



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Patrick Dionne

A CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter assigned to the Flying Tigers of Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron (HMH) 361 prepares to land on the flight deck of the amphibious dock landing ship USS Germantown (LSD 42) during exercise Blue Chromite. The amphibious training exercise is with the 4th Marine Regiment and the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines.

Navy Retired Activities Website: Quick Retiree Reference Info

Have you ever needed quick access to some bit of information about your retirement that you don't have? Have you visited the Navy Retired Activities Branch website?

The site — http://www.public.navy.mil/bupers-npc/support/retired_activities/Pages/default.aspx — offers a variety of documents and links to information and sources to answer many questions you may have. After clicking to the site, scroll to the bottom of the page and you'll find those links organized under sections such as “Survivor

Benefits,” “Retiree Toolbox,” “Hot Links,” “Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs),” and more.

In addition to those links, you will find contact information for the Retired Activities Branch, archived Retiree Council reports, and steps needed to get a new retiree identification card.

You can also contact the Retired Activities Branch through the Navy Personnel Command Customer Service Center. Call 1-866-827-5672 and ask to speak with the Retired Activities Branch.

Walter Reed Offers Transplant Program

The Organ Transplant Service at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at Bethesda is the only United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS)-certified transplant center in the Department of Defense health care system. Eligible patients include all TRICARE beneficiaries as well as Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) patients enrolled at the Washington D.C. VA Medical Center.

UNOS encourages patients with end-stage organ disease to list in more than one region at the same time. This process allows eligible patients to be listed at a transplant center close to home in addition to Walter Reed, increasing chances for organ availability. Patients can be referred to Walter Reed from anywhere in the country or from overseas. The average wait time at Walter Reed for a kidney transplant is lower than the national average (<http://www.srtr.org/>).

With more than 40 years of experience, Walter Reed provides organ transplant services to all beneficiaries with end-stage organ disease. In addition to kidney transplant services performed at the new Walter Reed facility, Walter Reed collaborates with the University of Maryland in Baltimore for liver and pancreas transplant and Georgetown University for pediatric transplant services.

The Organ Transplant Service can be reached at 1-301-295-4331 or at ArmyNavytransplant@mail.mil to assist with the evaluation and treatment of end-stage organ disease.

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Shift Colors

Rear Adm. David Steindl
*Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel;
Commander, Navy Personnel Cmd.*
Lt. Cmdr. Robert Lyon
NPC Public Affairs Officer
Pamela Warnken
NPC Deputy Public Affairs Officer
Wm. Cullen James
Editor

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Send correspondence to:
Navy Personnel Command
Shift Colors
5720 Integrity Drive
Millington, TN 38055
E-mail: MILL_ShiftColors@navy.mil
Phone: (866) 827-5672



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Brandon Cyr

Lt. Earl Wilson, from the amphibious transport dock ship USS New Orleans (LPD 18) places an unserviceable American flag into the fire during an American flag retirement ceremony at American Legion Post 434. New Orleans is homeported in San Diego while undergoing a planned maintenance period at BAE Systems Ship Repair.

Nationwide Scam Affecting TRICARE Beneficiaries

Courtesy TRICARE

TRICARE beneficiaries need to be aware of a telephone scam affecting beneficiaries over 65 and on Medicare nationwide.

A caller will usually identify themselves as being an official Medicare vendor, and will then offer to sell you back braces. The caller may have specific information that makes the call seem official, typically your address, phone numbers and doctor's name. The caller is hoping this will convince you they are a legitimate vendor and that you will give them your social security number and additional personal information.

If you receive a call like this, DO NOT give any of your personal identifiable information, such as birth date, social security number or banking information. TRICARE never asks beneficiaries for this information when calling for an official Department of Defense survey.

The Defense Health Agency (DHA) Program Integrity Office is closely monitoring this situation. If you receive a call of this nature, please do not provide your information and contact the DHA Program Integrity Office directly. For more information on fraud and abuse reporting visit, www.TRICARE.mil/fraud.



Photo by MC1 Kathleen Gorby

A marine mammal handler from the Navy Marine Mammal Program prepares to send Cody, a California sea lion, into the water during the International Mine Countermeasures Exercise (IMCMEX).

Diabetes: Increase Your Awareness, Decrease Your Risks

Courtesy TRICARE

When blood glucose levels rise and remain outside of the normal range, you can develop a disease called diabetes. Diabetes is a serious disease that can lead to other serious health risks. It is important for beneficiaries with diabetes to understand these additional risks and to highlight steps to prevent diabetes for those who don't.

Many of the foods that we eat are turned into glucose, or sugar, that our bodies use for energy. Our bodies produce insulin which helps to get glucose into our cells. When sugar builds up in our blood and is not processed by insulin either because we don't make enough insulin or because the insulin that we make is not effective, this can lead to diabetes. A person with pre-diabetes has a blood sugar level higher than normal, but not high enough

for a diagnosis of diabetes. When you develop diabetes, you are at a greater risk for heart disease, blindness, kidney failure, and other serious illnesses. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death in the United States. Beneficiaries with diabetes can manage their condition by remembering their ABCs.

"A" stands for the A1C Test; it is different from daily blood sugar tests and measures average blood sugar levels over the past few months. Knowing this number and working with your provider to keep this number below certain levels can help you make sure this number doesn't increase over time.

"B" is for blood pressure. Blood pressure is the force of your blood against the walls of your blood vessels.

If your blood pressure gets too high, it makes your heart work too hard, can injure blood vessels and can lead to a heart attack or stroke, and can damage your kidneys and eyes.

"C" is for cholesterol. High-density lipoproteins, also known as good cholesterol, help remove low-density lipoproteins, or bad cholesterol, from your blood. Know what your cholesterol levels are, what they should be, and work with your provider to maintain those numbers. Working with your health care provider is the best way to manage your diabetes.

Even if you have pre-diabetes, you still have the power to prevent or slow the progression of this disease by taking care of yourself. The National Institutes of Health offers some helpful advice and tips; stop smok-

ing, exercise more, make healthy food choices and lose extra weight.

TRICARE covers diabetic supplies through both pharmacy and medical benefits. You can get certain diabetic supplies from a military pharmacy, through home delivery or at any TRICARE network pharmacy. Additionally, certain diabetic supplies are covered as durable medical equipment. For details visit www.tricare.mil/diabeticsupplies.

Beneficiaries with diabetes can continue to live long and healthy lives. With information about your age, race and language, the National Diabetes Education Program offers publications tailored specifically for you to help you beat diabetes. TRICARE beneficiaries can also visit www.tricare.mil/livewell for advice on how to make healthy choices.

When Are 1099R Tax Statements Available?

Courtesy DFAS

The IRS Forms 1099R for the 2014 tax year will become available online in mid-December 2014. You will be able to access yours on **myPay**.

DFAS will also mail hard copy versions of the 1099R to those of you who have chosen that option. Please keep in mind that hard copy versions of the 1099R are issued later and will take a while to reach you. If you have elected hard copy, you may not receive it until mid-January 2015.

Please note that 1099Rs are not automatically issued for deceased members. If you want to receive a 1099R on the behalf of a member who passed away, a certificate of death must be on file, and you must request that a 1099R be issued. If you would like to make this request, or have questions regarding a 1099R for a deceased member, please contact us using one of the methods described in this link <http://www.dfas.mil/dfas/retired-military/about/aboutus/customer-service.html>.

Best Ways to Get or Replace a Lost Tax Statement - 1099R

Courtesy DFAS

Military retirees and annuitants receive a 1099R tax statement either electronically via **myPay** or as a paper copy in their mail each year. Members can also request additional copies of their 1099R tax statements in several different ways.

The fastest and most secure way to obtain a copy of your 1099R is **myPay**. Just login to **myPay**, and you can print your 1099R out in the comfort of your own home.

Not a **myPay** user yet? Then the fastest and easiest way to get a copy of your 1099R besides myPay, is to use DFAS's telephone self-service option. Telephone self service requests are logged instantly and are sent to your current address of record within three business days. Call 1-800-321-1080.

If you're not a **myPay** user, and the mailing address you have on file with us is out of date, the easiest quickest way to get your 1099R sent

to an updated address is to submit your request through the internet. You can update your mailing address, enter your email address, and request your 1099R be sent to the new address using one easy form. Your transaction will be logged instantly and it will be in the mail to you within 7 to 10 business days. Find the link and complete instructions at <http://www.dfas.mil/retired-military/manage/taxes/getting1099r/viaaskdfas.html>.

Do you prefer traditional mail? If so, send DFAS a written request by fax or mail, and make sure you leave us time to reply. Keep in mind, it takes 30 to 60 days to process requests received by fax or mail.

Members with unique situations can speak directly to one of DFAS's customer care representatives by calling 1-800-321-1080. Depending on call volume, you may have to wait on hold while we assist other customers.

Using myPay To Update Your Correspondence Address

Courtesy DFAS

If you choose to receive your 1099R in the mail, it's important to make sure the mailing address you have on file with **myPay** is current.

If you need to update the correspondence address you have on file with DFAS, make sure you also update your correspondence address with the U.S. Postal Service. If the two addresses are not the same, it can create confusion and result in a misdirected 1099R.

The quickest and easiest way to update the mailing address you have on file is to

use **myPay** (<https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>).

To change your mailing address using **myPay**:

1. On the Main Menu page, click on the Correspondence Address link.
2. Enter the correct address.
3. Save your changes and confirm the changes you made are correct.
4. From the top of the page in the gray bar, you may select Main to return to the Main Menu or Exit to close out your session.

You can also the DFAS Change of Address Fast

Form or send us a written request.

Fast Forms (<http://www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/forms.html>) are electronic versions of DFAS paper forms. They are processed automatically, and they save paper and postage costs. You will receive email confirmation of your submission and your account will be updated in three to seven business days.

If you choose to mail or fax a written request to change your address, please include both your old and new mailing address along with

the effective date for the new address. Additionally, please include your name, Social Security number, and signature with date on your request. It will take 30 to 60 days to process your written request.

If you have questions about what other account information you need to keep current, and when you should be updating it, you can access a video tutorial at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmZywoPSMZo&list=PLhx_8nsfXqVhB9fkFUpepXIERDHWQIwc_.

Why You Should Have a myPay Account

Courtesy DFAS

The key to effective day-to-day management of your retirement pay is creating and maintaining a **myPay** account. **myPay** is the most important tool for managing your pay. In addition, the email address you enter into **myPay** is our primary way of staying in touch with you and keeping you current. For retirees and annuitants, there is nothing more important than creating, using and maintaining the security of their **myPay** account.

On top of all that, **myPay** recently added new features that make it an even more vital tool for military retirees and annuitants. There are:

- Verification of Pay
- Prior Year Tax Statements
- Pay Garnishment Documentation

Verification of Pay

Getting the paperwork together for a loan application can get complicated, especially for mortgages and other high value loans that require verification of pay from your payroll office. This feature allows military retirees to easily download official pay verification statements without calling, mailing, or faxing requests to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

Whether it's for a loan, business transaction or legal proceeding, military retirees with a **myPay** account can get an official pay verification statement on DFAS letterhead to print from the convenience of their own home.

Prior Year Tax Statements

Tax statements such as the IRS Form 1099R are used by military retirees for filing or correcting federal and state tax returns, adjusting income tax withholding rates, and a variety of other planning and legal business.

With your online **myPay** account, you can now have access to up to five years worth of 1099Rs to help keep your personal financial and legal concerns in order.

Pay Garnishments

Defaults on commercial loans or court-ordered support for former spouses and children can result in pay garnishments for any of the 6.6 million payroll customers of the Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

While the agency's Garnishment Operations division is tasked with ensuring each court order or instructions for DoD authorities are valid before starting involuntary pay

deductions, individual customers may not have seen or misplaced the documents establishing their individual garnishments.

The latest updates to the myPay pay management system serving U.S. military members, military retirees and federal civilian employees from a number of departments and agencies now allows users to view documents issued by U.S. civil courts or military service related to any garnishments on their pay.

Commercial debt and spousal or child support orders will be available for 30 days for military members, military retirees and federal civilian employees following the date the order/letter is received by myPay. Military members will also have access to Military Commercial Debt Orders for 90 days from the date it is received by myPay.

According to DFAS officials, the ability for each user to view any documents used to begin pay garnishments is intended to save the time and effort necessary to file a request via phone, mail or fax.

Go to <https://mypay.dfas.mil> to sign up for a new account.



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Derek A. Harkins

Sailors from the Oliver Hazard Perry-class guided-missile frigate USS Rodney M. Davis (FFG 60) approach the Royal Brunei Navy Darussalam-class offshore patrol vessel KDB Darulaman (PV 08) to conduct a visit, board, search and seizure training exercise during Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Brunei 2014.

Making VA Copayments Online

Courtesy DFAS

Do you receive monthly billing statements for services provided to you at the VA? If so, www.pay.gov is a free, fast, easy, and secure way to pay your VA health care and prescription copayments online. You can pay your balance from the comfort of your home instead of writing checks, driving to your local VA, or calling the payment line. It's as easy as 1-2-3.

Under *Common Payments* on www.pay.gov homepage, click the **VA Medical Care Copayment** link.

Fill out the form entering your account number exactly as it appears on your VA billing statement, then click **continue**.

Enter your credit or debit card, or checking or savings account information to process your payment, then click **submit payment**.

Fry Scholarship Expanded to Surviving Spouses of Servicemembers Who Died on Active Duty

Courtesy VA

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced is now accepting applications by mail for the Fry Scholarship under newly expanded eligibility criteria to include surviving spouses. The expanded criteria for the Fry Scholarship is the latest in a series of VA actions to implement provisions of the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (“Choice Act”).

Specifically, Section 701 of the Choice Act expands the Fry Scholarship to include the surviving spouses of Servicemembers who died in the line of duty after September 10, 2001. Prior to this expansion, only children of those who died in the line of duty were eligible for this benefit.

“We can never fully repay the debt we owe to these families who have lost a

loved one,” said VA Secretary Robert McDonald. “It is a privilege to provide educational benefits that will make a positive difference in their lives.”

The Fry Scholarship was created to honor Sergeant John David Fry, 28, of Lorena, Texas. Fry had one week left in his tour in Iraq in 2006, when he volunteered to continue working for seven more hours disarming explosive devices, despite having already sustained an injury to his hand. He made the ultimate sacrifice on March 8, 2006, in Anbar province, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device detonated. He left behind a widow and three young children.

The Fry Scholarship will entitle eligible spouses to up to 36 months of the full, 100-percent level of the Post-9/11 GI Bill, which includes a tuition-and-fee payment, a monthly housing allow-

ance and stipend for books and supplies. Some spouses currently eligible for, or already receiving benefits under the Survivors’ and Dependents’ Educational Assistance (DEA) program may now be eligible for the Fry Scholarship. All surviving spouses eligible for DEA and the Fry Scholarship must make an irrevocable election for terms beginning on or after Jan. 1, 2015.

VA will identify surviving spouses eligible for both programs and send them a letter with comparative information on the benefits available and instructions on how make an election. Information about these two programs is available on VA’s website and the GI Bill website www.benefits.va.gov/gibill. The VA call center (888-GI-BILL-1) also will be able to help individuals understand the differences between the two programs.

Women Centers Partner for Better Representation

Courtesy VA

The Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) Center for Women Veterans (Center) entered into a memorandum of agreement (MoA) with the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, to increase women veterans’ leadership and career opportunities, which will benefit the Nation’s workforce and address women veterans’ needs.

The MoA will allow the Center and CAWP to leverage existing resources and increase coordination of activities to help women veterans develop public service

and community engagement skill sets, so they will be prepared for public and community opportunities.

“Women veterans often contact us for information about how they can continue serving,” said Elisa M. Basnight, director of the Center for Women Veterans.

The Center, created in 1994 to monitor VA’s administration of benefits and services to women veterans and to advise the Secretary on VA policy’s impact on women veterans, can provide advice to CAWPs on how it focuses its resource information to address women veterans’ issues.

CAWP is a source of scholarly research and cur-

rent data about American women’s political participation. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding about women’s participation in politics and government and to enhance women’s influence and leadership in public life.

“The Center for American Women and Politics is delighted to collaborate with the Center for Women Veterans to provide more information and resources for women veterans who want to engage more fully in their communities. Women who have already put their country first by serving in the military are exactly the people we need as public

leaders,” said Debbie Walsh, director of the Center for American Women and Politics.

Women veterans represent one of the fastest growing segments of the veteran population — about 10 percent of the total 22 million veterans in this country. Today there are an estimated 2.2 million female veterans. The Center for Women Veterans participates in collaborative initiatives with Federal/state/local governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, to improve opportunities for women veterans.

For more information about women veterans, visit www.va.gov/womenvet.

VA Demonstrates New Telehealth Scheduling System

Courtesy VA

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has demonstrated a new telehealth scheduling system to Veteran Service Organizations (VSO).

This new software system is intended to improve veterans access to care.

Representatives from the VA met recently with VSOs at the Washington VA Medical Center for a hands-on demonstration and discussion about VA's telehealth programs and services.

The hands-on demonstration included

a presentation of VA's new Clinical Video Telehealth scheduling software which launched last month and is intended to improve how VA employees schedule telehealth appointments.

"As we launch new programs and services, it is important to include our VSO partners," said VA Secretary Robert A. McDonald. "Today's demonstration is an important part of our collaborative process. We welcome our VSO's feedback. Like us, their goal is to ensure veterans have access to the

care and services they have earned."

Telehealth rapidly is becoming a popular option, particularly for veterans who do not have a VA health care facility close to home. In fiscal year 2014, VA's national telehealth programs served over 690,000 veterans and accounted for more than 2 million virtual visits.

For more information about VA's telehealth program, visit www.telehealth.va.gov/.

VA Health Care Expanded for Cases Related to Sexual Trauma

Expansion closes a gap in health care eligibility

Courtesy VA

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), under authority from the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 (VACAA), announced expanded eligibility for veterans in need of mental health care due to sexual assault or sexual harassment that occurred during their military service. This trauma is commonly known as military sexual trauma (MST).

This expansion, which primarily pertains to Reservists and National Guard members participating in weekend drill, gives the authority to offer veterans the appropriate care and services needed to treat conditions resulting from MST that occurred during a period of inactive duty training.

"VA simply must be an organization that provides comprehensive care for all veterans dealing with the effects of military sexual trauma," said VA Secretary

Robert A. McDonald. "Our range of services for MST-related experiences are constantly being reexamined to best meet the needs of our veterans."

Secretary McDonald met last week with Ruth Moore, a Navy veteran and MST survivor for whom the Ruth Moore Act of 2013 is named. Moore will be working with VA to ensure that survivors are treated fairly and compassionately, and that veterans with MST can access fair compensation exams and access health care practitioners who are trained in understanding and working with MST issues.

VA works closely with trauma survivors to ensure a full continuum of health care services are provided to assist veterans recovering from experiences of MST. Recognizing that MST survivors may have special needs and concerns, every VA health care facility has an MST Coordinator who

VA simply must be an organization that provides comprehensive care for all veterans dealing with the effects of military sexual trauma.

- Robert A. McDonald

serves as a contact person for MST-related issues. Every VA medical center and Community-based Vet Center offers MST-related outpatient counseling.

Currently, all VA health care for mental and physical health conditions related to MST is provided free of charge. Veterans do not need to have a service-connected disability or seeking disability compensation to be eligible for MST-related counseling and care. Veterans also do not need to have reported such incidents to the Department of Defense or possess documentation or records to support their assertion of having experienced such trauma. The determination of whether a veteran's

condition is MST-related is strictly a clinical determination made by the responsible VA mental health provider. Finally, veterans need not be enrolled in VA's health care system to qualify for MST-related treatment, as it is independent of VA's general treatment authority.

In addition to treatment programs, VA also provides training to staff on issues related to MST, including a mandatory training on MST for all mental health and primary care providers. VA also engages in a range of outreach activities to veterans and conducts monitoring of MST-related screening and treatment, in order to ensure that adequate services are available.

Veterans can learn more about VA's MST-related services online at www.mental-health.va.gov/msthome.asp and see video clips with the recovery stories of veterans who have experienced MST at <http://maketheconnection.net/conditions/military-sexual-trauma>.

DoD Releases Strategic Sustainability Plan

By Nick Simeone

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

The Defense Department released a plan intended to mitigate the effects of climate change on military operations and national security in what officials describe as a comprehensive framework for action through 2020 that calls for using resources more efficiently and acquiring more energy from renewable sources.

The Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan details DoD's goals for taking sensible and measured steps to mitigate the risk on operations posed by such climate change effects as flooding, surging sea levels, severe weather and extreme temperatures, by "managing the unavoidable and preparing for the possible," officials said in announcing the plan's release.

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel has called climate change a future trend that will affect U.S. national security and how the military executes its missions, including being increasingly called upon to respond to natural disasters.

"There are plenty of things we can do to mitigate the risk, but in order to mitigate risk, you have to recognize that it exists," said John Conger, acting deputy undersecretary of defense for installations and environment, who added that he considers the military's ability to conduct its mission in light of predicted environmental changes his top concern.

"We are trying to do a job here to protect the country, and this is one of those trends that might affect our ability to do that," he said. "We cannot ignore it. We need to be aware of the risks that it poses."

The report explains how climate change could directly affect military installations and operations, noting "some of the department's low-lying coastal installations are threatened by coastal erosion and inundation due to

sea level rise."

Hagel has highlighted the Hampton Roads area in Virginia -- home to the largest concentration of U.S. military sites in the world -- as one area under threat. "We see recurrent flooding today, and we are beginning to work to address a projected sea level rise of 1.5 feet over the next 20 to 50 years," he said in releasing the department's 2014 Climate Change Adaptation Roadmap earlier this year.

Conger said this is one example that shows the department is going to have to adjust to accommodate environmental change. "There are projections that we have out to 30 years where we're looking at a foot or two feet of sea level rises in that particular area," he said. "That will affect some of our infrastructure, but it's not going to make the base useless."

In addition, the Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan says conditions such as more frequent extreme heat projected with climate change could limit outdoor military training, potentially affecting readiness.

"There are 'black flag' days where

when it's over 90 degrees [and] you can't have the guys running for their training," Conger explained. "It affects live-fire training in that if it's particularly dry, you can't use live fire because it's more likely to set off a fire."

A comprehensive review of all U.S. installations will be conducted to assess the potential impact that climate change could have on the thousands of buildings, bases and other sites owned by the department.

In addition, the report lays out how the department will use a wide range of practices -- including reducing energy demand -- that, along with efforts by partner nations, are intended to move military operations away from vulnerabilities such as relying on traditional petroleum and electricity networks, resources that increasingly are at risk in some parts of the world.

Administration officials say these measures already have helped to reduce the federal government's greenhouse gas emissions by more than 17 percent since 2008, the equivalent of permanently taking nearly 2 million cars off the road.

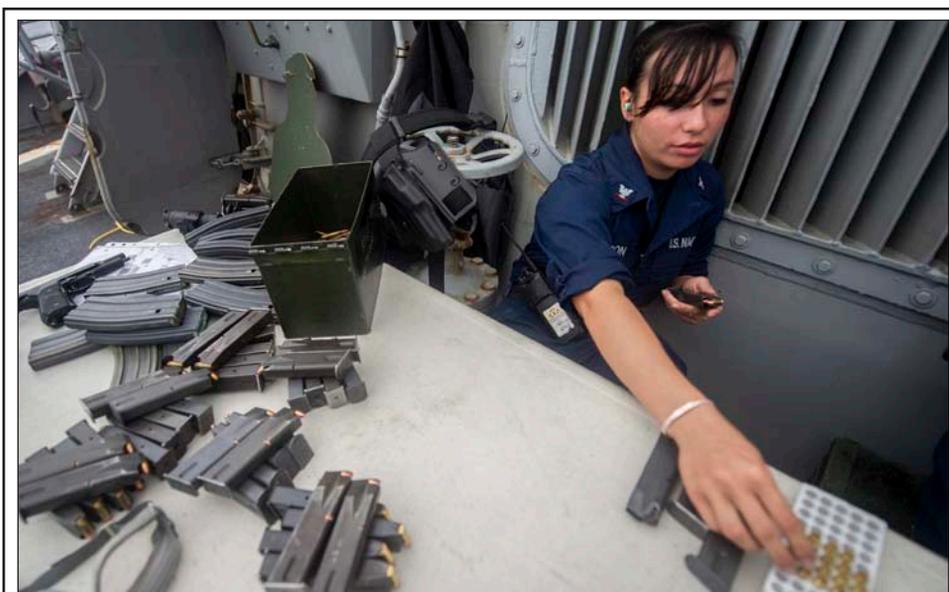


Photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Alonzo M. Archer

Gunner's Mate 3rd Class Alisa Eckerson, from Savannah, Ga., loads ammunition during a small-arms live-fire exercise on the flight deck of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Stethem (DDG 63).

WW II Cruiser USS Houston (CA 30) Final Report Completed

Courtesy Navy News Service

U.S. Navy underwater archeologists from the Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC) have completed the final survey report of the shipwreck of the World War II cruiser USS Houston (CA 30).

The team's interim report was finalized earlier this summer, confirming the site's identity and documenting conclusive evidence of a pattern of unauthorized disturbance of the grave site. While the findings remain intact from the interim report, this final report benefits from additional archival research and more exhaustively details the condition of the wreck.

Sailors and Military Sealift Command (MSC) civilian mariners assigned to the submarine tender USS Frank Cable (AS 40), representatives of the U.S.

embassy in Jakarta, and naval officers from Australia and Indonesia paid their respects to the crews of USS Houston (CA 30) and HMAS Perth (D 29) during a wreath laying ceremony Oct. 14, at the site of the sunken ships.

The original underwater survey was conducted as part of the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) 2014 exercise in June, U.S. Navy divers from Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit (MDSU) One Company 1-5, along with personnel from the Indonesian navy, surveyed the wreck during a joint training evolution. Over the course of 19 dive excursions, both ends of the wrecked vessel were marked with buoys and the exposed port side, as well as the deck, was documented using video recording.

The site of the sunken ship is the final

resting place of approximately 650 Sailors and Marines. The assessment noted there were indications that unknown persons illegally removed hull rivets and a metal plate from the ship. U.S. and Indonesian representatives are currently coordinating to develop measures to limit disturbances to the site.

Houston, nicknamed "The Galloping Ghost of the Java Coast," was sunk in combat during the World War II Battle of Sunda Strait in 1942. Capt. Albert H. Rooks, the ship's commanding officer who was killed in action, posthumously received the Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism, while USS Houston was awarded two battle stars, and the Presidential Unit Citation.

For more information on the USS Houston, visit: www.history.navy.mil/danfs/h8/houston-ii.htm.

First Manned, Unmanned Detachment Deploys Aboard LCS

Courtesy Navy News Service

The "Magicians" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 35 Detachment 1 departed Naval Air Station North Island, Coronado, Calif., Nov. 17, to join USS Fort Worth (LCS 3) on her maiden deployment.

The departure marks the first time the multi-mission MH-60R Seahawk helicopter and the MQ-8B Fire Scout unmanned autonomous helicopter are deployed together aboard a littoral combat ship.

HSM-35 Detachment 1 will consist of one MH-60R and one MQ-8B. The Fire Scout will complement the MH-60R by extending the range and endurance to enhance maritime domain awareness. The deploying aviation detachment will consist of 24

personnel who are qualified to operate or perform maintenance on both the MH-60R and the MQ-8B.

"We are the first squadron to bring all three components together with the MH-60R, the Fire Scout unmanned system, and the littoral combat ship," said Lt. Cmdr. Doug Kay, officer-in-charge, HSM 35 Detachment 1. "It's exciting to be at the cutting edge of Naval Aviation as part of HSM-35."

As the next generation submarine hunter and anti-surface warfare helicopter, the MH-60R Seahawk is the cornerstone of the Navy's Helicopter Concept of Operations. The MQ-8B Fire Scout system provides unique situational awareness and precision target support for the Navy and complements the MH-60R



Photo by Mass Communication specialist 2nd Class Tim D. Godbee

A Sailor performs preflight checks on an MQ-8B Fire Scout unmanned helicopter assigned to Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 35 aboard the littoral combat ship USS Fort Worth (LCS 3).

by extending the range and endurance to enhance maritime domain awareness.

Littoral combat ships are expected to routinely deploy with one Fire Scout and an

H-60 as part of the ship's surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, and mine countermeasures mission packages.

Reunion 2015	Date	Phone	Email
ASR/ARS Association	Oct. 5-9	(502) 477-0876	mbneal@twc.com
Destroyer Leaders Association (USS NORFOLK (DL 1), USS MITSCHER (DL 2/DDG 35), USS JOHN S MCCAIN (DL 3/DDG 36), USS WILLIS A LEE (DL 4), USS WILKINSON (DL 5)	Aug. 30 - Sept. 4	(401) 635-8860	mjbugara@hotmail.com
East Coast All Seabee Reunion	Feb. 27 - March 1		www.ecasr.com seabeemacd40@verizon.net
Navy Nuclear Power Unit	May 4-9	(845) 782-5539	fixitbob2@optonline.net
NSA/NSF DaNang	April 20-25	(502) 477-0876	mbneal@twc.com
Squadrons and Shipmates of the USS MIDWAY and USS FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT	Sept. 15-20	(859) 689-7001	squadronmates@aol.com http://squadron-shipmates-of-the-fdr-midway.com
USS BAUSELL (DD 845)	June 21-25	(928) 854-2205	www.ussebaussell.com genied@frontiernet.net
USS BORDELON (DD/DDR 881)	Aug. 26-30	(919) 467-2342	sully1944@gmail.com www.1dynamicplace.com/Bordelon
USS BREMERTON (CA 130 / SSN 698)	Sept. 13-18	(859) 771-5651	jeradams106@gmail.com
USS CONSERVER (ARS 39)	April 23-26	(610) 780-5484 (843) 810-0781	www.usserver.org kcwrdc@yahoo.com samuelsonlee@yahoo.com
USS HOLDER (DD/DDE 819 / DE 401)	Sept. 30 - Oct. 4	(831) 458-9062	ussholder_dde819@hotmail.com www.ussholder.com
USS KNUDSON (APD 101)	June 14-17	(386) 789-8612	wrj502@cfl.rr.com
USS LAWRENCE (DDG 4 / DD 250)	April 29 - May 3	(814) 322-4150	www.uslawrence.com dguts@uslawrence.com
USS MIDWAY Veterans Association	April 23-25		ussmidway.net facebook.com/ussmidwayveteransassociation ronaldpope79@yahoo.com
USS RICH (DD/DDE 820)	April 27 - May 1	(757) 361-5826	reunion2015@ussrich.org www.ussrich.org
USS SAN MARCOS (LSD 25)	Sept. 17-20	(215) 287-4311	jacklieberman8104@comcast.net
USS SKAGIT (AKA 105)	Sept. 28 - Oct. 3	(502) 477-0876	mbneal@twc.com
USS TUSK (SS 426)	Sept. 24-27	(860) 739-2065	ata245@sbcglobal.net
USS YELLOWSTONE (AD 27)	June 7-10	(352) 208-5400	bowp@centurylink.net
VA-75	May 15-17	(757) 831-0753	dale1231@cox.net
VR-24	May 7-10	(240) 577-9889	kuehnle@md.metrocast.net
VS-21 (1952-1972)	Sept. 27 - Oct. 1	(760) 612-4376	jsweisel@yahoo.com

Retiree Checklist: What Survivors Should Know

Shift Colors periodically provides a checklist for retirees and their family members. This checklist is designed to provide retirees and their loved ones with some help in preparing for the future. The checklist is not all-inclusive and should be used with other estate planning tools.

1. Create a military file.

- Retirement orders
- DD 214
- Separation papers
- Medical records

2. Create a military retired pay file.

- Claim number of any pending VA claims
- Address of the VA office being used
- List of current deductions from benefits
- Name, relationship and address of beneficiary of unpaid retired pay at the time of death
- Address and phone number for DFAS: Defense Finance and Accounting Service
U S Military Retirement Pay
Post Office Box 7130
London, KY 40742 7130
(800) 321-1080 option #3 (for deceased members)

3. Create an annuities file, to include:

- Information about the Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP)
(Additional information regarding SBP annuity claims can be obtained from the DFAS-Cleveland Center office at 1-800-321-1080.)
- Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (RCSBP)
- Retired Serviceman's Family Protection Plan (RSFPP)
- Civil Service annuity

4. Create a personal document file.

- Marriage Records
- Divorce decree
- Adoptions and naturalization papers

5. Create an income tax file.

- Copies of state and federal income tax returns

6. Create a property tax file.

- Copies of tax bills
- Deeds and any other related information.

7. Create an insurance policy file.

- Life Insurance
- Property, accident, liability insurance
- Hospitalization/Medical Insurance

8. Maintain a listing of banking and credit information, in a secure location.

- Bank account numbers
- Location of all deposit boxes
- Savings bond information
- Stocks, bonds and any securities owned
- Credit card account numbers and mailing addresses

9. Maintain a membership listing of all associations and organizations.

- Organization names and phone numbers
- Membership fee information

10. Maintain a list of all friends and business associates.

- Include names, addresses and phone numbers

11. Hold discussions with your next of kin about your wishes for burial and funeral services. At a minimum the discussion should include cemetery location and type of burial (ground, cremation or burial at sea). This knowledge may assist your next of kin to carry out all of your desires.

12. You could also pre-arrange your funeral services via your local funeral home. Many states will allow you to pre-pay for services.

13. Investigate the decisions that you and your family have agreed upon. Many states have specific laws and guidelines regulating cremation and burials at sea. Some states require a letter of authority signed by the deceased in order to authorize a cremation. Know the laws in your specific area and how they may affect your decisions. Information regarding Burials at Sea can be obtained by phoning Navy Mortuary Affairs at (866) 787-0081.

14. Once your decisions have been made and you are comfortable with them, have a will drawn up outlining specifics.

15. Ensure that your will and all other sensitive documents are maintained in a secure location known by your loved ones.

Organizations to be notified in the event of a retiree death:

1. Defense Finance and Accounting Service, London, KY
(800) 321-1080
2. Social Security Administration (for death benefits)
(800) 772-1213
3. Department of Veterans Affairs (if applicable)
(800) 827-1000
4. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)
(724) 794-8690
5. Any fraternal group that you have membership with:
e.g., MOAA, FRA, NCOA, VFW, AL, TREA
6. Any previous employers that provide pension or benefits.

Feedback

Our office is always looking to improve on how information is provided to the retired Navy community. Please send suggestions to MILL_RetiredActivities@navy.mil or:

Department of the Navy
OPNAV N170C
Retired Activities Branch
5720 Integrity Drive
Millington, TN 38055-6220

Retired Activities Office Phone Listing

Navy Sponsored RAOs

Arizona

Retired Activities Office
Navy Operational Support Center
14160 W. Marauder St.
Luke AFB, Glendale, AZ 85309
(602) 353-3033
9 a.m. – 1 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

California

Retired Activities Office
Naval Air Weapons Station
Code 75H000D
1 Administration Circle
China Lake, CA 93555-6100
(760) 939-0978
9 a.m. – 3 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

Retired Activities Office
Fleet and Family Support Center
966 Franklin Avenue
Naval Air Station
Lemoore, CA 93246-5001
(559) 998-2977
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. (Thu)

Retired Activities Office
Fleet And Family Support Center
1000 23rd Ave, Bldg. 1169
Port Hueneme, CA 93043
(805) 982-1023
Fax: (805) 982-1037
8 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

Retired Activities Office
Naval Amphibious Base
3324 Guadalcanal Road, Bldg. 16
Coronado, CA 92155
(619) 437-2780
9 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

Retired Activities Office
Navy Base San Diego
3005 Corbina Alley, Bldg. 259
San Diego, CA 92136-5190
(619) 556-8987
8 a.m. – 4 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

Retired Activities Office
Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach
800 Seal Beach Blvd.
Bldg. 22 Room 2
Seal Beach, CA 90740-5000
(562) 626-7152
9 a.m. – 3 p.m. (Mon-Thu)
9 a.m. – Noon (Fri)

Connecticut

Retired Activities Office
Naval Sub Base, New London
Bldg. 83, Room 172
PO Box 93
Groton, CT 06349-5000
(860) 694-3284
9 a.m. – Noon. (Mon-Fri)

Florida

Retired Activities Office

Naval Air Station, Jacksonville
Fleet and Family Support Center
554 Childs St. Bldg. 876
PO Box 136
Jacksonville, FL 32212-0136
(904) 542-5790
9 a.m. – 3 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

Retired Activities Office
Fleet and Family Support Center
Naval Air Station Whiting
7511 USS Enterprise St. Bldg. 3025
Milton, FL 32570-5000
(850) 623-7215 / 7177
8:30 a.m. – 11:30 p.m. (Mon & Fri)
Call for an appointment

Retired Activities Office
Fleet and Family Support Center
Naval Air Station
151 Ellyson Ave
Pensacola, FL 32508-5217
(850) 452-5622
9 a.m. – 1 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

Hawaii

Retired Activities Office
Fleet and Family Support Center
850 Ticonderoga St. Ste. 100 (RAO)
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-5101
(808) 474-0032
8 a.m. – 3 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

Massachusetts

Retired Activities Office
Naval Reserve Center
85 Sea St.
Quincy, MA 02169
(617) 753-4636/26
9 a.m. – Noon
Call for an appointment

Michigan

Retired Activities Office
P.O. Box 450045
Selfridge ANGB MI 48045
(586) 239-5580
(800) 645-9416 ext. 239-5580
9 a.m. – 3 p.m. (Tue-Fri)

Minnesota

Retired Activities Office
Naval Operational Support Center
5905 34th Avenue South
Minneapolis, M 55450
(612) 713-4664
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. (Tue & Thu)

Missouri

Retired Activities Office, St Louis
Naval/Marine Corps Reserve Center
10810 Lambert International Blvd
Bridgeton, MO 63044-2314
(314) 524-9553
9 a.m. – 1 p.m. (Tue)
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. (Fri)

New Hampshire

Retired Activities Office
Portsmouth Naval Shipyard
Code 866 Bldg. 22
Portsmouth, NH 03804-5000
(207) 438-1868
10 a.m. – 2 pm.. (Tue-Thu)

Rhode Island

Retired Activities Office
Naval Station Newport
Bldg. 690 Peary St.
Newport, RI 02841-1522
(401) 841-3030
9 a.m. – Noon (Mon, Wed-Fri)

South Carolina

Retired Activities Office
103 Hill Blvd, Bldg. 503, Rm 122
Joint Base Charleston, SC 29404
(843) 963-2228
9 a.m. – Noon (Mon-Fri)

Tennessee

Retired Activities Office
Fleet and Family Support Center
Bldg. 456, First Floor
NSA Memphis, Code N 763
Millington, TN 38054-5000
(901) 874-5195
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. (Tue & Thu)

Virginia

Retired Activities Regional Office
Fleet and Family Support Center
7928 14th St. Ste. 239
Norfolk, VA 23511
(757) 444-2102
Fax: (757) 445-5326
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

Retired Activities Office
Joint Expeditionary Base
Little Creek/Fort Story
1450 D Street
Norfolk, VA 23521
(757) 462-8663/7563
10 a.m. – 2 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

Washington

Retired Activities Office
Fleet and Family Support Center
Naval Station Everett
13910 45th Ave NE, Room 818
Marysville, WA 98271
(425) 304-3775/3721
10 a.m. – 1 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

Retired Activities Office
Fleet and Family Support Center
Bldg. #13
Naval Air Station
Whidbey Island
Oak Harbor, WA 98278
(360) 257-8054/55
9 a.m. – 3 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

Retired Activities Office
Fleet and Family Support Center
Bangor
1099 Tautog Circle
Silverdale, WA 98315
1-866-854-0638
Call for an appointment
(Note: Supports Bangor, Kitsap,
Keyport And Surrounding Areas)

Wisconsin

Retired Activities Office
Navy and Marine Corps Reserve
Center
2401 South Lincoln Memorial Dr.
Milwaukee, WI 53207-1999
(414) 744-9766
9 a.m. – 3 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

Navy Sponsored RAO Overseas

Rota, Spain

Retired Activities Office
NS Rota Community Support Bldg.
3293
PSC 819, Box 57
FPA AE 09645-5500
011-34-956-82-3232
1 – 4 p.m. (Mon, Wed, Fri)

Independent Retired Activities Coordination Offices (IRCOS)**

Florida

Retired Activities Office
VA Lakemont Campus, Rm. 125
VA Building
2500 Lakemont Ave
Orlando, Fl. 32814
(407) 646-4110/4111/4114

Maine (also serves Vermont)

Retired Activities Office
62 Pegasus Street, Suite 101
Unit B, Box 5
Brunswick, ME 04011
(207) 406-4103
9 a.m. – 1 p.m. (Mon-Fri)

New York

Retired Activities Office
25 Baiting Place
Farmingdale, NY 11735
(631)-768-3248
11 a.m. – Noon (Tue, Fri)

IRCO Overseas:

Italy

Retired Activities Office Contact
Via De Amicis #16
07024 La Maddalena
O. T. Italy
Panzanic@Hotmail.Com

* Limited services

** IRCOs are independent retired activities in areas which are geographically isolated from Navy commands or installations.

Ready Reference Contact Information

Air Force Retiree Services: (800) 531-7502; www.retirees.af.mil
Arlington National Cemetery: (703) 607-8000; www.arlingtoncemetery.org

Armed Forces Retirement Home: (800) 422-9988; www.afrh.gov
Army & Air Force Exchange Service: (214) 312-2011; www.aafes.com

Army Retired Services: (703)325-9158; www.armyg1.army.mil/retire

Burial at Sea Information: (866) 787-0081; www.npc.navy.mil

Combat Related Special Compensation:
www.donhq.navy.mil/corb/crscb/crscmainpage.htm

DEERS: (800)-538-9552, Fax: (831) 655-8317;
www.tricare.osd.mil/deers

Defense Commissary Agency: www.commissaries.com

DFAS Casualty Assistance Branch: (800) 321-1080 or (216) 522-5955; (For Reporting a Retiree's death, option #1)

Fleet Reserve Association: (703) 683-1400; www.fra.org

Gulf War homepage: www.gulfink.osd.mil

I.D. Cards Benefits and Eligibility: (866) 827-5672;

www.npc.navy.mil/support/paypers/ID_Cards/Pages

Internal Revenue Service: (800) 829-1040; www.irs.gov

Marine Corps Retired Affairs: (800) 336-4649; www.usmc.mil
(Hover over "Marine Services" then click on "Retired Services")

Medicare: (800) 633-4227. TTY: (877) 486-2048; www.medicare.gov

Military Officers Assoc. of America: (800) 234-6622; www.moaa.org

National Burial Services: (800) 697-6940

NPC Navy Reserve Personnel Management (PERS 9): (866) 827-5672,

www.npc.navy.mil/career/reservepersonnelmgmt/Pages/

Navy Casualty Assistance: (800) 368-3202

Navy Retired Activities Office: (866) U-ASK-NPC (866-827-5672)
MILL RetiredActivities@navy.mil;

www.npc.navy.mil/support/retired_activities/Pages

Navy Uniform Shop: (800) 368-4088; www.navy-nex.com/uniform

Navy Worldwide Locator: (866) U-ASK-NPC (866-827-5672);
www.npc.navy.mil/organization/npc/csc/Pages/NavyLocatorService.aspx

Reserve Component SBP: (866) 827-5672 ask for PERS-912

Retiree Dental — Delta Dental: (888) 838-8737; www.trdp.org

Servicemembers Group Insurance (SGLI): (800) 419-1473;
www.insurance.va.gov

Naval Historical Center: (202) 433-2210; www.history.navy.mil

Social Security Administration: (800) 772-1213; www.ssa.gov

TRICARE: www.tricare.mil

TRICARE North: (877) TRICARE (874-2273); www.hnfs.net/:
CT, DC, DE, IL, IN, KY, MA, MD, ME, MI, NC, NH, NJ, NY, OH,
PA, RI, VT, VA, WI, WV, some zips in IA, MO, TN

TRICARE South: (800) 444-5445; www.humana-military.com:
AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, OK, SC, TN (except 35 TN zips near
Fort Campbell), and TX (except the extreme SW El Paso area)

TRICARE West: (877) 988-WEST (9378); www.uhcmilitarywest.com:
AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, IA (except 82 zips near Rock
Island), KS, MO (except St. Louis area), MN, MT, ND, NE, NM,
NV, OR, DE, SW TX, UT, WA, WY

TRICARE Overseas: (888) 777-8343; www.tricare.mil

TRICARE For Life: (866) 773-0404; www.tricare.mil/tfl

TRICARE mail order pharmacy: (877) 363-1303;
www.tricare.mil/pharmacy www.express-scripts.com

VA: www.va.gov

Regional offices: (800) 827-1000 (overseas retirees should
contact the American Embassy/consulate), TDD (800) 829-4833

Insurance:

VA Regional Office and Insurance Center

PO Box 7208 (claims inquiries) -ORPO

Box 7327 (loans) -ORPO

Box 7787 (payments)

Philadelphia PA 19101

(800) 669-8477; www.insurance.va.gov

Burial information: (800) 827-1000; www.cem.va.gov

GI Bill: (888) 442-4551; www.gibill.va.gov

Records:

**For replacement DD 214, service records, medical records,
award information:**

Retired prior to 1995: www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records

Retired

Retired after 1995:

Navy Personnel Command

PERS-312E

5720 Integrity Drive

Millington, TN 38055-3120

Fax requests to: (901) 874-2664

Gray-area reservists: (866) 827-5672

Navy recreation: www.mwr.navy.mil

Navy Gateway Inns & Suites: <http://dodlodging.net>

ITT: <http://navymwr.org/mwrprgms/itt.html>

Sister service retiree publications:

Air Force Afterburner: www.retirees.af.mil/afterburner

Army Echoes: www.armyg1.army.mil/rso/echoes.asp

Coast Guard Evening Colors: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/cg1/psc/ras>

Marine Corps Semper Fidelis: www.manpower.usmc.mil/portal/page/portal/M_RA_HOME/MM/SR/RET_ACT/Semper_Fidelis



Sailors assigned to the explosive ordnance disposal team of Command Task Force (CTF) 75 conduct static line parachute operations from an MC 130J aircraft to demonstrate maritime parachute insertion capabilities. This capability can deliver personnel and equipment to remote locations during operational and crisis situations. (Photo by Chief Aircrew Survival Equipmentmen Justin Obyen)