

FLEET FOCUS

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Patrol Squadron 47 participates in USWEX 01-1



VP-47 file photo

Patrol Squadron Forty-Seven and Patrol Squadron Four recently conducted an Undersea Warfare (USW) exercise with the USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) Carrier Battle Group. P-3C Orions from VP-47 and VP-4 provided around-the-clock, long-range USW for the battle group.

Lt. j.g. Todd Anderson
VP-47 Public Affairs

Patrol Squadron Forty-Seven and Patrol Squadron Four recently conducted an undersea warfare (USW) exercise with the USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) Carrier Battle Group as it transited past the Hawaiian Islands on its ninth deployment to the Western Pacific. This USW exercise sought to test and improve the combined operations of maritime patrol aviation (MPA) within the carrier battle group structure.

The key players of the carrier battle group were USS Carl Vinson with Carrier Air Wing Eleven embarked, USS Princeton (CG 59), USS Antietam (CG 54), USS O'Kane (DDG 77), USS Ingraham (FFG-61) and USS Olympia (SSN 717). USS Key West (SSN 722) and USS Michigan (SSBN 727) played the roles of enemy submarines for the exercise.

USS O'Kane, USS Ingraham and USS Olympia comprised the battle group's primary organic

USW protection. These assets, in conjunction with USS Princeton and USS Antietam, worked together to protect the carrier from air, surface and subsurface threats at close range.

During the exercise, P-3C Orions from VP-47 and VP-4 provided around-the-clock, long-range USW for the battle group. The VP-47 tactics officer, Lt. Cmdr. Wayne Plager, was one of the individuals who helped coordinate the four-day exercise. "This event offered valuable training for both aircrew and maintenance personnel and exercised our ability to provide continuous USW support for the battle group movement," stated Lt. Cmdr. Plager.

Eight combat air crews from VP-47 dropped almost 500 sonobuoys and flew over 45 hours without missing a sortie. Lt. Chuck Grant, a P-3C tactical coordinator (TACCO) from VP-47 said, "Everybody was excited to put their USW knowledge and training to the test."

Second class petty officers Tim Peters and Chris Hart, both avia-

tion warfare systems operators, enjoyed the realism of the exercise. "The best training you can get in our platform is actively working with a battle group and learning how to handle real-world situations that could happen at any time," said AW2 Peters.

AW2 Hart agreed, "It is definitely better than sitting in a simulator. Training with our fellow Sailors allows all of us to see how important are jobs are to each other."

"If I were to fail in my duties as an acoustic operator, it can cause serious consequences affecting the entire battle group and possibly the safety of our country," AW2 Peters and AW2 Hart are responsible for providing acoustic information about submarines to the TACCO.

Exercises such as USWEX 01-1 provide the opportunity to further improve the interaction of non-organic aircraft with the battle group by demonstrating the P-3C's tactical capabilities in a multi-threat, multi-mission environment.

USS Chosin Sailors lend a hand in East Timor

Lt. j.g. Mark Aragon
USS Chosin Public Affairs

Dili, East Timor – Sailors aboard the USS Chosin (CG 65) recently arrived in Dili, East Timor to assist the United States Support Group East Timor (USGET) with humanitarian and civic action assistance projects. The Sailors worked to clean up, paint and refurbish Balide High School in Dili. Balide High School is one of 90 other high schools in the East Timor district with an attendance of approximately 1,000 students.

The project is the latest of USGET's efforts designed to further U.S. community relations and to improve social conditions and the quality of life for the people of East Timor. Approximately 50 Chosin Sailors boarded a landing craft that also offloaded supplies and material from Chosin to the beach.

As the Sailors arrived at the boat landing, Col. Charles Cooke, USMC, commanding officer, U.S. Support Group East Timor, eagerly greeted them and thanked them for their support. When asked about what he thought about Chosin's support for the people of East Timor,

Operations Specialist 3rd Paul Chase said, "These people are trying to rebuild their lives. I am really looking forward to helping out."

After a short safety brief, the group boarded the buses and proceeded to the Balide High School project site. Upon arrival, the Wardragons unloaded supplies and material, then promptly commenced work painting the school buildings.

OSSN Adam Peterson remarked, "The buildings look really run down and they are going to require a lot of work." However, at the end of the day, two of the buildings were painted inside and out and installation of the insect screens and security wiring was started. A new group of Chosin volunteers will return to the project site the next day to continue work.

The USS Chosin is commanded by Capt. Peter Daspit and is homeported at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The ship's most recent employment was in support of Operation Southern Watch and enforcing U.N. sanctions in the Arabian Gulf. The USS Chosin will remain in Dili for approximately three days before continuing to other missions in the Pacific.

JDS Chihaya arrives at Pearl Harbor



Lt. Lane Ogawa photo

The Japanese vessel, JDS Chihaya, recently arrived at Pearl Harbor to assist with the Ehime Maru recovery operation. The ship will assist in diving operations after the Ehime Maru is moved to the shallow water location.

MDSU-1 earns retention award



EMC Andrew Alexander photo

Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One (MDSU 1) was recently recognized as "best in fleet for retention" during calendar year 2000. Spearheaded by Command Career Counselor, HT1 Reyes, the Command Retention Team, CRT, obtained superior retention rates by striving to meet the needs of its Sailors. In addition to 27 re-enlistments, the CRT enabled eight rate conversions and 50 professional development boards.

For MDSU-1, the award reflects a definitive measure of success and validation of their continuing efforts to ensure a positive and professional command climate. MDSU-1's adherence to a weekly "training day" dedicated to in-rate and general military training, active support for continuing formal in-rate training, and off-duty education has been vital to its exceptional advancement results. The overall success of the MDSU-1 retention team is reflective of their overall commitment to customer (the sailor) valuation, and satisfaction.

Task Force EXCEL opening for business

Excellence through Commitment to Education and Learning intended to reinvent training Navywide

Lt. Cmdr. Gary Kirchner
Task Force EXCEL Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (NNS) - The Task Force for Excellence through Commitment to Education and Learning (EXCEL) is about to open for business.

The initiative is Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Vern Clark's intent to revolutionize training Navywide, so that Sailors have the resources to excel and the Navy maintains a sharpened state of readiness.

"We've started the revolution in Navy training," said Vice Adm. Alfred G. Harms Jr., Chief of Naval Education and Training (CNET). "We are in the process of finalizing locations, manning and determining specific taskings for the five cells comprising our implementation team."

In September, Task Force EXCEL will open "implementation cells" in San Diego; Washington; Norfolk, Va.; Orlando, Fla.; and Pensacola, Fla. Each cell will vary in size according to need, with an average of 10 to 20 staff members.

Rear Adm. Harry Ulrich, presently serving as USS Enterprise (CVN 65) Battle Group Commander, will assume command of Task Force EXCEL in mid-September. He will head the coordination efforts for the implementation team, as well as work policy and resource issues with the OPNAV staff.

"Rear Adm. Ulrich is perfectly suited for this job," said Harms. "He brings with him many years of fleet experience and a pas-

sion to empower our Sailors and improve our Navy. He will provide Task Force EXCEL innovative leadership as we move ahead."

The implementation cells in Norfolk and San Diego will work directly with the fleets, spearheading pilot projects and initiating long-term training and education improvements.

The human performance cell will be established in Orlando, Fla., at the Naval Air Warfare Center, Training Systems Division. Working closely with the entire implementation team, the human performance cell will be responsible for researching and developing performance requirement solutions that will accurately address fleet needs. The implementation cell in Pensacola, Fla., will coordinate CNET support for the entire team.

"We have put together a great team," said Harms. "We have experienced people from the fleet, CNET, private industry, academia and government. They understand what the Navy and our Sailors need and how to create long lasting performance solutions."

The program's goal is to revolutionize and revitalize Navy training and education to provide Sailors the opportunity to succeed and prosper in their professional and personal lives.

Task Force EXCEL is expected to challenge old assumptions, implement new processes and create new tools that will make a real difference in the lives of Sailors and the Navy's war fighting capabilities.

"This is part of covenant leadership and absolutely necessary if we are to capture the hearts, minds and loyalty of the young men and women who choose to join the Navy team," Harms said.

Go to <http://www.cnet.navy.mil/> for more information.