



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS DENVER (LPD 9)
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From: Commanding Officer, USS DENVER (LPD 9)
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH), Washington Navy Yard, Washington D.C.
Subj: SUBMISSION OF COMMAND HISTORY FOR USS DENVER (LPD 9) CY 1997
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

- Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative
(4) Biography and Photo of Commanding Officer
(5) Biography of Executive Officer
(6) Welcome Aboard Pamphlet for Visitors
(7) 3¼" Disk

1. In accordance with reference (a), the following is forwarded as the history of USS DENVER (LPD 9) for calendar year 1997.

2. USS DENVER (LPD 9) is the third United States Navy ship to bear the name of American pioneer James William DENVER and the capital of the state of Colorado. DENVER's primary mission is to provide an aviation and amphibious launch and recovery platform in support of amphibious assault operations. Secondary missions include providing logistical support for amphibious assault operations, humanitarian relief, and the training of helicopter pilots, Marines, special warfare personnel, reservists, and midshipmen.

3. The following major personnel changes occurred over the last year: The Commanding Officer, CAPT W. F. Hopper, was relieved by CAPT D. K. Dupouy. The Executive Officer, CDR T. Guillory, was relieved by LCDR R. Apollo. The Operations Officer, LT [redacted] was relieved by LT [redacted]. The Medical Officer, LT [redacted] was relieved by LT [redacted]. The Dental Officer, LT [redacted] was relieved by LT [redacted]. The Command Master Chief, FCCM(SW) A. Heady, was relieved by GMCM(SW) J. Malone.

D.K. DUPOUY

Command Composition and Organization

Commanding Officer
Captain Dupouy

Executive Department

Executive Officer
LCDR Apollo

Chaplain
LT [REDACTED]

Navigator / Admin Officer
LTJG [REDACTED]

Medical
LT [REDACTED]

Dental
LT [REDACTED]

Engineering Department

Chief Engineer
LCDR [REDACTED]

Main Propulsion Assistant
LTJG [REDACTED]

Damage Control Assistant
LT [REDACTED]

Aux Division
LTJG [REDACTED]

P-1 Division
LTJG [REDACTED]

P-2 Division
LTJG [REDACTED]

E Division
LTJG [REDACTED]

R Division
LTJG [REDACTED]

Deck Department

First Lieutenant
LT [REDACTED]

Combat Cargo
CW02 [REDACTED]

Ship's Bos'n
CW02 [REDACTED]

1st Division
ENS [REDACTED]

2nd Division
ENS [REDACTED]

3rd Division
ENS [REDACTED]

Operations Department

Operations Officer

LT [REDACTED]

CIC Officer

LT [REDACTED]

Communications Officer

CW02 [REDACTED]

EMO

LTJG [REDACTED]

Supply Department

Supply Officer

LT [REDACTED]

Disbursing / Sales Officer

ENS [REDACTED]

Food Service Officer

ENS [REDACTED]

Air Department

Air Officer

LT [REDACTED]

A/C Fuels Officer

LT [REDACTED]

Chronology Calendar Year 1997

January

01 - 12 Holiday Leave Period
13 - 21 PMA
22 COMPHIBGRU THREE Change of Command
23 - 31 PMA

February

01 - 10 PMA
11 - 13 Light Off Assessment
14 Dead stick move to NAVSTA San Diego
15 - 25 Inport San Diego, CA
26 - 27 Underway, Sea Trials
28 Inport San Diego, CA

March

01 - 06 Training and Upkeep
07 USS DENVER LPD 9 Change of Command
08 - 16 Training and Upkeep
17 - 21 IM Availability / LATR - 3-M Baseline Assessment / PMT
22 - 24 Training and Upkeep
25 - 27 Underway, SOCAL / SESEF Range
28 - 31 Training and Upkeep

April

01 - 06 Training and Upkeep
07 - 11 CART II / SIMA Avail 712
12 - 25 SIMA Avail 712
26 - 27 Training and Upkeep
28 - 30 TSTA I Inport / ASIR II

May

01 - 02 TSTA I Inport / ASIR II
03 - 04 Inport, San Diego, CA
05 - 09 Underway, TSTA 1 SOCAL
10 - 12 Training and Upkeep
13 - 16 Underway, TSTA 1 SOCAL / Engineering Evolutions
17 - 19 Training and Upkeep
20 Underway, TSTA 1 SOCAL
21 TSTA I Inport
22 - 23 Underway, TSTA 1 SOCAL
24 - 31 Training and Upkeep

June

01 - 15 SIMA Availability I-FVMF
16 - 30 Underway, Exercise Kernel Blitz

July

01 - 03 Upkeep and Training
04 - 06 Independence Day Weekend
07 - 14 TSTA II Inport
15 - 18 Underway, TSTA II SOCAL
19 - 20 Inport, Amphibious Orientation Training Onload / 23rd Marines Embark
21 - 23 Underway, AOT-1 / TSTA II SOCAL
24 - 25 Underway, TSTA II SOCAL
26 - 27 Inport, Upkeep
28 - 30 Underway, TSTA II SOCAL
31 Underway, ECERT SOCAL

August

01 Underway, ECERT SOCAL
02 - 03 Inport, Amphibious Orientation Training Onload
04 - 06 Underway, AOT-2 SOCAL
07 - 10 Upkeep and Training
11 - 17 SIMA Avail / Upkeep and Training
18 - 20 LMA
21 - 24 Upkeep and Training
25 - 26 TSTA III Inport
27 - 29 Underway, TSTA III SOCAL
30 - 31 Inport, Upkeep

Encl. (2)

September

01 Labor Day
02 Final Evaluation Period, Inport
03 – 05 Underway, FEP
06 – 07 Inport, Upkeep
08 Underway, Enroute Seal Beach
09 – 11 Inport, Ammo Onload Seal Beach
12 Underway, Enroute San Diego
13 – 18 Inport, Training and Upkeep
19 – 23 Underway, Enroute Annette Island, Alaska
24 Anchored, Alaskan Road
25 – 27 Inport, Ketchikan, Alaska
28 – 30 Underway, Enroute San Diego, CA

October

01 Underway, Enroute San Diego, CA
02 – 05 Inport, Training and Upkeep
06 – 10 Underway, COMPTUEX 98-1M Phase I
11 – 12 Inport, FLEET WEEK San Francisco, CA
13 U.S. Navy Birthday
14 – 15 Inport, FLEET WEEK San Francisco, CA
16 – 22 Underway, COMPTUEX 98-1M Phase II
23 – 31 Inport, Training and Upkeep

November

01 – 03 Training and Upkeep
04 – 09 Underway, FLEETEX 98-1M
10 U.S. Marine Corps Birthday
11 – 15 Underway, FLEETEX 98-1M
16 – 21 Inport, SESI / Diesel Inspection / Upkeep
22 – 30 Inport, SEMAT Visits / Upkeep

December

01 Upkeep and Training
02 – 12 Underway, SOC CERT SOCIAL
13 – 14 Inport, Upkeep
15 Begin POM / Holiday Leave Period
16 – 19 Boiler Inspection
20 – 31 Holiday Leave Period

1997 Narrative

January 1, 1997, DENVER was pierside at the Southwest Marine Shipyard in San Diego, CA. Much of DENVER's equipment was going through major overhauls, replacements, deletions, or upgrades. The complete crew returned from the Holiday leave period on the 13th, and it was back to business. Planned Maintenance Availability (PMA) progress meetings kept everything in check, and daily main space fire drills kept the crew on their toes. The rest of the month of January, was well spent in training, the semi-annual command PRT, and preparations by the Engineering Department for the upcoming Light Off Assessment (LOA).

With LOA coming up, the first days of February was the time to make sure DENVER was ready for steaming the plant and fighting a main space fire if need be. The Damage Control and Engineering Training Teams held drills daily, until the 11th. It was now showtime. The Propulsion Examining Board arrived onboard, and after three very successful main space fire drills, DENVER was certified ready to light off the plants. On the 14th, DENVER moved to more familiar surroundings, with a dead stick move to Pier 6 NAVSTA. Command training, zone inspections, and general upkeep followed, with a 2 day Sea Trial period to test equipment and conduct a full power run.

Turnover is something common to the Navy's way of life. And March brought about the Change of Command. Captain William F. Hopper was relieved by Captain Douglas K. Dupouy. The well executed ceremony took place on DENVER's flight deck on the 7th of March. Training and upkeep quickly continued, as every department got ready for the next SIMA availability. Underwater hull cleaning, coxswain training, a 3-M baseline assessment, lookout and after-steering training, and the advancement exams kept everyone busy throughout the month. Finally, a two-day underway period gave DENVER time to shake off some of the cobwebs and practice runs through a simulated swept channel, execute low visibility drills, and run through the SESEF range to check our radars. The last few days of March were spent inport conducting more training and upkeep.

April proved to be a busy month, kicking off a fast paced training cycle. After Command Retention Team training, manpower meetings, and an awards ceremony, CART II began on the 7th. At the same time DENVER went through another SIMA availability and a flight deck availability. All departments were tried and tested during CART II, and despite the hard work and long hours, DENVER was well on it's way to a successful training schedule. The SIMA availability continued and was followed by more training, upkeep, and a cargo/weapons elevator assessment. The end of the month brought the start of TSTA I and ASIR.

The inport phase of TSTA I continued into May, along with pre-underway checks. The 5th through 9th was the first underway phase of TSTA I. Man overboard drills, main space fire drills, and an underway replenishment kept everyone busy. DENVER pulled in for the weekend, but was soon back out for the second phase chocked full of engineering evolutions and casualty control drills. Following another weekend inport, DENVER began the final underway phase of TSTA I. General Quarters and Integrated Team Training drills tested the skills and endurance of

the crew, but as usual, DENVER's sailors proved their merit. The last week of May, gave everyone a breather with a nice long Memorial Day weekend and inport period. But, the training and upkeep continued as preparations began for the upcoming Kernel Blitz exercise and the follow-on TSTA II.

Another much needed SIMA availability kicked off the month of June. This inport period also provided time to conduct the command PRT, and zone inspections. The two week avail allowed for various habitability issues, equipment installations, and preservation maintenance actions to be completed. The 16th of June kicked off Exercise Kernel Blitz. DENVER got underway early to conduct a special mine warfare phase of the exercise. HM-15, and a special warfare EOD Det embarked to conduct various innovative mine counter-measures activities. New technologies and tactics were used onboard DENVER, including the use of marine mammals to detect mines, and the use of small craft in very-shallow water operations. On the 18th, COMPHIBGRU THREE visited the DENVER, to take a first-hand look at the operations DENVER was hosting. This phase of Kernel Blitz ended on the 22nd, and DENVER pulled in to enjoy a day inport. But it was back to the task at hand. This Kernel Blitz exercise was going to be the largest of it's kind ever. This huge amphibious exercise would involve more ships, personnel, and coordination, than any amphibious exercise in the last ten years. DENVER was ready for the challenge. Bright and early on the 24th, DENVER was underway again to assume duties as the Primary Control Ship off the coast of Camp Pendleton. On the 25th, Vice Admiral Brown, COMTHIRDFLT visited the DENVER to highlight the importance of this exercise, and to commend the DENVER for it's commitment to duty. And that it did, DENVER spent most of it's time in Condition 1A, conducting small boat operations, amphibious assault vehicle and landing craft launches, anchoring evolutions, and flight quarters. DENVER's Deck Department, Air Department, and Auxiliary engineers proved their mettle. Exercise Kernel Blitz came to an extremely successful close with D-Day on the 28th, and the offload on the last 2 days of June.

With the success of Kernel Blitz still fresh on everybody's mind, the first few days of July gave everyone a much deserved break. Independence Day was celebrated onboard with full dress ship. The inport phase of TSTA II began on the 7th and continued through the 14th. Then DENVER was underway again, for the first 4-day at sea phase. Integrated Training Team scenarios and drills were handled very well by the crew. After spending the weekend inport making preparations for the next underway phase, DENVER also embarked the 23rd Marines to conduct an Amphibious Orientation Training (AOT) period. COMPHIBRON 5 also embarked for this training period. From the 21st through the 25th, DENVER successfully conducted AOT-1 and knocked out it's TSTA II requirements as well. Another brief weekend inport and soon enough DENVER was underway again to finish it's third underway phase of TSTA II. Everything went as expected, DENVER was ready for Engineering Certification (ECERT). On the 31st, the Afloat Training Group disembarked and the Propulsion Examining Board embarked to conduct ECERT.

On August 1st, DENVER was Engineering Certified. The Engineering Department had worked long and hard for this, and pay off was sweet. Even more so being certified right after the TSTA II phase. Another quick inport period to onload a Marine Reserve element and DENVER got underway to conduct Amphibious Orientation Training again. The days were full of well deck and boat deck operations, but DENVER's crew was always ready to fulfill the mission. From the 7th to the 26th, DENVER was inport conducting more training and upkeep, and also another SIMA availability. DENVER also underwent a Logistics Management Assessment (LMA) in which it excelled again. The end of the month brought on the inport period of TSTA III and the underway phase as well. Afloat Training Group embarked and observed DENVER perform it's capabilities with utmost professionalism and skill. DENVER was now ready for it's final exam: Final Evaluation Period (FEP).

After a nice break due to Labor Day, DENVER's crew was motivated and ready for FEP. The inport phase conducted on the 2nd went well, with a General Quarters and CBR drill. The rest of the week was spent at sea for the underway phase of FEP. An underway replenishment, Amphibious Assault Vehicle (AAV) recovery and launch, boat operations, and flight quarters: DENVER had proved it's resolve in operating as an integrated and capable unit. DENVER was now ready to CHOP to it's operational chain of command. After a brief weekend inport, DENVER set sail on the 8th for NWC Seal Beach, CA for the standard ammunition onload. DENVER was back in San Diego on the 13th, and continued it's training and upkeep routine. On the 19th, DENVER got underway to recover a Marine Construction Battallion off of Annette Island, Alaska. On the 24th, DENVER arrived off the coast of Annette Island, and anchored to onload via Landing Craft. The crew enjoyed some time fishing from the ship, catching a wide array of cold water marine life. The weather however had different plans for the DENVER. Heavy gusts required DENVER to find a safe haven, and the nearby port of Ketchikan served as spot. DENVER pulled in for three days, giving the crew a nice break, and also allowing the residents of Ketchikan to tour the ship and learn about the Navy / Marine Corps team. The onload was completed pierside and DENVER got underway enroute to San Diego on the 28th.

DENVER arrived in San Diego late on the 1st of October. The crew enjoyed a few days back in our homeport. But, it was back underway again on the 6th to conduct COMPTUEX 98-1M Phase I. These exercises would involve the entire Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) and the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) whom we would deploy with in 1998. The first five days, were spent simulating realistic close-to-shore operations in a hostile scenario. COMPTUEX was pleasantly interrupted with a port visit in San Francisco, CA, for FLEET WEEK. On the 11th, after a parade of ships under the Golden Gate Bridge, and through San Francisco Bay, DENVER pulled in to Pier 27. The Navy's Blue Angels demonstrated their flying expertise, and the city of San Francisco gave the crew four enjoyable days in the "city by the bay." Also, DENVER provided tours of the ship to over 2,000 visitors. While in San Francisco, DENVER celebrated the Navy's 222nd Birthday. DENVER pulled out of port on the 16th to continue the second phase of COMPTUEX. An airfield seizure, a non-combatant evacuation operation, a RECON force raid insertion, an underway replenishment, and a complete amphibious landing exercise were all conducted during this phase. COMPTUEX was a huge success, and verified DENVER's ability to work well with embarked elements and the MEU. DENVER arrived in San Diego on the 22nd for a period of training and upkeep.

The first few days of November continued the emphasis on training and upkeep. On the 4th, DENVER got underway for FLEETEX 98-1M. DENVER made a quick stop at the La Playa pier of Point Loma for MOGAS and then topped off fuel oil via underway replenishment with the USNS RAPPAHANNOCK. DENVER also streamed it's NIXIE for operational testing. On the 5th, DENVER recovered the AAV's, held Unmanned Aerial Vehicle operations, and conducted a small craft amphibious raid. The following days were spent conducting humanitarian aid operations, reconnaissance and surveillance insertions, amphibious raids, stinger air defense drills, gun shoots, maritime interception and vessel boarding / search & seizure operations, and an amphibious landing. On the 10th of November, DENVER celebrated the U.S. Marine Corps Birthday, and on the 11th, Veteran's Day. DENVER returned to San Diego on the night of the 15th. While in port the remainder of the month, DENVER underwent SESI, a diesel inspection, underwater hull cleaning, a SIMA availability, various SEMAT assist visits, NAVOSH inspection, and the command PRT.

On December 1st, DENVER lit off it's engineering plants to prepare for a two week underway period. On the 2nd, DENVER was underway to conduct Special Operations Capable Certification (SOCCERT). This involved various exercises with the Air Combat Element, AAV Battalion, and Force Recon Marines. Similar to FLEETEX, DENVER conducted non-combatant evacuation operations, CRRC and AAV landings, flight deck fast rope drills, and unmanned aerial vehicle operations. On the 12th, DENVER and the MEU were certified as Special Operations Capable. This achievement demonstrated the tremendous joint effort of Sailors and Marines working together towards a common goal. DENVER's crew was now ready to enjoy the remaining days of the month, kicking it off with the DENVER's Christmas Party on the 14th. Door prizes, comedy show, dancing, and a fine dinner made this an enjoyable event for all. The Holiday leave period began on the 15th, but there was still one thing left. The engineers had a boiler inspection from the 16th to the 19th, and as usual passed with flying colors. The year came to a close as the crew enjoyed the festive spirit.

1997 was a very busy year for the DENVER. The crew worked extremely hard and long through the work up cycle and through the various exercises. Clearly DENVER was determined to be the best LPD on the waterfront. And all the hard work paid off, as DENVER won the 1997 Battle "E" Award. Also, for the second year in a row, DENVER won the coveted 1997 Chief of Naval Operations Safety Award for the large amphibious category. This was a testament of DENVER's commitment to its safety programs and the crew's overall safety awareness. As always: "A Mile High, A Mile Ahead".