

CHAPTER 2

Recent Naval Expeditionary Operations

"We are always the away team; we are always forward deployed. We are always ready for whatever mission comes along. We have got to be flexible; we have to be quick; we have got to be able to change missions."

The Honorable Ray Mabus, Secretary of the Navy

The purpose of this chapter is to paint a picture of recent naval expeditionary operations. The operations and exercises summarized are by no means all-inclusive, but are intended to show examples of the significant contributions naval expeditionary forces have made in executing the core capabilities and accomplishing the strategic imperatives of the Maritime Strategy.

Forward Presence

Rotationally deployed and FDNF provided persistent forward presence and supported the full spectrum of military operations including:

- Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM - ARG/MEUs, NSWROns, MCMROns, RIVROns, MSROns, NMCBs, EODMUs maintained a consistent presence during ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

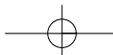


USS Mesa Verde (LPD 19) in Bahrain

- Among the many accomplishments of rotationally deployed EODMUs, EODMU 6 Platoon 621 provided mission-essential EOD skills to enable combat success for U.S. Army Special Operations Forces. The platoon rendered safe improvised explosive devices, disposed of more than 1,500 pounds of high explosives, and has been involved in a large number of combat engagements with the enemy. In Iraq, EODMU 12 had oversight for 30 EOD teams in U.S. Division North and played a key role partnering with Iraqi Army and Police EOD companies.

- Expeditionary Strike Group FIVE - In November 2009, ESG FIVE was established to provide command and control afloat or ashore of assigned forces in the conduct of contingency, maritime security, and theater security cooperation operations in support of USCENTCOM and COMFIFTHFLT. As CTF 51 and 59, ESG FIVE is responsible for contingency response and humanitarian and disaster relief missions, as well as all amphibious forces in the COMFIFTHFLT AOR.

- In 2009, two NMCB battalions were on the ground in Afghanistan primarily assisting Marines in Helmand province. Seabees were among the first U.S. troops to arrive in country at the start of Operation Enduring Freedom to upgrade and repair airfields. In 2010, two additional NMCBs were deployed in support of the 30,000 troop surge ordered in December 2009 by the President.





NMCB 133 Seabees Drilling Water Well in Afghanistan

The additional forces and engineering expertise were required to build forward operating bases; pave, repair, and construct roads, airfields, bridges, and buildings; and continue to provide force protection and quality of life upgrades for the increased numbers of U.S. and coalition forces. For the near-term, the four NMCBs will be comprised of two Active and two Reserve battalions. In addition to the mission in Afghanistan, Seabees operated in 20 countries around the world to support a variety of humanitarian, security and community-building operations.

- Exercise Bright Star 2010 - For the first time in four years the U.S., represented by the Bataan ARG, participated in bilateral exercises with the Egyptian Navy. This biennial training exercise is conducted by USCENTCOM and designed to improve readiness, interoperability, and strengthen military and professional relationships among U.S., Egyptian and several other coalition forces. During the exercise, all aspects of the Bataan ARG warfighting capabilities were demonstrated, including an offload of a portion of the 22nd MEU by LCACs (ACU-4) to participate in an amphibious demonstration.

- Naval Special Warfare - NSW forces continued to globally deploy in support of CCDRs' requirements. In 2009-2010, NSW began the initial overseas deployment under its new "NSW Anchor Team" (NSWAT) program, one of several significant NSW events to reach fruition over the past year. NSWAT's are small elements of SEALs and SWCCs who focus on the culture, tactical issues, and the strategic picture of a particular country for at least four years. This organizational structure will enhance and secure a continuity of relationships and create more effective training among NSW, interagency and the host nation force.

- Africa Partnership Station 2010 (APS 10) is the fourth year of the series of global maritime partnership deployments to the USAFRICOM AOR. APS West and East units are deployed to Central/West and East African littoral nations, respectively. USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44) served as the flagship for APS West conduct-

ing the mission to improve maritime safety and security with African Coastal nations including conducting small boat operations; maritime domain awareness; fisheries management; and VBSS tactics training with maritime forces



APS West Sailors Offloading Project Handclast Materials





from Nigeria, Ghana, and Sao Tome and Principe. Embarked Seabees constructed a breakwater jetty, installed floating piers, constructed additions and renovated barracks side-by-side with host-nation military engineers in Cameroon and Liberia.

- Southern Partnership Station 2010 (SPS 10) is the fourth year of the series of global maritime partnership deployments of various specialty platforms to the USSOUTHCOM AOR. SPS 10 was comprised of four phases: Oceanographic-SPS, High Speed Vessel-SPS (HSV 2 Swift with NECC SFA MTT and Marine Corps Training and Advisory Group personnel embarked), Navy Diver-SPS (USNS Grasp (T-ARS 51) with MDSU 2 divers embarked), and Amphibious-SPS (USS New Orleans (LPD 18) with PHIBRON FIVE, ACU ONE, BMU ONE, Special Purpose MAGTF 24, and other units embarked).

- Expeditionary forces significantly contributed to multinational naval exercises Cobra Gold 2010 (USS Essex (LHD 2), USS Denver (LPD 9), USS Harpers Ferry (LSD 49) and 31st MEU) and UNITAS Gold 2009 (USS Ashland (LSD 48), USS Mesa Verde (LPD 19), ACU FOUR). These exercises provide training, and enhance interoperability to counter asymmetric threats and promote regional peace and security.



Cobra Gold 2010

- In September and October 2009, at the request of Peruvian, Guatemalan, and Moroccan embassy and military leadership, SFA MTTs from NECC's MCAST conducted tailored training in a number of core maritime expeditionary topics for selected members of these countries' Navy, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Special Forces. Following pre-training site visits conducted earlier in the year to ascertain training needs and align training goals, the foreign military members were provided courses of instruction in small boat operations and tactics, anti-terrorism/force protection, and weapons handling. These MTTs were non-intrusive comprised of about six MCAST members each and conducted at host nation training sites and in the host nation's language. SFA MTTs such as these enhance maritime security and the stability of our global partners.

Deterrence

The ability of amphibious forces to rapidly deploy and poise offshore, with combat and soft power expeditionary forces embarked and ready, provided an enduring signal of U.S. intent and resolve:

- In April 2009, three Navy SEAL snipers ended in seconds what had been nearly a week-long standoff after an unsuccessful attempt by Somali





pirates to hijack the MV Maersk Alabama. Assessing that the life of the Alabama's master, held hostage for four days in an Alabama lifeboat presently towed astern USS Bainbridge (DDG 96) due to rough seas, was in immediate danger, each SEAL fired one shot from the DDG's fantail killing the three pirates in the lifeboat. Dozens of SEALs had embarked in Bainbridge to coordinate hostage rescue operations after clandestinely inserting in the vicinity of the DDG.



Team From USS Boxer LHD 4 Tows the Maersk Alabama Lifeboat

- In Afghanistan, special operations teams including Navy SEALs conducted raids with the aim of capturing and persuading militants to turn against the Taliban-led insurgency. The number of raids targeted against Taliban leaders and leadership of other insurgent groups and militant groups has increased dramatically in recent months. The SOF teams carried out more than 90 raids in November 2009, compared with only 20 in May.

Sea Control

Sea control operations to enable freedom of navigation and global maritime commerce included:



USS Defender (MCM 2) Remote-controlled Mine Neutralization Vehicle

- In November 2009, USS Defender (MCM 2), USS Guardian (MCM 5), USS Patriot (MCM 7) and Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 14 participated in Exercise Clear Horizon, an annual exercise conducted with the Republic of Korea to practice clearing routes for shipping as well as conducting training surveys for clearing operational areas.
- During Operation VIGILANT MARINER, Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron Three detachment Bahrain (MSRON 3 Det Bahrain) operating within COMFIFTHFLT AOR provided teams of sailors trained in point defense of defenseless replenishment and supply ships deployed to the Red Sea, Arabian Sea, and off the Horn of Africa.





Power Projection

In this "expeditionary era" when access to overseas bases is uncertain, sea-based power projection provides the U.S. an asymmetrical advantage over our adversaries.

- In June 2010, amphibious ships and naval expeditionary forces from COMTHIRDFLT and I MEF conducted Exercise Dawn Blitz, a MEB-level landing exercise involving approximately 4,500 Sailors and Marines which highlighted the blue/green partnership, and honed the skills needed to maintain operational readiness for amphibious joint forcible entry. This exercise was the first of its size in over a decade and supported Navy and Marine Corps initiatives to reinvigorate both Services' amphibious core competencies which have stagnated somewhat due to the requirements imposed by ongoing ground operations overseas.



LCAC CH46 Dawn Blitz 10



Bataan ARG Provides First MV22B Ospreys for Afghanistan Operations

- In December 2009, the Bataan ARG/22nd MEU completed a seven-month deployment to the COMFIFTHFLT and COM-SIXTHFLT AORs. The Marine Corps' MV-22B Osprey tilt rotor aircraft successfully made its debut during this deployment.

Maritime Security

Naval expeditionary forces supported operations to protect sovereignty and maritime resources, support free and open seaborne commerce, and to counter maritime-related activities which impede safety and security on the global commons.

- In January 2009, Coalition Task Force (CTF) 151 was established as a multinational counter-piracy task force. The mission of CTF 151 is coordinating and deconflicting the efforts of coalition and non-coalition ships and aircraft to effectively deter, disrupt, and suppress pirate activity in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia. Amphibious ships including the USS San Antonio (LPD 17) and USS Boxer (LHD 4), both of which have served as flagship, are platforms of choice for this important task force. CTFs 150 and 152, other coalition





task forces responsible for theater security cooperation activities and maritime security operations throughout this and other regions, have also been supported by amphibious ships and expeditionary forces. CTF 151 and other cooperating naval forces have encountered more than 1129 pirates, disarming more than 630 and turning over more than 470 for prosecution since 2008.

- NECC MESF units provided SPOD security at various ports in CENT-



Waterborne Security at Al Basrah Oil Terminal ABOT

COM. MESF offers critical infrastructure protection on Iraqi oil platforms in the Northern Arabian Gulf, the source of more than 95% of the Iraqi gross national product. Maritime Expeditionary Security Detachment 622 provided force protection training onboard the Khawr Al Amaya Oil Terminal and Al Basrah Oil Terminal with Iraqi Marines. MSRON 5 deployed to Kuwait Naval Base and the Kuwaiti port of Ash Shuaybah to provide harbor security, port protection, and high value asset shipping escort within the ports as well as anti-terrorism protection on selected oil platforms in the Northern Arabian Gulf.

- NSW built partner capacity and consistently enhanced global maritime security. The SWCC professionals at NAVSCIATTS were successful in training partner nation security forces in high-level riverine and coastal craft operations to increase mutual security and alliances in waterways around the globe. NAVSCIATTS instructors have provided training to more than 6,000 international students from over 55 countries.

Humanitarian Assistance / Disaster Response

Expeditionary forces were often the instrument to implement the nation's Maritime Strategy and demonstrate sincerity as "a global force for good" including:

- Pacific Partnership 2010 (PP10) is the fifth in the series of annual humanitarian and civic assistance partnership missions sponsored by the U.S. Pacific Fleet. In addition to the significant level of general medicine, optometry, dental, and pediatric care provided via medical civic action programs executed by medical personnel embarked in USNS Comfort (T-AH 20), MSRON 7 Sailors and Seabees from NMCB 11 and ACB 1 were also vital participants in PP10. PP10 includes 8 partner nations and 15 non-governmental organizations who conduct visits to Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Palau, and Papua New Guinea. During the first portion of PP10 alone, engineering civic action programs were completed by the Seabees, and Australian Defense Force Army





NMCB 11 Seabees Installing Solar Power

and host nation engineers for the people of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Indonesia and included water wells; water towers; and various renovations to schools, children's centers, and medical clinics.

- During April-July 2009, Seabees from Construction Maintenance Battalion embarked in USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) completed 13 projects during Continuing Promise (CP09). Seven Latin American and Caribbean nations benefited from these projects which included building repairs and improvements; small construction projects; utility system repairs and construction/technical assistance; pier repair; drainage projects; and trenching. In 2008, Amphibious Assault Ships USS Boxer (LHD 4) and USS

Kearsarge (LHD 3) with embarked Seabees made similar CP deployments.

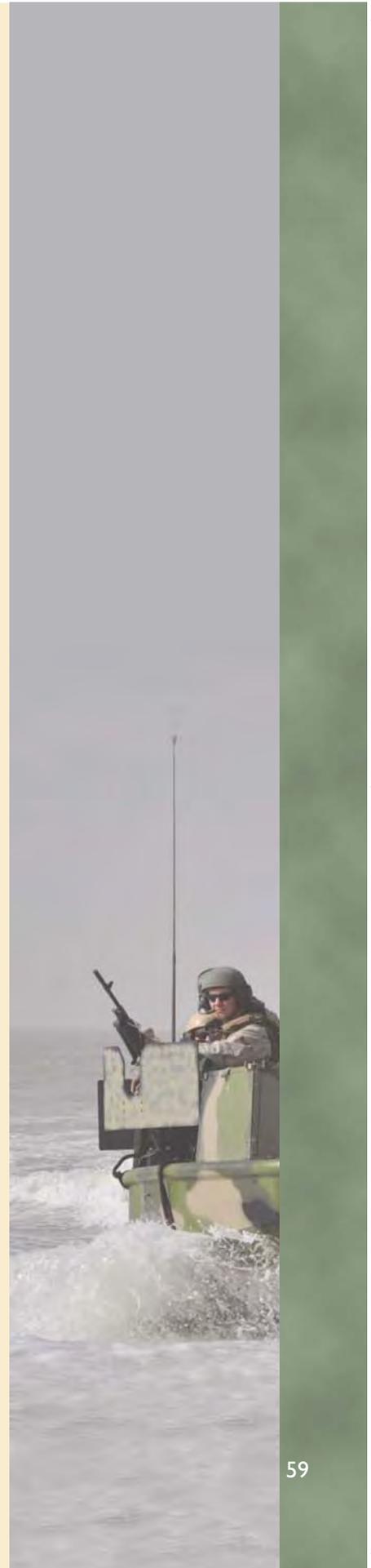
- In November 2009, divers, dolphin MMS, and support personnel from EODMU 1 and Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center Pacific participated in Lagoon Mine Exercise 2009 in New Caledonia. The operation sought to remove defensive mines laid during WWII by Australian



MMS in C17 Enroute Lagoon MINEX 2009

forces to protect thousands of U.S. troops on the island against predicted enemy attack and to prevent enemy access to New Caledonian ports.

- Between 14 and 18 January 2010, following the devastating 12 January earthquake which savaged the island nation of Haiti, seven amphibious ships, including two complete ARGs, were deployed, along with their associated MEUs. These forces included the Bataan ARG/22nd MEU, which was surged to participate in the Haiti relief effort; the amphibious dock landing ship USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44), which was en route for a deployment to Africa Partnership Station, but was ordered to proceed to Haiti, and the Nassau ARG/24th MEU, which deployed from Norfolk for a regularly-scheduled deployment, and was reassigned to support the relief effort. A summary of expeditionary force contributions to the Haiti relief effort is provided separately on the next page.





OPERATION UNIFIED RESPONSE

Expeditionary Warfare Forces Launch Haiti Earthquake Relief

The 7.0 magnitude earthquake of January 12, 2010 prompted the United States to mobilize massive humanitarian relief efforts through Operation Unified Response. With agility and flexibility, the U.S. Navy's Expeditionary Warfare forces were the key enablers and among the first responders to arrive with critically needed capabilities to deliver humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to the areas that the Government of Haiti deemed most necessary.

Following initial disaster relief, Naval Expeditionary forces remained on the ground in Haiti, improving roads and other infrastructure in preparation for the pending rainy season. The engineering efforts from the Seabees saved many lives.



Amphibious ships offer the versatility and adaptability that made them ideal for supporting relief operations in Haiti. Amphibious ships were ready to sail within days of the disaster. In addition to carrying a large number of crew members, these ships employed amphibious craft to assist with the evacuation of casualties, and facilitate the movement of troops, equipment and supplies over the beach. Sailors also selflessly participated in Sailors Ashore Missions to further relieve the suffering of Haitians.

The amphibious assault, dock landing, and amphibious transport dock ships of the Bataan and Nassau ARG/MEUs, were among the first Navy ships to arrive off the coast of Haiti. The ship-to-shore movement versatility and the LHD/LHA medical facilities,

"There is no other force other than ours, no other capability that can arrive in an unimproved area and... get this close to shore and then move from ships to the objective the way our Blue Green Team can do so."

Captain Sam Howard, USN
Commanding Officer,
USS Bataan

second only to the hospital ship, made amphibious ships ideal for the mission in Haiti. They provided flight decks, well decks, critical medical services afloat and ashore; supply distribution; helicopter refueling; crane operations; and

landing craft to transport humanitarian and relief supplies ashore.



Crew members from USS Carter Hall (LSD 50) prepare food stores for transport ashore.



USS Carter Hall (LSD 50)
 Sailors worked around the clock to transport critical supplies from Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, delivering more than 1,100 pallets of food rations and water, 5,000 cots, and 338 tents to Haiti during their six weeks on station.



Sailors assigned to the amphibious dock landing ship USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44) unload water from a landing craft for distribution in Killick, Haiti



Sailors assigned to ACU 2, ACB 2, and the amphibious dock landing ship USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44) move an injured Haitian woman after treatment aboard the hospital ship USNS Comfort (TAH 20)

Beachmaster Unit Two
 Members of BMU-2, embarked aboard USS Bataan (LHD 5), went ashore daily to man the beaches of Grand Goave to keep disaster relief supplies packed aboard LCAC moving from ship to shore.



A traffic control member of BMU 2, embarked aboard USS Bataan (LHD 5), directs an LCAC carrying food, water, and supplies onto the beach in Grand Goave

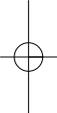


An LCAC assigned to ACU 4 exits the well deck of the multi-purpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) while transporting equipment and personnel off the coast of Haiti



USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43) VBSS team members help load an injured Haitian man into a truck for transport.

"Our mission at Killick was ship-to-shore transport. We provided a means of transporting aid that other ships out here weren't equipped for."
 Engineman 3rd Class Jarrell Ray, USN
 Assault Craft Unit 2





Assessed as unsafe and unserviceable, the damage to piers in the Haitian port of Port-au-Prince impacted the initial aid arrival from the sea. Navy and Marine Corps forces used the waters surrounding Port-au-Prince as a secure operating space for providing humanitarian assistance/disaster relief support. Through use of air and amphibious craft, naval ships operating from a sea base delivered much needed supplies ashore and transported victims in need of medical care to units at sea. A joint logistics hub and Task Force 48 established at Guantanamo Bay facilitated the throughput of aid and other supplies and ensured the sea base comprised of shipping from the U.S. Navy, MSC, and Allied navies was able to remain on station performing the vital mission.

Operations in Haiti demonstrated the flexibility and effectiveness of JLOTS capabilities. JLOTS used a floating causeway, small vessels and other equipment to move cargo containers and other stores to the shore. With much of the port area of Port-au-Prince either destroyed or rendered inoperable by the earthquake, JLOTS provided a temporary pier facility, allowing relief supplies to be shuttled from ship to shore.

Also operating from the sea base, the MSC hospital ship, USNS Comfort, was essential in treating injured earthquake survivors. During the first 10 days on station, Comfort ran 10 operating rooms at full capacity to care for injured Haitian, American, and other foreign earthquake victims requiring surgical care, while working closely with Haiti's Ministry of Health and health

care professionals from the U.S. Agency for International Development, international relief organizations and NGOs to secure follow-on care for patients in recovery.

"As we look back on this operation in the future, I'd like the historians to know that Task Force 48, any of the joint log hubs that the Navy puts forward, can support operations anywhere in the world. That we do this on a regular basis, that we can expand our capability at locations like Guantanamo Bay where our forward presence is so very, very important, and that the Navy seabase support is here to support military and joint and international operations of the future."

*Rear Admiral Patricia Wolfe, USN
Commander, Task Force 48
Guantanamo Bay, Cuba*



An MH-60S Sea Hawk helicopter from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 22 delivers pallets of supplies to the multi-purpose amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5) as the amphibious dock landing ship USS Carter Hall (LSD 50) completes a vertical replenishment evolution



A Sailor assigned to Task Force 48 moves pallets of relief supplies destined for Haiti at the joint logistics hub airfield at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay



Amphibious Construction Battalion 2

The INLS provided the capability of moving equipment from ships based in the waters of Port-au-Prince ashore. By using the causeway ferry, sailors were able to bypass the damaged piers and provide the equipment to continue relief operations.

"The capabilities that the Navy has to support JLOTS operations have been around and they are designed for major combat operations, where ship-to-shore movement of equipment and supplies in support of the warfighter has been the focus. What we did in Haiti was a natural expansion of applying our capabilities to that specific problem set. I think what Haiti has illuminated are how these systems can be employed."

*Captain Paul Webb, USN
Commanding Officer,
Amphibious Construction Battalion Two*

The expeditionary character of NECC forces uniquely positioned them to quickly support our nation's response to the tragedy in Haiti. NECC forces possess the agility and flexibility needed to provide humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to the Haitian people.

Sailors from Navy Expeditionary Combat Command's Combat Camera, Maritime Civil Affairs, Maritime Security, Expeditionary Logistic Support, Diving and Salvage, and Seabee units supported disaster relief efforts and provided a diverse capability including assessment, construction, security, civil affairs and logistical support.

Naval Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 202

Embarked on USNS PFC Dewayne T. Williams, CMBU 202 provided debris clearing, equipment operations, and tent camp construction and maintenance



Sailors assigned to the air detachment of NMCB 7 cut rebar during a search and recovery mission at the Hotel Montana in Port-au-Prince



22 MEU Marines Tent City, Haiti



Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit 2

MDSU 2, Company 2-1 used an unmanned underwater vehicle equipped with marine sonic scan sonar to map the waterways of Port-au-Prince for major obstructions to navigation, clearing the seaport of all hazards and increasing the passage of relief supplies into the port.



MDSU 2 divers inspect a submerged container box while conducting salvage and repair operations in the main seaport of Port-au-Prince



Seabees assigned to JTF Haiti unload a 3500kw mobile generator to support Operation Unified Response relief.



Maritime Civil Affairs Team 203, along with Sailors from the USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44) and the Mexican Navy, deliver donated goods from Mexico to more than a thousand Haitians in a school yard in Killick

"We are deploying an experienced Maritime Civil Affairs Planner and MCAT team to support the needs of the Haitian people. MCAST is able to address a unique need in planning and conducting maritime security operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief."

Captain Claudia Risner, USN
Commodore, Maritime Civil Affairs and Security Training Command



Equipment operators assigned to NMCB 7 offload equipment from naval vessels anchored near Port-au-Prince



**Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 7
Air Detachment**

Seabees from NMCB 7 provided flood control and drainage, landslide prevention and shoring, and safety and egress at Camp Petionville, a 50,000-man internally displaced persons camp in Port-au-Prince. The camp began when small bands of survivors displaced by the earthquake settled in and around the spacious land in the Petionville suburb. Mitigations made by NMCB 7 reduced the overall number of Haitians requiring relocation by over 17,000.



NMCB 7, Air Detachment, Equipment Operator supervises a Haitian worker who is improving a road that runs through Camp Petionville



A Hospital Corpsman assigned to ACB 2 treats a Haitian boy's foot during a community service event at an orphanage in Port-au-Prince

A Seabee assigned to ACB 2 fills in a water hole at the New Mission Beach compound in Nonel, Haiti

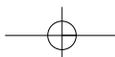


"I hope we helped to relieve the suffering after the earthquake. We can't restore the full infrastructure, but we provided the means to help deliver millions of meals and tons of water to those most in need."

*Captain Clay Saunders, USN
Commodore, Naval Beach Group 2*

**Naval Beach Group 2
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 7
Naval Construction Battalion
Maintenance Unit 202**

NBG 2 personnel, in conjunction with sailors from NMCB 7 and CMBU 202, constructed a portion of a life support activity facility, serving as the new location for Joint Task Force Haiti. These sailors also provided an alternate route of travel for residents to the Toussaint Louverture International Airport in Port-au-Prince.





A Seabee assigned to ACB 2 removes rubble near Toussaint Louverture International Airport in Port-au-Prince



Builder 2nd Class Andrej Paskevic, assigned to UCT 1, drills guide holes into a damaged section of pier at the port in Port-au-Prince



A security boat from MSRON 6 patrols the waters around Port-au-Prince while a landing craft utility departs the amphibious dock landing ship USS Fort McHenry (LSD 43)



Logistics and Support Unit 2 Construction Electrician prepares an electrical box for wiring during an improvement project at a local orphanage in Cap-Haitien



A temporary pier erected by Naval Beach Group 2 is a mooring point for utility boats at the port in Port-au-Prince

"The work the Seabees did for us will enable our NGOs to help more people. Literally, instead of helping a thousand people, we can help ten thousand people. We are extremely grateful for the hard work the military is putting in here in Haiti."

Steve Hersey
School Administrator, Quisqueya School