MSC showcases seabasing in

BOLD ALLIGATOR

An MV-22 Osprey lands on the flight deck of MSC's dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Robert E. Peary off the coast of Virginia during exercise Bold Alligator 2012.

U.S. Navy photo

INSIDE — MSC implements new load management system • MSC Reservists support Cobra Gold
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Mobile Landing Platform
The first three of the Navy’s four planned MSC-operated mobile landing platform ships have been named by Secre- tary of the Navy Ray Mabus. USNS General Con- ford Point, USNS John Glenn and USNS Lewis B. Puller will be flexible platforms providing capability for large-scale logistics movements such as transferring vehicles and equipment from sea to shore, or serving as Afloat Forward Staging Bases. This will significantly reduce our reliance on foreign ports and allow such operations where there are no ports. That makes them ideal for disaster response and support for the U.S. Marine Corps once troops are ashore. Each ship will be able to support a vehicle staging area, a side-port ramp, large mooring fenders and up to three landing craft, air-cushioned (LCAC) lanes, or other deck layouts as necessary. Keel laying for the first ship, Montford Point, occurred at Christy of General Dyna- ntics National Steel and Ship Building Company in San Diego. The vessel will be delivered to MSC in fiscal year 2013 and be operational in 2015. MSC will contract for the operation of all four MLPs.

High-speed vessels
USNS Spearhead (JHSV 1) continues the fitting-out process at Austal in Mo- bile, Ala., while Capt. Doug Casavant and his crew undergo a rigorous training program and prepare to take custody of the ship later this spring. Meanwhile, work is progressing well on JHSV 2, which will be commissioned by Capt. Rot- lin Bellfi. JHSV’s will support joint- or coalition-force operations to transport troops, vehicles, cargo and equipment for a wide range of global missions, including humanitarian relief and civic assistance. The 338-foot aluminum- hulled catamarans are designed to carry a 600-ton load and more than 300 troops for 1,200 miles at 35 knots. Capable of operating in shallow waters, the ship can interface with roll-on/roll-off discharge facilities. The stern ramp is capable of handling M1A2 Abrams main battle tanks. The first four ships will be crewed by 22 CIVMARs each, and the remainder will be crewed by commer- cial mariners working for ship operating companies under contract to MSC. In addition to the JHSVs, the Depart- ment of transportation transferred two commercial high-speed vessels – Huakou and Alakai - to the Navy in January. After modifications this spring, MSC will operate the ships through commercial maritime companies. One ship will fulfill mission requirements for the Marine Corps in Okinawa currently being filled by HSV Westpac Express. The second vessel will be used for other potential missions.

SBX-1
In December, MSC added the Sea- based, X-band Radar platform, known as SBX-1, to its fleet. This unique ship is part of the U.S. ballistic missile defense system and helps us and our allies defend against missile threats using the world’s most powerful phased-array, X-band radar set. The radar tracks, discriminates and as- sesses hostile ballistic missiles in flight. The semi-submersible, self-propelled vessel that carries the dome-shaped radar was developed from deep water exploration platform technology. At 389 feet in length and with a 236-foot beam, the vessel is bigger than the playing area and sidelines of most professional foot- ball stadiums. It will operate SBX-1 with 33 commercial mariners. Sponsor person nel will operate the radar and associated communications gear.

Better methods
We’ve been delivering supplies to the Navy at sea for decades. In all that time, “we’ve always aimed at improving our service. Our new Combat Logistics Force load management system will mark a new era in delivering to the customer effective- ly and efficiently. Our CIVMARs are al- ready outstanding cargo handlers, and their efforts will still be the driving force behind underway replenishment. The new man- agement system and software are already allowing us to better track cargo location, availability and delivery. The shore-based, centralized inventory management system will help us reach a new level of service. I could go on and on. There is a lot happening right now, and it is no accident that DOD and the Navy continue to turn to MSC for innovative solutions to the toughest maritime logistics and support missions. Your outstanding performance always and shore makes it possible, and for that, you have my enduring gratitude and admiration.

Mark H. “Buz” Buzby Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Commander, Military Sealift Command

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Military Sealift Command reports to the Commandant, U.S. Transportation Command for defense transportation matters, to the Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command for Navy-unique matters and to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition for procurement policy and oversight matters.

MOVING WITH ONE MSC
On Jan. 9, 2012, we officially began the MSC realignment. After months of planning, discussion among the leader- ship and weighing of pros and cons, we were ready to move ahead. Every day, my confidence grows that this is the right thing for MSC at this time. It will definitely position us to be stronger and more ef- ficient while we maintain our effectiveness in the trying times ahead.

The formalization of this realignment requires the commensurate paperwork, of course. The leaders and supervisors of MSC are working closely with the newly formed Strategic Workforce Management team to ensure that all positions are accurately represented. SF50 documents have been edited to be correct in our new structure. This is a time- consuming task that we are targeting for completion in June. I encourage all of you to stay in touch with your supervisors. They will know the completion schedule for each area of competency.

In the meantime, I am very pleased to see the behavioral swing that is taking place in our programs. The two new program executives are taking charge of their organiza- tions and are leading the change going worldwide. High-quality, bi-annual status reports will be shared with you as we move forward with the new strategic workforce plan.

In my weekly meetings with the board, we are working hard to ensure that the right people are doing the right things. We have made a significant transition in how we do business. The team is addressing the gaps in our organization and are doing whatever it takes to make MSC successful.

As we build our strong base of competencies we’ll use our guidance of our recently developed Strategic Workforce Plan. The Total Force Management team has obtained and developed tools and templates that we’ll use to strengthen our competencies and to operate more effectively.

We have begun to streamline the Strategic Work- force Plan in future editions of Sealift, so stay tuned.

Again, I thank all of you for your support in these challenging times. Please stay engaged, ask questions, challenge what you see happening and ask “why?” Together we will make this a successful transition for MSC.

W hile DOD is looking at significant budget cuts in the next sev- eral years, the 2012 strategic guidance recently released by the Secretary of Defense has a definite maritime focus. It reaffirms the benefits and strengths of sea power and operating forward, focus- ing on the Pacific and Indian Ocean region, but keeping a firm eye fixed on the Middle East and Southwest Asia at the same time. As we and more U.S. ground forces come home, air and sea power will be- come the predominant strengths behind U.S. diplomacy. The added maritime focus means MSC will be the enabling force for U.S. power projection, good- will and humanitarian assistance. Led by the strategic guidance, the Navy’s bud- get for fiscal years 2013-2017 produces a Navy-Marine Corps team built for war that is capable of operating forward to preserve the peace, responding to crises and protecting United States and allied interests. The force will be lean, agile, flexible, ready and technologically advanced. So what does that really mean for MSC?

It means that the many MSC missions around the world every day – be they in our government-operated fleet or our contractor-operated fleet – will become increasingly important to the execution of the new defense strategy. It also means new equipment and missions are headed our way.

AFSB(I)
Responding to a longstanding require- ment for a mobile offshore base to support mine countermeasure operations and other support missions in the U.S. Central Com- mand area of responsibility, amphibious transport dock ship USS Ponce’s decommissioning was postponed to prepare it for a new mission as an interim Afloat Forward Staging Base. Commander Fleet Forces Command, Rear Adm. Brian LaRoche and class manager Mike S. Land. Under the leadership of a Navy Deputy Commander Rear Adm. Mark H. “Buz” Buzby, USN
CLF ships’ new tech = better service

By Wayne Cox, MSFSC

CLF ships at sea.

Navy ships at sea.

more than 583 million gallons of fuel to
1.3 million square feet of cargo and
alone, CLF ships delivered more than
implemented by MSC’s CLF ships and
six subordinate commands worldwide.

The old cargo load management sys-
tem used outdated technology that was
virtually untouched since the 1960s. The
new system offers improved bene-
etits over the previous one, including
a comprehensive, real-time, centralized
load management system to keep
board CLF ships. Access to the big pic-
ture, in turn, has enabled CLF ships to
to more efficiently respond to the demands of
fleet customers in need of food, fuel,
spare parts and other vital supplies.

Ship inventories worldwide can
now be monitored from six centralized
locations aboard CLF ships. Latest stan-
dard computer technology enables both
seagoing personnel and a shore-based
management team to see accurate, up-
to-date inventories. As a result, supply-
laden CLF ships can be better directed
to provide the necessary underway
replenishment to Navy combatant ships at
sea.

Shoreside support personnel
dedicated to monitoring CLF ship
inventories have already been trained
at MSC Far East in Singapore and
MSC Central in Bahrain. By mid-
March, 19 CLF ships are scheduled
to have completed the software upgrades
that allow shoreside personnel to
see total inventory information. All
changes, shore and afloat, are slated
for completion by October 2012.

Leap to change

The old cargo load management
system was designed to support indepen-
dently operating CLF ships, which all
functioned as individual stock points
to replenish Navy combatant ships at sea.
When specific supplies were needed aboard
a ship, the crew could only contact
the crew aboard a specifically assigned
CLF ship to see if the ship was stocked
with the desired cargo. For the Navy’s
seagoing forces, this peculiarity look at
supply inventories – ship by ship – made
it challenging and time consuming to
locate and obtain urgently needed materials.
A change was needed.

U.S. Fleet Forces Command
and Commander U.S. Pacific Fleet – both
of which oversee MSC’s resupply of Navy
combatant ships – asked MSC to improve
to support combat load management system
in October 2007. By March 2010, MSC
completed a concept of operations that
provided the initial framework for estab-
lishing how dry cargo/ammunition ships,
ship replenishment oiers and fast combat
support ships could be reconfigured to
provide more centralized, ef cient support
to the fleet.

“As MSC and the
rest of the Navy continue to look for ways to
ef ciently cost savings, while still providing
outstanding logistic support to our
wartime, global management of
CLF stock levels is an imperative to
success,” said Navy CmDr. Robert
Keating, the of cer in charge of the
military department aboard MSC dry
cargo/ammunition ship USNS Alan
Shepard, one of the ships using the new
cargo load management systems.

Making CLF more ef cient

MSC’s new cargo load management
system eliminates some of the ineffici-
cy inherent in the old ship-to-ship inven-
tory search. The new system provides
the capability to see and manage all CLF
inventories from ashore, leaving the crews
of CLF ships able to concentrate on physi-
cally handling and transferring cargo.

Accurate data is the first step to ensure
high-quality viewing and ef cient
management of all CLF inventories from
ashore. Using a software upgrade, called
the Shipboard Load Management Mod-
ule, all inventory data carried by the ships
is transmitted via satellite link to a shore-
based Global Stock Control Of ce, or
GSCO, located at Naval Station Norfolk,
Va., as well as a CLF logistics of cer-led
team based at each of MSC’s five area
commands worldwide.

Ashore in Norfolk, the GSCO performs
two primary functions; processing all
CLF replenishment requests and keeping
track of all CLF ship inventories, includ-
ing managing the fnancial transactions
between ships.

At the area commands, the
CLF team serves as a centralized point of
contact to coordinate requests from all
combatant ships in that area of opera-
tions. Based on the centralized inventory
information available via satellite, the
CLF team can accurately determine
which CLF ships should resupply which
Navy combatant ships.

The new cargo load management
system went live in August 2011 when
MSC dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS
Amelia Earhart, MSC Far East and
the GSCO in Norfolk participated in a
major Paci c Fleet exercise supporting the
USS George Washington Carrier Strike
Group, successfully conducting 30 un-
derway replenishments that transferred
2,400 pallets.

“CLF is likely the single biggest
change in logistics going on in the Navy
today,” said Navy Capt. Matt Garside,
Commander, Logistics Group, Western
Commander, Logistics Group, Western
Paci c chief of staff. “We go from a large
force afloat to a much smaller group
ashore. We gain e ciency, save money and
still deliver the goods.”

Ponce receiving refit for new role as AFSB(I)

By James Marconi

M

ilitary Sealift Command civil
service mariners will join forces
with uniformed U.S. Navy personnel
to crew USS Ponce, which is currently
preparing for a new mission as an
Afloat Forward Staging Base. The vessel
will remain based at Naval Station Norfolk,
Va., postponed a scheduled decommissioning
to be refitted as an Afloat Forward Staging Base. The vessel
will be crewed in part by MSC civil service mariners.
By James Marconi
MSC Public Affairs

With the continuous roar of twin rotors sending powerful waves of air across the black flight deck, a U.S. Marine Corp MV-22 Osprey loaded with supplies for 100 Marines took off from Military Sealift Command dry cargo/ammunition ship USNS Robert E. Peary.

The Feb. 9 shipboard landing and subsequent takeoff marked the first time an Osprey has operated with one of MSC’s dry cargo/ammunition ships underway at sea, serving as a proof of concept that the ship class is a viable platform for Osprey aircraft supporting Marine missions. The mission in this case was an amphibious assault on Fort Pickett, Va., one of the centerpiece operations during Bold Alligator 2012—the largest amphibious exercise in a decade.

“Bold Alligator gets us back to the Navy and Marine Corps’ fundamental role of power projection from the sea,” said Navy Rear Adm. Mark H. Buzby, commander, MSC. “It also gives us an opportunity to try new concepts, like this. The last time we conducted a major amphibious exercise on the East Coast, neither the Osprey nor the T-AKE were operational.”

Bold Alligator, which is dual-sponsored by U.S. Fleet Forces Command and U.S. Marine Corps Forces Command, is intended to revitalize Navy and Marine Corps amphibious expeditionary tactics, techniques and procedures. Using a combination of live training and simulations, Bold Alligator’s scenarios were designed to refocus the Navy and Marine Corps partnership on projecting power from the sea. The exercise, held Jan. 31 to Feb. 12, encompassed 25,000 personnel and 25 ships associated with a carrier strike group and two expeditionary strike groups. These groups deployed in three major areas of operation off the East Coast: Jacksonville, Fla., Camp Lejeune, N.C., and Fort Pickett.

Six MSC ships, including Peary, participated in the exercise. During the two-week training period, these MSC ships demonstrated the concept of seabasing, one of the core competencies at the heart of Bold Alligator. Seabasing, in principal, means that an amphibious force can operate with support from ships and other assets at sea, without having to depend on equipment, supplies and repair capabilities that might not be available in a real-world scenario.

MSC, as a principal provider of underway replenishment services and prepositioning capabilities, was well-positioned to give that level of operational flexibility to exercise participants. In addition to transferring fuel and food to other ships, an MSC vessel acted as a floating machine shop for aircraft, while another launched amphibious vehicles as part of a beach assault reminiscent of World War II. Although geographically separated by thousands of miles of coastline and open ocean, MSC’s ships were tightly coordinated by MSC Atlantic, one of MSC’s five area commands worldwide.

Combat Logistics Force ships

Peary and two other MSC Combat Logistics Force ships, fleet replenishment oilers USNS John Lenthall and USNS Laramie, kept combatant vessels fully fueled and supplied during Bold Alligator. Lenthall, assigned to the USS Enterprise carrier strike group, also helped conduct the normal certifications that the strike group will need prior to its regularly scheduled deployment. Laramie, assigned to the USS Iwo Jima expeditionary strike group, conducted underway replenishments off the coast of North Carolina. Laramie also helped conduct certification exercises, like visit, board, search and seizure, for the strike group’s scheduled deployment.

Like Laramie and Lenthall, Peary also transferred fuel and food to exercise participants. Together, all three ships transferred millions of gallons of fuel during Bold Alligator.
Navy & Marine Corps partners...

"...project power from the sea"

U.S. Navy photo

be anchored to the ocean bottom when in use to prevent drifting. Obregon pumped water, rather than fuel, during Bold Alligator, transferring 50,000 gallons to Marine forces ashore. "Obregon has supported the MPS program since the mid-1980s, including AAV deployments," said Lora Hutchinson, a Prepositioning Program marine transportation specialist involved with Bold Alligator's planning. "By participating in this exercise, the ship continues to prove the robust capabilities it offers to the Navy."

**Wright, Chouest and Obregon**

Three other MSC ships also participated in Bold Alligator. Off the coast of Virginia, aviation logistics support ship SS Wright hosted embarked Marine Corps personnel from the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing. With civilian personnel aboard the ship, the Marines provided the critical capability to practice aircraft repairs during the exercise. "To understand Wright’s participation in Bold Alligator, you must understand the context," said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Chris Cook, the MSC liaison officer aboard the ship. "One part of Bold Alligator is the Marine Corps – in conjunction with the U.S. Navy and certain NATO nations – simulating a large-scale assault on a beach head. The USMC and Navy aviation component are a critical part of that operation. Any time you have large numbers of aircraft involved in sustained operations, sooner or later equipment on them will fail. Wright allows damaged aircraft to get back into the fight quicker and stay forward-deployed for longer."

MSC-contracted special warfare support ship MV Dolores Chouest served primarily as a platform for U.S. and Canadian divers to conduct diving operations.

MSC Maritime Prepositioning Force ship USNS PFC Eugene A. Obregon lowered its gunmetal gray stern ramp into the water Feb. 7, allowing 12 Amphibious Assault Vehicles, or AAVs, to enter the waters just off Camp Lejune. The AAVs, tracked vehicles that can carry three crew and 21 combat ready troops, splashed into shallow water in preparation for a massive D-Day style amphibious assault on the beach. Obregon also tested the Navy Beach Group 2 Amphibious Bulk Liquid Transfer System, which enables fuel transfers of 10,000 feet and water transfers of 10,000 feet from ship to shore where conventional port facilities are limited or non-existent. The system comprises three reels of floating hose, which can...
In January, Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS Kanawa traversed the central and eastern Mediterranean Sea and provided underway replenishment support to U.S. Navy ships, including the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group, specifically amphibious assault ship USS Bataan and dock landing ship USS Whidbey Island. Kanawa performed underway replenishments with the guided-missile destroyer USS The Sullivans and guided-missile cruiser USS Vella Gulf. Kanawa also performed an underway replenishment following a short-fused request by Canadian navy frigate HMCS Vancouver, allowing Vancouver to bypass a port visit for refueling.

Members of the U.S. 6th Fleet staff embarked MSC command ship USS Mount Whitney Jan. 19-27 to participate in training and future exercise planning. MSCEURAF marine transportation specialists coordinated force protection and fueling for the transit of MSC-chartered cargo ship MV BBC Houston and heavy-lift ship MV Ocean Charger, transporting Iraqi patrol boats to the MSC Central area of responsibility. Ocean Charger, carrying two boats, transferred to MSCCENT J. 21, Houston, carrying one boat, transited the Mediterranean Sea Jan. 16-29. MSC-chartered tanker MT Maersk Rhode Island completed its 30-day time charter Jan. 12 for transferring CODD fuel within the theater.

Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron One, including MSC Maritime Prepositioning Force ships USNS 2nd LT John P. Bobo and USNS LCP(L) Ray M. Wheat visited the ports of Palma de Mallorca, Spain, Dec. 2 to Jan. 9; Alicante, Spain, Jan. 10-24; and Hurd Bank, Malta, arriving Jan. 26. MSCEURAF welcomes Navy Boatswain’s Mate 1st Class Yoel Mejia-Diaz, who reported Jan. 11 as waterfront coordinator.
MSC headquarters honored employees at award ceremonies held at the Washington Navy Yard Catering and Conference Center Feb. 7. Receiving length of service awards for their years in the federal government were Larry Urban, Combat Logistics Force, for 35 years of service; Ken Allen, Maritime Forces and Manpower Management, for 25 years of service; Danton, Sealift Program, and David Dempster and Brendan Thompson, engineering, for 20 years of service; Robert Atlas, Combat Logistics Force, for 15 years of service; and Mark Buenaventura, Combat Logistics Force; Stephen Delaney, Special Program, and Brian Frick, Terrell Randall and Dave Johnson, command, control, communication and computer systems; and Rosanna Florida, office of the comptroller for 10 years of service.

Tim McCulley, Military Sealift Command’s deputy commander, represented MSCPAC at the California Maritime Academy Career Fair along with an MSC recruiter Jan. 17. At the fair, MSC described job opportunities for future graduates planning careers within the maritime industry.

Fourteen MSCPAC and Ship Support Port Unit San Diego employees served as MSC representatives at the annual Armada Maritime Electronics Association Forum held Jan. 24-26 at the San Diego Convention Center. The forum, with nearly 8,000 attendees, featured the latest in electronics and communications technology geared toward U.S. warfighters.

Bernie Donathan, from the office of MSC Representative Pearl Harbor, attended a meeting with personnel from Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam’s of MSC Representative Pearl Harbor, toward U.S. warfighters. Discussions included funding, berthing and mooring for the Sea-Based, X-band Radar.

Parrish Guerrero, MSCPAC deputy logistics officer, provided a Combat Logistics Force Load Management Program update for logistics officers from Commander, U.S. 3rd Fleet, Commander Naval Air Forces Pacific and San Diego-based supply officers about doing business with MSC.

MSCPAC bids farewell to Navy Lt. Cmdr. Florence Beato, MSCPAC logistics officer, who departs with the command for his new position at the Defense Logistics Agency in San Diego. Beato received the Meritorious Service Medal, for outstanding service during his tour by Navy Capt. Sylvester Moore, MSCPAC commander.

The command welcomes Navy Cmdr. David Dowler, who joins MSCPAC as the new command chief staff officer, and Navy Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Marshall Vanorenum, joining the MSCPAC logistics department staff.

Lt. Commandant of the Coast Guard, appointed to a 4-year term.

Guided-missile submarine USS Michigan moors against Frank Cable in Polaris Point, Guam, Jan. 26. Cables conduct maintenance and support of submarines deployed in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility.
Reservists deliver during Cobra Gold

By Edward Baxter
MSCFE Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command Reserve- sponsored missions, focused on contingency planning and exercise priorities, have become a hallmark of U.S. Navy operations throughout the Indo-Pacific. Reserve crew members, mariners, and cargo specialists deployed to support the biannual joint exercise, Cobra Gold, in January. The mission was a collective effort to provide humanitarian assistance, medical support, and military cargo support to the Kingdom of Thailand and other host nations.

Reservist Engineer 3rd Class Christy Caudill, assigned to USNS Compass (T-AO 202), deployed to the Kingdom of Thailand as part of the U.S. Army's support for Cobra Gold. Caudill and her team worked closely with host nations to deliver humanitarian assistance and cargo to the Kingdom of Thailand.

Swift runs final laps of SPS 2012

By Lt. Matthew Comer
HSV 2 Swift Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command- chartered high-speed vessel HSV 2 Swift completed a final four-month deployment in support of the Southern Partnership Station mission, bringing supplies and military cargo to eight host nations in the Western Hemisphere. The mission supported Department of Defense and U.S. Army Pacific operations in the region.

Naval Steelworker 2nd Class Jeremy Caudill, assigned to USNS Mobile Bay (LCH 11) embarked on HSV 2 Swift's final mission, which began in January. The vessel completed 55,000 square feet of U.S. Marine Corps cargo and assisted with vessel repairs. Swift worked with host-nation personnel to strengthen partnerships and promote joint operation.

Reservists deliver during Cobra Gold

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