USS Curtis Wilbur conducts weapons systems tests

By MC3 Andrew Ryan Smith, Navy Public Affairs Element Japan

USS CURTIS WILBUR, at sea - On June 29 *USS Curtis Wilbur* (DDG 54) conducted a live fire exercise, to test the readiness of it's weapons systems.

The weapons test was a routine part of the ships summer patrol.

The systems tested included the ship's 5-inch gun and the ships 20mm Close in Weapons System (CIWS).

During the test, the ship fired five shells from its 5-inch gun, while the two CIWS mounts onboard each fired multiple bursts successfully.

"This test was important to make sure we can fire our guns if needed, and make the rounds land on target," said Gunner's Mate 1st Class Robert Jackson, "it was a big success, everything went off flawlessly."

There was a lot more to the exercise than just pulling the trigger.

The crew spent the previous day prepping all of the necessary systems and loading live ammunition into the weapons.

"At the beginning of each deployment we have to spin the barrels and test the mount tracking before we put live ammo in the weapon," said Fire Controlman 3rd Class Evelyn Ruiz (SW), one of the ships CIWS technicians. "During todays shoot each mount successfully fired about 350 rounds."

A great deal of coordination and planning went into the live fire to ensure the success of the exercise and the safety of those involved.

"This exercise required a lot of coordination between Sailors working in the mounts as well as in the combat information center on the bridge and even other ships, to make sure the range was clear and the timing was right," said Lt. Anthony Massey, *Curtis Wilbur*'s weapons officer. "The exercise proved successful we fired all the rounds we intended and they landed where we planed."

The guided-missile destroyer *USS Curtis Wilbur* (DDG 54) fires a MK-45 5-inch/54-caliber lightweight gun during a live-fire exercise. The MK 45 gun is a fully-automatic naval gun capable of providing accurate naval gunfire against fast, highly-maneuverable surface targets, air threats and shore batteries.
U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Class Adam K. Thomas

With the ships weapons systems tested, and working up to standards the *Curtis Wilbur* will continue on its summer patrol.

George Washington conducts first CBR drill for summer patrol

Story and photo by MCSN Erin Devenberg, *USS George Washington* Public Affairs

SOUTH CHINA SEA - Armed with MCU-2/P gas masks, Sailors aboard the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) manned their designated repair lockers to train for combat in a contaminated environment June 29.

The chemical, biological and radiological (CBR) drill was *George Washington*'s first since getting underway June 12.

"We need to train and train hard for every possible scenario," said *George Washington*'s commanding officer, Capt. David Lausman. "We operate peacefully in international waters but we still need to always be prepared for all different forms of attack."

The CBR drill is a simulation to practice mission oriented protective posture (MOPP) levels which range from one to four. Level one indicates a threat is possible while at level four, intelligence suggest an attack using chemical, biological or radiological weapons is imminent and the crew is ordered to put on their MOPP gear.

The protective postures are also used in the event a ship passes through a chemical cloud or is exposed to fallout.

For Engineman Fireman Aaron Bates from Newport Beach, Calif., a new Sailor aboard *George Washington*, this evolution was a great reminder of the first time he donned the CBR protective gear.

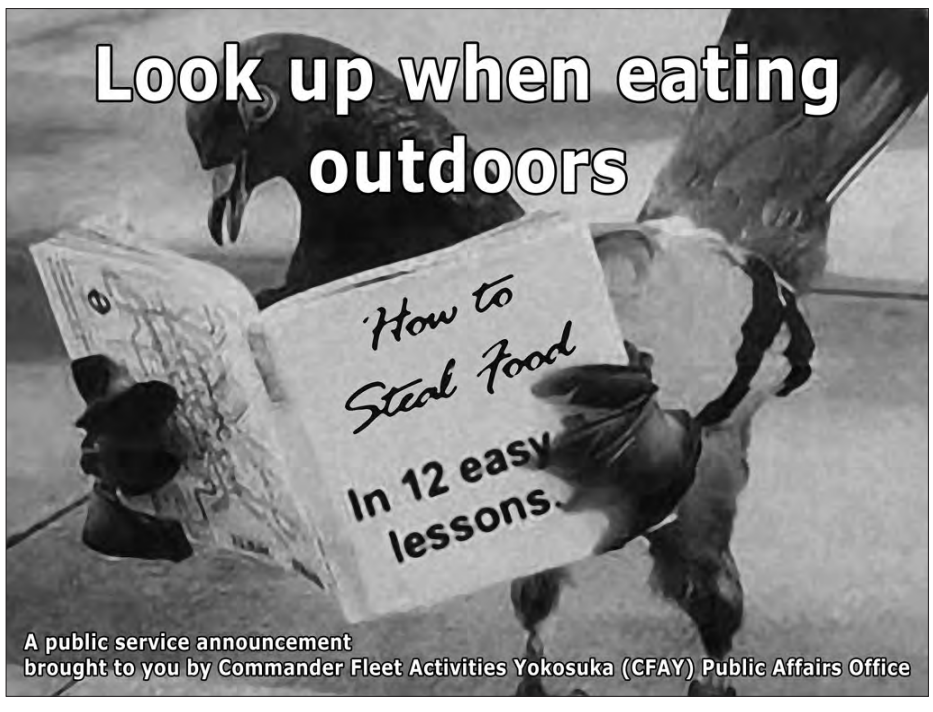
"[Putting the gear on] brought me back to boot camp," said Bates "I forgot how constricting it was after putting it on, but it was a good exercise and it was good to refresh myself of the basic fundamentals [of CBR drills]."

Engineman Aaron Bates from Newport Beach Calif., dons an MCU-2/P gas mask during mission oriented protective posture level four, a simulated chemical biological radiological attack aboard the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) June 29.

MCU-2/P masks protect Sailors against agents meant to harm them in warfare. For the 5,500 Sailors aboard *George Washington*, this goal is to get the mask on in just eight seconds. For the newest members of the crew, more senior Sailors were on hand to coach and motivate them to meet this requirement.

"They did quite well; everyone pitched in," said Chief Machinist's Mate Ralph Galvan from Corpus Christi, Texas. "For the new guys, the more experienced [Sailors] helped orientate them to the drill. I was pretty impressed by everyone out here today."

"From fighting simulated fires to mock chemical attack, we train day and night to make sure when something happens, we respond correctly and that everyone operates off the same page. That's the only way to be successful; train, train, train," said Lausman.

George Washington returned to patrolling the waters of the Western Pacific ocean on June 12, 2011, departing her forward operating base of Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka.

Onboard are more than 5,500 Sailors from *George Washington* and Carrier Air Wing Five. *George Washington*'s mission is to ensure security and stability in the Western Pacific and to be in position to work with our allies and regional partners to respond to any crisis across the operational spectrum as directed.