

Peleliu News

November 11, 2012

Peleliu Drills Weapons Readiness



Aviation Ordnanceman 3rd Class Alexander Loera mans a .50-caliber machine gun on the starboard gun mount during weapons drill.

Photo by MC2 (SW) Daniel Viramontes

Story by MCSN Alex Van'tLeven
Peleliu Staff Writer

The crew of amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) increased their weapons familiarization and training since entering the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility, Oct. 30.

The U.S. 5th Fleet is considered a dynamic and challenging environment at-sea and ashore, requiring a higher level of weapons understanding, safety, and qualification for the service members aboard Peleliu by the Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, 5th Fleet.

"[U.S. 5th Fleet] has mandated that every ship entering [its area of responsibility] will give hands-on training to all weapons qualified personnel within 24 hours of entering, and once every month," said Aviation Ordnanceman 1st Class John P. Lambert, Weapons department G-2 division leading petty officer."

The responsibility of training and educating the crew falls on the Weapons department, which consists of gunner's mates and aviation ordnancemen. Mandatory training has been held for two weeks aboard the ship.

"G-2 division set up the training sessions [that] were verified in the planning board

for training so the times did not conflict with other events and tasks on the ship," Lambert said, "These trainings gave detailed presentation of each weapon used by the Peleliu crew members and a hands-on session after the lecture to better familiarize everyone with these weapons."

With the high threat of possible terrorist attack in the area, personnel are required to be qualified to defend the ship from the various threats they may face.

"This is where it all happens. This is what we train to do; this is our mission," said Master-at-Arms Seaman Recruit David M. Delaney, from Yuba City, Calif., who attended the weapons training and qualification course. "We are out here to do force protection and show force, and if we can't get gun qualified, how can we protect ourselves?"

The familiarization sessions held twice a day, morning and afternoon, were broken down by duty sections. The training comprised of demonstrations, safety topics, and handling of the 9 mm Beretta service pistol, M-16 assault rifle, Mossberg 500 12-gauge shotgun, and M-240 light machine gun.

"Weapons training is important so they [watch standers] know what they are doing," said Gunner's Mate 3rd Class Guadalupe J. Ramos, from Corpus Christi, Texas, one

of the small arms weapons instructor. "We taught [personnel] the distances of the weapons, the maximum effective ranges, and releasing and reloading of the magazines."

After completing the familiarization training, Sailors attended live-fire qualification course held on the flight deck and aviation elevators. The Weapons department completed preliminary maintenance and checks on each weapon, up to 24 hours beforehand.

The ship also conducted numerous small craft attack team (SCAT) drills, mainly composed of Weapons department personnel. The drills tested the responsiveness of the team to be ready at a moment's notice. With U.S. 5th Fleet forces' flexibility for quick responses to any potential threat, including small craft attacks, Peleliu's teams displayed the ability to identify and engage seaward to ensure safety and security.

"We protect the ship in case anything goes down," said Gunner's Mate 3rd Class Matthew I. Williams, from Clarksville, Tenn., a SCAT member. "It's important to have a quick reaction team, and the sooner we can act and be prepared, the sooner we can protect the ship." SCAT performs continuous drills to increase speed and proficiency.

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

PELELIU SAPR POC:

NCCS SUSAN GARROW Ext 7567

If you have been sexually assaulted, call the 24 hour crisis hotline at 877-995-5247, text your location to 55247 (INCONUS), or contact any of the following personnel BEFORE you speak to anyone else:

Any Chaplain; Victim Advocates (VA):

PELELIU VICTIM ADVOCATES

Lt. Nicole Schwegman
Lt. j.g. Andrea Goldstein
HMC Jody Lacefield
AO1 Jennifer Martin
AO1 Benjamin Callen
LS1 Vernita Foster
AE1 Jeffrey Ritchie
ABH2 Donell Viree
HM2 Janice Sapaden
OS2 Canon Deimerly
PR2 Cassandra Cox

BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

What Can You Do?

WHO IS A BYSTANDER?

A bystander is anyone who sees, hears, or has knowledge of an issue.

WHAT IS SEX WITHOUT CONSENT?

Sexual assault.

WHAT IS THE ONLY WRONG RESPONSE TO WITNESSING A POTENTIALLY THREATENING DANGEROUS, OR ABUSIVE SITUATION?

To do nothing.

TYPES OF INTERVENTION

•**Direct** – Say something directly to the individual who is “crossing the line.” Let the victim know you see something dangerous about to happen.

•**Indirect** – Involve others - have someone else prevent an action from proceeding (have the bartender stop serving drinks).

•**Distraction** – Create a diversion or refocus the situation to another matter (“Look, your car is being towed!”)

•**Protocol** – Intervene with the assistance of the Chain of Command or other authority (police).

MWR Sponsors Events on Peleliu



Sailors and Marines play spades during a Morale, Wellness and Recreation sponsored tournament on the mess decks.

Photo and Story by MC3 Derek Stroop

Peleliu Staff Writer

Amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu's (LHA 5) Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) committee sponsored several events this week Nov. 3-10.

MWR sponsors different events around the ship to provide Sailors and Marines with outlets other than work.

“These events benefit our Sailors and Marines because some of them work 12-18 hours a day and it's good for them to be able to take some time and unwind,” said Chief Yeoman Marina Searcy, Peleliu's MWR events coordinator. “Some of our Sailors paint all day long, run drills, participate in training during the day, so it's good for them.”

Events sponsored in the month of November so far have been two movie nights in the hangar bay, a Spades tournament and bingo night.

“The movie was really good,” said Engineman 3rd Class John Thomas. “It was nice to get away for a bit.”

Sailors and Marines paired off in the Spades tournament with more than 75

participants competing.

“I love Spades,” said Lance Cpl. Ryan Calderas, from San Antonio. “I love competition, too and [events like] this make it easier to be on deployment.”

The ‘green’ side has their own organization that sponsors events on the Peleliu.

“Marines with the 15th MEU have ‘Campbell's Cup,’ which is their version of MWR, and we coordinate with them as well,” said Searcy. “We are trying to get the ‘blue’ and ‘green’ side to integrate more, instead of being separate.”

MWR plans to have more events in the future for Sailors and Marines to participate.

“Events we are looking at in the future are Peleliu ‘X-Factor™,’ Family Feud™ and ‘Wing Night,’” said Searcy.

Including to Searcy, other events in planning include a trivia night, karaoke, Native American movie night sponsored by the Diversity Team, and a Madden® football tournament. MWR welcomes Sailors and Marines to volunteer their time or lend their support.

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Peleliu Ramps Up General Quarters



Lt j.g. Matthew Hamilton monitors a radar screen on the bridge during a general quarters drill.

Photo by MC3 Derek Stroop

Story by MCSN Jasmine Sheard
Peleliu Staff Writer

Amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) enhanced general quarters training upon arrival to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility, Oct 30.

Prior to deployment, Peleliu has trained for various damage control drills with the flying squad, flight deck team and Condition I general quarters. Training for GQ in the 5th fleet increased due to the threat posture in the area.

“The threat of mines and the potential for interactions with threat platforms and weapons systems is increased in the Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command 5th Fleet AOR,” said Lt. Cmdr. Nathan Butikofer, Peleliu’s damage control assistant. “Increasing our training efforts ensures we are ready to meet those threats.”

Throughout the two weeks since arriving to the 5th Fleet, the damage control training team (DCTT) has conducted training with each repair locker focusing on repair locker leaders, plotters, phone talkers, investigators and hose teams.

The initial refresher of training focused on material condition zebra setting throughout the ship in a required minimum time. Zebra provides the most amount of protection for the ship through localizing and preventing the spread of fire and flooding.

“The DCTT looked for several items, [that] include, quick and accurate responses in setting material condition zebra, setting timely fire or flooding boundaries accurately and quick response times in manning repair lockers and command/control watch stations,” Butikofer said.

At the sound of the klaxon, Sailors responded to their designated repair lockers, ready to combat damages or emergencies throughout their respective areas aboard. Each repair locker has specific responsibilities in accordance with their repair party manual.

“It’s important to go through training because it allows us to prepare for anything that could possibly happen,” said Boatswain’s Mate 3rd Class Markell Ancrum, a repair locker investigator.

One of the drills simulated a chemical, biological, and radiological attack to the ship. During this drill, Sailors and Marines trained and prepared for a possible chemical warfare environment through the different mission oriented protective posture levels, the donning of the MCU-2/P protective mask and the proper use of the joint service light weight integrated suit.

“We went over different types of detection equipment we have and how to use them properly,” said Damage Controlman 1st Class Rudy Morales, a DCTT member. “We also instructed on the different types of agents that can be used and the effects it has on the body and what symptoms they should be aware of.”

M-8 and M-9 paper and M-256A1 chemical detector kit serve as some of the tools used aboard to detect blood, blister, choking, and nerve agents, or pathogens that could decapitate a crew member.

Peleliu also conducted an abandon ship drill. Sailors and Marines practiced reporting to their life raft stations, as well as the life raft contents and basic survival questions.

“It’s important to know the contents of the life rafts, so you can know the amount of food and water you have to sustain for the 25 personnel in the life raft,” said Boatswain’s Mate 2nd Class Steven Bryant. “Also, the rafts have signalers, fishing lines and distilling tablets for the sea water. Knowing what’s in the life rafts increases the chance of survival.”

Peleliu is the flagship for the Peleliu Amphibious Ready Group and along with the embarked 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit are deployed in support of maritime security operations and theater cooperation efforts in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility.

CMC’s Corner



MCMC (SW/AW) Robert Barber
Command Master Chief, USS Peleliu (LHA 5)

Yo! What’s Up?

Cool, I thought I had lost you there for a minute.

Today’s discussion is about ‘Holiday Routine,’ something that is near and dear to not only my heart but probably yours also. It is amazing how perceptions can differ depending on who you are talking to. I have had three separate conversations this week, all three at different levels in the chain of command, regarding this question: “*Master Chief, what does holiday routine mean?*”

Let’s start with what it is not. It is not a day off. It is not a day where you can do anything you want. For most of us it could simply be a day where we get a little more sleep. It could also be a day where I get to catch up on my favorite movies or even TV shows that I brought on my laptop. It could be a day where I zone out for a few hours playing video games, but again it is not a day off. Why is it not a day off?

Let’s take a quick walk outside, now look around. Everywhere you look, danger is just over the horizon. Danger is right around the corner; it could even be right behind you as we speak. We old-timers call where we are the “Tip of the Spear,” and while we are here I need every one of you FOCUSED!

Some of you have heard me say this: “This is not a job.” A job implies that I work set hours and at the end of the day, I go home.

This is a lifestyle where the mission always comes first. We make sacrifices so that others can rest easy. So in short, holiday routine is defined by the needs of the mission. Sorry, but there is no clear definition for Holiday Routine.

In closing, I want to thank every one of you for the hard work you put in every week! Even the little things matter!

Thanks for your time ... Sheriff out!

Rushmore Celebrates 237th Marine Corps Birthday



Master Sgt. Jason C. Topp, operations chief, Combat Logistics Battalion 15, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, hands a slice of the ceremonial Marine Corps Birthday cake to Lance Cpl. Marcos A. Solis, a motor transportation operator from the same unit, during an early Marine Corps Birthday celebration on the flight deck of USS Rushmore, Nov 7.

Photo and Story by LCPL Timothy Childers
15th MEU Staff Writer

USS RUSHMORE – Normally during the most important of Marine Corps celebrations, Marines would be looking sharp in their dress blue uniforms and seated at tables in a ballroom. Things were done differently during this festivity.

Marines from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit swayed in formation as the ship pitched and yawed over the sea during the early celebration of the 237th Marine Corps Birthday, Nov. 7. Because the MEU is scheduled to conduct a training operation on Nov. 10th, the official date of the Marine Corps birthday, the event was held early.

All Marines were in attendance for the ceremony on the flight deck as the official message from the 35th commandant of the Marine Corps, General James F. Amos, was read.

“The Commandant, in his message, reminds us that only a few Americans choose the dangerous, but necessary, work of fighting our nation’s enemies,” said Lt. Col. John J. Wiener, commanding officer, Combat Logistics Battalion 15, 15th MEU. “The Marine Corps is what it is because of who you and I are, and we are who we are, in no small part, because of the training and experience the Marine Corps afforded us. So, as we celebrate our history, let’s reflect on what bonds us together,” added Wiener, speaking to troops during the celebration.

The cake-cutting ceremony was the main event in the time honored ceremony. While most people use a spatula or knife to cut the first slice of cake, Marines use a sword to complete this rite.

The first slice of cake was given to the guest of honor, Cmdr. Brian Finman, commanding officer, USS Rushmore. The second slice was handed to the oldest Marine attending, Master Sgt. Jason C. Topp, operations chief, CLB-15, 15th MEU. After taking a bite he, handed it to the youngest Marine present, Lance Cpl. Marcos A. Solis, a motor transportation operator from the same unit.

“This is the first time I’ve had the honor to be the oldest Marine at the ceremony,” said Topp. “It’s humbling after being in the Marine Corps for more than 23 years to be that Marine. It’s something everyone thinks about but never believes will happen. I was able to pass on some words of wisdom to the youngest Marine present,” added the 41-year-old, Marblehead, Mass., native.”

The passing of the slice of cake from the oldest Marine to the youngest Marine present symbolizes the passing of history and traditions to the next generation.

“It was great for my first time celebrating the Marine Corps Birthday,” said Solis. “It was an exciting experience. It’s an important tradition because it gives us time to reflect and honor what we did in the past,” said the 19-year-old Mineral Wells, Texas, native.

After the ceremony, the Marines were dismissed to the mess decks for evening chow. It’s customary for Marines around the world to be served a much deserved steak-and-lobster dinner as they reflect on the Corps’ illustrious past and promising future.

The 15th MEU is deployed as part of the Peleliu Amphibious Ready Group as a theater reserve and crisis response force throughout U.S. Central Command and the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility.

#LOOSE LIPS

Story by Petty Officer 2nd Class **Part 9**
(SG) T. Grout, *PeleNews* contributor

Stephanie reviewed the comments from Blake’s page with mild concern and a hint of joy. On one hand his anticipation for their coffee “date” brought a warm peace to her soul. On the other a mild alarm sounded from a distance in her mind. But loud enough for her to notice — Who is Blake?

From the moment of their first encounter to their innocent dinner she felt comfortable with him. More than usual she found herself driving out of her way to visit the gym for a glimpse of his car in the parking lot. Maybe because he didn’t express the same interest in her, it intrigued her desire of him. But now, “Heck, I don’t even know his last name!” she blurted aloud to no one.

From across town Blake sat waiting for a response to his message.

From across the world, Anna sat at a computer terminal with both Blake’s and Stephanie’s page mirrored on her screen. She didn’t mind the job. After six years she became skilled monitoring social media from four monitors while reading the FoxNews ticker and drinking black coffee. Her comrades attempted to keep up, but no one succeeded. Close, but not yet. She enjoyed the cat-and-mouse game that her brother Blake started. If not for him, she would not hold the record. Because of him, their state receive certain guarantees.

They waited.

Stephanie looked through her friends and found Blake McCampbell and began to type. She reread her message. Too stern? Delete here, add there. Okay. Send.

Anna’s hand moved to her mouth and shifted in her chair.

The little number 1 appeared over the message icon of Blake’s Facebook page. The smile on his face faded as he read the message.

“Blake, I saw your post. I’m flattered. Really I am. But I’m not looking for anyone. I’m deploying soon and I need to focus on me. I don’t need distractions from a relationship. I hope you understand. Sorry. Steph.”

Blake muttered a curse. He finished his vodka, poured another shot, downed that, and stood up. He walked to his balcony and looked out over the downtown skyline. He did not anticipate this.

Peleliu Conducts Mass Casualty Training in 5th Fleet



Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Roseann Robles attaches a casualty card to a simulated casualty during a mass casualty drill.

Photos and Story by MC3 Derek Stroop
Peleliu Staff Writer

Amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5) conducted a mass casualty drill in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of responsibility, Nov. 7.

During a mass casualty drill, trained stretcher-bearers carry simulated casualties into medical triage to be treated for any multitude of injuries, including head trauma, burns or amputations.

“Mass casualty drills keep us sharp,” said Chief Hospital Corpsman Jody Lacefield, assigned to Fleet Surgical Team One, Senior Enlisted Advisor. “We have to constantly practice so the procedures become second nature.”

Now that Peleliu is operating in the 5th Fleet, the crew must be prepared for any scenario. The drill centered around a flight deck related incident.

“Today’s drill could definitely be a real-time scenario since it began on the flight deck,” said Lacefield. “That is always something we have to be aware of in the medical department.”

Mass casualty drills not only effect the medical department aboard Peleliu, it involves all hands as being the first responders at the scene.

“These drills are not only for medical personnel,” said Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Roseann Robles. “It tests the crew’s knowledge of how to bandage wounds and care for victims because it takes time for medical teams to get there, and if you can help your shipmate out by caring for an injury right then and there, you can

potentially save their life.”

According to Robles, medical staff addressed several different types of wounds, including facial wounds, compound fractures, abdominal lacerations and chest wounds.

“I believe our corpsmen performed amazingly,” added Robles. “All of our corpsmen are well-trained and it’s always good to practice because practice makes perfect.”

Lacefield said that Peleliu can expect more mass casualty drills in the future.



Information Systems Technician Seaman Lance Leach applies pressure to a simulated wound during a mass casualty drill.

Man on the Street

By MC2 Nick Brown

From carrier pigeons to the printing press, news has traveled to us in many different forms over the years. Now we have laptop computers, Wi-Fi Internet, Facebook, Twitter, and cell phones that literally put the news in the palm of your hand. This week’s question:

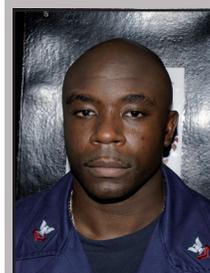
“What is your preferred method of getting news on board the ship?”

Information Systems Technician Seaman Nichole Ebert from Sussex, Wis.



“I like Facebook for news. It’s the most up-to-date plus I get to see what’s happening at home. If I see something big has happened, I’ll Google it to find out more or to see another point of view.”

Boatswain’s Mate 2nd Class Michael Trapps from Morvin, N.C.



“Getting news by word of mouth still works best for me. I’m a boatswain’s mate and I spend most of my time on deck. I can’t rely on e-mail or Internet because I just don’t have the time for it. If it’s really important, someone will tell me.”

Corporal Travis Scott from Newpaltz, N.Y.



“I don’t normally get a chance to watch television, so the best way to get news for me is through e-mails from my wife, like how I forgot it was time to register to vote until she reminded me. She’s always the first to let me know what’s going on in the world.”

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Manuel Medina from San Diego



“I like seeing my news on television where I can actually watch what’s happening. I prefer CNN over others because it’s usually less biased.”