[redacted]

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
MCM ROTATIONAL CREW HOTEL
UNIT 60536
FPO AE 09501-4508

Rec'd 3/16/98
W Walsh

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Hotel/013
01 Feb 98

[redacted]L -- Unclassified upon removal of classified messages

From: Commanding Officer, MCM Rotational Crew Hotel
To: Chief of Naval Personnel (Code N09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR 1997

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

1. As required by reference (a), the following command history for Avenger Class Mine Countermeasures Ship USS ARDENT (MCM 12) is submitted for the calendar year 1997.

2. Supporting documents attached.

P. Borkowski
By direction

[redacted]

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USS ARDENT
(Mine Countermeasures 12)

COMMAND HISTORY

1997

[redacted]

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[redacted]

DECLASSIFIED

SECTION ONE

DECLASSIFIED

[redacted]

[redacted]

COMMAND STRUCTURE
(ADMINISTRATIVE)

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COMNAVSURFLANT

VADM H.C.GIFFIN III

COMINEWARCOM

RADM D.R. CONLEY
COS: CAPT C.G. BELCHER

COMCMRON THREE

CAPT M.D. SIMPSON

USS ARDENT (MCM 12)

CO: LCDR T. T. SMITH
XO: LCDR P. E. BORKOWSKI

[redacted]

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[redacted]

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COMMAND STRUCTURE
(OPERATIONAL)

COMMANDER U.S. NAVAL FORCES CENTRAL COMMAND
COMMANDER U.S. FIFTH FLEET

VADM T.B. FARGO

COMMANDER MIDDLE EAST FORCE 55
COMMANDER DESTROYER SQUADRON 50

CDR J.F. HERGER

COMMANDER TASK GROUP 55.10
COMMANDER MINE COUNTERMEASURES SQUADRON THREE FORWARD

CAPT T. CARLSON

COMMANDER TASK UNIT 55.10.2

LCDR T. T. SMITH

[redacted]

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The Mine Countermeasures Ship ARDENT (MCM 12), accommodates a crew of eight officers and 76 enlisted crew members. It belongs to the AVENGER (Mine Countermeasures 1) class, which is the largest wooden hulled ship class in the United States Navy. The Mine Countermeasures class design incorporates modern mine countermeasures technology into a specially designed platform which includes low magnetic signature diesel engines, a precise electronic navigation system, a mine hunting and classification sonar, and a mine neutralization submersible vehicle. The mine countermeasures mission is to clear the bottom and water volume of mines in coastal and offshore areas. The mine countermeasures mission fulfills an important role in the long-standing objective to maintain the nation's mine countermeasures capability.

The United States Navy Mine Countermeasures mission statement requires the following strategic factors be considered:

-Ability to deploy world-wide for multipurpose missions.

-Ability to clear strategic ports and harbors of mines in the United States or foreign countries.

-Surveillance of United States and foreign coastlines.

-Neutralization of a variety of mine threats.

-Peacetime support activities

United States Navy strategic considerations provide the basis for the following Mine Countermeasures mission requirements:

-Search, detect and neutralize moored and bottom mines.

-Sweep moored mines.

-Sweep floating mines by gunfire embarked Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Mobile Unit Detachments.

-Accompany deploying forces overseas.

-Permit breakout of United States forces from continental United States ports.

-Provide navigational assistance to their fleet surface units.

-Conduct underwater surveys of ports and harbors.

-Perform collection of oceanographic and navigational data.

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SECTION TWO

[redacted]

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CHRONOLOGY FOR 1997

JANUARY 1997

Jan 18 Advance team from Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Alpha arrives to start turnover with Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Charlie.

Jan 19 Underway to conduct SHAREM 119 exercise, 19 through 29 January.

Jan 29 Mine countermeasures Rotational Crew Alpha arrives to begin turnover of USS Ardent (MCM 12).

FEBRUARY 1997

Feb 02 Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Alpha relieves Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Charlie in pier ceremony at Mina Salman, Bahrain.

Feb 04 Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Alpha commences Sea Trials 4 through 8 February.

Feb 12 Started Restricted Availability, Mina Salman, Bahrain.

Feb 16 Communications Material Security training provided by Administrative Support Unit, Southwest Asia. Logistics Management Assessment (LMA) assist begins.

Feb 20 Logistics Management Assessment (LMA) assist out brief.

Feb 24 Restricted Availability extended for Ship's Service Diesel Generator (SSDG) soft foot problem.

MARCH 1997

Mar 08 LCDR J. R. Howlett arrives to start Commanding Officer relieving process for Crew Alpha.

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Mar 13 LCDR J. R. Howlett relieves LCDR A. Collins as Commanding Officer, Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Alpha embarked in USS ARDENT (MCM 12).

Mar 23 Naval Environmental and Preventive Medicine Unit-7 (NEPMU-7) arrives for Environmental Health Survey. Commander Destroyer Squadron 50 (DESRON 50) visits.

Mar 26 Threat condition Charlie set by Administration Support Unit, Southwest Asia.

Mar 28 Senior Chief Engineman(SW) [redacted] becomes first enlisted member of Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Alpha to qualify Command Duty Officer (CDO).

APRIL 1997

Apr 05 Commander Naval Surface Force, Atlantic (COMNAVSURFLANT) visited and toured ship.

Apr 06 Officers attended luncheon for COMNAVSURFLANT.

Apr 07 Half-way cruise cookout on fantail and party at Administration Support Unit, Southwest Asia. Threat condition Charlie put into effect by Vice Admiral Fargo, Commander United States Fifth Fleet.

Apr 08 Fast cruise. Tested 1A Ship's Service Diesel Generator (SSDG).

Apr 10 Bilge diving team arrived

Apr 12 Sea Trials, successful test of 1A, 1B and 2A Ship's Service Diesel Generators(SSDG).

Apr 13 Engineering Department party at Administrative Support Unit, Southwest Asia.

Apr 15 Underway Q-Route survey Central Arabian Gulf (CAG).

Apr 16 Quick draw exercise. Mine Neutralization Vehicle operations.

Apr 18 Mine Neutralization Vehicle operations.

Apr 19 Anchored Dubai Harbor, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Apr 20 Arrived Dubai, United Arab Emirates for port visit.

Apr 23 Departed Dubai, United Arab Emirates en route Mina Salman, Bahrain. Conducted General Quarters drill.

APR 24 Arrived Mina Salman, Bahrain for six hours. Departed for Kuwait.

Apr 25 General Quarters drill. Personelman First Class(SW/AW) [redacted] and Quartermaster First Class(SW) [redacted] qualify Officer of the Deck (OOD) (Underway). Moored Kuwait City, Kuwait.

Apr 26 Exercise "EAGER SENTRY" planning conference (Commanding Officer, Executive Officer, Operations Officer). Participated in exercise "EAGER SENTRY" with United States, British, French, and Kuwaiti Naval forces. Breakout of Kuwait City, Kuwait. Conducted defense against small boat attack exercise, and explosive ordnance disposal operations.

Apr 27 Seeded practice mine field with practice mines in the vicinity of Kuwaiti Naval Base.

Apr 29 Recovered practice mines in the vicinity of Kuwaiti Naval Base. Arrived Kuwait City, Kuwait.

Apr 30 Debrief of exercise "EAGER SENTRY".

MAY 1997

May 01 Underway for Q-Route survey, North Arabian Gulf (NAG).

May 05 Mine Neutralization Vehicle missions (3), completed Q-Route survey off the coast of Kuwait.

May 06 Set 1M for Magnetic Tail meggering and Basic Engineering Casualty Control Exercises/General Quarters drill.

May 07 Arrived Mina Salman, Bahrain for upkeep period.

May 09 Began acoustic coating of propellers.

May 11 Began Ships Instrumentation Calibration and Integrated Calibration Assessment System (ICAS) technical assist.

May 15 Rear Admiral Marfiak visits. Ships Instrumentation

Calibration completed five days early. Underway Central Arabian Gulf for mine countermeasures operations. Held Awards Ceremony.

May 19 Returned to Mina Salman, Bahrain.

May 20 Engineering Assessment Team arrives.

May 22 Underway from Mina Salman, Bahrain with Engineering Assessment Team. Successfully demonstrated full power run, Light Load Propulsion Motors, and crash back of the main engines.

May 24 Underway, commenced Q-Route survey in Central Arabian Gulf.

May 28 Logistics Management Assessment (LMA) team final grade is an overall "Excellent" (S-1=96, S-2=92, 3M=90).

JUNE 1997

Jun 02 Conducted Propulsion Examining Board (PEB) Hull Examination preparations.

Jun 06 Commenced Propulsion Examining Board Hull Certification. All programs satisfactory and cleanliness evaluated as excellent. Must repair exhaust leak in Gas Turbine.

Jun 09 Underway, demonstrated full power run, crash back, and full power run of Light Load Propulsion Motors.

Jun 10 - 12 Underway for Q-Route surveys in Central Arabian Gulf and South Arabian Gulf.

Jun 13 Inport Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, Commanding Officer and Executive Officer have dinner with U.S. Embassy personnel.

Jun 16 Departed Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates with United States Defense Attaché LCDR [redacted] and four additional Officers, to witness sonar operations and Mine Neutralization Vehicle mission on buoy #9. Riders depart by small boat.

Jun 17 Arrived Mina Salman, Bahrain; advance group from Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Bravo arrive for turnover. Engineman First Class [redacted], Engineman Second Class [redacted], Engineman Third Class [redacted], and Hospital Corpsman First Class [redacted] obtain Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist (ESWS).

Jun 18 Second advance team from Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Bravo arrives.

Jun 19 Awards Ceremony held.

Jun 20 Underway from Mina Salman, Bahrain for turnover demonstrations.

Jun 24 Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Bravo relieves Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Alpha in a pier ceremony.

Jun 26 Underway from Mina Salman, Bahrain en route to Doha, Qatar. Conducted crew refresher training (Abandon Ship, General Quarters, Man Overboard).

Jun 28 Arrived Doha, Qatar. HMS WESTMINSTER in port. Port visit through 30 June.

Jun 30 Underway, en route Mina Salman, Bahrain.

JULY 1997

Jul 01 Returned to Mina Salman, Bahrain for upkeep.

Jul 02 Inport Mina Salman, Bahrain, completed magnetic off load in preparation for Mine Danger Area (MDA) clearance operations off of Kuwait.

Jul 06 Underway with USS DEXTROUS (MCM 13) for mutual mine countermeasures training. Consisted of Mine Neutralization Vehicle operations, minehunting, astern refueling exercises and internal ship drills. Anchored evenings of 6 through 8 July.

Jul 09 Inport Mina Salman, Bahrain.

Jul 10 Delayed in underway for exercise "RED REEF" due to material difficulties with AN/SQQ-32 sonar, Joint Maritime Combined Information System (JMCIS), and Reverse Osmosis Unit.

Jul 11 Underway for Jubail, Saudi Arabia to participate in exercise "RED REEF". Anchored at Jubail, Saudi Arabia.

Jul 12 Underway for exercise "RED REEF" operational area. Sonar casualty precluded operations. Anchored for remainder of day to troubleshoot.

Jul 13 Returned to Jubail, Saudi Arabia to anchor for trouble shooting of casualty to AN/SQQ-32 sonar.

Jul 16 Underway to Mina Salman, Bahrain for repairs to AN/SQQ-32 sonar.

Jul 18 Inport Mina Salman, Bahrain.

Jul 26 Conducted Awards Ceremony recognizing personnel who scored outstanding or excellent on the Physical Readiness Test (PRT). Awarded $650.00 to Chief Engineman(SW) [redacted] for Beneficial Suggestion.

Jul 28 Commenced Combat Systems Readiness Review (CSRR) assessment. Continues through 8 August.

Jul 31 Ensign [redacted] qualified as Surface Warfare Officer (SWO).

AUGUST 1997

Aug 01 Decision made to replace AN/SQQ-32 Sonar.

Aug 08 Underway for Dubai, United Arab Emirates for engine repairs and port visit.

Aug 10 Port visit changed to Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates. Conducted main space fire drill and Mine Neutralization Vehicle operations. Mineman Second Class [redacted] awarded Sailor of the Day for cutting fish trap from port shaft.

Aug 11 Arrived Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates for repairs and port visit. Divers clean hull. Repairs begin for three thousand gallon distiller, reverse osmosis unit, and governor calibration.

Aug 14 Departed Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates for Mina Salman, Bahrain. Repairs completed.

Aug 15 In port Mina Salman, Bahrain for continued material assessment.

Aug 16 Changed out AN/SPS-55 Surface Search Radar antenna.

Aug 20 Underway for local training. Anchored overnight at Sitrah Anchorage.

Aug 21 Conducted gunshoot en route Sitrah Anchorage.

Aug 22 Remained at anchor. Conducted General Quarters drills consisting of small boat attack and Class "B" fire on boat deck. Also conducted Abandon Ship drill.

Aug 23 Underway for Danning evolution. Returned to Sitrah Anchorage to anchor overnight.

Aug 24 Holiday routine at anchor.

Aug 25 In port Mina Salman, Bahrain. Meeting held with Captain Carlson and Port Engineer about AN/SQQ-32 sonar change out. Sonar expected to arrive 27 August and commence change out 28 August.

Aug 27 AN/SQQ-32 Sonar Towed Body arrived for replacement.

Aug 29 Commenced change out of AN/SQQ-32 Sonar Towed Body. ARDENT breasted out twice in order to remove old sonar and returned to pier.

Aug 30 New AN/SQQ-32 sonar removed from crate and placed in cradle. Inspection found a cut cable on the classify assembly. Repairs completed by approved method. New sonar placed in cradle and positioned into ship.

Aug 31 Completed repairs to tow staff and cable of AN/SQQ-32 Sonar.

SEPTEMBER 1997

Sep 17 Moved to Basrec Shipyard, Mina Salman, Bahrain to commence Restricted Availability. Lieutenant [redacted] and Engineman First Class [redacted] qualified Engineering Officer of the Watch (EOOW). Sonar representatives from Keyport, Washington arrive to complete repairs to AN/SQQ-32 sonar.

OCTOBER 1997

Oct 02 Conducted retention assessment for completion of Golden Anchor Package.

Oct 05 Commander, Mine Countermeasures Squadron Two Forward, (Captain Carlson) visits ARDENT.

Oct 14 Conducted dock trials.

Oct 15 Restricted Availability completed. Attempted to get underway but governor imbalance on all engines precludes.

Oct 16 Berth shift to Mina Salman Pier, Mina Salman, Bahrain. Conducted engineering test pier side. Test satisfactory, ship is ready to get underway.

Oct 17 Underway to complete high end engineering test, sonar operations, and to check repairs.

Oct 20 Inport Mina Salman, Bahrain, new AN/SQQ-32 sonar working well. Minor engineering problems.

Oct 21 Stores onload, magnetic signature offload.

Oct 22 Underway for Mine Danger Area (MDA) operations. First tasking, Q-Route survey off of Bahrain Bell.

Oct 23 Completed Q-Route survey at 0200, started transit north to Mine Danger Area (MDA) 6.

Oct 24 Arrived in Maritime Interdiction Operation Box-2 to investigate mine-like contact reported by USS ELROD (FFG 55). Explosive Ordnance Disposal Detachment Six providing support. Located three contacts of interest around first reported position. Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team to investigate. Preceded to second mine-like contact point. Located strong contact.

Oct 25 Regained strong contact, flew Mine Neutralization Vehicle, contact identified as a large crab pot. Exited to Mine Danger Area (MDA) 6. Conducted evening small arms fire.

Oct 26 Attempted Mission Package Two exercise. Casualty to Mine Neutralization Vehicle precluded attempts to deliver bomblet. Streamed and pulsed magnetic tail.

Oct 27 Commenced Mine Danger Area (MDA) 6 clearance operations. Worked around the clock, half of tasking complete with negative results.

Oct 28 Completed Mine Danger Area (MDA) 6 box 9 and anchored.

Oct 29 Completed Mine Danger Area (MDA) 6 box 8, moved to Mine Danger Area (MDA) 6 box 5 for added clearance operations.

Oct 30 Completed Mine Danger Area (MDA) 6 Box 5 late evening.

Oct 31 Anchored in early morning and conducted Awards Ceremony.

NOVEMBER 1997

Nov 01 Inport Kuwait City, Kuwait.

Nov 03 Underway, commenced search operations for jettisoned ordnance from USS NIMITZ (CVN 68).

Nov 04 Conducted search for ordnance with no result. Qualified Chief Mineman [redacted]r, Mineman First Class [redacted] as Combat Information Center Watch Officer (CICW). Qualified Signalman First Class [redacted] as Junior Officer of the Deck (JOOD).

Nov 07 Rendezvous with USNS Catawba (ATF 168), for Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team embarkation.

Nov 08 Transit to Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Nov 10 Port visit Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Nov 12 Underway, commenced Q-Route survey operations. Ceased operations due to increased sea state.

Nov 14 Qualified Gunners Mate First Class [redacted] and Mineman Third Class [redacted], Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialists (ESWS).

Nov 15 Conducted explosive ordnance disposal underwater detonation. Electrician First Class [redacted] and Electrician Second Class [redacted] qualified as Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialists. Lieutenant [redacted] qualified SWSCO.

Nov 16 Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team conducted diving operations and underwater detonation.

Nov 17 Conducted Mission Package Two shot. Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team recovered mine shape and returned to ARDENT.

Nov 18 Participated in Exercise "NEON FALCON" conducted two swept channel lead throughs with United States and Bahraini

Navy's. Returned to Mina Salman, Bahrain.

Nov 19 Inport Mina Salman, Bahrain.

Nov 22 Underway for participation in exercise "NEON FALCON".

Nov 23 Anchored after completion of exercise "NEON FALCON".

Nov 24 Returned to Mina Salman, Bahrain for crew turnover preparations with Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Hotel.

Nov 25 Continued crew turnover preparations. Qualified Operations Specialist Second Class [redacted] and Seaman [redacted] as Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialists (ESWS).

Nov 26 Qualified Chief Mineman [redacted] and Quartermaster Second Class [redacted] as Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialists (ESWS).

Nov 27 Thanksgiving Dinner for crew.

Nov 30 Commander, Mine Countermeasures Squadron Two Forward (Captain Carlson) and Crew Bravo conducted end of deployment Awards Ceremony.

DECEMBER 1997

Dec 01 Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Hotel advance party arrived and began turnover.

Dec 03 COMFIFTHFLT (Vice Admiral Fargo) onboard for Awards Ceremony.

Dec 04 Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Hotel second group arrived.

Dec 08 Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Hotel relieves Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Bravo in USS ARDENT (MCM 12).

Dec 14 Underway en route to the Central Arabian Gulf for bilateral exercise "NAUTICAL SWIMMER" with the Royal Saudi Arabian Navy.

Dec 16 Anchored outside King Abdul Aziz Naval Base, Saudi Arabia. Conducted Frocking Ceremony for September advancement cycle.

Dec 18 Returned to Mina Salman, Bahrain. Crew attended Chief of Naval Operations (Admiral Johnson) Admiral's Call at Administrative Support Unit, Southwest Asia.

Dec 21 Underway to the Central Arabian Gulf (CAG) Sharem Operational Area to conduct various mine hunting evolution's and Damage Control drills.

Dec 23 Inport Mina Salman, Bahrain for Christmas break.

Dec 28 Underway en route to Central Arabian Gulf (CAG), Sharem Operational Area.

Dec 29 Anchored southwest of Sharem Operational Area.

Dec 30 Underway from Sharem Operational Area en route to Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

Dec 31 Inport Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

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USS ARDENT 1997

1997 was an exceptionally busy year for ARDENT. Being one of two Mine Countermeasures Ships currently assigned to the United States Fifth Fleet and forward deployed to the Arabian Gulf, numerous tasks were asked of her while supporting the unique Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew structure.

The month of January was dedicated to preparing ARDENT for turnover between Crew Charlie and Crew Alpha. Yet despite the turnover process, ARDENT was tasked with, OPERATION SHAREM 119, in which her performance was exemplary. SHAREM 119 involved a coordinated task force of ships, submarines, aircraft, as well as testing Target Acquisition Systems, against either an allied diesel or United States Navy Submarine, simulating the regional threat. The focus of the Sharem program was site specific, shallow water, anti-diesel tactics, and mine warfare to add balance to the Undersea Warfare problem. ARDENT's particular tasking was to join USS CUSHING (DD 985), USS DEXTROUS(MCM 13), and USNS CATAWBA (ATF 168) in the Central Arabian Gulf for coordinated Mine Countermeasures operations. ARDENT served as a direct vehicle for the development of methodologies for the new MINE WARFARE READINESS EFFECTIVENESS MEASURING (MIRAM) PROGRAM. ARDENT served a major role in the overall effort for data collection in this important warfare area.

February saw ARDENT's new Rotational Crew, Alpha relieve Rotational Crew Charlie in a pier ceremony at Mina Salman, Bahrain. Immediately following turnover Crew Alpha put ARDENT through a series of sea trials prior to her Restricted Availability period.

On 13 March, LCDR J.R. Howlett relieved LCDR A.J. Collins as Commanding Officer Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Alpha embarked in USS ARDENT (MCM 12). During her Restricted Availability period, ARDENT underwent an environmental survey by Naval Environmental and Preventative Medicine Unit 7(NEPMU-7). As well as a visit by Commander Destroyer Squadron 50 (DESRON-50).

ARDENT's Restricted Availability conclusion was punctuated by a visit and tour by Commander Naval Surface Force, Atlantic (COMNAVSURFLANT), a "hump-day" cruise cookout on the fantail and a crew party at Administrative Support Unit, Southwest Asia. On 7 April Vice Admiral Fargo declares Threat condition CHARLIE in affect for all military personnel in Bahrain.

In April ARDENT underwent an extensive training schedule in preparation of the upcoming exercise "EAGER SENTRY". ARDENT conducted Q-route surveys in the Central Arabian Gulf as well as

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small arms Planned Availability Concept Fire. Mine Neutralization Vehicle operations were held prior to entering Dubai, United Arab Emirates for a port visit. During the transit from Dubai, United Arab Emirates back to Mina Salman, Bahrain, the Engineering Casualty Control Team and Damage Control Training Team conducted numerous drills improving the operational performance of both the engineering watch sections and at-sea fire party. ARDENT's hard work and in depth training, resulted in solid preparation for exercise EAGER SENTRY.

Exercise EAGER SENTRY took place during the last week of April. The objective was to improve readiness and interoperability between coalition naval forces; enhance multi-national training; refine mutual operating procedures; mutually exercise seamanship, anti-surface, anti-air, explosive ordnance disposal, and mine warfare skills. For her part, ARDENT performed a variety of mine countermeasures operations, such as: Q-route surveys, minehunting, drifting mine exercises, Mine Neutralization Vehicle operations, and small boat vectoring. EAGER SENTRY served as a platform to enable ARDENT to increase her proficiency in her primary mission area of mine countermeasures.

Upon completion of EAGER SENTRY, ARDENT was again underway to conduct more Q-route surveys and Mine Neutralization Vehicle missions in the Northern Arabian Gulf. On 15 May, Rear Admiral Marfiak visited ARDENT and was present for an Award Ceremony. Ships Instrumentation Calibration technical assist was completed five days early so ARDENT could be underway to the Central Arabian Gulf (CAG) for mine countermeasures operations. ON 20 May the Engineering Assessment team arrived. ARDENT successfully completed a full power run, Light Load Propulsion Motor demonstration, and Main Propulsion Diesel Engine (MPDE) crash back performance test. On 28 May ARDENT underwent Logistics Management Assessment and received excellent scores throughout. Scores were as follows:

RECORDED ACCOMPLISHMENT RATE	96.1%
ACCOMPLISHMENT CONFIDENCE FACTOR	96.2%
PLANNED MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE PERFORMANCE RATE	92.4%
MAINTENANCE DATA SYSTEM PERFORMANCE RATE	86.0%
OVERALL 3-M ASSESSMENT	89.2%
FINAL 3-M ASSESSMENT SCORE	**90.2%**

Crew ALPHA had assumed ARDENT just prior to an assist visit in which the 3-M program was evaluated as unsatisfactory. "The

attitude, drive, and professionalism exhibited by the crew and the amount of work that has been accomplished since the assist visit during an arduous deployment is evident in the complete turn around of the 3-M program. The crew, with little support or technical expertise, has become the first Mine Warfare Community asset fully implemented under the SKED/SKEDPORT PMS scheduling program." (Quoted from assessment summary.)

On 6 June ARDENT underwent it's Propulsion Examining Board (PEB) Hull Assessment. With the exception of a small exhaust leak on the gas turbine, all programs were satisfactory, and cleanliness was deemed excellent. The first half of June was spent doing Q-route surveys in the Central and Southern Arabian Gulf, and a port visit to Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Prior to departure from Abu Dhabi, ARDENT, along with the United States Defense Attaché LCDR [redacted], and four additional officers, proceeded to buoy "9" where Crew Alpha demonstrated sonar and Mine Neutralization Vehicle operations. United States Embassy personnel departed by small boat transfer and ARDENT was en route to Bahrain to greet an advance group from Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Bravo. The second half of June was spent primarily on crew turnover preparations. On 24 June Rotational Crew Bravo became the third Rotational Crew to embark upon ARDENT in 1997. Crew Bravo immediately got underway en route to Doha, Qatar. During the transit, Crew Bravo conducted crew refresher training consisting of Abandon Ship, General Quarters, and Man Overboard drills.

In July, ARDENT returned to Mina Salman, Bahrain for magnetic off load in preparation for Mine Danger Area clearance operations off the coast of Kuwait. In transit to Kuwait, ARDENT, along with DEXTROUS, conducted mutual mine countermeasures training and mine neutralization operations, minehunting, astern refueling, and internal ship drills. On 11 through 15 July, ARDENT was involved in exercise RED REEF. The objective was to demonstrate the capabilities of United States Mine Warfare Forces. ARDENT and DEXTROUS conducted minefield related-operations and open water Q-route surveys and influence sweep exercises. Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams embarked on ARDENT also conducted underwater demolition simulations. Upon conclusion of exercise RED REEF, USS INGRAHAM (FFG 61) hosted a fantail BBQ for all participants.

In August, ARDENT went to Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates for repairs and a port visit. Divers were utilized to clean the hull and repairs were made to the Three Thousand Gallon Distiller, Reverse Osmosis Unit, and governor calibration. ARDENT then returned to Mina Salman, Bahrain to continue with

Material Assessment and change out of AN/SPS-55 Radar antenna. On 20 through 25 August, ARDENT was underway locally for various training evolutions. Upon arrival to Mina Salman, Bahrain, a meeting was held with Commander, MCM Squadron Two Forward (Captain Carlson) and the Port Engineer concerning the change out of the AN/SQQ-32 Mine Hunting sonar towed body. The last week of August was dedicated to the sonar exchange. ARDENT commenced the change out of the sonar following the arrival of the sonar towed body and all the necessary technicians on 29 August. On 30 August a defect was found on the new sonar after it was removed from it's crate and placed in the cradle. Closer inspection revealed that there was a cut cable on the classify assembly. After this was corrected, the new sonar was positioned into place.

On 17 September ARDENT moved to Basrec, Mina Salman shipyard to commence Restricted Availability and await the arrival of sonar representatives from Washington to complete repairs. Sonar repairs were completed during the conclusion of the Restricted Availability on 15 October. ARDENT shifted berths to Mina Salman, Bahrain to conduct engineering tests alongside the pier. The ship tested satisfactory and was deemed ready to get underway. ARDENT got underway to complete high end engineering tests and sonar operations to check repairs. With the sonar working well, ARDENT conducted its first post Restricted Availability Q-route survey tasking off of Bahrain Bell on 22 October. With that tasking complete, ARDENT began its transit north to Mine Danger Area 6. En route ARDENT was diverted to Maritime Interdiction Operation Area 2, to investigate mine-like contacts. With Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Detachment Six providing support, ARDENT located four possible mine-like contacts with the intention of flying the Mine Neutralization Vehicle the following day. The strongest of the contacts was identified as a large crab pot, however, a casualty to the Mine Neutralization Vehicle precluded further identification of the other contacts. Crew Bravo worked arduously around the clock to complete Mine Danger Area 6, boxes 9, 8, and 5 by 30 October. With that complete, ARDENT was immediately called upon to conduct a search for jettisoned ordnance from the USS NIMITZ (CVN 68). The search yielded no results.

Crew Bravo saw several of its enlisted crew put on the Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist pin in the month of November: GMG1 [redacted], MN3 [redacted], ET1 [redacted], ET2 [redacted], OS2 [redacted], SN [redacted], MNC [redacted], and QM2 [redacted]. LT [redacted] qualified as Surface Warfare Supply Corps Officer. After a brief port visit to Dubai, United Arab Emirates, ARDENT was underway for more Q-route surveys and explosive ordnance disposal

demolition exercises in the Southern Arabian Gulf. On 18 November, ARDENT conducted two swept channel lead through operations with both the United States and Bahraini Navy's as a precursor to exercise, NEON FALCON. ARDENT's objective during NEON FALCON was to simulate real world navigational support through a swept channel for other vessels. ARDENT swept a channel, identified a mine line, designated the Mine Danger Area, and, from a hovering position outside the Mine Danger Area, provided navigational assistance through the channel. ARDENT's endeavors in NEON FALCON was revolutionary in developing procedures and tactics specifically tailored to this unique operating area and utilizing the local Bahraini Naval assets. Upon conclusion of NEON FALCON, Crew Bravo began turnover preparations in anticipation of the arrival of Rotational Crew Hotel.

On 8 December Mine Countermeasures Rotational Crew Hotel became the fourth crew to call ARDENT home in 1997. Crew Hotel was quickly tasked to participate in exercise NAUTICAL SWIMMER. NAUTICAL SWIMMER, a bilateral exercise with the Royal Saudi Arabian Navy, consisted of open water Q-routing, mine clearance operations in two different environments (shallow and deep water), visual communications among ships, and various simulated casualties and responses. ARDENT performed flawlessly and was praised for her minehunting tactical prowess and technical proficiency by the Royal Saudi Arabian Navy in a post exercise luncheon attended by the Commanding Officer and Executive Officer. Despite having just come off an intense and condensed training cycle back in Ingleside, Texas Crew Hotel proved their professionalism throughout NAUTICAL SWIMMER. On 16 December, while at anchor outside King Abdul Aziz Naval Base, Saudi Arabia, Crew Hotel conducted an Advancement Ceremony for it's crew members who through valuable experiences and professional development, gained advancement in the September advancement exam:

-ADVANCEMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

ENS [redacted] promoted to LTJG
MS3 [redacted] advanced to MS2
EN3 [redacted] advanced to EN2
RM3 [redacted] advanced to RM2
EN3 [redacted] advanced to EN2
ET3 [redacted] advanced to ET2
RM3 [redacted] advanced to RM2
OS3 [redacted] advanced to OS2
BM3 [redacted] advanced to BM2
QM3 [redacted] advanced to QM2

FN [redacted] advanced to IC3
FN [redacted] advanced to IC3
FN [redacted] advanced to EM3
SN [redacted] advanced to SK3

ARDENT capped off the year with a New Year's port visit to Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Evident by her many accomplishments, ARDENT's performance in 1997 was the epitome of excellence. She continues to acquire vital information and achieve firsts in this critical theater of operations. USS ARDENT (MCM 12) has set the standard for Mine Warfare in the Arabian Gulf.