



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

USS TARAWA (LHA 1)
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5750

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From: Commanding Officer, USS TARAWA (LHA-1)
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12E

Encl: (1) USS TARAWA Officer Precedence List
(2) Other Supporting Documentation

1. Per reference (a), the calendar year 1993 Command History for USS TARAWA (LHA-1) is submitted.

2. Command Composition and Organization:

a. Mission and Function of the Command: The Amphibious Task Force, which executes it's tasks in support of the Navy's force projection mission, is composed of LHA, LHD, LPH, LPD, LSD, LKA and LST class ships. TARAWA, the lead ship of the LHA class of general purpose amphibious assault ships, combines the functional capabilities of the LPH, LPD, LSD, and the LKA to deliver a balanced payload, by air or surface operations, in an amphibious assault. Explicitly, a former Chief of Naval Operations defined the LHA's mission: "To embark, deploy and land elements of a Marine Landing Force in an assault by helicopter, landing craft, amphibious vehicles and by any combination of these methods."

b. Commanding Officer:

Raymond M. Wikstrom, Captain
U.S. Navy,
Lineal Number: 002325-10, DOR: 01 June 1989

c. Command Structure:

Commander Naval Surface Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet
Amphibious Squadron Nine
USS Tarawa (LHA-1)

d. Homeport: TARAWA was homeported in San Diego, Ca. for the year until September 1993 when TARAWA changed homeport to Long Beach, Ca for a Complex Overhaul at Long Beach Naval Shipyard.

e. Command Composition: The command was composed of USS TARAWA (LHA-1). Ship's company included 62 officers and 964 enlisted as of 1 February 1994.

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3. Chronology

01-05 Jan	Inport San Diego, Ca. for leave and upkeep.
05-08 Jan	Underway for training in SOCAL OPAREA.
08 Jan	Moored Naval Station San Diego.
11-15 Jan	Underway for training in SOCAL OPAREA.
15 Jan	Moored Naval Station San Diego.
29 Jan	Consul General of Japan arrives for official visit.
08-19 Mar	Underway for training in SOCAL OPAREA.
17 Mar	Command receives COMNAVSURFPAC Warfare Excellence Awards.
19 Mar	Moored Naval Station San Diego.
30 Mar	Command receives Admiral James H. Flatley Memorial Award for Naval Aviation Safety.
31 Mar	Command receives COMSEVENTHFLT Amphibious Warfare Excellence Award.
06 Apr	Commenced OPPE.
07 Apr	Underway for OPPE in SOCAL OPAREA.
08 Apr	Moored Naval Station San Diego. Concluded OPPE.
28 Apr	Underway for berth shift to Pier 2, Naval Station San Diego. Moored at Pier 2.
06 May	Capt. R. M. Wikstrom relieved Capt. N. E. Parkhurst as Commanding Officer USS Tarawa.
12 May	Underway (dead stick) for berth shift from Pier 2 to Pier 7, Naval Station San Diego. Moored Pier 7.
03 Jun	VADM Smith and RADM Fitzgerald arrive for Admiral's call.
06 Jun	AN/SYQ-7(V)5A NAVMACS Communications System operational.

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10 Jun TARAWA hosts COMPHIBRON ONE Change of Command.

14 Jun Underway for training in SOCAL OPAREA. Moored Naval Station San Diego.

12-16 Jul Underway for drills in SOCAL OPAREA.

16 Jul Moored Naval Station San Diego.

19-23 Jul Underway for training in SOCAL OPAREA.

23 Jul Moored Naval Station San Diego.

07 Aug Moon Valley NJROTC unit personnel arrive.

09-13 Aug Underway for COMPTUEX 93-18T and CORTRAMID 93 exercises.

09 Aug Anchored offshore Red Beach at Camp Pendleton, Ca.

10 Aug Underway enroute SOCAL OPAREA.

11 Aug Anchored offshore Red Beach at Camp Pendleton, Ca.

12 Aug Underway for exercises in SOCAL OPAREA.

13 Aug Moored Naval Station San Diego.

16 Aug Underway for ammunition off-load.

17 Aug Anchored offshore Camp Pendleton, Ca.

18 Aug Underway enroute SOCAL OPAREA.

19 Aug Moored Pier "E" Long Beach Naval Station.

20 Aug Underway enroute San Diego, Ca. Moored Naval Station San Diego.

26 Aug Underway for INSURV training in SOCAL OPAREA.

27 Aug Moored Naval Station San Diego.

30 Aug Commenced Board of Inspection and Survey.

31 Aug Underway for Insurv UMI. Moored Naval Station San Diego.

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03 Sep	Board of Inspection and Survey concluded.
14 Sep	COMPHIBGRU THREE arrives for awards ceremony.
24 Sep	TARAWA hosts COMPHIBRON NINE Change of Command.
27 Sep	Underway enroute Long Beach, Ca. Moored Pier "E", Naval Station Long Beach. Commenced Complex Overhaul.
28 Sep	Underway (dead stick) for berth shift from Pier "E" to Pier 2, Long Beach Naval Shipyard. Moored Pier 2.
27 Oct	Crew completes move off ship.
30 Oct	Underway (dead stick) enroute Dry Dock 1, Long Beach Naval Shipyard. Moored Dry Dock 1.
08 Nov	COMPHIBGRU THREE visits.
22 Nov	Commanding Officer, Long Beach Naval Shipyard visits.
13 Dec	Commanding Officer, Long Beach Naval Shipyard visits.

3. Narrative: January 1993 found USS TARAWA pierside at Naval Station San Diego completing Christmas holiday leave and upkeep period. Between 5-8 Jan. and 11-15 Jan., TARAWA conducted local operations in the SOCAL OPAREA. While underway, the ship conducted LCAC operations, flight operations, ECC drills, general quarters drills, CIWS PAC FIRE drills and 5"/54 PAC FIRE drills. On 29 Jan., the Consul General of Japan arrived for an official visit with the Commanding Officer.

On 05 Feb., the Commanding Officer of the National Defense College of Canada and his staff made an unofficial visit for a tour of TARAWA. On 19 Feb., RADM Natter arrived for lunch with TARAWA's Commanding Officer, Commander Amphibious Group Three, Commander Naval Beach Group One, Commander Amphibious Squadron Nine, Commander Amphibious Squadron Seven, Commander Amphibious Squadron Five and Commander Amphibious Squadron One.

From 8 to 19 Mar., TARAWA conducted local operations in the SOCAL OPAREA. Ship's training included flight operations, general quarters drills, ECC drills, anchor drop tests and man overboard drills. TARAWA returned to Naval Station San Diego 19 Mar.

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On 17 Mar., TARAWA received the COMNAVSURFPAC Mission Area Warfare Excellence Awards for Anti-surface Warfare, Logistics, Mobility D, Mobility N/S and Electronic Warfare. On 30 Mar., the command received the prestigious Admiral James H. Flatley Memorial Award for Naval Aviation Safety for flight operations on amphibious ships. TARAWA's flight deck crew supervised more than 10,000 evolutions and 22,000 aircraft moves with no mishaps throughout pre-deployment workups and four major exercises during WESTPAC 92 deployment.

On 31 Mar., TARAWA was awarded the COMSEVENTHFLT Amphibious Warfare Excellence Award for amphibious operations conducted in the Seventh Fleet AOR during the WESTPAC 92 deployment.

TARAWA's Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE) started on 6 Apr. TARAWA got underway 7 Apr. to conduct equipment taskings, ECC drills and fire drills. On 8 Apr., Tarawa's OPPE was halted because of personnel safety concerns associated with lube oil leaks in the ship's main engine covers. Tarawa returned to Naval Station San Diego on 8 Apr and remained inport San Diego until main engine repairs were completed in early June.

TARAWA made a dead stick move from Pier 7 to Pier 2 at the Naval Station San Diego on 28 Apr. On 6 May, TARAWA's Change of Command ceremony was held on the flight deck. Capt. N. E. Parkhurst was relieved as USS TARAWA Commanding Officer by Capt. R. M. Wikstrom. On 12 May, TARAWA made a dead stick berth shift back to Pier 7 at Naval Station San Diego.

On 3 June, VADM Smith from OPNAV Staff and RADM Fitzgerald from COMCRUDESGRU THREE arrived for Admiral's call. TARAWA hosted the COMPHIBRON ONE Change of Command on 10 June. The ship accepted installation of the AN/SYQ-7(V)5A NAVMACS Communications system on 11 June. On 14 June, TARAWA got underway for flight operations training in SOCAL OPAREA before returning that day to Naval Station San Diego.

TARAWA got underway from 12 to 16 July for training in the SOCAL OPAREA. TARAWA conducted flight operations with USMC helicopters and AV-8B Harriers, ECC drills, general quarters drills, mass casualty drills, gunnery exercises and chaff launching exercises before returning to Naval Station San Diego on 16 July.

From 19 to 23 July, TARAWA conducted flight operations and routine training in the SOCAL OPAREA and returned to Naval Station San Diego.

The Moon Valley NJROTC unit arrived 7 Aug. for three weeks of shipboard summer training exercises.

On 9 Aug., TARAWA got underway for COMPTUEX 93-18T operations offshore Camp Pendleton, Ca. Participating units included elements of the First Landing Support Battalion, Third Amphibious Assault Battalion,

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Marine Air Group Thirty-nine, HMH-363, Air Cushion Unit One, Air Cushion Unit Five, Beach Master Unit One and USS TARAWA. Between 9-11 Aug., TARAWA conducted LCAC, LCU, AAV and flight operations offshore Red Beach at Camp Pendleton. On 12 Aug., TARAWA conducted underway replenishment training exercises with USNS John Ericsson for dry hookups and leapfrog maneuvers. Other drills included a 5" 54 PAC FIRE and a CIWS Track-Exercise.

Moon Valley NJROTC unit and CORTRAMID 93 midshipman were embarked during COMPTUEX 93-18T and provided them with a broad array of training experiences in amphibious operations.

Junior midshipmen conducted familiarization training in LCAC, AAV and LCU operations, shipboard flight operations, shiphandling and ship's engineering and deck evolutions. On 13 Aug., TARAWA returned to Naval Station San Diego.

Between 16 and 19 Aug., TARAWA left San Diego to conduct an ammunition off-load to USS Peleliu and Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach prior to commencing Complex Overhaul in Long Beach, CA. While anchored offshore Camp Pendleton, Ca., ship's fill, LFORM, MLA, and conventional special weapons ammunition were transferred. On 19 Aug., TARAWA moored at Pier "E", Long Beach Naval Station. On 20 Aug., TARAWA got underway and returned to homeport at Naval Station San Diego.

TARAWA sailed on 26 Aug. for one day of training operations in preparation for the Board of Inspection and Survey evaluation, returning to Naval Station San Diego on 27 Aug. On 30 Aug., TARAWA commenced the Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV). On 31 Aug., TARAWA got underway for INSURV Underway Material Inspection and returned to Naval Station San Diego later that day. INSURV concluded on 2 Sept.; TARAWA was evaluated fit for further service by Commander Board of Inspection and Survey.

Commander Amphibious Group Three arrived for an awards ceremony 14 Sept. TARAWA hosted the Commander Amphibious Squadron Nine Change of Command ceremony 24 Sept at pier 2, Naval Station San Diego.

TARAWA sailed on 27 Sept. enroute to her new homeport of Long Beach, Ca., and moored at Pier "E", Long Beach Naval Station to offload an oplift of personal vehicles. TARAWA made a dead stick berth shift to Pier 2, Long Beach Naval Shipyard on 28 Sept. to begin Complex Overhaul.

On 27 Oct., TARAWA completed the crew move off in preparation for drydocking the ship. On 30 Oct., TARAWA made a dead stick move to Dry Dock 1 at Long Beach Naval Shipyard. The ship was moored and subsequently taken out of the water to begin hull work while continuing her Complex Overhaul.

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Commander Amphibious Group Three conducted an informal visit to TARAWA 8 Nov. On 22 Nov. and 13 Dec., the Commanding Officer of the Long Beach Naval Shipyard visited TARAWA.

TARAWA remained on keel blocks in Dry Dock 1 at Long Beach Naval Shipyard from 30 Oct. through 31 Dec. 1993 while continuing her Complex Overhaul.



R. M. WIKSTROM