



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

COMMANDING OFFICER
MHC CREW FORCE
FPO AE 09501-5109

OPNAV Report Symbol: 15750-1

Ser: 00/019

Date Submitted: 13 February 2007

UNCLASS

Command Operations Report

1. Command Data.

Name of Command: MHC Crew FORCE

Unit Identification Number (UIC): 40179

Name and rank of Commanding Officer: Toland, Ronald W.,
LCDR

Date assumed command: 2005-05-18

Mission / Command Employment / Area of Operations: Deploys in support of mine countermeasures and other fleet operations. Upkeep/training, Crew Swap Deployment, Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), Egyptian Naval Officer (ENO) Visit, Northern Arabian Gulf (NAG) Maritime Security Operations (MSO), Arabian Gulf Survey Ops, Nautical Union 06, Port Visit (PVST) Jebel Ali, Continuous Maintenance Availability, Upkeep.

Permanent Location (Home Port for deployed units):
Ingleside, TX

Command Point of Contact:

LTJG [REDACTED]
Public Affairs Officer

[REDACTED]
MHC Crew FORCE
FPO AE, 05901-5109

2. Commander's Assessment.

2006 was an unprecedented year for MHC crew swap deployments. In February, Crew FORCE became the first mixed-gender MHC crew to deploy to the 5th Fleet Area of Operational Responsibility. Before that could happen, Crew FORCE had to turnover USS CORMORANT (MHC 57)—the exclusive ship of this crew to that date—to MHC Crew CONQUEST.

The turnover of CORMORANT was a first for this crew and, within a week, they were in another turnover, this time to assume responsibility for USS RAVEN (MHC 61), homeported in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Just before Crew FORCE arrived in theater, RAVEN had a major casualty to her SQQ-32 SONAR. Therefore, the first task for the crew was getting the SONAR repaired so that RAVEN could fulfill her primary mission of mine-hunting.

Due to recent decisions to open the MHC-platform to Foreign Military Sales (FMS), Crew FORCE later hosted the Egyptian Navy to demonstrate this platform's capabilities. This was a wonderful and unique opportunity as the crew got to experience another culture onboard. The men and women of Crew FORCE were wonderful ambassadors of the US Navy and their Egyptian counterparts were noticeably pleased with the interaction.

After hosting the Egyptian Navy, Crew FORCE had a very rewarding opportunity to participate in operations uncommon to this platform. RAVEN was sent to the North Arabian Gulf (NAG) and participated in Oil Platform (OPLAT) security as a part of OIF. To the crew members who had not yet been out of the mine-warfare community, it was a new experience to have that level of interaction with other vessels in a mission. Yet another new experience to the crew was the regular conduct of Replenishments-at-Sea (RAS), something never done with the MHC Platform in US waters. RAVEN's operations in the NAG went beyond controlling the waters around the OPLATS; Crew FORCE also became proficient in querying vessels both inbound and outbound of Iraqi territorial waters in Operation United River Dragon. Such operations helped to maintain and enhance the fleet's intelligence picture. Further cultural exchange ensued in these operations as Crew FORCE operated with coalition forces and had direct interaction with the British Royal Navy.

After a time spent in non-conventional operations, Crew FORCE returned to Bahrain to further improve RAVEN by conducting a safety survey. Having completed the survey and implementing changes to make RAVEN safer for her sailors, it was back to more typical MHC operations with the Find a Way or Make One Exercise (FAWOMOEX) and later survey operations in the Central Arabian Gulf (CAG). In all, MHC Crew FORCE surveyed over 120 NM of Q-route, ensuring that shipping routes are up to date with the latest information in case mine clearance operations need to be conducted.

Crew FORCE saw even more international cooperation as they participated with the Royal Saudi Navy in the Nautical Union exercise in June and again in July when hosting the Bahraini Navy in their considerations for FMS purchases.

Earlier in July, the crew was rewarded for all that they had accomplished thus far with a port visit to Jebal Ali, United Arab Emirates. One of the crews' favorite highlights of the deployment, everyone had the opportunity to see the exotic, fast-developing metropolis that is Dubai. It was good that everyone had the opportunity for rest and relaxation while in Dubai, particularly because unusually rough seas befell the return transit to Bahrain.

During the first week of August, the crew was delighted to see the arrival of MHC Crew DETECTOR, who had then come to relieve Crew FORCE onboard RAVEN. The two crews spent a few days doing self-assessments side-by-side and then Crew FORCE was finally able to depart RAVEN and the intense heat of summer in the Middle East.

After a long weekend, Crew FORCE assembled again to assume responsibility of USS KINGFISHER (MHC 56). Once ownership of KINGFISHER was properly taken, the crew went on a much-deserved post-deployment stand-down period.

Back from stand-down, the crew commenced a number of maintenance projects and continued correcting material deficiencies on KINGFISHER throughout the rest of the year. Highlights of the autumn spent on KINGFISHER included seeing the Egyptian Navy onboard again, as Crew FORCE hosted the Egyptian Navy's Damage Control teams in preparation for FMS, and Family Appreciation Day. Family Appreciation Day was held on Thursday, 16 November. Crew members had the opportunity to show their loved one's what

their lives were like onboard and how things operated on an MHC.

2006 was a seminal year in MHC history as MHC Crew FORCE made phenomenal achievements and an incredible reputation for a crew of this soon-to-be decommissioned platform.

3. Chronology.

- 1-8 January: Embarked USS CORMORANT, Inport (IPT) Naval Station (NAVSTA) Ingleside, Holiday / Pre-Overseas Movement Stand-down
- 9-29 January: IPT NAVSTA Ingleside
- 30 January-3 February: IPT NAVSTA Ingleside, Turnover of USS CORMORANT to MHC CREW CONQUEST
- 4-5 February: Pre-deployment liberty
- 6-7 February: Commercial Air (COMAIR) transit to USS RAVEN, homeported Manama, Bahrain
- 8-11 February: Turnover of USS RAVEN from MHC CREW BOLD
- 12-21 February: IPT Mina Salman, Bahrain
- 22 -23 February: Underway (U/W) to ASRY shipyard for sonar replacement
- 24 February: U/W to Mina Salman, Bahrain
- 25-26 February: IPT Bahrain
- 26 February-27 February: IPT Bahrain, HAMERA assessment
- 28 February: IPT Bahrain, HAMERA assessment, ENO visit
- 1 March: IPT Bahrain
- 2-3 March: U/W CAG, Shakedown Cruise
- 4-6 March: IPT Bahrain
- 7 March: IPT Bahrain, ENO visit
- 8 March: U/W CAG, ENO visit
- 9-10 March: IPT Bahrain, ENO visit
- 11 March: IPT Bahrain
- 12-17 March: U/W NAG, OPLAT Security
- 18 March: RAS with USNS RANIER
- 19-21 March: U/W NAG, OPLAT Security
- 22-25 March: U/W CAG, Operation United River Dragon
- 26 March: IPT Bahrain
- 27 March: IPT Bahrain, Safety Survey
- 28-31 March: IPT Bahrain
- 1-3 April: U/W CAG, FAWOMOEX
- 4 April: RAS

- 5-9 April: U/W CAG, FAWOMOEX
- 10 April: RAS with USNS RANIER
- 11-14 April: U/W CAG, SURVEY OPS
- 15 April: RAS with USNS RANIER
- 16 April: U/W CAG, SURVEY OPS
- 17 April: U/W CAG, Electrical Safety & DCPO Stand-down / Beard judging competition
- 18 April: IPT Bahrain
- 19 April: Berth Shift, COMCMRON 2 visit
- 20 April: IPT Bahrain, Commodore's call, Regular Availability (RAV), 3M Assist Visit, SISCAL
- 21-26 April: IPT Bahrain, RAV, 3M Assist Visit, SISCAL
- 27 April: Berth shift
- 28-30 April: IPT Bahrain, RAV, 3M Assist Visit, SISCAL
- 1-3 May: IPT Bahrain, SISCAL
- 4 May: IPT Bahrain, SISCAL, Mid-Deployment Party
- 5-9 May: IPT Bahrain, SISCAL
- 10-21 May: IPT Bahrain
- 22-29 May: U/W NAG Sector Patrol
- 30 May-8 June: IPT Bahrain
- 9 June: U/W CAG, Survey Ops
- 10 June: RAS with USNS SUPPLY
- 11-15 June: U/W CAG, Nautical Union
- 16 June: RAS with USNS SUPPLY
- 17-24 June: IPT Bahrain
- 25-26 June: U/W CAG Survey Ops
- 27 June: RAS with USNS BIG HORN
- 28 June-2 July: U/W SAG Survey Ops
- 3-7 July: IPT Jebal Ali
- 8-11 July: U/W SAG / CAG, unit level training
- 12 July-14 July: IPT Bahrain
- 15 July: Berth shift
- 16-29 July: IPT Bahrain
- 30 July: IPT Bahrain, Bahraini Navy Visit
- 31 July-2 August: IPT Bahrain
- 3 August: Crew FORCE moves into Gulf Hotel
- 4 August: IPT Bahrain
- 5-8 August: IPT Bahrain, Turnover of USS RAVEN to MHC Crew DETECTOR
- 9-10 August: COMAIR transit return to Ingleside Texas

- 11-13 August: Homecoming liberty
- 14-17 August: Assumption of hull-USS KINGFISHER (MHC-56)
- 18 August-15 September: Post-Deployment Stand-Down
- 16 September-15 November: IPT NAVSTA Ingleside
- 16 November: Family Appreciation Day
- 17 November-18 December: IPT NAVSTA Ingleside
- 19-31 December: Christmas Stand-Down

R. W. Toland
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