Distance Support services provided to deployed units

By Blake Vives, CFAY Public Affairs

U.S. Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC) Yokosuka, Detachment Marianas provided rapid, efficient logistics support to *USS Boxer* (LHD 4) Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) in preparation for the ESG's recent port visit to Naval Base Guam Feb. 5.

A recent 'Distance Support' initiative eliminated the need for a beach detachment, which involves shipboard supply personnel traveling ashore in advance of a ship's arrival to satisfy logistics requirements.

"It's Rear Adm. Thomas Traaen's [Commander U.S. Pacific Fleet Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics Fleet Supply and Ordnance] vision to have a 'zero beach detachment' footprint on Guam," said Detachment Marianas Officer-In-Charge Capt. Michael Uva. "As a result of the admiral's vision, which is part of developing Distance Support initiatives in the Western Pacific, *Boxer* ESG beach detachment responsibilities were transferred to FISC's logistics support operations."

Distance Support is rapidly becoming the fleet's principle Web-based readiness enabler, facilitating timely technical assistance and logistics operations. This critical capability remotely projects reactive, proactive and predictive logistics support to Sailors in order to achieve a sufficient readiness level at the best time and cost.

The Distance Support provided by Detachment Marianas directly impacted fleet readiness by allowing the ship's force to focus on performing its primary responsibilities while the detachment handled the logistics support tasks associated with preparing for the *Boxer's* arrival in port.

Detachment Marianas Logistics Support Center (LSC) Director Lt. j.g. William Buffington and logistics support representatives (LSRs) Jesse Sablan, Jimmy Fernandez, Fil Batayola, Henry Smith and Chief Ship's Serviceman Elly Mercado, in close coordination with Defense Distribution Depot Guam (DDGM), using Distance Support technology, tracked, inventoried and consolidated all passengers, mail and cargo for transfer to the *Boxer* ESG. The LSC team also arranged for transportation, cell phones, cranes and other pier side support services needed when the ESG arrived in Guam.

Sailors aboard *USS Boxer* (LHD 4) take part in an underway replenishment with the MSC fleet replenishment oiler *USNS Rappahannok* (T-AO 204). FISC Yokosuka logistics support representatives provide 'Distance Support' to ships, such as *Boxer*, to ensure materials supplied during underway replenishments are available. Distance Support is rapidly becoming the fleet's principle Web-based readiness enabler, facilitating timely technical assistance and logistics operations.

U.S. Navy file photo by MC2 John J. Siller

FISC LSRs successfully provided Distance Support to the *Boxer* ESG without using any shipboard supply personnel. "The value of LSRs is immeasurable," said Buffington. "They are the key to supporting the fleet in a timely, efficient and cost effective manner while reducing the workload on the ship-based supply department allowing them to focus on daily operations."

"LSRs increase the level of operational readiness of the fleet," said Mercado, a deployable LSR who traveled from Yokosuka, Japan to Guam to augment onsite support of the *Boxer* ESG.

"The knowledge and expertise of the LSRs was an important part of the support provided to the *Boxer* ESG. Four civilian LSRs [and I] acquired all of the parts and provisions and sent all of the items to where they needed to be for delivery."

Boxer Commanding Officer Capt. Mark Cedrun commended Detachment Marianas, their LSRs and DDGM for their outstanding support.

"Bravo Zulu," said Cedrun. "Despite scheduling changes and a wide array of requirements, [the LSC team] met all challenges. Your adaptability, responsiveness and flexibility are the mark of true professionals; a job exceptionally well done!"

"I am extremely happy," Buffington said about successfully using Distance Support instead of ship's beach detachment support for the first time in Guam, in order to supply the *Boxer* ESG. "A challenge was placed before us and we accomplished it."

Distance Support is a Navywide enterprise effort that combines people, processes and technology into a collaborative network without regard to geographic location.

This capability is critical as FISC Yokosuka and the Navy explore alternatives to operating at sea with fewer Sailors, and develops a common infrastructure to support both new and legacy platforms.

USS Boxer, the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit and five other ships homeported in San Diego, which comprise the *Boxer* ESG, left San Diego Jan. 9 for a scheduled seven-month deployment to the Western Pacific and Persian Gulf regions.

DDYJ Okinawa celebrates anniversary

Story and photo by SK1(SW) Corey Gronli, Defense Distribution Depot Yokosuka Japan

Defense Distribution Depot Yokosuka Japan (DDYJ), Okinawa Detachment celebrated its one year anniversary early with a town hall meeting and cake cutting ceremony March 24.

DDYJ Commanding Officer Cmdr. Paul J. Bourgeois spoke at the event.

"In the past year, this detachment has made significant achievements in providing logistical support to all services located on Okinawa and throughout the Pacific area of responsibility," said Bourgeois. "We have an outstanding group of employees who came together as a team to achieve this significant accomplishment. From Pacific Command approval in December 2007, to this first anniversary, what everyone at DDYJ has accomplished has been truly impressive and you can be justifiably proud of your efforts."

DDYJ Okinawa Detachment employees pose for a photo while celebrating the detachment's first anniversary March 24. The Okinawa Detachment processed more than 11,000 material release orders and received over 13,000 shipments since its opening April 2008.

Okinawa Detachment Director Rudy Reyes also thanked the employees for the hard work and accomplishments made during the last year. "Without significant contributions from our newly reported personnel and our expertly trained staff in Yokosuka we wouldn't have had the successes we've achieved," said Reyes.

After the opening remarks, employees celebrated with a cake cutting, light meal and social hour, which allowed time for reminiscing over the past year's events Detachment Deputy Director Takehiro Nozoe moved from Sasebo to Okinawa to assist in the founding of the new detachment.

"Everyday we continue to grow," said Nozoe. "The support we receive from DDYJ Yokosuka and DDYJ Sasebo is evident in our success. My family and I moved from Sasebo to open this detachment. We started a new life with many new friends in Okinawa."

DDYJ employee Rika Miyazato transferred to the Okinawa Detachment from Yokosuka to initiate its operations. "When I came here we started from scratch, creating what is here today. We didn't expect to impact the mission in such a positive way but we did," she said.

The Okinawa Detachment processed more than 11,000 material release orders and received more than 13,000 shipments since its opening April 2008.

NAVSUP

Faces of FISC

FISC employee PCSN Fernando Simon Mendez loads mail at the Yokosuka Post Office onto a truck bound for Fleet Mail Center Yokohama March 31. Photo by Blake Vives

Where are you from?
I was born in Caracas, Venezuela, and moved to Miami, Fla., when I was 11 fleeing from the newly elected president Hugo Chavez.

Why did you join the Navy?
I wanted to make a difference and better my future through job experience and college.

How is your job vital to the Navy?
Mail is such an important part of the morale of the Navy; I honestly believe all operations in the Pacific would be crippled if it wasn't for our constant supply of mail.

What is your life motto?
Being the best does not mean to be better than everyone; it means to outperform yourself every time.

Describe an interesting experience in Japan.
My first day in Japan I found the Imperial Palace by chance and at my first Japanese meal I accidently mistook vinegar for juice.