



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**

**USS PROVIDENCE (SSN 719)**

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From: Commanding Officer, USS PROVIDENCE (SSN 719)  
To: Director, Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard,  
805 Kidder Breese SE, Washington, DC 20374-5060

Subj: ANNUAL COMMAND HISTORY FOR 2003

Ref: OPNAVINST 5750.12H

Encl: (1) USS PROVIDENCE (SSN 719) Command History for 2003

1. Per reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted.

  
J. H. KAN

USS PROVIDENCE (SSN-719) COMMAND HISTORY - 2003

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION: 1 January 2003-31 December 2003

Commander, Submarine Squadron FOUR: CAPT D. E. Eyler

Commanding Officer USS PROVIDENCE (SSN-719): CDR J. H. Kan

Home Port: Portsmouth, New Hampshire

Unit Identification Code: 21029

Command Structure:

Executive Officer: LCDR T. E. Nisbett

**Mission Statement:**

For over two hundred years, the U.S. Navy has been called upon to guarantee freedom of the seas in peace and to fight and win our nation's wars. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, our Nation has, and will call upon PROVIDENCE to continue this proud tradition of service. Our Nation will expect us to be able to rapidly dominate a battlespace, apply power to take away the enemy's will and capability to fight, and to come home victorious. When our Nation calls, we will be ready and we will prevail. To this end, we:

**Live our core values of Honor, Courage and Commitment.** Our core values form the foundation on which we will build success. As individuals, adhering to our core values gives us the strength to do the right thing when faced with tough decisions; to strive to reach our fullest potential and do the best that we can when we are tired; having the integrity to acknowledge our mistakes, learn from them and move on; to build the common bond of trust and loyalty that will unite us as a team; and confidently face and conquer the unknown.

**Work as a team.** PROVIDENCE is a highly complex and technical ship that operates in an unforgiving and dangerous environment. To fight and win in this environment we must work as a team, not as individuals. This means setting up shipmates for success; constantly training those junior to you; carrying your share of the load; and providing forceful backup, even if it means respectfully telling a senior he is wrong.

**Uphold our high standards.** We know and follow the rules that govern our profession. Our standards come from over a hundred years of submarine operational experience and are the hard stops that allow us to safely operate PROVIDENCE to the limits of her warfighting capability. Upholding our high standards is the responsibility of every member of the team.

These themes are central to the Navy, have been instilled in all of us from the first day of our Navy training, and will be central to the way we will fight PROVIDENCE. Making these themes our way of life gives us pride that only comes with ownership and the right to say "We made PROVIDENCE better and when our Nation called, we were ready and we prevailed."

CHRONOLOGY:

07 JAN - 17 JAN POM WORKUP  
18 JAN - 28 JAN INPORT  
29 JAN - 02 FEB POM CERTIFICATION  
03 FEB - 09 FEB INPORT  
10 FEB - 16 FEB U/W DEPLOYMENT/TRANSLANT  
17 FEB - 21 FEB BSP GIBRALTAR/INCHOP RIDE  
21 FEB BSP AUGUSTA BAY, IT  
21 FEB - 06 MAR EASTERN MED OPERATIONS  
28 FEB MEDEVAC-USS DONALD COOK  
03 MAR MEDEVAC-BSP LIMASSOL, CY  
07 MAR - 08 MAR TRANSIT TO SOUDA BAY, GR  
09 MAR - 10 MAR STORES LOAD/ROD PROGRAM CHANGE ALONGSIDE ES LAND  
10 MAR - 12 MAR TRANSIT TO EASTERN MED  
12 MAR BSP USS WINSTON S. CHURCHILL FOR MEDIA EMBARK  
13 MAR EASTERN MED OPS  
14 MAR - 16 MAR TRANSIT TO PORT SAID  
16 MAR - 18 MAR TRANSIT SUEZ CANAL  
19 MAR - 24 MAR RED SEA OPERATIONS  
20 MAR - 23 MAR STRIKE OPS FOR IRAQI FREEDOM  
25 MAR - 26 MAR TRANSIT SUEZ CANAL  
27 MAR - 28 MAR TRANSIT TO SOUDA BAY, GR  
29 MAR - 05 APR PIERSIDE ES LAND FOR STORES AND WEAPONS RELOAD  
06 APR - 28 APR EASTERN MED OPS  
29 APR - 19 MAY PIERSIDE ES LAND FOR MID DEPLOYMENT UPKEEP  
19 MAY - 07 JUN EASTERN MED OPS  
08 JUN - 11 JUN JCOC  
11 JUN - 12 JUN TRANSIT TO LA MADDALENA, IT  
12 JUN BSP LA MADDALENA, IT FOR ERR EMBARK  
12 JUN - 17 JUN ERR AND TRANSIT TO KOPER, SLOVENIA  
17 JUN - 23 JUN IN PORT KOPER, SLOVENIA  
23 JUN - 27 JUN TRANSIT TO SOUDA BAY, CRETE  
27 JUN - 30 JUN IN PORT SOUDA BAY, CRETE  
30 JUN - 03 JUL TRANSIT TO LA MADDALENA, IT  
03 JUL - 18 JUL PIERSIDE ES LAND FOR END OF DEPLOYMENT UPKEEP  
18 JUL - 24 JUL TRANSIT TO GIBRALTAR  
24 JUL - 28 JUL IN PORT GIBRALTAR  
28 JUL - 07 AUG TRANSIT TO GROTON/ORSE WORK UP  
07 AUG BSP GROTON  
07 AUG - 09 AUG ORSE  
09 AUG - 09 SEP POST DEPLOYMENT STANDDOWN  
09 SEP - 17 SEP Z AVAILABILITY  
17 SEP - 25 SEP TACTICAL WEAPONS PROFICIENCY  
25 SEP - 27 OCT PREPARATION FOR CHANGE OF HOMEPORT  
15 OCT OFFICIAL CHANGE OF HOMEPORT TO PORTSMOUTH, NH  
27 OCT - 29 OCT UNDERWAY TRANSIT TO PORTSMOUTH NAVAL SHIPYARD  
29 OCT - 21 NOV PREPARATION FOR DOCKING  
22 NOV DOCK SHIP AT DRYDOCK 1 PORTSMOUTH NAVAL SHIPYARD  
23 NOV - 22 DEC PRE PRODUCTION PHASE  
23 DEC - 04 JAN CHRISTMAS STANDDOWN

NARRATIVE:

The PROVIDENCE team began 2003 not knowing when the nation may need us to deploy to respond to the world events occurring in Iraq. To ensure the ship and the crew was prepared for what may be an earlier than expected deployment date, the crew worked extremely hard during the POM-2 Upkeep from 08 Nov-18 Dec 2002 to get the ship ready to deploy on 01 Jan 2003. With the real world events on the minds of the crew, the 7-17 Jan underway was our final work-up prior to being evaluated for our upcoming deployment to the Mediterranean Sea. During this underway, we worked on our strike and communications capabilities, shallow water operations proficiency, as well as merchant tracking and identification. After the POM workup, the crew was able to successfully complete the certification process with the Submarine Group TWO Commander embarked. PROVIDENCE was ready to deploy and perform all missions required of her by her nation.

On 10 Feb, the ship deployed a week early and headed at top speed to the Mediterranean. After INCHOP to 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet on 17 Feb, the ship conducted an INCHOP ride that focused on training for upcoming strike operations and future mission areas. The crew used the remaining month of March to familiarize ourselves with operations in the Eastern Mediterranean. We found our pre-deployment training plan prepared us well for handling the ship in this challenging environment.

On 03 Mar, the ship was forced to MEDEVAC the Chief of the Boat (COB) during an unscheduled BSP in Limassol, Cyprus. The ship quickly contacted surface combatants in the area and evaluated whether a helicopter evacuation was feasible. This method of evacuating the COB was not conducted due to high sea state. The ship then quickly changed plans and proceeded to the nearest port. PROVIDENCE was able to replace this untimely personnel loss with a prior served COB who was able to come aboard during a brief stop in Souda Bay, Crete for stores.

On 12 Mar, we conducted a BSP with the USS WINSTON S. CHURCHILL to embark two members from the New London Day newspaper, Bob Hamilton and Tim Cook. This would be the first time since WWII that reporters would be present on board a US submarine involved in combat operations. These stories and pictures allowed our families, friends, and the nation unprecedented access to day-to-day life on a nuclear submarine. (These articles are included as supporting documents to this command history.)

On 16-18 Mar, PROVIDENCE transited the Suez Canal to join twelve other submarines in what became known as the "Red Sea Wolfpack" for strike operations. International concerns made the Red Sea one of the only places to conduct cruise missile launches into Iraq. From 20-23Mar, the ship conducted strike operations in support of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM. Since PROVIDENCE also fired missiles in OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, this was the first time that a submarine conducted strike operations in back-to-back deployments.

PROVIDENCE employed innovative techniques in the torpedo room that greatly reduced the reload time after conducting a missile launch from the torpedo tubes. These techniques have become the fleet standard and will make submarines an even more effective strike platform.

On 29 Mar, the ship pulled in to Souda Bay, Greece alongside the submarine tender USS EMORY S. LAND to load supplies and weapons. The crew of the tender "manned the rails" as the first member of the "Red Sea Wolfpack" returned after strike operations. We were the first submarine to conduct a

complete weapons reload and weapons system readiness review next to the tender. The ship was ready in record time to return to theater to continue more missile strikes. During this inport time, there were five submarines moored outboard the tender, a scene familiar only in WWII. These few days inport allowed the Sailors some much needed relaxation prior to returning to sea for continued operations in support of IRAQI FREEDOM and the Global War on Terrorism.

The ship conducted two missions vital to the Global War on Terrorism during the remainder of the deployment. Also, PROVIDENCE was chosen to participate in JCOC off the coast of Italy, which showed to numerous VIPs how submarines truly are a force multiplier to the military. The crew capped off a successful deployment with a strong performance on an Operational Safeguards Examination.

During the deployment, the ship made several port visits including Souda Bay, GR; La Maddalena, IT; Koper, Slovenia; and Gibraltar, UK. These stops allowed the crew to travel and "see the world." PROVIDENCE was one of only two submarines in years to go to Koper, Slovenia. This stop allowed the crew to travel to nearby Venice, Italy and enjoy a country few in the United States get to visit. During a port call in La Maddalena, Italy, the PROVIDENCE wardroom hosted a party for the wardroom of the HMS SPLENDID. SPLENDID also took part in the strike operations of IRAQI FREEDOM and this event allowed us a chance to learn more about our fellow officers in the United Kingdom.

We received a hero's welcome for our efforts in support of the Global War on Terrorism upon our return to Groton, CT and took a much needed stand down. Following the post deployment rest period, the ship performed demanding pre-overhaul and pre-availability testing prior to reporting to Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.

On 15 Oct, the ship officially changed homeports from Groton, CT to Portsmouth, NH. It was not until 29 Oct that we arrived at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard to begin a first of a kind Engineered Overhaul-the ship's first overhaul since it was launched on 4 August 1984.

As a result of PROVIDENCE's superb performance during the year, we were the recipients of the Navy Unit Commendation for action as part of the United States 5<sup>th</sup> Fleet Strike Force. Additionally, PROVIDENCE was awarded the Tactical "T" from Commander, Submarine Squadron FOUR.