



NEWS FROM THE FRONT

October 2018



Army Logistics-Over-the-Shore: Nautical Horizon 18

With foreword from the Center for Army Lessons Learned

SHUAIBA PORT, Kuwait - During Nautical Horizon 2018, several of the U.S. Army vessels participated in the logistics-over-the shore (LOTS) mission. Above is the Cape Ray with the roll-on/roll-off discharge facility attached. Nautical Horizon 2018 is a two-stage U.S. Army Central (USARCENT)/Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC) exercise that conducts an Army Watercraft Brigade Inspection Reconnaissance (BIREP) on Army Prepositioned Site (APS-5) vessels in conjunction with a LOTS exercise. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Charlotte Reavis, 143rd Sustainment Command [Expeditionary]).

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**News from the Front:
Army Logistics-Over-the-Shore: Nautical Horizon 18
with Highlights from an Article in
Today's Sustainer July 2018 edition**

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OVERVIEWⁱ

The purpose of this NFTF is to highlight the complexities involved with logistics-over-the-shore. It is presented in two parts: one an overview from CALL analysts stationed forward in the AOR and another excerpted from a SUSTAINER article.

Joint Publication (JP) 3-22, Command and Control of Joint Maritime Operations, defines the maritime domain as consisting of the “oceans, seas, bays, estuaries, islands, coastal areas, and the airspace above these, including the littorals.” It is true that the Navy and Marine Corps have predominant roles in Littoral Operations in Contested Environments (LOCE), but few are aware that the Army plays a pivotal role in keeping logistical supplies flowing inland from the shore. Exercising these capabilities increase readiness and ensure mission success in LOCE scenarios.

Nautical Horizon 2018 (NH18) is a complex logistics over-the-shore (LOTS) exercise aimed at testing Army watercraft capabilities in a contested littoral environment. It served as a backdrop for an upcoming multi-Service, multi-component joint-LOTS (JLOTS) exercise named Native Fury, which is set to take place in the region in 2020.

NH18 brought together Soldiers and subject matter experts (SMEs) from as far as Joint Base Langley Eustis and Fort Belvoir, VA, respectively. Elements from the 7th and 3rd Transportation Brigades (Expeditionary), along with the 401st Army Field Support Brigade (AFSB) and 38th Sustainment Brigade, both stationed at Camp Arifjan Kuwait, converged on the commercial Port of Shuaiba, Kuwait, and the Kuwait Naval Base (KNB). An additional unit present included the 653rd Theater Harbor Operation Detachment (THOD) from Tacoma, Washington, which supplied the Harbormaster Command and Control Center. These units were all under the command and control of the 1st Theater Sustainment Command (TSC), with direct support from United States Army Central Command (USARCENT). The importance and success of this year’s NH18 builds on the success of NH16 where the Watercraft Equipment Set (WES) was drawn from the 401st AFSB as part of a Brigade Inspection Reconnaissance Exercise Program (BIREP). While this year’s exercise saw the addition of LOTS and the actual movement of material from the Kuwaiti theater to an ocean-going transportation vessel, the next Nautical Horizon (NH) will raise the stakes even higher. NH20, also named Native Fury 2020, will exercise the integrated application of Army, Navy and Marine Corps capabilities to overcome emerging threats within littoral areas which are rapidly expanding in operational depth, complexity and lethality. Native Fury is a Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff-directed, United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) sponsored, United States Army Central (USARCENT), United States Naval Forces Central Command (USNAVCENT) and United States Marine Forces Central Command

**Major General Flem B. “Donnie” Walker, Jr.
1st Theater Sustainment Command
Commanding General**

“Whether it’s taking equipment out of APS5 WES for the Nautical Horizon 18 exercise or drawing a full Combat Brigade set, we need to test the equipment. It is an expensive proposition. It takes more personnel to turn the equipment on versus just maintaining it. It will also take more money and personnel on the back end to turn the equipment back-in in 10-20 standards.” (Interview conducted 6 July 2018)

(USMARCENT) executed Maritime pre-positioning force (MPF) exercise. Initial planning has already begun, and the lessons learned from NH18 are critical to ensuring success for the 2020 JLOTS exercise. To put things in perspective, the last Native Fury exercise was conducted in 2012.



SHUAIBA PORT, Kuwait – Members of the 331st Transportation Company work with the 38th Sustainment Brigade to use the barge derrick crane to hoist strings into the port so that they can build the roll-on/roll-off discharge facilities for the LOTS mission during NH18. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Charlotte Reavis).

The following highlights from a recent NH article focus on the application and employment of the Army's roll-on/roll-off discharge facility (RRDF) to support the loading of large amounts of personnel and equipment assigned to an armored brigade combat team. It also covers the BIREP that ensures the Army's prepositioned watercraft stock is inspected, tested and employed to support the maritime mission. As summed up recently by the 1st TSC Commanding General, Major General (MG) Walker, "It's all about readiness!"

BACKGROUNDⁱⁱ

We will shut down the Straits of Hormuz! A recent threat like this from an adversary that opposes the U.S. doesn't happen every day and can cause concern for all. It's a comforting feeling to our allies that regardless of the threat thrown our way, the U.S. Army has a number of ways to get the warfighter and his equipment to the fight. NH18 is just that; it shows both our allies and our adversaries, that the U.S. Army has the ability to get massive amounts of equipment from ocean

going vessels to shore wherever and whenever they choose. USCENTCOM is responsible for keeping the seaways open for both the Strait of Hormuz in the Arabian Gulf, and Bab el-Mandeb Strait located between Yemen and the Horn of Africa, connecting the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden. The scenario for NH18 is as above, being able to work in a degraded port. Brigadier General (BG) Deborah L. Kotulich, Deputy Commanding General, 1st TSC (Outside Continental United States (OCONUS) Command Post) put it best when she said, "...you can't just gingerly sail up to port, have an operational commercial crane and just conduct a normal operation. This is something that I think the U.S. is pretty uniquely equipped to execute."

That point was recently driven home at Shuaiba Port in Kuwait when boats or military vessels bringing mass amounts of personnel and equipment to a shoreline completed NH18. The United States Army maintains watercraft and has been using them for years to train and sustain ongoing missions across the world.

While the strategic utilization of Army vessels is not the same as those used by the Navy, the mission of those vessels remains as important - support the warfighter and sustain their needs. "NH, specifically the LOTS (logistics over-the-shore) portion brings a very influential spotlight to combat commanders, who in traditional aspects, don't know the Army has watercraft," said Sergeant First Class (SFC) Chase Conner, the roll-on/roll-off discharge facility platoon sergeant with the 7th Transportation Brigade (Expeditionary), based out of Fort Eustis, Va. "When higher echelons receive something like redeployment orders, they will not be restricted in their ability to just travel by land or air, they will also understand the Army has these unique capabilities to redeploy their forces or insert their forces into an austere environment if needed." NH started with the Brigade Inspection Reconnaissance Exercise Program (BIREP), which is the rapid deployment of Soldiers from the states to theater, in this case Kuwait, and then getting their equipment issued via the Army prepositioned stocks (APS) warehouse, which would be the APS-5 warehouse for Kuwait.



Distinguished visitors from the 1st Theater Sustainment Command, Kuwait military and other Coalition Forces came out June 24, 2018 to get a firsthand look at the U.S. Army vessels participating in the LOTS mission.

A previous BIREP was conducted in 2016 that brought a transportation brigade to the Kuwaiti Naval Base (KNB) to draw similar equipment minus the LOTS portion. The lessons learned gathered from that exercise were utilized by several of the groups in this year's exercise.

In addition to building on previous BIREP lessons learned, NH18 gained key takeaways in the form of lessons learned and best management practices in the areas of transportation, vessel movement, LOTS and RRDF construction considerations and also considerations when utilizing the Theater Harbor Operational Detachment.



Military vehicles are moved from the Roll on/Roll off Discharge Facility to the MV Cape Ray on June 24, 2018.

INSIGHTS

With the APS model, we have all of our equipment, in this case watercraft, drawn from the watercraft equipment set (WES) of APS-5 and we conduct vessel inventories. “It’s like a change of command but it’s just for the vessel master and the signing authority to conduct a line item by line item inventory,” as stated by SFC Conner. Once the Army watercraft is inventoried, the Soldiers then test the vessels and ensure everything is in good working order before the equipment is signed for and the mission can commence. This is the time any needed maintenance is conducted, and any deficiencies found are corrected. For this exercise, the goal was 96 hours from start to finish for this process. As summarized by BG Kotulich, at the end of the equipment draw, they should be ready to fight. Throughout the BIREP, the commanders of the various units involved are collecting data on how quickly and successfully their Soldiers can get through the deployment, Soldier Readiness and APS processes and what lessons learned can be carried forward for the next mission. This information is essential and used when USARCENT looks at employing its sustainment forces for future exercises.

LOTS exercises test and train the ability to take combat forces and bring them into a degraded port or potentially conducting a beach landing and projecting that force onto land in a very short amount of time. While this year’s exercise happened at the Port of Shuaiba, NH20 may occur in a whole new location. The lessons learned from this exercise can be transferred to a new location with minor modifications.



SHUAIBA PORT, Kuwait – Kuwaiti tugboats assist in pulling the barge (BD) crane into here, June 12, 2018. The BD crane assists in building the roll-on/roll-off discharge facility that is used as part of the Nautical Horizon exercise. Nautical Horizon 2018 is a two stage exercise that conducts an Army Watercraft Brigade Inspection Reconnaissance Exercise (BIREP) on Army repositioned site (APS-5) vessels in conjunction with a logistics over-the shore (LOTS) exercise. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Charlotte Reavis, 143rd Sustainment Command [Expeditionary]).

With LOTS, you can bring brigades and division level assets onto land within 24-48 hours with those Army systems rolling off the strategic vessels, fully combat ready, combat loaded and projecting that force into an adversary's area. The system also works in reverse, where we can leave the land and get onto military vessels in short time. SFC Conner and the soldiers of the 7th Transportation Brigade (Expeditionary) worked in conjunction with the members of the 38th Sustainment Brigade to make all of this happen. They were able to build the RRDF platform with the barge derrick crane ahead of schedule, although some weather and rough waters did factor in when it came time to 'stab' the RRDF onto the Multi-purpose support vessel (MSV) and move the vehicles from the Landing Ship Vessel and the Landing Craft Utility over the RRDF platform to the Military Vessel (MV) Cape Ray.

Normally for an exercise of this magnitude, equipment is drawn and then returned to the warehouse. What made NH18 unique, is that it combined a large scale training exercise with an operational requirement to return rolling stock recently used in theater back to the U.S. When MG Walker requested to utilize military assets [MV Cape Ray] to move some of our equipment back home and to test the RRDF, he was reminded of the "Commercial First" rule. The "Commercial First" rule is that we are required to utilize commercial vessel before military assets to move equipment. When it was explained that utilizing the Cape Ray would test our readiness, it was turned on.

One area of NH18 that should not be understated is the requirement of working with the host nation and all the appropriate ministries and governmental organizations. This point was driven home by both 1st TSC and 38th Sustainment Brigade representatives and their multiple key leader

engagements (KLEs) that ensured the success of the exercise and the operation. And while KLEs can potentially get hot, they do not get near as hot as daytime temperatures in Kuwait during the summer. NH18 demonstrated that with proper risk management, operations that would normally occur during daylight hours can occur at night during more favorable working condition.

WAY AHEAD

The lessons learned from NH18 is setting the stage for the 2020 joint logistics over-the-shore mission (Native Fury 2020). Native Fury 2020 is in the planning stages with multiple military components involved. The goal of these exercises is to continue to highlight the sustainment and readiness of today's military and the ability to project ourselves anytime, anywhere of our choosing. A successful mission like NH18 highlights the ability of the Army's watercraft and allows combat commanders to conduct littoral operations in contested environments by utilizing the vessels as part of their readiness and sustainment operations throughout the entire world. Look for Native Fury 2020 to build upon the lessons learned and best management practices of NH18 and take U.S. Army Forces, U.S. Central Command (ARCENT) watercraft readiness to a whole new level.

ⁱ COL Jason Awadi and COL Robert Blaesing from the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL).

ⁱⁱ Highlights from Today's Sustainer Volume 1, July 2018, Story, photos by SSG Charlotte Reavis, 143d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).