Vandegrift to return to 7th Fleet during independent deployment

By Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

The guided-missile frigate *USS Vandegrift* (FFG 48) departed San Diego April 12, for an independent deployment to the 7th Fleet area of responsibility in the Western Pacific Ocean.

"We are all anxious to begin our deployment to the 7th Fleet area of operations," said *Vandegrift* Commanding Officer Cmdr. Steven Prescott. "The ship and crew have been prepared for this deployment through a series of exercises and workups throughout the training cycle. This is a great ship and the crew is second to none. *Vandegrift* is ready for any tasking that comes our way."

The ship and its crew of approximately 25 officers and 185 enlisted Sailors is one of six Oliver Hazard Perry-class guided-missile frigates and will deploy for the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training exercise.

Also deploying with *Vandegrift* are the Scorpions of Helicopter Antisubmarine Squadron Light 49, Detachment 6, led by Lt. Cmdr. Kevin Carlson. *Vandegrift* falls under the command of Destroyer Squadron 1, led by Commodore Eric C. Young.

The ship was recently involved in training Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) and Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) personnel in integrating S-70 helicopters into the RSN fleet. RSAF pilots made a historic first-ever underway landing of an S-70 aboard *Vandegrift* last November.

Vandegrift, named for Gen. Alexander A. Vandegrift, U.S. Marine Corps, was built at Todd Pacific Shipyards in Seattle, Wash. and was commissioned Nov. 24, 1984. The ship completed eight years of service in Yokosuka, Japan in support of forward- deployed naval forces, departing Aug. 14, 2006, to make San Diego its new homeport.

Vandegrift helps provide deterrence, promote peace and security, preserve freedom of the sea and humanitarian and disaster response within 3rd Fleet's 50-million square mile area of responsibility in the Eastern Pacific, as well as supporting the Navy's maritime strategy when forward-deployed.

Sailors aboard the guided-missile frigate *USS Vandegrift* (FFG 48) man the rails Aug. 14, 2006, as the ship prepares to depart Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka for the last time after being part of the forward-deployed naval forces of Destroyer Squadron 15 for nearly 10 years. *Vandegrift* is now stationed in San Diego.
U.S. Navy file photo by MC2 Chantel M. Clayton

New guidance can help Sailors 'Perform to Serve'

By MCC(SW) Maria Yager, Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

Navy Administrative Message NAVADMIN 128/10, released April 12 announced policy, timeline and procedural changes to the Perform to Serve (PTS) program.

"At a time when retention is at an all-time high and attrition is at an all-time low, we have to make sure we keep the right number of people while maintaining a quality level that enables us to sustain a work force for the future," said Navy Total Force/ Manpower, Education and Training Fleet Master Chief (AW/ SW/SCW) Scott Benning. "PTS continues to evolve to ensure performance based opportunity is maintained for our best and brightest Sailors."

NAVADMIN 128/10 provides the timeline when PTS applications should be submitted, eliminates the Page 13 "commitment of intent to reenlist" entry, addresses Navy Reserve affiliation options and explains exceptions to PTS for limited groups of Sailors.

Working with their chain of command, Sailors should consult their career counselor and submit a PTS application no later than 13 months before their end of active obligated service (EAOS) or projected rotation date (PRD) if service obligation will be required.

Commands may submit applications 15 months prior to EAOS or PRD if they will be deployed during the regular processing months, or for Sailors who require early approval for special programs or decommissioning.

Applications are required for Sailors in paygrades E-3 to E-6 with less than 14 years of service, regardless of reenlistment intentions. According to the NAVADMIN, commands may submit applications for ineligible Sailors by selecting "no" to question one, "Is member eligible for reenlistment?" This enables accountability of all Sailors, according to the message.

The new message eliminates the requirement for Sailors to sign a Page 13 stating their reenlistment intentions. However, commands are required to submit a Page 13 to Bureau of Naval Personnel (BUPERS) 320 when a Sailor with PTS approval no longer desires to reenlist.

"All members of the command leadership team should read NAVADMIN 128/10 in its entirety and remain fully engaged in the conduct of timely career development boards, counseling and mentoring," said Benning.

PTS was first launched in 2003 as a method for the Navy to shape manning to match mission requirements. It is a centralized reservation system used to manage reenlistments. While most Sailors are permitted to reenlist in their current rate, Sailors in overmanned ratings may be offered reenlistment in an undermanned rating.

When PTS began, it applied only to "first-term" Sailors in overmanned ratings but has grown. Last year, the Navy expanded PTS to Sailors E-3 through E-6 with six-to-10 years of service (Zone B), and then to Sailors E-3 through E-6 with 10-to-14 years of service (Zone C). Performance is a critical factor in PTS selection. Sailors in paygrades E-1 and E-2 cannot apply to reenlist.

Commanding officers must ensure PTS applications are screened and certified for accuracy in accordance with Military Personnel Manual article 1440-060 and notify BUPERS 320 of any action that may adversely affect PTS eligibility. Actions may include loss of a security clearance, three Physical Fitness Assessment failures in a four-year period, reduction in rate, submarine disqualification, elected separation, non-judicial punishment, refusal to obligate service for orders and high-year tenure.

More guidance is available in NAVADMIN 128/10.

The Chief asks:

"Did you know the hand salute began in the days of chivalry when it was customary for knights dressed in armor to raise their visors for the purpose of identification? Because of the position of rank, the junior was required to make the first gesture.

"Another school of thought traces the salute back to a custom at the time of the Borgias (Renaissance Italy). Assassinations by dagger were not uncommon at that time, and it became the custom for men to approach each other with raised hand, palm to the front, to show that there was no weapon concealed.

"It's reasonable to believe that the hand salute came from the British navy. There is general agreement that the salute as now rendered is really the first part of the movement of uncovering. From the earliest days of military units, the junior uncovered when meeting or addressing a senior. Gradually, the act of taking off one's cap was simplified into merely touching the cap or, if uncovered, the head, and finally into the present form of salute.

"If you didn't know, now you know." – MCC(SW/AW) Eric Hannah, CFAY Public Affairs