# FACEPLATE

The Official Newsletter for the Divers and Salvors of the United States Navy

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P-8A Salvage in Kaneohe Bay
CTG 73.6, RTN Dive Unit 1 Completes HTMS Sukhothai Salvage
RMCs Evolving Role in Voyage Repair in the Far East
UCT TWO Completes Vital Projects on Infrastructure

# FACEPLATE

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Articles, letters, queries and comments should be directed to the Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command, NAVSEA 00C, 1333 Isaac Hull Ave. SE Stop 1070, Washington Navy Yard, DC 20376-1070. (Attn: FACEPLATE). Visit our website at **http://www.navsea.navy.mil/Home/SUPSALV/00C3-Diving/Faceplate-Magazine/** to view/print Faceplate.

## *Editorial Staff*



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MDV Jeremy Kilchenstein from MDSU ONE and LCDR Neil Tublin from SUPSALV prepare for an inspection dive prior to commencing aircraft defueling.
Photo by: CWO-2 Stephen Vanzant

# SUPSALV SENDS ...CAPT Sal Suarez

As always, the diving Navy is busy. Between testing down at NEDU, salvage operations in partnership with the ROK Navy, and the ever-present need for Underwater Ship's Husbandry (UWSH) work to try and keep our fleet fit to fight, there's always something interesting going on!

Upfront, I'd like to wish fair winds and following seas to Mr. Rick Thiel, who's been working in the SUPSALV office for 20 years, starting first as a Salvage Engineer then quickly transitioning into the ESSM Program Manager position for 17 years! Due to sustained superior performance and his happy demeanor, he will be missed. His relief is Mr. Eric Brege, who recently retired from active duty where one of his previous tours was assigned to SUPSALV as a Salvage Officer – another outstanding fit for the office and for the ESSM PM position. I'm looking forward to continued outstanding support from Eric to keep the ESSM machine moving forward to support the fleet!

Never ones to rest on their (many) laurels, the divers working in our UWSH lockers are always delivering a solid effort with outstanding performance! Due to some flooding during a tow of a decommissioned LCS to the inactive fleet, we've been engaged with Southeast Regional Maintenance Center (SERMC) and Surfaces Forces Atlantic to shore up the water jet tunnels for tow and storage. The SERMC locker helped mitigate the initial salvage need by placing a cofferdam until a more permanent solution could be put into place.

Ultimately, this led to the determination that the best mitigation was to blank all waterjet tunnels on these decommissioned ships to prevent additional leaks from developing while in storage within the inactive fleet. While I generalized the solution here, it was no small feat to get here. The way ahead includes fabrication of the patches and development of the procedure, ultimately leading to the (currently underway) effort of welding blanks into place, all in hopes of beating the approaching 2024 hurricane season.

Another UWSH win – a huge win, at that – was the emergent work over at Southwest Regional Maintenance Center (SWRMC) on the USS BOXER. This undertaking garnered heavy interest all the way up! Working 24-hour operations, the SWRMC/00C team accomplished the propeller repairs in 8 days(!), allowing the USS BOXER to meet her fleet commitments. This outstanding achievement that was recognized by SWOBOSS and all levels in between, and serves as another example of a waterfront locker getting it done when the pressure was on!

In the last issue, I mentioned the (then impending) Salvage Executive Steering Committee (S-ESC). That was a great discussion, one where we had a lot of fleet engagement from divers at salvage and UWSH commands, the Military Sealift Command (MSC) Headquarters, the program office in charge of the new salvage ship (T-ATS), NEDU representatives, and others. It was a good, honest discussion about the state of Navy salvage capability, and I applaud those that spoke up – some 'Get Real' moments. I've finished my outbriefs to the stakeholders at OPNAV N3, MSC, and NECC, so I'm hoping we can get after some 'Get Better' initiatives to ensure we can continue to enable the work the Navy expects of all of us, when needed. While I hope that call for action is well in the future, I think we all agree we should keep our skillsets honed as best we can in the coming years, and I will continue to push as best I can for the resources and assets you need to get the sets and reps in.

To that end, there are a few really good BDA/R exercises planned for the summer of 2024 – one in conjunction with RIMPAC and another as part of Atlantic Thunder 2024. I'm looking forward to seeing as much fleet engagement as we can get into the timelines (and budgets...) and plan to discuss these in the next issue of Faceplate. Hooyah, Deep Sea!

# Underwater Construction Team TWO Completes Vital Projects on Undersea and Waterfront Infrastructure at NSF Diego Garcia

**By: LT Pete Schmillen, LT Darek Ditto, and LTJG Tom McDowell**

U.S. Navy Seabee Divers from Underwater Construction Team (UCT) TWO, Construction Dive Detachment (CDD) ALFA, recently completed various undersea infrastructure repairs and maintenance actions, two fleet mooring inspections, and a bathymetric survey at Naval Support Facility (NSF) Diego Garcia. CDD ALFA, assigned to 30th Naval Construction Regiment, overcame several challenges during the mission, most notably, a significant travel delay resulting from aircraft mechanical issues that reduced the detachment's planned execution time for the Diego Garcia mission by 50%. Despite the condensed timeline, the dive detachment was able to work efficiently and effectively, completing 100% of assigned tasking in Diego Garcia. The Dive Detachment's work directly supported missions and initiatives of Naval Facilities Engineering and Expeditionary Warfare Center (NAVFAC EXWC), Diego Garcia Public Works Department (PWD), and Naval Research Laboratory.

UCT TWO Construction Dive Detachment ALFA's official tasking in Diego Garcia called for the maintenance and repairs of the Hydro-acoustic Data Acquisition System (HDAS) Cable, two fleet mooring inspections on buoys used at the installations POL (Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants) pier, and other critical underwater infrastructure. The maintenance actions on the undersea infrastructure included the installation of two Yale Grip strain reliefs, installation of 122 feet of articulated pipe, and replacing zinc anodes. These maintenance and repair actions will significantly extend the lifespan of these important systems.

Another portion of CDD ALFA's deployment tasking in Diego Garcia was the Fleet Mooring Inspection of the harbor's Fleet Mooring Buoys, which are used for vessel POL fueling. Inspection and zinc installation on the buoys ensured the serviceability of critical vessel mooring points at the installation's refueling pier, directly supporting fleet maneuver throughout the INDOPACOM AOR. The diver's inspections on these moorings included the use of specialized gauges to measure the degradation and corrosion of the supporting chains. These regular inspections are critical to ensuring the moorings are ready for operational use. Installation of sacrificial zinc anodes prevents the further degradation of the mooring system. When asked about the adversity and significance of the job, CM2 Martinez, a lead diver on the project, stated, "The Island itself presents several logistical issues and challenges, but the opportunity to dive and com-

*SW2 Andrew Cuellar installs new sacrificial zinc anodes on the Hydroacoustic Data Acquisition System (HDAS) to prolong the system's lifecycle.*

plete meaningful work in a beautiful environment made it all worthwhile."

While on site in Diego Garcia, the detachment received additional tasking to execute a hydrographic survey at the wharf in the Diego Garcia Harbor. The Diego Garcia Harbor Pilot suspected the presence of debris on the seafloor and requested engineering data and imagery to confirm. The hydrographic survey conducted by the detachment informed critical decisions for the Diego Garcia Port Operations team, particularly vessel mooring plans and navigational chart revisions. Commenting on the additional survey tasking, LTJG Darek Ditto, UCT TWO CDD ALFA OIC, said, "Our personnel rose to the occasion and really accepted the challenges here in Diego Garcia. It is clear that our divers were focused and determined to complete important work in an important location."

*SW2 Andrew Cuellar installs new sacrificial zinc anodes on the Hydroacoustic Data Acquisition System (HDAS) to prolong the system's lifecycle.*

Despite the detachment's short amount of time on Diego Garcia, the team was still able to have a tremendous impact on the island's waterfront and undersea infrastructure. CDR Nicholas Brown, Public Works Officer, NSF Diego Garcia, elaborated on this statement by saying "The UCT-2 detachment not only fulfilled their mission to inspect critical underwater infrastructure but also took on important emerging tasking to map obstructions at our deep draft wharf. Their exceptional work exemplifies the power of collaboration and expertise in safeguarding our maritime assets. They dive deep to ensure our operations stay afloat."

*Diego Garcia Project Supervisor, BU1 Jesus Saucedogomez, briefs divers on articulated pipe installation..*

*Hydrographic survey technicians from Underwater Construction Team TWO complete a bathymetric survey in the Diego Garcia harbor.*

Underwater Construction Team TWO (UCT TWO), homeported out of Port Hueneme, CA, provides undersea construction, inspection, repair, and maintenance of ocean facilities in support of Navy and Marine Corps operations, to include repair of battle damage. UCT TWO serves as C7F's experts in waterfront engineering and undersea construction. In time of emergency or disaster, UCT TWO is capable of conducting disaster relief and recovery operations.

U.S. Navy Support Facility Diego Garcia provides logistic support to operational forces forward deployed to the Indian Ocean and Arabian Gulf areas of responsibility. The maintenance of undersea and waterfront infrastructure at this strategic and austere installation is of vital importance to DOD initiatives.

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*LT Pete Schmillen, Operations Officer, Underwater Construction Team TWO, Port Hueneme, CA.*

*LT Darek Ditto, Assistant Operations Officer, Underwater Construction Team TWO, Port Hueneme, CA.*

*LTJG Tom McDowell, Officer in Charge of Construction Dive Detachment ALFA (CDD/A), Underwater Construction Team TWO, Port Hueneme, CA.*

# Command in the SPOTLIGHT

# Over the Side: Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Divers

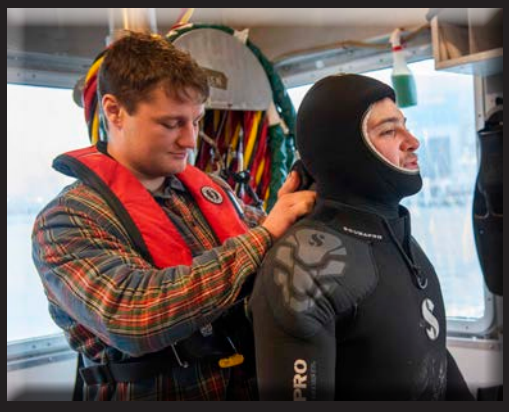
By: Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Charlotte C. Oliver

Submerging into the dark depths of the Piscataqua River on a dreary February morning, two divers sink beneath the surface of the chilly 41-degree river. Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (PNSY) divers Xavier Framilla and Jackson Howarth are over the side of the Virginia-class attack submarine USS TEXAS (SSN 775). It's business as usual for the members of the PNSY dive locker.

The divers conduct various repairs and inspections to the submarines at PNSY year-round and set up the keel blocks in Dry Dock 1. They are also responsible for the hull maintenance of the barges, including the removal of sea deposits, such as algae and barnacles.

As PNSY grows, so does the need for divers. Following a recent Navy Manpower Analysis Center review of all Underwater Ships Husbandry commands, PNSY will be looking to request an additional six Navy billets. The shipyard hopes to add a Chief Warrant Officer, an additional Chief and First Class Petty Officer, as well as three more Second Class Petty Officers, with hope of a total combined end strength of 23 civilian and military personnel. The once all-civilian crew has now expanded to include Master Chief Navy Diver (Master Diver) Justin Stehr and Chief Navy Diver Jordan Mcelyea and soon will add a First Class and Second Class Navy Diver that are scheduled to arrive this summer.

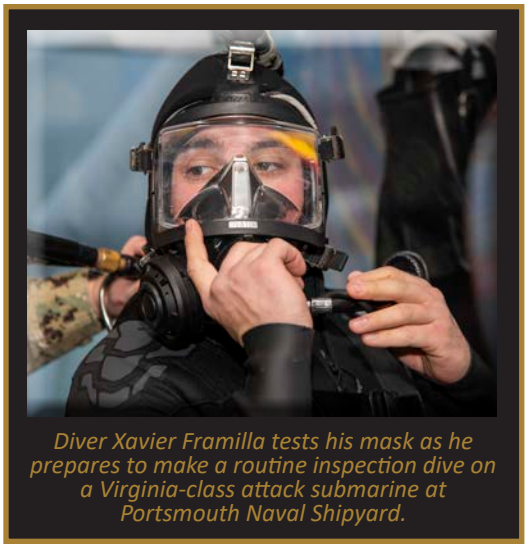
*Diver Xavier Framilla submerges to make a routine inspection dive on a Virginia-class attack submarine at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.*



*Diver Josh Smith, left, assists Diver Xavier Framilla suit up to make a routine inspection dive on a Virginia-class attack submarine at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.*

PNSY divers, both civilian and Navy, have common paths. They both attend the Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center, located at Naval Support Activity in Panama City, Florida. It is the largest diving facility in the world.

Each diver at PNSY has different story of how they came to join this small, but growing team of elite technicians.

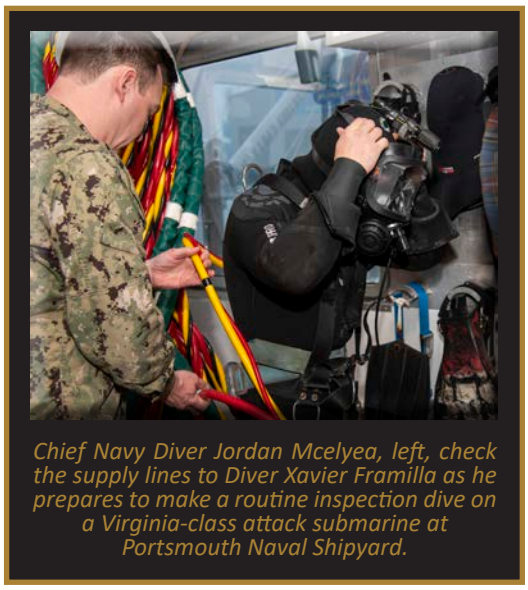


*Diver Xavier Framilla tests his mask as he prepares to make a routine inspection dive on a Virginia-class attack submarine at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.*

"Another rigger who I was working with at the time told me about the dive team here at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard," said Howarth. "I liked how it was a small group of tight knit guys who specialize in a skill that not many others have. I grew up playing sports so I was attracted to that kind of team that can work together to achieve a common goal."

Trust is everything. Prior to attending dive school, applicants are interviewed by members of the dive locker to ensure they will be a good fit to work with the team. The dive team also puts applicants through a physical screening test (PST). The PST consists of a 500-yard swim in 12:30 minutes or less; 50 push-ups in 2 minutes; 50 curl-ups in 2 minutes; 6 pull-ups with no time limit; and a 1.5 mile run in 12:30 minutes or less.

"I took the PST supervised by the dive crew and learned that swimming for distance is much harder than I thought," Howarth said of his dive school preparation. "I was told this is the bare minimum and that at dive school the PST is the easiest evolution you will be put through. I instantly took to the challenge to give myself a new goal to accomplish. The water component to the training was something I had never experienced before and the difficulty of it made me want to accomplish my goal of graduating Navy Dive School even more."

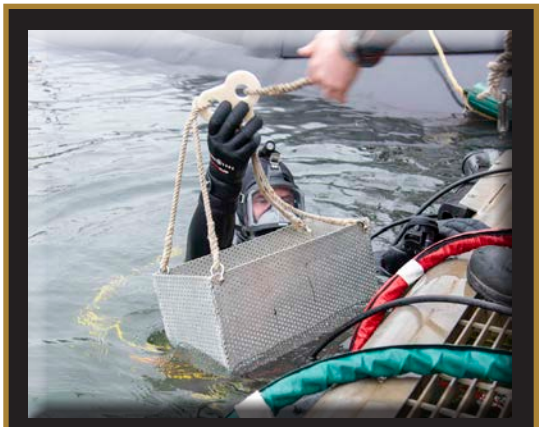


*Chief Navy Diver Jordan Mcelyea, left, check the supply lines to Diver Xavier Framilla as he prepares to make a routine inspection dive on a Virginia-class attack submarine at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.*

*Diver Xavier Framilla enters the water from the dive barge to make a routine inspection dive on a Virginia-class attack submarine at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.*

If applicants can pass these requirements, they may apply to attend dive school. The grueling 20-week course will push even the most seasoned athlete and diver to their physical and mental limits. U.S. Navy Dive School has one of the highest attrition rates of all Navy schools; 40 to 50 percent will fail.

"We are looking for athletes," said Stehr. "Navy divers, both civilian and active duty military, must be able to handle the physical stresses of the job but also have the mental toughness to overcome the arduous nature of diving. Above all else however, they must have the ability to work well in a team environment. Divers rely on each other with their lives, literally."



*Diver Jackson Howarth receives tools from the dive barge while making a routine inspection dive on a Virginia-class attack submarine at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard.*

Even though many of the civilian divers at PNSY come from the rigger shop, Diving Supervisor, Jared Richards, wants to ensure that anyone from any shop is not only welcome, but encouraged to come visit the dive locker if they are interested in becoming a diver.

"As volunteer numbers within from the rigger shop decreased, we have started recruiting from other trades," said Richards of finding diver applicants. "Ideally, candidates will have a good amount of experience working throughout Los Angeles-class and Virginia-class submarines. They should also be comfortable in confined spaces, mechanically versatile, and physically fit."

For more information on becoming a Navy diver, visit www.netc.navy.mil/NDSTC/ or contact Master Diver Justin Stehr at justin.p.stehr.mil@us.navy.mil or Jared Richards at jared.a.richards4.civ@us.navy.mil.

# SEALAB I

## The Birth of U.S. Navy Saturation Diving

By: Steve Mulholland

SEALAB I was the pioneering experiment to determine the capability of men to live and work for extended periods under great pressure at considerable depth. In SEALAB I, conducted off the coast of Bermuda in July 1964, four Navy Divers - Chief Quartermaster Robert "Bob" Barth, Chief Hospital Corpsman Sanders "Tiger" Manning, Gunner's Mate Lester "Andy" Anderson and LCDR, then Lt, Robert Thompson - lived and worked comfortably and safely for 11 days at a depth of 193 feet. The habitat, the brainchild of CAPT George F. Bond, MC, USN, was built in 1964 at the Mine Defense Laboratory, now NSA Panama City. SEALAB I is nine feet in diameter, 40 feet long, and was fabricated from two large surplus anti-submarine net floats. The internal equipment of the undersea house provided most of the normal accouterments of terrestrial living, plus immediate access to the adjacent ocean floor via an open entrance trunk. Surface support was provided from a Navy Lighter (YFNB-12) barge anchored above the habitat, where a multipurpose umbilical ran to SEALAB I, providing power, communications, video, and emergency gas and water supplies. It was also supported by the USN research platform, Argus Island, a Texas Tower structure similar to offshore oil drilling platforms, and a key reason the Bermuda site was selected for the first habitat deployment. SEALAB I was the U.S. Navy's first ocean floor habitat and answered the question of whether men could live and do meaningful work on the ocean floor. While it had its share of technical difficulties, SEALAB I was a major success.

Following the successful SEALAB I experiment, the crew of the Navy's newly designated "Man-in-the-Sea Program" set their sights on a brand new, much more sophisticated habitat, that would be used for the SEALAB II experiment in 1965 and SEALAB Ill experiment in 1969. The planned experiments would conduct further research that started with the SEALAB I experiment. In the meantime, SEALAB I came back to the Mine Defense Laboratory in Panama City. Senior Engineer Bill Culpepper, who also engineered SEALAB II, found a great use for the SEALAB I habitat. It went through several modifications, including a new conning tower (so larger equipment could be lowered into the habitat rather than going through the smaller hatch in the underside) and a black and white paint scheme. SEALAB I would become a major component of the STEP (Submerged Test Engineering Platform) Program. It was lowered to its new home about two miles off the coast of Panama City in the Gulf of Mexico next to the Navy's Stage Il Research Platform. During its time in the STEP Program, SEALAB I became an underwater laboratory for a series of equipment and procedures testing to be used in the forthcoming SEALAB III experiment and future Man-in-the-Sea projects.

*SEALAB current condition at the Man in the Sea Museum.*

After the STEP program, SEALAB remained an underwater laboratory for the Scientist-in-the Sea Program developed by CAPT Bond who was still very active in sea-dwelling practices and theories. CAPT Bond led a partnership between the Navy, NOAA, and the Florida University System offering a multi-disciplined, full-time, summer-long graduate credit program that exposed students to the underwater life-support and data collecting technology available at that time. The program was very successful. However, in 1974, SEALAB I was sealed and abandoned by the Navy on the ocean floor for almost a decade.

SEALAB I received a new lease on life when the Navy's Experimental Div-

ing Unit (NEDU) and Diving & Salvage Training Centre (NDSTC), joined forces to raise the now historic habitat. During its time on the bottom, SEALAB had become an artificial reef. It took divers several weeks to clean and patch the habitat for its eventual ascent to the surface in June 1981. After it was raised, the habitat was towed to Alligator Bayou to be further cleaned, scraped, and basic repairs made. Prior to the recovery, CAPT Bond led a group of divers, many associated in the Man-in-the-Sea Program, in starting the Institute of Diving (IOD). The major focus of the IOD was to preserve the Man-in-the-Sea Program's history and heritage, as well as become a resource for the furtherance of diving - military, commercial, and recreational. In February 1982, the IOD's efforts culminated in a new International Diving Museum. The somewhat patched and newly painted SEALAB I was placed outside of that first museum, marking its first out-of-water home. The IOD was offered property for a new museum on Panama City Beach Parkway (formerly Back Beach Road or W. Hwy 98), and the museum, along with SEALAB I, moved in 1987 to its current location. To move the habitat, it had to be trucked across the Hathaway Bridge. Because SEALAB I was too tall for the bridge's vertical clearance, the vessel's legs had to be cut from the body. Now in two parts the habitat was successfully transferred to the new property and the legs welded back on. The plans for a complete restoration were never realized, and for 33 years, the historic habitat became weathered and rusted. In 2014, the museum developed a plan to restore SEALAB I to its original 1964 condition with the intention of making it a walk-in exhibit.

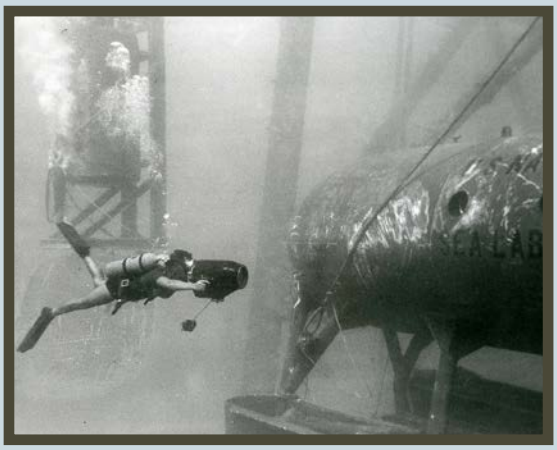
In 2023, over 8,000 visitors walked through SEALAB and learned the history of what these brave Aquanauts accomplished. The Man in the Sea Museum is honored to host a celebration of its 60th anniversary in July of 2024. Aquanauts and family members will all be in attendance for this Honored event. To find out more information on this celebration, please visit www.maninthesea.org.


*SEALAB I in Panama City prior to launch.*

*Sealab Crew Members. Left to right: Sanders Manning, Lester Anderson, Bob Barth, and Robert Thompson, 1964.*

*Argus Island, location of SEALAB I experiment 1964.*

*Interior of SEALAB I 1964.*



*SEALAB I being lowered 1964.*

*SEALAB I Team 1964.*

# P-8A Salvage in Kaneohe Bay: Teamwork and Roller Bags

**By: LCDR Neil Tublin**


Each year at the Salvage ESC there is a desire to have more integrated operations between the MDSU Companies and the NAVSEA Supervisor of Salvage and Diving. Oftentimes when opportunities arise for this integration there are several hurdles to overcome that prevent the collaboration from taking place, causing another missed opportunity. On November 20th, 2023, a P-8A Poseidon was executing an instrument approach into Marine Corps Base Hawaii's airfield and overran the runway after landing, coming to rest on a reef in Kaneohe Bay. Thankfully all the aircrew survived the incident, however the P-8A would need to be removed from Kaneohe Bay as quickly as possible to prevent further damage to the environment, and prevent further damage to the aircraft. The operation to salvage the aircraft and protect Kaneohe Bay ended up being an amazing collaboration between not only SUPSALV and MDSU, but also several organizations on Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH).

MDSU ONE quickly reacted to provided immediate assistance, working in the dark and pouring rain to ensure the aircraft remained in place. Utilizing bulldozers provided by the Marine Wing Support Squadron (MWSS) as shore-based anchors, along with actual anchors provided by MCBH's Port Operations, they were able to secure the aircraft in place with mooring lines. Fortunately, the aircraft didn't appear to have any active leaks, however, any inclement weather would have the potential to disrupt the airframe and potentially cause more damage, not to mention that the salvage operation itself always has the potential to cause pollutants to be released into the water. Multiple booms were installed around the aircraft as a precaution to prevent any pollutants from making their way further into the bay.

All of this, along with initial survey dives, took place prior to SUPSALV's arrival on scene and were vital to the success of the operation. SUPSALV worked with MDSU to coordinate providing ESSM equipment to the work site, providing additional boom, command vans, salvage material and equipment, and personnel. With SUPSALV on site with a small team from SMIT, the situation was thoroughly evaluated and it was determined that the best course of action was to first defuel the aircraft then utilize roller bags to float and roll the aircraft back onto land, with linear pullers from the ESSM inventory providing the pulling force.


First stages of removing aircraft from the water utilizing roller bags and linear pullers.


Placement of roller bags on the nose was particularly important to avoid damaging aircraft further due to the slope at the end of the runoff.

Tail view of P-8A after being rotated to the proper position for removal. After being floated via roller bags this orientation was achieved by tightening and slacking mooring lines.


Roller bags strategically placed to continue moving aircraft to a safe location on the runway.


P-8A maintainers conduct landing gear inspection prior to removing roller bags.


P-8A safely towed to hanger after the successful salvage operation.

While those steps may sound simple enough, they required great attention to detail and coordination of several assets and organizations. The VP squadron XO, CDR Shultz, walked the SUPSALV, SMIT, and MDSU team through the defueling procedure on a P-8A at Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam, which was a fantastic familiarization tool that should be replicated for future operations when able. If the team that is diving can see what they're diving on while it's on dry land it will greatly improve their situational awareness and efficiency in the water. The MDSU team executed the steps required to set the aircraft up for defueling and SUPSALV provided the hoses and trucks for offloading the fuel.

Once the aircraft was defueled, the MDSU team set the roller bags underneath the aircraft based on the plans created by the contractors providing the roller bags, Center Lift, in coordination with the SUPSALV representative on site, the MDSU ONE EDO LCDR Nick Twisselman, CPF Diving and Salvage Officer LCDR Englehart, and the aircraft engineers from Boeing. With SUPSALV supervision, Center Lift direction, and MDSU operating the linear pullers with guidance from ESSM, the roller bags were inflated and floated the aircraft to the shoreline, rotating as necessary by adjusting the makeshift mooring lines, then slowly rolled the aircraft onto shore, shifting the roller bag positions as required, until the aircraft was safely on the runway. After a landing gear integrity check, it was determined that the aircraft could be towed to the hangar utilizing a normal aircraft towing vehicle.

While the Navy Planning Process is appropriate in certain contexts, this operation's success was hindered by attempting to utilized it in this scenario. The Navy Planning Process distracted from developing actual courses of action and forced MDSU action officers to develop courses of action that weren't feasible, and to provide timelines that weren't realistic. Delays in action while awaiting approval to execute in combination with one timely storm could have resulted in destruction of the aircraft, and could have been catastrophic to the environment. Command by negation is the more appropriate solution for emergent operations such as this one. Salvage operations require that the experts on site are given the freedom to make timely decisions using their expertise and best judgement.

This operation was an amazing success due to the team on the ground working together to accomplish the mission. The SUPSALV, MDSU, and contractor leadership on the ground established a positive working relationship immediately. With SUPSALV directing the salvage, the MDSU CO handling command and control, MDSU divers contributing diving expertise and salvage knowledge while gaining more experience utilizing ESSM equipment, and SUPSALV's contractors providing equipment, personnel, and expertise, the aircraft was removed Kaneohe Bay with minimal additional damage to the aircraft and the environment. It also cannot be understated how much MCBH's teams, from Port Operations, environmental, MWSS, and the base itself contributed to the operation's success.

**MDV Kilchenstein briefs the defueling plan to the MDSU company prior to operations.**

**ESSM personnel familiarize MDSU divers with the controls for the linear pullers prior to use.**

**SUPSALV, MDSU ONE, support contractors, and other military salvage personnel successfully complete the salvage of P-8A.**

*Article cover photo: Roller bags being inflated to lift the aircraft off of the reef.*

*LCDR Neil Tublin is an Engineering Duty Officer Diver and has served as an Assistant for Salvage at SUPSALV since June 2021.*

# RMCs Evolving Role in Voyage Repair in the Far East

By: NDC Bryan Myers

Ship Repair Facility, Japan Regional Maintenance Center (SRF-JRMC) Yokosuka and Detachment Sasebo's mission is to provide intermediate and depot-level maintenance to 22 forward deployed naval force ships, including CNO and Continuous Maintenance (CMAV/CM) availability, planning, execution, and oversight. However, in recent months SRF has looked to expand this mission in order to satisfy an emerging demand for Voyage Repair capabilities, to include underwater ship's husbandry - the particular focus of this article.

Since the beginning of 2023, there has been a persistent need for routine and emergent maintenance in the 7th Fleet AOR resulting in increased taskings from CTF-73 and the christening of the new SRF Detachment Singapore in August. In a nine-month period, accomplishing 12 fly-away missions to Singapore, Guam, Australia, Bali, and Malaysia, SRF-JRMC Navy divers, in some cases working in conjunction with Southwest Regional Maintenance Center (SWRMC) and IMF Pearl Harbor divers, have accumulated 136 days TAD supporting underwater ship's husbandry repairs for forward deployed Littoral Combat Ships and Destroyers. This need reflects a trending increase prior to falling off dramatically during the pandemic, but as travel restrictions have lifted, normal operations have resumed and SRF has refocused efforts to continue developing creative solutions to ensure the adequate distribution of manpower and resources.

Streamlining logistics, strengthening partnerships with foreign nations, as well as integrating highly capable Ship's Force into unplanned and emergent repairs are simply a few of the solutions that have resulted in the execution of SRF's first all-encompassing Ship Wartime and Repair Maintenance (SWaRM) exercise in partner with the USS Rafael Peralta (DDG-115) conducted in Sydney, Australia this past August. The primary objective of the exercise, to deploy a joint team of SRF Yokosuka and Sasebo Navy Divers in order to conduct emergent underwater ship's husbandry repair, on an expedited timeline, in an expeditionary location, with minimal footprint. The purpose, to identify and address obstacles that accompany a Voyage Repair Availability (VRAV) and assess the performance, timeliness, and limitations of conducting ship repairs away from home ports. Overall, the end result was more than just a successfully completed ship repair and inspection, it was a pinnacle display of mutual re-

*ND1 Dorsey verifies surface checks*

*SRF Leadership meet with ADF Dive School Staff.*

*ND2 Vandinter works onboard with DDG-115 crew to fabricate cofferdams*

spect and partnership, including multiple entities of multiple nations coming together to achieve an objective.

Partnering with Australian divers, SRF established a working relationship with the doctors and hyperbaric staff of Australia's Submarine and Underwater Medicine Unit (SUMU) of HMAS Penguin to provide medical assistance and hyperbaric support in the event of diving related casualties. The Australian Defense Forces Diving School staff provided air compressors and system operators in order to maintain system readiness and ensure continual diving operations. Rafael Peralta's Independent Duty Corpsman, working with SRF's Diving Medical Technician, gathered essential medical supplies required to conduct diving operations. Ship's Force provided access to tools and sheet metal materials and a certified welder to assist in the onsite fabrication of cofferdams needed to complete the repairs. SRF Yokosuka and Sasebo Navy Divers coordinated the logistics of equipment and personnel to come together to execute dives completing all mission objectives.

The exercise showed that through these developed partnerships Navy Divers can maintain forward deployed ships in need, and rapidly return them to Full Mission Capable, allowing them to stay on patrol when previously the alternative was a return to home port or operating in a limited capacity.

*SRF Divers tour Chamber facilities with SUMU Hyperbaric Medical Specialists.*

*NDC Bryan Myers, SRF-JRMC det Sasebo LCPO*

# This Day in Diving History

By: MDV David Gove

## Chief Gunners Mate Frank William Crilley Rescue

The F-4 had sank due to loss of depth control on 25 March 1915 off the coast of Honolulu. Navy Divers were in process of raising the sunken U-boat from 306 feet below the water's surface. Keep in mind that in 1915 Deep Sea Diving was far more art than science with equipment that was cumbersome by today's standards. Mixed-gas would not be discovered/developed as a diving breathing medium for another 24 years so the entire operation would have to be conducted on air. It was unknown whether the Divers could withstand the pressure at 300fsw because no one had ever dove that deep.

During the operation, GMC Frank Loughman followed an 8-inch thick steel hawser 250 feet down. At this depth, the current caused the hawser to bend. Loughman paused to rest and became entangled in the hawser, breaking his hip in the process. Loughman fell unconscious and GMC Frank W. Crilley dove in after him, disregarding personal safety. He found Loughman and worked for an hour and a half to free him. Both men took hours to decompress and developed decompression sickness on the surface.

For his heroism, Crilley became the first Navy Diver to be awarded the Medal of Honor on February 15, 1929. This is even more impressive when it is understood that the entire operation and rescue was conducted with air as the breathing medium. William Crilley was also awarded the Navy Cross for his actions later on the submarine salvage S-4 which would occur some 13 years later, but that is a different story.

Note: USS CRILLEY (YHLC-1), a heavy salvage lifting craft was commissioned in 1967 in support of Pacific theater salvage operations. The SWRMC Divers (formally CDU) facility was named in his honor on March 22, 2002. There is also a building in the Washington Navy Yard named after him.

Medal of Honor citation of Chief Gunner's Mate Frank W. Crilley: "For display of extraordinary heroism in the line of his profession above and beyond the call of duty during the diving operations in connection with the sinking in a depth of water 304 feet, of the U.S.S. F-4 with all on board, as a result of loss of depth control, which occurred off Honolulu, T.H., on 25 March 1915. On 17 April 1915, William F. Loughman, chief gunner's mate, United States Navy, who had descended to the wreck and had examined one of the wire hawsers attached to it, upon starting his ascent, and when at a depth of 250 feet beneath the surface of the water, had his life line and air hose so badly fouled by this hawser that he was unable to free himself; he could neither ascend nor descend. On account of the length of time that Loughman had already been subjected to the great pressure due to the depth of water, and the uncertainty of the additional time he would have to be subjected to this pressure before he could be brought to the surface, it was imperative that steps be taken at once to clear him.


Instantly, realizing the desperate case of his comrade, CRILLEY volunteered to go to his aid, immediately donned a diving suit and descended. After a lapse of time of 2 hours and 11 minutes, CRILLEY was brought to the surface, having by a superb exhibition of skill, coolness, endurance and fortitude, untangled the snarl of lines and cleared his imperiled comrade, so that he was brought, still alive, to the surface."

*MDV David Gove, your friendly neighborhood Master Diver.* 

# Ex-USS Paul Foster (DD-964) Propulsion Shaft Repairs

**By: WS-12 Brian King**

When we think of ships and how they get from point A to point B we generally don't think of propulsion shafts, yet they play a major role in how a ship transits the world. Recently Southwest Regional Maintenance Center (SWRMC) Code 970 Divers, in collaboration with Phoenix International Holdings Inc., were tasked with the inspection and repair of the propulsion shafts onboard the Self Defense Test Ship (SDTS) Ex-USS PAUL FOSTER (DD-964).

All U.S. Navy ship propulsion shafts have a Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) protective coating. This coating is designed to act both as a watertight barrier and impact protection layer over the ferrous propulsion shafting. Since salt water is highly corrosive to the ferrous shafting material, strict inspection processes must be followed to ensure the protective GRP is intact and watertight.

The SDTS provides a crucial platform to test the newest advanced countermeasure systems. Effective testing of these systems is far too dangerous on manned vessels as the results of failure would be catastrophic. The SDTS is the largest remote-controlled vessel in the world and allows the U.S. Navy to conduct comprehensive testing of individual weapons and integrated combat systems without putting lives at risk. There is only one SDTS in operation and replacement of the platform would require years to complete a conversion from a decommissioned ship at a cost of approximately $200M. The repairs completed by the combined Navy and Phoenix dive teams extended the service life of the SDTS by six years, saving the Navy over $18 million by delaying acquisition of a new test vessel. An additional $10M cost was avoided by completing the repairs waterborne instead of dry docking the vessel.

As the last SPRUANCE Class Destroyer (DD) in service, there are no replacement shafts are available for the SDTS, meaning that a complete inspection of the shafts would need to be conducted to extend the shafts' service life. Unfortunately, such an inspection of shafting is no small feat as it requires removal of all GRP coating and complete Non-

*ND1 Scott Johnson directs installation of the dog-house cofferdam on the Ex-USS Paul Foster.*

Destructive Testing (NDT) of all bare shaft surfaces in a dry environment.

In order to complete the inspection, a dry-habitat cofferdam (commonly referred to as a dog-house) with removable doors is installed on the shaft. The dog-house weighs over 2,500 pounds and is rigged into place via a combination of crane operations and complex underwater rigging. Once rigged into place it is then attached to the propulsion shaft with slings, shackles, and lever hoists. This entire process is often a long, arduous, and dangerous task. After installing the doors around the shaft and tightening everything down, ship's air is introduced to the top of the dog-house and the painstaking process of chasing leaks to create an air-tight boundary begins. The inspection process starts once the dog-house is adequately sealed and remains dry. This work is typically focused on a small area where GRP damage has been reported and includes a repair of only one to two feet of GRP. This job, however, required the complete removal of all 142 feet of shaft GRP, inspection of the entire length of the shaft, and reinstallation of GRP to satisfy requirements for shaft life extension. Due to the scope of work, SWRMC divers elected to complete six foot inspection areas at a time, almost the whole length of the dog-house cofferdam. The meticulous and very dirty process of GRP removal begins with chipping and grinding the old GRP while paying special attention to not damage propulsion shaft. Only when the shaft surface is shiny and smooth can NDT begin, which involves both Visual Testing (VT) and Magnetic Particle Testing (MT). Currently there are only two divers in the U.S. Navy qualified as Underwater NDT Inspectors, both of whom are civilian members of the SWRMC Dive Locker.

Once the NDT inspection has been completed and no indications of degradation have been noted, the shaft is cleaned and prepared for installation of new GRP. The GRP installation process is perhaps the most involved due to the delicate timing required between each process. The two-part GRP resin has to be mixed in the dog-house by one diver while two other divers set up along either side of the propulsion shaft with rolls of GRP ready to be installed. The new resin is poured on the shaft and divers install new GRP along the six-foot bare shafting area in four layers. Once the 12-hour GRP cure time is complete, it is inspected for defects and painted with Hycote 151 (underwater paint), which requires another cure period of its own. Once all coatings are cured and final inspections are completed, the dog-house can be moved to the next inspection position.

This was the first time a complete shaft inspection was conducted in-water, and the areas under the fairwaters and stern tube covers required special attention. Phoenix divers, with the experience and expertise in such tasks, cut off fairwaters and stern tube covers, conducted inspections, performed NDT, and made GRP repairs to these sections prior to welding the fairwaters and stern tubes back in place.

SWRMC divers were tasked with the inspection of both port and starboard shafts from the intermediate struts aft to the main struts while Phoenix divers were responsible for sections from the intermediate struts forward to the stern tubes.

SWRMC divers repaired a total of 72 linear feet of propulsion shafting that necessitated 12 different doghouse positions and required 75 days of continuous work. The 15-man SWRMC Dive team accumulated 692 hours of bottom time during the inspection and repair.

Utilizing a second dog-house cofferdam and two Phoenix-engineered and custom built dry-habitat cofferdams for the stern tube areas, Phoenix divers inspected and repaired roughly 70 linear feet of shaft. Additionally, the reattachment of the fairwaters and stern tube covers required 125 linear feet of wet welding bringing the total accumulated bottom time to 2,187 hours.

*NDT in process on the propulsion shaft, this portion is located under the fairwater.*

All this hard work and collaboration enabled the SDTS to return to her critical mission of validating ship saving countermeasures to defend the operational Fleet for years to come. Mission Accomplished!

*Brian King is a retired NDCS, now the Diving Production Supervisor at SWRMC C970.*

*Article cover photo: ND1 Jeremy Cruz celebrating the completion of GRP installation.*

# Diving Officer's Perspective

**By: CWO4 Luke Johnson**

**Who Owns Your Navy Diving Policy?**

The Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) Director, Undersea Warfare Division (N97), or commonly referred to as "OPNAV N97", is a pivotal office tasked with the stewardship of Navy Diving Policy and the Joint Military Diving Technology and Training (JMDT&T) Program.

**OPNAV N97's Central Role and alignment with Navy Diving Policy:**

OPNAV N97 is involved in strategic planning, budgeting, and resourcing undersea warfare capabilities, which includes aspects of diving, salvage, and other undersea activities. This could involve providing funding for diving technology, systems, and research into new capabilities. Additionally, OPNAV N97 coordinates with NAVSEA, SUPSALV, and other relevant entities to ensure Navy diving capabilities align with overall undersea warfare strategies. OPNAV N97 and the Deputy Director for Diving (DEPDIVE – N972D) are located at the Pentagon in Arlington, VA and serve as the Navy's single point managers for Diving policy.

DepDive's role is comprehensive, as he serves N97 as the primary advisor for the establishment of diving policy, requirements, setting of military diving priorities, and directing the planning and programming for Navy diving capabilities (i.e. funding).

**Technical Authority and Oversight:**

While OPNAV N97 sets the strategic direction and policy, Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command (COMNAVSEASYSCOM), operates as the technical authority. This designation includes oversight of design, acquisition, system certification, and ANU designation for all Navy diving life support and manned hyperbaric systems. Such delineation of roles ensures a robust framework when cross walking strategic policy with technical capabilities.

**Operational Flexibility and Risk Management:**

A crucial aspect of Navy Diving Policy is the framework established for managing diving Exceptions to Policy (ETP) and Waivers, enabling operational commanders' flexibility to accomplish unique mission requirements. The Navy's Supervisor of Salvage and Diving (SUPSALV), NAVSEA office code 00C (Zero, Zero, Charlie), plays a pivotal role in this process, coordinating the technical review of Risk Assessments (RA) requests conducted by the Diving Programs Division, NAVSEA 00C3. NAVSEA 00C3 Division Director, SUPDIVE, Fleet Diving Officer, Master Divers, and system engineers, in conjunction with the 00C4 Systems Certification Authority (SCA), System Certification Engineer, System Certification Managers and Salvage Project Engineer perform technical reviews of diving-related RAs that provide a technical risk assessment for operational commanders used to inform the waiver and ETP process. Additionally, NAVSEA 00C3 evaluates requests for additions to the Authorized for Navy Use (ANU) list, modifications to established technical references (Technical Publications; Systems; Procedures; Policy; Diving Manual), and publish diving advisories that impact Navy-wide diving operations.

**The Waiver and ETP Process: A Hierarchical Approach:**

At the heart of this framework is a structured approach to approval authority, designed to balance operational flexibility with safety and oversight. The process for requesting and granting waivers or ETPs involves multiple layers of review and approval, each tailored to the nature and risk profile of the deviation sought.

- Flag Officers (FO) and General Officers (GO) within the chain of command are vested with the authority to approve Navy dives using non-certified or non-ANU life support equipment. This high-level oversight ensures that decisions with potentially wide-ranging implications are subject to rigorous scrutiny. Risk Assessments conducted by NAVSEA 00C3 are a prerequisite for all such waiver or ETP requests, and OPNAV N97 is kept informed throughout the process, underscoring the collaborative nature of policy and operational decision-making.

- O6 Commanders are empowered to authorize mission-essential Navy dives that deviate from established procedures or doctrine, including the use of non-Navy certified Recompression Chambers (RCC's) and interoperability dives (interservice, agency, or foreign). This level of authority recognizes the need for operational commanders to adapt to dynamic mission requirements while maintaining a structured oversight mechanism during peacetime operations.

- O5 Commanders can approve deviations from established procedures during contingencies, reflecting the Navy's pragmatic approach to unforeseen operational challenges.

This approval process is complemented by the expertise and advisory capacity of the Office of the Supervisor of Salvage and Diving (NAVSEA 00C), who provides consultation, advice, and risk assessments upon request via NAVSEA 00C3. This ensures that decisions are informed by the most current and comprehensive technical insights.

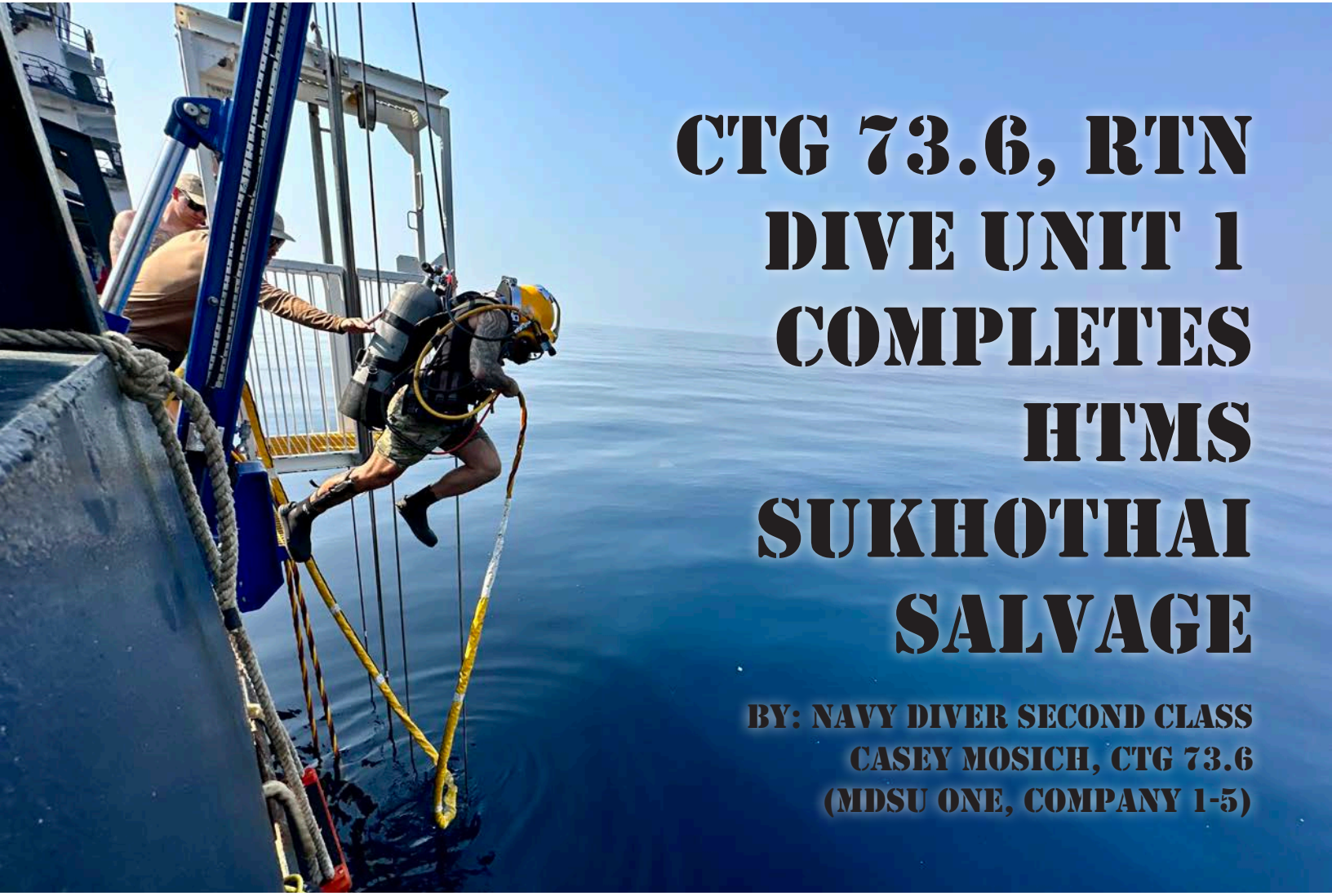
**Ensuring Preparedness and Mitigating Risks:**

The waiver and ETP process is underpinned by a commitment to drive down risk, by providing mitigation strategies while allowing commanders to make risk decisions based on technical assessment and review. OPNAVINST 3150.27D CH-1 policy requires a NAVSEA 00C RA for all waiver requests as specified in figure 5-1 of the OPNAVINST 3150.27D, which ensures each decision is informed by a detailed understanding of the potential technical risks and benefits. This process not only facilitates informed decision-making but also fosters a culture of risk awareness and management across the diving community. Planning and forecasting of operations that may require a RA are critical to meeting operational objectives. NAVSEA 00C3 has developed a RA template to aid the fleet in submission which can be found at https://supsalv.navy.mil/ Communicate early and often!

Moreover, the policy provides for scenarios necessitating deviation from established policies or Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs). Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) or Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) negotiated by OPNAV can serve as ETPs, offering a formal mechanism to address unique operational requirements or collaborations. The current OPNAV approved Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom (ABCANZ) MOA for use of recompression chambers is a great example. OPNAV N97, the custodian of this policy, retains approval authority for all waivers, ETPs, and MOU/MOA's when delegation is not appropriate or when they could invoke national-level or foreign national interest, ensuring that such decisions are aligned with broader strategic objectives and the Navy's warfighting capabilities.

**Conclusion:**

The realm of Navy diving is governed by a comprehensive set of policies and guidelines designed to ensure the safety, efficiency, and effectiveness of diving operations. My aim with this article is to help our leaders better understand the ownership of Navy Diving overarching policy framework with a particular focus on risk assessments, diving waivers and ETP's. NAVSEA 00C3 fields several questions a week on this specific policy, so it is my intent to provide some clarity and education with this article. I highly encourage leadership to carve out time to discuss not only this article, but those written by my predecessor with your future Navy Diver leaders. Interoperability waiver requests are on the rise and the better informed we are on the associated policy will ensure timely requests and assessment. Dive safe and see you around the dive locker!



# CTG 73.6, RTN Dive Unit 1 Completes HTMS Sukhothai Salvage

BY: NAVY DIVER SECOND CLASS CASEY MOSICH, CTG 73.6 (MDSU ONE, COMPANY 1-5)

On December 18th, 2022, the Royal Thai Navy (RTN) corvette HTMS Sukhothai tragically sank in 180 feet of water in the Gulf of Thailand due to a storm. Twenty-four RTN sailors perished in the accident and an additional five sailors' whereabouts are still unknown. From February 12th to March 13th, 2024, Commander, Task Group 73.6/Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit ONE, Company 1-5 (CTG 73.6/MDSU 1-5) completed a bilateral salvage mission with RTN Dive Unit on Sukhothai. The salvage team had four objectives: to search for the missing persons, to collect information in support of the RTN accident investigation, to demilitarize or remove sensitive equipment on-board, and to recover culturally significant items to memorialize the tragic loss.

The mission, performed as part of Exercise Cobra Gold 2024, was the most advanced combined USN/RTN salvage event ever conducted. According to Lt. Cmdr. Max Cutchen, the U.S. Seventh Fleet Salvage Officer, "The combined diving on Sukhothai allowed us to capitalize on 30 years of bilateral naval training in order to field a 100% interoperable team to attack technically complex, real-world objectives. I think this event opened all of our eyes to what we can accomplish when we work together."

With assistance from NAVSEA 00C (Supervisor of Salvage), CTG 73.6 mobilized the required dive systems and salvage equipment onto the Military Sealift Command contracted offshore supply vessel MV Ocean Valor in Singapore. Ocean Valor then sailed to Thailand to embark the RTN dive team and conduct interoperability work-up training. Ocean Valor and CTG 73.6 are responsible for U.S. Navy maritime emergency response in the Seventh Fleet Area of Operations.

On February 22, salvage efforts commenced with internal and external surveys to assess the safety of the wreck, collect information as requested by the RTN accident investigation board, and locate priority items. Once all surveys were complete, divers began to salvage items from the ship including weapon systems, communication equipment, and culturally significant items. Overall, the combined dive team conducted 76 total bilateral dives consisting of 68 hours of bottom time and 76 hours of surface decompression in a recompression chamber installed on Ocean Valor.

"It was an honor to support the bilateral light salvage of Sukhothai alongside Royal Thai Navy divers," said Lt. William Rittenhouse, CTG 73.6. "The two nations' divers integrated quickly and completely, thanks to the proficiency and dedication of both USN and RTN divers, and many iterations of Exercise Cobra Gold. Additionally, the operation was fortunate to have an RTN Diving Officer who is

*A Navy diver assigned to CTG 73.6/MDSU 1-5 prepares to enter the bridge of Royal Thai Navy (RTN) corvette HTMS Sukhothai.*

a graduate of the United States Naval Academy, and a recent RTN graduate of the United States First-Class Dive School. These two representatives of military exchanges are prime examples of the programs' mutual benefit."

The combined Sukhothai salvage mission was successful on many fronts, but the interoperability of U.S. Navy and RTN divers working side-by-side was one of the most significant. The professionalism and respect, as well as the camaraderie displayed throughout the mission, is a model for future bilateral exercises and operations.

*Article cover photo: A Navy diver assigned to Commander Task Group 73.6/Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit 1-5 jumps from Military Sealift Command fleet experimentation ship MV Ocean Valor during a joint dive-and-salvage operation for Royal Thai Navy (RTN) corvette HTMS Sukhothai.*

*Ambassador Robert Godec, U.S. Ambassador to Thailand, center left, and Royal Thai Navy (RTN) Adm. Adoong Pan-iam, Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Thai Navy, center right, visit with U.S. and Royal Thai Navy divers assigned to CTG 73.6/MDSU 1-5 and RTN Dive Unit.*

*A Navy diver assigned to CTG 73.6/MDSU 1-5 removes the mast from Royal Thai Navy (RTN) corvette HTMS Sukhothai.*


*U.S. Navy divers assigned to Commander Task Group 73.6/Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit 1-5 participate in the closing ceremony of a combined salvage mission on the Royal Thai Navy (RTN) corvette HTMS Sukhothai.*

*U.S. and Royal Thai Navy divers assigned to CTG 73.6/MDSU 1-5 and RTN Dive Unit.*

# The Old Master

Deep Sea,

As I take the opportunity to sit down to write this letter, I am overwhelmed with gratitude and nostalgia, reflecting on the journey that has brought me to this point. I wanted to take a moment to express my deepest appreciation to each and every one of you for being an integral part of my life's narrative.

MCPO Michael D. Kenefic

It's hard to believe that it has been twenty-seven years since I first embarked on this remarkable voyage. The decision to join wasn't merely about seeking a career path; it was a pivotal moment of liberation from a rough past. For me, the Navy wasn't just a job; it was a sanctuary, a refuge from the intensity of life, offering solace amidst the chaos.

As I reminisce about those early days, I vividly recall the moment I was pinned as a Navy Diver, a symbol of the extraordinary adventures that awaited me. It was a moment tinged with excitement and trepidation, a prelude to the countless lessons in humility and self-discovery that lay ahead.

For many of us who embarked on this journey in the mid to late 1990s, the Navy wasn't merely a career choice; it was a lifeline, an escape from circumstances that threatened to engulf us. Raised in an environment marred by dysfunction and poverty, the Navy offered a glimmer of hope, a chance to break free from the shackles of the past and chart a new course.

Throughout the years, I have had the privilege of serving alongside an extraordinary community, a band of brothers who have become my second family. To my mentors, leaders, and friends, I owe an immeasurable debt of gratitude. Your guidance, support, and camaraderie have shaped me into the person I am today, instilling in me values of integrity, resilience, and selflessness.

As I stand at the threshold of a new chapter in my life, I am filled with a profound sense of pride for all that we have accomplished together. From the highs of triumph to the lows of adversity, we have weathered every storm with unwavering resolve and unwavering camaraderie.

As I bid farewell to the uniform and embark on the next phase of my journey, I carry with me the invaluable lessons and cherished memories of our time together. Though our paths may diverge, the bond we share as shipmates and friends will forever endure.

In parting, I leave you with the words of wisdom that have guided me through the years: seize every opportunity, for life is fleeting, and regrets are the bitter opportunities squandered. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve alongside the finest the Navy has to offer, and I am eternally grateful for the privilege of calling you my friends.

**HOOYAH DEEP SEA!!**

# SUPDIVE SENDS ...CAPT Bob Marsh

HOOYAH, DEEP SEA! Change is coming to NAVSEA 00C3 this summer! It pains me to say that this will be my last SUPDIVE SENDS article. I have thoroughly enjoyed the privilege of being this historic periodical's "Editor in Chief" for the last three years I have held the SUPDIVE position. My time here is nearly up and I wanted to take this opportunity to welcome the incoming SUPDIVE, Commander David Scherr, who will be reporting this July after completion of his command tour at Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit TWELEVE in May. I have no doubt Commander Scherr will quickly assume the rolls and responsibilities this position entails and will deliver dividends to the Deep Sea diving community throughout his tenure and for years to come! Commander Scherr will join the dedicated team of NAVSEA 00C3 Deep Sea professionals whose focus remains on our community's need to deliver capability to the fleet as we operate in a unique time of global uncertainty.

On July first, Master Chief Master Diver Josh Dumke will also depart the 00C3 team. Josh will be honorably retiring from the U.S. Navy after 32+ years of selfless and dedicated service to his Nation, the U.S. Navy, and to each one of us. Josh reported to NAVSEA 00C3 in July of 2019, and throughout his 5-year tenure, has left an indelible mark on our division and the diving community as a whole. From his duties acting as the Diving Senior Enlisted Advisory Team (SEAT) Chairman, to the Authorized for Navy Use (ANU) Program Manager, Josh has been involved at all levels of technical policy, guidance, and direction our office provided the fleet over the past five years. His diving expertise is second-to-none and will be greatly missed as he departs the pattern. If you haven't had the opportunity to work with Josh in the past, his real talent and passion lies in connecting with Sailors and Navy Divers on the deckplates doing the hard work, day in, and day out. I had the privilege to personally watch Josh connect with numerous Sailors while conducting DORIs across the country and can personally attest to his absolute selfless dedication to teaching, mentoring, and guiding our brothers and sister divers to dive safer and smarter! As Josh and his family embark on an exciting "Chapter 2", we have no doubt he will continue to impact those around him as he has done throughout his very successful career as a Sailor, Navy Diver, Master Diver, and Master Chief! "Fair Winds and Following Seas" Josh, from all of us here at NAVSEA 00C3 and from our fellow Sailors you impacted throughout your career…HOOYAH on a job well done!

Last December, we said farewell to LCDR Matt Irwin when he transferred to U.S. AFRICOM to bring his EOD and diving expertise to the Combatant Commander's staff. Matt was directly responsible for ensuring the equipment you use daily has been through the technical rigors you'd expect from our office. Matt led the ANU program for 2 years, and while working alongside Josh, delivered additional capability, redundancy, and options to the fleet diving community. Matt was also my critical "right-hand man" when it came to maintaining and growing our relationships with NATO and FVEY partners. He served as the Deputy Technical Project Officer managing our strategic international sharing agreements relating to U.S. Navy Diving and Salvage efforts. HOOYAH Matt, and thanks for rowing hard throughout your tour! Matt's replacement, LT Tim Colabrese, will be reporting in April after completion of his Officer in Charge tour at Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit THREE in San Diego. Finally, we are looking forward to welcoming Master Diver Jordan Wingard to the 00C3 team this July when

he transfers from Naval Station Guam. We had the opportunity to meet MDV Wingard during our DORI last year and are looking forward to integrating his wealth of experience, knowledge, and capability into the office!

**Ongoing Efforts and Future Outlook.**

**OPNAV N97 DivESC.** This June, OPNAV N97 will execute the 1st Diving Executive Steering Committee (DivESC) in 6 years. Combined efforts between OPNAV N97, NAVSEA 00C, Diving SEAT and CWOAT, TYCOMS, and other fleet diving stakeholders enabled this important meeting to come to fruition. To date, three working groups have been conducted to determine the topics for presentation to the Flag-level committee that have shared impact across all TYCOMs and the diving community writ large. We look forward to providing additional education and presenting issues to decision makers that will enable future action and resolution. See my last SUPDIVE SENDS for additional detail on this important event.

**Diving Manual and Other Revisions.** Efforts continue with Revision 8 of the U.S. Navy Diving Manual. Master Diver Kyle Hubbard has remained

our point-man shepherding this herculean task. To date, great progress has been made to reduce redundancies that lie within, clarify requirements or "grey areas" based off direct fleet feedback, reorganize content to make the manual more user friendly, and update existing doctrine due to the introduction of new equipment, TTPs, or operating procedures. Although final release will be later than we originally planned, the Team's focus here to is deliver a quality revision for fleet use and implementation.

Coupled with the Diving Manual efforts, the Team has also been working on numerous DLSS technical manual revisions (i.e. TRCS, SNDL, etc.) that incorporates and codifies previous equipment configuration changes, operating procedure updates, and general policy requirements. We will continue to introduce these manuals to the fleet via AIGs for implementation. CWO4 Johnson and team are also putting the final changes on updated DORI checklists for fleet use. Changes are a result of team feedback captured while conducting numerous DORIs, updates from key diving policies (i.e. OPNAV 3150.27D), and feedback from fleet users. Our goal is to provide checklists that reduce redundancy, provide additional detail and associated references, and consolidate "like items" into sections where applicable. These checklists will be another reference or tool used when conducting self-assessment and/or oversight of your respective diving programs.

As my parting shot, I ask that you continue to communicate with our NAVSEA 00C3 office so we may better support your needs. We exist to support your unique missions, assist with solving issues, or address immediate shortfalls that may exist in policy, technical direction, and capability. Feedback and transparent communication are welcomed and desired, so please continue to be a part of shaping the future of U.S. Navy diving! It has been an absolute pleasure to serve and work alongside you throughout these last 3 years! Dive Safe, Dive Smart, and ALWAYS support your teammates! v/r SUPDIVE

# Diving Advisories

24 - 01 LIST OF EFFECTIVE DIVING ADVISORIES

24 - 02 ISSUANCE OF REVISED TECHNICAL MANUALS FOR / UNDERWATER BREATHING APPARATUS (UBA) KM 37 HELMET AND UBA KM 97 / HELMET

24 - 03 ADVISORY TEAM MEETING

24 - 04 POSEIDON DIVING HIGH PRESSURE / HOSE ASSEMBLIES

For more information on effective diving advisories, go to
**https://secure.supsalv.org/home.asp**