



SURFACE SITREP



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Forging Close Relationships with Allies is a Force Multiplier

An Interview with Admiral Mark Ferguson, USN Commander, Allied Joint Force Command, Naples; Commander US Naval Forces, Europe and Commander, US Naval Forces, Africa

Conducted by CAPT Edward Lundquist, USN (Ret)

Can you share with us your synopsis of the major challenges that face you today in your job as Commander of Naval Forces Europe and Africa?

My position is unique in that I wear three hats. First, I'm Commander of Joint Force Command, Naples, under NATO. I have an 800 person staff based in Lago Patria. We are an operational level headquarters and I'm the current NATO Response Force Commander for the year. I am also the Operational Commander for NATO Forces in Kosovo, numbering about 4,500 troops. That consumes a lot of my time and attention, planning operations across the NATO AOR.



NAPLES, Italy (March 6, 2015) Adm. Mark Ferguson, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, delivers closing remarks at the 2015 Combined Force Maritime Component Commander (CFMCC) Flag Course Africa at Naval Support Activity Naples. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Daniel P. Schumacher)

What does 'sitting NATO Response Force' mean?

Gen. Phil Breedlove is the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. He has two operational headquarters – one of them is in Brunssum, Netherlands, commanded by a German general, General Hans-Lothar Domrose, and the other is my headquarters in Naples, Italy. In alternate years, we command the NATO Response Force. If a crisis happens, or an Article 5 action (Article 5 states that an attack on a NATO ally will be considered as an attack against all members, and all members will take the actions they deem appropriate to respond to the attack), and a NATO operation is undertaken,

the headquarters that is certified for that year is the one that steps up and serves as the operational commander.

I would imagine that force would be prepared and certify that year for what the anticipated threat would be.

In November, we conducted a very large exercise called Trident Juncture 15. Our air component commander was a French General based in Lyon, the maritime component commander was Spanish, the Special Forces were Polish, and the land component was the German Netherlands Corps. We went through this process last year to

be certified to assume command of the NATO Response Force for calendar year '15. General Domrose in Brunssum is preparing his command to get certified for next year. He'll do that in August/September, and then he'll assume command of the NATO Response Force in January next year. This experience is unique for a surface officer and quite broadening in its command aspects, in the sense that I have a NATO staff of 800, with NATO flag and general officers from allied nations, and command air, land and maritime forces. Also here at Naples, I have Vice Adm. Jamie Foggo and the U.S. 6th Fleet, along with the Naval Forces Europe and Africa staff. So, I time-share between the two commands as I execute my responsibilities. It's challenging.

“This is a dynamic and volatile theater that encompasses the full range of security threats from maritime security assistance all the way up to the very high end of warfare, especially the Ballistic Missile Defense ships deployed in support of NATO.” - Admiral Mark Ferguson, U.S. Navy

So that’s one hat.

My second hat is Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Africa; and then the other one is Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe. So those are the three responsibilities. And I have three bosses: I look to the CNO for my Naval Forces Europe Title 10 responsibilities; I have responsibilities to General Breedlove in his U.S. European Command hat; and General David Rodriguez as AFRICOM. On the NATO side, we report to General Breedlove as Allied Command Operations, or ACO, in his NATO command role. It’s a pretty demanding environment, and certainly the broadest and most demanding operational command assignment that a 4-star could have for a U.S. Navy command. It’s not at the level of a combatant commander, but it’s pretty demanding because it’s multinational, commanding ground forces, working with allies within NATO and the U.S. COCOM structure at the same time.

Just trying to keep all of those straight, that’s a challenge.

Very true. The operational challenge is this is a dynamic and volatile theater that encompasses the full range of security threats from maritime security assistance all the way up to the very high end of warfare, especially as you look at the Ballistic Missile Defense ships deployed in support of NATO. So as we look around, certainly you have Europe facing increasing threats to its stability – from Russian actions in the Ukraine, their annexation of the Crimea, and the challenges of operating in the Black Sea. We’re seeing increased pace of operations in the Russian navy on both of the NATO flanks. Second, I would say that we’re concerned with the proliferation of ballistic missiles and the proliferation of advanced surface-to-surface missiles in theater, and in the Eastern Med operating area in particular. Another threat is the chronic social, and economic conditions leading to unstable states in North Africa, in the Levant, with the presence of violent extremist organizations. We are seeing extremists and foreign fighters returning from Iraq and Syria into Europe. This instability in the Levant and Africa is creating a mass migration problem for Italy, Spain, and Greece, a challenge that the European Union is grappling with on NATO’s Southern flank. And on the Africa side, we operate on both coasts. Our base in Djibouti supports military forces operating there, from

both an ISR (intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance) and a support standpoint. On the other coast, in the Gulf of Guinea, we do a series of exercises and work with our partners to stem piracy and illicit trafficking. So when I look across the theater, we may be conducting ISR support; a non-combatant evacuation of an embassy; you may see a ship engaged in a counter-piracy operation; or you may have an Aegis guided missile destroyer in a BMD patrol station in defense of NATO, or performing high end operations within the NATO or the U.S. command structure.



TANGIER, Morocco (Jan. 15, 2015) Adm. Mark Ferguson, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, salutes the Royal Moroccan navy honor guard as he departs Ksar Sghir Naval Base. Ferguson visits Morocco to build on the enduring partnership the U.S. Navy has with the Royal Moroccan Navy and discuss mutual maritime security issues with his counterparts. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Corey Hensley.)

It’s a dynamic environment, and the nature of threats and the closeness of the distances, means they may escalate very quickly and require a very rapid response. I would also add that we’re becoming increasingly concerned with the cyber threats through our networks because we rely very heavily on those for command and control, particularly when you look over the recent actions of certain cyber actors. We look very carefully at the vulnerability and defense of our networks, and being able to fight through a cyber-attack as we go forward. I think that’s a lot to handle just on the U.S. and the naval forces side.

We have naval forces that deploy to you. Do they have to adapt to that to meet this threat? Or do they come well prepared to meet whatever mission that you assign to them?

The rotational forces that deploy are very well trained and very



CASABLANCA, Morocco (Jan. 14, 2015) Adm. Mark Ferguson, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, takes a tour of the bridge on the Royal Moroccan navy frigate Mohamed VI (701). Ferguson is visiting Morocco to build on the enduring partnership the U.S. Navy shares with the Royal Moroccan Navy and to discuss mutual maritime security issues with his counterparts. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Corey Hensley)

well prepared; and the BMD forces are prepared when they arrive. Among the services, the Navy is actually growing in Europe. The BMD site in Deveselu, Romania is going to come online by the end of this year, Poland will come online in '18. And so we're growing in numbers and in high end capability. I look forward to getting all four ships—the last two arrive this year at Rota—they will then become experts here in the theater, in the operations, in the geography, and how they maneuver in the space. The big bonus is they're able on a consistent basis to work with our allies and partners. They may find themselves doing an exercise up north in the Baltic; they could then be operating with the French carrier; or they could be up in the Black Sea. Their continued presence here as an FDNF will bring the additional knowledge and experience with the AOR over-and-above the rotational deployers that are just here for a few months before heading back home.



SOUDA BAY, Greece (Oct. 23) Adm. Mark Ferguson, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa, speaks to Sailors during an all-hands call at U.S. Naval Support Activity Souda Bay. Ferguson visited Souda Bay to thank Sailors stationed there for supporting forward naval forces and to strengthen the enduring partnership with Hellenic Navy counterparts. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jeffrey M. Richardson)

The people I've talked to on Donald Cook and Ross say they're already seeing that. They're already gaining that familiarity with the commanding officers of the ships of the other navies that they meet, and the base commanders where they call.

I think we're forging very close relationships with our allies here—that's the force multiplier. But even more importantly, when our ships routinely operate in the Eastern Mediterranean and become familiar with the environment, or they transit a few times into the Black Sea and back out, and they begin to work with allies such as the Ukrainians, Romanians or the Turkish navies in the Black Sea, they become more proficient in their operational skills. There's nothing better to build proficiency than those FDNF deployments on a routine basis. The four crews in Rota will become the experts in the AOR. I hope to build upon what they come with in theater, to be able to address the new threats that we see proliferating with their ideas and innovation.

So they're here first and foremost for BMD, but they retain their ability to conduct the full spectrum of combat operations?

We intend to keep the ships certified for full spectrum operations. They will get time to operate with carrier strike groups that come through; for example, they will participate in the Joint Warrior series of exercises at the high end with our NATO allies. I think these ships have to be ready and be on-call to respond to the full spectrum of missions. It will not just be BMD.

We've had BMD-capable ships in 6th fleet, but now we're going to have four of them. So how does that alter the naval presence in the region?

One FDNF ship represents three ships that Fleet Forces Command would have to generate and put through the cycle in order to be over here for a certain level of deployment. The four allow me to keep some on the BMD stations in the eastern Med; allow me to do maintenance and training; and support work with our allies and

partners in other missions for NATO or AFRICOM as those missions arise—supplemented by other rotational forces from the U.S. Having the ships based in Rota builds the expertise and gives me a pool of forces to draw on for more than just BMD.



DEVESELU, Romania (Feb. 19, 2015) Rear Adm. Katherine L. Gregory, chief of civil engineers for Naval Facilities Engineering Command, discusses construction plans and progress with U.S. Army Corps of Engineer representatives during a tour of the ongoing construction of permanent facilities at Naval Support Facility (NSF) Deveselu. NSF Deveselu is Navy Region Europe Africa Southwest Asia's latest tool for providing efficient and effective shore service support to United States and Allied Forces operating in Europe, Africa and Southwest Asia.. (U.S. Navy photo by Lt. j.g. Alexander Perrien)

Some of the other nations are acquiring some pretty good air warfare surface combatants. Norway and Spain have Aegis ships. The Netherlands and the UK air defense ships have some BMD capability. When we take our four ships, do we plan to work with the other navies that have tracking capability, or perhaps could shoot another ship's tracking solution? Is that all part of the calculus?

Our vision is that as we integrate this capability into the NATO alliance, and that as our allies come online, we' will do a series of joint exercises. As you look at the flight times and the threat and how the ballistic missile engagement cycle will take place in a few minutes, and the proliferation of these missiles around the world, it means we must work with our allies to build this capability and capacity in Europe. The foundational piece is the NATO Alliance, because it gives us standards for inter-operability, the common procedures, and the framework of nations that contribute to it.

BLACK SEA (Oct. 23, 2014) Romanian Navy special forces conduct a visit, board, search, and seizure exercise aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Cole (DDG 67). The U.S. Navy relies on cooperation and collaboration with allies and partners. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communications Specialist 2nd Class John Herman)



The key, then, is interoperability?

Yes, the key is for us to share the information, data, and procedures. It's going to require an investment on the part of all our allies to help bring our systems into alignment. At the president's direction, Aegis ashore will be operational by the end of this year in Romania; and in '18 we will have it online in Poland. Combined with the ships here, we'll provide pretty good coverage. We certainly want the allies to be part of this solution set with us.

It's interesting that this global BMD challenge, especially here in Europe and NATO, is being addressed by the Navy. The mission is being done by Sailors.

Exactly. If you'd have asked me 15 years ago about the prospect of sending Navy watch standers into Romania and Poland to operate from a land-based Aegis site, I could not have envisioned that mission. This validates the vision of the surface warfare officers who went before us who saw this threat, and then responded with the industry and the technical community to produce a solution that works. This is a solution delivered by the surface Navy for a very real problem we're facing globally.

Do the Europeans look upon this approach that the United States is offering and is investing in is going to deliver them that sense of security that they want?

I can't speak to that directly, but I can say that in the communications I have there is a realization that this is a threat we have to be concerned about. At the ministerial level, they're very appreciative of this contribution by the United States. But what I see is there is a realization that this threat is for real and that nations have to make the investments in the training, people and systems to sustain this for the defense of Europe.

You have an overarching mission of achieving 'maritime domain awareness.' We need to know what's out there so that we can

find the counter, the piracy events, the criminal events, the illegal migrant events, perhaps the terrorists trying to move out a returning Jihadist, it all comes under knowing that maritime domain picture and being able to share it with others so that if we need to we can act on it. Can you talk about how we're going to achieve and improve that maritime domain awareness, in your AOR?

NATO has asked us to look at crafting a strategy for the "Strategic Direction South," also referred to in some papers as the Southern Flank of NATO. That's essentially looking to the challenges in the Mediterranean that you've outlined: migration, violent extremist organizations, unstable states, particularly the networks that can move people, contraband, and terrorists. So the way that we're looking at this and working through it is several-fold. One, there

through that. So the first piece is the collaboration in sharing information to make sure that we can legally do it within the framework and that the nations agree. Second, is about the question of how do we choose a response mechanism. NATO may not be the first responder, in many of these cases, to deal with a given situation. It may be the host nation or the EU. Also, as I think about action in the maritime domain, we generally respond at sea to the symptoms of a larger problem taking place ashore. There are usually more significant issues ashore in a failed state or in a conflict zone, and it may be another organization that has the lead for the resolution to solve the problem ashore.

Looking back to the days of the Cold War when, you had a pretty well-defined threat axis, in your view, is this really what's been the major change since the end of the Cold War?

After 12 years of conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan and the focus on those areas and conflicts, and with the growing shift in the Pacific, Europe has been seen by some in the past as a transit point or logistic supply point to get to another theater, usually Central Command. What I see changing is there's a desire by our allies to return to high end warfighting as a result of Russian actions in Ukraine and on the flanks of NATO – that's number one. Second, I see a recognition of the proliferation of advanced anti-access missile systems targeted on naval forces and, in particular, the proliferation of ballistic missiles. And third is the instability of states and the violent extremist organizations that present unique security challenges to the U.S. and our allies. In the past we didn't really need to focus on the violent extremist organizations and the impact of these transnational threats to the southern flank of Europe. I think those threats are gaining pre-



BLACK SEA (July 11, 2014) The Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Vella Gulf (CG 72) leads the ships participating in Exercise Breeze, the Bulgarian-led multinational training exercise. Vella Gulf, homeported in Norfolk, Va., is conducting naval operations with partners and allies in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility in order to advance security and stability in Europe. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Edward Gutierrez III)

has to be synergy between various national intelligence collection pieces, what NATO does, and what other multilateral organizations do, such as the EU. Since that's where the information is, we have to figure out the methodology and the modalities in order to share that information. The second piece is that there's an overlapping set of authorities and mandates – statutory, legal, and regulatory – within Europe that enable some and constrain other organizations from taking action. So, there's a mechanism that we have to think through in terms of collaboration, coordination, de-confliction, and then integration and response. It may not be NATO or the United States that acts in some cases. It may be the European Union, which coordinates the EU border management policies and mechanisms. It may be a national response from Greece, Italy, Spain or France, for example. We're still working

eminence now. And I would say that NATO is wrestling with both the Eastern security challenge with Russia; and at the same time dealing with this serious threat on the southern flank. It's quite a change from the Cold War period.

With Russia, are we looking at sort of a return to the Cold War?

I hope that's not the case. In my view, and if you were to ask our allies their view, it is that the best condition for the future is a Europe whole, free, and at peace where Russia is a partner, as opposed to an opponent or an antagonist. A lot of that has to do with the decisions that Russia has made in her behavior and actions. What we're doing on the alliance side is 'how do we adapt the Alliance?' What we're seeing are the new threats presented, the hybrid-warfare model we're seeing out of Russia.

I don't think anyone wants a return to a Cold War, and I don't think that's necessary, but I also believe that the alliance has to stand unified and firm in the face of aggressive behavior, and I believe the measures we're taking are doing that.

In your area of operations, you're getting some forward-deployed ships that will be here all the time, you're getting the transiting ships, and you'll also have ships that deploy here. Can you characterize the readiness of those ships that are coming to you? The type commanders are responsible for manning and training and equipping those ships; and the 2nd and 3rd Fleet have the role of ensuring the ships and battle groups are ready to deploy. So, when you get them, are they ready for what it is you need them to do?

I would give it an affirmative and strong 'yes.' What I'm seeing is that the investments we have made over the last few years in getting Sailors confident in their proficiency of firing the weapons in the training cycle, of making the COMPTUEX (Composite Training Unit Exercise) and JTFXs (joint task force exercises) more complex is paying off. In fact, we have our allies go over to the U.S. and participate in these exercises and increase their own interoperability. We're starting to weave these more complex threads into the exercises in the training cycle. Adm. Phil Davidson served here and is now at Fleet Forces Command, and he's introducing these elements into the training cycle. I've been very satisfied with what I'm seeing on the training and the material condition. And the Sailors that I meet are very excited to be here. I think they view deployment to this theater and service in Rota as a great opportunity because of the breadth of the security challenges, and I think they and their families love living and travelling in Europe. I think it's a great place to be. It's a very exciting place to be.

You just touched on Rota. What are some of the other key shore installations that you have in your AOR?

Between about 2003 and 2010, we consolidated our infrastructure where we had facilities in northern Europe and the UK, and we're now at places with both a seaport and an airfield with a logistics center close by. Rota is extraordinarily valuable. It has a large seaport, and an airfield that we can move logistics to and resupply the ships. Sigonella—also extraordinarily important—has an airfield and a port at Augusta Bay nearby. Souda Bay, on the island of Crete, in the eastern Med has an airfield and a naval port.



So I look at it as having three airfields that can operate almost like aircraft carriers and that can serve as a resupply hub for our forces. We also have the Marine Special Purpose MAGTF in Moron, Spain, which can flex across the theater. When you look at Africa, we operate from Djibouti, also with an airfield and a seaport for supporting the force. We have at that base over 4,000 people. And then lastly, Naples. Naples is unique because it's the one place where I have NATO linked together with the EU—there's an EU commander in my headquarters—and the 6th Fleet and Naval Forces Europe and Africa staffs. Our bases provide us strong access to the theater.

What question did I not ask you that you would like to address?

I'd like to talk about our people. The staff here is terrific, and they are fully engaged with our allies. They are extraordinarily busy, reporting to two combatant commanders and NATO, and they approach their work with enthusiasm and pride. They're really committed and dedicated. I think they're having fun being here in Europe and representing the United States. This is unique arena of operating with allies and partners, within an alliance, and servicing two combatant commanders really keeps things pretty dynamic. They recognize that the hot spots around the theater can flare up pretty quickly—things can change very rapidly. So it certainly keeps us challenged and involved. I couldn't be more proud of the team and the mission. I'll give you one example. We pulled together a team of professionals to neutralize Syria's chemical materials this past year. This was an MSC (Military Sealift Command) ship with Army personnel onboard operating unique equipment. The mission involved the interagency, DTRA (Defense Threat Reduction Agency) and others in planning to carry out chemical demilitarization. We had part of the DESRON staff onboard to oversee it; we had our allies providing defense of that ship as it operated; we had our allies provide us use of port facilities to transfer these materials; and then we operated at sea with our allies defending the ship. It was something that was very unique. It had high-level national attention. And the teamwork that it took to pull that together in the inter-agency is representative of both the challenges we face, the unique professional opportunities that are here, and the teamwork evident every day on our staff. It's great to be part of the team in Europe and Africa.

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Forward Deployed Ships at Rota Provide Ballistic Missile Defense for Europe; Able to Conduct Full Range Naval Missions Conducted by CAPT Edward Lundquist, USN (Ret)

The U.S. Navy is stationing four Aegis guided missile destroyers (DDGs) at Rota, Spain, as part of the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), under a presidential directive to provide protection against ballistic missiles for Europe. Two of the Forward Deployed Naval Forces (FDFN ships—USS *Donald Cook* (DDG 75) and USS *Ross* (DDG 71) have already arrived. Two more will arrive soon: USS *Porter* (DDG 78) and USS *Carney* (DDG 64).

The ships have been moved to Europe first and foremost for ballistic missile defense (BMD), but they retain their ability to conduct the full range of combat operations.

“These ships have to be ready and be on-call to respond to the full spectrum of missions. It will not just be BMD,” says Adm. Mark Ferguson, Commander of Allied Joint Force Command Naples, U.S. Naval Forces Europe and U.S. Naval Forces Africa.

“One FDFN ship represents three ships that Fleet Forces Command would have to generate and put through the cycle in order to be over here for a certain level of deployment. The four allow me to keep some on the BMD stations in the eastern Med; allows me to do maintenance and training; and support work with our allies and partners in other missions for NATO or AFRICOM as those missions arrive—supplemented by other rotational forces from the US,” Ferguson says. “Having the ships based in Rota builds the expertise and gives me a pool of forces to draw on for more than just BMD.”



MEDITERRANEAN SEA (Feb. 26, 2015) Cmdr. Charles Hampton, commanding officer of the guided-missile destroyer USS *Donald Cook* (DDG 75), talks with the commanding officer of the French navy frigate *La Fayette* (F 710) during a passing exercise. *Donald Cook* is conducting naval operations in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility in support of U.S. national security interests in Europe. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Karolina A. Oseguera)

It's all about the base

Naval Station Rota is strategically located on the Atlantic coast near the Straits of Gibraltar, and a busy operating base and logistics hub. Before FDFN, transiting ships on their way to the 5th or 6th Fleet would stop for food, fuel and supplies. That still happens, but Captain Greg Pekari, the Commanding Officer of Naval Station Rota and Commander of, U.S. Naval Activities Spain, says FDFN has made the base busier in many ways. There's housing, schools, the exchange and commissary, already in place, but other infrastructure such as training facilities are needed.

In fact, Naval Station Rota boasts the biggest weapons magazine and largest strategic war reserve of fuel in the region. “We have 25-plus tanks that can store up to 55 million gallons of three different types of fuel. Those tanks and our weapons magazine are all within a single, secure fence line,” says Pekari. “But new utility improvements, warehouses, training facilities and weapons magazines are being built to support FDFN.”

Pekari says Naval Station Rota is the Spanish Navy's version of Norfolk. “It's their biggest navy base. They have nine combatants or support ships that are stationed here.”

Pekari says the strategic value of the BMD ships to NATO and Europe cannot be understated. But, he says, they also provide the opportunity to work with allies and partner nations in joint exercises and for maritime security cooperation. And their presence has strengthened the bond between the U.S. and the Spanish military.

“We have an opportunity to work with the Spanish Navy regarding training and maintenance. For example we are working hard to see how we can utilize the Spanish Navy's intermediate maintenance facility, ISEMER, which is here on base. Perhaps we can also leverage their training devices, such as firefighting, instead of having to send our folks back to the States,” he says.

“The strategic value of the BMD ships to NATO and Europe cannot be understated.”

— Captain Greg Pekari, Commanding Officer, Naval Station Rota, Spain



MEDITERRANEAN SEA (Feb. 20, 2015) Ensign Jillian Coughlin, from Annapolis, Md., serves as the conning officer during a replenishment-at-sea aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Donald Cook (DDG 75). Donald Cook is conducting naval operations in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility in support of U.S. national security interests in Europe. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Karolina A. Oseguera)

The base has worked hard to make it easy for Sailors and their families to move to Spain. “We had sponsorship program in place for the first two ships. We’re doing that now for USS *Porter*, and we’ll do the same thing for USS *Carney* when she’s getting ready to come over,” says Pekari. “We’re also working on a spouse-to-spouse sponsor program to line up spouses of Sailors here with those on the next two ships coming over. This may help them with questions about the transition. We have a great “Welcome to Rota” web site with over 200 questions and answers that will also assist them with their transition. We instituted an outreach program, starting with USS *Donald Cook*, where a team of representatives from the base would go to the homeport—Norfolk or Mayport. We bring folks from departments such as housing, MWR, and transportation, to the ships to present our information and have a Q&A session for the Sailors and dependents in order to alleviate a lot of their concerns and fears about the transition to NS Rota. We want to make it as easy as possible.”

There is housing on base, but many families live off base in communities like Rota, El Puerto de Santa Maria, and Chipiona. There are many beautiful and affordable homes and apartments available for rent, Pekari says, many on or near the beach.

Pekari says Sailors who get assigned to the base will work hard. “It’s a busy shore tour, but they know that we’re supporting the fleet, the war fighter, and their families.”

Supporting the ships is a team effort, Pekari says. “The fantastic thing about this base is that, even with 35-plus tenant commands, the leadership communicates and works well with each other to complete the task at hand. We’ve always had ships coming through Rota, but not permanently stationed where you’re now performing significant maintenance on them from the piers. We’re going through some small growing pains, but the communication has

always been there, and the different commands and departments work through whatever challenges they have to get the job done, and to do it safely.”

“When I talk about Rota leadership, it’s just not the officers but the senior enlisted as well. There’s a very active Chief Petty Officers’ mess that is base-wide and encompasses Chiefs from all the tenant commands to include the ship’s senior enlisted. So when you have your senior enlisted across the base working together to achieve the same mission, and to take care of our junior Sailors and our families, which goes a long way,” Pekari says.

High OPTEMPO

“Ships are challenged when they come here,” says Capt. Jim Aiken, Commander of Destroyer Squadron 60. The ships are doing complex operations at a high OPTEMPO. They may be doing an ASW exercise one day; working with the French aircraft carrier the next day; and then doing a theater security cooperation exchange the following day.

“These are not just BMD ships,” says Aiken. “They are multi-mission surface combatants that have to train, exercise and certify to meet their 22 mission areas.”

In addition to the shipboard BMD capability, Aiken says that the Aegis Ashore installations in Romania and Poland leverages the capability and skill sets of the U.S. Navy and its Sailors. “It’s amazing how much responsibility our young Sailors have.”

According to Cmdr. Chuck Hampton, Commanding Officer of USS *Donald Cook* (DDG 75), the deployments have been fast-paced and interesting. “We’ve been here a year, and we’ve already been to the Black Sea twice, and operated with the Romanians both in



MEDITERRANEAN SEA (Jan. 20, 2015) Cmdr. Charles Hampton, right, from Corpus Christi, Texas, Commanding Officer of the guided-missile destroyer USS Donald Cook (DDG 75), trains junior officers on proper man overboard ship maneuvering. Donald Cook is conducting naval operations in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility in support of U.S. national security interests in Europe. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Karolina A. Oseguera/Released)

port and at sea. We have also operated with the Bulgarians both in port and at sea.”

“As a ship’s captain, I’m always concerned about the weather. There’s only so many places you can run to get away from the weather while operating in the Black Sea. It makes it quite challenging in January dodging heavy weather. We pulled into Varna, Bulgaria on the heels of a Black Sea snowstorm, with winds blowing 40 to 50 knots and whiteout snow conditions. The crew performed brilliantly and was well prepared for our operations in such cold latitudes.”

And, he adds, that it’s certainly a dynamic area given what’s going on in the area with Crimea and Eastern Ukraine.

The Russian Navy is watching what the Americans are doing. “This is their backyard, so anytime that we declare a northern or a southern transit of the Turkish Straits, which is required by the Montreux Convention, they know it. So normally when we exit out the north side of the straits, they’re there waiting on us. They’re very professional. Every country we have operated with in the Med and Black Sea has been very professional,” Hampton says.

“We’ve also had the opportunity to operate with the Turkish Navy while in the Black Sea. They’ve proven to be not only very professional but very proficient. We enjoyed an exercise with them in December. They always welcome us to the Black Sea, and bid us farewell when we leave.” Hampton says.

“We have been treated very well in both Romania and Bulgaria, and not just by the military contingent but also by the local community,” Hampton says. “A transiting ship that may deploy to the Med for seven months, might make one trip to the Black Sea and then they’re out. The host countries may not see that ship again for two and a half years, if ever. So I think we’re really going a



NAVAL STATION ROTA, Spain (Nov. 18, 2014) Sailors man the rails of the guided-missile destroyer USS Ross (DDG 71) as the ship returns to Naval Station Rota following its first patrol since being forward-deployed to Europe. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jason Baird)

distance with relationship-building. It’s only going to get better once *Porter* and *Carney* get over here. As an executive officer and then commanding officer, you might go to the Black Sea eight or nine times during your tour.”

Hampton says the continuity is paying dividends. For many ships, returning from deployment means stand down and crew transfers, followed by maintenance, then training and workups to get the ship ready to deploy again, which may take two years. “We don’t have that schedule here. We’re pretty much operational on a constant basis. Given our schedule the operational proficiency of the crew is much higher.”

“We’re starting to recognize the Navantia shipyard workers when they come on board as well. Another large part of FDNF is relationship building. Not only with other navies, but here at home, in Rota, as well. Normally we’ll execute a mid-deployment 10-day maintenance period and it’s a big win for the ship and families to do this in our homeport,” Hampton says.

Living in Rota, Spain, is great, especially for a young Sailor or officer who wants to see the world. “The crew has the opportunity to fly their families to places like Haifa, Crete, Sicily, or Rhodes, Greece, and visit the ship while actually on a deployment,” says Hampton.

Sustaining, training and maintaining

“Wherever you put ships, you have to fix and modernize and sustain them,” says Cmdr. Joe Saegert, the Officer-in-Charge of the Forward Deployed Regional Maintenance Center (FDRMC) Detachment in Rota. “Here the ships operate four months on and then they have a four-month training, sustainment, and upkeep period, and then they go back on patrol for four months,” says Saegert.” This cycle repeats indefinitely and you have to keep crew skills sharp.

“The training, in particular, happens in real time. We call it sustainment,” says Cmdr. Chris Cigna, Officer in Charge of the DESRON 60



MEDITERRANEAN SEA (Dec. 7, 2014) Cmdr. Charles Hampton, Commanding Officer of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Donald Cook (DDG 75), supervises the modified navigation detail in the bridge as the ship prepares to pull in to port. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Karolina A. Oseguera)



JEREZ, Spain (Sept. 29, 2014) Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 133, Detail Rota, Sailors assigned to the guided-missile cruiser USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55), German Sailors from the German navy frigate FCS Niedesachsen (F208), and Turkish Sailors from the Turkish navy frigate TCG Kemalries (F247), move a shed during a community service project for the Sisters at the Monastery in La Cartuja in Jerez, Spain. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Cliff Williams/Released)

detachment at Rota. “We don’t have a dedicated workup basic phase for the ship before they go out on operational deployment like we do in CONUS. We do it in stride throughout their patrols. We’re finding opportunities to fit in training events to make sure they maintain their certifications and periodicities. And the bottom line is it means these ships are busy. They’ve got a lot to do. It keeps them on top of their game. It keeps them ready all the time. We can’t allow for any of that readiness to atrophy at any time.”

The Navy will add some classroom space and trainers, but Cigna says they will rely heavily on CONUS training facilities, at least for the foreseeable future. “ATG does not have a permanent detachment here, but they can send people here, and that’s working. It all gets back to careful scheduling, to make sure everything is supportable,” Cigna says.

Even though they are not part of a deploying battle group, they still must be certified for deployment by COMSIXTHFLEET. The FDNF DDGs are on a 24-month cycle. At any point during that 24-month period, not to exceed 24 months, a ship can recertify in any mission area.

“At the end of the day, it’s all about the Sailors,” says Cigna. “Being stationed in Europe is a wonderful thing, but this is FDNF, and these Sailors have to be ready to operate. We’re fortunate to have absolute rock-star Sailors on both ships who are making it happen,” says Cigna. “It’s a joy to have the opportunity to work here and be able to support Sailors doing what they need to do.”

Because the FDNF DDGs will maintain the full set of DDG mission requirements and certifications, Cigna says the training and certification has to be sequenced to fit the unique operational schedule that these ships have. “We don’t have all the trainers and ranges

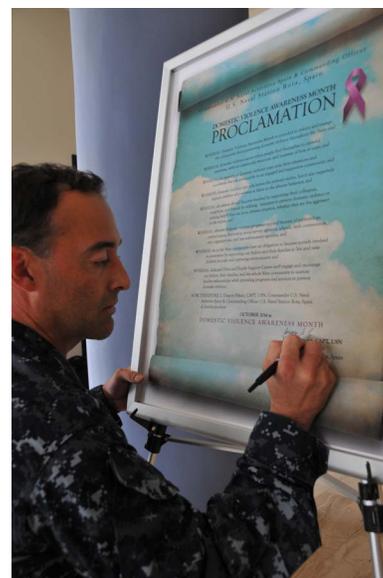
here in Rota, but we have it within the theater. So there are some things we need to do differently. For instance, we leverage international training opportunities. The Royal Navy conducts a significant piece of their unit level training requirements at Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) in Plymouth, England. *Donald Cook* will soon be there for three weeks. It will allow her to recertify in four mission areas but also develop and fulfill requirements in a number of others. Immediately following that, she will go up to Joint Warrior, a multi-national fleet-level exercise similar to our COMPTUEX, for her deployment certification.”

Maintaining partnerships

Saegert says the host nation relationship with Spain is exceptional. “Last year we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the US Navy and Spanish Navy cooperation here in Rota. There’s been a presence in Rota for a long time, and a lot of good operating history between the two navies. Today I have very solid partnerships, both with Spanish industry my prime contractor, Navantia - but also in the Spanish Navy who own and operate ISEMER ((Instalaciones del Segundo Escalón de Mantenimiento en Rota), an intermediate maintenance activity here in Rota to support their fleet, and their battle group that’s home-ported in Rota. It’s a very vibrant and robust relationship. The Spanish Armada has many, many of the same systems that the Arleigh Burke DDGs have on board. There are Spanish navy sailors assigned to the gas turbine shop at ISEMER working aboard the Ross They’re very familiar with the LM2500 gas turbines, because they have them aboard their FFG 7s and Aegis frigates. There’s a lot of crossover, both in the combat and in the HM&E world.”

Donald Cook was the first ship to undergo an availability at Rota. Saegert says, the “first avail went swimmingly well, much better than I had really hoped that it would. “We started the availability on time; we met every milestone and internal key event of the availability; we finished the availability on time; there was no rework required; and we finished within the target budget, Saegert says. “We learned from that availability, and made adjustments for the subsequent avails.”

ROTA, Spain (Oct. 1, 2014) Capt. Greg Pekari, commanding officer of Naval Station Rota, signs a proclamation declaring October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Naval Station Rota will host a variety of programs geared toward prevention of domestic violence, and provide community members with information about signs of domestic violence and what resources are available. (US Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Christina Brewer)



There are BAE Systems Ship Repair representatives from the U.S.—highly experienced in maintaining and repairing DDGs—in Rota working in support of the Navantia team. Saegert says the two companies have embraced the “one team concept.” work well together. “The BAE-embedded representatives that are here to help Navantia have fully integrated into the Navantia team, and it really helps,” Saegert says.

Will Gallegos leads the small cadre from BAE Systems Ship Repair, bringing to Navantia their experience and expertise from performing maintenance, repair and modernization of DDGs and the guided missile cruisers at BAE Systems shipyards in Norfolk, Jacksonville, San Diego and Pearl Harbor. His 45 years of experience has made him an invaluable advisor to the Navantia team.

The BAE Systems team has been helpful in ensuring the schedule development and manpower projection process follows the U.S. requirements, and with their experience, can help plan the work in the various spaces of the ship in a logical way, because they’ve done it many times.

Gallegos says the BAE Systems team isn’t hesitant to speak up if they see something. “We speak with authority. We can tell them, ‘We’ve done this before.’ They listen, analyze, and take our counsel.” “We’ve learned a lot, too,” Gallegos says. “We’ve seen how they protect equipment, and build full enclosures for electronics. I’m impressed with their professional competency, excellent craftsmanship and quality control work, and how quickly they respond to any discrepancies. And their level of housekeeping is outstanding. Here even the person sweeping the deck has pride in his work and gets satisfaction in doing his part to get the ship finished and ready to fight.”

“We’re a not new to ship repair. Our shipyard has been designing, building and supporting naval ships for 300 years,” says Humberto Martinez Marin, Navantia’s program director for the FDNF ships. “This is a great opportunity to work on these ships, especially with their important BMD mission. They are operating on

a very tight schedule, so we have to be ready to start when they come in and we have to complete the work on time. Navantia is pleased on having the opportunity of showing our capabilities and commitment to support the U.S. Navy ships overseas. Fortunately, we all work exceptionally well together as a team, and the results so far have been very positive.”

The FDNF ships are always considered available for employment. “The *Ross* is in her maintenance availability right now, with the systems opened up and being worked. But I have a contractual work item that says ‘get the ship ready to go now,’ and we’ll button it up and get her back out in a matter of a few days” Saegert says. “It depends on how bad it’s needed, but we’re ready to get the call anytime to get her back out.”

“We can’t fail in these avails. We have a requirement to the operational command, and the mission must be met,” Saegert says. “So if a ship is delayed for any reason, somebody else gets extended. And when you’re on such a quick turn—four months on, four months off—at very high OPTEMPO, we need to get the ships back so they can do everything else they need to do to maintain their readiness and get the other ship on patrol.”

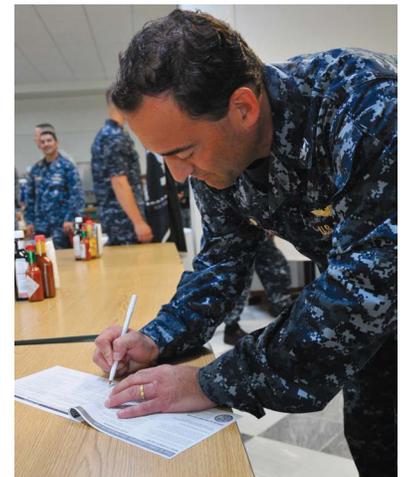
Aiken says the U.S. and Spanish navies have a longstanding and close relationship. “They were ready for us when the first ship arrived. That wouldn’t be the case if we had only started our relationship when they showed up.”

“We’re going to make Rota the best homeport in the Navy,” Aiken says.



NAVAL STATION ROTA, Spain (July 2, 2014) Service members and civilians assigned to Commander, U.S. Naval Activities Spain stand at attention during the annual flag raising ceremony. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist William Clark)

NAVAL STATION ROTA, Spain (Sept. 18, 2014) Capt. Greg Pekari, commanding officer of Naval Station Rota, fills out a Combined Federal Campaign - Overseas contribution following a kick-off ceremony in the base galley. CFC-O offers military members and other federal workers the opportunity to donate to more than 2,600 charitable organizations. (U.S. Navy photo by Senior Chief Mass Communication Specialist William Lovelady)



High-Tech Solutions for the Oldest Form of Naval Warfare

Boarding Team Training Critical for Maritime in Interdiction Operations

Conducted by *CAPT Edward Lundquist, USN (Ret)*



NATO Maritime Commander Vice Admiral Peter Hudson, CBE Royal Navy, visited the two-week Advanced Maritime Law Enforcement/Training of Trainers course taking place at NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC), in Souda Bay, Crete, Greece. (Photo: IMO)

Navy combatants are designed for high-end warfighting, with sophisticated sensors, weapons and combat management systems. But the most common mission for warships today may be “visit, board, search and seizure,” or VBSS.

Running ridged hull inflatable boats and sending boarding parties aboard ships, boats or dhows isn’t glamorous.

“It isn’t naval warfare in the classical sense,” says Hellenic Navy Commodore Ioannis Pavlopoulos, the Commandant of the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) at Souda Bay, Crete.

“It’s not fighting ships or submarines or aircraft,” says Pavlopoulos, who is both a SEAL and surface warfare officer who has been assigned to destroyers, and guided missile patrol boats and has commanded amphibious ships. “But it is important, and it can be dangerous. For that reason, training of boarding parties is extremely valuable.”

Maritime interdiction operations (MIO) are defined by the NATO Allied Maritime

Interdiction Operations publication (ATP-71) as “The operations conducted to enforce prohibition on the maritime movement of specified persons or materials within a defined geographic area.” That means MIO is more like a law enforcement function than a military mission. Nevertheless naval commands can deploy to remote areas of the world and in international waters where MIO may be required, such as the Arabian Gulf or Gulf of Aden.

Many warships on their way to operate in the Arabian Gulf, Indian Ocean or the Eastern Mediterranean and Black Sea pass the Greek island of Crete, where NMIOTC is conveniently located to help train commands, staffs and boarding parties for MIO and visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) missions.

Interdiction of criminal elements at sea is a law enforcement function, but only navies and coast guards or other armed maritime agencies have the ability to conduct interdiction operations at sea. In some cases in international waters, national coast guards do not have authority, so the navies do the job. “It is necessary to providing proper training on international law,” Pavlopoulos said.

“We’re trying to instill a law enforcement culture to naval forces,” said Italian Navy Commander Corrado Campana, the Director of Training Support. “We’re creating a mindset; a culture of law.”

NMIOTC stresses proficiency in typically military skills such as marksmanship and weapons handling, but the school also teaches how to respond to a crime scene, collect evidence, and treat suspects or prisoners. Everything they do has legal implications. Improperly following procedures or adhering to the law can result in suspects being released or court cases dismissed, or even the prisoners suing the boarding team.



GULF OF ADEN (Nov. 22, 2013) Sailors assigned to the visit, board, search and seizure team from the guided-missile destroyer USS Mason (DDG 87) descend from a fishing dhow into a rigid-hull inflatable boat. Mason was deployed as part of the Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group supporting maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Rob Aylward)

What sets NMIOTC apart from other training opportunities is simulation training and ships dedicated for training. According to Hellenic Navy Commander Spyridon Lagaras, the chief of staff at NMIOTC, the 2,500-ton ex-HS *Aris* (A 74), formerly the Hellenic Naval Academy cadet training ship, serves as a realistic platform for live training for a variety of boarding scenarios. The ship is equipped with smoke, flashing strobes, booby traps, noise to create confusion, role players to be rescued, detained or captured. Trainees use weapons that fire small paint pellet rounds. During the course of training, the difficulty and complexity of the scenarios can be increased. There are numerous cameras to monitor progress of training evolutions, ensure safety, and provide video for debriefing. When the teams leave they take with them a DVD with the video of their training. *Aris* will soon be joined by a decommissioned mine countermeasures ship, the ex-HS *Alkyion* (M211), which is at NMIOTC now and being modified for live training.



GULF OF ADEN (Nov. 23, 2013) Members of the visit, board, search and seizure team assigned to the guided-missile destroyer USS Mason (DDG 87) climb aboard a dhow. Mason was deployed as part of the Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group supporting maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Rob Aylward)

Training is adapted for the requirement, the teams being trained, and the anticipated operating environment, Lagaras says. The most dangerous boardings are conducted only by Special Operations Forces (SOF); ship VBSS teams are drilled in lower-risk consensual or unopposed boardings, or in some cases uncooperative boardings.

NMIOTC's simulators can create multi-role scenarios that can be repeated if required, and programmed to simulate anticipated operations, serving as mission rehearsal. Those missions can then be rehearsed aboard the *Aris*.

NMIOTC has an international and joint staff, with Greece as the hosting nation, and is one of seven NATO training facilities. It received accreditation in 2013 by Allied Command Transformation, which is

good for six years, and contributes directly to force integration and interoperability within the alliance and partner nations. The "just in time" training supports Allied Command Operations for units who are on their way to conduct actual MIO operations.

It also has a role in concept and doctrine development and experimentation. "We operate with several academia, academic and research institutions, not only within the alliance but also outside. We like to keep our door open to see what's happening outside," said Campana.

When commands can't visit Crete, the training can be exported with mobile training teams from NMIOTC, but would not get the full benefit of the assets and resources at the center.

Pavlopoulos said that numerous government labs, academic institutions and commercial activities come to Souda Bay for test and evaluation of new equipment and concepts.

The training is not just for NATO nations. Officers from Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles and Tanzania recently completed Advanced Maritime Law Enforcement/Training of Trainers course, offered under the auspices of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC).

"The trainees of the 13th Session of the IMO/DCoC initiative, along with NMIOTC Instructors, are going to deliver training at Jeddah Saudi Arabia in March 2015. So we are training the trainers com-



SPLIT, Croatia (Oct. 7, 2014) Sailors participate in joint visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) training with members of the Croatian and Slovenian navies aboard the amphibious transport dock ship USS Mesa Verde (LPD 19) during a scheduled port visit. Mesa Verde is part of the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group and, with the embarked 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit, is deployed in support of maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Shannon M. Smith)



SPLIT, Croatia (Oct. 7, 2014) Gunner's Mate 2nd Class Phillip Wright, from Maple Grove, Minn., assigned to the amphibious transport dock ship USS Mesa Verde (LPD 19), boards the Croatian ship HRM Cetina (DBM-81) as part of joint visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) training with members of the Croatian and Slovenian navies during a scheduled port visit. Mesa Verde is part of the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group and, with the embarked 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit, is deployed in support of maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Shannon M. Smith)

ing from the Djibouti Code of Conduct States, to be able to teach criminal investigation at sea to their compatriots," said Pavlopoulos.

SOF personnel can also train in disrupting different configurations of pirate or terrorist camps using the two small islands in the bay used exclusively for that purpose.

"Every one of our ships has enjoyed the realistic VBSS training they received at NMIOTC," says Capt. Jim Aiken, Commander of Destroyer Squadron 60. "It's an impressive facility. Law enforcement is a complex operation, and it's a great way to leverage our NATO partners to get the training we need for our ships when they are far from CONUS."

According to Cmdr. Chuck Hampton, Commanding Officer of USS Donald Cook (DDG 75), the NMIOTC training is effective and efficient. "We sent a team through there on our last patrol. Anytime we can leverage a facility like that in theater without sending folks back to the states is a win."

A legacy of boarding

For many centuries boarding was the main—and often the only—method of naval warfare. When Thucydides wrote the "Peloponnesian War" in 402 B.C., he described the boarding techniques saying they were "the ancient way of fighting", in contrast with the most recent ramming techniques which were emerging as novel tactical choice.

Throughout the centuries, warships were designed to fight at close quarters, and were built to come alongside and capture an enemy, or a prize.

According to retired U.S. Navy Capt. Jeff Kline and retired Swedish Navy Capt. Bo Wallender, of the Naval Postgraduate School's Littoral Operations Center, such operations favored the bold and audacious. "The Romans were better soldiers than sailors, but found that the corvus, a device developed to hold their ships fast to an opponent's and allow their soldiers to cross over to the enemy vessels where they could defeat their enemy by overcoming their weakness and exploiting their strength," they wrote in *Lions in the Littoral - Leadership on Risk's Edge*, for the Swedish Royal Society of Naval Sciences.

Even recently, many navies use specialized units to carry out boarding operations, rather than relying on the ships' crews, which Annati says is not very different from what was done for many centuries, when boarding was the core of naval warfare and an infantry fighting force was specifically embarked in any man-of-war.

Steam propulsion and better artillery changed things, and naval warfare turned to sinking ships rather than taking them. "While there have been some notable exceptions, over the years the world's navies lost the capability to carry out a boarding. Whenever called to this type of operation, crews had to resolve to impromptu tactics, techniques and equipment," said Rear Adm. Massimo Annati, who is retired from the Italian Navy and now chairs the European Working Group for Non-Lethal Weapons. He is the author of the book, *Boarders Away, Twenty-five Centuries of Shipboard Fighting*, published in Italian by Murisa.

According to Annati, many navies today have designated special military units to carry out boarding operations, rather than relying on ship's company, not so different from centuries past, when boarding was the core of naval warfare and an infantry fighting force was specifically embarked on a man-of-war. That changed when NATO navies were faced with complex embargo operations during both the Iraqi and Balkan conflicts. Boarding became more important, and also as new challenges surfaced and joined the old ones: piracy, terrorism, WMD transfer, narco-trafficking, and weapons smuggling.

"Boarding operations require a number of competences and skills that are usually foreign to naval experience, including boat handling, getting onboard by multiple means, tactical and close-quarter operations, searching, and collecting intelligence and evidence," said Annati.

Warships today are being designed with an eye to the requirements of the embarked military force, including additional accommodations and space for boats and special equipment, even holding cells for prisoners. New fast, long range, and high-capacity RHIBs are replacing the old whaler life-boats, and new solutions for launching and recovering the boats, such as stern ramps, stabilized davits and cranes, are faster and safer. New technologies provide dedicated communications and data links so teams can share imagery and biometric data with the parent warship, and the team can be advised of the recognized surface data picture around them.

“NMIOTC was established to revive and improve a competency which, not long ago, was believed to belong to the history books,” Annati says. “Boarding operations today are for a different purpose, and require new and different skills, but NMIOTC is the place where sailors can hone their skills for what the current world requires.”

There are a wide number of specific training programs at NMIOTC, aimed to fulfill the different needs: from counter-piracy to counter-WMD; from the command team to the boarding team; including all the specific issues like small arms training, container inspection, tactical sweep, RHIB insertion, and biometrics collection, which are usually not part of the normal crew training process, Annati says.

“The International contacts and exchanges with different entities—navies, coast guards, special forces, and law enforcement units—further enlarge the wealth of the training process,” he said.

“Nowadays one would probably wonder whether Thucydides would be more surprised to see that today, after some 25 centuries, the ancient technique came back, or if he would be more proud to see that the new NATO Maritime Interdiction Operation Training Center (NMIOTC) is located right in Greece,” Annati says.

San Diego Training

The Afloat Training Group San Diego (ATGSD) trains and certifies the fleet in various warfare areas to meet the Fleet Response Plan. Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure (VBSS) is a Unit Tactical warfare area that provides training, assessment, and certification for shipboard assigned VBSS teams. Our goal here at ATGSD is to provide advanced training tactics, ‘outside of the box’ thinking methods, and increase VBSS warfare proficiency by building on the foundation that they have from the non-compliant boarding (NCB) formal course of instruction,” says Senior Chief Master at Arms Russ Treider.



GULF OF ADEN(Oct. 04, 2012) The Royal Australian Navy frigate HMAS Anzac (FFH 150) underway alongside a dhow in the Gulf of Aden. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Aaron Chase)

Treider says the ATG training revolves around one 10-man fully qualified scalable team, two fully qualified Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (RHIB) crews, intelligence specialists and assigned personnel and the liaison officer (LNO). The 10-man team includes a boarding officer (BO), assistant boarding officer (ABO), two mechanical breachers, two rated engineers, or two personnel qualified in sounding and security, and four security team members. The RHIB crew consists of a boat coxswain, boat engineer, search and rescue (SAR) Swimmer, or bow hook qualified personnel.

Teams are trained in “approach, assist and visit” (AAV), where teams pull alongside vessels without actually boarding them to meet, gain rapport, and pick up intelligence about any recent questionable activities a vessel’s crew may have seen or heard of.

“In regards to NCB and compliant boardings, we evaluate and train the boarding team on their hook and pole procedures, climbing ability, tactical team movement, mental preparation and tactical mindset, personnel search techniques, non-lethal offensive and defensive tactics, communications skills, and other techniques,” Treider says. “We teach the entire team to climb, board, reset the hook, set security posture and identify their path to the objective of the mission. We try to keep every training evolution as realistic as possible, from actual boarding operations on a contracted ship with opposing forces (OPFOR) personnel role playing as the crew, to hook and pole procedures that require conduct missions to combat piracy, smuggling, human trafficking and drug trade”

“For missions that have previously been handled by special operations forces, having certified VBSS teams onboard their own ship provides commanding officers an extra hand to deal with these non-typical surface warfare issues,” Treider says.

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Romanian Navy is “An Ocean-going Navy . . . and Has No Hesitation to Show It”

By *CAPT Edward Lundquist, USN (Ret)*

The Romanian Navy is upgrading its frigate flotilla to modernize the capability and extend the service life. Chief of the Romanian Naval Forces Staff Rear Admiral Alexandru Mirsu said the ships must be able to operate in the Black Sea as well as support international operations as part of multinational task forces.

The Romanian frigates flotilla consists of two Type-22 frigates, imported from the UK (Regele Ferdinand (F 221) ex-HMS Coventry; and Regina Maria (F 222) (ex-HMS London); one Romanian designed and built Marasesti-class frigate (F 111); as well as a naval helicopter group consisting of three Puma naval helicopters designated to operate as organic helos for the Type-22 frigates. All frigates are NATO certified and all of them are declared to NATO forces.

“When the Type-22 frigates entered in the Romanian naval service, the Romanian navy became an oceangoing navy and has no hesitation to show it,” Mirsu said.

Security environment

The Black Sea region consists of common elements that define the region from the identity and security point of view, but also elements that are diverse, and sometimes even divergent. Beyond the sea’s neighboring countries, the area of the Black Sea stretches from the Caspian Sea to the center of Europe and Adriatic Sea. “The Black Sea is considered a link between Europe and Asia, and a transportation crossroad of energy and resources. The important geostrategic status of the Black Sea as a regional security platform is tied to the European fight against terrorists and against the asymmetric threats, representing at the same time both a barrier and a forward point of Europe for the global fight against the terrorists coming from Asia and Middle East,” Mirsu said.



BLACK SEA (October 23, 2014) The Romanian navy frigate Regale Ferdinand (F 221) approaches the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Cole (DDG 67) during a passing exercise. Cole is conducting naval operations in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility in support of U.S. national security interests in Europe. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communications Specialist 2nd Class John Herman/Released)

Mirsu said there are risks and challenges in the region, including the threat of terrorist activities against critical infrastructure; illegal maritime activities, including piracy; limitation of movement on the Danube River and the sea; littoral pollution; and natural disasters. “There is new and very aggressive behavior of a Black Sea littoral actor,” he said. “This had had a negative impact upon some of the existing conflicts in the area.”

“With regard to the current situation in the Black Sea, we witnessed a new and very aggressive move of an important geopolitical actor. The consequences of that movement affected the entire Black Sea security architecture which was already weakened by numerous conflicts,” Mirsu said.

“By ignoring international law, and arrangements, Russia aggressively annexed Crimea, which was a part of a sovereign



CONSTANTA, Romania (Feb. 10, 2015) Commander, U.S. 6th Fleet Vice Adm. James Foggo, center-left, and Romania Chief Navy Rear Adm. Alexandru Mirsu, center-right, look upon the USS Cole (DDG 67) Hall of Hero’s memorial plaque during a tour of the ship in Constanta Romania, Feb. 10, 2015. Cole, an Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, homeported in Norfolk, is conducting naval operations in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations in support of U.S. national security interests in Europe. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Mat Murch/Released)

New Three-Year Members

STGCM Paul Abney USN (Ret)	CDR David Hebert USN	Tom Reynolds
LT Stephen Arnold USN	Brett Helgeson	LCDR Andrew Rivas USN
CDR Casey Baker USN	CPO Brett Herner USN (Ret)	LTJG Mor Rosenberg USN
Craig Benson	ENS Victoria Hudgins USN	Paul Rouffaer
OSC Acie Blocton USN	CDR Kevin Hunt USN (Ret)	LCDR John Rummel USN
Alan Brown	CDR Vincent Janowiak USN	Kelly Scheidt
MIDN Alexander Brown USN	Tom Jelinek	CDR Stephen Schmidt USN (Ret)
CAPT Robert Cepek USN	CAPT Richard Jones USN (Ret)	Michael Schnable
CDR Frankie Clark USN	RADM Mark Kenny USN (Ret)	LT Arthur Sciortino USN
Tom Conlon	CDR Matthew Knight USN	Mark Scott
Col Paul Daniels USA (Ret)	Peter Kuzdeba	LCDR Charles Spivey USN
ADM Phil Davidson USN	Anita Latin	CAPT Joseph Spruill USN (Ret)
CPO Stanley Dawson USN (Ret)	CAPT Alan Lytle USNR	CDR Kirk Steffensen USN (Ret)
Chris Deegan	Meredith Martin	Craig Tautges
LT Daniel DeMatteo USN	CAPT Matthew Meilstrup USCG	LCDR Valerie VanHo USN
LT Timothy Didjurgis USN	LT Ian Meredith USN	LT Desmond Walker USN
ENS Michelle Ferguson USN	LCDR Elizabeth Nelson USN	CAPT Allan Walters USN
CAPT Christopher Flood USN (Ret)	YN1 David Parker USN	CAPT Jon Watson USNR
CDR Christopher Follin USN	CAPT Kenneth Parks USN (Ret)	CAPT Scott Weller USN
CDR Nathan Fugate USN	Sebastian Pascarelle	Michael Werbowetzki
LTJG Kelli Guffey USN	RADM Christopher Paul USN	LT Douglas Williams USN
LT Matthew Harmon USN	CAPT David Portner USN (Ret)	LCDR Bryan Wolfe USN
David Hartshorne	Dennis Randall	



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BLACK SEA (April 23, 2014) Cmdr. Scott Jones, Commanding Officer of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Donald Cook (DDG 75) waves to the Romanian navy frigate ROS Marasesi (F 111). Donald Cook, the first of four Arleigh Burke-class destroyers to be forward-deployed to Rota, Spain, is serving on a scheduled patrol in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of responsibility as part of the president's European phased adaptive approach to ballistic missile defense in Europe. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Edward Gutierrez III/Released)

neighboring state, and supports the separatist's movement in the east Ukraine. Now Russia has Sevastopol, a stronghold from which it can launch future aggressive air and naval actions against Ukraine or NATO countries bordering the Black Sea. This has completely changed the balance of power in the region, and—based on the unpredictability of Russia's actions— makes the security situation more volatile," he said.

The Romanian Naval Force is an active contributor to maritime security operations, as well as a participant in regional initiatives and major exercises in the area. The six nations which border the Black Sea have created the BLACKSEAFOR to enhance peace and stability through regional cooperation and understanding. BLACKSEAFOR conducts search and rescue; humanitarian assistance; mine countermeasure operations; environmental protection; and goodwill visits.

"One of our tasks in the Black Sea area is to contribute to the regional stability by enhancing the security and by improving the bilateral and regional relations within the Black Sea. In this respect, the Romanian Naval Force endorses all activities and obligations according to the BLACKSEAFOR arrangement. BLACKSEAFOR has

CONSTANTA, Romania (March 10, 2014) - Romanian Commander of Naval Operations Rear Adm. Alexandru Mirsu arrives aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Truxtun (DDG 103). The Truxtun is deployed as part of the George H. W. Bush Strike Group on a scheduled deployment supporting maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts in the U.S. 6th fleet area of operations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd class Scott Barnes/Released)

been activated at least once in a year starting in 2001, and two times a year since 2005. The naval task group consists of four to six ships, and command of the task group rotates among the participants. The main classes of ships that are in the group are frigates, corvettes, patrol ships, MCMs, and amphibious and auxiliary ships. These ships are normally based in their home ports, but any of the participating nations may request the activation of the group, when the consensus of all member countries is applied.

"Unfortunately, BLACKSEAFOR is currently suspended until the Ukrainian crisis is solved," Mirsu said.

Another important activity for the Romanian Navy is the participation with the maritime security operation called Black Sea Harmony. This is a Turkish initiative based on bilateral agreements among Black Sea neighboring countries. Romania signed a memorandum of understanding with Turkey in March 2009 and has been an active member since then. The Romanian Navy was asked by the Romanian government to be the implementing authority for the national responsibilities. We initiated a participation of this operation in June 2014. According to the technical arrangement, one Romanian naval officer is assigned in Turkey, at the regional coordination center of the operation, and one Turkish navy officer is located in the Romanian national coordination center in Constanta, both for at least six months. In December, we conducted the first rotation of the officers in the two centers.

In this way, Romania contributes actively to the international communities' efforts for determining, disrupting, and preventing the threat of terrorists, illicit trafficking, or other illegal activities at sea.

Frigate Flotilla

The Romanian frigates flotilla was established in 2006 and consists of two 4,800-ton Type-22 frigates, imported from the UK; and one 5,780-ton Marasesi-class frigate; a logistics support ship, the Constanta; as well as a naval helicopter group consisting of three Puma naval helicopters designated to operate as organic helos for the Type-22 frigates. All frigates are NATO certified and all of them are declared to NATO forces.



“When the Type-22 frigates entered in the Romanian Naval Service, the Romanian Navy became an oceangoing navy and has no hesitation to show it,” said Mirsu.

“In their configuration today, our frigates have only limited capabilities to cover the whole spectrum of naval missions,” he said.

Mirsu said the frigates will be modernized in two phases. “During the first phase we will bring their anti-submarine warfare, maritime interdiction, anti-piracy, surveillance and electronic warfare-related capabilities back up to their initial operational capabilities. The second phase consists of upgrading the combat systems in order to improve the already existing anti-surface warfare and anti-air warfare capabilities and add new kinetic capabilities with ship-to-ship missiles and ship-to-air missiles. This phase will also provide the ships with a more robust combat management system; a 3D radar that will be complementary to the existing one; a close-in weapon system based on the super-rapid or equivalent gun, and improved communications.”

These frigates are capable of operating Romania’s Puma naval helicopters, which are brand new aircraft produced and fitted for naval operations made in Romania. Their main task is anti-submarine warfare, but, he said, they can also be used for rescue operations or transport of personnel, special operations forces, and other tasks.

The Marasesti-class frigate is entirely designed and built in a Romanian shipyard in Mangalia. She entered service in the 1980s in the Romanian naval forces service, and is based on the ex-Soviet Union equipment and armament.

The platform is equipped for all the surface combatant mission areas – with anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, anti-air warfare capabilities, combat and navigation radar, and a close-in weapon system based on 30-millimeter guns, and the improved electronic warfare and communications system. This ship is also capable of operating Puma-type helicopters.

“For the moment, it is our intention to maintain the ship in its current configuration until we complete the modernization of the Type-22 frigates in order to provide the full-spectrum of naval mission areas.”



Lieutenant Gen. Richard Tryon, Commander of U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command and U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Europe, shakes hands with Romanian Rear Admiral Alexandru Mirsu, Chief of Romanian Naval Forces, after meeting with him and his staff in Bucharest, March 18, 2014.

Mirsu said they have not decided upon the new ASW suite for the Type 22s. “The Black Sea hydrology is unusual, and different from what almost everybody’s used to. But we want to be able to use them for the international commitments, so they will require hull-mounted and towed array sonars.”

Multi-national operations

The Romanian Navy has been involved in international naval operations. “Both Type-22 frigates have participated in the NATO Operation Active Endeavor in the Mediterranean starting in 2005. We participated in Operation Unified Protector, the Libya embargo in 2011, for three months, and EU NAVFOR Operation Atalanta in 2012 in the Gulf of Aden,” Mirsu said.

During Regele Ferdinand’s participation in Atalanta, the frigate carried

an organic helicopter and the special operational force detachment on board for the full period of deployment. The results of the mission are quite impressive: more than 70,000 nautical miles travelled and more than 115 helicopter flight hours flown; 2,400 vessels were monitored; 24 were interrogated; seven ships were boarded by the boarding team; two vessels were escorted; one piracy action denied; nine pirates captured and handed to the EU NAVFOR authorities; one pirate vessel destroyed; and assistance provided to two vessels in distress, one of which required a medevac conducted with our embarked helicopter.

“This was the first participation of a Romanian warship in counter piracy operations, and also the first presence of the Romanian Naval Forces in the Indian Ocean and the Southern Hemisphere, deployed so far from our home port,” he said.

As the Romanian Navy looks to the future with its modernized frigates, it will be able to fulfill its commitments to NATO, the EU, and participate in regional initiatives that Romania is taking part. “My wish is that the Romanian naval forces will become a more flexible, well-balanced and capable structure, able to carry out military and naval diplomacy tasks.”



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Bahrain-Based PCs: Big Opportunities on Small Combatant

By CAPT Edward Lundquist, USN (Ret)

For a ship that at one time seemed to have little future in the U.S. Navy, the patrol coastal ships (PCs) are more valuable than ever, with new weapons and capabilities. Ten of the 179-foot, 380-ton ships are forward deployed with the U.S. Fifth Fleet in the Arabian Gulf providing maritime security, escort of larger ships, intelligence collection, protection to maritime infrastructure and participation in exercises with allies and regional partners. Three more are assigned to Mayport, Florida, where they are available to support U.S. Fourth Fleet missions.

The 14 Cyclone-class PCs were built to support the special warfare community. They were fast, but proved to be too large for clandestine operations in shallow water, yet too small to be full-fledged combatants. Without a mission, the navy was going to dispose of them, and in fact started to do so. The lead ship of the class was transferred to the Philippines, and several were transferred to the Coast Guard. However, after 9-11 their utility value as a small, fast fighting platform grew.

The PCs have been present in the Gulf since 2003, and crews rotated between Little Creek, Va., and Bahrain. Thirteen crews took turns manning the five PCs on four to six month deployments to Bahrain. Now, the crews are permanently assigned as ship's company.

"This class of ship is ideal for working in this area," said Capt. Brendan McLane, Commander, Destroyer Squadron 50, which has operational command of the PCs. "They greatly increase our ability for continued maritime security operations and theater security cooperation in Fifth Fleet."

There are fewer DDGs deploying to the Arabian Gulf, leaving some of those missions to be picked up by the PCs, including some tasks not really suited for larger ships.

"The PCs comprise 22 percent of the surface fleet out here. They are the force provider in the Arabian Gulf—they're in the NAG, SAG and CAG (northern, southern and central Arabian Gulf)—and they are doing the majority of the interactions with the mariners in the Arabian Gulf. These ships are ideal platforms for working with partner navies in the Gulf," McLane said. The navies and coast guards of coalition partners operate similar sized ships, with similar systems

and capability fostering better interoperability in the maritime domain," McLane said.

"When we pull into a port to do an exchange with one of the navies in the region, the PC is comparable to what they have," said Cmdr. Jake Douglas, Deputy Commander of PC Squadron 1. "Their crews love coming onboard to see what we've got, and taking our crew over and showing what they have. It's an exchange of ideas, and it builds relationships."

Today, in their maritime security and force protection role, the PCs have new unmanned remotely operated 25mm guns fore and aft, and Griffin anti-surface missile launchers are being installed. Puma

UAVs are giving the PCs better situational awareness, and a stern ramp permits faster and safer launch and recovery of their boats.

The PCs are assigned to coalition task force CTF 55, CTF 150, or CTF 152 on a rotational basis. "There's four of them in CTF 152 right now who work for a Saudi captain who commands the task force. It's their backyard. So they're able to give us a perspective that we didn't have before when we were running it," said McLane. "They know the smuggling routes that have been there for thousands of years, the people, drugs, pirate activity and the things that all mariners are concerned about in this environment."

"They're incredible ships," said McLane. "We have really worked on their sustainment—including replenishment at sea with astern refueling and vertical replenishment for stores—so they can go



NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY BAHRAIN (Aug. 13, 2014) The coastal patrol ship USS Monsoon (PC 4) maneuvers alongside USS Hurricane (PC 3) while arriving at its new homeport at Naval Support Activity Bahrain. Hurricane and Monsoon are the final two of 10 coastal patrol ships that are part of a realignment plan in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Steve Smith)



NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY BAHRAIN (Aug. 13, 2014) The coastal patrol ships USS Hurricane (PC 3) and USS Monsoon (PC 4) arrive to their new homeport at Naval Support Activity, Bahrain. Hurricane and Monsoon are the final two of 10 coastal patrol ships that are part of a realignment plan in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Steve Smith)

out for a long time, and stay out there. Their patrols are getting longer—12 to 14 days—and they're able to interact outside of Bahrain, and interact with the GCC countries on a more routine basis to where they are part of the fabric out here. That presence is so important. We will get a call two or three times a month where a mariner is in distress and our ship is right there. We can provide rescue and assistance, water, or medical support when called upon. We're there, and we're friends and neighbors out here and part of that. If heightened tensions happen or whatever else, they're used to seeing us. The mariners out on the Gulf call us and they know that there's a safe place not too far away."

Eliminating the crew rotation has not only saved money—more than \$13.8 million in costs associated with rotating crews are projected to be saved every year—but crews take better care of their ships.

According to Douglas, PC Sailors approach their jobs a little differently if they know they are going to turn the ship over to another crew then rotate back stateside. "If I'm assigned to a ship, I own that ship," Douglas said.

Another benefit to having permanent crews assigned to ships homeported in Bahrain is that Sailors can have

U.S. 5TH FLEET AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (April 18, 2013) Lt. j.g. Kyle Patterson, left, weapons officer aboard the Cyclone-class coastal boat USS Firebolt (PC 10), oversees antiterrorism tactical watch officer Lt. j.g. Wellens and officer of the deck Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Philip Myers during a force protection drill aboard Firebolt. (U.S. Navy photo by Lt. j.g. Matthew Hipple)



their families accompany them. An unaccompanied tour is one year, but Sailors who bring their families stay for two years.

The duty is challenging. "On the PC you're in 3-section duty, you're operating 40 to 50 percent OPTEMPO per year, and in the hot, uncomfortable time of the year, you're working your butt off in the hot engineering spaces on these ships and even topside is no joy ride," said Douglas. But Douglas said Sailors like the two-year option.

"It's gold anytime I get somebody out here for two years. We're starting to see the numbers increase. While it's a tough job, it's definitely rewarding with the operations they conduct, and having their families here gives them the support they need to succeed," said Douglas. It's a huge boost, and the families really seem to like it out here. We've had people that are here on two-year orders that are requesting to extend another year."

The small crews don't leave any slack for non-performers. "It's busy, so the Sailors come fully trained, with all the schools and NECs," Douglas said. "Sailors, junior and senior alike, essentially step onboard, quickly must assume responsibility, and immediately make an impact to the ship and its mission.

The small size and crew on the PCs means there isn't room for spare parts or supplies onboard, or people to do most maintenance or repairs. That work falls to the squadron's engineering readiness department and a combat systems readiness department to supplement the ship-level maintenance requirements with the ship's crew to meet all requirements. For that reason, the squadron staff is larger than a typical destroyer squadron.

"The amount of knowledge that you will gain to be successful in a Navy career is ten times on a PC what you would get anywhere else, because of the one-of-one billets," Douglas said. "You learn 100% responsibility right away. If that equipment is going to operate, it's me and only me that's going to get it going. If you're a second class petty officer on a cruiser or a destroyer, it's hard to get that kind of experience and responsibility that you get onboard a PC on Day 1. You're responsible; and everybody depends on you. As a second

class petty officer, you can be officer of the deck, underway on a PC. Compare that to some larger ships where officers may take a year or more to qualify as OOD.”

Douglas said that when he was Commanding Officer of a destroyer, he was excited to get a Sailor from a PC or a mine countermeasures ship, because he knew they came from small ships where they carried a lot of responsibility on their shoulders. “I knew they were going to be performers,” Douglas said. “I knew that they were going to take charge of their work centers and run their equipment and get it all done and get it done the right way, because they’ve done it, they’ve lived it, they’ve breathed it, and they didn’t have anybody else to prop them up and help them through the process.”

High OPTEMPO

“The camaraderie on those ships is amazing,” said Douglas. “They’re a family. They all eat together—there’s no chief’s mess, there’s no wardroom. Everybody on that crew is tight from the captain down to the most junior fireman.”

Lt. Cmdr. Scott Whitworth, who commands USS *Squall* (PC-7) tells his crew that they are “ordinary Sailors that do extraordinary things day-in and day-out.”

“In my 23 years of naval service, with 12 of those years being enlisted, I have never seen a group of Sailors pull together and work together to achieve the common goal of making mission and getting the job done. The 22 enlisted Sailors onboard *Squall*—from an ITSA to a BMCS—have allowed *Squall* to achieve one of the highest OPTEMPOs’ of any forward deployed PC,” Whitworth said. “They simply do not know how to fail. No matter what the circumstances are, they always find a way ahead to complete the mission.”

The “extraordinary things” that these Sailors do can be summed up in their flexibility and to take on responsibility normally reserved for much senior pay grades. “I have an HM1 (Hospital Corpsman First Class) that not only takes care of every Sailors medical/dental needs but is also the ships special sea and anchor detail conning officer. I have an ITSN (Information Systems Technician Seaman Apprentice) who is 20 years old and serves as the ship’s communications officer and keeps the ship fully connected in regards to C4I. I have an EN3 (Engineman Third Class) that just earned his EDO (engineering duty officer) qualification and is the process of running drills to obtain his Engineering Officer of the Watch qual. I have a CS1 (Culinary Specialist First Class) that not only cooks three meals a day for the crew, but stands the watch as a Conning Officer at night, is part of the boat deck crew that launches the RHIB, and is SRF/BRF (security reaction force and basic reaction force) qualified,” said Whitworth.

Whitworth said being in command is rewarding. “If you have leadership aspirations, you should definitely be applying for early command.”

“Our OPTEMPO over 12 months typically averages out to anywhere from 40-45% which is a lot for a small ship like a PC,” said Lt. Cmdr.



Sailors aboard USS *Chinook* (PC 9) approach a fishing dhow in the Northern Arabian Gulf. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Nicole L. Carter

Mitch McGuffie, Commanding Officer of USS *Firebolt* (PC 10). “The 25-28 Sailors assigned to a PC are hands down the most dedicated and hardworking Sailors in the Navy,” said McGuffie.

According to Lt. Hunter Washburn, Commanding Officer of USS *Monsoon* (PC 4), the PCs were designed for speed, to operate in a variety of sea states, and to carry SOF personnel, so there’s extra berthing for riders. *Hurricane* and *Monsoon* are the two newest arrivals in Bahrain. They were transported from the U.S. by heavy lift ship last summer, and already have spent plenty of time out in the Gulf.

Washburn was previously part of a rotating crew. He said the permanent crews are making a difference. “This is our ship. The pride and sense of ownership goes through the roof.” “Our RHIBs get a lot of use. We do a lot of what we call ‘approach and assist’ visits. It’s not a boarding. It’s a way to maintain a positive presence out here,” said Washburn.

Griffin and Puma

Monsoon is one of the PCs with the Griffin missile system installed. All ten are scheduled to get it. The missiles are mounted amidships and carried in port and starboard fixed box launchers with four containerized missiles in each.

Two of the PCs—*Squall* and *Hurricane*—can launch, operate and recover a UAV while underway. While *Puma* can carry other pay-

NORFOLK (Aug. 8, 2014) The Cyclone-class coastal patrol ship USS Zephyr (PC 8) is lifted out of the water by a travelift at Colonna's shipyard. Zephyr will receive extensive maintenance, upgrades and refurbishments during a scheduled 347-day dry-docking phased maintenance availability. (U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Cmdr. Daniel Follett)

loads, the *Hurricane* uses the EO/IR sensor exclusively to provide better situational awareness.

"Puma will be used in boardings and for overall awareness. It's a battle space management tool that extends and increases the height of eye that otherwise wouldn't be very high, and so you're able just to cover a lot more things," said Capt. Phil Sobeck, the Deputy Commander of DESRON 50.

The UAV provides an organic ability to watch what's going on, to see how speedboats do business, how smuggling happens, and everything else. "You're able to go all the way from the finding, the fixing, the tracking and then the targeting, if needed," Sobeck said.

Lt. Cmdr. John Meise, *Hurricane's* Commanding Officer, said Puma is a force multiplier when it comes to maritime security operations. "If we detect a dhow on the horizon—whether it's via radar or look-out—and that dhow has been earmarked for approach-and-assist, or something of that nature, we can send PUMA out there to see what the nationality is, how many folks are on deck, and whether or not there's any trip wires. So from a commander's perspective, that means when I send my team out there, I have a little bit more reassurance that it's going to be a safe evolution. And throughout the entire process we can get good imagery and push that ISR back to the operational commander."

According to Operations Specialist 1st class David Veldkamp of USS *Hurricane*, the normal load out for a PC is three aircraft and six Pelican cases. The aircraft is operated using a ruggedized lap top.



"We have the laptop, and we also have installed a TV so that when the bird is in the air, the captain and everybody in the pilot house can view the video of what you're getting from the UAV on that screen," said Veldkamp. "It's very, very helpful."

In addition to the ten PCs, the U.S. Coast Guard has six Island-class 110-foot patrol boats doing the same mission. The Navy and Coast Guard together provide a flexible patrol presence in the region. PC Sailors know they're on the front line.

"These ships are in the operating area as soon as they leave port," said McLane. "As soon as the lines go in, they are on station."



U.S. 5th FLEET AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (May 21, 2013) The coastal patrol craft USS Firebolt (PC 10) and the Royal Navy destroyer HMS Dragon (D35) are underway together during International Mine Countermeasures Exercise (IMCMEX) 2013. IMCMEX 13 includes navies from more than 40 countries whose focus is to promote regional security through mine countermeasure operations in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility. (Royal Navy photo by L(Phot) Dave Jenkins)

Symposium Takes Aim at Lethality

By CAPT Edward Lundquist, USN (Ret)

With the “Distributed Lethality” theme, the 2015 Surface Navy Association Annual Symposium was on target with thought-provoking presentations and panel discussions from the Surface Navy’s top leadership.

Under the “distributed lethality” concept, Commander, Naval Surface Forces Vice Adm. Tom Rowden said the Navy is looking at “up-gunning” ships with more offensive capability, and examining new ways to operate them, such as developing “hunter-killer surface action groups.”

“Every ship’s a shooter,” Rowden said.

Director, Surface Warfare (N96), Rear Adm. Pete Fanta, said new ships such as the modified LCS would be built with more weapons, and the Navy would backfit existing ships as much as possible. He added, “If it floats, it fights.”

Major Gen. Robert Walsh, USMC, the Director for Expeditionary Warfare, OPNAV N95, said the demand for seabased platforms continues to go up. Walsh drew a parallel with IEDs, which changed the way Marines operated in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the asymmetric threats facing naval forces today, and the need to adapt our systems and concept of operations to meet those anti-access and area denial threats. He pointed to the MC-22 Osprey, an aircraft that has fundamentally changed the way Marines operate.

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus said that the small surface combatant study has led the Navy to continue with the littoral combat ship (LCS) program, and that the final 20 ships will be designed and built with more lethality and survivability. He also said LCS will be known in the future as a frigate, and that new designations will be forthcoming for the mobile landing platform (MLP) and afloat forward staging base (AFSB), as well as the joint high speed vessel (JHSV).

Mabus also highlighted some of the naval service’s humanitarian efforts, such as supporting the Ebola medical effort in West Africa. “Where it matters, we’re already there.”



Fleet Forces Commander Adm. Phil Davidson reminded the attendees of the Navy’s “warfighting first” precept, and that the first order of a naval force is to be ready to fight and win in combat. To do this, Davidson said the Navy and Marine Corps team must have the distributed sensors and fires to successfully maneuver in multiple domains.

Vice Adm. Phil Collum, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Readiness

and Logistics, discussed the spectrum between inextricable trends and “wild cards,” and the importance of being able to innovate faster than an adversary. “Bold ideas ignite fearless innovation,” he said.

Commander of Naval Installations Command, Vice Adm. Dixon Smith, talked about the importance of the shore domain, and his objective of ensuring that tenants can execute their mission.

Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. William Moran talked about the balance between payloads and platforms, but reminded attendees not to forget the people. He discussed the Navy’s efforts to provide a modern, innovative personnel system; realistic and relevant training; and an enriching culture for Navy men and women.



Vice Adm. Bill Hilarides, Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command, chaired two panels focused on acquisition programs and ship maintenance.

Naval Attaches at the International Navies Luncheon—from the United Kingdom, Egypt and New Zealand—talked about their unique requirements, but the larger imperative to work together and achieve true interoperability.

And lastly the heritage presentation by Prof. David Skaggs explained the sequence of events and historical significance of the Battle of Lake Champlain during the War of 1812.

A full list of the speakers and their video presentations can be found in the “Members Only” section of the SNA Website (<http://www.navysna.org>). Take time to watch the presentations you missed!













2014/15 AWARD WINNERS

Admiral Arleigh Burke Surface Warfare Excellence Award

LCDR James Drennan, USN, USS Gettysburg (CG 64)

LT Christopher Hayes, USN, USS Antietam (CG 54)

OS1(SW) John P. Casa USN, USS Hue City (CG 66)

OS2(SW) Johnnie Eslinger, USN, USS Wayne E. Meyer (DDG 108)

Admiral Zumwalt Award for Visionary Leadership (Co -Sponsor for this Award is Whitney, Bradley and Brown, Inc.)

GSE1(SW) Ginai Little, USN, USS Momsen (DDG 92)

BM(SW) Derek Strickland, USN, USS Firebolt (PC 10)

Surface Force Independent Duty Corpsman of the Year Award

HM1(SW/FMF) Andrew Wemlinger, USN,
USS James E. Williams (DDG 95)

HMC (SW/AW) Todd Burkholder, USN, USS Preble (DDG 88)

Naval Surface Force Shiphandler of the Year Award

LT Erik Guiremand, USN, USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60)

LTJG Chris Mikell, USN, USS Oak Hill (LSD 51)

Special Recognition Awards

CAPT Henry "Jerry" Hendrix, II, USN (Ret)

Mr. Dave McComb

HMCM(SW/FMF) Patrick Modglin, USN (Ret)

VADM Phillip Quast, USN (Ret)

Surface Navy Literary Award (Co -Sponsor for this Award is USNI)

LT Erik A. H. Sand, USN

Performance over Process

Proceedings, October 2014

Honorable Mention: LT Lawrence Heyworth, USN

Fireproofing Commanding Officers

Proceedings, January 2014

Captain Raymond Komorowski Photography Award

Grand Prize: MIDN Miguel Mirano

1st Operations: MIDN Miguel Mirano

1st Ships: CAPT Robert Lang, USN (Ret)

1st Personal Interest: MC2 Matthew Dickinson, USN



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CHAPTER NEWS

BATH, MAINE

President: CAPT James Kirk, USN



CAPT Downey, Linda Grotton (Casco Bay Council Navy League) CAPT Vandroff, RADM Gale, & CAPT Kirk.

A joint SNA / Casco Bay Council Navy League dinner and briefing was held at the Muddy Rudder Restaurant in Yarmouth on October 29, 2014.

A three person panel, lead by Rear Admiral David J. Gale, USN (PEO Ships), also featured CAPT James Downey, USN (Program Manager, DDG-1000) and CAPT Mark Vandroff, USN (Program Manager, DDG-51). The discussion focused on both U.S. Navy destroyer programs being built by Bath Iron Works located in Bath, Maine. Also in attendance was CAPT James Kirk, USN (Commanding Officer, Pre-Commissioning Unit Zumwalt DDG-1000) and crew members from PCU Zumwalt and Supervisor of Shipbuilding Bath.

The question and answer period considered the future of these two Navy shipbuilding programs and the challenges that both the Navy and the ship building industry have encountered due to sequestration. An active social hour and excellent dinner were enjoyed during this well-attended event.

While this past winter has been harsh, we look forward to the rapidly approaching spring so that we can continue to work jointly with the Casco Bay Council Navy League in hosting events for both organizations.



CTT1(IDW/NAC/AW) Orehosky and Frank Broadband.



CTT1(SW/IDW) Hastings and Mrs. Hastings.



STG1(SW) Meehan, CTT1(SW/AW) Orehosky, and CTT1(SW/IDW) Hastings.

CHARLESTON

President: CDR J. Michael Cole, USN

Hello from the great city of Charleston! This great year of 2015 is on pace to be a very productive and exciting year for the Charleston Chapter!

On January 9th, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus and the City of Charleston Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr. hosted a ship-naming ceremony at the Charleston Maritime Center. The USS Charleston (LCS 18) will be the sixth ship to bear the name of this great city.

The first SNA luncheon of 2015 was held on January 21st to a crowd of returning active members as well as fresh new faces. We announced that the SNA Charleston Chapter received the 2014 Chapter Excellence Award for the second consecutive year. ENC Arlington Sanford, USN (Ret.), aka Ol' Chief Sanford, was the guest speaker for the event and he spoke of his personal accounts of life as a Sailor on a LST during World War II. Just to highlight a few significant accomplishments, Chief Sanford saw action in the North African Campaign, Invasion of Sicily and Salerno, and landed on Omaha Beach on D-Day! His sea stories were both entertaining and informative to everyone in attendance.

At the conclusion of his speech, Chief Sanford and RADM Charles F. Horne III, USN (Ret.), our SNA Charleston mentor, were presented with quilts by Quilts of Valor to honor their service to our Nation. Quilts of Valor's mission is to cover service members and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor (see <http://www.qovf.org>). As of August 2014, there have been over 113,000 quilts awarded to service members and veterans.

We are currently ramping up for the 3rd Annual Surface Navy Association's Golf Tournament taking place on May 2nd at the Wescott



RADM Chuck Horne (Ret) and ENC Arlington Sanford (Ret), Ol' Chief Sanford, accept a quilt from Quilts of Valor.

Plantation Golf Club in Charleston, SC. Foursomes made up of active duty and retired service members, civil servants, family and friends will join up to celebrate the organization and have an all-around good time. Additionally, proceeds will go towards supporting the Canines for Veterans service dog program, Quilts of Valor and establishing a SNA Charleston Scholarship fund.

SNA Charleston is going BIG in 2015! You can now "Like" us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Surface-Navy-Association-Charleston-Chapter/766711283416306>

SNA Chapter Excellence Award Winners

Arabian Gulf

Charleston

Hampton Roads

Pearl Harbor

San Diego

USS CONSTITUTION

SNA Media Site

SNA hosts an active media site on www.Youtube.com

The channel is **NavySNAMedia**

Subscribe to this site to receive notifications when updated material is posted.

Archive material also available

CONSTITUTION

President: CAPT Bill Mauser, USN (Ret)



Chapter President CAPT Bill Mauser and Member CDR Dave Robinson present Chapter Plaque to USS ARLINGTON CO CDR Greg Baker and CMDCM (SS) Brian McDonough.

Force Master Chief Knox Receives SNA Chapter Award at His Retirement

On 30 January, retiring FORCE Master Chief Brannon F. Knox received the USS Constitution Chapter’s Special Award plaque for his dedicated and steadfast support of the George Sirian Meritorious Service Award.

He retired after three decades of service, including assignments as a command master chief in USS Howard (DDG 83) and USS Essex (LHD 2). Previously, Knox served as a radioman on board USS Gridley (CG 21), USS Comstock (LSD 45) USS Jarrett (FFG 33), and USS John C. Stennis, and as an information systems technician on board USS Essex (LHD 2), USS Belleau Wood (LHA 3), and USS Nimitz (CVN 68).

When selected as Force Master Chief on 9/30/2011, he became, along with his Atlantic Fleet counterpart, a key point of contact for the USS CONSTITUTION chapter’s George Sirian Award Program.



He helped manage the annual vetting process and actively participated in ceremonies aboard USS CONSTITUTION in Boston. He was a committed and enthusiastic colleague and advisor, and remains a great friend to the Chapter. From his shipmates in Boston, “Fair winds and following seas!”

Chapter Presents Commemorative Plaque to USS ARLINGTON (LPD-24)

During her visit to Boston to participate in Evacuation Day celebrations on 13 March, the USS CONSTITUTION Chapter President CAPT Bill Mauser and Member CDR Dave Robinson presented the presented a commemorative plaque to Commanding Officer Greg Baker and CMDCM Brian McDonough of USS ARLINGTON (LPD-24).

USS ARLINGTON (LPD-24), a San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock, is the third ship of the United States Navy to be named for Arlington, Virginia, the location of the Pentagon. Like her sister ships, USS New York and Somerset, she is named in commemoration of the September 11, 2001 attacks.

Evacuation Day commemorates General Henry Knox’s heroic installation of artillery on Dorchester Heights on 17 March 1776, which forced the British to evacuate Boston. It coincides with annual St Patrick’s Day celebrations.

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HAMPTON ROADS

President: CAPT Doug Nashold, USN

Hope everyone has been enjoying the slew of snow days. Unlike the typical panic at 2 inches of snow in Virginia, we've had some legitimate weather to worry ourselves over. The next step is to actually plow the side-roads, instead of waiting for trucks and SUV's to smash snow into deceptively safe looking ice-traps. Despite winter's beating, the beginning of the year has seen some exciting discussion and engagement for the Surface Navy Association here in Hampton Roads.

First, I hope everyone had a chance to take part in the SNA Annual Symposium in Washington, DC. With VADM Rowden's roll-out of Distributed Lethality, to include the January Proceedings article (<http://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2015-01/distributed-lethality>), we would be hard-pressed to find a greater foundation for our forum's relevance.

As the threats our surface force face change along with the geopolitical landscape, we are in a time ripe for debate and discussion on the nature of how the Navy fights. As part of SNA, it is exciting to be both present and part of such a historic discussion. In particular, I would recommend the following video of RADM Fanta's Distributed Lethality brief, which touches strongly on both operational

and programmatic considerations of Distributed Lethality (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WF2nDJeV9dM>).

Our February Professional Development Luncheon with RADM Gumataotao was unfortunately called off due to weather, but we were well kept in January by CDR Drew Carlson, CO, Aegis Ashore Missile Defense System. The technology that allows rogue elements to reach out and disrupt civilized society becomes ever cheaper and more available. Missile defense is a critical component of our defensive, deterring, and stabilizing capabilities that maintain the global system. CDR Carlson did a fantastic job introducing us to the block-and-tackle of our shore-side effort to leverage those capabilities. Vista Point Conference Center has continued to provide excellent service as a venue, and I look forward to our future events. Finally, we have our upcoming 17 April Spring Golf Tournament at Sewells Point. Hopefully, we've accumulated our "bad weather" quota for the year and spring will be kind to us. The fee will be \$60 for SNA members and \$75 for non-SNA members, which includes golf carts, lunch, and other assorted necessary accoutrements for a good day of golfing. More information is available at the following link (<http://www.navysna.org/Events/Norfolk/Spring2015SNA-GolfFlyer.pdf>).

MID SOUTH

President: CAPT Eugene Black, USN

The SNA National Symposium is the primary outreach and engagement event for us to meet with our Washington, D.C. shipmates, and the PERS-41 team would like to thank everyone who came out to visit us at the National Symposium. The turnout at our booth was outstanding and the career management discussions provided insights to everyone, from Midshipmen to our senior Captains. As always, reuniting with past shipmates and swapping sea stories with future shipmates is the real highlight of this event. We look forward to continuing our engagement with each of you at this outstanding event in the years to come.

Ship Selection at the US Naval Academy in January was a fantastic event. The SWO Boss – VADM Tom Rowden, Commander, Naval Surface Forces, led the charge, pumping up the crowd with his infectious energy. The first ships selected by our USNA and NROTC Midshipmen this year were USS DONALD COOK (DDG 75) and USS ROSS (DDG 71), respectively. Bravo Zulu to all the ships that participated in this year's ship selection, and welcome aboard to all of our new Division Officers!

We recently said farewell to LCDR Al Siegrist (LCDR/CDR Detailer), LCDR Amy Lindahl (LCDR/CDR Detailer), and LCDR Diane Cua (1st Tour DH Detailer), and we welcomed aboard LCDR Jason Lester (LCDR/CDR Detailer), LCDR Cullen Greenfield (JO Shore Coordinator), and LT Adreinne Roseti (1st Tour DH Detailer).

Later this Spring we will host our semi-annual Golf Tournament at the Glen Eagle Golf Course. If you're in the Mid-South area or plan to be in April, please come out for some golf, Memphis BBQ, and SWO camaraderie! Contact LT Joe Mills for more information (joseph.r.mills@navy.mil).

Please check out the latest PERS-41 Newsletter located on our website. The January 2015 issue discusses several key career initiatives, updating your record, and promotion board season. Please take a look at the Newsletter and share it with your wardrooms.

MONTEREY

President: LT James Hough, USN

The Monterey Bay Chapter has had a busy couple of weeks since the start of the New Year. Representatives from the chapter attended the 27th National Surface Navy Association Symposium in order to get the word out about the Naval Postgraduate School. Lieutenant Andrew Stafford and Lieutenant James Hough attended and spoke to junior SWOs and Midshipman about the advantages of taking an NPS tour and encouraged all to expand the scope of graduate education amongst fellow Surface Warriors. Additionally, they had the opportunity to speak with NPS Alumni at the symposium about their own experiences at the school and brought their lessons back to share with the rest of the chapter.

Vice Admiral Rowden, Commander, Naval Surface Forces visited Naval Postgraduate School in February and held a luncheon with junior officers and discussed his vision for the Surface Force followed by a question and answer period. This was a great follow-up to the admirals "All SWO" call in November at NPS and provided a more intimate setting in which to hear about the direction of the Surface Navy.



Left to Right – Department of Operations Research Senior Lecturer Paul Sanchez, Professor of Practice Jeff Kline, Lieutenant Dustin Schultz, Lieutenant Steve Rockwell, Professor Tom Lucas.

To welcome new SWO's to the area, the chapter also held the first "SWOcial" of the academic quarter. The event was a rousing success with over 40 junior SWOs in attendance all headed towards the fleet as Department Heads in the near future. The Monterey Chapter gained lots of exposure amongst the fresh faces and the chance to share sea stories served as a welcome reminder of why we do what we do. The chapter is certainly looking forward to hosting more events in the future.

In March, Lieutenant Andrew Stafford was relieved by Lieutenant James Hough as the Monterey Chapter President.

Naval Postgraduate School Surface Navy Association Graduation Award – March 2015

Lieutenant Steven Rockwell, USN and Lieutenant Dustin Schultz, USN are the recipients of the Surface Navy Association Award for Academic Excellence in Surface Warfare for March 2015.

Their thesis is entitled: *High energy laser employment in self-defense tactics for naval platforms in complex threat environments*. The thesis abstract reads: This research evaluates the impact of adding a Solid State Laser (SSL) to complement the current weapons systems of a FLT IIA DDG that is engaged by numerous heteroge-

neous air threats or swarming attacks by Fast Inshore Attack Craft (FIAC). Insights gained from over one million simulated saturation attacks on the DDG can help inform tactics, quantify our ability to counter the threat, and ultimately protect the lives of U.S. Navy personnel. Best of all, these simulated attack experiments are conducted without ever having to send a DDG out to sea. This research incorporates data from the latest Navy tactical publications, tactical bulletins, tactical memorandums, and also incorporates the insight from subject matter experts at the Naval Surface Warfare

Center Dahlgren and the Naval Surface Warfighting Development Center Tactics in San Diego. This research is also the first ever at Naval Postgraduate School to use a new Department of Defense created agent-based simulation framework called Orchestrated Simulation through Modeling (OSM). OSM was developed by NSWCDD K Department. Finally, this thesis research incorporates state-of-the-art design of experiments and tools created by the NPS Operations Research's SEED Center; together, they allowed the experiments to efficiently determine tactical impacts of combat equipment and com-

mand decisions against a breadth of threats. The classified results involve estimates of the probability of raid annihilation (i.e., ship survival) against multiple threats. Moreover, robust tactics have been developed for use of the laser in conjunction with the ship's other weapon systems.

Lieutenant Rockwell is a Surface Warfare Officer studying Operations Research. He has earned a Master of Science in Operations Research. His thesis work is titled "*High Energy Laser Employment in Self-defense Tactics on Naval Platforms in a Complex Air Threat Environment*." After graduation, Lieutenant Rockwell will be reporting to Surface Warfare Officers School in Newport, Rhode Island and subsequently to USS *Oscar Austin* (DDG 79) as Operations Officer.

Lieutenant Schultz is a Surface Warfare Officer studying Operations Research. He has earned a Master of Science in Operations Research. His thesis work is titled "*High Energy Laser Employment in Self-defense Tactics on Naval Platforms in a Surface Threat Environment Involving Fast Attack Craft/Fast Inshore Attack Craft (FAC/FIAC)*." After graduation, Lieutenant Schultz will be reporting to Surface Warfare Officers School in Newport, Rhode Island and subsequently to USS *Kearsarge* (LHD 3) as Combat Systems Officer.

NEWPORT

President: CAPT Dave Welch, USN

In spite of the snow, on March 10th, the Newport Chapter hosted its first join up of the year at the Naval Station Newport Officers Club. As it had been a couple of months since our last event, everyone was looking forward to the camaraderie that comes with our join ups, and it was a huge success. Seventy SWOs, including Naval War College, Prospective Department Head, Commanding Officer, and Major Command students from the Newport area gathered to meet and greet with CAPT Gene Black and the detailers from PERS 41. Many spouses also attended to learn about changes in the Surface Warfare Officer training pipeline, but more importantly, to connect with other SNA members' spouses and families. The spouse's network in Newport is very strong thanks to events like these and the leadership of the spouse groups.

The frosty temperatures and near continuous snowfall in New England this winter have slowed down the SNA Newport Chapter's events schedule, however, as we thaw out there are several events planned in the immediate future. At the end of March the Newport Chapter will host its first annual Bowling Tournament at Naval Station Newport's Sea View Lanes. We expect a large turnout of officers, Sailors, base civilians, and friends to bowl through the evening until both a team and individual champion are crowned. Proceeds from the event as always will go to support Wounded Warriors and the Rhode Island Veterans Home.

The Newport Chapter's upcoming schedule also includes in May our semi-annual SNA "5K by the Bay" at the Naval Station on our USATF certified course. Our Spring Golf Classic tournament will be held in May as well. Please be sure to check our website at <http://www.chapter.navysna.org/newport> for details on upcoming events.



CAPT Dave Welch (L), Newport Chapter President, congratulates a lucky winner of our SNA Join Up raffle at the PERS 41 event.

As we start 2015, I'd like to take a moment to recognize the member chiefly responsible for the chapter activities over the past two years: a hearty "BZ" to former Newport SNA Vice President CDR Chris Senenko for all of his hard work supporting SNA throughout his tour in Newport. We appreciate his time and leadership in keeping the Chapter strong.

SNA Newport members gather at the Naval Station Newport Officers Club at the Chapter's Fall SNA Join up.



PUGET SOUND

President: CDR Jeffrey Bessler, USN

The Everett waterfront had to say goodbye to the USS INGRAHAM and the USS RODNEY M DAVIS along with the many Shipmates from those crews over the last few months. Thank you all for your service and we wish you the best in your future assignments. The legacy left behind by these ships and their Sailors will never be forgotten.

In the beginning of March the Puget Sound Chapter joined together to acknowledge the achievement of GSE1 Ginai Little, the 2014 winner of the Admiral Zumwalt Award for Visionary Leadership. Petty Officer Little was humble and thankful for the recognition but was quick to point out that the award was a result of the hard



Commodore Brian Shipman addresses the crowd.



GSE1 Ginai Little is presented with the Admiral Zumwalt Award for Visionary Leadership.

work of the MOMSEN team and also acknowledged the support and inspiration she receives from her husband and son at home.

Petty Officer Little was unable to attend the National Symposium to receive the award due to operational commitments but the chapter made the most of it with a ceremony and speaker who allowed many of her shipmates to hear about SNA and experience the benefits of being a member for the first time.

The guest speaker and presenter for the ceremony was CDRE Brian Shipman, Commander Destroyer Squadron Twenty One. CAPT Shipman shared his experience and wisdom with the crowd highlighting the current status of the fleet and thought on what the future holds for our young Sailors. Thanks, Commodore, for your support of the ships and Sailors of the Puget Sound. We know that you will continue to be a strong voice for the Surface Navy in your new position at Naval Surface Warfighting Development Center.

We are planning more speaking events in the future with other leaders on the waterfront to keep the exchange of ideas active on the waterfront and in the chapter.

Look for the SNA Puget Sound booth at the 2015 Surface Navy Women’s Waterfront Symposium on April 22nd.

The chapter is looking for nominations for a Chapter Secretary and an Event Coordinator. If you or someone you know are interested please email: snapugetsound@gmail.com for more information.

Revisit events of the past and see what’s being planned for the future in the Pacific Northwest at our Facebook site: <https://www.facebook.com/SNAPugetSound>

YOKOSUKA

President: CAPT Shan Byrne, USN

The first quarter has proved to be both challenging and rewarding for Yokosuka Chapter of the Surface Navy Association. High OPTEMPO and the execution of complex multinational exercises and real-world operations put a press on free time and made it challenging to hold periodic SNA gatherings, but we were able to find time to socialize and make significant contributions to the Surface Warfare Community. These events continue to build upon SNA Yokosuka Chapter’s tradition of excellence in Surface Warfare.

The Yokosuka Chapter kicked off the first quarter with our Annual Commander Destroyer Squadron FIFTEEN (CDS-15) led Surface Warfare Officer Tactical Seminar. The SWO seminar is designed to expose junior Officers to higher level tactical training and discussions while building enthusiasm and excitement throughout the Yokosuka waterfront. This year’s seminar was very unique and included training topics from various warfighting elements throughout our Surface Navy, to include CVW-5, CTF-72, CTF-74, various

units from CTF-70 and distinguished guests including PERS-41 Team, Paul Rinn (Capt. Retired), Frank Smyth, and Naval Surface Warfare Development Center (NSWDC) Capt. McPherson. The SWO Seminar was followed up by a SNA Social held at the Yokosuka Chief Petty Officers Club allowing for SNA members from Yokosuka Chapter a chance to socialize and build camaraderie in a relaxed environment. These types of events continue to show growth and development in our FDNF Surface community.

As we move forward into 2015, full of promise and opportunity, we will continue to enhance our relationships between USN and our regional surface navy counterparts, reconnect with our Shipmates, and support the mentorship and development of our collective Surface Warfare community forward deployed to Japan and the C7F area of operations.

SNA Yokosuka is looking forward to a very successful 2015!

SAN DIEGO

President: CAPT Mark Johnson, USN



CAPT Mark Johnson, Chapter President, CAPT Scott Sciretta, CO USS COWPENS, and RDML Jim Kilby at the Warrior Join Up.

Greetings from beautiful San Diego! The Chapter Board of Directors continues to make each quarter more productive by enabling professional growth and camaraderie for San Diego area Surface Warriors. We are always looking for additional opportunities to enrich SNA members so contact us with any great ideas.

Our winning streak continued with the news that the Chapter once again was awarded the Chapter Excellence Award at National Symposium in Washington DC. The Chapter Vice President, CDR Jason Patterson, was on hand to receive the award at the Awards Luncheon. We were proud to receive the award along with the other outstanding Chapters that were recognized!

In February, we hosted a SNA Social at Basic Pizza in the Gaslamp District. It was a wonderful evening that brought Surface Warriors from all over the Waterfront as well as our civilian members for a few hours of fun. A special thanks goes out to CAPT Scott Sciretta and the Officers and Crew of USS COWPENS for co-hosting a great event. Stay tuned to our Facebook page for our Quarter 2 social event!

Also in February, we hosted one of our pinnacle events of the year. The 2014 Commander Naval Surface Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet Sailor of the Year Banquet honored the best and brightest Sailors of the Surface Force! The SURFPAC Sailor of the Year week is the culmination of a process of selecting the best of the best Petty Officer First Class Sailors. First each ship, at the end of the year, selects a Sailor of the Year (SOY). Then, in the early part of the following year, the top four SOYs from Ashore and Afloat commands are selected as finalists for the Top Sea and Shore Sailor of the Year award. The finalists win the top SOY award and a pipeline to promotion to Navy Chief. The culmination of the week is the banquet hosted by the San Diego Chapter of the Surface Navy

Association. During the evening, VADM Rowden and FORCM Wallis announced the sea and shore selectees to an audience of CNSP Sea and Shore Sailor of the Years, their spouses, and Command Triads. This year's selectees were ABH1 David C. Dysart from USS MAKIN ISLAND and ABF1 Joseph Matthews from USS AMERICA. It was a great event honoring the Surface Force's finest Sailors!

Please take some time to visit our San Diego Surface Navy Association Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SanDiegoSNA>. In addition to waterfront flyers and emails, we'll provide updates on our page. Furthermore, if you've recently transferred into the area, please take a moment to update your membership info at www.navysna.org so our Chapter membership list remains current. If you are interested in becoming a committee chair or joining the local Board of Directors in some capacity, please email the Chapter Vice President, CDR Jason Patterson at jason.p.patterson@me.com or Chapter President, CAPT Mark Johnson at MarkJohnsonSNA@outlook.com.



VADM Tom Rowden congratulates the Sea Sailor of the Year, ABH1 David Dysart at the Sailor of the Year Banquet.

For more information on events at all chapters please visit our website at

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