



SEALIFT

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Military Sealift Command's (MSC) dry cargo ammunition ship USNS Matthew Perry (T-AKE 9) approaches MSC chartered tanker MT Badlands Trader during a consolidated cargo replenishment operation in the vicinity of Okinawa, Japan, Dec. 15. (U.S. Navy courtesy photo)

MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND SHIPS HONE LOGISTICS SKILLS IN CONSOLIDATED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT-AT-SEA

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command (MSC) dry cargo ammunition ship USNS Matthew Perry (T-AKE 9) conducted a consolidated cargo replenishment (CONSOL) at-sea with the MSC chartered tanker MT Badlands Trader in the vicinity of Okinawa, Japan, Dec. 15.

During the CONSOL, Matthew Perry received about 335 thousand gallons of JP5 aviation fuel (7,300 barrels) that will eventually be transferred to Navy combat logistics force (CLF) ships in the Indo-Pacific area of operations.

CLF ships are used to provide logistics support to U.S. combatant ships and allies operating in the region via underway replenishment-at-sea (UNREP) operations.



Military Sealift Command's (MSC) dry cargo ammunition ship USNS Matthew Perry (T-AKE 9) connects fuel lines with MSC chartered tanker MT Badlands Trader during a consolidated cargo replenishment operation in the vicinity of Okinawa, Japan, Dec. 15. (U.S. Navy courtesy photo)

“Naval forces rely on their ability to project power across vast distances. Refueling at sea becomes an indispensable tool in maintaining this force projection capability,” said Commodore of MSC Far East Capt. Robert R. Williams. “It allows U.S. 7th Fleet to stay engaged and responsive in the Indo-Pacific region, ensuring a continuous and formidable presence in a free and open Indo-Pacific region.”

Badlands Trader is one of a few commercial oil tankers that has been chartered and outfitted to pump fuel to CLFs at sea, which allows the CLF ships to stay closer to the fleet.

Typically, CLF ships are required to return to shore to a supply depot to resupply. CONSOL capability is when a specially outfitted MSC-controlled tanker conducts UNREP operations, transferring cargo to CLF ships at sea making CONSOL a cost-effective measure compared to ships returning to port.

“By refueling while underway, naval vessels can extend their operational range and duration, thereby expanding their reach far beyond what would be possible with their aboard fuel capacities alone,” said William A. Andrews, Marine Transportation Specialist, MSC Far East. “This extended range becomes particularly invaluable in scenarios where the proximity of friendly ports is limited or during prolonged missions far from logistical support.”

Although MSC conducts hundreds of UNREPs a year, these events come with risks. To maintain proficiency and enhance interoperability, MSC conducts these CONSOL evolutions at least once every quarter.



Military Sealift Command's (MSC) dry cargo ammunition ship USNS Matthew Perry (T-AKE 9) approaches MSC chartered tanker MT Badlands Trader during a consolidated cargo replenishment operation in the vicinity of Okinawa, Japan, Dec. 15. (U.S. Navy courtesy photo)

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SECNAV DEL TORO NAMES FUTURE MEDICAL SHIP USNS BETHESDA (EMS 1), HONORS MEDICAL LEGACY

From The Office of the Secretary of the Navy

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro honored the history and community of healthcare professionals of Naval Support Activity Bethesda, by naming the future Bethesda-class Expeditionary Medical Ship USNS Bethesda (EMS 1), during a ceremony at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center’s National Intrepid Center of Excellence (NICoE), Jan. 8.

The future USNS Bethesda is the lead ship of the new EMS-class, which Secretary Del Toro formally named during Mental Health Awareness month in May 2023. The name selection follows the tradition of naming expeditionary medical ships after U.S. military hospitals.

“This ship, as well as all the Bethesda-class of expeditionary medical ships, are designed to provide hospital-level medical care in austere environments, and will serve not just our Sailors and Marines, but offer assistance and comfort to our allies and partners around the globe in times of need. Most of all, USNS Bethesda will serve as a beacon of hope, of comfort, of mercy, and of the American people’s enduring friendship to all she supports around the globe,” said Secretary Del Toro.

Maryland Governor Wes Moore and First Lady Dawn Moore joined Secretary Del Toro at the event. First Lady Moore is the ship’s sponsor, whose role is to maintain a lifelong relationship with the ship and crew. Mrs. Moore shared initiatives with supporting healthcare communities and her intent to continue her legacy of work with her sponsorship of the future USNS Bethesda.



First Lady of the State of Maryland Dawn Moore cuts the cake during the future USNS Bethesda (EMS 1), the lead ship of the new EMS class, naming ceremony at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center’s National Intrepid Center of Excellence. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jared Mancuso)

“As a proud member of a military family and the First Lady of Maryland, it is my mission to stand up for those serving in the armed forces and for people who need healing – and the USNS Bethesda represents both pieces of that mission as a ship that will serve and heal,” said First Lady Moore. “I am so honored to have my name associated with the ship and her crew for years to come. As the ship’s sponsor, I look forward to maintaining a lifelong relationship with USNS Bethesda and those who serve aboard.”

“Today is special not just because of the health and support that the USNS. Bethesda will provide to our military, but because of what this ship represents. By bearing the name “Bethesda,” EMS-1 will carry the tradition and pride of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center – a legacy institution that stands for healing, hope, health, and heart,” said Governor Moore. “This is a moment of joy for our state, as USNS Bethesda will travel the world to places where most ships can’t — to carry forward healing in the midst of humanitarian crises and disaster relief for those who need healing the most, and provide healing for those who raised their hands to serve and stepped up to protect us.”

For decades, the name Bethesda has been synonymous to a world-class medical facility serving countless service members. Former Assistant Secretary of the Navy (1913-1920) President Franklin Delano Roosevelt envisioned a Navy Medical Center and in 1937 Congress appropriated funds for construction of a new Naval Medical Center, with groundbreaking on the site June 29, 1939, bringing to life what became the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) and National Institutes of Health to Bethesda.

“As a part of its storied evolution, Naval Support Activity Bethesda is proud to have grown to support the more than 40 tenant commands dedicated to the healing of military members and their families. It’s only appropriate that the name Bethesda be used as the name for new Expeditionary Medical Ship and the name of the first ship in its class, EMS 1. Future USNS Bethesda will carry on this tradition of excellence and represents an incredible evolution in expeditionary medicine,” Capt. Alan Christian, Commanding Officer, NSA Bethesda.



First Lady of the State of Maryland Dawn Moore speaks during the future USNS Bethesda (EMS 1), the lead ship of the new EMS class, naming ceremony at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center’s National Intrepid Center of Excellence. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jared Mancuso)

Located just north of the Nation’s Capital in Bethesda, Maryland, Naval Support Activity Bethesda is the home of the world renowned Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, the flagship center of military medicine, and Uniformed Services University, dedicated to training medical professionals for careers in the Department of Defense and the Public Health Service.

“The USNS Bethesda truly represents a significant step in our Navy’s ability to provide expeditionary medical support to our forces across the distributed maritime environment,” said Rear Adm. Darin Via, the Navy’s 40th Surgeon General. “This ship—and its sister ships—will serve as the backbones of future missions, allowing us to deliver agile and responsive medical care whenever and wherever needed. The naming of the USNS Bethesda remains a testament to our unwavering commitment to the well-being of our forces. It symbolizes the strength, resilience, and compassion that our great Navy exemplifies. We express our deepest gratitude to all those who have contributed—and those who will contribute—in the creation of this remarkable ship. And on behalf of Navy Medicine, I extend my deepest thanks to all those who have had the honor of serving at Bethesda and helped build this institution’s proud legacy of healing through their selfless dedication and compassion.”

Bethesda-class expeditionary medical ships are designed as a dedicated medical ship that optimizes hospital-level medical care in support of distributed maritime operations (DMO). EMS will feature a shallow draft enabling greater reach and allowing direct access to shallow austere ports, while also providing a flight deck that accommodates military helicopters. This design provides a full range of medical capabilities including triage/critical care, three operating rooms, medical laboratory, radiological capability, blood bank, dental, mental health, OB/GYN and primary care, rapid stabilization and follow-on evacuation of multiple casualties and combat search and rescue including recovery at sea. The primary mission of the EMS as a high-speed forward-deployed medical ship is to provide rapid responsive sea-based and near-shore hospital level critical care, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, non-combatant evacuation operations and special operations. The EMS is designed to respond and provide care at a more rapid pace than their predecessors, USNS Mercy and USNS Comfort, sailing at speeds of at least 30 knots with a range of 5,500 nautical miles at 24 knots.



Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro names the future USNS Bethesda (EMS 1), the lead ship of the new EMS class, during a ceremony at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center’s National Intrepid Center of Excellence. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jared Mancuso)



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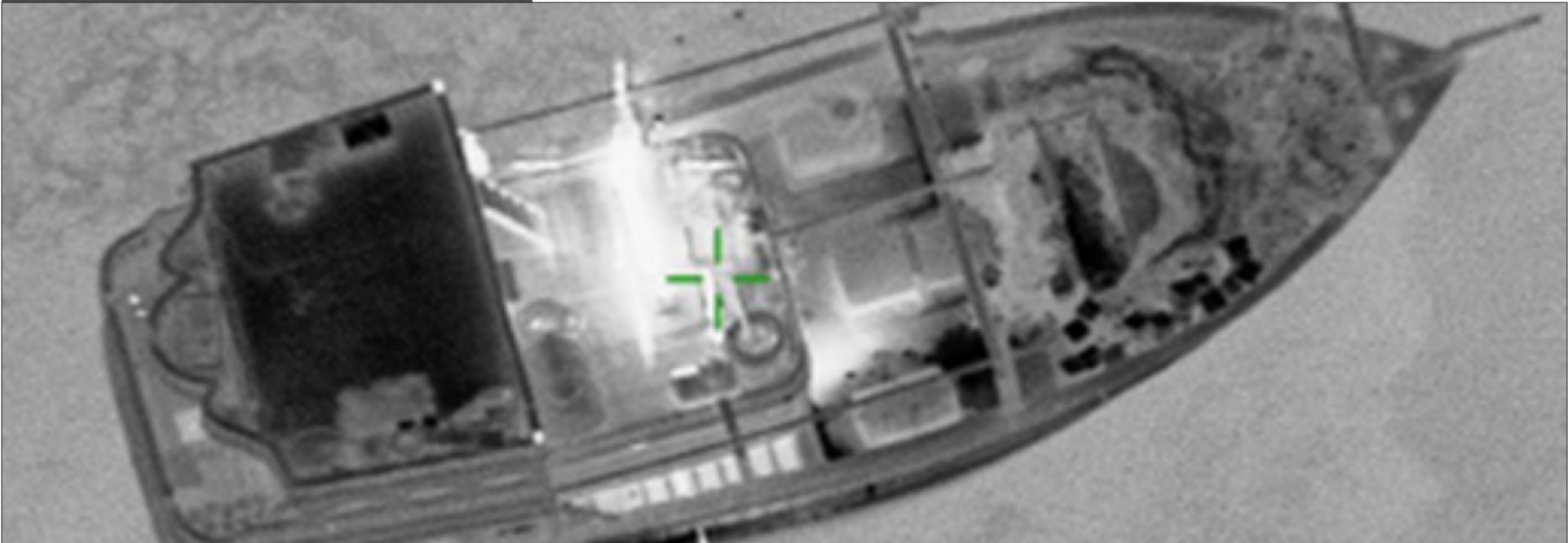




LEARN MORE ABOUT REFERRAL BONUSES

U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND SEIZES IRANIAN ADVANCED CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS BOUND FOR HOUTHIS

From U.S. Central Command Public Affairs



U.S. CENTCOM seizes Iranian advanced conventional weapons. On Jan. 10, 2024, a dhow was identified, and an assessment was made that the dhow was in the process of smuggling. The expeditionary sea base USS Lewis B Puller (ESB 3) was vectored to conduct flag verification. (U.S. Central Command Public Affairs Courtesy Photo)

On January 11, while conducting a flag verification, U.S. Central Command Navy forces conducted a night-time seizure of a dhow conducting illegal transport of advanced lethal aid from Iran to resupply Houthi forces in Yemen as part of the Houthis’ ongoing campaign of attacks against international merchant shipping.

U.S. Navy SEALs operating from the expeditionary sea base USS Lewis B Puller (ESB 3), supported by helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), executed a complex boarding of the dhow near the coast of Somalia in international waters of the Arabian Sea, seizing Iranian-made ballistic missile and cruise missiles components. Seized items include propulsion, guidance, and warheads for Houthi medium range ballistic missiles (MRBMs) and anti-ship cruise missiles (ASCMs), as well as air defense associated components. Initial analysis indicates these same weapons have been employed by the Houthis to threaten and attack innocent mariners on international merchant ships transiting in the Red Sea.

This is the first seizure of lethal, Iranian-supplied advanced conventional weapons (ACW) to the Houthis since the beginning of Houthi attacks against merchant ships in November 2023. The interdiction also constitutes the first seizure of advanced Iranian-manufactured ballistic missile and cruise missile components by the U.S. Navy since November 2019. The direct or indirect supply, sale, or transfer of weapons to the Houthis in Yemen violates U.N. Security Resolution 2216 and international law.

Two U.S. Navy SEALs previously reported as lost at sea were directly involved in this operation. The two missing SEALs were identified as Navy Special Warfare Operator 1st Class Christopher J. Chambers and Navy Special Warfare Operator 2nd Class Nathan Gage Ingram, both of whom were serving with a U.S. West Coast-based SEAL team.

The dhow was deemed unsafe and sunk by U.S. Navy forces. Disposition of the 14 dhow crew-members is being determined in accordance with international law.

“It is clear that Iran continues shipment of advanced lethal aid to the Houthis. This is yet another example of how Iran actively sows instability throughout the region in direct violation of U.N. Security Resolution 2216 and international law,” said General Michael Erik Kurilla, “We will continue to work with regional and international partners to expose and interdict these efforts, and ultimately to reestablish freedom of navigation.”



U.S. CENTCOM seizes Iranian advanced conventional weapons. The packages were opened aboard the dhow and advanced conventional weapons were identified. The items were immediately verified as safe by ordnance professionals. (U.S. Central Command Public Affairs courtesy Photo)

USNS ARCTIC RECEIVES FIRST FUEL MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE AWARD

By LaShawn Sykes, Military Sealift Command Atlantic Public Affairs

The crew of Military Sealift Command’s (MSC) fast combat support ship USNS Arctic (T-AOE 8), the Navy’s largest combat logistic ship, accepted its first-ever, Fuel Management Excellence Award, Dec. 15.

Recognized for being the best-of-the-best in the Afloat Capitalized Fuel Category, Arctic received its award as part of calendar year (CY) 2022 Excellence in Naval Fuel Management Recognition Program. This established program promotes excellence in fuel management and recognizes personnel and activities making the most significant contributions to Navy and Marine Corps fuel operations.

With MSC’s Director of Logistics Mr. Rick Adside on hand to read the award citation, MSC’s Director, Maritime Operations Mr. Christopher D. Thayer presented the award to Arctic’s Master, Capt. Dale P. Cramer who accepted the award with much pride and admiration for his ship and crew.

“Receiving awards always feels good because it helps boost ship’s morale and gives those involved a sense of pride for their hard work and dedication,” Cramer said.

While the Arctic crew took great pleasure in celebrating the ship’s achievement, Cramer said, there were four crew-members from the Supply, Deck, and Engineering cargo teams who were responsible for administering and managing the ship’s fuel operations in CY22. Those crew-members who deserve a big thank you, he said, are Supply Officer Susan Clayton, Junior Supply Officer Sherri Golden, and Cargo Officers Gabrielle Marionakis and Benjamin Bailey.

Despite facing some fierce competition, Arctic was able to take its first win over both MSC and U.S. Navy ships in the Afloat Capitalized Fleet Category (Defense Fuel

Supply Points), because Arctic excelled in the areas of fuel quality surveillance, safety, fuel accounting, and training, Adside said. In addition to executing 103 logistical support services with U.S. Navy and foreign navy ships, transferring 7,006 pallets of critical repair parts, mail, and general consumables, the Arctic crew safely delivered more than 25 million gallons of diesel marine fuel and JP-5 aviation fuel. “Having an excellent fuel management program benefits efficiency and productivity and, more importantly, ensures long-term sustainability. I am so blessed to have such an experience and dedicated team,” Cramer said.

What makes Arctic an invaluable asset to the Navy’s fleet is its speed, ability to carry all the essentials to replenish Navy ships, and its capacity to keep pace, with the carrier battle groups at sea. Because of the ship’s speed, it can rapidly replenish Navy task forces while carrying more than 6.5 million gallons of bulk petroleum, 1,800 tons of ammunition, 250 tons of dry cargo, and 400 tons of refrigerated cargo.

Arctic is part of MSC’s Combat Logistics Force program, composed of 14 dry cargo and two fast combat ships (USNS Arctic and USNS Supply). Arctic is crewed by 170 Civil Service Mariners (CIVMARs) and a detachment of aviation personnel from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 7.

While at sea, Arctic has maintained an excellent record in providing exceptional on-time logistics services to the Navy’s fleet. The ship uses two proven underway replenishment-at-sea services – connected (CONREP) and vertical (VERTREP). Both methods can be conducted one at a time or at the same time. A CONREP involves two or more ships, steaming side by side, using hoses and tensioned wire ropes to transfer fuel, ammunition, supplies, and personnel. A VERTREP is the ability to supply seaborne vessels by helicopter.

MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND HOLDS FIRST ENLISTED NAVY RESERVIST SYMPOSIUM

By Hendrick Dickson, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command hosted a four-day symposium for its Navy Reserve Force, Nov. 2-5, at Naval Station Norfolk so that Navy Reserve enlisted Sailors gain a better understanding of the command’s mission.

More than 100 Reservists attended the symposium, which included 40 hours of Reserve unit training, MSC 101 – Ship Program Manager classes, Job Qualification Requirements and general military training. MSC Deputy Commander Rear Adm. Jeffrey Spivey and Force Master Chief Steven Bosco also addressed the Sailors.

The symposium allowed Reservists to connect with MSC’s active duty Sailors during joint command quarters, led by MSC Chief of Staff Capt. Daniel Broadhurst. They also held joint physical fitness training sessions.

“We began to plan the symposium earlier in the year with the intent to bring Sailors here to train together,” said MSC Far East Command Senior Chief William O’Connell. “The training was invaluable to gain a better understanding of MSC, while providing an opportunity for MSC Sailors to learn from other units and fellow enlisted Sailors from across the country.”

MSC Headquarters Command Senior Chief Lynita King said many of those in attendance were newly assigned to MSC and were not as familiar with the command’s mission. The symposium gave those Reservists a firsthand look at how MSC operates.

“We’ve never had an enlisted symposium where we brought Reservists to MSC to get together and see what we do and how we function,” she said. “We had some who have only been with MSC for less than a year and had no idea of the magnitude of the role MSC plays in the overall defense of our nation.”

MSC has more than 900 Reserve members who augment the headquarters staff and area commands. They support units including; Expeditionary Port Units that provide port opening and management capabilities and Cargo Afloat Rig Team units that augment Combat Logistics Force during operational surges.

MSC Force Master Chief Steven Bosco said this symposium helped to build bridges between the Reserve force and the more than 6,500 Civil Service Mariners (CIVMARs), civilian support staff and active duty service members at MSC.

“Now more than ever it is important for the MSC team to work together,” said Bosco. “We are a very diverse team consisting of CIVMARs, civilian personnel and military. Our Reserve component is at least two times larger than our active duty competent. With that in mind, a large percentage of our Reservists are enlisted and often don’t get to hear or have input on their responsibilities when called to fight.

This symposium was all about aligning the team to the mission and how vital a role our Reserve component plays.”

The highlight of the symposium was a tour aboard expeditionary transfer dock vessel USNS Montford Point (T-ESD 1) where Sailors learned about the vessel’s mission and toured the bridge, engineering spaces and other areas. The tour left an impression on the group– to two members in particular.

“The Montford Point crew really did a great job showing what it is like to be a mariner,” said King. “They were really excited about their job. From that tour, we actually got two Sailors who are interested in joining and want to be mariners now.”

USNS Montford Point is crewed by contract mariners employed by Ocean Shipholdings Inc.

With the success of the first symposium and positive feedback, MSC plans to make the symposium an annual event and perhaps expanded it to MSC Pacific in the future.

“Our intent is to continue this event yearly and host it on the West Coast as well to accommodate the maximum number of Sailors,” said O’Connell.



USNS Montford Point (T-ESD 1) contract mariner Mike Long talks about the capabilities of the expeditionary transfer dock vessel with Military Sealift Command Reserve enlisted Sailors in the Engineering Control Room during a ship tour. More than 100 Reserve Sailors attended a four-day symposium hosted by MSC at Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia. It was the first time MSC held a symposium for its Reserve Sailors to help them gain a better understanding of the command’s mission. (U.S. Navy photo by Hendrick Dickson)

USNS HENRY J. KAISER ARRIVES IN SAN DIEGO FOR DUTY OILER OPERATIONS

Sarah Cannon, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command Pacific (MSCPAC) welcomes fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser (T-AO 187) back to San Diego. Kaiser will assume the role of duty oiler, providing logistics services to the ships of the U.S. 3rd Fleet.

The first ship in the Henry J. Kaiser-class of fleet replenishment oilers, Kaiser arrives in the area following tasking in the Hawaiian Islands Operating Area (HIOA) as the duty oiler. Prior to sailing east, the 39-year-old ship passed its largest material inspection with flying colors and remains ready for tasking.

The 677-foot Henry J. Kaiser operates with a crew of 70-100 Civil Service Mariners, as part of the MSC fleet, delivering jet fuel, diesel fuel, lubricating oil, as well as fresh and frozen food, equipment, mechanical parts, and other items.

Upon arrival in San Diego, the ship immediately loaded diesel ship fuel and 203 pallets of food, mail and comfort items, before getting underway to provide logistics services to Navy ships off the coast of Southern California.

“We are very happy to have Henry J. Kaiser back in the San Diego area,” said Capt. Micah Murphy, commander, MSCPAC. “Having a duty oiler back on station enables us to resume providing outstanding logistics services while also lessening the burden on the La Playa fuel farm and San Diego Port Operations teams who have been going above and beyond in trying to fill the void our absence created over the last six weeks.”

Henry J. Kaiser will serve as a duty oiler in the region, increasing capabilities and fleet service in the region until her next maintenance availability.



Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Henry J. Kaiser (T-AO 187) arrives at the La Playa fuel pier in San Diego. Kaiser assumes the role of duty oiler, providing logistics services to the ships of the U.S. 3rd Fleet. (U.S. Navy photo by Sarah Cannon)

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MSC RESERVISTS SUPPORT OPERATION DEEP FREEZE 2024 LOAD-OUT

By Sarah Cannon, Military Sealift Command Pacific Public Affairs



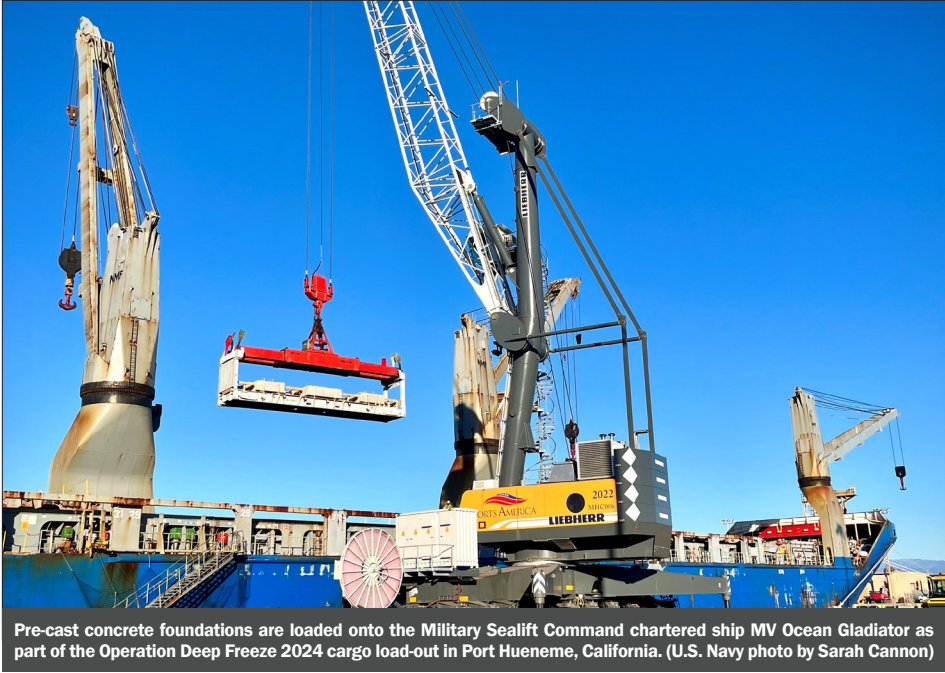
Navy Reservists from Military Sealift Command Pacific’s Expeditionary Port Unit (EPU) 114 are conducting cargo operations in Port Hueneme, California, overseeing the load-out of supplies and equipment which are being loaded onto the Military Sealift Command charter ship MV Ocean Gladiator in preparation for delivery to the remote Antarctica outpost of McMurdo Station, in support of the annual resupply mission Operation Deep Freeze 2024.

Serving as liaisons between the Navy and the crew of the ship and the stevedores on the pier, the EPU 114 Reservists are coordinating the load-out of 407 pieces of cargo, consisting of containers filled with mechanical parts, vehicles, construction materials, office supplies and electronics equipment, and mobile office units; supplies needed for the year’s survival at McMurdo Station, Antarctica.

According to Cmdr. Timothy Cushmanick, EPU 114’s Commanding Officer, the morale among the six-member Reserve team is high, something he attributes to the mission itself, and to the fact that this year’s mission will be completed before Christmas, unlike past years when it was conducted during the holiday.

“Everybody is excited to support the mission, because it is so different than anything we normally do, but also because we will be home for the holidays!” He explained. “You can feel the excitement talking to the ship’s master and crew. They really want to be on this mission and to go to Antarctica. ODF is truly one a one of a kind thing for all of us, and we all feel privileged to be a part of it.”

Loading cargo into the 545-foot Ocean Gladiator requires advanced planning. Weight differences in cargo, as well as the types of cargo loaded and the storage issues require a specific load order, which is followed to the letter to ensure an



on time departure. Because of this, the reservists have worked with members of the MSCPAC Operations team as well as Ocean Gladiator’s crew, port workers, stevedores and members of the National Science Foundation and Ports of America.

“This mission is supporting real-world operations, and not a table-top scenario type exercise like we as reservists normally do,” said Cushmanick. “This is a fantastic opportunity for all of us, because we are working as a new team, with organizations we don’t normally work with. This mission is special, because of the length of it. As the mission is nearly two weeks long, we are able to really get to know all the players, especially the ship’s crew, their capabilities and their needs. These are things we can take with us into other missions.”

Navy Reservists are used to working in new environments with a team they have not met before, but that does not mean it is easy. Working as a new team can have its own set of challenges. To make the transition into the ODF mission easier, the EPU-114 team began communication through electronic means weeks ago, getting to know each other, and identifying strengths of each member. While they had not worked as a team before reaching Port Hueneme, they did have a familiarization with each other.



“Working electronically before the mission set the stage for working together,” said Cushmanick. “We might not know each other physically, but we did know each other’s names and a little bit of their personalities, which definitely makes the first couple of days easier.”

Ocean Gladiator will depart Port Hueneme later in the week. Following a stop in Christchurch, New Zealand, where the ship will load additional cargo, it 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 Gladiator 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.

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 and its resupply mission were established in 1955.

NAVY ACCEPTS DELIVERY OF USNS CODY

By Team Ships Public Affairs

The U.S. Navy accepted delivery of the first Flight II Expeditionary Fast Transport vessel, USNS Cody (EPF 14), Jan 11.

EPFs are designed to operate in shallow waterways and are capable of a wide range of activities. These versatile, non-combatant transport ships are used for the high-speed transportation of troops, military vehicles, and equipment.

“The delivery of the first Flight II EPF is a significant milestone. The ship’s enhanced medical capabilities will ensure that it provides critical support to our sailors and marines, while still performing its other mission sets,” said Tim Roberts, Strategic and Theater Sealift Program Manager, Program Executive Office (PEO), Ships.

Flight II EPF vessels have added medical mission afloat capabilities. The ships can also transport approximately 419 short tons and travel 1,200 nautical miles at an average speed of 33 knots. Each vessel includes a flight deck to support day and night aircraft launch and recovery operations. The ships are capable of on/off-loading heavy equipment and vehicles such as a fully combat-loaded Abrams Main Battle Tank.

Austal USA is also constructing two additional Flight II vessels, the future USNS Point Loma (EPF 15) and EPF 16.

USNS JOHN ERICSSON DONATES, DELIVERS SUPPLIES, BUILDS HOLIDAY CHEER

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East



Crew members of fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Ericsson (T-AO 194) visited the Social Development Center in Olongapo City, Philippines, to participate in a community outreach event during a routine port visit at Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority at Olongapo, Dec. 13. (U.S. Navy photo by Navy Lt. Jamil A. Khan)

Members of Military Sealift Command’s (MSC) fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Ericsson (T-AO 194) and MSC Far East visited the Social Development Center in Olongapo City, Philippines, to participate in a community outreach event during a routine port visit at Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority in Olongapo, Dec. 13.

A team of 13 CIVMARs from John Ericsson visited the center to deliver donations from the crew of John Ericsson that included toys, clothes, snacks, and supplies.

“It was heartwarming to see how the civmars went out of their way to make these girls feel special,” said Navy Lt. Jamil A. Khan, chaplain, MSC Far East in Singapore. “When the kids met Americans, they were giddy with excitement. The mariners treated the girls like princesses for a couple of hours; it was special to watch.”

The Social Development Center is a local governmental agency that services disadvantaged youth in crisis and is designed to care, protect, rehabilitate and integrate them back to society.

There were 26 girls between the ages of 4-19 years-old at the community outreach event. The crew from John Ericsson donated cash and purchased pizza, rice, juice, soda, board games, toys, ramen noodles, candies and hygiene products.

“When I heard about the community relations event, I knew I had to go because it hit close to home,” said CIVMAR Deontre Peoples, Ordinary Seaman assigned to USNS John Ericsson. Peoples stated that he was not a stranger to hardship, as well. He was taken in and raised by his grandmother since 10, when no one else cared.

Peoples went to the local shopping mall immediately after learning about the community outreach event and purchased a brand new pair of shoes, clothes, several bags of chocolate, and food to donate.

According to Peoples, providing the kids with essential resources (and comfort items), supports their basic needs, and improves their quality of life. It’s a way to contribute directly to making a difference in someone’s life.

“I was glad to put a smile on all the kids’ faces just before the holidays because you never know when these kids will be able to experience that again,” said Peoples. “Moments like these strengthen the relationship we have with the people here in Olongapo and the region.”

Aside from sharing a meal, the kids opened up to the civmars and asked about life in the U.S. The kids were interested in what part of America each civmar was from.

Then, after lunch the girls performed a couple songs and demonstrated their sincere appreciation by giving each of the crew a personal thank you card.

“These types of community events are crucial for fostering connections, mutual support, and solidarity within a community,” said Khan. “They build a sense of belonging and shared identity. We walk into a room full of strangers and leave with new friends, and memories that motivate us to continue finding ways to support when we can in the future.”



Civil Service Mariner Manuel Ocampo, Able Bodied Seaman aboard the fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Ericsson (T-AO 194), poses for a photograph with a child at the Social Development Center in Olongapo City, Philippines, during a community outreach event, Dec. 13. (U.S. Navy photo by Navy Lt. Jamil A. Khan)

PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP 24-1 CONCLUDES MISSION STOP IN THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

By Ensign Lacy Burkett, Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific

Multinational service members participating in Pacific Partnership 2024-1 (PP24-1) departed the Republic of the Marshall Islands aboard the hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19), Nov. 14, following a 14-day mission stop in the island nation.

“Pacific Partnership has brought together people from different backgrounds, cultures and expertise to work hand-in-hand, fostering understanding and building lifetime connections,” said the Honorable Ladie Jack, the mayor of Majuro. “Through our collective efforts, we have achieved remarkable milestones and made a positive impact on the lives of our countless individuals.”

This was Pacific Partnership’s fifth visit to the Republic of the Marshall Islands since its first visit in 2007. Service members from the United States and Australia worked with Marshallese on a range of events including humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) seminars, engineering projects, medical engagements and host nation outreach events.

“I am grateful to have the chance to work alongside our friends here in the Republic of Marshall Islands,” said U.S. Navy Capt. Brian Quin, mission commander. “Kommol tata to the Marshallese people for inviting us to their country and for a successful first stop of many during Pacific Partnership 24-1. These enduring bonds of friendship and trust that we have put together across this mission are the real reward of this visit.”

Members of PP24-1’s medical group sailed aboard RMIS Liwatoon Mour, the Marshallese hospital ship, for 4-day mission where they worked side-by-side with Marshallese medical providers conducting a tuberculosis eradication campaign in Aur Atoll.

“The success of this joint effort to bring critical health testing and treatment to the people of Aur represents the best of what our two nations can achieve when working

together toward common goals, such as containing the scourge of tuberculosis,” said U.S. Embassy Chargé d’Affaires Lance Posey.

This effort held extra significance because it was first time in Pacific Partnership history that U.S. medical personnel operated from a host nation’s hospital ship.

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U.S. Navy Cmdr. Brittany Powell and Lt. Cmdr. Jaslyn Bushong prepare a Marshallese patient for Manual Small-Incision Cataract Surgery aboard the hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) while anchored in Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, during Pacific Partnership 2024-1, Nov. 11. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Gavin Arnoldhendershot)

MSC Blast from the Past: USNS Taluga T-AO 62

In May 1977, USNS Taluga (T-AO 62) conducted it’s 1000th replenishment at sea with USS Kitty Hawk (CV-63) off the coast of Southern California.



To celebrate the milestone, USS Kitty Hawk’s mess department baked a cake for the crew of Taluga and delivered it by replenishment line with congrats from the commanding officer Capt. Ned Hogan and the Kitty Hawk crew.

USS Taluga (AO-62) was laid down under a Maritime Commission contract on Dec. 23, 1943, at Sparrows Point, Maryland, by the Bethlehem Steel Co. The ship was launched July 10, 1944, delivered to the U.S. Navy in Norfolk, Virginia, on Aug. 25, 1944, and commissioned the same day.

Taluga was a Cimarron-class fleet oiler acquired by the U.S. Navy during World War II, served primarily in the Pacific theatre of operations, and provided petroleum products where needed to combat ships. Taluga was awarded four battle stars during World War II, four during the Korean War, and six campaign stars during the Vietnam War.

USS Taluga was transferred to Military Sealift Command in May of 1972 and was the first MSC fleet support oiler. Initially, USNS Taluga was deployed to the Western Pacific and manned with a civilian mariner crew of 105, and a 16-member military detachment to handle communications. The advantages of having a civilian crew were favorable and proved highly productive since the mariners were experienced professionals able to perform a variety of shipboard tasks. In addition, the overall cost for the ship’s operation was about half the cost of a military-manned oiler, \$3.6 million a year as compared to \$6.6 million.

USNS Taluga continued to carry out numerous missions for MSC and was officially struck from the Naval Vessel Register in 1992.

FEBRUARY IS AMERICAN HEART MONTH

By Stephanie Rusnak, Military Sealift Command Health Promotion Program

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both women and men in the United States. When we take care of our hearts as part of our self-care, we set an example for those around us to do the same. Every February, we celebrate American Heart Month by motivating Americans to adopt healthy lifestyles to prevent heart disease.

Practicing self-care can keep our hearts healthy. Here are some healthy habits you can adopt to keep yourself healthy this year.

- Eat healthy
- Stay active
- Stay at a healthy weight
- Get quality sleep
- Quit smoking
- Control your cholesterol and blood pressure
- Drink alcohol only in moderation
- Manage stress

Are you at risk for heart disease? Anyone can get heart disease, but you’re at higher risk if you:

- Have high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or diabetes
- Smoke
- Are overweight or have obesity
- Don’t get enough physical activity
- Don’t eat a healthy diet

Your age and family history also affect your risk for heart disease. Your risk is higher if:

- You’re a woman over age 55
- You’re a man over age 45
- Your father or brother had heart disease before age 55
- Your mother or sister had heart disease before age 65

Good news! The Health Promotion program at MSC offers the following free services to its civilian mariners to help prevent heart disease:

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

HPP is here for you! We encourage you to connect with us for any questions or concerns you may have. EMAIL: Stephanie.rusnak.ctr@us.navy.mil

MSC.USFF.NAVY.MIL



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“With a CONSOL there’s considerable risk and everyone has to know their place and exactly what they’re doing,” said Andrews. “The two ships are about 50-60 meters away from each other, which is very close. By conducting these operations regularly, we can focus on safety while increasing our expertise.”

Commander, Task Force 73, in coordination with MSC Far East, refuels and resupplies deployed naval forces, along with regional allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific.

MSC Far East ensures approximately 50 ships in the Indo-Pacific Region are manned, trained, and equipped to deliver essential supplies, fuel, cargo, and equipment to warfighters, both at sea and on shore.



A view of Military Sealift Command’s dry cargo ammunition ship USNS Matthew Perry (T-AKE 9) at sea. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Greg Johnson)

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“Tuberculosis is one of the leading causes of death in the Marshall Islands,” said Lt. Hoel Rupert David, medical planner, family nurse practitioner. “Because of that, a Marshallese medical team conducts a Tuberculosis eradication campaign to the various Atolls each year. This was the first year our medical staff was able to do an expeditionary medical operation to assist with the campaign. It was such an honor to work alongside the Marshallese medical staff and make a difference in people’s lives.”

Aboard the Mercy, Pacific Partnership’s optometry team worked side-by-side with the local ophthalmologist, Dr. Meena Pathak, to screen patients and remove cataracts from 42 Marshallese patients.

“We were able to give the gift of sight to patients who were previously debilitated due to cataracts, which are the most common cause of treatable blindness in the world,” said U.S. Navy Cmdr. Gabriel Valerio, head of surgery for this year’s Pacific Partnership. “This surgery returns these patients to being productive members of society and frees family caretakers to do the same. This increases the quality of life, not only for the patient, but also for the entire family and community. I am honored and blessed to have been a part of the Marshallese citizens’ care.”

Additionally, the optometry team provided 795 pairs of eyeglasses to community members as part of their vision health efforts.

The 3-day Pacific Partnership 24-1 humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) workshop centered on climate change and Marshallese disaster response capabilities. More than 30 members of the Majuro first responder community, including representatives from the National Disaster Management Office, Port Authority, Sea Patrol, Marshall Island Police Department and the Directorate of Civil Aviation, participated in the workshop, which culminated in a Mass Rescue Operations Exercise in the Majuro lagoon.

“We practiced coordinating boats to do search patterns and pull victims out of the water,” said James Gardner, a planner with the U.S. Coast Guard. “With the three different search areas covered, we were able to locate all 25 mannequins.”

This was especially valuable for the newer members of Sea Patrol, for whom this kind of skills training was a new experience, said Nate Lometo, a member of the Marshall Islands Sea Patrol.

U.S. Navy Amphibious Construction Battalion 1 (ACB 1) led engineering projects at Long Island and Rita Elementary Schools. Working alongside local volunteers, including American and local staff from the U.S. Embassy, the Seabees repaired sinks, rewired electrical systems, replaced outdoor lighting, painted classroom interiors and exteriors, and installed new ceiling lights and fans, handrails, and toilets.

“The ability to work with the local schools here in Marshall Islands and to make a difference for the kids here was truly a rewarding experience”, said Lt. j. g. Nelson Demarest, the engineering planner for Pacific Partnership 24-1. “This has been one of the highlights of my naval career.”

Across 32 host-nation outreach events, more than 3,600 Sailors, students, and residents of Majuro came together to foster bonds of friendship through concerts, sports days, and religious events.

Now in its 19th iteration, Pacific Partnership is the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific. Pacific Partnership works collaboratively with host and partner nations to enhance regional interoperability and disaster response capabilities, increase security and stability in the region, and foster new and enduring friendships.



U.S. Navy Sailors pose for a photo with local U.S. military veterans aboard the flight deck of the hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) during a tour while the ship was anchored in Majuro Atoll, Republic of the Marshall Islands, in support of Pacific Partnership 2024-1, Nov. 11. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Gavin Arnoldhendershot)

FALLEN MSC TEAMMATE



Christopher Darnell Jones
MSC Supply Management Analyst
MSC Service:
2016-2024



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.



Military
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Editor, Sealift, Military Sealift Command
471 East C Street
Norfolk, VA 23511-2419
Commercial: 757-443-2839
DSN: 646-2839
EMAIL: lewis.w.mesta.civ@us.navy.mil

CommanderRear Admiral Philip Sobeck, USN
Director, Public Affairs Tom Van Leunen
Deputy Director, Public AffairsJillian Morris
Editor.....Bill Mesta, Norfolk, VA
Visual InformationBrian Suriani, Norfolk, VA
Visual Information.....Ryan Carter, Norfolk, VA
Writer Jennifer Hunt, Norfolk, VA
Writer Hendrick Dickson, Norfolk, VA
WriterDave Griesmer Norfolk, VA
Writer LaShawn Sykes, Norfolk, VA
WriterSarah Cannon, San Diego, CA
WriterGrady Fontana, Singapore

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