



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
COMMANDING OFFICER  
USS COMSTOCK (LSD 45)  
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From: Commanding Officer, USS COMSTOCK (LSD 45)  
To: Chief of Naval Operations (OP-09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR 1997

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) USS COMSTOCK (LSD 45) Command History for 1997

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

  
G. S. JACKSON

## SHIP'S MISSION

United States Ship COMSTOCK (LSD-45) is the fifth ship of the WHIDBEY ISLAND (LSD-41) class, and the third ship of the class to serve in the Pacific Fleet.

COMSTOCK's mission is to transport United States Marines with their combat equipment to designated areas around the world, and then to launch and support assault landing craft and helicopters during amphibious operations against hostile shores. COMSTOCK can carry four Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC). The LCAC is an assault hovercraft with the ability to exceed 40 knots while carrying a 60 ton payload. Using this craft, COMSTOCK forces will be able to carry out an amphibious assault against a significantly wider range of beaches and other littoral areas of the world's geography as described in "Forward... From the Sea."

COMSTOCK accomplishes her mission through the use of a well deck, which is flooded to embark and launch assault craft. The well deck can be flooded up to 6 feet forward and 10 feet aft when embarking or launching assault craft. After leaving the ship, the assault craft are directed towards the shore by the ship's Combat Information Center.

To provide continuing support to the assault force, COMSTOCK is equipped with the Navy's latest advanced technology including updated communication and combat systems, 20-ton and 60 ton cranes, expanded repair facilities and an automated computer based supply system.

### **Immediate Senior In Command:**

Commander, Amphibious Group THREE

### **Commanding Officer, USS COMSTOCK (LSD 45)**

G.S. Jackson, CDR, USN/1110

<b>CHRONOLOGY FOR THE YEAR 1997</b>	
JAN 1-10	HOLIDAY UPKEEP
JAN 11-20	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
JAN 21-24	SOCAL OPS/LCAC OPS
JAN 25-26	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
JAN 27	TSTA II-INPORT

JAN 28-31	SOCAL OPS
FEB 1-5	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
FEB 6	VISIT SHIP
FEB 7	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
FEB 8	GATOR BALL/INPORT SAN DIEGO
FEB 9	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
FEB 10	AMMO ONLOAD/INPORT SAN DIEGO
FEB 11-17	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
FEB 18-19	SOCAL OPS
FEB 20	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
FEB 21	CHANGE OF COMMAND
FEB 22-25	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
FEB 26-28	INPORT SAN DIEGO/SHIPHANDLING SIMULATOR
MAR 1-3	INPORT SAN DIEGO/CMS ASSIST VISIT
MAR 4-6	SOCAL OPS
MAR 7-9	INPORT SAN DIEGO/NJROTC EMBARK
MAR 10-11	INPORT SAN DIEGO/TSTA III-IPT
MAR 12-14	SOCAL OPS/TSTA III
MAR 15-23	INPORT SAN DIEGO
MAR 24-25	INPORT SAN DIEGO/NJROTC/MROTC VISIT
MAR 26-31	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP

APR 1-6	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
APR 7-11	INPORT SAN DIEGO/IMA
APR 12-13	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
APR 14-17	SOCAL OPS/FEP
APR 18-20	INPORT SAN DIEGO/MARINE ONLOAD FOR CABO SAN LUCAS
APR 21-22	ENROUTE CABO SAN LUCAS PORT VISIT
APR 23	ARRIVE CABO SAN LUCAS
APR 24-27	PORT VISIT CABO SAN LUCAS
APR 28-29	ENROUTE SAN DIEGO
APR 30	INPORT SAN DIEGO
MAY 1-7	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP/EMBARK FOR 97-12M/MARINE AMMO ONLOAD/CATF SURGEON VISIT
MAY 8-16	UNDERWAY/COMPTUEX 97-12M
MAY 17-18	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
MAY 19-20	UNREP SIMULATOR
MAY 20-21	VISIT SHIP/INTERNATIONAL SWO STUDENTS
MAY 22-25	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
MAY 26-31	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP/SEMAT VISIT/ ANNUAL QA AUDITS
JUNE 1-6	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP/CHT CERTIFICATION

JUNE 7-8	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
JUNE 9-13	COMPTUEX 97-13M/LCAC OPS/NVD QUALS/ TORPEDO EVASION DRILL/ARG DIVTACS
JUNE 14-19	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP/AMMO ONLOAD
JUNE 20-30	EXERCISE KERNEL BLITZ 97/FLEETEX 97- 13M
JUL 1-3	EXERCISE KERNEL BLITZ 97/FLEETEX 97- 13M
JUL 4-6	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP
JUL 7-13	INPORT SAN DIEGO/UPKEEP/VISIT SHIP
JUL 14-25	JTFEX 97-2
JUL 26-31	INPORT SAN DIEGO/POM LEAVE PERIOD
AUG 1-18	INPORT SAN DIEGO/POM LEAVE PERIOD
AUG 19	FAST CRUISE
AUG 20	INPORT STEAM
AUG 21-22	SEA TRIALS/FAMILY DAY CRUISE
AUG 23-27	INPORT SAN DIEGO/ U.S. MARINE ONLOAD
AUG 28	UNDERWAY WESTERN PACIFIC ARABIAN GULF DEPLOYMENT/ENROUTE HAWAII
AUG 29-31	ENROUTE HAWAII
SEP 1	COMSTOCK MAKES HISTORY BY REFUELING PATROL CRAFTS USS HURRICANE AND USS MONSOON

SEP 2	ENROUTE HAWAII
SEP 3	RAS WITH USS WILLAMETTE AO180
SEP 4-7	PEARL HARBOR SUSTAINMENT TRAINING/ARG OPERATIONS
SEP 5	INPORT HAWAII
SEP 8	UNDERWAY ENROUTE GUAM
SEP 9-18	ENROUTE GUAM
SEP 19-21	PORT VISIT GUAM
SEP 22	UNDERWAY ENROUTE SINGAPORE
SEP 23-30	ENROUTE SINGAPORE
OCT 1-5	PORT VISIT SINGAPORE
OCT 6	UNDERWAY ENROUTE PHUKET, THAILAND
OCT 7-10	PORT VISIT PHUKET, THAILAND
OCT 11-14	UNDERWAY ENROUTE FIFTH FLEET/ INDIAN OCEAN
OCT 15	INCHOP FIFTH FLEET
OCT 16-19	NORTH ARABIAN SEA
OCT 20	TRANSIT STRAIT OF HORMUZ
OCT 21	ENROUTE BAHRAIN
OCT 22-25	INPORT BAHRAIN
OCT 26	UNDERWAY ENROUTE ARABIAN GULF VISIT BY GENERAL KRULAK, COMMANDANT OF THE U.S. MARINE CORPS VICE ADMIRAL FARGO, COMMANDER FIFTH FLEET

OCT 27-31	INPORT JEBEL ALI UAE/MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY
NOV 1-2	INPORT JEBEL ALI UAE/MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY
NOV 3-6	UNDERWAY ENROUTE SOUTHERN ARABIAN GULF/CENTRAL ARABIAN GULF
NOV 7	RAS WITH USNS TIPPECANOE
NOV 8-10	UNDERWAY VICINITY QATAR
NOV 11	RAS WITH USNS TIPPECANOE/ USS SACRAMENTO
NOV 12-14	UNDERWAY VICINITY QATAR
NOV 15-18	OPERATION "SILENT ASSURANCE"
NOV 18	MAJOR GENERAL BOLDEN, DEPUTY COMMANDING GENERAL, 1ST MARINE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE (I MEF) CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA
NOV 19	ENROUTE JEBEL ALI UAE/RAS WITH SACRAMENTO
NOV 20-24	INPORT JEBEL ALI UAE
NOV 25	UNDERWAY ENROUTE BAHRAIN
NOV 26-30	INPORT BAHRAIN
DEC 1	UNDERWAY ENROUTE KUWAIT/RAS WITH USNS TIPPECANOE AND USNS SPICA
DEC 2-5	INPORT KUWAIT/EXERCISE EAGER MACE
DEC 6-9	UNDERWAY ENROUTE NORTH ARABIAN GULF/EXERCISE EAGER MACE

DEC 10	UNDERWAY ENROUTE BAHRAIN/RAS WITH USS SACRAMENTO/EXERCISE EAGER MACE
DEC 11	INPORT BAHRAIN/EXERCISE EAGER MACE
DEC 12	UNDERWAY ENROUTE KUWAIT/ EXERCISE EAGER MACE
DEC 13-14	ANCHOR KUWAIT/EXERCISE EAGER MACE
DEC 15	UNDERWAY NORTH ARABIAN GULF(NAG) EXERCISE EAGER MACE
DEC 16	RAS WITH TIPPECANOE/SPICA/ EXERCISE EAGER MACE
DEC 17-19	UNDERWAY (NAG)/EXERCISE EAGER MACE VISIT BY REAR ADMIRAL BREWER, COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS GROUP THREE
DEC 20-22	CART I/ANCHOR KUWAIT/EXERCISE EAGER MACE
DEC 23	CART I/ANCHOR KUWAIT/VISIT BY ADMIRAL JAY JOHNSON, CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS/MRS. JOHNSON/ETCM (SW) JOHN HAGAN, MASTER CHIEF PETTY OFFICER OF THE NAVY/ EXERCISE EAGER MACE
DEC 24	CART I/ANCHOR KUWAIT/EXERCISE EAGER MACE
DEC 25	ANCHOR KUWAIT/EXERCISE EAGER MACE
DEC 26	CART I/UNDERWAY ENROUTE BAHRAIN EXERCISE EAGER MACE
DEC 27	INPORT BAHRAIN/EXERCISE EAGER MACE
DEC 28	UNDERWAY ENROUTE KUWAIT/ EXERCISE EAGER MACE



DEC 29

RAS WITH USS SACRAMENTO/VERTREP  
WITH USNS SPICA/EXERCISE EAGER MACE

DEC 30-31

INPORT KUWAIT/EXERCISE EAGER MACE

## NARRATIVE

COMSTOCK began the new year in port San Diego, California enjoying the holidays with family and friends. After upkeep period, operations in the Southern California area with LCAC's were conducted, and the second phase of the Tailored Ships Training Availability (TSTA) pre-deployment workups wrapped up the month of January.

On February 6, COMSTOCK allowed visitors to tour and see life onboard a U.S. Naval Ship. COMSTOCK loaded ammunition on February 10 and went to sea for more training.

A Change of Command ceremony took place on February 21 when CDR Gregg S. Jackson relieved CDR Douglas Whalen and assumed duties as Commanding Officer, USS COMSTOCK.

During the last week of February, shiphandling simulator drills were conducted to keep proficiency high for the bridge watchstanders.

March began with the Communications Security Material System (CMS) assist visit. The third phase of TSTA was conducted and more at sea operations were conducted off the Southern coast of California. Navy and Marine Junior ROTC students embarked COMSTOCK to get a glimpse of what to expect as future, Navy/Marine Corps team members.

Before getting underway to visit the Mexican port of Cabo San Lucas for a few days, COMSTOCK went through a repair availability and the Final Evaluation Period (FEP). On April 23, COMSTOCK arrived in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico for 4 days of sunny weather and much needed rest and relaxation.

On May 1, the onload of Marine ammunition began and the CATF surgeon visited. In preparation for COMPTUEX 97-12M, the embarkation of Marine equipment began and by May 8, COMSTOCK was underway for the exercise. On May 19-20, the crew got to experience an underway replenishment simulator in preparation for deployment. After the exercise, COMSTOCK was a visit ship for International SWO students. The month of May ended with a SEMAT visit and annual Quality Assurance (QA) audits.

The month of June was extremely busy. While in San Diego a CHT certification was held. LCAC operations and a torpedo evasion exercise were held along with Peleliu Amphibious Ready Group (PARG) Tactical Maneuvering Drills (DIVTACS). COMSTOCK conducted COMPTUEX 97-13M and helicopter Night Vision Devices (NVD) qualifications were held for the flight deck crew. The onload of equipment for Exercise KERNEL BLITZ 97/FLEETEX 97-13M began on June 14. This was the final training exercise prior to deployment. COMSTOCK made front-page news for conducting the first ever M1A1 Abrahms launch and beach landing. JTFEX 97-2, was conducted from July 14-25.

From July 26 - August 18 the crew was able to take care of final preparations prior to deployment and spend time with family and friends. On August 19, COMSTOCK got underway for a FAST CRUISE to ensure final readiness for sea.

WESTPAC 97-98 began on August 28. On the way to Hawaii, COMSTOCK made history by refueling the Patrol Crafts USS HURRICANE and USS MONSOON. In the Hawaii operational area COMSTOCK conducted Pearl Harbor Sustainment Training for Marines and continued ARG Operations.

Sailors and Marines got some rest and relaxation in the first port, Guam, from September 19-21. The crew enjoyed shopping and seeing the beautiful scenery the island had to offer. Singapore was the next port visit on the schedule. After anchoring at the Man-of-War Anchorage, Sailors and Marines set out on liberty to see the city which resembled that of big cities in the United States. While in Singapore COMSTOCK Sailors and Marines participated in community relations projects helping the aged and sick. After spending five days in Singapore, COMSTOCK got underway to begin the transit to Phuket, Thailand. Another community relations project was held for middle school children. Painting, providing books, dental supplies, and a cookout for the youngsters brought smiles to all who participated. Thailand was the last port visit before entering the Indian Ocean and chopping to the Fifth Fleet commander for duty.

On October 26 General Charles C. Krulak, Commandant of the Marine Corps and Vice Admiral Thomas B. Fargo, COMFIFTHFLT, landed onboard COMSTOCK. They were given a brief tour of the ship and a formal ceremony was prepared on the flight deck in celebration of the Marine Corps birthday. The Commandant's visit was part of a whirlwind tour of each of the ships in the PELELIU amphibious ready group during his tour of US forces in the Arabian Gulf.

COMSTOCK sailed into the North Arabian Sea and transited the Strait of Hormuz, beginning the official presence in the Arabian Gulf. After spending a few days in port Bahrain, COMSTOCK visited Jebel Ali for a maintenance availability. While underway in the vicinity of Qatar, COMSTOCK completed Operation "SILENT ASSURANCE." Major General Bolden, Deputy Commanding General, First Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) Camp Pendleton, California visited. Several replenishments at sea were successfully completed with the USS SACRAMENTO, USNS TIPPECANOE and USNS SPICA.

On December 2, COMSTOCK began Exercise EAGER MACE. This exercise was an air, ground and amphibious training exercise intended to strengthen military relationships, improve proficiency in rapid employment of Marine forces forward from the sea and provide training opportunities for the Kuwaitis.

COMSTOCK spent the holidays anchored off the coast of Kuwait. The holidays were highlighted by a visit from the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Jay Johnson, Mrs. Johnson, and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, ETCM(SW) John Hagan. The CNO and MCPON came to thank everyone for working hard and keeping the forward presence. Rear Admiral David L. Brewer III, Commander Amphibious Group Three also visited COMSTOCK to answer questions from the crew and encourage everyone to keep working hard. During the month of December COMSTOCK successfully completed a vertical replenishment with the USNS SPICA and focused on exercise Eager Mace.