



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS AUSTIN (LPD-4)  
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From: Commanding Officer, USS AUSTIN (LPD-4)  
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH), Washington Navy Yard,  
Washington, DC 20370

Subj: 1993 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS AUSTIN (LPD-4)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

- Encl:
- (1) Command Composition and Organization
  - (2) Command History 1993 Chronology
  - (3) Command History 1993 Narrative
  - (4) Commanding Officer's Biography
  - (5) Commanding Officer's Photo
  - (6) Current Ship's Photo
  - (7) Command Welcome Aboard Pamphlet
  - (8) MARG 1-93 Welcome Aboard Pamphlet
  - (9) USS AUSTIN ltr 3590 Ser LPD 4/X:005 of 2 Jan 94  
(w/o enclosures)
  - (10) CINCLANTFLT ltr 3540 Ser N0102/004037 of 30 Aug 93
  - (11) COMNAVSURFLANT ltr 5040 RSG Ser N41/327 of 23 Sep 93  
(w/o enclosures)
  - (12) USS AUSTIN msg dtg 071206Z JUL 93
  - (13) CINCLANTFLT msg dtg 031209Z JUN 93
  - (14) USS AUSTIN msg dtg 211445Z JUN 93
  - (15) CINCLANTFLT PAO News Release no. 21-93
- 1993

1. In accordance with reference (a), the 1993 Command History for USS AUSTIN (LPD-4) is forwarded.

W. L. HARRIS JR

Copy to:  
COMPHIBGRU TWO  
COMPHIBRON TWO

## COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

AUSTIN is an Amphibious Transport Dock designed to transport and land ashore her complement of up to 900 Marines and their equipment by both helicopter and surface amphibious landing craft. AUSTIN carries enough equipment and supplies to sustain her assault force ashore for a period of 30 days, unsupported.

Units embarked on AUSTIN during 1993 included Marine Service Support Group 22 (MSSG), Battalion Landing Team 1/6 (BLT), Fleet Surgical Team Four, Seal Team Eight Platoon Echo, Special Boat Unit Two, Assault Craft Unit Two, Amphibious Construction Battalion Two, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit Two.

AUSTIN is under the administrative command of Commander Amphibious Group TWO, Rear Admiral L. F. Picotte, and the operational command of Commander, Amphibious Squadron Four, Commodore . She is homeported in Norfolk, VA.

1993 COMMAND HISTORY  
USS AUSTIN (LPD 4)

1-6 JAN TRANSIT FROM BARCELONA, SPAIN TO ASHDOD, ISRAEL FOR USMC OFFLOAD  
7-10 JAN SHIP ANCHORED OFF HAIFA DUE TO BAD WEATHER  
10-22 JAN PORT VISIT AND MAINTENANCE PERIOD HAIFA, ISRAEL  
15-16 JAN COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROJECT: AUSTIN SAILORS PAINTED AND CLEANED A MEETING HOUSE FOR MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN.  
16-18 JAN SHIP PROVIDED MEDICAL AND DENTAL SERVICES FOR USDAO PERSONNEL IN HAIFA  
20 JAN ISRAELI FOLK DANCE SHOW PRESENTED ONBOARD  
22 JAN UNDERWAY ENROUTE ANTALYA, TURKEY  
22-23 JAN DECK LANDING QUALIFICATIONS WITH USAF 21ST SPECIAL OPERATIONS HELICOPTER SQUADRON  
23 JAN UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USS KALAMAZOO  
25-29 JAN ANCHORED ANTALYA KORFEZI (BAY) FOR PORT VISIT  
29 JAN- 1 FEB TRANSIT TO ADRIATIC SEA  
1-3 FEB ON STATION IN ADRIATIC SEA IN SUPPORT OF OPERATION PROVIDE PROMISE. UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS KANAWA AND USS SYLVANIA  
4 FEB MOORED RIVA DEI SETTE MARTIRI PIER, VENICE ITALY  
4-8 FEB PORT CALL VENICE, ITALY  
5-7 FEB CONDUCTED SHIP TOURS FOR OVER 500 VENETIANS  
8 FEB UNDERWAY FROM VENICE, ITALY  
11 FEB EMBARKED COMBAT CAMERA TEAM AND TWO ROYAL MORROCCAN NAVAL OFFICERS (LTJG SAHL; LTJG EL OUALID) FOR SIX WEEKS TRAINING  
12-15 FEB ANCHORED GULF OF MANFREDONIA, ITALY FOR AMPHIBIOUS EXERCISES  
16 FEB UNREP WITH USS KALAMAZOO  
16 FEB CASEX - CLOSE AIR SUPPORT EXERCISE, AUSTIN LAUNCHED FLOATING TARGET, PROVIDED AIR INTERCEPT CONTROLLER (AIC) SERVICES, AND PLATFORM FOR CONTROLLING ACFT.  
17-19 FEB ANCHORED GULF OF MANFREDONIA, ITALY  
21 FEB AUSTIN DETACHED FROM COMMANDER TASK FORCE (CTF) 61  
22-25 FEB PORT VISIT TRIESTE, ITALY  
26 FEB ON STATION IN ADRIATIC SEA  
6 MAR UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS JOSHUA HUMPHRIES  
10 MAR ANCHORED GULF OF MANFREDONIA FOR AMPHIBIOUS OPERATIONS  
13 MAR SIMULTANEOUS CONNECTED (CONREP) AND VERTICAL REPLENISHMENT (VERTREP) WITH USS SAN DIEGO AND USS KALAMAZOO  
14 MAR STEEL BEACH PICNIC FOR THE CREW  
17 MAR ANCHORED GULF OF MANFREDONIA  
19 MAR UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USS KALAMAZOO  
21 MAR DEPARTED ADRIATIC SEA ENROUTE ALMERIA AND RENDEZVOUS WITH USS GUAM  
24 MAR UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS JOSHUA HUMPHRIES  
24 MAR ANCHORED VICINITY ALMERIA SPAIN FOR SPANISH "PHIBLEX" AMPHIBIOUS EXERCISE  
25-30 MAR MOORED TO DIQUE DE LEVANTE PIER, ALMERIA SPAIN FOR PORT VISIT

31 MAR DEPARTED MEDITERRANEAN SEA  
 31 MAR-3 APR MOORED TO PIER 1, NAVAL STATION ROTA SPAIN FOR CUSTOMS  
 WASHDOWN AND MARINE AMPHIBIOUS READINESS GROUP TURNOVER  
 1 APR KING JUAN CARLOS OF SPAIN VISITS NAVAL STATION ROTA AND  
 DEPARTS ON SPANISH FRIGATE  
 3 APR DEPARTED ROTA, SPAIN ENROUTE MOREHEAD CITY, NC  
 3-16 APR TRANSITED THE ATLANTIC, CONDUCTED MANEUVERING  
 EXERCISES, GUNFIRE PRACTICE, AND VARIOUS OTHER DRILLS  
 8 APR MARG (4 SHIP TASK GROUP) DIVERTED APPROXIMATELY 300  
 NAUTICAL MILES SOUTH TO AVOID HEAVY SEAS  
 13 APR PASSED BERMUDA ISLANDS  
 14 APR UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USS MONONGAHELA  
 16 APR ARRIVED MOREHEAD CITY, NC FOR OFFLOAD OF EMBARKED UNITS  
 AND EQUIPMENT. UNITS DEBARKED INCLUDED MSSG 22, B  
 COMPANY, BLT 1/6, AND VARIOUS OTHER NAVAL DETACHMENTS  
 INCLUDING DETACHMENTS FROM FST-4, ST-8, SBU 2, ACU-2,  
 PHIBCB 2, EODMU-2. RADM PICOTTE, MGEN NEAL, BGEN  
 WALLS, COL HUCK, COL HULY VISITED SHIP. EMBARKED 209  
 CIVILIAN DEPENDENTS FOR TIGER CRUISE. DEPARTED  
 MOREHEAD CITY.  
 17 APR ANCHORED LYNNHAVEN ROADS TO DEBARK LCU 1660, TWO LCM-  
 6'S, AND SBU-2 RIGID HULL INFLATABLE BOATS (RHIBS).  
 MOORED NAVAL STATION NORFOLK. HOMECOMING CELEBRATIONS.  
 21 APR FCA VISIT  
 28 APR CORE MANNING PROJECT REVIEW  
 4 MAY "SALTS" (SUPPLY ONLINE COMPUTER SYSTEM) INSTALLATION  
 COMMENCED  
 5 MAY OFFICE OF SECDEF MILITARY WORKING GROUP EXAMININED CORE  
 MANNING PROJECT INPUTS FROM AUSTIN  
 AMC THEATER EXECUTIVES GROUP VISIT  
 6 MAY SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETINGS NAVAL STATION,  
 NORFOLK VA  
 10 MAY SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE (SASC) VISITED SHIP AS  
 PART OF INVESTIGATION INTO THE SUBJECT OF HOMOSEXUALS  
 IN THE MILITARY: SENATORS SAM NUNN, JOHN WARNER, JAMES  
 COATES, CHARLES ROBB, RICHARD SHELBY  
 12 MAY COMMANDING OFFICER TESTIFIES AT SASC HEARING  
 17 MAY EMBARKED TWO OFFICER AND FOUR ENLISTED RESERVISTS FOR  
 12 DAYS ANNUAL ACTIVE TRAINING (AT). HELD TRAINING ON  
 CRANE HANDLING OF SEAL TEAM FAST BOATS. POSTAL ASSIST  
 VISIT.  
 18 MAY UNDERWAY FROM N.S. NORFOLK  
 18-21 MAY TRAINED WITH USAF AND USN SEAL JOINT SPECIAL OPERATIONS  
 CAPABLE (JSOC) BOATS IN VACAPES OPAREA  
 21 MAY EMBARKED 8 MIDSHIPMEN FOR "LANTRAMID I" TRAINING CRUISE  
 24-28 MAY UNDERWAY VACAPES OPAREA FOR JSOC FLIGHT OPS. EMBARKED  
 5 GUESTS OF THE NAVY AND ENGINEERING READINESS ASSIST  
 TEAM (ERAT)  
 30 MAY-5 JUN HURREX '93  
 4 JUN SHIP'S PICNIC  
 8-11 JUN UNDERWAY VACAPES OPAREA FOR "CORTRAMID" MIDSHIPMEN  
 TRAINING CRUISE. PROVIDED 23 MIDSHIPMEN WITH  
 INDOCTRINATION IN FLIGHT OPS, WET WELL OPS,  
 SHIPHANDLING AND VARIOUS OTHER TRAINING. EMBARKED 9

GUESTS OF THE NAVY

11-15 JUN MOORED PIER 4, BERTH 5 N.S. NORFOLK

14-15 JUN AMPHIBIOUS GROUP TWO (ISIC) NAVIGATION CHECKRIDE

15-18 JUN UNDERWAY CHERRY POINT OPAREA, VICINITY ONSLOW BAY, NORTH CAROLINA, TO CONDUCT BASCOLEX (EXERCISE ASSAULT WITH NEWLY COMMISSIONED USMC OFFICERS). CO OF THE BASIC SCHOOL (TBS) VISITS SHIP.

18-22 JUN MOORED N.S. NORFOLK

21 JUN EMBARKED 10 MIDSHIPMEN AND 1 GUEST OF THE NAVY FOR LANTRAMID II CRUISE

22 JUN UNDERWAY ENROUTE GLOUCESTER, MA. CONDUCTED BURIAL AT SEA CEREMONY. (CDR QUENTIN S. MEEKER)

24-28 JUN ANCHORED GLOUCESTER, MA FOR PORT VISIT. CONDUCTED SHIP TOURS AND LCM-8 BOAT RIDES FOR THE PUBLIC, HOSTED OVER 3000 VISITORS. PARTICIPATED IN HARBOR FEST, TOWN PARADE, AND BLESSING OF THE FLEET

28 JUN DEPARTED GLOUCESTER ENROUTE BOSTON, MA WITH NUMEROUS GUESTS AND DELAYED ENTRY PROGRAM ENLISTEES ONBOARD. HELD FLIGHT DECK COOKOUT FOR CREW AND GUESTS

29 JUN MOORED WORLD TRADE CENTER PIER (COMMONWEALTH PIER), BOSTON, MA.

30 JUN HELD RECEPTION ON FLIGHT DECK. NUMEROUS DISTINGUISHED VISITORS IN ATTENDANCE.

2 JUL DURING VISIT BY FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY PERSONNEL, OUTLINED USS AUSTIN'S CAPABILITY TO PROVIDE SUPPORT IN EVENT OF FUTURE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS.

2-4 JUL VISIT SHIP - CONDUCTED PUBLIC TOURS

6-9 JUL TRANSIT TO NORFOLK, VA

10 JUL PQS ASSIST VISIT

12-16 JUL PERSONNEL ASSIST TRAINING GROUP (PATG) VISIT

15 JUL COMMANDER, AMPHIBIOUS GROUP TWO VISIT

16 JUL-13 AUG 8 MIDSHIPMEN EMBARKED FOR LANTRAMID III CRUISE

17 JUL VISIT OF VISIT OF CHICAGO AREA FORTUNE 500 CEO'S AND EDUCATORS

23-27 JUL UNDERWAY VACAPES OPAREA FOR AMPHIBIOUS TRAINING

27 JUL FAADC (PERSONNEL/DISBURSING) INSPECTION

28 JUL CINC ATLANTIC FLEET, ADM MAUZ VISIT

2 AUG MAJOR FUEL OIL LEAK #1 MAIN MACHINERY ROOM CAUSED BY FIRE SAFE FUEL OIL STRAINER.

2-6 AUG UNDERWAY VACAPES OPAREA FOR ENGINEERING TRAINING

16 AUG SECRETARY OF THE NAVY, JOHN DALTON; CINC ATLANTIC FLEET, ADM MAUZ ARRIVE FOR VISIT.

16-19 AUG UNDERWAY VACAPES OPAREA FOR OPPE

19-30 AUG MOORED N.S. NORFOLK

8 AUG FUEL OFFLOAD

30 AUG SHIP CONDUCTED A PERSONNEL RECALL, SET HURRICANE CONDITION III AND DEPARTED PORT DUE TO HURRICANE EMILY. CHIEF OF SINGAPORE NAVY VISITED (ARRIVED BY LCAC, DEPARTED BY HELICOPTER)

30 AUG-2 SEP UNDERWAY FOR STORM EVASION IN VACAPES OPAREA.

7-10 SEP WEAPONS OFFLOAD NAVAL WEAPONS STATION YORKTOWN, VA

13-16 SEP LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT ASSIST/MAINTENANCE MATERIAL MANAGEMENT (3M) INSPECTION

13-30 SEP RESTRICTED MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY SEP '93

17 SEP 733RD ENGINEERING DEPOT COMPANY REUNION ONBOARD  
 20 SEP-31 OCT SHIP'S FORCE COMPLETELY REFURBISHED SUPPLY AND ADMIN /  
 MEDICAL / DENTAL BERTHING SPACES  
 24 SEP LCDR J. J. BIRD RELIEVED LCDR S. C. JOACHIM AS  
 EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
 27 SEP 18 FEET CUT FROM TOP OF MAST TO ALLOW MOVE DOWNRIVER  
 30 SEP TROOP HABITABILITY INSPECTION  
 1 OCT MOVED TO MARINE HYDRAULICS INTERNATIONAL (MHI) SHIPYARD  
 ON THE EASTERN BRANCH OF THE ELIZABETH RIVER.  
 4 OCT PMA (PHASED MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY) COMMENCES  
 7-8 OCT PHYSICAL SECURITY ASSIST VISIT  
 13 OCT COMMANDER, AMPHIBIOUS GROUP TWO VISIT  
 19 OCT ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY VISIT/TOUR  
 10 NOV NATO SECRET CONTROL INSPECTION  
 18 NOV MEDICAL READINESS INSPECTION (MRI) ASSIST VISIT  
 13-15 DEC PROPULSION PLANT LIGHT OFF ASSESSMENT  
 14 DEC TROOP HABITABILITY INSPECTION, QUALITY OF LIFE  
 INSPECTION  
 17 DEC MOVED TO N.S. NORFOLK, VA  
 20-21 DEC SEA TRIALS

1993 COMMAND HISTORY  
USS AUSTIN (LPD 4)  
NARRATIVE

For USS AUSTIN (LPD 4), 1993 was an intense, challenging and successful year. AUSTIN started 1993 in the middle of a Mediterranean deployment, with hostilities in the former Yugoslavia holding the attention of the world. New Year's Day was spent underway, transitting from a pleasant Christmas port visit in Barcelona, Spain to Haifa, Israel. Embarked Navy and Marine Corps units included Marine Service Support Group 22, "B" Company from Battalion Landing Team 1/6, Fleet Surgical Team 4, Seal Team Eight Platoon Echo, Special Boat Unit 2, Assault Craft Unit 2, and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 2. AUSTIN operated with a Marine Amphibious Readiness Group (MARG 1-93) consisting of USS GUNSTON HALL, USS SUMTER, USS HARLAN COUNTY and USS GUAM.

On 6 January, AUSTIN arrived off the coast of Ashdod, Israel, participated in Operation Noble Shirley for the day, and then quickly steamed north to Haifa for a port visit and maintenance. Entry into port was delayed, however, due to a mid winter storm which produced high winds and 14 to 16 foot seas. The ship was unable to safely remain at anchor, and rode the storm out until 10 January when the weather was calm enough to enter port.

The following two week port visit in Haifa was busy, with an emphasis on the extensive repair work accomplished with the help of the USS PUGET SOUND. The crew also took time out for many tours and off duty activities. Highlights were visits to the many historical sites in the Holy Land, and a community relations work project cleaning a meeting house for mentally handicapped children.

On 22 January the AUSTIN got underway for Antalya, Turkey. Along the way, the Air Force 21st Special Operations Squadron practiced landing MH-53 "Pave Low" helicopters on AUSTIN's flight deck. The scheduled port visit to Antalya was significant since the AUSTIN was the first Navy ship to visit Turkey after the tragic October 92 accidental missile firing onboard the USS SARATOGA. The four day visit was a pleasant exposure to the unique Turkish culture.

Just as hostilities began to receive increased media attention in Bosnia-Herzegovina, AUSTIN reported for duty in the Adriatic Sea on 1 February. Her mission was to support any search and rescue operations needed for Task Force 61, and to contribute to American naval presence in the area. On 4 February AUSTIN stopped for a port visit in Venice, Italy. Moored at a choice location near the center of the city, AUSTIN drew large crowds of local citizens eager for a close look at a U.S. warship. Many of the crew made friends with the outgoing

Venetians, and brought them back to the ship for tours.

AUSTIN continued operations in the Adriatic sea for the next six weeks, until 21 March. AUSTIN anchored four times in the Gulf of Manfredonia off the coast of Italy to conduct training in amphibious operations with the other ships of the MARG. Training included ship to shore movement, Naval Special Warfare support, and aviation operations. The Italian government assisted by extending diplomatic clearance for the MARG ships to conduct operations less than 5 miles off the coast. During this time, the AUSTIN hosted two officers of the Royal Moroccan Navy for six weeks of training. AUSTIN also stopped for a short port visit in Trieste, Italy from 22 - 25 February. Three days in this western Adriatic city corresponded with the local "Mardi Gras" festival time, and presented great opportunities to observe the local culture.

On 21 March, AUSTIN left the Adriatic sea for a rendezvous near Sicily with the USS GUAM. The MARG flagship had been conducting independent operations and inport repairs for over six weeks. A number of embarked personnel were returned to the GUAM along with turnover of various duties pertinent to the MARG flagship.

The reunited MARG steamed on to Almeria, Spain, to conduct "Spanish PHIBLEX," a combined exercise with Marine Expeditionary Unit 22 and the Spanish Army. AUSTIN enjoyed a port visit from 25 - 30 March, while marines continued the exercise ashore. On 30 March, AUSTIN left Almeria, along with the remainder of the MARG, and at midnight departed the Mediterranean enroute Rota, Spain, where, during a four day stop, AUSTIN finished turnover with the relieving MARG, customs washdown of vehicles, and preparations for return to the States.

During the two week trans-atlantic transit, AUSTIN's crew participated in numerous training exercises with the other ships of the MARG and spent numerous hours cleaning, painting and polishing the ship in order to present the best appearance for the return home. At the halfway point, the group diverted south to avoid rough weather, and, as a result, enjoyed warm, sunny, and calm days for the remaining week.

In Morehead City, North Carolina, AUSTIN offloaded all Marines and their equipment and departed for Norfolk, Virginia the same day. This frenzied day of activity included hosting an official visit from a group of flag officers, and embarking 209 friends, parents and children of the crew for a "Tiger Cruise." The ship then left port and steamed north, quickly running into heavy seas and giving the "Tigers" a very memorable, if unpleasant ride.

The next day AUSTIN arrived at Naval Station Norfolk for Homecoming celebrations and to start a well-earned leave period. For the crewmembers who remained, however, the work continued.

Along with a study group visit from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the AUSTIN hosted members of the Senate Armed Services Committee who toured the ship during their visit to Norfolk in May. AUSTIN also hosted a group of about 50 executives from the American Movies Corporation.

AUSTIN started a busy summer on 18 May, getting underway for numerous training events, hosting over 50 midshipmen, and effecting repairs and maintenance to the engineering plant.

Midway through the summer, AUSTIN anchored at Gloucester, Massachusetts for a port visit and participation in Harbor Fest. Huge crowds of local citizens toured AUSTIN at anchor and rode the LCM-6 boats to and from the ship. The crew fielded a drill team for the town parade, and enjoyed the friendly atmosphere of this small fishing town. On 28 June, AUSTIN weighed anchor and hosted a number of overnight guests, who enjoyed a flight deck picnic, and whale watching over Stellwagen Bank near Cape Cod Bay. The next day, AUSTIN moored pierside in Boston for crew liberty and Fourth of July celebrations.

Upon return to Norfolk, 9 July, the crew turned their attention back to regular work. Two major inspections, of training Personnel Qualification Standards and of Personnel/Administrative functions, soon followed. Preparations for the upcoming propulsion examination (OPPE) continued. At the end of July, the Commander in Chief of Atlantic Fleet, Admiral Mauz, visited and was so impressed with the appearance of the ship, he awarded three "Bravo Zulus" to various spaces onboard. He soon returned, on 16 August, with the newly appointed Secretary of the Navy, John Dalton. The same day the ship got underway to conduct an Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE), which resulted in outstanding grades for the engineering department.

At the end of August, as AUSTIN prepared for its upcoming shipyard period, Hurricane Emily approached the east coast. On 30 August AUSTIN got underway for storm evasion, stopping briefly to host the Chief of the Singapore Navy for a tour. AUSTIN rode out the storm for three days, then returned to port to continue preparations for entering the shipyard. At the end of September, the ship did exceptionally well on a Logistics Management Assessment (Supply and Maintenance), and welcomed a new Executive Officer.

On 27 September workers from Marine Hydraulics International (MHI) cut the top half of the ship's mast in order to allow clearance to pass under power lines on the Elizabeth River eastern branch. Two days later, the ship was towed to MHI shipyard where AUSTIN spent three months undergoing major maintenance. The long hours and difficult conditions associated with shipyard maintenance continued until the end of the year, when, on 17 December AUSTIN left MHI Shipyard and then conducted Sea Trials.