



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
USS CURTIS WILBUR (DDG 54)  
FPO AP 96683-1272

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

5750  
DDG 54 /033  
23 Mar 98

From: Commanding Officer, USS CURTIS WILBUR (DDG 54)  
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH), Washington Navy  
Yard, 901 M Street, SE, Washington, DC 20374-5060

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR 1997

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

- Encl:
- (1) Command Organization
  - (2) Daily Chronology 1997
  - (3) Narrative History
  - (4) Commanding Officer Biography
  - (5) Commanding Officer Photograph
  - (6) Welcome Aboard Pamphlet
  - (7) CURTIS WILBUR MSG 180735ZJAN97
  - (8) COMDESRON FIFTEEN MSG 230040ZJAN97
  - (9) COMCARGRU FIVE MSG 271310ZJAN97
  - (10) COMSEVENTHFLT MSG 221020FEB97
  - (11) COMSURFARDEVGRU LITTLE CREEK VA MSG  
181633ZDEC97 [IN CLASS FILE]
  - (12) COMSURFARDEVGRU LITTLE CREEK VA MSG  
181643ZDEC97 [IN CLASS FILE]
  - (13) COMSURFARDEVGRU LITTLE CREEK VA MSG  
181653ZDEC97 [IN CLASS FILE]
  - (14) TANDEM THRUST 97 Safety Ship Post Exercise  
Report
  - (15) CCTF TANDEM THRUST MSG 230740ZMAR97
  - (16) AMCONSUL SYDNEY MSG 011214ZAPR97
  - (17) CTF SEVEN ZERO MSG 020638ZAPR97
  - (18) COMSEVENTHFLT MSG 050140ZMAY97
  - (19) COMDESRON FIFTEEN MSG 061205ZMAY97
  - (20) COMDESRON FIFTEEN MSG 262330ZJUN97
  - (21) Seahawk Article dated 12 Sep 97
  - (22) Seahawk Article dated 15 Aug 97
  - (23) Change of Command Ceremony Program
  - (24) Seahawk Article dated 5 Sep 97  
(Change of Command Ceremony)
  - (25) Seahawk Article dated 5 Sep 97  
(Command Master Chief Retirement)
  - (26) Letter from DACOWITS Chair to ADM Natter  
dated 15 Aug 97
  - (27) Newspaper Article from AP military writer

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- (28) Seahawk Article dated 8 Aug 97
- (29) CURTIS WILBUR MSG 150520ZAUG97
- (30) CURTIS WILBUR MSG 161355ZAUG97
- (31) CTF SEVEN ZERO MSG 190840ZSEP97
- (32) CURTIS WILBUR MSG 110519ZSEP97
- (33) CURTIS WILBUR MSG 110800ZSEP97
- (34) CTF SEVEN ZERO MSG 201346ZSEP97
- (35) CURTIS WILBUR MSG 210427ZSEP97
- (36) BUNKER HILL MSG 210716ZSEP97
- (37) COMCARGRU FIVE MSG 211122ZSEP97
- (38) Seahawk Article dated 14 Nov 97
- (39) CURTIS WILBUR MSG 042330ZOCT97
- (40) ANNUALEX 09G SOE and Organization
- (41) CURTIS WILBUR MSG 121430ZNOV97
- (42) Article from Sendai, Japan Newspaper
- (43) Article from Sendai, Japan Newspaper
- (44) COMDESRON FIFETEEN MSG 110715ZDEC97

1. In accordance with reference(a), enclosure (1) comprises the 1997 Calendar Year history of USS CURTIS WILBUR (DDG 54).

  
M. J. FISCHER

# USS CURTIS WILBUR COMMAND HISTORY 1997

## SECTION I

### COMMAND ORGANIZATION

1. Immediate Superior in Command:  
Commander Destroyer Squadron FIFTEEN  
01 January - 05 May      CAPT R. E. Smith  
06 May - 31 December    CAPT J. F. Ferguson
  
2. Commanding Officer, USS CURTIS WILBUR (DDG-54)  
01 January - 31 July      CDR C.T. Nichols  
01 August - 31 December   CDR M. J. Fischer
  
3. Executive Officer  
01 January - 11 June      LCDR V. G. Mercado  
12 June - 31 December    LCDR H. A. Graf

## SECTION II

### DAILY CHRONOLOGY 1997

- 06 - 10 JAN - MARINE SANITATION INSPECTION.
- 18 JAN - UNDERWAY PHILIPPINE SEA FOR TSTA III.
- 18 - 21 JAN - TSTA III/FEP.
- 20 JAN - CONDUCTED CIWS AND 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 21 JAN - CONDUCTED CIWS GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 21 JAN - MOORED YOKOSUKA.
- 27 - 31 JAN - LOGISTICS TRAINING REVIEW.
- 30 JAN - PARTICIPATED IN SLAMEX.
- 15 FEB - UNDERWAY EN ROUTE SASEBO
- 16 FEB - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 17 FEB - MOORED SASEBO.
- 18 FEB - UNDERWAY.
- 18 - 25 FEB - SHAREM 120A.
- 19 FEB - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 22 FEB - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH JDS SAGAMI (AOE 421).
- 25 FEB - MOORED SASEBO.
- 26 FEB - UNDERWAY EN ROUTE GUAM.
- 26 FEB - CONDUCTED 5" AND CIWS GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 27 FEB - PARTICIPATED IN SLAMEX.
- 27 FEB - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.

01 MAR - CONDUCTED CIWS GUNNERY EXERCISES.

01 MAR - MOORED GUAM.

03 MAR - UNDERWAY FOR TANDEM THRUST.

04 MAR - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPELENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).

05 MAR - CONDUCTED SYNTHETIC HIGHLINE TRANSFER DRY HOOK-UP WITH USS CURTS (FFG-38).

06 MAR - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).

10 MAR - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH HMAS WESTRALIA (AO 195). UNABLE TO TAKE FUEL DUE TO HOSE FAILURE ON STATION 4. CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).

10 - 22 MAR - PARTICIPATED IN EXERCISE TANDEM THRUST AS SAFETY CELL SHIP.

11 MAR - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.

13 MAR - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).

15 MAR - ASSUMED DUTIES AS INDEPENDENCE BATTLE GROUP AIR WARFARE COMMANDER.

17 MAR - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).

21 MAR - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS TIPPECANOE (T-AO-199).

24 MAR - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).

27 MAR - MOORED SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA.

01 APR - UNDERWAY TO CONDUCT ESCORT DUTIES FOR USS INDEPENDENCE (CV-62) EN ROUTE FREEMANTLE. ASSIGNED AS INDEPENDENCE CVBG AIR WARFARE COMMANDER.

- 11 APR - MOORED FREEMANTLE, AUSTRALIA.
- 03 APR - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).
- 09 APR - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).
- 16 APR - UNDERWAY EN ROUTE PORT KLANG, MALAYSIA.
- 18 APR - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).
- 24 APR - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).
- 28 APR - MOORED PORT KLANG, MALAYSIA.
- 30 APR - CONDUCTED GENERAL TOURS.
- 01 MAY - UNDERWAY EN ROUTE SINGAPORE.
- 02 MAY - ANCHORED SINGAPORE.
- 05 MAY - UNDERWAY TO PARTICIPATE IN EXERCISE MERLION.
- 05 - 07 MAY - PARTICIPATED IN EXERCISE MERLION.
- 06 MAY - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).
- 09 MAY - CONDUCTED CIWS GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 09 MAY - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200). CONDUCTED DD RAS DRY HOOK-UP WITH USS INDEPENDENCE (CV-62).
- 10 MAY - ANCHORED PHATTAYA BEACH, THAILAND.
- 15 MAY - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).
- 15 - 21 MAY - EXERCISE COBRA GOLD.
- 18 MAY - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS

GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).

- 21 MAY - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 23 MAY - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 23 MAY - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).
- 24 MAY - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 26 MAY - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 27 MAY - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).
- 27 MAY - CONDUCTED 5" AND CIWS GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 28 MAY - MOORED TO BUOY IN HONG KONG. SEVENTEEN FIRST AND SECOND CLASS MIDSHIPMEN EMBARKED FOR FOUR WEEK CRUISE.
- 31 MAY - NAVY LEAGUE TOUR IN HONG KONG.
- 03 JUN - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 06 JUN - FIRED ONE HARPOON AND CONDUCTED RANGE SAFETY DUTIES DURING HARPOONEX 97.
- 10 JUN - MOORED YOKOSUKA.
- 23 - 27 JUN - LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT.
- 26JUN-06JUL- COMDESRON FIFTEEN EMBARKED.
- 14 JUL - LINK 11 QUICKLOOK.
- 14 - 18 JUL - COMBAT SYSTEMS READINESS REVIEW.
- 16 JUL - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 18 JUL - DEFENSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN THE SERVICE VISIT.
- 21 JUL - COMREL WITH KURAKI MOTHER AND CHILD HOME.

23 JUL - MWR FUND INSPECTION.

24 JUL - FAMILY DAY CRUISE.

30 JUL - EXERCISE POLO HAT.

28 - 29 JUL - SURFACE RESCUE TEAM TRAINER.

01 AUG - CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY, CDR C. T. NICHOLS RELIEVED BY CDR M. J. FISCHER.

08 AUG - COMMAND MASTER CHIEF, CTRCM(SW) W. C. DALY, RETIREMENT CEREMONY HELD ON FLIGHT DECK.

12 AUG - ADM CLEMINS, COMMANDER IN CHIEF, PACIFIC FLEET.

12 AUG - CRUISE MISSILE TACTICAL QUALIFICATION (CMTQ) COMPLETED.

15 AUG - PARTICIPATED IN SLAMEX.

18 AUG - UNDERWAY FROM YOKOSUKA FOR TRAINING.

18 AUG - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.

19 AUG - CONDUCTED CIWS GUNNERY EXERCISES.

21 AUG - MOORED YOKOSUKA.

24 AUG - FRIENDSHIP DAY TOURS.

28 AUG - UNDERWAY FROM YOKOSUKA FOR CARRIER ESCORT DUTIES.

29 AUG - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS NIAGARA FALLS (T-AFS-3).

30 AUG - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.

3 - 6 SEP - EXERCISE JAVELIN MAKER.

05 SEP - MOORED WHITE BEACH, OKINAWA.

08 SEP - UNDERWAY FROM WHITE BEACH.

09 SEP - FIRED ONE STANDARD MISSILE DURING MISSILEX 97-4.



10 SEP - MOORED WHITE BEACH, OKINAWA.

12 SEP - UNDERWAY FROM WHITE BEACH.

14 - 16 SEP - ASWEX 97-6JA.

16 SEP - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).

17 SEP - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.

18 SEP - CONDUCTED CIWS GUNNERY EXERCISES.

19 SEP - FIRED ONE STANDARD MISSILES DURING MISSILEX 97-4. COMDESRON FIFTEEN EMBARKED.

20 SEP - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).

20 - 23 SEP - PERFORMED RANGE SAFETY DUTIES AND ASSISTED IN THE INSTALLATION OF TARGETS ON OKINO DAITO ISLAND FOR HARMEX 97-2.

23 SEP - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).

23 SEP - CONDUCTED CIWS GUNNERY EXERCISES.

01 - 03 OCT - NAVOSH/INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE SURVEY.

06 OCT - UNDERWAY FROM YOKOSUKA.

06 - 10 OCT - CONDUCTED LTT - C, D, E.

06 - 26 OCT - FRANK CABLE INTERMEDIATE MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY.

10 OCT - MOORED YOKOSUKA.

27 - 31 OCT - INTEGRATED MAINTENANCE REVIEW OF SQQ-89.

17 OCT - SHIP'S PICNIC.

17 OCT - CONDUCTED TOUR FOR COMMANDER, FLOTILLA GROUP ONE.

30 OCT - HALLOWEEN PARTY FOR FAMILY MEMBERS HELD ONBOARD.

03 NOV - UNDERWAY FROM YOKOSUKA.

04 NOV - CONDUCTED SYNTHETIC HIGHLINE TRANSFER DRY HOOK-UP WITH USS THACH (FFG-43).

04 NOV - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.

05 NOV - CONDUCTED MEDEVAC OF ONE PERSON FROM USS PORTSMOUTH (SSN 707).

05 - 13 NOV - EXERCISE ANNUALEX 09G.

07 NOV - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200).

12 NOV - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS GUADALUPE (T-AO-200) AND VERTICAL REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS NIAGARA FALLS (T-AFS-3).

14 NOV - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.

15 NOV - MOORED SENDAI, JAPAN.

18 NOV - UNDERWAY FROM SENDAI.

19 NOV - COMPLETED NAV CHECKRIDE AND MOORED YOKOSUKA.

20 NOV - CONGRESSIONAL VISIT, THE HONORABLE MR. SISISKY FROM VIRGINIA.

24 - 26 NOV - HEALTH RISK APPRAISAL.

03 DEC - UNDERWAY FROM YOKOSUKA.

02 - 04 DEC - SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED MID CYCLE ASSESSMENT.

04 DEC - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.

05 DEC - CONDUCTED CIWS GUNNERY EXERCISES.

05 DEC - MISSILEX 98-1.

06 DEC - CONDUCTED UNDERWAY REPLENISHMENT WITH USNS YUKON (T-AO-202).

- 07 DEC - CONDUCTED 5" GUNNERY EXERCISES.
- 09 DEC - MOORED YOKOSUKA.
- 14 DEC - COMMAND CHRISTMAS PARTY.

SECTION III  
NARRATIVE HISTORY

USS CURTIS WILBUR (DDG 54) began 1997 with the Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA) Phase III. Despite a 30 percent crew turnover from TSTA I, all training teams and mission areas were evaluated as "EFFECTIVE," and CURTIS WILBUR became the first ship in SEVENTH Fleet to validate the Final Evaluation Period (FEP) during TSTA III. After returning to Yokosuka, Japan, the crew immediately began preparing for the upcoming deployment.

On 15 February, CURTIS WILBUR left Yokosuka to begin a four month deployment. The first stop was Sasebo, where the ship conducted numerous free play exercises with Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force submarines during SHAREM 120A. SHAREM, a bilateral exercise conducted in the East China Sea, involved search tactics and sensor performance during anti-submarine warfare. After a hot wash-up in Sasebo, CURTIS WILBUR headed south to Guam. The ship then participated in Exercise TANDEM THRUST with the Royal Australian Navy.

Originally scheduled to begin on 10 March, the exercise was delayed until 15 March by Cyclone "Justin." During the delay, CURTIS WILBUR served as a weather observation ship for the battle group. TANDEM THRUST was a combined exercise conducted in the Shoalwater Bay Training area. Participants included the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force, as well as the Royal Australian Navy and Air Force. As the Safety Cell Ship, CURTIS WILBUR was responsible for the successful coordination of over 1500 aircraft sorties in just under 10 days. CURTIS WILBUR's Combat Information Center flexed to support additional air controllers

from the Royal Australian Air Force and the United States Air Force. Together with the CURTIS WILBUR team, they provided essential deconfliction between aircraft, ships, and shore installations (civilian and military) in a near total free play environment.

On 15 March, CURTIS WILBUR relieved MOBILE BAY as Independence Battle Group Air Warfare Commander, a role normally assigned to a cruiser. CURTIS WILBUR successfully executed those new duties. CURTIS WILBUR remained "AW" throughout the remainder of the deployment as CV escort.

While acting as the carrier escort, the crew visited ports including Sydney and Fremantle, Australia, and Port Klang, Malaysia. CURTIS WILBUR was open for general tours in Fremantle and Port Klang, and was visited by more than 6,000 people. CURTIS WILBUR transited the Straits of Malacca and anchored in Singapore, in preparation for Exercise MERLION, an international exercise with the Singapore Navy. CURTIS WILBUR performed duties as "AW" and "REDCROWN," checking battle group aircraft in and out during sorties against the Singaporean surface ships.

Following a port call in Phattaya Beach, Thailand, CURTIS WILBUR participated in Exercise COBRA GOLD, another international exercise, this time with the Thai Navy. Again assigned "AW" duties, CURTIS WILBUR defended the battle group against air raids which included Thai F-16's and USAF F-15's.

CURTIS WILBUR then transited to Hong Kong and became one of the last American ships to visit before China was assumed control of the city. While moored to a buoy in the harbor, CURTIS WILBUR hosted a Navy League tour and picked up seventeen First and Second Class Midshipmen for four weeks of summer training.

During the transit back to Yokosuka, CURTIS WILBUR served as Range Safety for

HARPOONEX 97, in which the first Harpoon was launched from the ship. At the same time, CURTIS WILBUR was Range Safety for the combined RAN/USN Missillex.

On 10 June, CURTIS WILBUR returned to Yokosuka, and quickly finished all preparations for the Logistics Management Assessment. During the assessment, CURTIS WILBUR earned her first Blue 'E' since commissioning by scoring above 90 percent in all categories. In July, Fleet Technical Support Center Pacific personnel conducted a detailed Combat Systems Readiness Review (CSRR), during which they assisted ship's force in a complete readiness evaluation of the entire Combat Systems, including logistics and publications. The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service (DACOWITS) visited Yokosuka and singled out CURTIS WILBUR among all shore and sea based SEVENTH FLEET commands for its fair and equitable command environment. CURTIS WILBUR organized a Friends and Family Cruise that included guided tour information on the announcing system, a steel beach picnic, various fly bys, a high speed run, and an awards ceremony. Also in July, a Surface Rescue Team Trainer evaluated CURTIS WILBUR's SAR program as "SATISFACTORY."

On 1 August, in a ceremony held onboard the ship, CDR M. J. Fischer relieved CDR C. T. Nichols as Commanding Officer, USS CURTIS WILBUR. Just a week later, the Command Master Chief, CTRCM(SW) W. C. Daly retired. In mid-August, the Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet visited the ship and addressed the crew. Later in August, the Annual Physical Readiness Test was conducted, with a record setting 58% of the crew scoring "Outstanding."

At the end of August, the ship headed towards Okinawa for carrier escort duties and Exercise JAVELIN MAKER. During the exercise, CURTIS WILBUR interacted with elite members of the special forces to conduct a Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) exercise.

CURTIS WILBUR and USS BUNKER HILL (CG-52) conducted several practice boardings prior to boarding the Motor Vessel Williams. CURTIS WILBUR launched a standard missile during the first phase of MISSILEX 97-4. Then, due to a casualty to another ship, CURTIS WILBUR was tasked on short notice to participate in ASWEX97-6JA, a combined exercise with JMSDF ships. CURTIS WILBUR assumed OCE for several events. The ship then returned to Okinawa for the second phase of the MISSILEX, launching another standard missile. Following this launch, CURTIS WILBUR assisted in the installation of targets on Okino Daito island and executed the duties of Range Safety for the successful completion of four live HARM missile shots.

Upon returning to Yokosuka, a NAVOSH/Industrial Hygiene Survey was completed the first week in October, with all programs evaluated "EFFECTIVE." Afloat Training Group Western Pacific conducted Limited Team Training (LTT): Combat Systems (C), Damage Control (D), and Engineering (E) during a short underway period. FRANK CABLE Intermediate Maintenance Availability, also in October, included the completion of 187 jobs during an arduous three week availability.

On 3 November, CURTIS WILBUR was underway for Exercise ANNUALEX 09G with the Japanese Navy. ANNUALEX tested the cooperation between U.S. and Japanese forces during several types of tactical actions. During the transit, CURTIS WILBUR and THACH conducted several training exercises, including a synthetic high line transfer hook-up. Before beginning the exercise, however, CURTIS WILBUR was tasked with a medical evacuation from a submarine. After an eight-hour high-speed transit, CURTIS WILBUR's boat crew successfully evacuated the Chief of the Boat of USS PORTSMOUTH (SSN 707). CURTIS WILBUR then rejoined INDEPENDENCE, MOBILE BAY, BUNKER HILL, FIFE, THACH, and several

Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force units to complete the exercise. On the return trip, the ship pulled into Sendai, Japan for a port visit.

In December, CURTIS WILBUR was underway for the Mid-Cycle Assessment. All programs were graded "EFFECTIVE." CURTIS WILBUR was the first ship in SEVENTH FLEET to pass this assessment. After returning to Yokosuka and a command Christmas party, CURTIS WILBUR ended 1997.