future operating environment.

Sailors have a direct line to provide input to the Rating Modernization working group to make sure their ideas are heard. Send them to [NavyRatingMod.fct@navy.mil](mailto:NavyRatingMod.fct@navy.mil).

## SURFACE NAVY ASSOCIATION NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Charlotte C. Oliver

The Surface Navy Association’s (SNA) 29th annual National Symposium opened Jan. 10 with a video displaying the superior technology and warfare of the United States Navy fleet in Crystal City, Virginia.

The theme this year is “Distributed Lethality: Enabling Sea Control” to highlight the doctrine of distributed lethality as a valuable warfare strategy that enhances Naval power at and from the sea.

The symposium gives Navy leaders, government officials and members of private industry an opportunity to discuss the continued national value of a strong Naval Surface Force.

Vice Adm. Thomas Rowden, Commander, Naval Surface Forces, opened the symposium with “The Surface Navy Today” where he talked of returning to sea control and strengthening our naval forces.

“We, as the United States Navy, are back in the sea control game again in a big way and just how we got here is worth remembering,” said Rowden. He spoke of the Navy’s history and the nearly 600 ships in the 1980s. “It was a powerful Navy able to impose sea control where we needed against

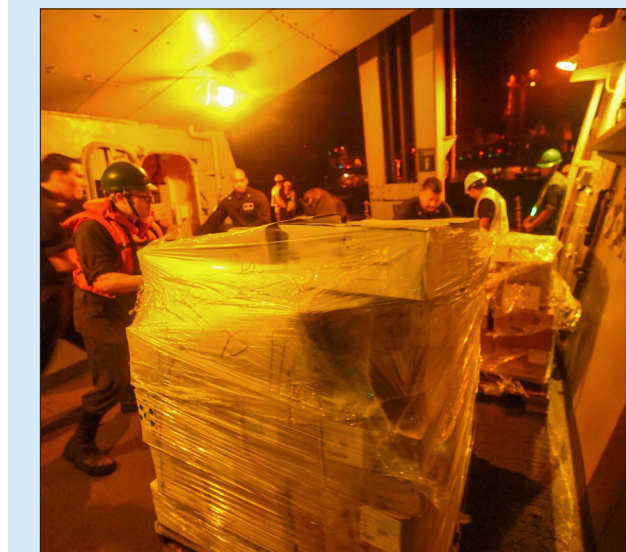
a powerful foe that wanted to deny it. Simply put the world has changed and so must we.”

Fleet and force Master Chiefs from around the Navy hosted an enlisted round table luncheon to discuss issues and gain insight to help the Sailors of the surface Navy. The luncheon ended with remarks by Navy Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Steven S. Giordano.

“As we prioritize readiness and change how we apply fire power and how we fight, the most important component of just how effective we will be, tomorrow and well into the future, is of course our people,” said Vice Chief of Naval Operations, Vice Adm. Bill Moran. “When I say people, I mean Sailors, Navy civilians, engineers, yard workers, academia, industry. Together they form the Navy’s asymmetric advantage.”

The Surface Navy Association was incorporated in 1985 to promote greater coordination and communication among the military, business and academic communities who share a common interest in naval surface warfare and to support the activities of Surface Naval Forces.

The SNA symposium continued through Jan. 12..



**ABOVE** Boatswain’s Mate 2nd Class Chad Beall signals the Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Kanawha (T-AO 196) during a replenishment-at-sea aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Mahan (DDG 72). (U.S. Navy photograph by Mass Communication Specialist First Class Tim Comerford)

**LEFT** Sailors aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Mahan (DDG 72) move food stores as they conduct a replenishment at sea with Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Kanawha (T-AO 196). (U.S. Navy photograph by Mass Communication Specialist First Class Tim Comerford)



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