



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS TARAWA (LHA-1)
FPO AP 96622-1600

*Rec'd 4/21/01
w/ disk*

5750
Ser PAO/026A
1 Mar 01

From: Commanding Officer, USS TARAWA (LHA 1)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G

Encl: (1) Commanding Officer's Biography and Photograph
(2) Ship's Photograph
(3) Command Structure
(4) News Releases
(5) 3.5" Disk Copy of the Command History

1. Per reference (a), the Calendar Year 2000 Command History for USS TARAWA (LHA 1) and enclosures (1) through (5) are forwarded.

2. Command Mission, Composition and Organization

a. Command Mission. The primary mission of USS TARAWA is to embark, deploy and land elements of a Marine Landing Force in an assault by helicopter, landing craft, or amphibious vehicles alone or in concert with other attached units of the Amphibious Ready Group and embarked Marine Expeditionary Unit. Other missions include service as flagship for embarked Amphibious Squadron, Flag or general staff; casualty receiving platform; support of special operations; command and control ship; assault provisions carrier to sustain embarked forces ashore. TARAWA also renders extensive humanitarian assistance to civilian populations, foreign or domestic, at the discretion of the National Command Authority.

b. Permanent Duty Station. TARAWA was homeported at Naval Station San Diego, California.

c. Command Composition. Ship's company included 62 officers and 970 enlisted.

d. Organizational Structure.

(1) Immediate Superior in Charge was Commander, Amphibious Group Three.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

(2) USS TARAWA Commanding Officer during 2000:

Captain Garry E. Hall
U.S. Navy, Designator 1310
Lineal Number: 002957-65
DOR: 1 May 97

3. TARAWA Departments included:

a. Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department

- (1) IM01 Division
- (2) IM02 Division
- (3) IM03 Division
- (4) IM04 Division

b. Air Department

- (1) V-1 Division
- (2) V-3 Division
- (3) V-4 Division
- (4) Crash and Salvage

c. Combat Cargo Department

d. Combat Systems Department

- (1) CA Division
- (2) CC Division
- (3) CE Division
- (4) CF Division
- (5) CW Division

e. Communications Department

- (1) CI Division
- (2) CR Division

f. Deck Department

- (1) First Division
- (2) Second Division
- (3) Third Division

g. Dental Department

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

h. Engineering Department

- (1) A Division
- (2) E Division
- (3) MP1 Division
- (4) MP2 Division
- (5) MP3 Division
- (6) R Division

i. Medical Department

j. Navigation/Executive Department

- (1) Navigation
- (2) Executive

k. Operations Department

- (1) OA Division
- (2) OC Division
- (3) OI Division
- (4) OZ Division

l. Safety Department

m. Supply Department

- (1) S-1 Division
- (2) S-2 Division
- (3) S-3 Division
- (4) S-4 Division
- (5) S-5 Division
- (6) S-6 Division
- (7) S-7 Division
- (8) S-8 Division

3. Chronology

Jun99-Aug00	IDTC (Inter-Deployment Training Cycle)
Sep99-Jan00	TSTA (Targeted Ship Training Availability)
Nov99-Feb00	FEP (Final Evaluation Period)
01 Jan	Moored Pier 13, Naval Station, San Diego.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

24 Jan Enroute to Camp Pendleton.

25 Jan Anchored SOCAL Camp Pendleton.

27 Jan SOCAL Op Area.

28 Jan Moored Pier 8, Naval Station, San Diego.

31 Jan Underway.

5-10 Feb AST (Amphibious Specialty Training); EKMS
(Electronic Key Management System) Inspection

03 Feb Moored Pier B Street North, San Diego.

04 Feb Hosted COMNAVREG Southwest Change of Command
Ceremony.

05 Feb Underway for AST and EKMS; Silver Strand
Anchorage, San Diego.

07 Feb Underway from Anchorage for Amphibious Exercise
in SOCAL Op Area.

10 Feb Moored Pier 8 Naval Station, San Diego.

Mar00 IART (Intermediate Amphibious Readiness Training)

21 Mar En route from San Diego, CA, to San Francisco,
CA.

24 Mar Moored Pier 30-32, San Francisco, CA.

27 Mar En route from San Francisco, CA, to San Diego,
CA.

31 Mar Moored Pier 13, San Diego, CA.

09 Apr En route from San Diego, CA, to SOCAL Op Area.

14 Apr Launched one missile from the after RAM and one
from the forward RAM.

21 Apr Moored Pier 13, San Diego, CA.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

16-26 May RIMPAC/FLEETEX (Rim of the Pacific/ Fleet Exercise); SACEX (Support Arms Coordination)

16 May En route from San Diego, CA, to SOCAL Op Area for FLEETEX.

21 May Anchored Wilson Cove, San Clemente Island. Underway.

23 May Anchored Wilson Cove, San Clemente Island.

24 May Underway SOCAL Op Area.

26 May Moored Pier 13, San Diego, CA.

19 Jun Underway SOCAL Op Area for SOCCEX.

29 Jun Moored Pier 13 San Diego.

31 Jul Passage to Fallbrook Anchorage.

01 Aug Underway SOCAL Op Area for AMMO Onload.

02 Aug Batteries released for PAC Fire MT 23.

03 Aug Conducted a UNREP with USNS Guadeloupe.

04 Aug Moored Pier 7, Naval Station San Diego.

14 Aug Underway enroute Pearl Harbor, HI. Embarked: Commander Amphibious Group Three, Captain Alan D. Wall; Thirteenth Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), Colonel Christopher J. Gunther. Chief of Naval Operations arrived onboard. Conducted ammo onload, LCAC and LCU onload, and HC-11and Harrier fly-on.

20 Aug Moored Pier H Naval Station Pearl Harbor.

21 Aug Received fuel from Pearl Harbor Fuel farm pier side.

22 Aug Underway enroute Darwin, Australia.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

29 Aug Conducted an All Hands Ceremony on the ship off the coast of the Tarawa Atoll and sent 100 personnel ashore to commemorate the World War II battle fought there.

30 Aug Conducted Shellback Initiation - Crossing the Equator.

02 Sept UNREP with USNS John Ericsson.

04 Sept Torres Strait transit and STUFFEX.

06 Sept Conducted UNREP with USS Bunker Hill.

07 Sept Clarence Strait transit. Moored at New Fort Hill Wharf, Darwin, Australia. The Thirteenth MEU conducted movement to training sites.

12 Sept Underway enroute to Dili, East Timor.

13 Sept Conducted UNREP with USNS John Erickson.

14 Sept Anchored off the coast of Dili, East Timor. Underway enroute Silat Watar area. LCAC/LCU/LCM-8 operations for the East Timor Community Relations projects.

15 Sept Anchored off the coast of Dili, East Timor. Underway enroute Silat Watar area to launch LCU-1666 and LCU-1632.

16 Sept Anchored off the coast of Dili, East Timor. LCAC/LCU/LCM-8 operations and HV lift for Community Relations projects in Atauro Islands. COMUSGET Change of Command Ceremony. Also conducted a crossdeck of the RHIB trailer to the USS Duluth. Concluded East Timor Operations and backloaded LCAC/LCU's/LCM-8. Underway enroute Singapore.

19 Sept Conducted archipelagic sea lanes passage of Indonesian Archipelago.

21 Sept Anchored off the coast of Singapore.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

22 Sept Conducted FCEP with Singapore Navy and FCU.
Conducted an LCAC swap of LCAC-31/62.

23 Sept Recovered LCU-1666 and 1632.

26 Sept Underway enroute Phuket, Thailand. Transited the
Strait of Malacca.

28 Sept Anchored off the coast of Phuket, Thailand.
Royal Malaysian Air Force contacted and conducted
fly-by 3nm across bow and 2nm down starboard side
during flight operations claiming Tarawa was in
Exclusive Economic Zone.

02 Oct Underway enroute Persian Gulf.

04 Oct Ship alongside USNS John Ericsson for UNREP
stationing

08 Oct Transferred from Seventh Fleet to Fifth Fleet.

12 Oct UNREP with USNS Walter S. Diehl.

19Oct-21Nov Operation Determined Response, Adem, Yemen
following horrific terrorist attack on USS Cole
in the Gulf of Aden.

23 Oct UNREP with USS Camden.

24 Oct Hosted Yemeni Armed Forces Chief of Staff.

03 Nov Conducted UNREP with USS Walter S. Diehl.

13 Nov Conducted UNREP with USS Camden.

14 Nov Conducted UNREP with USNS Spica.

26 Nov Moored to Mina Salman Pier, Bahrain.

27 Nov USS Cole crew evacuation.

29 Nov Underway Persian Gulf Op Area. Conducted UNREP
with USS Camden.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

30 Nov Hosted US Ambassador to Kuwait and Canadian Ambassador to Kuwait.

30Nov-10Dec MEUEX (Marine Expeditionary Unit Exercise) - Kuwait; Non-Combatant Evacuation Exercise (U.S. Embassy, Kuwait); Exercise Iron Magic - United Arab Emirates.

01 Dec Anchored Kuwait Bay.

06 Dec Underway in Persian Gulf.

08 Dec Conducted UNREP with USNS Walter S. Diehl.

09 Dec Anchored Kuwait Bay.

11 Dec Underway in Persian Gulf.

13 Dec Moored at Berth 10 Jebel-Ali.

16 Dec Underway. Conducted UNREP with USS Camden. Iranian P-3 passed down port side with a CPA of 6.5 NM. Warning was made to stay 5nm away in international waters.

17 Dec Iranian F-27 spotted 300R/8nm; flew over and up starboard side.

24 Dec Anchored at Port Victoria, Seychelles.

27 Dec Moored to pier, Port Victoria, Seychelles.

30 Dec Underway enroute Phuket, Thailand.

4. Narrative

USS TARAWA (LHA 1) has accomplished every mission in the Third, Fifth and Seventh Fleets, successfully embarking, deploying, and landing elements of the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) to conduct an assault by helicopter, landing craft, amphibious

vehicle, or any combination. TARAWA has impressively led the TARAWA Amphibious Ready Group (TARG) in attaining the highest-possible level of combat readiness, fully supporting U.S.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

national defense authorities' ability to conduct forward-deployed surface operations with an amphibious assault capability during sustained operations throughout the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

The USS Tarawa opened the year in the middle of her IDTC (Inter-Deployment Training Cycle), and closed the year with successful completion of the following: Amphibious Operations for Training (AOT; Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA); Supply Management Assessment (SMA); Final Evaluation Phase (FEP); Amphibious Specialty Training (AST); Intermediate Amphibious Readiness Training (IART); Comprehensive Training Exercise (COMPTUEX); Fleet Exercise (FLEETEX)/RIMPAC participation; Special Operations Command Certification & Exercises (SOCCERT/SOCEX); and Western Pacific (WESTPAC) and Indian Ocean (IO) SEVENTH/FIFTH Fleets deployment (AUG00-JAN01).

*The TARAWE embarked for deployment the following aircraft:

HMM-161 (REIN), 12 CH-46E, 4 CH-53E, 4 AH-1W, 3 UH-1N, 6 AV-8B HC-11 DET 5, and 2 HH-46D.

*Executed 6,505.7 incident free flight hours by Navy and Marine Corps aircraft during both training and operational commitments.

- Completed 9,556 takeoff and landing flight deck evolutions, 4,282 aircraft moves and 1274 elevator evolutions without incident. This year's mishap free record moves TARAWE's three-year record to 18,230 hours of safe aviation operations leading the "L" class in aviation safety excellence.

- The V-4 division received over 968,988 gallons of JP-5 and delivered over 1,023,237 gallons of JP-5 to the various USMC and Navy aircraft in support of flight operations.

- Conducted 10 VERTREPS moving over 2,750 pallets of stores and ammunition.

- TARAWE's Helicopter Direction Center controlled over 1,270 Sorties with zero incidents or flight violations zero class A, B, or C mishaps.

- Provided critical integrated aviation logistics support for six organic AV-8B Harriers... the first L-class in over 18 months to work up and deploy with these decisive ARG battle force multiplier assets.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

*Sustainment Training 19-22 August, Pearl Harbor

- VMA-214's AV-8B aircraft accomplished 40 ACM intensive sorties with local USAF assets.

*Interoperability Training 6-12 September, Darwin, Australia

- Supported cross-training operations with the Australian Army, Air Force, and Special Operations units. This included the safe movement of large amounts of ordnance ashore by CH-46 aircraft and multiple live fire exercises.

*Operation BOLD SAMARITAN, 14-16 September, Dili, East Timor

- TARAWA's flight deck provided multiple Forward Area Refueling Points (FARPs) to facilitate greater mission flexibility. The air assets also provided force protection through the transport of Security Detachments and flying armed escort missions.

*Operation DETERMINED RESPONSE, 13Oct-19Dec, Aden Yemen

- Within 24 hours of the USS Cole bombing, TARAWA performed the emergency airborne evacuation of theater weapons assets (Harpoon, SLAM, and Maverick missiles) from Qatar.

- TARAWA air assets provided logistics flights for armed coverage of all aspects of the operation around the clock.

*Operation IRON MAGIC, 15-26 November, United Arab Emirates

- Immediately following the successful recovery of USS Cole and her crew, TARAWA proceeded back into the Arabian Gulf to conduct joint training with the Armed forces of the United Arab Emirates. Evolutions including troop and equipment lifts, FARP establishment, and simulated aviation evacuation and operations in a chemical, biological, and radiological (CBR) environment were all conducted without a single incident.

*MEUEX, 1-9 December, Kuwait City

- Demonstrating the inherent power projection of the Marine Expeditionary Unit, the Air Combat Element (ACE) was flown ashore to participate in combined exercises ashore. The entire offload and return was flawlessly conducted by all elements of

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

the TARAWA ship/ air team. ACE conducted over 50 live-fire sorties, and interoperability training with Air Force and Army aircraft during the exercise.

*Operation ABLE COURIER, 24-30 December, Seychelles Islands

- In support of the United States diplomatic goals in the region, TARAWA transported 2 former US Coast Guard Motorized lifeboats for delivery to the government of the Seychelles Islands. This evolution culminated in the flawless and safe transfer of the boats and their associated equipment from TARAWA's flight deck utilizing the Amphibious Assault Crash Crane operated by the Crash Salvage Team of the Air Department.

*Completed highly successful TYCOM Boiler Light Off Inspection in June and pre-deployment diesel and steering inspections. Deployed with ZERO CASREPS.

*During Operation DETERMINED RESPONSE

- Provided sustained ballasting operations in excess of 30 straight days for LCU and LCAC operations.

- Skillfully fabricated shoring supports, reinforcing beams and stringers for COLE's severe bomb-blast damage providing bulkhead and deck structural integrity to allow loading in the BLUE MARLIN for the 12,000 NM transit back to her homeport in Norfolk.

- TARAWA's ARGIMA has completed 255 forces maintenance repair actions in 2,100 man-hours, an average turn-around time of 1.4 days, saving an estimated \$135,000 for six ships, three squadrons, and two assault craft detachments.

- During remote operations, TARAWA refueled three separate CRUDESGRU ships, delivering 400,000 gallons of DFM allowing these critical assets to stay on station for COLE force protection. During WESTPAC, TARAWA conducted fourteen UNREPS and received 6,883,819 gallons of ship (DFM) and jet (JP-5) fuel.

- Provided around the clock Damage Control teams to keep COLE afloat.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

- Sustained Full Power operations, steaming in excess of 24 knots for over 15 days in quick response actions in support of DETERMINED RESPONSE.

Significant Achievements during WESTPAC

EAST TIMOR

* Led Community Relations (COMREL) and humanitarian relief operations in East Timor. Mission accomplishments included:

- Exhaustive diligence ensured safe execution of extremely dynamic and complex Well Deck, small boat and anchoring evolutions under arduous conditions of near continuous amphibious operations in support of humanitarian relief operations in East Timor.

- Delivered over 40 tons of building materials and seven tons of medical supplies to remote sites throughout East Timor.

- Managed major communication and information system support for Tarawa, CPR5 and 13th MEU during sustainment training in Seventh Fleet and assistance operations in East Timor.

- Arranged distribution of project handclasp material to four separate sites in Dili, East Timor.

- Painted and repaired 95 foot tall catholic cathedral steeple and two elementary schools.

- Safely executed 105 flawless fixed and rotary wing launch and recovery evolutions during high tempo ops.

- Created Health Clinics, integrated forces, planned and implemented medical missions and provided unparalleled Navy and Marine medical support during three-day East Timor humanitarian visit.

- Overcame numerous obstacles in organizing food, water and supplies in addition to obtaining local volunteers in the community to assist the citizens of East Timor and guarantee the mission's success.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

OPERATION DETERMINED RESPONSE (ODR)

* Assumed CJTF flagship for Operation Determine Response (ODR). Coordinated essential sustainment operations for seven ships on-scene in Yemen in support of USS COLE.

* Led multi-faceted operation over a three-week period to save the Norfolk-base Guided missile destroyer USS COLE crippled by an explosion during a refueling stop in Aden, Yemen of 12 October 2000.

* Resolved damage control, logistics, force protection, and climate challenges into an impressive and tightly synchronized team effort and operation ISO ODR.

* Performed miraculous coordination to execute helicopter, boat and shore operations to provide critical services to USS COLE, enduring limited Yemeni government diplomatic clearance support.

* Operating in rough water and over long distance, provided security, logistics support and transportation for every command and agency involved.

* Assumed full control over COLE's CMS responsibilities providing security and transportation of critical encryption codes and tactical manuals.

* Provided hot meals, messing, and billeting, including manpower relief for command and control teams, engineers, and damage control security watches. Established field kitchens, provided round-the-clock food, initiated crew counseling and maintained crew morale and helped COLE Sailor through the tragedy.

* Commended by CINCLANTFLT for USS COLE support: "I want to pass on my heartfelt thanks for a job well done in support of USS COLE. It is truly inspiring to see and felt the cooperation and sense of purpose within this nation's militaries and other agencies. You all provided the very best from Physical security requirements and investigations to military pay support and everything in-between. The COLE was stabilized, the crew cared for, fed and clothes, and families supported. Your can-do response and our great American heritage. I have never been prouder to be a part of this effort."

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

* Demonstrated U.S. armed forces' "courage, resolve, and tenacity" that the Navy will not be diminished as demonstrated by the overwhelming determined response to terrorist attack on the USS COLE in Aden, Yemen on 12 October 2000.

* Performed the mission safely, precisely and efficiently under incredibly difficult circumstances, reflecting favorably on the Navy's image, character and courage.

DEPLOYMENT

* TARAWA displayed impressive forward-deployed battle readiness, participating in multi-faceted operations and bi-lateral exercises throughout the Western Pacific, Indian Ocean, and Persian Gulf. TARAWA met and exceeded the highest professional standards.

* While maintaining an aggressive schedule, Tarawa improved battle readiness and efficiency in every mission area. Excelled in all Maritime Warfare Operations.

* Directed smooth replenishments averaging over seventy thousand pounds and 1.3 mission dollars in cost per evolution.

* Integrated ship's company and Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) into combat-ready fighting force, fully able to respond in hostile and extremely arduous environment.

* Conducted historical ceremonies at Tarawa, Guadalcanal, and Iwo Jima battle sites.

* Impressively enhanced material and operational readiness for 24-year old ship.

* Executed over 6500 mishap-free flight hours, over 9500 AV-8, CH-46, and CH-53 launches and recoveries, ten Vertical Replenishments, while steaming over 35,000 NM.

* Ensured adept management of all aspects of maintenance, training, and operation of an aging LHA propulsion plant. Completed the Engineering Certification on schedule despite a significant mechanical casualty during the basic training phase.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

* TARAWA was the first Pacific Fleet LHA-class ship in over a year to perform a Full Power operation. During the out-brief, the Senior Assessor acknowledged TARAWA as the standard all ships should strive to attain in engineering readiness.

* Established Amphibious Readiness Group IMA (ARGIMA) repair capability; standardized ship configuration, resolved fleet-wide ship alteration conflicts, and avoided costly installs of over \$12 Million in retrofit funds.

* Led impressive TARG public affairs coverage during humanitarian assistance operations during Operation Determined

Response for USS COLE in Aden, Yemen, as well as conducting historical commemoration ceremonies at the Tarawa, Guadalcanal, and Iwo Jima battle sites.

COMMAND

* Recognized personnel for accomplishments as well as shortcomings. Unmatched leader in "people-programs." Promoted Equal Opportunity which led ISIC to conclude command climate was the most positive sea-going unit on the waterfront.

* Retention statistics greatly exceeding Navy goals. Promoted Blue Jacket HARP program. Set a goal to reenlist over 100 people on deployment and reward over a half-million dollars in Selective Reenlistment Bonuses (SRB): shattered goals by reenlisting 140 personnel and awarding over \$1.1 million in SRB. TARAWA retention statistics for the period July 2000-January 2001 were:

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>NAVY GOAL</u>	<u>TARAWA</u>	<u>PLUS</u>
FIRST TERM	33.5%	52.0%	+18.5%
SECOND TERM	49.5%	61.5%	+12.0%
CAREER	57.5%	80.0%	+22.5%

First Term retention for the First Quarter of FY-2001 (OCT-DEC 2000) was a phenomenal 77.6%, with Second Term and Career retention exceeding an impressive 80%. Positive retention resulted from the positive command climate.

* Positive leadership influenced over 100 crewmembers (10%-plus of crew) to extend for deployment. Over 36 percent of

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

advancement exam participants have been promoted in past 18 months, significantly outpacing Navy-wide percentages.

* Overcame every obstacle. Watch standers performed as seasoned Sailors despite equipment installations exceeding established lifelines; crew performed as though they have been training on the equipment for years.

* Demonstrated exceptional skill and flawless seamanship during near continuous amphibious operations in East Timor, Yemen, and Persian Gulf.

* Substantially improved amphibious assault and force protection capability.

* Crew conduct promoted Navy ambassadorship during port visits to San Francisco, Pearl Harbor, Darwin, Australia, Phuket, Thailand, Bahrain, Aden, Yemen, Jebel Ali UAE, Seychelles, and Hong Kong. No major incidents.

TARAWA's continuous improvement, mission accomplishment, and high morale throughout extended arduous operations in a potentially hostile environment demonstrated extraordinary performance of over 2300 male-female USN-USMC crew in THIRD, FIFTH and SEVENTH Fleets, and set the standard for amphibious ship's throughout the Pacific Fleet.


J. L. CLARK