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# NAVY

news

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Issue 02 2005



## Ready... ASSeT...GO!

**Mission Accomplished With Unwavering Resolution!**

*"Everyone understood it was a real risk  
being in a real area of operations..."*

**COSCOM Muscles Up with ASSeTs at the ready**

*"We cannot afford to be complacent..."*



Republic of Singapore Navy



■ RADM Ronnie Tay  
Chief of Navy

## A Word from CNV

We have just successfully completed another eventful and exciting workyear, and it is the season for taking stock and charting our directions for the new workyear that lies ahead. Much has been done and as always, more remains to be done, in meeting both current requirements and preparing for challenges of the future. The RSN therefore continues to aspire "To be the World Class Navy: Ready Today, Ready for Tomorrow".

RSS Resolution returned from the Arabian Gulf in March, after its three-month long deployment there, which was a meaningful contribution by the RSN towards the multi-national efforts for security and stability there. Closer to home, new initiatives in COSCOM such as the Multi-Crew Concept for our Patrol Vessels, the regularisation of 180 Squadron, and the establishment of the Accompanying Sea Security Teams (ASseT) have enhanced our capabilities to tackle threats to maritime security.

The RSN also recently hosted the ASEAN Navy Interaction as well as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Confidence Building Measures seminar and sea demonstration. These efforts serve to build capacity for greater regional maritime co-operation. I am confident that as a navy working closely with our counterparts in and beyond the region, we will find new points of convergence and effective modalities of co-operation that will help us all to respond to the challenges that lie ahead.

I am proud of all our people in the Navy Family who have answered the call of duty in enabling the RSN to make a difference in the maritime arena and creating a positive impact on the lives of others, both close to and farther from our shores. In all that we do, continue to fly our ensign high while upholding the fine traditions, values and spirit of our Navy.

Chief of Navy's Message



◀ Cover Page:  
Photo by Gerald Neo



◀ Back Page:  
Text by MAJ Irvin Lim  
Photo by RSS Resolution

## Courtesy Calls on CNV



■ CAPT Marc De Briancon,  
Commanding Officer Jeanne D'Arc,  
French Navy



■ First Admiral Budiharto, Commander,  
Tanjung Pinang Main Naval Base VII,  
Indonesian Navy

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# Regional Cooperation In Maritime Security Singapore Hosts Asean Regional Forum

THE ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) has an important role to play in strengthening regional maritime security. "Over the years, as the comfort level between the participants increases... the regional security dialogue is moving beyond the simple exchange of views, and is beginning to critically examine problems of common concern with a view to finding cooperative solutions" - Minister for Defence Mr. Teo Chee Hean made this key point at the Opening Ceremony of the ARF Confidence Building Measures (CBM) on 2 Mar. Minister Teo also identified three broad principles participants should keep in mind for "dynamic regional cooperation": the primary role of the littoral states, the important role of other stakeholders, and the need for consultation and to proceed in accordance with international law. The ARF event lasted for almost three days and was co-hosted by Singapore and the United States.

Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Mr. Efthimios Mitropoulos, a speaker at the CBM's plenary sessions, praised Singapore "for having taken the threat of piracy being used as a form of terrorism very seriously." Yet, he stressed, "Combating piracy requires multi-national cooperation because threats of maritime security now transcend territorial boundaries due



■ RSN Representatives along with foreign delegates onboard RSS Endurance

to the inter-dependence of the world's economy, particularly the maritime community."

Participants of the ARF also visited the one of two Port Operations Control Centre (POCC) located at the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) where vital monitoring of shipping routes around the Singaporean waters is carried out. Sailing off on one of RSN's Landing Ship Tank (LST) RSS Endurance later in the day, various demonstrations were carried out at sea. Elite teams consisting of RSN personnel and members of the Police Coast Guard (PCG) boarded a 'hijacked' merchant vessel and intercepted a terrorist-manned fast craft, showcasing Singapore's capability to handle different potentially menacing scenarios at sea.

Approximately 170 officials from 22 ARF countries, including the Navy Chiefs of ASEAN, participated in the meeting, which brought together

maritime security experts from military, enforcement, port and shipping, and policy agencies of ARF members for a series of inter-agency discussion in four key areas: multilateral cooperation, operational solutions to maritime security threats, shipping and port security, as well as the applicable technology for maritime security.

-YK



■ Mr. Mitropoulos addressing the participants at the opening of the ARF



■ CNV RADM Tay (right) with Mr Mitropoulos



## 5th Local Frigate Keel Laying

THE keel for the fifth locally-built Frigate was laid at a ceremony held at Singapore Technologies (ST) Marine shipyard on 17 May by Chief Defence Scientist, Professor Lui Pao Chuen. Also present at the ceremony was Chief of Navy, RADM Ronnie Tay.

This locally-built frigate is the sixth in the series, and the ceremony marks

the last keel laying for all the frigates for the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN), with all six frigates scheduled to come into service in 2008. The first vessel was built by Directions Des Constructions Navales (DCN) in France, the remaining five are being built at home in ST-Marine's shipyard.

-GN



■ CNV (3rd from left) pictured with representatives from ST Marine & DCN





Minister Teo's visit on 26 Feb



CDF LG Ng Yat Chung's visit on 28-29 Dec 04



CNV's visit during CNY 6-7 Feb 05



CTG LTC Miranda and LTC Abey host Senior Foreign Naval Commanders onboard



Providing Medical Aid



Providing Much Needed Supplies



First ever COC onboard a ship in an overseas mission :  
LTC Sam Abey (right) hands over his command to LTC Lee Swee Ann

## Mission Accomplished With Unwavering Resolution: RSN Welcomes Our LST Back Home From The Gulf

Story by Lin Yuankai, with contributions from CPT Victoria Tan • Photos courtesy of RSS Resolution

**MARKING** an end to yet another successful chapter in the SAF's participation in Multi-National Peace Support Operations, RSN's Landing Ship Tank (LST) RSS Resolution returned home on 19 Mar 2005 after being deployed in the Arabian Gulf for three months; longer than the previous mission by RSS Endurance. It departed on 27 Nov 2004, carrying around 180 personnel, comprising of Task Group staff, regular ship crew, security team from the Naval Diving Unit (NDU) and personnel from 195 SQN.

In a Welcome Home Ceremony organised at Changi Naval Base, the men and women onboard RSS Resolution were met by CNV RADM Ronnie Tay, members of the Naval Staff and their loved ones. In his address to those present, RADM Tay praised the members of the Task Group for "making significant contributions to the multi-national effort in the reconstruction of Iraq, and again demonstrated Singapore's commitment and contribution to greater stability in the Arabian Gulf region."

### THEIR MISSION

#### To safeguard the Al-Basrah Oil Terminal

The export of crude oil is a main source of Iraq's national income and around US\$60m worth of it is generated by the installation daily. RSS Resolution was entrusted with the task of enforcing security within a two nautical mile exclusion zone of the terminal with other Coalition warships.

#### A Source of Logistics Support

With the ability to accommodate and perform refuelling operations for helicopters onboard its flight deck, RSS Resolution served as an alternative pit-stop for Coalition helicopters whose mother ships were deployed for duties off-station. It also assisted in the replenishment of fuel and provided fresh water for US Naval Patrol Crafts and US Coast Guard Patrol Boats.

#### Ship Boarding Operations

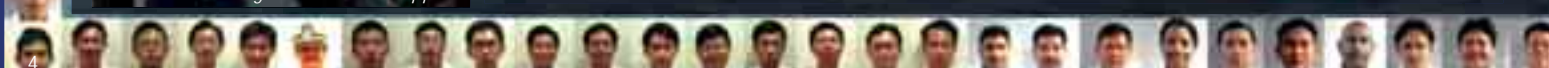
Under the United Nations Security Council Resolutions, illegal items and products such as arms-related materials and illegally exported petroleum products were not allowed to be shipped in and out of the country without authorisation. NDU personnel were part of Coalition ship-boarding teams that served to enforce these resolutions.

#### Health and Comfort Checks

Vessels violating the UN Security Council Resolutions were detained in secure areas within the Coalition zone to await legal judgement. During the potentially lengthy duration of their detention, RSN medical teams assisted in upholding the Coalition's responsibility in ensuring the welfare of the vessel's crew. Health and comfort checks were held regularly and efficiently, thanks to the capabilities of the Fast Craft Utility (FCU) of 195 SQN.

#### Surface Action Commander

RSS Resolution not only assumed the same duties as RSS Endurance performed during its mission in 2003, but was also concurrently appointed the Surface Action Commander. This meant that the RSN vessel took charge of other Coalition ships involved in the security of the Al-Basrah Terminal.





## WORDS FROM COMMANDER TASK GROUP

Commanding Officer 191 SQN and Commander Task Group LTC Bernard Miranda has every reason to be happy. After all, members of his Task Group worked seamlessly as a close-knit unit, performing a total of 48 days of oil terminal guard ship duties, 268 query operations, 62 boarding and security operations, 16 helicopter operations, 65 staff boat duties and 8 replenishment tasks for patrol boats. Not an easy feat when they had to overcome the coldest winter in the Arabian Gulf in years when temperatures dipped to nearly zero degrees Celsius!

LTC Miranda commented: "We've done very well. The positive feedback is not just based on our own assessment, but also from the other navies we've worked with." He related how the Task Group encountered some intrusions into the Warning Zone but due to swift and early action from the personnel, there was no need to commit themselves into any engagements.

He went on to add that the main challenge he expected to face before departing for the Gulf mission was to integrate every individual into one unit because not all of them were members of the regular ship crew. However, he was grateful that "everyone understood that it was a real risk being in a real area of operations where terrorism was an ever-present threat and it was then easy to imbue the values of teamwork and fighting spirit into them."

## ABOUT THE TSUNAMI TRAGEDY

The tsunami disaster in December affected members of the Task Group as much as it did back in Singapore. Coxswain 2WO Harpajan Singh reflected: "It left everybody shocked because it was so unexpected. We felt touched when we learnt about all the donations and relief efforts being organised back home. Even onboard the ship, we attempted to do something on our part."

Marine Engineering Officer CPT Justin Koh agreed, revealing that "it was very emotional as some crew members had families going abroad for tours during that time window. Thanks to the communication technology employed onboard the LST, they were able to check back on their loved ones for reassurance."

Communications and Engineering Specialist 2SG Ho Siew Foon was quick to add: "We were all proud that our colleagues in the SAF, together with many other Singaporeans played a part in helping others in need!"

## PERSONAL TAKES ON SUCH MISSIONS

This deployment to the Arabian Gulf was the first real-time operation that Communications Specialist CPL Su Min Han had taken part in. He exclaims: "We were the smallest Asian country to be involved in the coalition and I am beaming with pride as I come home with this exposure!"

Prior to the mission, 2WO Harpajan had already completed his term as Coxswain but chose to stay onboard for the deployment because of his great passion for ships and sailing. He confided: "I'm glad to have played a part in helping the locals there, by protecting their oil installations which are a main source of their revenue... If there were a need to do this all over again, I'd gladly do so. No worries!"

*"RSS RESOLUTION's list of accomplishments in Fifth Fleet are significant and her positive impact has raised the bar for maritime security operations support."*

**- RADM Christopher Ames,  
Commander ESG 5, US Navy**

*"RSS RESOLUTION displayed tactical proficiency and combat readiness that typified her exceptional performance throughout the deployment."*

**- RADM Mike Tracy,  
Harry S. Truman  
Battle Group Commander, US Navy**

## Minister for Defence Visits RSS Resolution in the Gulf

Minister for Defence Mr Teo Chee Hean travelled to the Gulf and visited RSS Resolution on 26 Feb.

In a doorstep interview during his visit, Minister Teo highlighted that "it's important that Singapore is contributing to the reconstruction of Iraq because what happens in this part of the world has an impact on Singapore's security and also our economic stability."

Engineering Naval Specialist SSG Tham Wai Yue said: "I am reminded of the show "Braveheart" where the leaders go to the front line to motivate the fighters and I was touched when our leaders came to encourage and motivate us."



## RSN's PROTECTOR: Tried and Tested in the Gulf!

This deployment to the Arabian Gulf also saw RSN's Unmanned Surface Vessel (USV), the Protector, deployed in a real-time operation for the first time.

The Protector, being highly autonomous and remotely controlled, offers enhanced surveillance, identification and interception capabilities while reducing risks to personnel.

"The Protector generated interest among the coalition forces, as unmanned surface vessel technology is still relatively new and employment of such craft for security operations in an operational environment is unprecedented," remarked CTG LTC Bernard Miranda.







## RSN WORKPLAN 2005

# "TO BE THE WORLD CLASS NAVY: READY TODAY, READYING FOR TOMORROW."

THE theme for this year's Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) Workplan Seminar is "To be the World Class Navy: Ready Today, Ready for Tomorrow." Held at the MINDEF auditorium, RSN personnel were also able to participate via teleconferencing at the Changi Naval Base auditorium. Gracing the seminar were Minister for Defence Mr Teo Chee Hean, Minister of State for Defence Mr Cedric Foo and Chief of Defence Force LG Ng Yat Chung among other senior Mindef and SAF officers.

In his speech, Chief of Navy RADM Ronnie Tay summed up the past workyear as "an exciting and rewarding one" and thanked "every man and woman in the RSN for [their] commitment and contributions, for it is truly our people who have made our achievements possible."

Setting the direction for the coming workyear, RADM Tay highlighted the need for RSN to stay poised for maritime security and elaborated on the maritime security response framework which covered areas such as "situation awareness to deterrence and response to multi-lateral engagement." He spoke about the changes in COSCOM, which had been "re-structured for efficient and effective implementation of the new capabilities it has developed." RADM Tay also believed that intelligence and knowledge were important requirements to effectively combat terrorism. COSCOM's 180 SQN, along with its Accompanying Sea Security Teams (ASSETs), was one of the examples he listed of RSN's efforts to pre-empt and neutralise any developing threats.

In addition to maritime security, RADM Tay highlighted RSN's participation in the multi-national reconstruction effort in Iraq as well as in Operation Flying Eagle, which were among the operations the RSN had undertaken in the past workyear.



RADM Tay also addressed participants about the transformation which the RSN is undergoing. Beyond the acquisition of major platforms such as the frigates and the S70B Seahawk naval helicopters, RSN is also "developing its new warfighting system as a vital part of the 3G SAF." Such developments will "serve to increase situation awareness, reduce our manning requirements, enlarge our operating space and give greater potency to our fighting concepts."

Individual training in the RSN was also another aspect that had experienced transformation. RADM Tay explained: "The re-location of TRACOM to the newly completed Changi Naval Training Base, with its Learning Management System and suite of trainers, emulators and simulators,

provide new capacity and potential for the transformation of TRACOM's structure and processes." Besides a new home for TRACOM, trainees can look forward to added focus in their training capability areas, and new learning methodologies such as Problem-Based Learning and Competency-Based Learning as well as instructional training will be introduced.

Lastly, RADM Tay encouraged "squadrons to share with one another the many good safety practices they have, and to firmly establish the culture of reporting near misses among their people." He encouraged everyone in the Navy to continue to emphasise safety in all that they did, and continue to uphold the fine values of the Navy family.

# Crown Prince Brunei Visits CNB

The Crown Prince of Brunei Darussalam, Prince Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah, made an official visit to Singapore from 8 to 12 Mar at the invitation of Minister for Defence, Mr. Teo Chee Hean. His Royal Highness was accompanied by his wife and his cousin, Her Royal Highness Paduka Seri Pengiran Anak Isteri Pengiran Anak Sarah, and Yang Amat Mulia Pengiran Muda Abdul Qawi respectively.

On 9 Mar, His Royal Highness visited Changi Naval Base. He was

hosted by Minister Teo and CNV RADM Ronnie Tay. During his visit, he went onboard the submarine RSS Chieftain and was given a tour onboard RSS Persistence, one of the three Landing Ship Tanks (LST) recently deployed for the SAF's relief work in Meulaboh, Indonesia.

His Royal Highness was also briefed on the capabilities of the LST as well as the RSN's role in the tsunami relief mission.

-ML



## RSN Hosts 3<sup>rd</sup> Asean Navy Interaction



THE third ASEAN Navy Interaction (ANI) was successfully organised by the RSN from 28 Feb to 2 Mar. Senior naval commanders from nine of the ten ASEAN countries including CNV RADM Ronnie Tay and their wives participated in the event.

In his address at the welcome reception held at Pan Pacific Hotel, RADM Tay extended a warm welcome to all present and hailed ANI as "an excellent avenue for the senior leadership of ASEAN navies to come together to share ideas, enhance our mutual understanding and deepen bonds that we already have with each other."

Through the duration of ANI, the representatives participated in an interesting interaction programme. Amongst the many activities was a visit (pictured left) to the Maritime and Port Authority's Port Operations Control Centre (POCC), a key installation of

Singapore's maritime security. The visit was followed by a professional discussion on the theme "Meeting Maritime Security Challenges – Now and in the Future". A sailing regatta was also organised at the Changi Yacht Club to promote interaction and exchange among personnel from the ASEAN navies. In a dinner which marked the closing of the event, RADM Tay declared ANI a success as the commanders had "benefited from sharing their thoughts and perspectives on the challenges facing the navies, both now and in the future."

Previous ANI interactions were hosted by the Royal Thai Navy and the Royal Malaysian Navy in Pattaya and Kota Kinabalu respectively.

A majority of the foreign senior naval commanders were also present to attend the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) which was also held in Singapore.

-YK

## Singapore And Indian Navies Conduct Bilateral Exercise

THE Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) and the Indian Navy (IN) conducted an annual bilateral exercise in the South China Sea from 24 Feb to 5 Mar 05. The RSN deployed a submarine (RSS Chieftain), two missile corvettes (RSS Valiant and RSS Vengeance), a missile gunboat (RSS Sea Dragon) and an anti-submarine patrol vessel (RSS Dauntless). The IN participated in the exercise with a destroyer (INS Ranvijay), frigate (INS Gomati) and corvette (INS

Kora). Aircraft from the IN and the Republic of Singapore Air Force were also involved in the exercise.

Ex Simbex was first initiated in 1999 with a focus on anti-submarine warfare training. Over the years, the exercise has expanded in scope and complexity to include anti-air and anti-surface serials. This year's exercise featured a new component on maritime interdiction.

Singapore and India share warm



and friendly defence relations. Ex Simbex is part of the regular professional interactions between the two armed forces, and has helped foster mutual understanding and friendship between the RSN and IN.

-GN



# COSCOM MUSCLES UP FOR CHALLENGES AHEAD

Story by Lin Yuankai, Photos courtesy of COSCOM



"As the challenges posed to the RSN, in particular COSCOM evolve, so must we. We cannot afford to be complacent, but embrace change for renewed capability to deal with these challenges."

*COL Chng Teow Kiang,  
Commander COSCOM*

## Key Responsibilities and Tasks

Established in 1988, Coastal Command (COSCOM) holds the crucial role of safeguarding the maritime security of Singapore waters. The Singapore Strait is a heavily utilized area with 1000 vessels, such as merchant ships, ferries and barter-traders, transiting it daily. It is therefore important that the security of the Singapore Strait is not compromised in any way.

COSCOM works closely with other national agencies such as the Police Coast Guard (PCG), the Maritime and Port Authority (MPA) and the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA). This multi-agency cooperation ensures efficiency and accuracy in the range of key tasks COSCOM undertakes:

- The conduct of maritime security patrols in the Singapore strait 24/7, collaborating with the PCG and MPA.
- The provision of assistance to civil authorities during contingencies such as ferry mishaps, air disasters and anti-hijack operations.

- The conduct of Mine Counter-Measure (MCM) operations where necessary such as the clearance of WWII bombs discovered in Singapore waters.

In a revamp of its organizational structure to better address the maritime security challenges, COSCOM has introduced four key initiatives:

## Multi-Crew Concept

Implemented for both 182 and 189 Squadrons, each operational Patrol Vessel (PV) and Anti-Submarine Patrol Vessel (APV) will be maintained and utilized by two sets of crew, generating more operating capacity to meet increased demands for both Squadrons.

Head Operations COSCOM LTC Nicholas Teo explains: "Post 9/11, the operational demands on both the APV and PV squadrons have increased greatly. The multi-crew concept was introduced in recognition of the fact that the vessels being machines, are able to work continuously whereas the men onboard are unable to. This optimizes operational tempo of COSCOM greatly without affecting the welfare of our sailors."

Commanding Officer RSS Justice MAJ Vince Tan explains that "this concept not only halves the hours and workload onboard the ship but also allows for more time for the crew to undergo shore-based training and professional development courses."

## Optimization of Resources

189 SQN was officially transferred to COSCOM from Fleet in a ceremony held on 24 Jan 05. This transfer puts both 189 SQN and 182 SQN under the command of the same formation in RSN.

This new initiative will provide COSCOM with greater flexibility and efficiency in the deployment of these vessels for maritime security operations and in the support of COSCOM and the Fleet's other training and operational requirements.



*Working hand in hand, COL Chng (left) together with Commander, Western Fleet Sea Security Group, Indonesian Navy, FADM Budhi Suyitno*





### Inauguration of 180 Squadron

Established to conduct shipping data analysis as well as shipping monitoring and control in times of emergency, demands on this squadron have risen post 9/11. Some key appointments within the squadron that were previously held by NSmen and Concurrent Appointment Holders will now be filled by regulars to increase the operational sustainability of the squadron.

180 SQN will continue to have linkages and exchanges with external agencies such as MPA and PCG in its duties. It also shares first-



hand information with the rest of the squadrons in COSCOM constantly to ensure readiness in the formation's role of maintaining security in the Singapore Strait.

### Accompanying Sea Security Teams (ASSeT)

As a part of the 180 SQN, ASSeT personnel will be placed on selective merchant vessels, based on shipping data analysis. Comprising small teams of armed personnel from both RSN and PCG, ASSeT personnel have undergone specialized overseas training to assist in the security of merchant ships within



Singapore waters. ASSeT enhances RSN's capability in conducting pre-emptive measures against possible terrorist attacks.

LTC Teo revealed that "the PCG presence in ASSeT has been very fruitful because of their experience and our RSN personnel have integrated very well with them. This highlights our multi-agency approach in combating maritime terrorism in Singapore which was already in place before 9/11."

ASSeT's capabilities were showcased at a sea demonstration in conjunction with the ASEAN Regional Forum held in early March.



## Back Paddle



Since its inauguration some 17 years ago, COSCOM has seen action in some notable real-time operations that have tested the capabilities of the formation.

On 31 Jan 1991, then-operational Coastal Patrol Crafts (CPCs) RSS Swift Knight and RSS Swift Cavalier responded to a distress call by a general cargo vessel M.V. Jenson, eight nautical miles south-west of Horsburgh Lighthouse. Battling limited visibility at night, the crew onboard the CPCs were able to rescue 15 members of the vessel's crew. The vessel sank two hours after the rescue mission.

The crash of SilkAir Flight MI 185 on 19 Dec 1997 in the Musi River near Palembang, Indonesia was a national tragedy that shocked many. RSN's MCMVs RSS Kallang, RSS Punggol and RSS Bedok were deployed as part of a SAF contingent to assist Indonesian Authorities in their Search and Rescue operations near the crash site. The ships' sonar systems scanned the riverbed for metal debris.

No survivors were found but the speed and efficiency in which RSN responded to this deployment served to reinforce RSN's reputation as both an operationally ready force as well as a caring member of the national family.

# Navy Scholars Do the RSN Proud

Story by Mervyn Lim, Photos courtesy of featured individuals



■ LTA Tan (2nd from left), with RAN CNV VADM Chris Ritchie (centre), together with his family



■ Ready to serve with Pride: LTA Tan (centre), with fellow officers from ADFA

**THE** first thing that strikes you when you first meet LTA Christopher Tan is his humility, despite his high achievements.

LTA Christopher Tan, 22, is currently pursuing his degree in Electrical Engineering at the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) under the Naval Military Training Award (NMTA). More than just being a scholar, he has done the RSN proud by receiving the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) Chief of Navy (CNV) award, the first time it has been awarded to a foreigner.

However, when LTA Tan was selected to further his studies under the NMTA, getting an award wasn't the first thing on his mind.

LTA Tan said: "When I got selected for this course, my main aim of going to a military academy was to increase my military knowledge while doing my degree at the same time. Furthermore, it gives me training with another country's navy, and increases my knowledge for my future job."

When asked about his achievements in ADFA, LTA Tan quipped: "I didn't go into the academy thinking of getting awards and prizes. I was more focused on doing well and making my country proud. However, I'm very proud that I was able to do it for my country because I think that's the whole idea of sending junior officers to other countries to represent Singapore."

LTA Tan was also appointed as commander in his graduating parade. His drill work caught the eye of the CNV of the RAN, who commended him for being one of the best in terms of drill work.

Another overseas scholar that has done the RSN proud is CPT Ho Kin Leong.

After completing his studies at the US Naval Academy (USNA), CPT Ho is currently a research student in the Active Vision Lab of Oxford Robotics Research Group after being awarded the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship.

CPT Ho said: "I feel honoured to represent RSN as a Rhodes Scholar. It is a testament on the success of RSN in developing its men and women of the navy to their fullest potential."

"The USNA provided me with not only an exceptional academic experience but also an education in leadership and moral development, which I felt gave me an edge for the application of the Rhodes Scholarship."

CPT Ho believes his research in robotics would help the development of RSN's capabilities in the years ahead.

"Given the rapid advancement in military technologies, an advanced degree in information engineering will put me in a better position to appreciate the challenges concerning force transformation of RSN," he said.



■ CPT Ho (2nd from left), together with his Commanders and Midshipmen buddies from USNA

## Launch of RSN-ASMI Career Transition Scheme

**THE** Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) and the Association of Singapore Marine Industries (ASMI) launched the RSN-ASMI Career Transition Scheme at HQ TRACOM, RSS Panglima on 1 April. Under this scheme, naval specialists nearing the end of their military careers will now be able to start their new ones in the marine and offshore industry.

At the launch, a MOU was signed by COS-NS/HNO RADM Sim Gim Guan and the chairman of ASMI Manpower Committee Mr Wong Peng Kin, sealing both organisation's

commitment to work closely to ensure the smooth running of the scheme. Amongst those witnessing the signing was CNV RADM Ronnie Tay, MD of EDB Mr Ko Kheng Hua, President of ASMI Mr Heng Chiang Gnee and senior commanders of the RSN.

In 2004, Singapore's marine and offshore industry grew by about 30 per cent to reach a record S\$53 billion. The signing of the MOU is significant as it represents a unique way for the industry to source for skilled talent previously untapped to fuel its growth.

-YK





# First Flotilla Commemorates Total Defence Day 2005



■ Viewing of National Education Exhibits



■ Balancing lessons from the past on the barrel of a Monster Gun

## "FORTRESS SINGAPORE BATTLES" RE-VISITED

SINGAPORE'S defence must be founded on a sound appreciation of our past. As part of First Flotilla's continuous effort to increase commitment of its personnel through a deep appreciation of our nation's history, over 700 members embarked on a "Guided WWII Singapore Battlefield Tour" on 21 Dec 04. "Re-experiencing the Battle for Fortress Singapore", reinforces National Education and Total Defence (TD) messages through an experiential learning activity," said CPT Jason Kwek, Executive Officer RSS Victory who helped organise the event. Prior to the outing, members of the Flotilla also attended a presentation on the "Fall of Singapore" conducted by the Singapore History Consultants in Tuas Naval Base.

Mixing retrospection and education, the battlefield tour took visitors through memory lane. They relived the mayhem of the first Japanese onslaught at Sarimbun Beach; re-traced the steps of the British retreat at Kranji Reservoir Park; re-imagined the firing of shore battery guns at Labrador Park and the Johore Battery; examined memorabilia and resurrected ghosts at the Changi Chapel and Museum; and paid tribute to the fallen brave at the Kranji and Lim Bo Seng Memorials.

The tour struck different chords with our servicemen and women. 2SG Ong Yisheng from RSS Valour said: "The tour allowed me to understand the sacrifices made by our forefathers and the brave men who stood tall in defending our shores, and also the consequences of leaving the task of our own defence to others."

Ms Sandy Lai from HQ First Flotilla agreed, as she felt that it was "shocking to learn crucial battles such as that in

Sarimbun were fought and lost not just because of a superior enemy, but because of seemingly unimportant tasks like the proper handling of classified military documents." It made her realise the importance of administrative duties she is responsible for and the need to safeguard classified information at all times.

## TD DAY COMMEMORATION AND NE EXHIBITION

To reinforce the NE messages communicated to the First Flotilla servicemen and women, a TD Commemoration Ceremony and National Education Exhibition was organised at Tuas Naval Base on 15 Feb.

In his opening address, Commander First Flotilla/CO 188 SQN COL Ng Chee Peng explained that "terrorism is an ever-present threat, made obvious in the aftermath of 9/11." He further highlighted that fighting terrorism required a concerted team effort and constant vigilance. There was also a short talk by Assoc. Prof Kumar from the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies on the menacing nature of the transnational terrorism threat.

The crew of the different ships of First Flotilla also had hands-on participation in the National Education exhibition that was held after the ceremony. As part of a friendly competition, the crew had to present their unique and interactive exhibits, which were in relation to their Battlefield Tour experience, to the invited guest judges led by COL Ng. RSS Sea Lion emerged as the 1st prize winner with a comprehensively built model illustrating the fall of Singapore in WWII.

First Flotilla specially organises wide-ranging NE activities during the workyear to build up the 'heartware' of its personnel across the ranks and throughout the squadrons. The NE activities aim to impress upon our sailors that our sovereignty and national security cannot be taken for granted, enhancing their commitment, cohesion, confidence and collective will to fight.

Ms Angela Tay, Staff Officer, NEXUS commented: "1st Flotilla is the first unit the navy to make use of the newly-launched SAF NE Fund initiative, with the largest number of personnel involved. The sustained programme of lead-up NE activities was all very well-organised, detailed, interesting and comprehensive. All in all, a very good way to promote NE and commemorate Total Defence Day!"

- Story by Lin Yuankai, with contributions from CPT Jason Kwek and CPT Ho Jee Kien



■ Blindfolded? You can't be see-rious!



■ Enthusiastic Heritage Explorers of Fortress Singapore



■ Putting the many pieces of history together sure is challenging

# Chief Warrant Navy & COSCOM CWO COC



■ SWO Seow takes over the reins from SWO Choo

THE RSN witnessed a change of its Chief Warrant Officer Navy (CWN) at the Fleet Auditorium in Changi Naval Base on 21 Feb.

Outgoing CWN, SWO Choo Thiam Fook handed over the baton to SWO Roger Seow at the ceremony

graced by Chief of Navy, RADM Ronnie Tay.

SWO Choo has served as CWN since taking over the position from SWO Johnny Lim in 19 Aug 2003.

SWO Seow was Chief Warrant Officer(CWO) COSCOM before his

appointment as CWN. He had also served as Coxswain of various vessels such as the decommissioned Coastal Patrol Crafts (CPC), Patrol Crafts (PC), Missile Gun Boats (MGB) and Missile Corvettes (MCV) since his enlistment into National Service in 1972.

MWO Neo Hock Hee took over from SWO Roger Seow as COSCOM CWO, to assume the responsibilities in mentoring and guiding the young WOSR and specialists of COSCOM.

MWO Neo, in his speech, described his appointment as COSCOM CWO as 'bittersweet'. Having served the 189 SQN for close to a decade, he said it was difficult for him to bid farewell to the squadron and staff he had come to know so well. Nonetheless, he was thrilled to be bestowed with greater responsibilities and looked forward to embracing the bigger COSCOM Family.

- ML with contributions from CPT Daen Ng

## Chief of Navy Visits 188 Squadron

CHIEF of Navy RADM Ronnie Tay visited 188 Squadron on 25 Feb accompanied by recently appointed RSN Chief Warrant Navy SWO Roger Seow. CNV was received by Commander First Flotilla/CO 188 SQN COL Ng Chee Peng and introduced to the MCVs' Commanding Officers and Executive Officers as well as 188 Squadron staff. CNV was then shown a video of 188 Squadron's achievements and focus areas for the past few years, and updated on the latest developments and projects in the squadron by COL

Ng. This was followed by a guided tour of the squadron facilities with a viewing of the Total Defence exhibits put up by the squadron.

RADM Tay then visited RSS VICTORY to observe some of the latest developments in action. At a "Meet-The-People" session at the Tuas Wardroom CNV listened to and shared his views with the officers and men of 188 Squadron. He was presented with a commemorative 188 Squadron T-Shirt, before a photo-taking session concluded his visit.



- Article contributed by CPT Kwan Hon Chuong

## NLO Cares For The Environment - ISO 14001 Certified!

IN March 2005, NLO successfully achieved ISO 14001: 1996 Certification audited by BSI Management Systems Ltd, in recognition of its commitment to protect and care for the environment.

NLO's pursuit to achieve certification has involved the establishment of the EMS Working Committee in Feb 03. While recognising the need to ensure that the design/modification and maintenance operations of RSN vessels are consistent with the established EMS, the committee also ensures that

the RSN's operational capabilities are not compromised. A series of "Green Ship" programmes that explore the innovative use of technologies to make existing vessels 'greener' and at the same time reduce operating costs have been implemented.

As an ISO14001 certified organisation, NLO will continue to hold up to its environmental policy to CARE and at the same time, provide the highest standard of logistics support and services to the rest of the RSN family.

- Article contributed by Ms Tan Si Hui

### Our Environmental Policy

The Naval Logistics Organisation (NLO) aims to be an **Environmentally Responsible Organisation** while providing the highest standard of logistics support and services to the RSN units.

We will:

- Conserve energy and other natural resources
- Adhere to relevant environmental regulations
- Reduce, reuse, recycle waste and prevent pollution through sound environmental practices
- Ensure continual improvement of the environmental management system through periodic training, audits and reviews



# Ballroom Dancing - A Disciplined Sport!

Story by Lin Yuankai, Photos courtesy of CPL Roger Kwa



**BALLROOM** dancing will be included in the list of competitive sports for the South-East Asian (SEA) Games 2005, a first in the already-rich history for the biennial event.

This fact must be making CPL Roger Kwa dance with joy (pun fully intended). Roger, 22, a NSF underwater medic, has been a regular competitor in the ballroom dancing circuit for almost a decade, an impressive feat considering his relatively young age.

Currently ranked second in Singapore, Roger's talent in the sport has earned himself accolades not only in the local arena but also in overseas tournaments such as the World Games 2004 held in Taipei, Taiwan.

"It all started with my parents," Roger recounts, "They used to be social dancers in community centres and I followed them for the fun of it and the rest is history..."

Unknown to many individuals, a typical round in a ballroom dancing tournament requires the competitor to be dancing and working all his major muscle groups for almost eight minutes non-stop! In fact, sports conditioning experts reportedly compared the exertion to be equivalent to a continuous flat-out full speed sprint of one kilometre! What was that about ballroom dancing not being a sport again?

Juggling NS obligations and five training sessions a week for National Team training would be a challenge for anybody. For this, Roger is grateful to his superiors at Sembawang Medical Centre for their support. Roger explains: "For example, whenever I represent Singapore in overseas competitions, they grant me unrecorded leave. I am very thankful for their understanding!" Like any other sport, ballroom dancing requires plenty of discipline. Roger

elaborates that "ballroom dancers have to carry themselves in a dignified manner and it is therefore very important to pay attention to small details such as your posture. Your expression must also convey the mood of the music being played." He also learns to apply this discipline from the sport to other areas of his life such as his duties in the RSN.

At the end of the interview, I wished Roger good luck in making the SEA Games contingent and doing the nation proud. Judging from the dedication and passion he displayed throughout the session, one gets the sense that he might just dance his way to victory for national glory soon enough!



## SAF/RSN Road Relay & RSN Charity Heartstrings

**THE** SAF/RSN 50km Road Relay Run 2005 was held at Marina Park on 11 Mar. The crowds roared off their marks when the Guest-of-Honour, Chief of Defence Force, LG Ng Yat Chung, flagged off the 50km Relay Race at 3pm. The intense competition saw CNV, RADM Ronnie Tay and Commander, Naval Diving Unit, COL Chng Ho Kiat, leading the Navy with strong finishes, clinching the top prizes.

LG Ng gave away the prizes to the fastest 2km runner, 2LT Lin Zhi Yi from NDU who clocked an impressive timing of 6:09 mins. CPT Tan Cheng Yin walked away with the fastest female award for the fifth consecutive year. The NDU also won the CDF Challenge trophy for the second consecutive year.



Our Navy Personnel and NSmen raised more than \$117,000 for ten homes and charitable organizations, including the SAF Benevolent Fund for the RSN Charity Heartstring. RADM Tay presented the checks to the representatives of the homes and the charitable organisations after the Mass Run.

- Article contributed by 2LT Nelson Goh





# SPORT DIVING is SERIOUS FUN

Story by Lin Yuankai  
Photos courtesy of featured individuals

*Navy News takes the plunge with two RSN recreational divers... who are only all too ready to take the pressure anytime in pursuit of their love of the sport.*

LTA Alivia Tay loves the sea. That was obvious from the moment I spoke to her. LTA Tay, currently attending the Naval Junior Officer's Course (NJOC), has been diving for more than two years and her love for the sport has not diminished a single bit. A growing desire to spend more time near the sea led the 24 year old to choose a career with the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN). She was commissioned as an officer in January this year. You won't easily find a more passionate sea lover than her!

Anybody seeking advice on recreational diving would do well to speak with 1SG Leon Low, 28. He is not only a qualified instructor certified by the International Association of Nitrox & Technical Divers (IANTD) but also has had more than 10 years of experience under his belt. Add to the fact that 1SG Low is also a Training Development Specialist in the Naval Diving Unit (NDU) and you can understand why this is no weekend diver, but one who takes his sport seriously indeed.

## D for Discipline, Dedication and Determination

**LTA Tay** - "You start off with Basic Diving... then Advanced...then the Divemaster course...followed by Specialty Dive..." LTA Tay counts off with her fingers so quickly that my pen nearly flew out of my hand from trying to keep up. With that many courses, it requires quite a bit of discipline, dedication and determination to become proficient in the sport. "Learning to dive is a discipline as well as a process of self-discovery for me. In no small ways, it builds up confidence in oneself, with the courage to venture into the murky unknown."

**1SG Low** - 1SG Low advises aspiring divers to choose a good reputable dive school that emphasizes on knowledge-intensive courses as "one is able to apply knowledge learnt in each course to each dive and as your diving skills improve, there's a deep sense of satisfaction." Although there are courses which only last for a few days, 1SG Low recommends beginners to attend the longer and more comprehensive courses. "Diving is one of the sports where there should be no short-cuts in the learning process because of the safety considerations and fluid environment lending greater complexity in the mastery of the sport."

## Interest begins with 'the Sea' and 'I'

**LTA Tay** - A self-professed lover of the sea, LTA Tay has tried various sea sports such as wakeboarding and snorkelling but scuba diving remains her favourite. "After you've seen the beautiful depths of the waters, you'll feel dumb paying to be just above the surface!" the bubbly officer chuckles. For LTA Tay, scuba diving is a sport

that "one can forget about everyday issues like work and stress by keeping a deeply personal connection with the watery wonders of nature. Diving is never boring!" She has been diving around the region such as Berhantian, Malaysia, a popular commercial dive site.

**1SG Low** - Even before he joined NDU, 1SG Low was already involved in recreational diving. He constantly seeks new challenges by diving at different locations around the region; even as far as India! Besides finding the sport to be relaxing, 1SG Low adds: "I aim to discover by swimming in and seeing for myself many more different seas around the world in the future." Despite his experience and other work commitments, 1SG Low dives for at least an afternoon every week to keep his diving skills current and reflexes sharp.

**Vigilance:** *Because the sea can be like a box of chocolates one moment or a can of worms the next, you never know what you'll get!*

**1SG Low** - "Scuba diving's an Extreme Sport...No kidding!" This reporter blinked hard and stared blankly back at 1SG Low. My idea of Extreme Sports were activities like bungee jumping or skysurfing, but definitely not diving under the serene canopy of the seas. 1SG Low explains: "We're land animals and our land instincts do not apply in the sea. The sea does not take into account whether you're a world-class athlete or a highly skilled professional, you'll still be a stranger in the eyes of the sea. In the peaceful waters dangers may lurk. Knowing your physical limits coupled with a healthy respect for the sea are important."

LTA Tay

1SG Low



**LTA Tay** - The exposure to the dangers of being in an unfamiliar environment calls for one to remain alert at all times. LTA Tay shared one of her close shaves with us: "During a dive, one of my friends thought she caught a glimpse of a shark in the vicinity. The alarm was raised and the Dive-master cancelled the dive and the divers had to scramble quickly back onboard the boat! Although the shark's presence was never confirmed, it was better to be safe than sorry and the unthinkable could have occurred if the diver had not been on her toes."

#### **Every Experience is Different and Nothing Should be Taken for Granted**

**1SG Low** - Despite being a naval diver, 1SG Low does not believe that his experience exempts him from the possible dangers of the sport. He treats every dive like a new one because "regardless of dive sites, a diver is subject to many varying factors such as the water currents and the marine life." He does, however, feel that the experiences gained with each dive makes one a more self-confident and skilful diver.

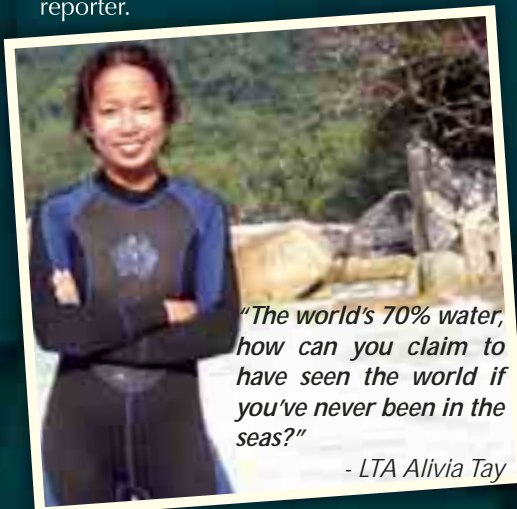
**LTA Tay** - To LTA Tay, experience does not make her take the safety checks and procedures for granted, instead she treats them much more seriously as she explains: "a diver, no matter what experience, needs to be constantly aware of the possible dangers and their consequences should anything go wrong below the surface. He or she must be prepared to quickly take the necessary action should things go wrong. Poor training and hesitation can be a deadly combination."

#### **Resources for the Right Reliable Gear 'R' Everything!**

**1SG Low** - It is common belief that scuba diving is a sport for the rich. However, 1SG Low is quick to dismiss this as a myth, explaining: "Scuba diving is extremely equipment-intensive but much of the cost is initial start-up, provided you invest in a good set of gear." He estimates the cost of a basic set of equipment to be around \$2000, but with good maintenance, it could well last for up to two decades!

For those who are hesitant about forking out a large sum of money, they may be heartened to know that some

dive schools provide equipment for their students during their courses. Most commercial dive sites also rent equipment and help to clean up the gear after usage. Talk about a hassle-free dive! Yet, LTA Tay considers the cost to be small change compared to the treasure trove of wonders waiting for one under the waves. "The world's 70% water, how can you claim to have seen the world if you've never been in the seas?" she quips. Sounds like deep logic that washes well with this reporter.



## **RSN's 10<sup>th</sup> Straight Win at 36th SAFSA Swim Meet**

**FOR** the 10th consecutive year the RSN Swimming Team emerged as the overall Team Champion by accumulating a massive lead over the 1st runners-up team from 3rd Division at this year's 36th SAFSA Swimming Meet held at the CNB Swimming Complex on 18 Mar. Six new records were established in all. The new records were set by CPL Sng Ju Wei (400m Freestyle, Intermediate), PTE Thum Bing Ming (200m Freestyle, Open), LCP Ng Cheng Xun (200m Butterfly, Open), Mr Delwyn Wee (50m Freestyle, Master). In addition, two team records were set

by the RSN for the 4 X 50m Freestyle Mixed Relay, Open and 4 X 50m Freestyle Mixed Relay, Intermediate.

A total of 467 swimmers from 13 SAFSA Formations participated in this year's meet, which consisted of 64 events. A total of 10 new records were set in various events. The longest standing record of the 50M Freestyle Women Open event set in 1994 was broken this year by OCT Tan Yi Jie Louisa from Armour. COL Cyril Lee, Mr Delwyn Wee and CPL Sng Ju Wei won the Individual Best Performance Awards for Men (Veteran), Men (Master) and



Men (Intermediate) respectively with outstanding timings.

This year's event was organized by the Institute of Maritime Operations and Systems (IMOS).

- Article contributed by 2WO Sabapathy R.

## **COSCOM Tops 32<sup>nd</sup> RSN Swimming Meet**



**215** swimmers participated in the 32nd RSN Swimming Meet held on 24 Jan at Changi Naval Base (CNB) Swimming Complex. The annual event organized by the Institute of Maritime Operations and Systems (IMOS) was graced by COL Tay Kian Seng, Commander TRACOM.

20 new records were set with COSCOM emerging as the champion. LCP Ng Cheng Xun from NALCOM broke the record for the 100m Butterfly (Open) held for the last 16 years by Singapore's famous swim champ Mr. Ang Peng Siong. The timing for the new record is 58.28 seconds, 0.52 second faster than the old record.

- Article contributed by 2WO Goh Kai Look

Racing into harm's way  
Riding-off at safe distance  
Go fast, Go firm  
Sense further, Look closer! Better yet...  
Hands on deck no longer required

