



Rec 04/22/91  
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
USS AUSTIN (LPD-4)  
FPO NEW YORK 09564-1707

IN REPLY REFER TO:

5750  
Ser X/110  
23 MAR 1991

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

Subj: 1990 COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS AUSTIN (LPD-4)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization  
(2) Command History 1990 Chronology  
(3) Command History 1990 Narrative  
(4) Current Ship's Photo  
(5) Welcome Aboard Packet

1990

1. In accordance with reference (a), the 1990 Command History for  
USS AUSTIN (LPD-4) is forwarded.

  
C. M. deGRUY

Copy to:  
COMPHIBRON TWELVE

## COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

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

AUSTIN is under the administrative command of Commander Amphibious Squadron TWELVE and is currently serving with the Sixth Fleet under the operational command of Commander, Amphibious Squadron EIGHT, Commodore Turner, with no units assigned under her.

AUSTIN's Commanding Officer is Captain Charles M. deGruy, United States Navy. Born in [REDACTED], Captain deGruy graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in June 1967. He was designated a Naval Aviator in December 1968 and reported to F-8 Crusader training at VF-124, followed by assignment to Fleet Composite Squadron EIGHT. Following transition training in the F-4J Phantom, he reported to the Fighting Falcons of VF-96 and made two combat deployments in USS CONSTELLATION (CV-64). While in VF-96, he served as Quality Assurance Officer and Assistant Maintenance Officer.

In June 1974, Captain deGruy attended the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School, Patuxent River, Maryland, and then served at the Naval Air Test Center as an Engineering Test Pilot and F-14 Program Manager. While at Patuxent River, he earned a Master of Science degree in Systems Management from the University of Southern California.

Following transition training in the F-14 Tomcat, Captain deGruy joined VF-213 in December 1978 and completed Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean deployments in USS AMERICA (CV-66). While in VF-213, he served as Maintenance Officer, Operations Officer, Personnel Officer and Administrative Officer. Additionally, he qualified as Officer of the Deck underway aboard USS AMERICA.

In February 1982, Captain deGruy reported as Executive Officer to VF-211 where he made two Western Pacific deployments aboard USS CONSTELLATION (CV-64) and USS RANGER (CV-61). In June 1983, he assumed command of VF-211. At the completion of his tour as Commanding Officer, VF-211 held the "E", "S", and Clifton Awards.

Captain deGruy then reported to the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations as Head, VF Programs Branch, Anti-Air Warfare Division, in the Office of Naval Warfare. In September 1986, Captain deGruy reported to the Grim Reapers of VF-101 as Commanding Officer. He then served as Executive Officer of USS AMERICA from November 1987 to April 1989.

Captain deGruy has accumulated over 4,000 flight hours, over 800 carrier landings, and has flown over 30 different aircraft. He has been awarded four Meritorious Service Medals, the Air Medal with eight subsequent awards and the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V" for his combat actions.

Enclosure 1

Captain deGruy is married to the former [REDACTED]  
of [REDACTED]. They reside with their four children,  
[REDACTED], in [REDACTED],  
[REDACTED].

AUSTIN's home port is Norfolk, Virginia.

Enclosure 1

01 JAN - 19 JAN	INPORT LITTLE CREEK, VA IMAV
19 JAN	IN TRANSIT TO NORFOLK NAVAL BASE
19 JAN - 06 MAR	INPORT NORFOLK, VA
06 MAR - 11 MAR	IN TRANSIT TO TRUJILLO BAY , HONDURAS
12 MAR - 21 MAR	PHIBCB TWO DET REPAIRED BEACH
21 MAR - 09 APR	EXERCISE AHUAS TARA 90, TRUJILLO BAY, HONDURAS, MARITIME PREPOSITIONING FORCE OPERATION
09 APR - 11 APR	IN TRANSIT TO GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA
11 APR - 14 APR	IN TRANSIT TO NORFOLK, VA
14 APR - 22 APR	INPORT NORFOLK, VA
23 APR - 10 MAY	EXERCISE OCEAN VENTURE 90
23 APR - 24 APR	IN TRANSIT TO MOREHEAD CITY, NC
24 APR	INPORT MOREHEAD CITY, NC
25 APR	U/W, SHIP TRAINING DRILLS
26 APR - 27 APR	MULTIPLE ASSAULT REHEARSALS, ONSLOW BAY
27 APR - 30 APR	IN TRANSIT TO PUERTO RICO OPERATIONS AREA
29 APR	WAR AT SEA EXERCISE
01 MAY - 08 MAY	PUERTO RICO OPERATING AREA
09 MAY - 10 MAY	BACKLOAD ROOSEVELT ROADS, PR
10 MAY - 12 MAY	PORT VISIT TORTOLA, BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS
12 MAY - 17 MAY	IN TRANSIT TO MOREHEAD CITY, NC
17 MAY	INPORT MOREHEAD CITY, NC
17 MAY - 18 MAY	IN TRANSIT TO NORFOLK, VA
18 MAY - 20 MAY	INPORT NORFOLK, VA
21 MAY - 23 MAY	INPORT YORKTOWN, VA AMMO OFFLOAD
24 MAY - 06 JUN	INPORT NORFOLK, VA
07 JUN - 13 NOV	PHASED MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY, MOON ENGINEERING, PORTSMOUTH, VA
13 NOV - 19 NOV	VIRGINIA CAPES OPERATING AREA AMPHIBIOUS REFRESHER TRAINING
19 NOV - 22 NOV	INPORT YORKTOWN, VA AMMO ONLOAD
22 NOV - 25 NOV	INPORT NORFOLK, VA
26 NOV	U/W MEDITERRANEAN AMPHIBIOUS READY GROUP (MARG) 1-91 WORKUPS
27 NOV -29 NOV	IN TRANSIT TO GULF OF MEXICO
30 NOV - 02 DEC	SPECIAL OPERATIONS
03 DEC - 07 DEC	IN TRANSIT TO MOREHEAD CITY, NC
07 DEC	INPORT MOREHEAD CITY, NC
07 DEC - 20 DEC	MARG WORKUPS VICINITY OF ONSLOW BAY, NC
21 DEC	INPORT MOREHEAD CITY, NC
21 DEC - 22 DEC	IN TRANSIT TO NORFOLK, VA
23 DEC - 31 DEC	PRE-OVERSEAS MOVEMENT LEAVE & STANDDOWN

January 1, 1990 dawned with USS AUSTIN moored at Little Creek Amphibious Base, Norfolk, VA. On the 19th of January, AUSTIN transited from Little Creek to Naval Station Norfolk, Va.

On the 6th of March, loaded with a maximum load plan, AUSTIN got underway for Trujillo Bay, Honduras to participate in Exercise AHUAS TARA, a Maritime Prepositioning Force Operation. AUSTIN, which is not flag configured, acted as the flag ship for Commander, Maritime Prepositioning Force One, Rear Admiral Whistler. Embarked aboard AUSTIN were Marines from Sixth Marine Expeditionary Brigade, including Battalion Landing Team 6, Brigade Service Support Group 6, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 266, with six helicopters, Amphibious Construction Battalion Detachment TWO, Beach Master Unit Detachment TWO, two causeway sections and LCU 1662.

The transit to Trujillo Bay, Honduras took five days. On the morning of the 11th of March, AUSTIN anchored in Trujillo Bay. There she sent Construction Battalion Detachment 2 ashore for pre-exercise preparations to the beach, which was unserviceable for the exercise without major reconstruction. A swampy area was drained and filled in, a road was improved and the beach itself was widened and improved to provide adequate support for the actual exercise.

On the morning of the 21st of March the prepositioning force, comprised of SS PLESS, SS OREGON, SS KOCAK and MV BOBO, arrived and anchored in Trujillo, Bay. A general in-stream offload of two of the ships, SS KOCAK and MV BOBO, commenced that morning. A major airlift operation into Goloson International Airport and Soto Cano Air Base brought Marines from Cherry Point, NC into Honduras to marry up with the equipment and supplies from the prepositioning ships. Helicopters from HMM-266 on board AUSTIN provided air support and security for the operation. Waterborne security patrols were maintained around the clock by Coast Guard Surface Patrol Unit Detachment, flown to Honduras and stationed aboard AUSTIN.

Following the in-stream offload of SS KOCAK and MV BOBO, the washdown/backload was conducted from the Dole Company Pier, conveniently located at Trujillo Bay. When the backload was finished the four prepositioning ships left Trujillo Bay on the 8th of April. On the morning of the 9th of April AUSTIN weighed anchor and headed for Norfolk, VA.

Having spent five days enroute from Norfolk to Trujillo Bay and twenty eight days at anchor, AUSTIN was down to 38% fuel. Because she was unable to arrange an underway replenishment, AUSTIN was forced to stop in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba for fuel. The trip to Cuba took two days with AUSTIN arriving in Guantanamo Bay on the 11th of April. After a brief stop for fuel she continued to her homeport of Norfolk, VA arriving there on the 14th of April, she remained pierside for ten days until the 23rd of April.

On the 24th of April, AUSTIN departed Norfolk to take part in Exercise OCEAN VENTURE 90, as part of a three ship Marine

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Amphibious Readiness Group (MARG), comprised of USS AUSTIN, USS NASSAU and USS BARNSTABLE COUNTY. The MARG was under the operational command of Commander, Amphibious Squadron EIGHT, Commodore Kemple. For the exercise AUSTIN was carrying Beach Master Unit Detachment TWO, LCU 1659, Auxiliary Construction Battalion Detachment TWO and elements of Seal Team EIGHT. As part of the exercise a port breakout was conducted by the three ships upon leaving Norfolk, VA.

AUSTIN's first stop, on the 25th of April, was Morehead City, NC where she embarked Marines of Sixth Marine Expeditionary Brigade including components of Battalion Landing Team 2/8, MEU Service Support Group 2/8, Echo Company 2/8 and Reconnaissance Platoon 2/8.

From Morehead City the MARG proceeded to conduct the rehearsal portion of the exercise at Onslow Bay, NC. The MARG remained there until the 27th and conducted multiple daytime and night time assault rehearsals and abandon ship and man overboard training for the embarked Marines.

On the 27th the MARG proceeded south toward the Puerto Rico Operating Area off of Vieques Island just east of Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. Enroute the MARG was joined by USS HAYLER, USS KING, USS STEPHEN W. GROVES, USCGC OCRACOCKE, and USS HENRY J KAISER, who provided exercise screen cover and logistic support.

On the 29th a war at sea exercise (WASEX) was conducted, simulating an attack by high speed patrol craft. USCGC THETIS simulated a KRIVAK II and USCGC NANTUCKET and USCGC NUNIVAK simulated two NANUCHKA II's.

The MARG arrived in the Puerto Rico Operating Area on the 1st of May and a pre-assault conference was conducted. On the 2nd of May Advance Force Operations took place while the MARG prepared for the main assault.

On the 5th of May the main assault was conducted using the scenario of an Opposed Combined Surface and Air Assault on the Province of Aurora in the fictitious country of Azucar. During the assault portion of the exercise, which lasted 4 days, AUSTIN was visited by General Steiner, Major General Keys, and Admiral Kelso.

On the 9th and 10th of May the MARG arrived at Roosevelt Roads to conduct a washdown, backload and port visit. AUSTIN departed on the 10th of May and proceeded to Road Town Harbor on the Island of Tortola, British Virgin Islands. She arrived there on the 10th, anchored in the bay at Road Town and ran liberty boats to the beach for a two day port visit and a well deserved rest.

AUSTIN departed Road Town on the 12th of May and headed back to Morehead City, NC where she arrived on the morning of the 17th of May. In Morehead City the Marines from the Sixth Marine Expeditionary Brigade disembarked and returned to Camp Lejeune, NC. By early afternoon the offload was completed and AUSTIN headed north, arriving in Norfolk on the 18th of May.

On the 21st of May, after a weekend in homeport, AUSTIN

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transited to Naval Weapons Station, Yorktown, VA where she spent three days offloading ammunition. She returned to Norfolk on the 24th of May. On the 7th of June she moved to Moon Engineering Shipyard where she began her much needed six month PMA 90.

During PMA 90 AUSTIN underwent many changes. A few of the more significant jobs were: #1 and #2 main machinery spaces went through extensive overhauls. Sections of steam piping and fuel oil piping were replaced, both boilers were cleaned and repaired, extensive ballast system piping was replaced. Radio communication systems were replaced with new upgraded gear. Three crew berthing compartments were renovated with all new racks, decks, lagging, wiring, etc. The mogas tank was rebuilt. And all flight deck lights were replaced with new ones.

Of note is the fact that Iraq invaded Kuwait on the 2nd of August. This had a significant impact on all of the East Coast Amphibious Ships. Many of the ships that had just returned from deployment were redeployed. AUSTIN was unable to deploy, but provided cannibalized parts from her working systems to help other ships get underway. AUSTIN's PMA schedule was shortened by one month and her operational schedule was accelerated. The work tempo increased and parts that had gone to other ships had to be replaced or remanufactured. Her flight deck was resurfaced and recertified just prior to her departure and it was a much improved and ready AUSTIN that left Moon Engineering and proceeded out to sea on the 13th of November for sea trials and Amphibious Refresher Training.

Refresher training commenced on the 13th of November in the Virginia Capes Operating Area. Following refresher training, AUSTIN steamed to Naval Weapons Station, Yorktown, VA on the 19th of November for an ammunition onload. She returned to Norfolk on the 21st of November.

She left again for MARG 1-91 workups on the 26th of November as part of a four ship MARG in company with USS GUADALCANAL, USS CHARLESTON and USS BOULDER. The MARG was under the operational command of Commander, Amphibious Squadron EIGHT, Commodore Turner. She carried LCU 1662, and elements of Special Boat Unit 20, Seal Team Eight and Beach Master Unit TWO.

Although AUSTIN was scheduled to go directly to Morehead City, NC to embark her Marine Complement, she was diverted to complete special operations in the Gulf of Mexico from the 29th of November until the 2nd of December.

AUSTIN arrived in Morehead City, NC on the morning of the 7th of December and embarked elements of Battalion Landing Team 2/8 from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) including Echo Company 2/8, Reconnaissance Platoon 2/8, and Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAV) Platoon 2/8, with their eight AAV's. She departed Morehead City and rejoined MARG 1-91 that afternoon in Onslow Bay.

For thirteen days MARG 1-91 conducted workups at Onslow Bay, NC. Training including a War at Sea exercise, several Special Operations Capability exercises, and non-combatant evacuation and

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mass casualty exercises. On the 20th of December the MARG departed for Morehead City arriving on the morning on the 21st of December.

AUSTIN's offload included a night time, underway launch of AAV Platoon 2/8 prior to arrival in Morehead City. Consequently the pierside disembarkation went quickly. AUSTIN departed Morehead city that afternoon and headed for Norfolk, VA arriving there on the 22nd of December.

On the 23rd of December AUSTIN began a Pre-Overseas Movement (POM) leave and standdown period which lasted into the New Year.

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