



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS SAFEGUARD (ARS-50)
FPO AP 96678-3221

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From: Commanding Officer, USS SAFEGUARD (ARS-50)
To: Director of Naval History, (OP-09BH), Washington Navy
Yard, Washington, D.C. 20374

Subj: 1995 COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) USS SAFEGUARD (ARS-50) Command History for 1995

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


D. D. BELT

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

USS SAFEGUARD (ARS-50), a rescue and salvage ship based in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, is under the operational control of Commander, Naval Surface Group Middle Pacific. Lieutenant Commander David D. Belt, USN, () is the Commanding Officer. Lieutenant Eric B. Anderson, USN, () is the Executive Officer. Lieutenant Don E. Cheramie, USN, () relieved Lieutenant Richard F. Hayes, USN, () as the Operations Officer on 11 October 1995. Lieutenant John W. Doolittle, USN, () relieved Lieutenant Junior Grade Thomas F. Fulton, USN, () as the Supply Officer on 14 June 1995. Ensign Gregory S. Gordon, USN, () relieved Lieutenant Don E. Cheramie, USN, () as the Chief Engineer on 11 May 1995. Chief Warrant Officer Robert F. Yoder, USN, () is the First Lieutenant. Ensign Bradley Andros, USN, () reported aboard as the Assistant Chief Engineer on 15 August 1995. Ensign Eric Correll, USN, () reported aboard as the Damage Control Assistant on 17 October 1995.

CHRONOLOGY

01 Jan		Began the New Year in a Leave and Upkeep Period While Moored in Pearl Harbor (PH), Hawaii
02-08 Jan		Inport PH; Holiday Upkeep
09-16 Jan		Inport PH; TSTA1
17-22 Jan		Independent Steaming PH; TSTA1
23-27 Jan		Independent Steaming PH; TSTA1
28 Jan-20 Feb	Feb	Inport PH; Intermediate Maintenance Availability
21-26 Feb		Independent Steaming PH; TSTA2
27 Feb-05 Mar	Mar	Independent Steaming PH; TSTA2
06-12 Mar		Independent Steaming PH; TSTA2
13-16 Mar		Anchored PH; DORA
17 Mar		U/W for Kauai
18-19 Mar		Inport Kauai; Port Visit
20 Mar		U/W for PH
21 Mar-16 Apr	Apr	Inport PH; Intermediate Maintenance Availability
17-21 Apr		U/W for Middle Pacific; Salvage Training (TSTA4)
22-23 Apr		Inport PH; Upkeep Period
24-27 Apr		Anchored PH; Dive Operations
28 Apr		Anchored PH; Final Evaluation Problem
29 Apr-07 May	May	Inport PH; Upkeep Period
08 May		Inport PH; Inspection and Survey (INSURV)
09-11 May		U/W from PH; Inspection and Survey (INSURV)
12 May-13 Jun	Jun	Inport PH; Intermediate Maintenance Availability
14-28 Jun		U/W for Bremerton, WA with Ex-USS ASPRO (SSN-648) in tow
29 Jun		Inport Everett, WA; EOD Diver Training
30 Jun		U/W for Seattle, WA
01-04 Jul		Inport Seattle, WA; Port Visit
05-09 Jul		U/W for Coronado, CA
10-12 Jul		Inport Coronado, CA; Submarine Rescue Chamber Support Operations rigging and onload
13 Jul		U/W for SRC Operations 2.5 miles off La Jolla shores
14-19 Jul		Anchored off La Jolla shores; SRC Operations
20 Jul		U/W for Coronado, CA
21-27 Jul		Inport Coronado, CA; Port Visit
28 Jul-06 Aug	Aug	U/W for PH
07-27 Aug		Inport PH; Intermediate Maintenance Availability
28 Aug		Inport PH; Engineering Limited Team Training
29 Aug		U/W for Lahaina, Maui; Salvaged USS BIRMINGHAM's Anchor
30 Aug		Inport PH; Engineering Limited Team Training
01 Sep		U/W for Lahaina, Maui
02-04 Sep		Inport Lahaina, Maui; Port Visit
05 Sep		U/W for PH
06 Sep		Inport PH; Upkeep Period
07 Sep		Inport PH; Ammunition Offload at NAVMAG LLL for DPMA
08-10 Sep		Inport PH; Upkeep Period
11 Sep		U/W for Maui
12-14 Sep		Anchored off Maui shores; Dive Operations
15 Sep		U/W for PH

16 Sep-05	Oct	Inport PH; Upkeep Period
06 Oct		U/W for Maui
07-11 Oct		Anchored Maui; Telemetry Buoy Replacement Operation
12 Oct		U/W for Hilo
13-15 Oct		Inport Hilo; Navy Birthday Celebration
16 Oct		U/W for PH
17-22 Oct		Inport PH; Upkeep Period
23 Oct		Inport PH; Start Drydocking Planned Maintenance Availability
24 Oct-14	Dec	Inport PH; Upkeep Period
15-31 Dec		Inport PH; Leave and Upkeep Period

NARRATIVE

1995 proved to be another exciting and eventful year for SAFEGUARD. The Pearl Harbor based Rescue and Salvage ship serves a variety of missions, including: manned diving operations, debatching stranded vessels, firefighting and rescue services for other ships, heavy lift, recovery of submerged objects, and ocean towing for all vessels. In 1995, SAFEGUARD performed each of these vital missions either in a training exercise or as an actual operation. Besides the many inspections and training evolutions, the year also consisted of one deployment consisting of a long-range open ocean tow of a nuclear submarine and extensive submarine rescue chamber operations.

SAFEGUARD began 1995 with the commencement of a five month inspection cycle. Tailored Ship Training Availability 1 (TSTA1) started inport in Pearl Harbor on 9 January. In this first training phase, Afloat Training Group Middle Pacific (ATGMP) trained SAFEGUARD's Combat Systems (CSTT), Damage Control (DCTT), and Engineering Training Teams (ETT). Training consisted of level of knowledge and drill scenarios. In addition, ATGMP conducted deckplate training on basic maritime warfare skills for all crew members in their areas of responsibility. TSTA1 (inport) lasted for one week. SAFEGUARD spent the next 2 weeks completing TSTA1 (underway) in which additional training was conducted in the same areas. At the completion of TSTA1, SAFEGUARD began a much needed Intermediate Maintenance Availability (IMAV) in Pearl Harbor.

Tailored Ship Training Availability 2 (TSTA2) began on 21 February. This phase consisted of 3 weeks of independent steaming in the Middle Pacific Operation Area. TSTA2 defined ship-wide skills and integrated watch teams into a single organization capable of coordinating their efforts for mission accomplishment. ATGMP again focused on training SAFEGUARD's CSTT, DCTT, and ETT, so that these training teams can in turn train all SAFEGUARD crew members.

Following TSTA2, SAFEGUARD conducted a Diving Operation Readiness Assessment (DORA) while anchored just outside of Pearl Harbor. SAFEGUARD earned the highest score in this inspection. All management areas as well as three operational dives were evaluated as outstanding.

On 17 March, SAFEGUARD conducted a family and guest cruise to beautiful Nawiliwili, Kauai. Many crew members and their families explored the scenic island of Kauai on bicycles, mopeds, or rental cars. Others enjoyed two days of golf on Kauai's renown championship courses. The visit proved to be an excellent break between the constant barrage of ship-wide inspections. On 20 March, SAFEGUARD departed Nawiliwili, Kauai for Pearl Harbor.

On 21 March, SAFEGUARD began its second IMAV of 1995 in Pearl Harbor. This IMAV, which lasted until 16 April, again gave SAFEGUARD crew members the opportunity to perform much needed maintenance and preservation on all assigned equipment and spaces.

During the IMAV, SAFEGUARD passed a safety inspection by COMNAVSURFGRU MIDPAC.

On 17 April, SAFEGUARD commenced TSTA4 which included one full 12-16 hour a day week of salvage training. During SALVTRA, a training vessel was set ablaze off the coast of Ewa Beach. SAFEGUARD approached the vessel from windward and began extinguishing flames with three fire monitors. Once all flames were under control, SAFEGUARD grappled alongside the burning training vessel and then lowered a brow to the training vessel's fantail. SAFEGUARD's expert team of firefighters then boarded the training vessel and extinguished all fires. SAFEGUARD then took the disabled ship in tow and moored her, without the assistance of tugs in Pearl Harbor.

On 24 April, SAFEGUARD anchored off the coast of Oahu to continue diving operations. On 28 April, SAFEGUARD successfully completed its Final Evaluation Problem to end its inspection cycle for 1995.

Following a few days of upkeep in Pearl Harbor, SAFEGUARD conducted an Inspection and Survey. The inspection, which was completed on 11 May, helped SAFEGUARD identify and document many longstanding material discrepancies. The inspection ended by the INSURV board finding SAFEGUARD "fit for further service."

From 5-13 June, SAFEGUARD Sailors began the tow inspection and rigging of the Ex-ASPRO (SSN-648) for its trans-pacific tow from Pearl Harbor, HI to Bremerton, WA. On 14 June, SAFEGUARD and SALVOR, both with tows, escorted by USS ROANOKE, departed for Bremerton. Within 24 hours of departing, SAFEGUARD experienced head on seas in excess of eight feet. Approximately one third of the crew got sea sick, but luckily the worst weather only lasted three days. SAFEGUARD entered Puget Sound via the Straits of Juan de Fuca on 28 June and arrived in Bremerton on 29 June. After a flawless tow disconnect, SAFEGUARD sailed for Everett, WA. In Everett, SAFEGUARD sponsored and participated in diving operations with Explosive Ordinance Disposal unit based in Whidbey Island, WA. SAFEGUARD divers trained the EOD divers in the use of MK-21 light weight surface supplied diving equipment. Over thirty dives were conducted from SAFEGUARD's fantail in only two days.

On 1 July, SAFEGUARD arrived in downtown Seattle, WA for a much deserved four day port visit and Fourth of July festivities. The ship moored along Seattle's downtown waterfront piers; hence, most of the tourist attractions were walking distance for the

crew. Many enjoyed the numerous Fourth of July festivities in downtown Seattle.

On 5 July, SAFEGUARD departed Seattle for Coronado, CA to participate in Submarine Rescue Chamber Operations with Deep Submergence Unit San Diego. On 10 July, SAFEGUARD moored at Naval Air Station North Island on Coronado, directly across San Diego Bay from downtown San Diego.

Upon arriving, SAFEGUARD Sailors and the Deep Submergence Unit teamed up to rig SAFEGUARD for two simulated submarine rescue operations off the southern California coast of La Jolla. For the next day and a half, SAFEGUARD Sailors worked well into the night finishing the four point moor rigging and the massive onload of gear two complete Submarine Rescue Chamber (SRC) systems. The beach gear alone included rigging 360 feet of 2 and 1/4 inch die lock chain and 6000 feet of 1 and 5/8 inch wire over the port sides of SAFEGUARD. In addition to rigging four complete legs of beach gear connected to large orange spring buoys, the evolution also included unloading two submarine rescue chambers with support gear, and chipping up non-skid to weld SRC-19 and SRC-21 support cradles to SAFEGUARD's fantail.

On 13 July, SAFEGUARD transitted from San Diego to 2.5 miles off La Jolla, California. Once on station SAFEGUARD laid a four point moor in 400 feet, and four days later SAFEGUARD had laid another four point moor in 850 feet of water. The SRC Operation went smoothly without any glitches proving the capability to rescue crew members from disabled submarines.

After a week of long days and short nights supporting SRC Operations, SAFEGUARD was rewarded with three days of liberty in Coronado. Most of the crew took this opportunity to see the sights of San Diego or catch up with former shipmates now stationed there.

SAFEGUARD departed Coronado on 28 July headed for Pearl Harbor on the final leg of the deployment. With no specific deadlines to meet this time was used to drill watchstanders and damage control teams. By the time SAFEGUARD pulled into port on 6 August, the ship was at the highest state of readiness, capable of performing its mission safely and efficiently.

The remainder of August was spent inport, where SAFEGUARD Sailors went to work repairing the ship in areas that were worked hard during the deployment. With assistance from Intermediate Maintenance Facility, Pearl Harbor, SAFEGUARD's material condition improved quickly. This time in port also afforded the opportunity to receive training from Afloat Training Group, Middle Pacific which focused on Engineering Administration and Damage Control.

On 29 August, SAFEGUARD was called into action when the USS BIRMINGHAM could not properly house her anchor. The salvage operation was so emergent SAFEGUARD's crew had to be recalled at one o'clock in the morning to get underway for Lahaina, Maui. BIRMINGHAM was dead in the water, unable to maneuver due to the damage that could occur if the anchor chain was to foul in the screw, rudder, or stern planes. SAFEGUARD's salvage and dive team, working out of a 35 foot work boat and two zodiacs, used underwater cutting equipment to cut the anchor chain. Lift bags were utilized to prevent the anchor and chain from sinking to the bottom. When the BIRMINGHAM was well clear of the work sight, SAFEGUARD maneuvered into position and hauled the anchor on deck with a capstan.

During the months of September and October SAFEGUARD went back to Maui three times. The first visit was over Labor Day to Lahaina for a port visit. The cruise transit was opened up to family members and guests and most of the crew invited loved ones to ride over to the "Valley Island." While only there for four days, everyone had an enjoyable time taking in the sights and beauty of the neighbor island. The second trip was for dive operations. In order to maintain proficiency, SAFEGUARD anchored in a two point moor in about 140 feet of water. The divers spent three days diving MK-21 surface supplied dives for training. The last trip to Maui was to assist and provide a work platform to replace a Telemetry Buoy for the Navy's shallow water ASW range. High winds and heavy seas made recovery of the mooring buoys and array cables nearly impossible, but with the help of differential GPS, a remotely operated vehicle and SAFEGUARD's bow thruster the array was placed installed with pinpoint accuracy.

After completing the Telemetry Buoy Ops, SAFEGUARD travelled to Hilo on the island of Hawaii. The visit coincided with the Navy's Birthday and some of SAFEGUARD's crew were invited by the Hilo Navy League and Hilo Rotary Club to a birthday dinner. Admiral Richard Macke, Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Forces, was the guest of honor and took time to meet with the crew members in attendance. The three days on the "Big Island" was ample time for the crew to visit Hawaii's only active volcano, see black sand beaches, and take a ride to Kailua-Kona for shopping and sightseeing. SAFEGUARD's duty sections conducted much publicized tours for the residents of Hilo.

On 23 October, SAFEGUARD moored in Pearl Harbor and began a Drydock Planned Maintenance Availability. Both SAFEGUARD and SALVOR went into Drydock 4 of Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard on 30 October to undergo extensive maintenance in almost every area of operation.

The holiday leave period began 15 December which allowed crew members to spend time with family and friends. 1995 proved to be a busy year for SAFEGUARD and 1996 looks to be even busier, such is life in the Salvage Navy.