



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS THUNDERBOLT (PC 12)

FPO AE 09588-1971

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

5750

Ser 00/xxx

From: Commanding Officer, USS THUNDERBOLT (PC 12)

To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2000

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G, Command Histories

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization  
(2) Ship Data and Mission Statement  
(3) Chronology  
(4) Narrative  
(5) Supporting Documents  
(6) Commanding Officer Biography/Photograph  
(7) Photograph of Ship

1. In accordance with reference (a), USS THUNDERBOLT (PC 12) Command History for calendar year 2000 is submitted.

2. This document is classified CONFIDENTIAL due to the documents present in enclosure (5).

3. For any further requirements or questions, my point of contact is QM1(SW) (b) (6) COM (b) (6) or DSN (b) (6)

[REDACTED]  
I. R. POLLITT

## 2000 CHRONOLOGY

- A. January 01-11, 2000 Inport NAB Little Creek for Holiday stand down.
- B. January 11, 2000 Captain and crew attend EM1 (SW) (b) (6) retirement Ceremony.
- C. January 12, 2000 Underway from NAB Little Creek, conducted live firing, General Quarters, Emergency Destruction, and Abandon ship drills at Hannibal Range. Returned to NAB Little Creek, VA.
- D. January 13,- February 10, 2000 Inport NAB Little Creek, VA. Crew attend schools, and conduct Inport Fire and BECCE drills.
- E. January 13, 2000 SN(SW) (b) (6) checks off ship on PCS orders to NTC Great Lakes. De-fueled the ship for fuel tank cleaning.
- F. January 20, 2000 Conducted Navy Wide E-7 exams.
- G. February 21, 2000 MS1(SW) (b) (6) departed ship on PCS orders to San Antonio, Texas.
- H. February 11, 2000 Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA to conduct gunnery exercises, General Quarters, and BECCE drills in VA Capes operating area. Returned to NAB Little Creek.
- I. February 12-14, 2000 Inport NAB Little Creek, VA.
- J. February 15, 2000 Underway from NAB Little Creek enroute Hannibal Range, to conduct Gunnex, General Quarters, and BECCE's. Returned to port early due to accidental discharge of Halon system.
- K. February 16, 2000 "FAST CRUISE" inport NAB Little Creek. Conducted BECCE's.
- L. February 17, 2000 Underway from NAB Little Creek to Chesapeake Bay operating area. Conducted BECCE's and General Quarters drills for damage control. Returned to port, NAB Little Creek.
- M. February 18, 2000 Underway from NAB Little Creek to Chesapeake Bay operating area. Conducted BECCE and General Quarters for damage control. Returned to NAB Little Creek.
- N. February 19,-Mar 23, 2000 In port NAB Little Creek for POM leave and stand down.
- O. February 22, 2000 OS1(SW) (b) (6) departs ship on PCS orders to San Diego. Ships crew conducts rehearsal for Colombian Navy CNO visit.
- P. February 24, 2000 Colombian Navy CNO arrives for official visit.
- Q. March 07, 2000 Conducted Navy Wide E-4 Exam.
- R. March 09, 2000 Conducted Navy Wide E-5 Exam.
- S. March 14, 2000 Conducted Navy Wide E-6 Exam.
- T. March 21, 2000 Berthshift from Pier-12 to Quay wall NAB Little Creek, VA. for ammo on load.

- U. March 22, 2000 Conducted ship's picnic at "Franks Place" SBU-2 for crew and families.
- V. March 24, 2000 Underway from NAB Little Creek for High speed run and towing exercise of Seal Deployment Vehicle. Return to NAB Little Creek, VA.
- W. March 25, 2000 Underway for Family Day cruise to downtown Norfolk, VA. Return to NAB Little Creek, VA.
- X. March 26, 2000 Baptism of CO's daughter (b) (6) on forecastle.
- Y. April 3, 2000 Underway from NAB Little Creek enroute St. George, Bermuda. Commence Med Cruise 2000 and Trans-Atlantic crossing.
- Z. April 4, 2000 Arrived St. Georges Bermuda, brief stop for fuel. Underway from St. Georges Bermuda, enroute Naval Station Rota Spain.
- AA. April 9, 2000 Commenced/ceased receiving fuel from USNS LARAMIE due to parting of fuel hose. Re-fueling delayed until repairs to hose are completed.
- AB. April 10, 2000 Successfully conducted refueling at sea with USNS LARAMIE.
- AC. April 11, 2000 Conducted Gunnery exercises.
- AD. April 13, 2000 Arrive Naval Station Rota Spain for turnover, maintenance upkeep, and crew rest.
- AE. April 13-16, 2000 Inport Naval Station Rota, Spain.
- AF. April 16, 2000 Underway from Naval Station Rota due to minor damage sustained on hull caused by exposed heavy swells, which banged the ship on side of crane barge. Several mooring lines parted as well. Ship spent the night at sea in Rota Operating area.
- AG. April 17, 2000 Returned to Naval Station Rota.
- AH. April 18, 2000 Underway from Naval Station Rota, Spain enroute Malaga, Spain.
- AI. April 19, 2000 Arrived Malaga, Spain for maintenance, upkeep and crew rest.
- AJ. April 19-23, 2000 Inport Malaga, Spain.
- AK. April 23, 2000 Underway from Malaga, Spain enroute Cartagena, Spain.
- AL. April 24, 2000 Arrived Cartegana, Spain for upcoming exercise Lisa Azul, maintenance upkeep and crew rest.
- AM. April 26, 2000 Berthshifted alongside USNS BIG HORN. Refueled, berth shifted to Spanish Naval Pier, Cartagena, Spain.
- AN. April 28-29, 2000 Underway from Cartagena, Spain to Cartagena Operating area for insertion/extraction exercises with Spanish Special Forces.
- AO. April 29-02 May, 2000 Underway from Cartagena, Spain operating area. Enroute Las Palmas, Gran Canarias.

- AP. May 02, 2000 Arrived Las Palmas, Spain for continuation of exercise Lisa Azul, maintenance upkeep, and crew rest.
- AQ. May 03, 2000 Underway from Spanish Naval Pier Las Palmas, Spain to Las Palmas Operating area for Insertion/Extraction exercises with Spanish Naval Forces.
- AR. May 04, 2000 Returned to Naval Pier Las Palmas, Spain. Conducted de-brief of Exercise Lisa Azul. Held Advanced Damage Control Training inport.
- AS. May 05, 2000 Berth shifted 100ft up Spanish Naval Pier.
- AT. May 07, 2000 Underway from Las Palmas, Spain enroute Dakar, Senegal.
- AU. May 09, 2000 Arrived Dakar, Senegal to fueling pier. Completed refueling, berth shifted to Naval Pier.
- AV. May 10, 2000 QM1(SW) (b) (6) departs ship.
- AW. May 12, 2000 Underway from Dakar, Senegal enroute Las Palmas, Spain. Shortly after underway, ship was ordered to return to Dakar. Arrived Dakar, Senegal.
- AX. May 13, 2000 Underway from Dakar, Senegal enroute Las Palmas, Spain.
- AY. May 15, 2000 Arrived Las Palmas, Spain for BSF. Underway enroute Rota, Spain.
- AZ. May 17, 2000 Arrived Rota, Spain for BSF. Underway from Naval Station Rota, Spain enroute Algiers, Algeria.
- BA. May 18, 2000 Arrived Algiers, Algeria to fuel Jetty. Berth shifted to downtown Algiers. CO and crew attend dinner at U.S. Embassy.
- BB. May 19, 2000 Underway from Algiers, Algeria enroute Cagliari, Sardinia.
- BC. May 20, 2000 Arrive Cagliari, Sardinia for maintenance, upkeep and Crew rest.
- BD. May 22, 2000 Underway from Cagliari, Sardinia to anchorage area near Capo Teulada, Sardinia.
- BE. May 23-25, 2000 Anchored off Capo Teulada Sardinia. Conducted day and night Insertion/Extraction exercises in Operating Area.
- BF. May 25, 2000 Underway from anchorage. Completed Insertion/Extraction exercises in Cagliari Operating area. Enroute Catania, Sicily.
- BG. May 27, 2000 Arrived Catania, Sicily for BSF. Underway Catania, Sicily enroute Kyparissia, Greece Operating Area.
- BH. May 29, 2000 Arrived Kyparissia, Greece Operating Area for NATO exercise "Dynamic Mix" with US, Greek and Spanish naval forces.

- BI. May 30-31, 2000 On station Kyparissia OP Area ISO exercise "Dynamic Mix" Conducted night time CRRC Operations with European Special Forces, BECCE's and General Quarters for damage control exercises.
- BJ. June 01, 2000 On station Kyparissia Op Area. Conducted advanced Damage Control training.
- BK. June 02, 2000 Underway from Kyparissia Greece Operating Area Enroute Corfu, Greece.
- BL. June 03, 2000 Arrived Corfu, Greece for maintenance, upkeep and crew rest. LTJG (b) (6) and EN3 (b) (6) report aboard for duty.
- BM. June 03-08, 2000 Inport Corfu, Greece.
- BN. June 08, 2000 Underway from Corfu, Greece enroute Argostolion, Greece. Arrive Argostolion, Greece.
- BO. June 09, 2000 Re-fueled ship. Commanding Officer meets with Mayor of Argostolion concerning group of hard line Communist protesters which were due to arrive at the pier to protest our presence there. To avoid any problems with the Greeks, the Captain decides to get underway one day early. Underway from Argostolion, Greece Enroute Split, Croatia.
- BP. June 11, 2000 Arrived Split, Croatia for maintenance, upkeep and crew rest.
- BQ. June 12, 2000 Crew conduct tours for Croatian Naval officers, local press and tourists.
- BR. June 13, 2000 Underway from Split, Croatia to conduct VBSS demonstration and local operations with Croatian Navy. Returned to Split, Croatia.
- BS. June 14, 2000 Underway from Split, Croatia enroute Valletta, Malta. Conducted small arms FAMFIRE.
- BT. June 15, 2000 Arrive Valletta, Malta for BSF/RON and Defense Chief tour.
- BU. June 16, 2000 Underway from Valletta, Malta enroute Naval Station Rota, Spain.
- BV. June 17, 2000 Conducted GUNNEX.
- BW. June 19-26, 2000 Arrive Naval Station Rota, Spain for Mid Deployment Maintenance Period, CART-I and crew rest.
- BX. June 23, 2000 LTJG (b) (6) departs ship for orders to Old Dominion University.
- BY. June 26, 2000 Underway from Rota, Spain enroute Las Palmas, Spain.
- BZ. June 28, 2000 Arrived Las Palmas, Spain for BSF/RON.
- CA. June 29, 2000 Underway from Las Palmas, Spain enroute Dakar, Senegal.
- CB. June 30, 2000 Conducted BECCE's, General Quarters for Damage Control and GUNNEX.

- CC. July 01, 2000 Ship celebrates "Hump Day", (Marking the half way point of the cruise) with steel beach picnic.
- CD. July 02, 2000 Arrive fueling pier Dakar, Senegal. Berth shifted to Naval Pier upon completion of re-fueling. LT (b) (6) departed on emergency leave.
- CE. July 03, 2000 CO, Ops, and SEAL OIC meet with Senegalese Chief of Staff. Crew conducts Damage Control training and tour of ship for Senegalese Navy personnel.
- CF. July 04, 2000 Holiday routine. Ship observes Independence Day and full dresses ship. Wardroom hosted aboard HMS ARGYLL for luncheon crew invited to celebration at American Embassy.
- CG. July 06, 2000 Underway from Dakar, Senegal. Demonstrated BECC's, General Quarters for Damage Control, DIVTACS, and Man Overboard drills for Senegalese Navy. RTP Naval Pier Dakar, Senegal.
- CH. July 07, 2000 Underway from Dakar, Senegal enroute Banjul, The Gambia. Arrived Banjul, The Gambia for maintenance, upkeep and crew rest.
- CI. July 11, 2000 Underway Banjul, The Gambia. Enroute Conakry, Guinea.
- CJ. July 13, 2000 Arrive Conakry, Guinea to Wharf #5.
- CK. July 14, 2000 Berth shifted alongside merchant vessel "MULTIMAX ANTWERP" to receive fuel from the pier. Completed refueling, berth shifted back to Wharf #5.
- CL. July 19, 2000 Underway from Conakry, Guinea to Conakry Operating Area. Demonstrated BECC's, General Quarters for Damage Control, STT, And Man Overboard drills to Guinean Navy. RTP to Conakry, Guinea.
- CM. July 20, 2000 Debrief with Guinean Naval Commandant. Underway from Conakry, Guinea enroute Tema, Ghana.
- CN. July 21-22, 2000 Conducted GUNNEX.
- CO. July 24, 2000 Arrived Tema, Ghana to Wharf #4 for maintenance, upkeep, re-fueling, and crew rest.
- CP. July 25, 2000 Crew participates in local COMREL project.
- CQ. July 26, 2000 Underway from Tema, Ghana with HMS ARGYLL and Ghanaian Navy. Conducted live firing demonstration, CRRC operation, BECC's, and Swept Channel Exercises. Returned to Tema, Ghana. Held picnic with Ghanaian Navy.
- CR. July 28, 2000 Underway from Tema, Ghana. Conducted DIVTACS with GNS ACHIMOTO. enroute to Port Gentil, Gabon. Conducted WOG beauty pageant for Shellback initiation.
- CS. July 29, 2000 CO and Crew held Golden Shellback Ceremony. LAT 00.00' LONG 00.00' degrees. Continued toward Port Gentil, Gabon.
- CT. July 31, 2000 Arrived Naval pier Port Gentil, Gabon for maintenance, upkeep and crew rest. CO attends meeting with US Ambassador, Provincial Governor and Mayor. Crew gives VIP party tour of ship.
- CU. August 01, 2000, Ship's crew gives VIP tours to Gabon Navy.

CV. August 02, 2000 Ship's crew participates in COMREL project at local hospital.

CW. August 03, 2000 Underway from Port Gentil, Gabon enroute Tema, Ghana.

CX. August 05, 2000 Arrive Tema, Ghana for BSF. Completed re-fueling, Underway from Tema, Ghana enroute Conakry, Guinea.

CY. August 08, 2000 Arrived Conakry, Guinea for BSF. Completed re-fueling. Underway From Conakry, Guinea enroute Praia, Cape Verde.

CZ. August 09, 2000 Conducted GUNNEX.

DA. August 10, 2000 Arrived Praia, Cape Verde for fuel, maintenance upkeep and crew rest. Due to heavy swells in the harbor and the snapping of mooring lines the ship had to get under way early. Underway from Praia, Cape verde enroute Santa Cruz, Tenerife.

DB. August 13, 2000 Arrived Santa Cruz, Tenerife for re-fueling, maintenance upkeep and crew rest.

DC. August 18, 2000 Underway from Santa Cruz, Tenerife enroute Funchal, Madeira.

DD. August 19, 2000 Arrived Funchal, Madeira for fuel, maintenance upkeep and crew rest.

DE. August 22, 2000 Underway from Funchal, Madeira enroute Casablanca, Morocco.

DF. August 24, 2000 Arrive Casablanca, Morocco for fuel, maintenance upkeep, and crew rest.

DG. August 27, 2000 Underway from Casablanca, Morocco enroute Rota, Spain.

DH. August 28, 2000 Arrive to Anchorage off Rota, Spain. Moved from anchorage to pier-1 naval station Rota, Spain for fuel and crew rest.

DI. August 29, 2000 Underway from Rota, Spain enroute Lisbon, Portugal.

DJ. August 30, 2000 Arrived Lisbon, Portugal for maintenance upkeep, fuel and crew rest.

DK. September 02, 2000 Underway from Lisbon, Portugal.

DL. September 04, 2000 Conducted GUNNEX, BECCE's and General Quarters drills for damage control.

DM. September 05, 2000 Arrived Poole, England for refueling, maintenance upkeep and crew rest.

DN. September 09, 2000 underway from Poole, England enroute Dartmouth, England. Arrived Dartmouth, England for fuel, maintenance upkeep and crew rest.

DO. September 11, 2000 Refueled ship.

DP. September 12, 2000 Underway from Dartmouth, England enroute Puerto de Santa Maria, Spain.

- DQ. September 14, Conducted STT, Man Overboard and Loss of Gyro exercises.
- DR. September 15, 2000 Arrived Puerto de Santa Maria, Spain for maintenance, upkeep and crew rest. Conducted Navy Wide E-5 Exam.
- DS. September 16, 2000 Assembled ships crew on focal's for CPO pinning ceremony for HMC (b) (6) and EMC (b) (6)
- DT. September 18, 2000 Conducted Physical Readiness Test for crew.
- DU. September 19, 2000 Underway from Puerto de Santa Maria enroute Naval Station Rota, Spain. Arrived Rota, Spain for refueling, turn over, fresh water wash down and sanitation.
- DV. September 20, 2000 Completed Physical Readiness Test for remaining crewmembers.
- DW. September 22, 2000 Completed Med Cruise 2000. Underway from Naval Station Rota, Spain. Enroute Horta, Azores. Conducted Man Overboard Drills.
- DX. September 23, 2000 Conducted BECCE drills.
- DY. September 25, 2000 Arrived Horta, Azores for refueling, maintenance upkeep and crew rest.
- DZ. September 28, 2000 Underway from Horta, Azores enroute Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, VA.
- CA. September 30, Conducted BECCE drills.
- CB. October 01, 2000 Conducted refueling with USNS LARAMIE.
- CC. October 02, 2000 Conducted GUNNEX.
- CD. October 03, 2000 Conducted refueling with USNS LARAMIE.
- CE. October 05, 2000 Arrived NAB Little Creek, VA. Commence stand down, for first leave period.
- CF. October 09, 2000 Holiday routine for Columbus Day.
- CG. October 10, 2000 Re-fueled the ship.
- CH. October 13, 2000 ET2 (b) (6) reports onboard for duty.
- CI. October 16, 2000 Conducted De-rat inspection.
- CJ. October 18, 2000 Commence second leave period.
- CK. October 25, 2000 SM3 (b) (6) reports onboard for duty.
- CL. November 02, 2000 Second leave period expires.
- CM. November 06, 2000 Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA. enroute Chesapeake Bay for Insurv preps. Conducted Swing Ship, Navigation STT and BECCE drills. Returned to NAB Little Creek, VA.

- CN. November 09, 2000 Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA. enroute Hannibal Range for GUNNEX. Conducted Navigation STT drills, General Quarters for guns, BECCE's, and Abandon Ship drill. Returned to NAB Little Creek, VA.
- CO. November 13-20, 2000 Inport NAB Little Creek. Conducted Diesel Inspection.
- CP. November 19, 2000 Flooding reported and isolated in AUX#1 due to leak in fire-main. All water removed using #2 Eductor. No damage to personnel or equipment.
- CQ. November 27, 2000 Conducted Engineering LTT walk through, Navigation Check-ride pier side.
- CR. November 30, 2000 Underway from NAB Little Creek, VA enroute PC Operating Area. Conducted NAV-CHECKRIDE, Engineering ETG, ARR, Full Power demonstration and BECCE/General Quarters for Damage Control. Returned to NAB Little, Creek.
- CS. December 04, 2000 Conducted INSURV preparations inport.
- CT. December 05, 2000 Underway from NAB Little Creek enroute VA. Capes Operating area for INSURV preparations and GUNNEX. Returned to NAB Little Creek, VA.
- CU. December 11, 2000 Welcome aboard, brief conducted for INSURV inspectors. Held Senior Observers zone inspection.
- CV. December 12, Underway from NAB Little Creek enroute VACAPES Operating area for INSURV UMI. Returned to NAB Little Creek, VA.
- CW. December 13-14, 2000 Inport NAB Little Creek, VA. for INSURV UMI.
- CX. December 14, 2000 CO Debrief with senior members of INSURV inspection team.
- CY. December 15, 2000 Underway from NAB Little Creek, enroute Yorktown Naval Weapons Station. Conducted ammunition offload. Returned to NAB Little Creek, VA.
- CZ. December 16, 2000 Commenced first leave period for Christmas Holiday stand down.
- DA. December 27, 2000 First leave period expired. Commenced second Leave period Holiday stand down. Commanding Officer checks out on leave. Acting CO is LT. O'Brien.
- DB. December 31, 2000 End of year.

## 2000 Narrative

USS THUNDERBOLT (PC-12) rang in the year 2000 pier side at NAB Little Creek, VA. Considering the concern with the dreaded Y2K bug, everything went as smoothly as could be expected, with no service disruptions due to the transition. Half of the officers and crew were on leave, spending the second holiday leave period with their families while the other half continued shipboard preservation, maintenance and upkeep. On 11 January the crew participated in EN1 (SW) (b) (6) retirement ceremony which was held on pier 12. The crew said farewell to EN1 in a touching and moving ceremony, much appreciated by all.

On 12 January THUNDERBOLT set sail to conduct a live firing exercise along with an emergency destruction and Abandon ship drill at Hannibal Range with USS WHIRLWIND. After a successful day of drilling, the ship returned to NAB Little Creek for a four week DPMA period. During this time the ship was de-fueled and the tanks were cleaned. Crewmembers attend schools, conducted in-port fire drills, worked on pre-deployment maintenance and supply procurement. Between 17-28 January the Engineering Department conducted a successful diesel engine groom on all four main engines, making throttle control adjustments and calibrating engine control panels for optimum operation in support of the ship's upcoming EUCOM deployment.

Between 11-18 February THUNDERBOLT was in and out of homeport conducting training in the VACAPES Operating area for Gunnery Exercises and damage control training. During a BECCE drill on 15 February training had to be cut short due to the accidental release of HALON in the forward engine room. The ship immediately returned to NAB Little Creek for repairs. On the following day, the discharged HALON bottles were replaced and the HALON system was tested, returning the ship to mission readiness. Engineering and damage control drill sets continued unabated.

On 19 February the crew began the pre-overseas movement, leave and stand down period which would continue until 23 March. During this time the crew participated in the E-4 through E-6 Navy wide rating exams and conducted an extensive ammunition onload to adjust inventory to correspond with deployment loadout requirements. On 24 February the Colombian CNO came aboard for a short but very informative visit, during which he was thoroughly impressed by the professionalism of the ship and crew.

After the leave and stand down period the crew was very busy making final preparations for the Mediterranean cruise. On 24 March THUNDERBOLT successfully conducted a high speed run and a towing exercise with a SEAL Deployment Vehicle. The following day on 25 March family members and loved ones were welcomed aboard THUNDERBOLT for a three hour Family Day Cruise to downtown Norfolk to see what their fathers, sons, and husbands do while underway. It turned out to be a safe and uneventful visit for our loved ones and spouses. On 26 March the forecastle was pressed into service for the Baptism of the Commanding Officer's four month old daughter, (b) (6). She was baptized by Chaplain Beadle, Royal Navy, using holy water drawn from the ship's bell. In accordance with time-honored tradition, (b) (6) name was stenciled in the ship's bell to memorialize the event.

On 03 April THUNDERBOLT cast off her mooring lines and set sail for Rota, Spain. On 04 April the ship moored in St. Georges, Bermuda for a brief stop for fuel and later that afternoon set sail again toward Rota. Along the way, on 09 April THUNDERBOLT attempted to refuel with the USNS LARAMIE but had to cease the evolution after 45 minutes alongside due to a leak in the fueling rig. The rig was returned to the oiler for repair and the following day refueling was successfully completed. The ship continued on with the TRANSLANT toward Spain.

On 13 April THUNDERBOLT, along with her sister ship, USS WHIRLWIND arrive at Naval Station Rota, Spain for turnover, crew rest and maintenance upkeep. While in port, the crew was able to conduct much-needed PT and also participated in the spring PRT. The Weapons officer and the MSI busied themselves with stores onloads, taking advantage of the many supply resources Rota has to offer. On 16 April the ship took heavy swells from sea at her assigned berth, parting many lines and causing minor damage to the port side shell plating. At first light the ship conducted an emergency sortie from port and rode out the remainder of the storm just off the coast of Spain. THUNDERBOLT returned to Rota the following day and moored to Pier 1, in a position not exposed to the sea.

On 18 April THUNDERBOLT set sail for Malaga, Spain, the first "liberty port" of the cruise. The following day the ship arrived and moored in a picturesque setting in downtown Malaga for crew rest and maintenance up keep. The ship's arrival coincided with the Spanish Holy Week, Semana Santa, and the ship was thus treated to a first-hand look at one of Spain's most historic and important religious festivals.

The crew enjoyed four days of liberty prior getting underway. The ship departed from Malaga on 23 April and headed for Cartagena, Spain for cross training exercises with Spanish Navy Special forces in Phase one of exercise LISA AZUL. On 24 April the ship arrived Cartagena, and the crew enjoyed three days of liberty prior to commencing the formal training program. While in port, tours to the local Spanish Navy were given and the ship was photographed and written up in the local newspaper. On 26 April the ship berth shifted and temporarily tied up alongside USNS BIG HORN for refueling and then returned to the coal depot.

On 28-29 April the ship berth shifted once again to the Spanish Navy Special Forces pier. There followed two days of intensive around-the-clock inport and underway training, conducting CRRC and VBSS insertion and extraction exercises. THUNDERBOLT also conducted inside-the-lifelines training evolutions including NAV team training, small boat handling, CRRC operations, engineering drills, and man overboard / ship handling operations. The principal cross-training event of Phase I was a simultaneous HYDRO / RECON team nighttime insertion consisting of elements of the UEBC, ST-8 E PLT and THUNDERBOLT. The event proceeded slowly due to poor integration of new personnel into CRRC launching / recovering crew, a high sea state, and the rig POIC's overarching emphasis on safety. Overall, the cross training of Phase I was successful for both THUNDERBOLT and the Spanish Special Forces, but there were many lessons learned that were carried into Phase II.

On 29 April THUNDERBOLT finished training in Cartagena and commenced the 1000nm transit to Las Palmas, Spain for Phase II of exercise LISA AZUL. On 02 May the ship arrived in Las Palmas and immediately continued with high-paced training. The first event consisted of a swimmer attack exercise on THUNDERBOLT. The following day the ship embarked combined Spanish HYDRO / RECON elements and conducted an insertion exercise in vicinity of La Laja beach, south of the city. The exercise was a complete success and concluded ahead of schedule. The ship returned to Las Palmas around 0300 for some much-needed crew rest. Overall exercise LISA AZUL provided effective training for the crew and was an excellent first exercise for THUNDERBOLT. The only major problem was the language barrier, as only four members of the ship's crew spoke Spanish and few of the Spaniards were conversant in English. After the exercise, a great deal of time and energy were devoted to the debriefing process, helping to ensure the continued success of this important bilateral training initiative.

On 07 May the ship was directed to respond to real-world events and sortied on short notice bound for Dakar, Senegal to show U.S. presence and to assist if necessary in support of a burgeoning humanitarian crisis in Sierra Leone. The ship arrived Dakar, Senegal on 09 May. Once there, the ship refueled then berth shifted to the naval pier. After a difficult mooring due to offsetting heavy winds and the lack of tug assist, the ship moored and was on standby until further notice. While the ship remained on two-hour standby for nearly a week, the crew continued maintenance upkeep, inport security alert drills and daily PT. Since no liberty was authorized, the crew enjoyed a few barbecues on the pier to help pass the time and boost morale.

On 12 May the ship was authorized to get underway and did so, making her way toward Las Palmas, Spain. After a brief navigation detail and about three hours of steaming, world events took a turn and the ship was once again diverted to Dakar in standby status. However, within a day tensions had eased enough to allow the ship to again be released to proceed on duties assigned. Early the next morning on 13 May the ship once again slipped her moorings and made her way toward Algiers, Algeria via Las Palmas, and Rota, Spain for a brief stops for fuel.

On 18 May THUNDERBOLT made a historic visit to Algiers, Algeria. Only the third U.S. ship to call there since WWII, the Embassy put out a great welcome for the ship and her crew. On arrival the ship received fuel from a fueling depot and then shifted to a berth downtown. The crew was invited to attend dinner at the U.S. Embassy; due to the terrorist threat, the entire crew was shuttled to the compound in an armored motorcade. For many it was their first experience in such a setting and the crew was thrilled to have been a part of it. The visit to Algiers was brief and uneventful, and THUNDERBOLT sortied on 19 May and made turns for Cagliari, Sardinia. The following day the ship arrived at Cagliari, Sardinia for maintenance upkeep, and to make preparations for her participation in the upcoming NATO multilateral exercise DYNAMIC MIX 00-1.

On 22 May THUNDERBOLT got underway from Cagliari for the rehearsal phase of training in vicinity of Capo Teulada, Sardinia. To conserve fuel, the ship anchored in 130ft of water a mile offshore, and remained in this position for several days. While at anchor the crew conducted 24/7 insertion and extraction exercises with U.S., Spanish and Greek Special Forces. On 25 May after completing exercises off Capo Teulada the ship weighed anchor and proceeded toward Kyparissia, Greece. The crew also welcomed aboard 17 multi-national riders that composed of U.S. Navy SEALs, Greek and Spanish Special

Forces. The extra riders made life onboard cramped but not unbearable. The SEAL's gave up their racks for the Greek and Spanish riders, in favor of makeshift accommodations in seal prep and on the weather decks. This proved that a PC could serve as a mother ship for embarked personnel in numbers well in excess of ship design limits for short periods of time.

On 27 May THUNDERBOLT made a brief stop in Catania, Sicily for fuel. The crew was able to make runs to the Navy Exchange at the naval base in Sigonella for haircuts and to do a little shopping. Later that afternoon the ship cast off her mooring lines and continued on to Kyparissia. The ship arrived 29 May off the coast of Kyparissia for the tactical phase of "DYNAMIC MIX" and remained on station in 4W grid operating box, while conducting day and night CRRC / OTH exercises, BECCE sets and GQ drills.

On the morning of 02 June THUNDERBOLT left her 4W grid and conducted close CRRC insertion / extraction operations just off the beach with multinational special forces, while Sailors and Marines from the NATO multinational ARG conducted LCAC and LCU landing operations to secure the beach head. THUNDERBOLT debarked all riders and departed the Kyparissia area enroute to Corfu, Greece for a five-day liberty visit. The ship arrived in Corfu on 03 June for crew rest, fuel and maintenance upkeep. During this visit the new Operations Officer reported aboard.

On 08 June the ship slipped left Corfu behind and made her way to Argostolion, Greece. After a four-hour transit, THUNDERBOLT arrived marking another historic moment for the ship: this visit represented the first by a U.S. Navy ship to the port in recent memory. The small town of 10,000 people were very welcoming and the crew enjoyed one day of tremendous liberty. On the second day inport, however, the CO was picked up by a Greek Naval officer and rushed to meet with the mayor of Argostolion. He was informed that a group of hard-line communists were planning on coming to the ship to protest American presence. In view of the unknown intentions of the protestors and to appease the mayor, the CO elected to get the ship underway prior to their arrival. In support of our safety, Greek Special Forces were immediately sent to guard the pier until all personnel could be recalled from liberty and the ship was underway.

After loitering at sea conducting internal training, on 11 June the ship arrived at Split, Croatia for an important bilateral engagement. This was a significant visit for the crew, as it helped to establish a strong relationship between U.S. SOF and the Croatian Navy. While in port, the crew gave tours to Croatian Navy personnel and was also open to the public. THUNDERBOLT was a big hit! The local press interviewed crewmembers and the ship made the papers yet again.

The Croatian Navy was very interested in seeing how the ship and crew conducted business. On 13 June the ship embarked several Croatian Naval Officers. Some of our crewmembers were invited to ride onboard their ships and one crewmember conducted a photo exercise in a Russian-built MI-8 "HIND" helicopter. Later that day the ship got underway with Croatian Navy ships "FAUST VRANCIC", "SOLTA" and "HRVATSKA" and conducted a SAR/VBSS and DIVTACS demonstration. The demonstration provided good training for all, and also demonstrated to the crew that the small but very capable Croatian Navy has a lot of potential.

The next morning on 14 June the ship departed Split and made its way toward Valletta, Malta, conducting small arms FAMFIRE training along the way. The ship arrived in Valletta on 15 June for BSF/RON. The Commanding Officer hosted the Maltese Defense Chief aboard for an extensive tour and in-depth discussion of PC capabilities and limitations. On 16 June THUNDERBOLT departed Valletta, Malta and headed for Rota, Spain.

The ship arrived at Naval Station Rota, Spain on 19 June for the mid-deployment maintenance and CART-I period, which lasted until 26 June. During this period the crew was busy checking components, replacing or refurbishing mechanical and electrical equipment, and painting out external and interior spaces. CART-I afforded ship's planners the opportunity to evaluate school and other training requirements for the upcoming IDTC, and identify personnel to fill these requirements. The crew concluded the availability period with a ship's picnic and softball game.

On 26 June THUNDERBOLT cast her lines from Rota and began heading toward Dakar, Senegal with embarked SEALs to continue on with the second half of MED-00. Along the way, the ship stopped into Las Palmas, Spain to refuel and remain over night. The next morning on 29 June the ship got underway and continued on to Africa. For this second "leg" of the deployment, the crew transitioned from woodland to desert camouflage uniforms. Enroute, the ship conducted basic engineering casualty control exercises and damage control training. On 01 July the crew celebrated hump day, which marked the half way point of the cruise, and had a steel beach picnic. On the morning of 02 July the ship arrived at the Dakar, Senegal fuel pier to top off tanks. Upon completion, the ship berth shifted to Dakar's naval pier. Later that day, the crew began what would immediately become a daily task: a two hour all-hands assembly line

process of pouring bottled water into the ship's water tanks for consumption and personal hygiene, due to the lack of drinkable water at the pier riser. This daily evolution was conducted in every African port with the exception of Tema, Ghana where the water tested to be safe. Security measures were also beefed up in African ports as well, because of prior after action reports of theft and rioting on the piers.

On 03 July, the ship was visited by the Senegalese Chief of Staff and several of their Navy personnel, for training and to tour the ship. Senegalese Engineering officers were given a tour of THUNDERBOLT's engineering spaces and then treated to lunch. Other personnel were given a show of U.S. small arms and fire fighting equipment on the pier by embarked SEALs and the ship's crew. At the end of the day it seemed we had made some new friends and were challenged to several sporting events throughout our stay in Senegal. On 04 July, "holiday routine" was in effect and the crew had a picnic on the pier. Later that evening, several in the ship's company were invited to the U.S. Embassy for a party in observance of Independence Day.

After a few days of rest and relaxation the ship and crew were ready to continue on with her training mission. On 06 July THUNDERBOLT, along with Senegalese patrol craft "ST LOUIS" got underway and conducted a four hour cross training evolution which included Man overboard, basic engineering casualty control, General Quarters and DIVTACS drills. During the drills, two crewmembers from THUNDERBOLT were on board ST. LOUIS to observe, while several naval officers and crew from Senegalese Navy embarked THUNDERBOLT. Although limited in capability due to funding and maintenance availability, ST. LOUIS and her crew were able to safely conduct training. Both ships returned to Dakar with a new appreciation for how each other's navies operate and conduct training.

On 07 July, training was complete in Dakar and the ship departed for her next destination. Late in the morning the crew set Sea and Anchor and the ship departed Senegal for a short transit to Banjul, The Gambia. The ship arrived in Banjul later that afternoon for crew rest, maintenance upkeep and to provide U.S. presence in the region. No training was given in this port, however tours were given to the Ambassador and his staff. The ship was refueled and crewmembers took advantage of some liberty.

On 11 July the crew was at Sea and Anchor detail once again and set sail for Conakry, Guinea. The ship arrived in Conakry on 13 July at a small but very crowded wharf, swarmed with Sierra Leonean refugees, indigents and destitute persons. The pier was eventually cleared and guarded by Guinean military personnel. Representatives from the U.S. Embassy arrived and briefed the C.O. and crew on the region and the limited resources that could be provided to the ship.

On 14 July the ship had to berth shift alongside a merchant ship to re-fuel because it could not be delivered to the pier. Fueling was complicated because the fuel lines had to be stretched across the vessel "MULTIMAX ANTWERP" to reach the ship. The ship shifted back to the refugee pier and remained there for the next five days. While in port the crew continued with the increased security measures, daily "bottled water" filling of water tanks, maintenance and PT that had become the African routine. The U.S. Embassy provided telephone calls and transportation for the crew. Due to the threat of gun-toting thugs in the city, liberty was restricted to the "Marine House," the main liberty choice of the crew, the "Hotel Riviera", or a two hour van ride to Dubreka Falls, which was a waterfall /restaurant/ hotel that catering to foreign nationals which provided a scenic view of the African wilderness and a relaxing environment.

On July 19 the crew went to Sea and Anchor detail and set sail for the Conakry operating area with Guinean Navy personnel on board. Guinean Naval ships were supposed to get underway with THUNDERBOLT for training, but cancelled at the last minute. Once on station the ship demonstrated STT, man overboard, BECCE, and General Quarter drills. The Guinean navy riders did not seem very enthusiastic, as most of them opted to sleep out on the weather decks during training. Later that day the ship returned to Conakry. The following morning, debrief of the training was held with the Guinean Commandant. Upon completion of debrief, the crew went to Sea and Anchor and the ship slipped her mooring lines at long last, bound for Tema, Ghana. For the next two days while enroute to Tema, the crew conducted gunnery exercises.

On the morning of 24 July, the ship arrived in Tema, Ghana. Later that day the ship topped off her fuel and water tanks. The remainder of the day was spent on briefings and continuation of maintenance. The following day more than half of the crew participated in a local Community Relations Project. The crew supplied and painted a large fence at a local hospital. On 26 July THUNDERBOLT got underway for training with Ghanian Navy personnel embarked. HMS ARGYLL (the British Type 23 frigate THUNDERBOLT had met during the Dakar visit) was also in port, and her CO eagerly joined in the training. The crew of THUNDERBOLT conducted joint live firing exercises with HMS ARGYLL and GNS ACHIMOTO. THUNDERBOLT then went on to demonstrate CRR operations, BECCE's and Swept channel exercises for The Ghanian Navy. Upon completion of demonstration and exercises, the

ship returned to Tema, later that afternoon, the crew joined the Ghanaian Navy personnel for a picnic. The ship remained in port the following day where the crew demonstrated damage control and equipment familiarization procedures.

On 29 July the THUNDERBOLT regretfully departed Tema, having made many new friends and established a strong professional bond. The Ghanaian Navy was very eager to learn, they were by far the most enthusiastic and professional navy worked with in Africa. THUNDERBOLT headed due south, toward the intersection of the Greenwich Meridian and the Equator, 00-00N, 000-00E for a Golden Shellback ceremony. The festivities kicked off the night before, with a WOG beauty pageant held on the messdecks. After a hilarious performance by one candidate from each Department EN1 (SW) (b) (6) was voted the winner. The ship arrived at the equator on 30 July and the crew spent the better part of the day trying to convince King Neptune of their worthiness. All participants were judged by his Royal Court and found to be guilty of at least one crime. However in the end the court was lenient, and all the judged were found to be worthy. After the ceremony was complete the exhausted crew spent the remainder of the day cleaning the ship and prepared to go back on watch while the bridge team pointed the ship's bow in the direction of the next destination: Port Gentil, Gabon.

On 31 July, the ship arrived at Port Gentil and was welcomed by the Gabonese Navy with red carpet treatment. All of their personnel were at attention and their ships were at full dress. Later in the morning the Commanding Officer attended a meeting with the U.S. Ambassador, Provincial Governor, and the town mayor. Each morning while in port the crew was challenged by the Gabonese sailors in sporting events that which included soccer, volley ball, and softball. Crewmembers also participated in the "adopt a sailor" program and were invited to the homes of three area families (Americans that lived and worked in the local oil business) to have dinner and spend a night away off the ship. The hospitality was greatly appreciated and gave the crew a new view on working over sea. On Aug 01 the crew invited many VIP's onboard for a tour of the ship. Most of the VIP'S were of the Gabonese Navy, however several French and American families visited the ship as well. On 02 Aug several crewmembers participated in a local COMREL project to help clean up at a local hospital. The efforts of the COMREL were greatly appreciated by the town mayor. Later that evening, the crew was invited to an informal ball at the base cafeteria, several crewmembers mingled with the locals and had their first taste of caviar. The event and the entire visit went over extremely well, despite the fact that none of their ships could get underway for training. This marked the end of a nice visit to Gabon and the end of our multi national training efforts in the West African littoral.

On 03 Aug THUNDERBOLT finished the visit to Gabon and set sail toward Tema, Ghana for a brief stop for fuel. The ship arrived on 05 Aug topped off fuel tanks and departed toward Conakry, Guinea for another BSF. On 08 Aug the ship arrived Conakry filled fuel tanks and departed early that afternoon enroute Praia, Cape Verde. Along the way the crew conducted a gunnery exercise. The ship arrived at Praia, Cape Verde on 10 Aug. mooring at the only pier available, which was protected by a jetty. Shortly thereafter, the ship began to pound against the pier and some of the mooring lines started to break. In view of the deteriorating condition of the ship's moor, The CO elected to sortie from port as soon as fueling had been and the ship set sail again toward Santa Cruz, Tenerife. On 13 Aug the ship arrived in Tenerife for maintenance, upkeep, and crew rest. Tenerife was the first good liberty port for the crew in two months, which was much appreciated by all.

On 18 Aug the ship set sail toward Funchal, Madeira , arriving ther next day. On 22 Aug the ship set sail again, this time for the last African port of the cruise, Casablanca, Morocco. The ship arrived in Morocco on the morning of 24 Aug for fuel, maintenance and crew rest. While in port, three crewmembers were authorized to take a train to Marrakesh for some bargain shopping. They returned safely and without any major problems. Most of the crew however, stayed in the Casablanca area and participated in a tour of the city. Many personnel had a once in a lifetime chance to see the inside of a mosque. On 27 Aug the ship departed from Casablanca and headed north to Rota, Spain. The ship arrived in Rota harbor on 28 Aug and dropped anchor until berthing was available. The next morning THUNDERBOLT departed Rota enroute Lisbon, Portugal. On 30 Aug the ship arrived to downtown Lisbon for fuel, crew rest and maintenance. After a good three-day visit to Lisbon, the ship and crew were ready to head toward Great Britain. On 02 Sep the ship departed Lisbon enroute to Poole, England.

On 04 Sep the crew conducted a GUNNEX, basic engineering casualty control exercises and General Quarters drill. The ship arrived in Poole, England on the morning of 05 Sep and moored downtown, near the pub district. While in port, a dozen crewmembers were invited to ride on various insertion craft of the British Royal Marines—a memorable event for all involved, as the SBS took pains to impress their

American guests from start to finish! Other crewmembers toured the area in the ship's van. Several visited the mysterious "Stonehenge." Both the crew and the locals seemed to appreciate the visit to Poole.

On 09 Sep THUNDERBOLT completed a very short transit from Poole to Dartmouth, England. After a brief five hour transit the ship arrived Dartmouth and moored at the British Naval College Pier. Crewmembers visited the many pubs and shops for spirits and souvenirs. In many respects, Dartmouth was the most beautiful and enjoyable port visit of the cruise, a fitting way to wrap up the deployment. On 12 Sep THUNDERBOLT set sail again for Rota, to prepare for the long transit home. On 14 Sep, while enroute Spain the crew conducted STT, Man Overboard and Loss of Gyro exercises. Due to lack of available pier space at Rota Naval Station, the ship moored in Puerto de Santa Maria instead, five miles to the south. While inport, the ship was deep cleaned, all topside spaces were painted, and the crew participated in the semiannual Physical readiness test. On 16 Sep the crew assembled on the ship's foc's'le for the pinning ceremony of new CPO candidates, HMC (SW) (b) (6) and EMC (SW) (b) (6). This ceremony is not usually open, but all hands were requested by the selectees and this request was honored. On the morning of 19 Sep THUNDERBOLT left Puerto de Santa Maria and berth shifted over to Naval Station Rota for fuel, and turnover with UNIT-10. This event marked the end of EUCOM 2000 deployment for the crew of THUNDERBOLT. Everyone had worked diligently throughout the deployment and were anxious to get back home to their loved ones. On 22 Sep THUNDERBOLT joined up with her sister ship, USS WHIRLWIND steamed west toward the United States by way of Horta, Azores for a BSF. Along the way the crew conducted BECCE drills to keep everyone busy during the long transit home. On 25 Sep the ship's arrived Horta, Azores for fuel. Both ships refueled, but just prior to departure received orders to linger in Horta for a safe harbor due to the threat of two hurricanes in the Atlantic. THUNDERBOLT and WHIRLWIND ended up staying for three days. On 28 Sep the hurricane threat subsided and the ships got underway to rendezvous with USNS LARAMIE for fuel. On 01 Oct the ship's caught up with USNS LARAMIE and a challenging refueling at sea in 14 foot seas (remnants from the two storms). LARAMIE steamed with THUNDERBOLT and WHIRLWIND, refueling both ships again on 03 Oct.

On the morning of 05 Oct the ship returned home to NAB Little Creek to a hero's welcome, having safely steamed more than 24,000 miles, and visited 37 ports in 17 nations. After the ship was moored the crew commenced a leave and stand-down period which lasted until 02 Nov. On 06 Nov THUNDERBOLT was underway again in the Chesapeake Bay to conduct preparations for INSURV UMI. The crew conducted swing ship, navigation STT and BECCE drills. The ship returned to Little Creek later that afternoon.

On 09 Nov the ship was underway again enroute Hannibal Range to conduct live firing exercises. Along the way the crew continued STT, BECCE, General Quarter and Abandon Ship drills for the upcoming INSURV inspection. The ship returned to Little Creek that evening and remained in port until 20 Nov for diesel engine inspections. While in port on 19 Nov, the ship had a fire main leak in AUX-1. Heads-up response by the duty section isolated the leak prevented any equipment damage or personnel injury.

On 27 Nov Engineering LTT walkthrough and Navigation Checkrides were conducted. Both inspections went extremely well. THUNDERBOLT returned to Chesapeake Bay for engineering ETG, ARR, full power demonstration, BECCE and General Quarters drills. The crew had done a very good job preparing, and were graded above average. THUNDERBOLT returned to Little Creek. On 04 Dec the crew conducted INSURV preparations pier side. On 05 Dec the ship departed Little Creek for the VACAPES operating area to conduct gunnery exercise and INSURV drills. The ship returned to Little Creek later that evening. For the next week, the crew focused on continued preparations for INSURV.

On 11 Dec the CO and crew welcomed aboard the INSURV inspectors and conducted a senior observer's zone inspection for all departments of the ship. The inspection went over very well, and very few discrepancies were found. The next day on 12 Dec THUNDERBOLT departed Little Creek for INSURV UMI in the VACAPES operating area, later that afternoon the ship returned. The ship remained in port for the next two days while INSURV UMI continued. Overall the ship and crew graded extremely high and were given a BZ by the INSURV inspector team for their exhaustive preparation.

On 15 Dec the ship departed Little Creek and arrived at Yorktown Naval Weapon Station for ammo offload. The crew completed the offload in three hours and returned to Little Creek later that afternoon. This would be the last underway for THUNDERBOLT in the year 2000.

The crew began Christmas Holiday stand down for the first leave period on 16 Dec while the remainder of the crew continued on preservation, maintenance upkeep and preparations for the upcoming shipyard period at NORSHIPCO, in downtown Norfolk for the remainder of the calendar year.