



# RHUMB LINES

*Straight Lines to Navigate By*



October 5, 2010

## USS Cole Attack – 10 Years Later

*"Remember the special heritage that this ship has. It represents the resiliency of our Navy, and it represents the spirit of our Navy - in ways that other ships simply do not."*

- Adm. Gary Roughead, Chief of Naval Operations

### A Moment in Naval History

On October 12, 2000, at 11:18 a.m., as USS Cole (DDG 67) was refueling in Aden Harbor, Yemen, suicide bombers detonated an explosive-laden boat directly against the port side of the ship. The resulting blast [killed 17 Sailors](#), wounded 37 others, and tore a 40-by-60 foot hole in the ship's hull.

### A Decade Later – Better Prepared Against Current Threats

Since the attack on USS Cole, the Navy's Anti-terrorism/Force protection (AT/FP) and damage control programs have become increasingly robust, integrating themselves into every aspect of Sailors' lives.

**AT/FP** – The Navy has steadily improved AT/FP manning, resourcing, technologies, command and control (C2), policies, and doctrine. As a result, Sailors deploying today are far better prepared to defend against current threats.

- At the fleet level, Sailors participate in annual exercises such as [Solid Curtain/Citadel Shield](#) and [Citadel Protect](#), which train to AT/FP capabilities.
- Naval Security Forces are being redistributed to naval facilities and installations based on their Required Operational Capability Tiering rank, which is determined by that facility's impact on the Navy's operational capability. This redistribution will ensure more resources are allocated to installations that are critical to supporting near-term operations.
- U.S. law was enacted to provide a [Naval Vessel Protection Zone](#), forbidding unidentified vessels from approaching within 100 yards of a Navy ship and requiring vessels operating within 500 yards to travel at minimum speed.

**Damage Control** – Improvements to damage control training procedures have been incorporated at the earliest levels of training to ensure our Sailors are prepared to respond to an attack.

- Damage control training programs start at boot camp, with [Battle Stations 21](#) (BS-21), a series of challenging and [realistic training](#) scenarios based on actual events such as the USS Cole attack. As part of BS-21, recruits must navigate through a structural model of the damaged Cole mess decks.
- A damage control study was conducted after the attack and produced the "Cole Lessons Learned Kit." The kit was distributed throughout the surface force and has eleven items to aid in major catastrophes, such as escape trunk reflective marking, leather palm gloves, a forcible entry tool, diesel generator and digital camera.

### Key Messages

- We will never forget the sacrifice made by the brave Sailors killed in the [attack on USS Cole](#).
- The Navy's AT/FP program is continually working to ensure Sailors are trained to defend against the current threat.
- The Navy is [resilient](#) and determined. It is [committed to learning](#) from past events to be better prepared to respond in the future.
- Anti-terrorism and force protection are every Sailor's responsibility. Vigilance can prevent future attacks.

### Facts & Figures

- Immediately following the attack, the crew conducted more than 96 hours of sustained damage control in conditions of extreme heat and stress.
- After \$250 million of upgrades and repairs, Cole returned to service Apr. 2002. Since then, she has participated in eight exercises and completed four [deployments](#).
- Today there are 31 ships and approximately 25,000 Sailors operating in the U.S. Central Command Area of Operations.