

## FLEET FOCUS

## VP-9 joins multi-national exercise

By Lt. James Tran  
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VP-9

As the USS Constellation (CV 64) Battle Group left its homeport of San Diego, Calif., enroute to their deployment site in the East China Sea, they were scheduled to complete their final pre-deployment qualification exercises in Hawaii's waters.

These exercises were conceived to test the ability of the battle group to transit an area patrolled by a hostile submarine, then conduct around the clock combined strike operations in a simulated wartime environment. Respectively, these two tests consisted of the Anti-Submarine Warfare Exercise (ASWEX) and the Joint Fleet Exercise (JTFEX).

Patrol Squadron Nine (VP-9) and other Allied assets provided MPA support for the exercises. The Allied Forces were detachments from the Royal Air Force (RAF), the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), the Canadian Air Force (CAF), and the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF).

This was the first opportunity for VP-9 and other MPA Squadrons to conduct the around the clock operations from Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay in more than ten years.

The exercises began with the ASWEX. This portion of the exercise took place approximately 580 nautical miles northeast of Kaneohe Bay and focused on utilizing the combined forces of air, surface, and subsurface assets to detect and monitor USS Topeka (SSN 754), simulating a hostile subsurface threat.

Topeka's mission was to target the Constellation Carrier Battle Group and attack it before being detected herself.

This scenario presented numer-



VP-9 file photo

A Patrol Squadron 9 (VP-9) P3 Orion lands on the runway at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay. VP-9 recently participated in the JTFEX and ASWEX multi-national exercises.

ous challenges to the VP-9 aircrew and tactics department, specifically a large open ocean search against a quiet and challenging subsurface target.

The combined forces pooled their tactical talents and proposed several innovative recommendations to their operational commander, Commander, Task Force 12, prior to the commencement of the exercise.

From dividing the area per the P-

3C's capability to operational deception and tactics employment, no stone was left unturned.

Once the planning stages were completed, operations commenced with the ASWEX. Three full days were dedicated for the ASWEX in order to locate and track the Topeka.

Within the first twenty-four hours of the exercise, VP-9 had effectively searched the initial pre-

planned area and detected the hostile submarine.

From this point on, VP-9, along with the help of the participating Allies were able to maintain continuous around the clock contact on Topeka. This "multi-national" effort included two sorties per day by the JMSDF, and four sorties per day by VP-9. This quick detection and continuous contact of the target made ASWEX 99-5 a resounding

success for all MPA assets involved. Once the ASWEX was completed, the seven-day phase of the qualification process commenced.

The objective of JTFEX was to have the Carrier Battle Group conduct daily operations in a simulated littoral environment. Considerations such as shallow water, land and hostile threat standoffs, utilization of carrier assets, and safety of flight issues factored into the tactical operation on the carrier.

MPA's role was to provide surface search, strike asset augmentation, and undersea warfare services to the battle group.

Depending on the type of information required, the battle group would dictate the daily mission for each MPA asset. As realized during the ASWEX exercise, VP-9 and their Allies enabled a complete operational success for the carrier's final test before her six-month deployment.

In summary of both exercises, the CAF flew four sorties for 25 flight hours, the RAF flew seven sorties for 53 flight hours, the RAAF flew 10 sorties for 55 flight hours, the JMSDF flew 18 sorties for 120 flight hours, and VP-9 flew 38 sorties for 300 flight hours.

Overall, the interaction with the allied forces proved to be both successful and rewarding, while working together as a team to accomplish the mission.

In terms of VP-9's progression in its Inter-Deployment Training Cycle (IDTC), the challenging exercises provided the unique opportunity to hone our interoperability skills with the battle group, while building a solid working foundation with our Allies. The crews planned and executed flawlessly, while the maintainers kept the aircraft up and mission capable. This exercise was a true team effort and proved that VP-9 is making significant progress in preparation for their up-coming deployment.

## Tucson crewmembers enjoy Chile port call

USS Tucson Public Affairs

USS Tucson (SSN 770) returned to Pearl Harbor recently following a two-month, 15,000 mile trip to Chile. Tucson participated in Teamwork South 99 (TWS 99), a multinational exercise involving Chilean and U.S. Naval forces and Chilean and Canadian Air Forces.

Teamwork South is the biggest exercise conducted by the Chilean Navy. It offered an exceptional opportunity to engage the Chilean Navy at sea and in port while practicing coordinated task group submarine operations, submarine warfare against a highly proficient diesel submarine, and anti-surface tactics in a high-threat littoral environment.

Conducted over an 18-day period off the coast of Chile, TWS-99 encompassed 19 individual events involving 13 surface ships, two submarines, six helicopters, seven fixed-wing aircraft and over 1,800 personnel. This exercise marked the first time a Chilean Navy Commander assumed tactical command (TACOM) of U.S. and Chilean submarines and the first ever Chilean coordinated operations among submarines, surface ships and aircraft.

TWS-99 provided Tucson with the opportunity to demonstrate her superb anti-ship and anti-submarine warfare capabilities while operating independently more than 6,000 nautical miles from any logistical support. The exercise also allowed Tucson to work with the Chilean submarine force, considered to be the best-trained in South America.

Tucson and the Chilean diesel submarine CS Obrien worked together in numerous events over the three weeks and exchanged officers and crew during underway periods. More than 100 crewmembers from the two submarines attended a joint picnic ashore. These interactions resulted in great camaraderie between the crews. In addition to the exercise, Tucson's trip to South America included stops in three outstanding Chilean ports: Valparaiso, Antofagasta and Iquique.

This trip marked the first time that most crewmembers had been to South America, and no one was disappointed. Valparaiso is a world class liberty port and easily ranks among the top places any crewmember has been. It is a thriving seaport that, prior to the opening of the Panama

Canal, was a mandatory stop for every seafarer transiting the Strait of Magellan.

The city's beautiful museums, unique historical areas, and idyllic cobblestone side streets provided a fascinating way for the crew to experience Valparaiso's overwhelming European cultural influence.

Several crewmembers visited the steep slopes of the Andes Mountains, less than two hours inland from the beaches of Vina del Mar, to experience some of the finest snow skiing in South America.

While Antofagasta and Iquique were smaller cities, their raw physical beauty, sweeping mountain vistas and equally active nightlife made for a close call on which port was the favorite. Regardless of the specific location, plentiful opportunity to sample the local, exotic cuisine was all that many crewmembers needed to judge the visit a success.

Teamwork South was an outstanding run for the Tucson crew. Sailors join the Navy to participate in deployments like this. The combination of challenging operations, world class liberty and engaging a navy as professional as the Chileans made this a once in a lifetime experience.

## Surface Reserve Force commander visits Frederick

By Ens. Sharon Boyd  
USS FREDERICK

While in port Sembawang, Singapore for Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training 99, the crew and wardroom of USS Frederick (LST 1184) hosted Rear Adm. John F. Brunelli, Commander, Naval Surface Reserve Force. During the visit, Brunelli toured the ship and spoke to the crew and embarked Marines, as well as members of USS George Philip (FFG 12).

The official party visited several areas of the ship where Brunelli conversed with ship reservists and primary crew. In the pilot house, he spoke with reserve officer Lt. Ann Duff of Honolulu, Hawaii, concerning the opportunities provided to reservists for attainment of qualifications. Duff stated, "Rear Adm. Brunelli indicated that any training

available to active Sailors should be available for reservists. This is good news for those who want to retrain or enhance their skills."

Brunelli also talked to the embarked Marines while looking at amphibious assault vehicles in the tank deck, where the heart of Frederick's mission, amphibious operations, is carried out.

Brunelli emphasized how great the ship looked when he was here a year ago and how impressed he is since it looks even better now.

The visit provided Brunelli the opportunity to see the outstanding work of the men and women of Frederick. The visit also allowed him to see the opportunities provided to the reservists on Frederick. Petty Officer Jamie Brewer of Sebring, Fla., Frederick's selected reservist coordinator said, "he seems to be making a conscientious effort to address the needs of Sailors."

## Pacific submarine training center changes command

By J03 McClain Shewman  
COMSUBPAC PUBLIC AFFAIRS



Capt. Carlton W. Puryear

Capt. Carlton W. Puryear, Jr. relieved Capt. Robert Dunn as commanding officer, Naval Submarine Training Center, Pacific (NAVSUBTRACENPAC), July 20 at the Submarine Memorial, Pearl Harbor.

Rear Adm. Al Konetzni, Jr., Commander Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet was the guest speaker in the ceremony.

Capt. Dunn, who served as Commander of NAVSUBTRACENPAC since July 1996, will be reporting to Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

"Capt. Dunn has created his own legacy," said Konetzni. "He has influenced the entire sub-

marine force in how to train, work as a team, how to fight and how to win in combat," said Konetzni.

"It was a great tour. We trained more than 10,000 Sailors in a three-year period," said Dunn. "The quality of our people was tremendous, and they are the ones that make things happen. They're the finest group of Sailors I have ever worked with," added the King of Prussia, Penn. native.

"Any time you go into a great command that has been running flawlessly, you arrive with a sense of pride," said Puryear. "We will continue to prepare ships for deployments to the Pacific and train the Sailors to be the future of the submarine force," added Puryear.

NAVSUBTRACENPAC was established in 1960 as the Fleet Submarine Training Center, with the main objective of offering training and courses to Pacific Fleet submariners. With a staff of approximately 200 personnel, NAVSUBTRACENPAC trains the submarine force stay on the cutting edge.

## A handle on things



GM3 Chris Glover handles the lines as USS Crommelin (FFG 37) prepares to get underway for a family cruise to Maui on July 23. For more on Crommelin's trip, see page B-1.

J01 David Nagle photo