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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS PONCE (LPD-15)
FPO NEW YORK 09582-1717

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From: Commanding Officer, USS PONCE (LPD 15)
To: Director of Naval History, Washington, DC, 20347-0571
Subj: 1990 COMMAND HISTORY
Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E
Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization
(2) Chronology
(3) Narrative
1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (3) are submitted.

F. C. Wexler LTJG

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By direction

JPH

COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

USS PONCE (LPD 15) is commanded by Captain Stanley W. Bryant, United States Navy, and is homeported in Norfolk, Virginia. USS PONCE'S immediate unit commander is Captain Morris M. Kemple, Commander Amphibious Squadron Twelve.

PONCE'S mission as an amphibious transport dock is to embark United States Marine Corps and Navy support elements and, by both water and airborne means, conduct amphibious landings to obtain beach heads, prosecute further operations ashore or deny areas or facilities to the enemy.

PONCE'S crew consists of 31 officers (including one U.S. Marine Corps Combat Cargo Officer) 25 Chief Petty Officers and 383 enlisted personnel with a multitude of skills to execute the multi-mission role of a major amphibious ship.

CHRONOLOGY 1990

01 JAN-07 JAN Holiday leave and upkeep Little Creek, Virginia.

08 JAN-10 JAN Ammo onload Yorktown, Virginia.

10 JAN-12 JAN Amphibious training Lynnhaven Anchorage.

12 JAN Captain S. W. Bryant relieves Captain A. B. Moser as Commanding Officer of USS PONCE.

12 JAN-23 JAN Inport Norfolk, Virginia.

24 JAN Moorehead City, North Carolina onload.

24 JAN-28 JAN Transit to Vieques, Puerto Rico.

28 JAN-04 FEB Amphibious training/ Blue-Green work-ups Vic Vieques, Puerto Rico.

05 FEB-08 FEB Transit to Onslow Bay, North Carolina.

09 FEB-11 FEB Special Operations Capability Exercise, VIC Onslow Bay, North Carolina.

12 FEB Moorehead City, North Carolina offload.

12 FEB-13 FEB Transit to Norfolk, Virginia.

13 FEB-05 MAR Preparations for Overseas Movement. Leave and upkeep Norfolk, Virginia.

CHRONOLOGY 1990

07 MAR Deploy MARG 2-90.

08 MAR Moorehead City, North Carolina onload.

09 MAR-25 MAR Translant, inchop to CINCUSNAVEUR Opcon CTG 61.9.

26 MAR-01 APR Rota, Spain Turnover.

02 APR-07 APR Sierra De Retin Training Achorage.

08 APR Underway Eastern Med.

09 APR-16 APR Barcelona, Spain Port visit.

17 APR-24 APR Underway Eastern Med.

20 APR-24 APR Cannes, France Port visit.

25 APR-27 APR Underway Eastern Med.

28 APR-01 MAY Naples Port visit

02 MAY-13 MAY Capo Teulada NATO Exercise "Dragon Hammer" 90.

14 MAY-15 MAY Underway Eastern Med.

16 MAY Anchor St. Raphael

17 MAY-27 MAY Toulon, France Port visit. MEDTRAMID I

CHRONOLOGY 1990

28 MAY-04 JUNE Transit from Eastern Med to Liberia
MODLOC.

05 JUNE-04 AUG MODLOC patrol off coast of Monrovia,
Liberia. MEDTRAMID II (30 JUNE)

05 AUG-19 AUG Operation "SHARP EDGE." Non-Combatant
evacuation of 1,648 American, Indian and
Lebanese civilians from war-torn Liberia.

20 AUG Turnover at MODLOC Liberia.

21 AUG-29 AUG Translant Chop to CINCLANTFLT OPCON CTU
22.1.2.

30 AUG Arrive Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico.

30 AUG-02 SEP Agricultural Washdown Customs Inspection.
Operational Propulsion Plant Exam Board
arrives (01 Sep).

02 SEP-05 SEP Underway for Moorehead city, North
Carolina. Commence OPPE (03 SEP).

06 SEP Moorehead City, North Carolina offload.

07 SEP Homecoming Little Creek, Virginia.

08 SEP-05 OCT Leave and upkeep/IMAV Little Creek,
Virginia.

CHRONOLOGY 1990

01 OCT-15 DEC Restricted Availability with SIMA Little
Creek, Virginia. Pre-Supply Management
Inspection assist visit.

05 DEC Fast Cruise.

10 DEC-12 DEC Sea trials.

12 DEC Arrive Norfolk, Virginia.

13 DEC-14 DEC Ops department / 3rd division PQS assist
visit.

15 DEC-08 JAN Flight deck resurfaced.

17 DEC-31 DEC Holiday leave and upkeep.

NARRATIVE

The USS PONCE (LPD 15) is the newest and the last of a class of Amphibious Transport Docks used by today's Navy. Her continuous service to the fleet has earned the "Proud Lion" the uncontestable reputation as "The Best LPD in the Atlantic".

The arrival of January 1990 found PONCE pierside at Little Creek Amphibious Base in Virginia with a large percentage of the crew enjoying holiday leave. On January 12, Captain S. W. Bryant relieved Captain A. B. Moser as PONCE'S thirteenth Commanding Officer. January 8 the "Proud Lion" was back at work as she prepared to deploy to the Mediterranean Sea as a component of Marine Amphibious Ready Group 2-90. On January 8, PONCE departed Little Creek, Virginia for an ammunition on load. After a successful load out was completed, it was off to Lynnhaven Anchorage for some pre-workup amphibious training.

On January 24, after completing a safe and successful onload of United States Marine Corps elements of Marine Expeditionary Unit 22 in Morehead City North Carolina, PONCE was off to Vieques, Puerto Rico for pre-deployment Blue Water/Green Water work ups. From February 05-12 PONCE conducted Special Operations Capability Exercises in Onslow Bay, North Carolina, helping 22 MEU gain her SOCEX qualifications. February 12 PONCE off-loaded her Marines at Moorehead City, North Carolina and transited to Norfolk, where she remained until March 5 for the Preparations for Overseas Movement Period.

On March 7, PONCE departed Norfolk, Virginia enroute to Morehead City, North Carolina and then on to the Mediterranean Sea with the other MARG 2-90 elements.

On March 12, PONCE arrived in Rota, Spain to begin in-chop and turnover with elements of MARG 1-90. The first few days of April were spent conducting Amphibious assaults with other MARG units at Sierra De Retin, Spain. After successfully completing operations at Sierra Del Retin, PONCE departed in company with the MARG to transit the Straights of Gibraltar and conduct a port visit in Barcelona, Spain. The arrival in Barcelona on April 9, marked the first time many Ponce sailors had experienced liberty in Europe and all hands enjoyed their stay.

From Barcelona, it was off to Cannes, France where PONCE anchored and enjoyed four relaxing days in the beautiful French port. PONCE closed out the month of April with a Naples, Italy port visit with all MARG units in preparations for operation "DRAGON HAMMER", a major NATO exercise.

PONCE departed Naples on May 2 and, along with the other MARG units, participated in operation "DRAGON HAMMER" at Capo Tuelado, Sardinia.

On May 16, anchored at St. Raphael, France, Ponce off-loaded 22 MEU elements for training ashore at Camp De Canjuers, France.

On May 17, PONCE pulled into Toulon, France for a much needed Restricted Availability upkeep and eagerly anticipated liberty time. On May 28, however, PONCE'S IMAV was cut short as she was sortied from Toulon and steamed at top speed toward Liberia for West African Contingency Operations.

On June 5, PONCE arrived at MODLOC off the coast of Monrovia, Liberia and joined the other elements of MARG 2-90. PONCE remained at MODLOC for nearly sixty days conducting training and intelligence gathering operations in preparation for the possible evacuation of civilians from the war-torn country of Liberia. On August 5, PONCE and the other units of MARG 2-90 executed operation "SHARP EDGE"; the non-combatant evacuation of over sixteen hundred American, Indian and Lebanese Nationals from Monrovia. Of the 1,648 people evacuated, PONCE carried 1,111 to the safe port of Sierra Leone.

On August 20, MARG 2-90 conducted turnover on station off the coast of Liberia with MARG 3-90. PONCE arrived in Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico on August 30, ending a 96 day long underway period. While in Puerto Rico, PONCE conducted an off-load, agricultural washdown and customs inspection.

On September 7, PONCE sailed up Thimble Shoals Channel and pulled into Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Virginia for a much anticipated reunion with wives, girlfriends, family and friends, thus ending an eventful deployment.

The month of September was spent in port for leave and standdown.

From October to the middle of December, PONCE underwent a Restricted Availability Period with SIMA, Little Creek. The "Proud Lion" was underway in the VACAPES area from December 10-12 to conduct Builder's Acceptance sea trials. PONCE spent the remainder of December in port Norfolk, Virginia for holiday leave and upkeep.