



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**

USS MOBILE BAY (CG-53)  
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**14 Apr 00**

From: Commanding Officer, USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53)

To: Director of Naval History (N09BH)

Subj: 1998 COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53) 1998 Command History

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "E. J. ROGERS", written over the printed name.

E. J. ROGERS

## COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53), commanded by CAPT Edward J. Rogers, III, USN, is an asset of Battle Force Seventh Fleet, Forward Deployed Naval Force, Yokosuka, Japan. MOBILE BAY reports to immediate senior in command Commander, Carrier Group Five, RADM T. J. Keating.

Our mission is to enhance regional stability, promote cooperative security and to deter aggression with capable, flexible and mobile U.S. Naval Forces, cooperating closely with U.S. military services and the forces of allied and friendly nations. Independently or as a part of a Joint, Combined or Multinational Force execute military and humanitarian operations as tasked by higher authority. If necessary, terminate hostilities on terms favorable to the United States and its Allies.

## USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53) CY 98 HISTORICAL SCHEDULE

01 JAN - 06 JAN Upkeep YOKOSUKA  
07 JAN - 13 JAN Enroute SINGAPORE  
14 JAN - 18 JAN Inport SINGAPORE  
15 JAN Secretary of Defense Visit  
19 JAN - 22 JAN Enroute HONG KONG  
23 JAN - 26 JAN Inport HONG KONG  
27 JAN - 29 JAN Enroute OKINAWA, JAPAN  
29 JAN Inport OKINAWA  
30 JAN - 05 FEB Enroute GUAM, USA  
06 FEB - 08 FEB Inport GUAM  
09 FEB - 12 FEB Enroute YOKOSUKA, JAPAN  
13 FEB - 08 MAR Upkeep YOKOSUKA  
09 MAR - 04 MAY SRA-7  
05 MAY Fast Cruise  
06 MAY - 07 MAY Sea Trials  
08 MAY - 10 MAY Inport YOKOSUKA  
11 MAY - 13 MAY Ammo Onload, TYT Training  
14 MAY - 15 MAY Inport YOKOSUKA  
16 MAY USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53) Friendship Cruise  
17 MAY - 31 MAY Upkeep YOKOSUKA  
20 MAY US Forces Japan Visit  
01 JUN Underway, Enroute GUAM  
05 JUN Moored GUAM  
06 JUN - 10 JUN Enroute TOWNSVILLE, AUSTRALIA  
08 JUN Crossing the Line Ceremony  
11 JUN Arrive TOWNSVILLE/Flight Deck Reception  
11 JUN - 14 JUN Inport TOWNSVILLE  
12 JUN Australian-American Association Reception  
15 JUN - 18 JUN Underway, Enroute DARWIN, AUSTRALIA  
16 JUN Transit Great NE Passage  
19 JUN - 22 JUN Inport DARWIN  
23 JUN - 27 JUN Enroute LUMUT, MALAYSIA  
28 JUN - 30 JUN Inport LUMUT, EXERCISE CARAT 98  
01 JUL - 05 JUL Underway (CARAT 98 Malaysian Phase)  
06 JUL - 12 JUL Inport SATTAHIP, THAILAND  
13 JUL - 19 JUL Underway (CARAT 98 Thai Phase)  
20 JUL - 27 JUL Inport SINGAPORE  
27 JUL - 29 JUL Underway (CARAT 98 Singapore Phase)  
30 JUL - 01 AUG Inport SINGAPORE  
02 AUG - 04 AUG Underway, Enroute PHILIPPINES  
05 AUG Underway (CARAT 98 Philippines Phase)  
06 AUG - 07 AUG Underway, Enroute OKINAWA, JAPAN  
08 AUG BSF OKINAWA, JAPAN  
09 AUG Underway, Enroute NOGOYA, JAPAN / CART I  
10 AUG - 13 AUG Anchored NOGOYA, JAPAN  
14 AUG - 15 AUG Underway, Enroute, YOKOSUKA / Tiger Cruise

16 AUG - 21 SEP Upkeep, YOKOSUKA  
08 SEP - 12 SEP NSFS LTT  
14 SEP - 18 SEP CMTQ Refresher  
22 SEP - 23 SEP TYT PHILLIPINE SEA  
24 SEP - 09 OCT Upkeep, YOKOSUKA  
10 OCT - 12 OCT Enroute, PUSAN, REPUBLIC OF KOREA  
13 OCT - 16 OCT FLEET WEEK, PUSAN  
17 OCT - 22 OCT Enroute, INCHON, REPUBLIC OF KOREA  
23 OCT - 25 OCT Inport INCHON  
26 OCT - 04 NOV FOAL EAGLE 98, TBMD-EX, CSOF-EX  
05 NOV - 12 NOV ANNUALEX 10G  
13 NOV - 30 NOV Upkeep, YOKOSUKA  
18 NOV COMNAVSURFPAC Visit  
01 DEC - 03 DEC Enroute, OKINAWA JAPAN  
04 DEC - 05 DEC Inport, OKINAWA  
06 DEC - 08 DEC MISSLEX 99-1  
09 DEC - 09 DEC NSFS FIREX  
10 DEC - 11 DEC Enroute, YOKOSUKA  
12 DEC - 31 DEC Leave and Upkeep, YOKOSUKA  
15 DEC USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53) Christmas Party  
19 DEC Children's Christmas Party  
22 DEC Giving Tree to Kobo Cottage

## HISTORICAL NARRATIVE 1998

USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53) began 1998 in a holiday standdown period. Everyone had enjoyed the holidays and was still resting up from a busy schedule from the previous Fall. Many of the crew took leave, both in Yokosuka and in the United States. But the rest was soon completed and MOBILE BAY was again underway in mid-January, this time in support of the Secretary of Defense's official visit to Singapore. The ship arrived in Singapore and immediately began preparing for the Honorable William S. Cohen's arrival. On January 15, the ship proudly hosted the highest official ever to visit MOBILE BAY with full ceremony, which included an opportunity for the crew to hear a few remarks from the Defense Secretary. The ceremony also gave the Honorable Mr. Cohen time to present some awards to the crew. The Secretary completed his visit with a press interview on the VLS deck for AFN Pacific Report before attending a luncheon elsewhere in Singapore. Also during the time in Singapore, MOBILE BAY hosted a dinner for COMLOGWESTPAC and other VIPs.

After saying farewell and the good liberty it provided, MOBILE BAY headed to Hong Kong. This was the crew's first visit to there since Hong Kong's transition to the Chinese government. While in Hong Kong, Captain Volpe arranged a Super Bowl party at the fleet landing to provide the crew a chance to view the Super Bowl live and in a party environment. The crew enjoyed the party and also the shopping in Hong Kong, which had not changed much in spite of the transition of government.

MOBILE BAY visited Okinawa for one night at the end of January and then headed for Guam to embark riders to conduct a Mid-Cycle Assessment (MCA) in the beginning of February. After a successful MCA and some good liberty, MOBILE BAY left Guam and returned to Yokosuka, Japan to begin preparations for a nine-week Ship's Restricted Availability.

During this time, MOBILE BAY was presented the Seventh Fleet Award for Air Warfare Excellence. This award represented outstanding achievement in and the advancement of air warfare in all of Seventh Fleet. The award was earned in part due to MOBILE BAY taking the lead in Air Warfare Syndicate meetings and developing increased awareness and knowledge of air warfare tactics.

Also during late February, MOBILE BAY had the opportunity to participate with the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force in a Joint Photography Exhibition at a local Yokohama bank. The ship provided a shuttle to the bank to allow MOBILE BAY sailors to see the exhibition each day. The ship also provided a few

pictures for the exhibit, which focused on the theme "Brave Men at Sea."

The Ship's Restricted Availability kept MOBILE BAY very busy with repairs, additions, and refurbishments to the ship from March until May. MOBILE BAY adjusted its working hours to start earlier in the morning to allow for training and ship's business before the arrival of the Naval Ship Repair Facility workers. The SRA was completed on time and completed safely. One of the numerous additions to the ship during the SRA was a plastic waste compactor. The compactor is able to take plastic waste and compresses it into pizza sized disks in order to be stored and disposed of properly in port. Thus reducing the ship's impact to the ocean environment. Another major addition to MOBILE BAY during the SRA was IT-21, a computer Local Area Network. This allowed many computers to be connected in a network and increased communication between sailors and also family members with an extensive e-mail capability.

The SRA was followed by Sea Trials in mid-May. MOBILE BAY was successfully put through its paces after the extensive maintenance period. Many of the crew enjoyed evolutions such as turns at high speed, full reverse power, and acceleration evolutions that really show of what the ship is capable. Also following SRA, MOBILE BAY successfully completed a Light Off Assessment (LOA). Once again, the crew proved it could, among other things, efficiently and correctly light off engines and combat a mainspace fire.

Shortly thereafter, and before the summer deployment, MOBILE BAY hosted a Friendship Cruise on 25 May 98 to Tokyo Bay. This gave friends and family the opportunity to catch a glimpse of what sailors do at sea. Friends and family were treated to tours of the ship, static displays of shipboard equipment and weapons, and a delicious steel beach picnic while at anchor in Tokyo Bay. AFN Radio even broadcast live from MOBILE BAY during the one-day cruise.

On 1 June 98, MOBILE BAY got underway for a summer deployment. The ship's first stop was "down under" in Townsville, Australia. In order to get there, MOBILE BAY had to cross the equator. MOBILE BAY cleansed the ship of polywogs, paid respects to King Neptune Rex, and continued a Navy time-honored tradition with a "crossing the line" ceremony.

Townsville was a great liberty port for MOBILE BAY. The MSs and FSAs kept busy upon the ship's arrival as MOBILE BAY played host to a reception of Townsville locals including members of the Australian American Association and the Townsville Chamber of Commerce. MOBILE BAY also opened its brow to general visiting while in port. The crew found Townsville to

be exceptionally friendly and a location for outstanding liberty. Many of the crew took advantage of Townsville's close proximity to the Great Barrier Reef and went on SCUBA, snorkeling, and fishing trips. Also in Townsville, MOBILE BAY was joined by a group of five midshipmen for the purpose of summer training and gaining insight into the Surface Warfare community.

After leaving Townsville, MOBILE BAY transited to Darwin, Australia through the Great Barrier Reef. The transit made for a lengthy navigation detail because of the many tiny islands throughout the area. To aid with the navigation, an officer from the Royal Australian Navy, who was very familiar with the transit, rode the ship to Darwin. MOBILE BAY hosted a reception in Darwin also. The Darwin Chapter of the Australian American Association reciprocated by hosting a barbecue for some of the officers and crew of the MOBILE BAY. Good food, drink, and conversation were had by all. While in Darwin, the crew again enjoyed some great liberty. One of the highlights for many of the crewmembers was a MWR tour, which provided a view of jumping saltwater crocodiles. Others enjoyed opportunities to see local wildlife including kangaroos and wallabies.

Upon departing Darwin, MOBILE BAY headed again into the Northern Hemisphere giving the midshipmen an opportunity to cross the equator on 27 June 98.

MOBILE BAY was notified, during this time, that the Medical Department was awarded the Force Commander Annual Wellness Unit Award, Green H. The purpose of the Green H is to "provide formal recognition to SURFPAC units that have excelled in establishing and promoting a command climate conducive to wellness and health promotion."

July began with the embarkation of COMDESRON 31, CAPT Frank Guest, USN, as MOBILE BAY proudly began serving as the flagship for Exercise CARAT 98 (Cooperation Afloat Readiness And Training). MOBILE BAY's participation in CARAT 98 began with the Malaysian phase in Lumut, Malaysia. After planning meetings in Lumut, MOBILE BAY along with other U.S. ships and ships from the Royal Malaysian Navy got underway for a few days of exercises including gun and ship maneuvering exercises. When the exercises were complete and the ships were back in port, the Royal Malaysian Navy sponsored a Sports Day, which allowed many crewmembers the opportunity to compete against Malaysian teams in soccer, volleyball, and physical fitness. The crew greatly enjoyed the exercise and healthy competition.

The next phase of CARAT 98 brought MOBILE BAY to Sattahip, Thailand where we had to anchor a few miles out due to draft restrictions. Again, while some attended planning meetings,

others were able to take liberty. Since it was an international event, there were also receptions to attend. Buses were provided for trips into Pattaya Beach. As the weather degraded and the seas increased, however, MOBILE BAY had to move to a better anchorage; this time off the coast of Pattaya Beach. This was good for the crew as it put them closer to a good liberty port. The crew was also given the opportunity to help the less fortunate through a community relations project coordinated through the Chaplain. While in Thailand, some crewmembers helped a senior citizens' home by doing some painting and some much-needed yardwork. Soon the ship was underway and conducting exercises with ships from the Royal Thai Navy.

Singapore was the next phase of CARAT 98. MOBILE BAY stayed busy in Singapore by hosting a reception for the participants including VIPs from the Republic of Singapore Navy and COMLOGWESTPAC, RADM Loeffler. Singapore, as always, was great liberty for the crew. MOBILE BAY sailors also helped out a Singapore orphanage by contributing clothing and skateboards and by doing some yardwork. After the conclusion of the exercise with Singapore, MOBILE BAY headed back for Japan.

In August, however, before returning to Yokosuka, MOBILE BAY had one more exercise; this time with the Republic of the Philippines Navy. This exercise was brief and, unfortunately, did not include a port visit.

With Exercise CARAT 98 completed, MOBILE BAY then traveled to Nagoya, Japan for some liberty. This represented MOBILE BAY's first visit ever to the city and also the first visit to Nagoya by a U.S. Navy ship in over 20 years. Many of the crew enjoyed the sights and sounds of Nagoya including Nagoya Castle. Some sailors even opted to take trains back to Yokosuka during this time.

MOBILE BAY was excited to see Yokosuka again and we appreciated the warm welcome we received upon our return. Things did not slow down to much, however, as we had to make final preparations for the change of command that took place on September 25, 1998. The ceremony represented a very fond farewell to CAPT Joseph M. Volpe, Jr. as CAPT Edward J. Rogers III assumed command of USS MOBILE BAY (CG 53).

By October 9, MOBILE BAY was underway again, this time to Pusan, Korea in support of Korean Fleet Week. Ships from around the world arrived in Pusan. Participating countries included New Zealand, England, Australia, France, Japan, Singapore, India, and others. Unfortunately, time was cut short due to Typhoon Zeb. MOBILE BAY sortied to avoid the typhoon on October 15. On October 19, MOBILE BAY held a Hispanic Heritage



Celebration, which honored those of Hispanic heritage who have served in the U.S. Navy. The ceremony also served to educate the crew on the many contributions of Hispanics to naval history.

The ship returned to the Republic of Korea on October 22 when it arrived in Inchon for liberty and to attend preparation meetings for Exercise FOAL EAGLE 98. The arrival to Inchon was challenging and unique due to the shallow water and narrow locks through which the ship had to transit. Many MOBILE BAY sailors enjoyed the liberty and shopping in nearby Seoul. MOBILE BAY was soon underway for the exercise in the Yellow Sea, which included many gunnery, maneuvering, air defense, and counter special operations exercises. One highlight was when the ship conducted replenishment at sea with Republic of Korea Ship HWACHON, the ROKN's newest oiler. Another highlight occurred around the midpoint of FOAL EAGLE 98 when all of the commanding officers were invited aboard MOBILE BAY for a "steel beach" cookout while at anchorage.

Upon the completion of FOAL EAGLE 98, MOBILE BAY coordinated a tracking exercise with U.S. Army shore facilities in Korea from 26-29 October. MOBILE BAY successfully tracked a NIKE missile in order to practice Theater Ballistic Missile Defense capabilities.

On November 2, MOBILE BAY rendezvoused with USS KITTY HAWK (CV 63) and began its participation in ANNUALEX 98, an annual exercise with the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force on November 5. ANNUALEX involved a wide variety of exercises including Air Defense, gunnery, and Undersea Warfare exercises. MOBILE BAY detached from ANNUALEX 98 on November 10, and began to proceed to Yokosuka, Japan. While enroute, the crew conducted many drills to make preparations for the duty sections to train with the Fleet Activities Yokosuka Fire Department. The training was part of a plan to allow the ship to extend to eight duty sections while in port Yokosuka. As the ship transited the Tsugaru straits, many playful dolphins were sighted alongside which was an exciting experience for the crew. Before the journey was complete, the ship conducted an ammo offload while at anchorage in Yokosuka Harbor.

On November 18, during a short in-port period in Yokosuka, VADM Moore, COMNAVSURFPAC, visited MOBILE BAY. MOBILE BAY was soon underway to Okinawa to coordinate a missile exercise on 7-8 December. Enroute to Okinawa, MOBILE BAY commanded a MAG which included the USS VINCENNES (CG 49), USS JOHN S. McCAIN (DDG 56), and USS CUSHING (DD 985). While enroute, MOBILE BAY conducted a Mess Management Specialist exchange with the VINCENNES. This allowed the ships to learn different food preparation techniques

and styles from each other. As a part of the exchange, the ships had a cookies contest where chocolate chip cookies were exchanged during a highline transfer. Also during this underway period, MOBILE BAY held a Native American Heritage Month Celebration on December 3.

As MOBILE BAY began its return to Yokosuka, it conducted a mock Engineering Certification (ECERT). MOBILE BAY was also notified that it had been awarded the 1998 U.S. Department of Energy Management Program (FEMP) Award in the Mobility Energy Management Award to Organizations Category. The award was given for notable efforts to reduce the consumption of energy and innovative energy conservation technologies. MOBILE BAY was one of 49 award recipients from 185 nominees.

Upon return to Yokosuka, MOBILE BAY began a holiday standdown to conclude 1998. Fun was had by many crewmembers on December 15 during the MOBILE BAY Christmas Party at Club Alliance. Many MOBILE BAY sailors also donated gifts to the Kobo Cottage orphanage, which were presented at a Christmas party on December 19. Many sailors stayed busy by participating in the Seventh Fleet Olympics. Everyone enjoyed the holidays and the standdown and prepared for 1999. "Damn the Torpedoes, Full Speed Ahead!"