



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS DEVASTATOR (MCM 6)  
FPO AA 34090-1926

*Rec'd 10/10/00  
w/ disk*

5750

Ser XNAV/ 056

28 September 2000

From: Commanding Officer, USS DEVASTATOR (MCM 6)

To: Chief of Naval Operations (N09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY FOR 1999

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G

(b) CNO ltr 5757 Ser 09BH/SH/OU505886 of 17JUL00

Encl: (1) USS DEVASTATOR (MCM 6) Command History for 1999

(2) 5¼" diskette

1. Per references (a) and (b), enclosures (1) and (2) are forwarded.

*C.A. Pish*

C. A. PISH

# **COMMAND HISTORY**

**1999**

**USS DEVASTATOR  
(MCM 6)**

## **PART I: COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION**

A. **Command Short Title:** USS DEVASTATOR (MCM 6)

B. **UIC:** 21427

C. **Mission:** Mine countermeasures operations which include but are not limited to:

1. Minehunting
2. Minesweeping
3. Mine Neutralization
4. Mine laying and recovery
5. Environmental/Q-route (bottom) survey

D. **Fleet:** Second Fleet

E. **Group:** Commander, Mine Warfare Command

F. **Squadron (ISIC):** Commander, Mine Countermeasures Squadron Two

G. **Units under Operational Control:** None

H. **Units under Administrative Control:** None

I. **Name of Commander:** Commander Thomas Aquinas Flisk, USN

J. **Permanent Duty Station:** Naval Station Ingleside, Texas

K. **Aircraft Assigned:** None

## **PART II: CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS**

### **JANUARY**

- 01-06 Inport Navsta Ingleside (Berth B-5-1)
  - A.) Conducting Holiday Leave and Upkeep
- 07 Underway for berth shift to B-5
- 07-10 Inport Navsta Ingleside (Berth B-5)
- 11 Underway for berth shift to A-5
- 11-13 Inport Navsta Ingleside (Berth A-5)
- 14-23 Underway Corpus Christi OPAREA
  - A.) Conducting GOMEX 99-1, which included minesweeping, minehunting and neutralization, basic engineering casualty control exercises, anchoring, and refueling at sea exercises
- 24-31 Inport Navsta Ingleside (Berth B-5-1)
  - A.) POM Standdown

### **FEBRUARY**

- 01-03 Inport Navsta Ingleside (Berth B-5-1)
  - A.) Continued POM Standdown (01-03Feb)
- 04 Underway for berth shift to A-6-1
- 04-09 Inport Navsta Ingleside (Berth A-6-1)
  - A.) Continued POM Standdown (04-09Feb)
- 10 Underway for berth shift to A-8
- 10-23 Inport Navsta Ingleside (Berth A-8)
  - A.) Continued POM Standdown (10-21Feb)
- 24-28 Underway for INCTASKGRU Deployment '99
  - A.) Enroute Port Everglades, FL
  - B.) Ships in company include: USS Avenger (MCM 1), USS Champion (MCM 4), USS Scout (MCM 8), and USS Inchon (MCS 12)

### **MARCH**

- 01 Moored Port Everglades, FL
  - A.) Brief Stop for Fuel
- 01-18 Underway from Port Everglades, FL
  - A.) Enroute Funchal, Madeira, Portugal
  - B.) Fueling at Sea with USS Platte (06Mar)
  - C.) Fueling at Sea with USS Inchon (12Mar, 16Mar)
- 19 Moored Madeira, Portugal
  - A.) Brief Stop for Fuel
- 19-22 Underway from Madeira, Portugal
  - A.) Enroute Navsta Rota, Spain
- 23-28 Inport Navsta Rota, Spain (Pier 1, Berth A-3)
- 29-31 Underway from Navsta Rota, Spain
  - A.) Enroute Barcelona, Spain
  - B.) Magnetic influence minesweeping (31Mar)

## APRIL

- 01-06 Inport Maritime Station N, Barcelona, Spain  
07 Underway from Barcelona, Spain  
    A.) Enroute La Maddalena, Italy  
    B.) Upon getting underway, ordered to proceed to Palma de Mallorca, Spain  
    due to high sea state
- 08-12 Inport Palma de Mallorca, Spain  
13-15 Underway from Palma de Mallorca, Spain  
    A.) Enroute Naples, Italy
- 16-21 Inport Naples, Italy  
    A.) Diesel Engine Inspection "Quick Look" (17-19Apr)  
    B.) Berth shift (19Apr)
- 22-24 Underway from Naples, Italy  
    A.) Enroute Souda Bay, Crete  
    B.) Magnetic influence minesweeping (23Apr)
- 25 Inport Souda Bay, Crete  
    A.) Brief Stop for Fuel
- 26-28 Underway from Souda Bay, Crete  
    A.) Enroute Haifa, Israel  
    B.) Mechanical minesweeping (27Apr)
- 29-30 Inport Haifa, Israel  
    A.) Attended planning conferences for Exercise Noble Melinda '99 with  
    crewmembers of USS Scout and various officials of the Israeli Navy

## MAY

- 01-04 Inport Haifa, Israel  
    A.) Continued exercise preparations  
    B.) Crewmembers visited and performed community service at a local  
    orphanage
- 05-06 Underway Eastern Mediterranean OPAREA  
    A.) Conducting various minehunting and neutralization missions in support  
    of Noble Melinda '99  
    B.) Compiled environmental data including sound velocity and bottom type  
    profiles
- 07-08 Inport Haifa, Israel  
    A.) Attended various exercise conferences with crewmembers of USS Scout  
    and various officials of the Israeli Navy  
    B.) Toured Israeli minesweeping ship and provided tours of USS Devastator  
    for various officials of Israeli Navy
- 09-12 Underway Eastern Mediterranean OPAREA  
    A.) Continued minehunting and neutralization operations in support of Noble  
    Melinda '99
- 13-16 Inport Haifa, Israel  
    A.) Attended "Hot Wash Up" Conference for Exercise Noble Melinda '99
- 17-21 Underway from Haifa, Israel  
    A.) Enroute Augusta Bay, Italy
- 22-23 Inport Augusta Bay, Italy  
    A.) Ammunition onload (22May)
- 24-26 Underway from Augusta Bay, Italy  
    A.) Enroute Spanish Naval Station Puerto de Mahon, Menorca, Spain

- 27-30 Inport Spanish Naval Station Puerto de Mahon, Menorca, Spain
  - A.) Attended ceremonies and laid wreath at cemetery and memorial to United States Servicemen killed in World War I
  - B.) Attended honorary dinner for members of USS Devastator crew
  - C.) All events sponsored by local Navy League
- 31 Underway from Puerto de Mahon, Menorca, Spain
  - A.) Enroute Palma de Mallorca, Spain

### JUNE

- 01 Inport Palma de Mallorca, Spain
  - A.) Investigating casualty to 1B Main Propulsion Diesel Engine
  - B.) INCTASKGRU DEI onboard to perform mandrel test
  - C.) Made final preparations for Exercise Alcudra '99
- 02-04 Underway from Palma de Mallorca, Spain
  - A.) Enroute Castellon, Spain
  - B.) Commenced Alcudra '99 and performed minehunting and neutralization missions
- 05 Inport Castellon, Spain
  - A.) Brief Stop for Fuel as directed to proceed to Rota, Spain to replace 1B MPDE, vice completing Exercise Alcudra '99
- 05-07 Underway from Castellon, Spain
  - A.) Enroute Navsta Rota, Spain
- 08-30 Inport Navsta Rota, Spain
  - A.) Performed engine block replacement and performance test onto 1B MPDE (08-19Jun)
  - B.) Completed successful Mid-Cycle Assessment (21-23Jun)
  - C.) 1A MPDE crankshaft condemned by DEI and commenced replacement (29Jun)
  - D.) Diesel Engine Inspection (22Jun-30Jun)

### JULY

- 01-02 Inport Navsta Rota, Spain
  - A.) Continued Diesel Engine Inspection (01-02Jul)
  - B.) Completed replacement 1A MPDE crankshaft and performance testing (02Jul)
- 03-05 Underway from Navsta Rota, Spain
  - A.) Enroute Funchal, Madeira, Portugal
  - B.) Performed magnetic minesweeping evolution
- 06 Inport Funchal, Madeira, Portugal
  - A.) Brief Stop for Fuel
- 06-27 Underway from Funchal, Madeira, Portugal
  - A.) Enroute Ingleside, TX
  - B.) Refueling at Sea with USS Inchon (09, 13, 16, 21, 26Jul)
  - C.) Performed one minesweeping evolution, various General Quarters damage control drills, and basic engineering casualty control drills while in transit
- 28-31 Inport Navsta Ingleside, TX (Berth A-8-1)
  - A.) POM standdown

## AUGUST

- 01-21 Inport Navsta Ingleside, TX (Berth A-8-1)  
A.) Continued POM standdown
- 22-23 Underway to Hurricane Moor, Ingleside Turning Basin-Nest 3 with USS Scout and USS Warrior  
A.) Hurricane Bret forced ship to recall essential personnel during standdown to shift berth to hurricane moor. USS Devastator moved in tandem with USS Scout. All personnel were forced to abandon ship due to approaching storm. Essential personnel rode out storm on USS Inchon in case of emergency. All equipment secured.
- 24 Underway for berth shift to A-6-1  
A.) Ship remanned and moved back to "A" Pier
- 25-31 Inport Navsta Ingleside, TX (Berth A-6-1)  
A.) Continued POM standdown (25-27Aug)

## SEPTEMBER

- 01-07 Inport Navsta Ingleside (Berth A-6-1)  
A.) FMAV conducted 01-15Sep
- 08 Berth shift to A-6
- 08-26 Inport Navsta Ingleside (Berth A-6)  
A.) Diesel Engine Inspection conducted 15-30Sep  
B.) Lt. Edward L. Butts checked onboard to relieve Lt. Shawn P. Murphy as Executive Officer 20Sep
- 27 Berth shift to A-2  
A.) Berth shift conducted to allow for maintenance to magnetic minesweeping equipment
- 27-30 Inport Navsta Ingleside (Berth A-2)  
A.) Conducting INSURV preparations

## OCTOBER

- 01-03 Underway CCOA  
A.) Underway for GOMEX 99-2 mineshape recovery  
B.) EOD embarked for operations (MDSU-2 Det A)  
C.) Conducted magnetic minesweeping operations
- 03-06 Inport Navsta Ingleside (Berth A-8)
- 07 Underway CCOA  
A.) Conducting INSURV Underway Material Inspection rehearsal, including magnetic minesweeping, minehunting, anchoring, and full power demonstration
- 08-18 Inport Navsta Ingleside (Berth A-8)  
A.) Conducting inport material preparations for INSURV  
B.) Commenced INSURV (18Oct)
- 19 Underway CCOA  
A.) Conducting INSURV UMI  
B.) President, Board of Inspection and Survey onboard for UMI
- 20-24 Inport Navsta Ingleside (Berth A-5)  
A.) Completed INSURV (21Oct)
- 25 Underway Transit to Peterson Ship Repair, Ingleside, TX
- 25-31 Inport Peterson Ship Repair  
A.) Commenced CNO PMA 061 (26Oct)

**NOVEMBER**

01-30 Inport Peterson Ship Repair

A.) Conducted PLOT I with ATG Ingleside (06-08Nov)

**DECEMBER**

01-31 Inport Peterson Ship Repair

A.) Conducted PLOT II with ATG Ingleside (08-10Dec)

B.) Commenced SSDG performance testing after motor rewind completion  
(07Dec)

C.) Conducted Holiday Leave and Upkeep (18-31Dec)



### **PART III: NARRATIVE**

USS DEVASTATOR entered 1999 on the brink of overseas movement. All Inter-Deployment Training Cycle (IDTC) milestones were successfully completed, however the process proved rigorous and highly challenging for the ship's crew for two reasons. First, the 1998 depot level availability, which required dry docking, brought highly critical changes to the ship's engineering plant. Installation of the Integrated Ship's Control System (ISCS), made DEVASTATOR a "smart ship" platform. Although the system improved plant control and provided watchstanders with the capability to monitor equipment status in real time, its novelty to the waterfront and quirky imperfections forced DEVASTATOR to become the trendsetter in the mine countermeasures community. In addition to acclimatizing users to the system's basic capabilities and utilities, members of the Engineering Department were required to revolutionize training methods, casualty control procedures, and drill scenarios. Second, the availability saw the replacement of the SQQ-30 Sonar with the highly capable SQQ-32 Sonar. As a result, a majority of the training cycle was dedicated to minehunting operations, which allowed Sonar Operators and Combat Information Center watchstanders to fully grasp, both the limitations and extensive capabilities of the newly installed system.

INCTASKGRU '99, which in addition to DEVASTATOR, would be composed of USS Avenger (MCM 1), USS Champion (MCM 4), USS Scout (MCM 8), and USS Inchon (MCS 12), was set to depart in late February. In preparation for the extended underway periods, GOMEX 99-1 was conducted in early January. The exercise allowed deploying units to practice performing as one group and utilized a high operational tempo which integrated trial refuelings at sea, communication checks and experimentation, minehunting and neutralization operations, damage and casualty control scenarios, anchoring, and maneuvering in various tactical formations. During GOMEX 99-1, DEVASTATOR was the only ship to successfully hunt and clear a minefield. At exercise completion, DEVASTATOR achieved full readiness for deployment and transitioned to Pre-Overseas Movement standdown.

On February 24, 1999, DEVASTATOR got underway for INCTASKGRU Deployment '99. After brief stops for fuel in Port Everglades, Florida and Madeira, Portugal, DEVASTATOR arrived at Naval

Station Rota, Spain and the European mainland. Although the 27 day Atlantic Ocean transit proved strenuous, it provided ample time to conduct basic engineering casualty control exercises and several main space fire drills, in early preparation for the Mid-Cycle Assessment. Junior, less experienced personnel with lengthier tours onboard, were substituted into important watch or fire party positions, to invest in the ship's future and provide long term continuity. Additionally, DEVASTATOR utilized underway time to remain proficient in all mine warfare areas. DEVASTATOR was the only ship in INCTASKGRU to regularly perform minesweeping operations, including magnetic and acoustic influence sweeps during the transatlantic voyage.

On March 21, 1999, DEVASTATOR transitted the Straits of Gibraltar and commenced three months of Mediterranean Sea operations. While making her way eastward, DEVASTATOR took liberty in several ports of call, including: Rota, Barcelona, and Palma de Mallorca, Spain; Naples, Italy; Souda Bay, Crete; and Haifa, Israel. Upon arrival in Haifa, the ship prepared for minesweeping operations in conjunction with USS Scout and the Israeli Navy, while participating in Exercise Noble Melinda '99. After two days of planning conferences, DEVASTATOR proceeded to assigned tasking areas and performed minehunting operations. Utilizing the SQQ-32 Sonar, DEVASTATOR was able to locate and prosecute, with the SLQ-48 Mine Neutralization Vehicle, over 5 minelike objects, thus attaining the highest success rate of any unit participating in the exercise. Additionally, proficiently trained crewmembers compiled environmental data for the Eastern Mediterranean OPAREA, including sound velocity and bottom type profiles. DEVASTATOR and her Israeli naval counterparts exchanged tours, plaques, and more importantly tactical information, furthering cooperation and relations between countries.

On May 27, 1999, DEVASTATOR arrived at Spanish Naval Station Puerto de Mahon in Menorca, Spain. Operating independently on a specially assigned tasking, ship's crewmembers attended ceremonies and laid a wreath at a cemetery and memorial for United States Servicemembers killed in action in World War I. The events were sponsored by the local Navy League and our hosts graciously invited participants to a large honorary dinner in commemoration of the visit. Upon departing Menorca, preparations began for a second exercise, Alcudra '99, which was designed to improve operational

cohesiveness between NATO allies. Despite minehunting conditions, which were poor at best, DEVASTATOR remained ontask and performed three mine neutralization missions.

While inport, Castellon, Spain for refueling and replenishment, the INCTASKGRU Diesel Engine Inspector condemned 1B Main Propulsion Diesel Engine. As a result of the casualty, DEVASTATOR was directed to proceed to Rota, Spain to facilitate the engine replacement. Demonstrating unfaltering dedication, the Engineering Department replaced 1B MPDE and completed performance testing in less than 10 days, completed a crankshaft replacement on 1A MPDE in just 4 days, and successfully completed a Diesel Engine Inspection on all MPDE's and Ship's Service Diesel Generators. Simultaneously, the crew completed preparations for Mid-Cycle Assessment in which all programs and the main space fire drill were deemed fully effective. DEVASTATOR departed Rota, Spain on July 3 and arrived home to family and friends in Ingleside, Texas on July 28, thus completing a commendable deployment. In total, DEVASTATOR conducted refueling at sea 8 times, minesweeping operations—specifically Double and Single Orapesa, 5A and 6H sweeps—over 10 times, over 35 SLQ-48 MNV missions, over 20 main space fire drills, 40 basic engineering casualty control exercises, and 7 swim calls.

One of the most challenging aspects of INCTASKGRU '99 Deployment, was managing ISCS. While ship's crew became proficient at monitoring the engineering plant and performing casualty control via the system, troubleshooting and repair capabilities were still relatively limited. ISCS demonstrated various problems with load sharing and shifting between SSDG's and shore power. The individual consoles experienced phantom alarms, unexplained "lock-up", and Uninterruptible Power Supply failures. The Bell Logger program failed almost regularly and several times watchstanders shifted to paper logs to take operational readings due to Portable Data Terminal and Integrated Condition Assessment System (ICAS) failures. Despite these difficulties, DEVASTATOR dedicated her efforts toward making the system in place, functional and the future of the system a bit brighter. Over 25 2K's were submitted to NAVSSES, requesting specific improvements and providing a continuous operational evaluation of the system. NAVSSES took the ship's comments, opinions, and recommendations and utilized them as a basis for development of Shipalt 252K which DEVASTATOR received at the end of 1999.

The post overseas movement standdown was rudely interrupted on the morning of August 22, as DEVASTATOR crewmembers were forced to return to perform a berth shift to the hurricane moor. Hurricane Bret developed in the southwest Gulf of Mexico and increased in strength to over 125 mile per hour winds, as it approached the South Texas coastline. Once the ship was safely in the nest, COMINEWARCOM ordered all ship's on the waterfront evacuated as the hurricane's path was projected very close to Navsta Ingleside. All essential personnel were required to spend one evening on USS Inchon, while the rest of the crew joined family members at the evacuation center in Lackland AFB, San Antonio, Texas.

September brought a return to normal inport operations. FMAV 922, Diesel Engine Inspection, and relief of the Executive Officer were the most notable events conducted. The ship, however shifted its focus and began looking ahead to the upcoming INSURV. Originally schedule for prior to deployment, time constraints and underway preparations did not facilitate INSURV completion. While administrative preparation began in the final months of deployment, space preparations did not commence until mid-September. Crewmembers were tasked with thorough deep cleaning of all spaces onboard, performing PMS checks to ensure correct operation of equipment, and with reviewing administrative histories, to ensure the ship was in top condition of readiness. On October 7, the ship got underway for the INSURV Underway Material Inspection (UMI) rehearsal. DEVASTATOR performed a "dry run" of the complex scenario, which ship's force created to complete the entire underway portion of inspection in one day. After further cleaning, preparation, and self-assessment were completed, DEVASTATOR commenced INSURV on October 18. President, Board of Inspection and Survey was onboard for the UMI and witnessed DEVASTATOR as she demonstrated her wide range of operational capabilities. At the outbrief, the senior inspector cited DEVASTATOR as "the best MCM the board had ever seen."

The end of October brought transition to the next phase in the IDTC, an extensive yard period. DEVASTATOR transited to Peterson Ship Repair, Ingleside, TX on October 25 and remained pierside for depot level maintenance and installations until year's end. In preparation for the Light-Off Assessment, DEVASTATOR conducted PLOT I and II with Afloat Training Group (ATG), Ingleside. ATG found the Engineering Department programs in very good standing and discovered only minor discrepancies.

Throughout the yard period, ship's crew dedicated themselves to training early, hard, and often, in hopes of achieving IDTC milestones as quickly as possible, thus preventing any restrictions to underway operation.

On December 18, ship's crew entered the Holiday Leave and Upkeep period, which in addition to expansion to 10 duty sections for the yard period, allowed for maximized liberty time with family and friends.