



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
USS TARAWA (LHA-1)  
FPO AP 96622-1600

*Rev 3/28/00  
W/dish*

5750  
Ser D11/130  
08 Feb 00

From: Commanding Officer, USS TARAWA (LHA 1)  
To: Director of Naval History (OP-09BH)  
Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12G

Encl: (1) Commanding Officer biography and photograph  
(2) Ship's photograph  
(3) News releases  
(4) Change of Command pamphlet  
(5) Welcome Aboard pamphlet  
(6) Officer Precedence List  
(7) 3.5" disk copy of Command History report

1. Per reference (a), the calendar year 1999 Command History for USS TARAWA (LHA 1) and enclosures (1) through (7) are submitted.

2. Command mission, composition and organization.

a. Command mission. The primary mission of USS TARAWA is to embark, deploy and land elements of a Marine Landing Force in an assault by helicopter, landing craft, or amphibious vehicles alone or in concert with other attached units of the Amphibious Ready Group and embarked Marine Expeditionary Unit. Other missions include service as flagship for embarked Amphibious Squadron, flag or general staff; casualty receiving platform; support of special operations; command and control ship; assault provisions carrier to sustain embarked forces ashore. TARAWA also renders extensive humanitarian assistance to civilian populations, foreign or domestic, at the discretion of the National Command Authority.

b. Command composition. Ship's company included 62 officers and 970 enlisted.

c. Organizational structure. Immediate Superior In Charge was Commander, Amphibious Group THREE.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

USS TARAWA commanding officers were:

(1) 19 December 1997 - 2 July 1999

James D. Bray, Captain

U.S. Navy, 1110

Lineal Number: 002784-30

DOR: 1 Oct 94

(2) 2 July 1999 - 31 December 1999

Garry E. Hall, Captain

U.S. Navy, 1310

Lineal Number: 002957-65

DOR: 1 May 97

TARAWA Departments included:

1. Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department
  - a. IM01 Division
  - b. IM02 Division
  - c. IM03 Division
  - d. IM04 Division
2. Air Department
  - a. V-1 Division
  - b. V-3 Division
  - c. V-4 Division
3. Combat Cargo Department
4. Combat Systems Department
  - a. CA Division
  - b. CC Division
  - c. CE Division
  - d. CF Division
  - e. CW Division
5. Communications Department
  - a. CI Division
  - b. CR Division

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

6. Deck Department
  - a. First Division
  - b. Second Division
  - c. Third Division
7. Dental Department
8. Engineering Department
  - a. A Division
  - b. E Division
  - c. MP1 Division
  - d. MP2 Division
  - e. MP3 Division
  - f. R Division
9. Medical Department
10. Morale, Welfare and Recreation Department
11. Navigation/Executive Department
  - a. Navigation
  - b. Executive
12. Operations Department
  - a. OA Division
  - b. OC Division
  - c. OI Division
  - d. OZ Division
13. Safety Department
14. Supply Department
  - a. S-1 Division
  - b. S-2 Division
  - c. S-3 Division
  - d. S-4 Division
  - e. S-5 Division
  - f. S-6 Division
  - g. S-8 Division

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

d. Permanent Duty Station. TARAWA was homeported at Naval Station San Diego, Calif.

3. Chronology.

01 Jan In port, Naval Station, San Diego.

05 Jan En route to Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, WA.

09 Jan Moored Pier 5, PSNS Bremerton. Began Complex Overhaul (COH) Phase II.

10 Jan Installed dual Nixie, AN/SLQ-25A, SHIPALT 757K.

10Jan-31Dec Installed Advanced Combat Direction System.

10Jan-31Dec Upgraded Tactical Environmental Support System Next Century (TESS-NC) and SMQ-11 Satellite receiver for Meteorology Division (OA).

13 Jan Dead stick move to Drydock 6, PSNS Bremerton.

Mar Awarded Force Commander Annual Wellness Unit "Green H."

12 May Conducted Command Assessment of Readiness and Training (CART A).

Jun Exchanged seven Rough Terrain diesel forklifts For seven new All Terrain forklifts and exchanged two electric forklifts.

Jun Completed site activation of Amphibious Assault Crash Crane and replaced obsolete Helicopter Crash Crane (HCC-50).

Installed Damage Control Quarters (DCQ) SHIPALT.

03 Jun Conducted Light-Off Assessment. Tested Satisfactory.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

Completed conversion of the Sewage Treatment Plant to a collection, holding and transfer system. All associated piping systems, valves, pumps and motors were either completely replaced or underwent significant repair.

04 Jun En route from PSNS Bremerton, WA to NAVSTA San Diego.

08 Jun Moored Pier 13, NAVSTA San Diego.

14 Jun Completed Total Combat Systems Alignment Tests.

Jul Installed Navigational Sensor System Interface SHIPALT 812K.

Completed site activation of A/S32P-25A Fire Fighting Truck and replaced obsolete A/S32P-16A.

Installed Damage Control Distributed Stowage modification for seven DC repair lockers, bridge and DC Central.

02 Jul Change of Command commenced. CAPT Garry E. Hall relieved CAPT James D. Bray and took command of TARAWA.

05 Jul Achieved an overall grade of outstanding on the Aviation Readiness Evaluation.

08 Jul Dead stick move to Pier 7, NAVSTA San Diego.

13 Jul Underway SOCAL ops.

14 Jul Conducted UNREP with USS RAINIER.

15 Jul Certified Tactical Air Control and Navigation (TACAN) system.

17 Jul Moored Pier 7, NAVSTA San Diego.

19 - 30 Jul Underway for Amphibious Orientation Training (AOT). Served as flagship for reserve 24th MEU, USS MOUNT VERNON and USS PEARL HARBOR.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

22 Jul Moored Pier 7, NAVSTA San Diego.

26 Jul Underway for AOT.

27 Jul Assisted small craft stranded at sea, California Restoration, CF1317FM.

30 Jul Moored Pier 7, NAVSTA San Diego.

Aug High Frequency Radio Group AN/URC-131 system, SHIPALT 787K installation completed.

Aug Replaced all four 400 Hz motor-generators with three solid state frequency converters.

04 Aug En route to Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

05 Aug Conducted UNREP with USS RAINIER.

09 Aug Moored at Canada Place, Vancouver B.C., Canada. Host ship for North American Air Exposition.

12 Aug En route to Victoria, B.C., Canada. Moored at Victoria.

16 Aug En route to NAVSTA San Diego, CA.

19 Aug Moored Pier 7, NAVSTA San Diego.

23 - 27 Aug Conducted Supply Management Assessment by SURFPAC/ATG. Upgraded to Supply Management Inspection.

30 Aug-03 Sep Conducted Command Assessment Readiness Training (CART B).

Sep Installed a fifth air conditioning plant and conducted numerous upgrades to four existing air conditioning plants.

02 Sep Underway SOCAL ops. UNREP with USS RAINIER.

03 Sep Moored Pier 7, NAVSTA San Diego.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

15 Sep            Achieved CIWS magazine sprinkler re-  
                  certification.

20 Sep-22 Oct    Conducted Targeted Ships Training Availability  
                  (TSTA-A).

30 Sep            Underway SOCAL ops.

01 Oct            Moored Pier 7, NAVSTA San Diego.

04 Oct            Underway SOCAL ops.

08 Oct            Moored Pier 7, NAVSTA San Diego.

18 Oct            Underway SOCAL ops.

20 Oct            CONREP with USNS PECOS.

22 Oct            Moored Pier 7, NAVSTA San Diego.

25 Oct-19 Nov    Conducted Targeted Ships Training Availability  
                  (TSTA-B).

01 Nov            Underway SOCAL ops.

03 Nov            UNREP with USS PECOS.

05 Nov            Moored Pier 7, NAVSTA San Diego.  
                  General Quarters due to toxic fumes. Eight  
                  personnel injured and sent to local Navy medical  
                  facilities ashore.

19 Nov            Collection, Holding and Transfer tank (CHT)  
                  casualty.

29 Nov            Underway SOCAL for ECERT.

Dec                Installed ORDALTs 16561 and 16562 to CIWS.

02 Dec            Conducted Engineering Certification (ECERT).

02 Dec            Conducted burial at sea ceremony for 10 cremated  
                  remains.

03 Dec            Moored Pier 13, NAVSTA San Diego.

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY (OPNAV REPORT 5750-1)

15 Dec                    Achieved magazine certification for cargo holds  
4, 5, 9, and 10.

4. Narrative.

On 5 July 1999 TARAWA achieved an overall grade of outstanding on the Aviation Readiness Evaluation (ARE) within 30 days of completing COH.

In July 1999 TARAWA began its first air operations of the year in support of a major reserve Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) assault during exercise "Summer Thunder." This large-scale assault was conducted within 30 days of completing a 10-month Complex Overhaul. Embarking 17 helicopters (2 AH-1, 2 UH-1, 9 H-46 and 4 H-53), TARAWA conducted over 800 take-off and landing flight deck evolutions and 125 aircraft moves during the week-long exercise.

On 5 November 1999 the Medical Department was called upon to respond to an actual mass casualty due to a hydrogen sulfide fume leak that endangered the safety of the crew. Actions of the Medical Department contributed to all affected personnel being safely evacuated from the space and transported to medical triage for further care. Eight personnel were transported to local Navy medical facilities for further observation and later returned in good health.

On 27 August 1999 the Supply Department successfully completed a Supply Management Assessment by SURFPAC/ATG inspectors. Results were overwhelmingly positive and the SMA was upgraded to an SMI. TARAWA became the first ever West Coast large deck amphibious ship to achieve this feat.



G. E. HALL