

# USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) Command Operations Report

## 1. Command Data

Name of your Command or Organization:  
USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6)

Unit Identification Code: 22202

Name and Rank of Commander/Commanding Officer/Officer in Charge:  
Greene, Stephen, Captain, U.S. Navy

Date Assumed Command: 2005-08-31

Mission/Command Employment/Area of Operations: The primary mission of the ship is to embark, deploy and land elements of a Marine Landing Force in amphibious assault operations by helicopter, landing craft, amphibious vehicle or any combination of these methods. The ship operates in Third, Fifth and Seventh Fleet's areas of responsibility, spanning the globe from the coast of Southern California to the Northern Arabian Gulf.

Permanent Location: San Diego, California.

Immediate Superior In Command: Commander, Amphibious Squadron SEVEN

Operational: Commander, 3<sup>rd</sup> Fleet

Commands, Detachments or Units deployed on board or stationed aboard as tenant activities: Expeditionary Strike Group FIVE, Amphibious Squadron SEVEN, 15<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron TWO ONE, Assault Craft Unit FIVE, Tactical Air Control Squadron TWELVE and Fleet Surgical Team NINE.

Number of Personnel Assigned: Approximately 1,200

Officers: Approximately 100 Enlisted: Approximately 1,100

Command Point of Contact:

Name: JOC(SW/AW) [REDACTED]

Job Title/Office Code: Public Affairs Officer

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Phone number(s): ([REDACTED])

Command Mailing Address:

USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6)

ATTN: PAO

FPO AP 96617

## **2. Commander's Assessment**

For the two years covered by this report, USS Bonhomme Richard's (LHD 6) (BHR) crew has been hard at work defending our great nation and serving on the point in the Global War on Terrorism.

During 2004, BHR trained for her inaugural Expeditionary Strike Group deployment, passing its Board of Inspection and Survey Inspection in the process. The ship also participated in the premier maritime festival in the Puget Sound, Seattle Seafair. While serving as the Seattle Seafair flagship during five days of festivities, the BONHOMME RICAHRD hosted thousands of visitors and made a favorable impression in this vital fleet concentration area.

From December 2004 to June 2005, BHR deployed to the Western Pacific Ocean and Arabian Gulf and played a leading role in delivering humanitarian assistance relief to people of Indonesia. While serving as a sea base off the coast of Sumatra, BHR delivered more than 2.1 million pounds of water, food, medicine and other life-saving supplies to tsunami survivors in the remote and hardest hit regions of Sumatra. The ship's crew was awarded the Humanitarian Service Medal for their efforts in Operation Unified Assistance.

Following humanitarian relief operations, BHR set its course for the Middle East and delivered the embarked 15<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit ashore in Kuwait for follow-on combat operations in Iraq. With the Marines ashore, the ship served as the hub for maritime security operations in the Northern Arabian Gulf, protecting two vital Iraqi offshore oil terminals and intercepting suspicious shipping traffic.

In August 2005, BHR returned to Seattle for the second consecutive year to serve as the flagship for Seattle Seafair, once again hosting thousands of visitors on board and receiving enthusiastic reviews. On August 31, 2005, Captain Stephen Greene relieved Captain Jeffery S. Jones and assumed command of BHR after serving as her executive officer.

The ship entered drydock at the National Steel and Shipbuilding Company in San Diego on Oct. 1, the first time BHR has been out of the water since her commissioning in 1998.

## **3. Chronology and Narrative**

From January to December 2004, BHR prepared for her Western Pacific and Arabian Gulf deployment during local operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

In March 2004, BHR successfully completed its Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) Inspection, a three to five year requirement for ships.

In June, the ship made a port visit to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and participated in Operation OPLIFT, delivering personally owned vehicles in the ship's well deck to servicemembers stationed in Hawaii, saving more than \$47,000.

Following a change of command where Captain J. Scott Jones assumed command from Captain Jon Berg-Johnson in August 2004, BHR served as the flagship in the 2004 Seattle Seafair festivities, hosting thousands of distinguished visitors, local officials and Navy supporter.

The ship then participated in advanced joint integration operations with the combined staffs of Expeditionary Strike Group FIVE, commanded by Rear Admiral Christopher Ames; Amphibious Squadron SEVEN, commanded by Captain Michelle Howard; and the 15<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit, commanded by Colonel Thomas Greenwood. The ship underwent extensive C5I and Habitability upgrades to accommodate the addition of the Expeditionary Strike Group FIVE staff.

In an effort to further improve the quality of life of Sailors and Marines on board, the crew's lounge was transformed into an internet café prior to deployment.

On December 6, 2004, BONHOMME RICHARD deployed in support of the Global War on Terror and made a brief port visit to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, in mid-December.

Following the worst recorded natural disaster in history, the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami that devastated coastal nations from East Africa to Southeast Asia, BHR cancelled two port visits to participate in humanitarian assistance operations in Indonesia in support of Operation UNIFIED ASSISTANCE. BHR and the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit delivered more than 2.1 million pounds of humanitarian aid to tsunami survivors on the Indonesian island of Sumatra. In addition to providing life-saving food, water and medicine to tsunami survivors, the ship's bakery baked more than 25,000 servings of cookies, brownies and cornbread for the tsunami survivors. The crew also raised more than \$10,000 in donations for the American Red Cross tsunami relief effort. In addition, the ship's embarked dental personnel set up a satellite clinic in the Indonesian city of Meulobah.

In February 2005, BHR offloaded the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit Feb. 14-16 in Kuwait for follow-on combat operations in Iraq. During three days of landing craft and helicopter operations, the ship landed more than 2,000 Marines and their equipment ashore.

A memorial ceremony was held in February 2005 to recognize Chaplain (LCDR) Edward Jack, who died of a heart attack during the ship's port visit to Manama, Bahrain.

With her embarked Marines ashore, BONHOMME RICHARD conducted maritime security operations, detecting, deterring and disrupting terrorist threats in the North Arabian Gulf. The ship also maintained security in and around both the Al Basrah and Khawr Al Amaya oil terminals (ABOT and KAAOT, respectively), in support of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546, which charges the multinational force with the responsibility and the authority to maintain security and stability in Iraqi territorial waters and also support the Iraqi government's request for security support.

While in the North Arabian Gulf, the ship made port visits in Manama, Bahrain, and Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

On her return trip to San Diego, BHR made a five-day port visit to Brisbane, Australia, where she hosted dignitaries onboard for a reception. BHR also visited Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

After her deployment from July 18 – 20, 2005, BHR transferred more than 2,452,000 pounds of ammunition off the ship by landing craft to prepare for the upcoming Dock Planned Maintenance Availability.

In August 2005, for the second consecutive year, BHR served as the flagship for Seattle Seafair, hosting numerous distinguished visitors for a trip around the Puget Sound. She also hosted thousands of local residents for general shipboard tours and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Fleet Admiral's reception. In August 2005, BHR hosted a reception for the Festival of Sail at downtown San Diego's Broadway Pier.

In September 2005, BHR commenced a \$30 million Dock Planned Maintenance Availability. BHR was raised from the water for the first time since commissioning when she entered the drydock at the National Steel and Shipbuilding Company in San Diego on October 1, 2005.

In November 2005, BONHOMME RICHARD was awarded the Golden Anchor award for retention excellence. BHR was also awarded the Supply Blue "E" for Logistics Excellence. The ship successfully completed its Supply Management Assessment.

During this reporting period, BHR safely conducted 150 LCAC launches and recoveries and 15 LCU launches and recoveries spanning two full offloads and backloads of the 15<sup>TH</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit. Strict attention to detail facilitated the prompt embarkation of 1,300 Marines and 549,152 cubic foot of vehicles and equipment.