



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS MOBILE BAY (CG-53)
FPO AP 96672-1173

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IN REPLY REFER TO:
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From: Commanding Officer, USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53)
To: Director of Naval History (N09BH)

Subj: 1996 COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl (1) USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53) 1996 Command History

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted.


J. M. VOLPE

MOBILE BAY (CG 53) COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

MISSION: MOBILE BAY IS A FORWARD DEPLOYED AEGIS GUIDED MISSILE CRUISER. WITH A STATE OF THE ART, FULLY INTEGRATED COMBAT SYSTEM, MOBILE BAY IS UNIQUELY EQUIPPED TO PROVIDE COMMAND AND CONTROL FOR MISSIONS RANGING FROM AIR WARFARE DEFENSE TO STRIKE WARFARE IN SUPPORT OF U.S AND ALLIED COALITION FORCES. ADDITIONALLY, FORWARD...FROM THE SEA, MOBILE BAY SUPPORTS THE UNITED STATES NATIONAL MILITARY STRATEGY BY PROVIDING CONTINUOUS NAVAL PRESENCE IN THE SEVENTHFLT AND FIFTHFLT AREAS OF OPERATION.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: CAPTAIN JOSEPH M. VOLPE, JR. COMMANDS MOBILE BAY UNDER REAR ADMIRAL CHARLES W. MOORE, JR. --COMMANDER, BATTLE FORCE SEVENTH FLEET(CTF-70), COMMANDER, CARRIER GROUP FIVE, CTF(CTG-70.1)

HOMEPORT: YOKOSUKA, JAPAN

AIRCRAFT ASSIGNED: MOBILE BAY EMBARKED THE FOLLOWING SH-60B AIRCRAFT IN 1996:

HSL-49 RED STINGER 111
HSL-49 RED STINGER 112

USS MOBILE BAY CHRONOLOGY 1996

01 JAN - 08 JAN 1996 INPORT, PIERSIDE YOKOSUKA, JAPAN
UNDERGOING EDSRA 6 . CREW LIVING ON BARGE
IX 503.

08 JAN 1996 ENTERS DRY DOCK 6 AT YOKOSUKA, JAPAN.

09 JAN - 21 MAY 1996 IN DRY DOCK 6.

21 MAY 1996 DEPARTS DRY DOCK 6 AND BERTHS AT HARBOR
MASTER PIER.

25 MAY - 28 MAY 1996 CREW MOVES OFF BARGE IX 503 AND ABOARD
MOBILE BAY.

28 JUN 1996 BERTH SHIFT TO BERTH 6.

10 JUL - 12 JUL 1996 FIRST LOA

30 JUL - 31 JUL 1996 SECOND LOA

07 AUG 1996 UNDERWAY FOR AMMO ANCHORAGE.

08 AUG - 12 AUG 1996 MOORED AT BERTH 6.

12 AUG - 15 AUG 1996 UNDERWAY FOR SEA TRIALS

15 AUG - 21 AUG 1996 INPORT YOKOSUKA, JAPAN, BERTH 6.

21 AUG 1996 BERTH SHIFT TO BERTH 8.

21 AUG -26 AUG 1996 INPORT YOKOSUKA

26 AUG - 29 AUG 1996 UNDERWAY FOR TRAINING IN R-116 OPAREA

29 AUG 1996 MOORED YOKOSUKA.

30 AUG 1996 UNDERWAY FOR FAMILY DAY CRUISE.

30 AUG - 03 SEP 1996 INPORT YOKOSUKA AT HARBOR MASTER PIER..

03 SEP 1996 BERTH SHIFT TO BERTH 7

03 SEP -09 SEP 1996	INPORT YOKOSUKA.
09 SEP - 20 SEP 1996	UNDERWAY FOR TRAINING AND TRANSIT TO SUBIC BAY, PHILIPPINES..
20 SEP - 24 SEP 1996	INPORT SUBIC BAY, PHILIPPINES.
24 SEP - 27 SEP 1996	UNDERWAY TRANSIT TO HONG KONG
27 SEP - 30 SEP 1996	MOORED TO BUOY IN HONG KONG.
30 SEP - 04 OCT 1996	UNDERWAY TRANSIT TO YOKOSUKA.
04 OCT - 16 OCT 1996	INPORT YOKOSUKA
16 OCT - 12 NOV 1996	UNDERWAY FOR EXERCISES FOAL EAGLE, KEEN SWORD, AND ANNUALEX.
12 NOV - 20 NOV 1996	INPORT YOKOSUKA.
20 NOV 1996	CHANGE OF COMMAND, CAPTAIN GARRY HOLMSTROM RELIEVED BY CAPTAIN JOSEPH M. VOLPE, JR.
20 NOV - 02 DEC 1996	INPORT YOKOSUKA.
02 DEC - 04 DEC 1996	UNDERWAY TRANSIT TO SASEBO, JAPAN.
04 DEC - 07 DEC 1996	INPORT SASEBO, JAPAN.
07 DEC - 13 DEC 1996	UNDERWAY FOR MISSILEX 97 - 1 AND TRANSIT TO YOKOSUKA.
13 DEC - 31 DEC 1996	MOORED INPORT YOKOSUKA, JAPAN BERTH 7.

USS MOBILE BAY HISTORICAL NARRATIVE 1996

On 01 January, 1996 MOBILE BAY was at the beginning stages of Extended Dry-docking Selected Restricted Availability(EDSRA) Six and moored pier side in Yokosuka, Japan. During EDSRA-6 MOBILE BAY was upgraded in almost every area. Upgrades included: SPY-1A "Big Five" Ordnance Alterations, Extremely High Frequency(EHF) communication system, the ship's forward hull was strengthened by the replacement of hull plating with new thicker plating, and the AFFF system was upgraded to a new two tank system to increase MOBILE BAY's capability to fight shipboard fires. Also during EDSRA-6, MOBILE BAY's crew had the opportunity to work on almost every space to improve its material condition; MOBILE BAY emerged having improved material condition in almost every area.

EDSRA-6 posed several difficult challenges for MOBILE BAY. Among them were a move aboard Berthing Barge (IX 503) and docking in dry-dock number SIX at Fleet Activities Yokosuka. During the third week of December 1995 every member of the crew, administrative offices, and all supply parts were moved to IX 503 or storage sites ashore. It was a difficult evolution and was executed over a three day period with the barge moored outboard MOBILE BAY. Then on 08 January, MOBILE BAY set the Docking Detail and was underway for Dry-dock SIX. Crossing the sill of the dock at approximately 0900, it would take another eight hours before she was safely docked. Once docked, MOBILE BAY sailors traded their ball caps for hard hats and EDSRA began in earnest. SPY array covers were installed, all four illuminators were removed for overhaul, propeller blades were removed, shafts were pulled, and scaffolding

was erected starting the next day.

The next four months were filled with keeping up with the extensive work and increased hazards associated with a yard period. Daily routines were modified to include a safety inspection by the Commanding Officer or Command Duty Officer. By identifying and correcting discrepancies every day, injuries and accidents were undoubtedly reduced. EDSRA also marked a new beginning for MOBILE BAY's physical fitness program. Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday the crew mustered in PT gear for physical fitness training. Wednesday afternoons were also Rope Yarn for sports ranging from Basketball to Softball. Each division fielded teams and competed against other divisions, increasing comradere as well as fitness. The results of this program would be noticeable in the dramatic increase in PRT scores between the January and June PRT's.

During the time in dry dock, MOBILE BAY's crew planned and executed numerous activities to keep morale at a high level. Among those was an extensive use of the Program for Afloat College Experience(PACE) and Navy Campus. Numerous sailors completed college level classes aboard the barge or at the University of Maryland. Other members of the crew were members of the Command Assessment Team(CAT), which under CTRC [REDACTED] and with Commander Carrier Group Five assistance, conducted a thorough assessment of the command and made valuable recommendations on improvements for the ship. A massive ship wide effort to qualify personnel in Damage Control led to the crew being able to support a five section duty rotation beginning in March. Additionally, MOBILE BAY sailors practiced going to General

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Quarters and manning operations stations every Wednesday; this helped keep the crew's focus on the operation of the ship and would pay dividends once she was underway again in August.

MOBILE BAY also attracted numerous senior Navy Officers, who were interested in the work aboard MOBILE BAY and her crew. In February, Vice Admiral Walter J. Davis, the Director of Space and Electronic Warfare, toured the ship. In March, Commander Naval Surface Forces Pacific, Vice Admiral Robinson toured MOBILE BAY and had lunch with the officer's in the barge wardroom. In May, Vice Admiral Archie Clemmins, Commander Seventh Fleet, visited MOBILE BAY and was impressed by the extent of the work being done aboard MOBILE BAY. MOBILE BAY's EDSRA-6 was the largest availability ever conducted by SRF Yokosuka.

While in dry dock, MOBILE BAY received word that she was the Battle Efficiency Award winner for 1995 and celebrated with the raising of the "meatball" on MOBILE BAY's mast in March. MOBILE BAY also received honorable mention in the 1996 CINCPACFLT Captain Edward F. Ney Memorial award for excellence in providing quality food to the crew.

As MOBILE BAY moved closer to departing dry dock the duty section rotation was modified to a three section rotation and the pace of work increased. During the dry docking period, in a cooperative effort between MOBILE BAY and Ship Repair Facility(SRF), Yokosuka, MOBILE BAY's hull was sandblasted to white metal and repainted to look almost new. Once out of dry dock, the crew would work even harder to push MOBILE BAY through to

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the end of the EDSRA. Notably, a special team was created to augment personnel preserving the superstructure. By June , the superstructure was complete and MOBILE BAY looked great from waterline to the top of the mast. MOBILE BAY emerged from dry dock in May and she was moved by tug boats to Harbor Master Pier.

Fire-fighting and Light Off Assessment(LOA) preparations were significant issues during the entire EDSRA-6. In the Spring, MOBILE BAY had already started to train her crew to fight Main Space Fires and train duty sections toward the goal of a successful LOA. This training involved all hands and everyone learned more about their ship. All hands pulled together towards preparing for LOA, everyone was qualified in Advanced Fire Fighting, large numbers of the crew were also sent through Advanced Fire Fighting school on base. However, the LOA conducted by the Propulsion Examining Board(PEB) on 10-12 July identified some major deficiencies in MOBILE BAY and she would require a second visit to get the go ahead to light off the engineering plant. MOBILE BAY's crew pulled together and on the second look by PEB, 30-31 July, MOBILE BAY was ready to light off and make final preparations for Sea Trials.

Shortly after the successful LOA, MOBILE BAY shifted back to five section duty rotation and made final preparations for underway operations. 07 August, 1996 was the first time in almost eight months that MOBILE BAY was underway on her own power. She spent the night of the 7th at anchor in Yokosuka harbor loading ammunition. It was an excellent way to get the officers and crew ready for the following week of sea trials. On 12 August, MOBILE BAY was underway with numerous civilian and military riders to exercise and test almost every

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system aboard. Some of the evolutions conducted during Sea Trials were CIWS Pre-action calibration, 5" 54 Pre-action calibration, Full Power Astern, Rudder checks, SPY fly-around test, Detect to Engage sequences on all weapons systems, Man Overboard drills, and Degaussing tests. Significantly, the SPY-1A radar worked extremely well and marked an enormous increase in the ability of MOBILE BAY to combat anti-ship cruise missiles. Entering port on 15 August, MOBILE BAY and her crew were extremely proud to be back in operational service with the Forward Deployed Naval Forces.

Before MOBILE BAY would get underway again, she would entertain over 6400 visitors during tours on Friendship Day. With USS CURTS moored outboard, MOBILE BAY was definitely a hit, and the event designed to promote relations with civilian Japanese Nationals was an outstanding success.

MOBILE BAY was underway for training again on 26 August and would remain underway conducting drills and training for crew proficiency, until 29 August, when she returned to port in Yokosuka. On 30 August MOBILE BAY was underway, this time to treat her families and friends to a family cruise in Tokyo Wan. Hundreds of people explored the ship and were delighted by a demonstration by ship's damage control personnel and a small air show by MOBILE BAY's air detachment from HSL-49.

Upon returning to port in the early afternoon of the 30th, MOBILE BAY settled in for a ten day period and readied for her first voyage to foreign ports and training with the USS

INDEPENDENCE(CV 62). Underway, on 09 September, MOBILE BAY embarked members of Afloat Training Group Western Pacific(ATGWESTPAC) and commenced training. Underway for the first time with INDEPENDENCE, watchstanders responded to the challenge and all evolutions were safe and well briefed. During the transit , MOBILE BAY conducted numerous training exercises, from Under Sea Warfare (USW) to Naval Shore Fire Support (NSFS). MOBILE BAY was then detached and transited to Subic Bay, Philippines. On 24 September, MOBILE BAY pulled into Subic Bay for her first port visit of the year. Excitement buzzed around the ship, as many of the crew had not been to a foreign port with MOBILE BAY. From 20-24 September, the crew enjoyed liberty and the culture of Subic Bay . MOBILE BAY's volunteer team, Operation Hand Clasp, along with sailors and marines from the USS Mt. RUSHMORE contributed time and skills in the renovation and painting of a local orphanage.

Underway on 24 September, MOBILE BAY set sail for Hong Kong. On 27 September MOBILE BAY moored to a buoy in Hong Kong harbor. Hong Kong is always an exciting place to visit and MOBILE BAY's crew had a wonderful chance to sight see and shop. After the grueling yard period, Subic Bay and Hong Kong gave the crew much needed liberty. Underway from Hong Kong on 30 September, MOBILE BAY steamed towards Yokosuka and moored in Yokosuka on 04 October.

MOBILE BAY's next underway was on 16 October for exercises with the INDEPENDENCE Battle Group near the Korean Peninsula. Operations FOAL EAGLE 1996, KEEN SWORD, and ANNUALEX gave MOBILE BAY's watchstanders full speed runs in

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exercises in all major warfare areas. MOBILE BAY was activated as INDEPENDENCE Battle Group Alternate Anti-Air Warfare Commander (AC) on 24 October proving she was indeed back. She provided Air Control as well as command and control to friendly fighters and other aircraft defending the Battle Group from Air force and Marine Corps jets during air Defense exercises. The operations during this period were fast paced and challenging. In the span of three weeks, MOBILE BAY consistently was involved in Air Control Operations, Air Defense Exercises, Tactical Training with the AEGIS Combat Systems Training system, Under Sea Warfare exercises, Photo Shoots, Helicopter operations, as well as Engineering drills and evolutions.

On 03 November, Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Jay Johnson visited the MOBILE BAY with the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, ETCM (SW) John Hagan. After a short speech to the crew and some questions and answers, the CNO had a working lunch with Captain Holmstrom. Shortly, thereafter he boarded his helicopter and visited other ships in the battle group. The entire crew was honored by his visit. Additionally, MOBILE BAY was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation for operations with the INDEPENDENCE Battle Group during the deployment to the Arabian Gulf in the fall of 1995.

On 09 November, MOBILE BAY officially relieved USS BUNKER HILL as the primary Anti-Air Warfare Commander(AW) for the INDEPENDENCE Battle Group. This also coincided with the commencement of ANNUALEX, which was a joint exercise with the Japanese, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, and U.S. Marine Corps.. During this exercise numerous

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forces from the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force participated in an exercise to defend Japan from an attack by foreign invaders. The exercise provided more opportunities for MOBILE BAY's watch teams to learn and gain experience. Unfortunately, the exercise was ended early due to Super Typhoon Violet, and the INDEPENDENCE Battle Group returned to Yokosuka to avoid the storm. For MOBILE BAY, it was a great underway and the last for Captain Garry Holmstrom. Captain Holmstrom welcomed his relief aboard after entering port on 12 November. The crew was then busy preparing the ship for change of command, which included reviews of programs, spaces, and a personnel inspection.

On 20 November, Captain Holmstrom was relieved by Captain Joseph M. Volpe, Jr. in a ceremony held aboard MOBILE BAY. Rear Admiral Albert Konetzni was the guest speaker and the entire ceremony went extremely well. After the orders had been read and the ceremony was complete, all guests were invited to attend the reception on the foc'sle. The food prepared by MOBILE BAY's mess specialists was outstanding and received much praise.

The week of 22-27 November was Total Ship's Training Assessment (TSTA) I. ATG was back aboard assessing MOBILE BAY's ability to conduct training. The evolution was conducted inport, due to an engineering casualty to the steering gear, but the quality of training was undiminished. MOBILE BAY and her crew completed TSTA I and prepared for her next underway period.

MOBILE BAY would have one more underway period away from Yokosuka for 1996.

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On 02 December, MOBILE BAY was underway for Sasebo, Japan. The voyage to Sasebo was another good training opportunity, and MOBILE BAY prepared for her first Missilex since the spring of 1995. On 04 December, MOBILE BAY entered Sasebo, and the crew enjoyed the opportunity to explore Fleet Activity Sasebo. Many crewmembers took the opportunity to visit Nagasaki, the sight of the second Atomic bombing. On 07 December, MOBILE BAY was underway for the Okinawa operating area and MISSILEX 97-1, which MOBILE BAY was in tactical command.

MOBILE BAY was joined by USS FIFE and USS HEWITT off the coast of Okinawa and the exercise was conducted on 09 December. The targets were BQM-74 drones launched and controlled from FIFE. FIFE and HEWITT shot missiles first and MOBILE BAY had the third event of the day. MOBILE BAY's training paid off and the firing team performed extremely well, and the Missilex was a success although telemetry data indicated that although the fuse triggered, the missile was outside the 50 foot window . MOBILE BAY's guns also shot at the drone and each mount fired 10 rounds flawlessly. Overall it was a definite success, with all aspects of the Combat System performing well.

MOBILE BAY returned to Yokosuka on 13 December and began to prepare for a well deserved holiday leave and stand down period. On 18 December, a Christmas party was held at the Officer's Club and all hands who attended had a terrific time. The crew also enjoyed preparing for the holidays and dressed the ship in an amazing display of lights and decorations. Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka proclaimed MOBILE BAY the runner up in the annual

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Yokosuka holiday decoration contest. MOBILE BAY would remain in Yokosuka through the end of the year.

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