

NAVY NEWS

ISSUE 04 2014



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**ONWARDS
AND UPWARDS**
A lifetime of learning

THE RUNNING MAN
Hit the road for an ultramarathon



*Get trigger
happy*

TRI-SERVICE TRIDENT

The SAF comes together for
ship-to-shore success

DO YOUR IPT

Anywhere, Anytime

Encouraging NSmen to take ownership of their fitness.

What is self-administered IPT?

For greater convenience and flexibility, NSmen can use fitness tracking technology to record their exercise routines to clock IPT sessions. A four-month trial starting from Sep 2014 will be conducted for a selected unit.

I CAN USE...



- **iDAT tracker**

Health Promotion Board's GPS-enabled run tracker app for smartphones and other devices.

- **Fitness band**

Wearable fitness device which syncs with a third-party webpage or app.



ONE IPT SESSION IS...



75 minutes of running in one week

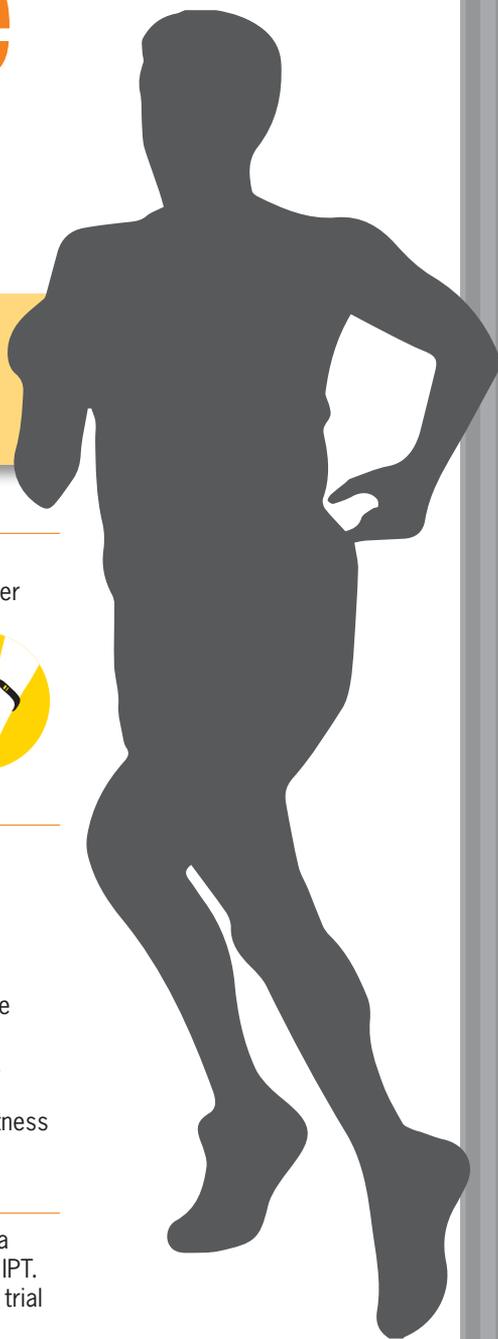
I HAVE TO DO...



- 8 out of 10 sessions will be self-administered IPT
- First and last IPT sessions, i.e. IPPT tests, will still be conducted in one of the Fitness Conditioning Centres.

CAN I SIGN UP NOW?

The trial is only for a selected SAF NS unit. The SAF will conduct a review after the trial to assess the feasibility of Self-Administered IPT. NSmen who do not complete the eight sessions at the end of the trial will have to do their remaining sessions at an FCC.



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The mission of the RSN is to enhance Singapore's peace and security through deterrence and diplomacy, and should these fail, to secure a swift and decisive victory over the aggressor at sea. The RSN will ensure Singapore's seaward defence, secure our sea lines of communication, and maintain a high level of operational readiness and a broad spectrum of capabilities to support our national interest.

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RADM Lai Chung Han
Chief of Navy

As defenders of our seas, our men and women stand at the frontline of our nation's waters. Recently, I visited the various formations, squadrons and HQ departments to meet the men and women who devote themselves to defending our everyday. They come from different parts of our Navy, but their devotion to our mission is one and the same – to protect our waters and to safeguard our national interest.

During my visits, I asked to interact with our people at their work spaces to get a better feel of their work environment and to understand their daily concerns. I was also impressed by how our people believe in the mission of the RSN, are proud of the role they play and strive to be great at what they do.

Believing in the mission of the RSN

It is heartening to see the passion and dedication our men and women have for our mission. Even during this festive season, duty never ceases. Be it out on patrol or standing guard in base, our men and women believe strongly in our Navy's purpose and have dedicated themselves to keeping our island nation safe. Despite the sacrifices, they are committed to serve, because they know that ours is a worthwhile cause and vital to a maritime nation like Singapore.

Taking pride in the role they play

Over the course of 2014, those deployed for operations and exercises have put in blood, sweat and tears to ensure mission success. These stories were among many that our men and women proudly recounted during my unit visits.

They also spoke about sharing their stories with their families, friends and the Singapore public. An occasion mentioned was Navy@Vivo where they showed their loved ones and the public a slice of life at sea. They also used the opportunity to share what drives them to stand their watch, and to do their best for our Navy that they cherish and are proud of.

Being great at what they do

The desire to be great at what they do was also evident in our people's approach and attitude towards their daily work. Whether with Naval Logistics Command winning the Minister for Defence Award or in small teams or even as individuals, I was impressed by their professionalism and commitment to excellence.

2015 – Onwards and Upwards

2015 marks the 50th anniversary of both Singapore and the Singapore Armed Forces. Our Navy has kept Singapore's waters safe for the past 50 years and will continue to do so. There is a part for all of us as we write the next chapter of our Navy story – onwards and upwards!

QUICK REP

18th Mine Hunting Officers Course

Naval officers from the RSN, along with officers from Germany, Indonesia, Sweden and the United States of America, participated in the 18th Mine Hunting Officers' Course (MHOC) from 31 Jul to 28 Aug 2014, held at the Naval Advanced School.



34th Tri-Service Warfighter Course

The 34th Tri-Service Warfighter Course was conducted from 11 Aug to 5 Sep 2014, and six RSN officers graduated from it. During the course, participants learnt to appreciate and understand SAF Joint Operations with emphasis on Operations-Other-Than-War.

Fleet Anniversary

RSN's Fleet commemorated their 43rd anniversary on 15 Aug 2014 at the SAFTI Military Institute Stadium. Over 1400 people participated in the event, which was officiated by then-Fleet Commander RADM Timothy Lo.

SAFRA Singapore Bay Run and Army Half Marathon

RSN servicemen participated in the Singapore Armed Forces Reservist Association Singapore Bay Run & Army Half Marathon held on 31 Aug 2014. Among the participants were CPT Kenneth Tan from the Naval Diving Unit, who was diagnosed with a genetic disorder that causes him difficulty in walking. Accompanied by his batchmates from the 27th Combat Diving Course, he achieved his aspiration of completing a marathon.



Long Service Award Presentation Ceremony

194 Navy personnel were recognised for their contributions on 5 Sep 2014 at RSN Central Mess in Changi Naval Base. Chief of Navy RADM Lai Chung Han presented the Long Service Awards to recipients for their service ranging from 20 to 40 years.

Singapore Armed Forces Sports Association Inter-Formation Badminton Competition 14/15

Team Navy emerged as the 1st runner-up in the Singapore Armed Forces Sports Association Inter-Formation Badminton Competition 14/15. The RSN lost narrowly to defending champions, Combat Service Support Command, in the finals on 5 Sep with a score of 3-2.

Operationally Ready National Servicemen Commanders Engagement Sessions

Operationally Ready National Servicemen (ORNS) Commanders got a better understanding of new ORNS policies over two engagement sessions. During these sessions, they were updated on the initiatives and implementation details from recommendations made by the Committee to Strengthen National Service. The first session, attended by Chief of Navy RADM Lai Chung Han, took place on 11 Sep 2014 at SAFRA Mount Faber. Separately, Director for National Service Affairs BG(NS) Tung Yui Fai spoke to about 300 NS Commanders at Changi Naval Base on 10 Oct 2014.

Specialist Cadet Graduation Parade

19 specialist cadets from the RSN graduated as Section Commanders on 26 Sep 2014. They comprised nine cadets from the Naval Diving Unit and 10 cadets from the Base Defence Squadron. MID Peter Ang Nielsen, from the Naval Diving Unit, received the Golden Bayonet award.

SAF Learning Symposium

The Naval Military Experts Institute received the Singapore Armed Forces Learning Innovation Award (Bronze) on 1 Oct 2014 during this year's SAF Learning Symposium, which was held at SAFTI Military Institute.

Littoral Mission Vessel Keel Laying Ceremony

The keel of the RSN's first of eight Littoral Mission Vessels (LMVs) was laid on 11 Sep 2014. The ceremony, which took place at Singapore Technologies Marine in Benoi Shipyard, was officiated by Permanent Secretary (Defence) Mr Chan Yeng Kit. The LMVs will replace the existing Fearless-class patrol vessels. The LMVs will enhance the RSN's capabilities to provide seaward defence of Singapore.



Community Chest Awards

The Clearance Diving Group (CDG) from the Naval Diving Unit and submarine RSS *Swordsmen* received awards at this year's Community Chest Awards Presentation Ceremony, held on 8 Oct 2014 at the Istana. RSS *Swordsmen* received a Platinum award, while CDG received a Gold award. Second Minister for Defence, Mr Chan Chun Sing presented these awards.



Singapore Armed Forces Sports Association Inter-Formation Cross-Country

On 2 Oct 2014, Team Navy participated in the SAFSA Inter-Formation Cross Country Competition held at Bedok Reservoir Park. CPT Katie Lin clinched top position in the Women's Open category for the third consecutive year.

3rd Flotilla Friendly Games With Guards

3rd Flotilla participated in a cohesion event with the Guards from the Singapore Army on 2 Oct 2014 at Bedok Camp II. 3rd Flotilla clinched the Challenge Trophy.

41st Combat Diving Course Graduation

67 divers from the 41st Combat Diving Course were declared combat-ready in an underwater graduation parade held at Sembawang Camp on 9 Oct 2014. The Reviewing Officer was Chief of Staff-Naval Staff, RADM Jackson Chia.



Inauguration of Frogman School

On 14 Oct 2014, Dive School was officially renamed Frogman School by Chief of Navy, RADM Lai Chung Han. The move was made to better reflect the school's transformation in both structure and syllabus.



Singapore Armed Forces Leadership Dining-In

The 4th SAF Leadership Dining-in was held on 17 Oct 2014, for SAF Commanders to acknowledge the effort and achievements of their personnel. The event was held at Pasir Laba Camp Leaders' Hall, where one serviceman from each service received the Chief of Defence Force coin from the Guest of Honour, Lieutenant-General Ng Chee Meng.

Ministry of Defence Productivity and Innovation in Daily Efforts Day

The Naval Logistics Command (NALCOM) clinched the Minister for Defence Award during the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) Defence Productivity and Innovation in Daily Efforts (PRIDE) Day, which was held at Nanyang Polytechnic on 28 Oct 2014. The ceremony recognised over 20 RSN individuals, groups and units for their ideas and efforts in innovation.



Public Service Learning Journey

Public Service Officers from various Ministries and Statutory Boards attended the PS21 ExCEL Convention Learning Journey, held on 27 Oct 2014 at Changi Naval Base. They visited parts of the base including the shore simulator and damage control trainer. The officers got a better understanding of what the RSN does, and how it improves productivity and work efficiency through innovation.



Command and Staff Course Graduation Ceremony

17 RSN personnel graduated from the 45th Command and Staff Course (CSC), 15th CSC (National Service) and 3rd CSC (Executive) at the Istana on 30 Oct 2014. MAJ Chuah Meng Soon was the RSN's top graduate. SWO Ong Siang Thai was the Navy's first warrant officer to participate in the CSC (Executive).



Instructors' Day Celebration

The Maritime Training and Doctrine Command celebrated Instructors' Day on 31 Oct 2014 to recognise their instructors' efforts and dedication in their duties.

Defence Technology Prize Award Presentation Ceremony

The Missile Corvette Upgrade Team from the Defence Science and Technology Agency, Singapore Technology Engineering and Republic of Singapore Navy received the Team (R&D) Award. They won the award for a series of MCV upgrades, including UAV integration and enhanced sensor coverage. The ceremony took place on 7 Nov 2014 at the Fusionopolis Genexis Theatre. The Guest of Honour was Minister for Defence Dr Ng Eng Hen.



Fleet Change of Command

RADM Timothy Lo handed over command of the Fleet to COL Lew Chuen Hong at a ceremony held on 6 Nov 2014.



Maritime Security Task Force Change of Command

RADM Giam Hock Koon handed over command of the Maritime Security Task Force to COL Frederick Chew at a ceremony held on 7 Nov 2014.

WHERE WE'VE BEEN

📍 Exercise Kakadu

RSN officers joined personnel from 14 other countries in Exercise Kakadu, as part of a bi-annual multilateral maritime exercise organised by the Royal Australian Navy. The exercise took place from 25 Aug to 12 Sep 2014 in Darwin, Australia.



📍 Exercise Singaroo

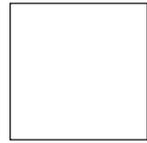
Singapore hosted the 17th Exercise Singaroo, a bilateral exercise with the Royal Australian Navy. The five-day exercise took place from 29 Sep to 3 Oct 2014. It was conducted in the South China Sea and comprised three-dimensional warfare serials such as air defence exercises, combined helicopter anti-submarine warfare exercises and gunnery firings. Frigate RSS *Tenacious* took part in the exercise with an embarked S-70B Seahawk naval helicopter.

📍 Exercise Bersama Lima

Singapore hosted Exercise Bersama Lima this year from 7 to 21 Oct 2014. The exercise comprised a joint operation in a simulated “multi-threat” environment for the defence of Malaysia and Singapore. Member nations of the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) – Australia, Malaysia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Singapore – took part in the exercise.







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The navigation department operates from the bridge, and uses navigational charts to plot a course that will lead the ship safely to its destination.



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At the heart of the ship, naval engineers work to operate, maintain and repair the electrical and marine systems that keep it combat-ready.



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Midshipman Sea Training Deployment

82 Midshipmen from the 72nd Midshipman Course and 9th Military Domain Experts Course 1 completed the Midshipman Sea Training Deployment, a six-week sail meant to develop essential seamanship and leadership skills. They also called into foreign ports in West Papua, Indonesia; Lumut, Malaysia; and Yangon, Myanmar.

Ex APEX

Exercise APEX, part of a series of annual operational readiness drills to exercise inter-agency responses in the conduct of maritime security operations, was held from 27 Oct to 6 Nov 2014. It was led by the Singapore Armed Forces' Maritime Security Task Force and involved more than 900 personnel from the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN), Singapore Maritime Crisis Centre, Singapore Police Coast Guard, Immigration and Checkpoints Authority of Singapore, Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, and Singapore Customs.

Ex Trident

RSS *Persistence* took part in Exercise Trident, which was held for the second time at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area in Queensland, Australia. The RSN conducted ship-to-shore operations with the Army and Air Force, as well as troops from the Australian Defence Force. The exercise ran from 29 Oct to 8 Nov 2014. Find out more on page 18.

WHERE WE'VE BEEN - AUG TO NOV 2014



BETTER, FASTER, STRONGER

*Story by CPT Cheong Yaohui and CPT Desmond Choo
Photos courtesy of 194 Squadron*

The RSN's Mine Countermeasures Vessels are now better equipped to detect mines following their upgrade program.





Mines have been lethal weapons as early as the first World War. Lurking on the seabed and underwater, they camouflage their potency well. But, it is not the number or size of mines in the water that makes transiting dangerous – rather, it is the threat that mines might be present that makes it so terrifying.

The Singapore Strait is one of the world's busiest shipping highways. Every day, more than 1,000 ships pass through this narrow channel, carrying with them a third of the world's trade. As a maritime nation where seaborne trade made up more than three times Singapore's GDP, our economy would be badly affected if our waters were mined.

In order to prevent such a disaster from happening, our mine countermeasure vessels (MCMVs) regularly survey Singapore's waters to ensure they are free from such threats.

To further sharpen our capabilities, the RSN's Bedok-class MCMVs have undergone an upgrade programme, which was completed in August last year. The upgrade involved integrating new technologies to enhance the detection, identification and neutralisation of mine threats.

One such upgrade is the Towed Synthetic Aperture Sonar (TSAS). Besides boasting a wider detection range than its predecessor, the ship is now also able to travel twice as fast while the TSAS is in operation. This makes for a quicker and more thorough underwater survey. Additionally, a clearer and better resolution picture is transmitted to the underwater systems operator to better identify any possible threat.

Once a mine is detected, the ship's Expendable Mine Disposal System (EMDS) will be deployed with a precision guidance system to effectively neutralise it.

An important addition to the RSN's mine-hunting arsenal is the autonomous underwater vehicle Remote Environmental Monitoring Units (REMUS). This compact unmanned system is easily transported and can be operated from any platforms.

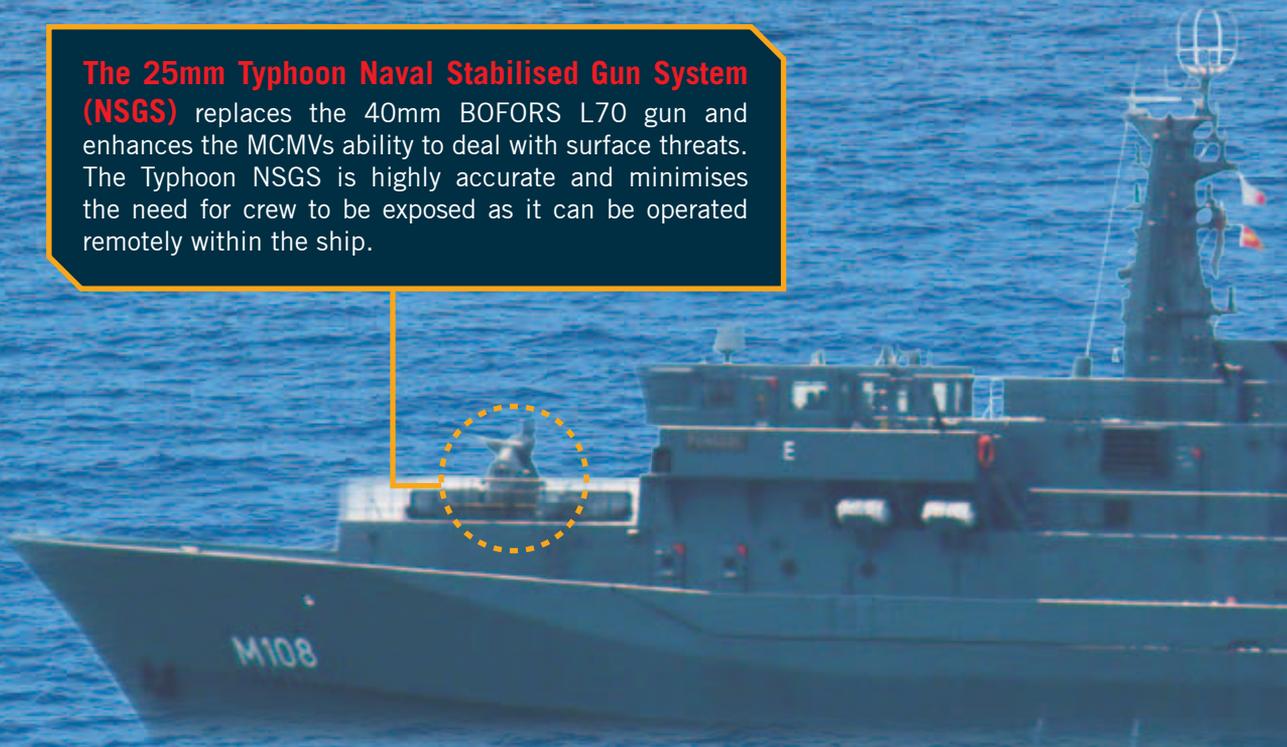
All the operator needs to do is programme the parameters of the search and the REMUS will speed away to survey the specified area for the instructed duration. It uses acoustic navigation to survey the vicinity during the seabed scan.

Squadron Commanding Officer LTC Lee Soon Tat said, "The system upgrades and introduction of unmanned technology have boosted the confidence of our sailors in achieving their mission. We have grown as a mine-hunting community, capable of localising and neutralising mines expeditiously."

The advancement of mine hunting capabilities in 194 Squadron now enables the RSN to operate more safely and swiftly.

BETTER, FASTER, STRONGER

The 25mm Typhoon Naval Stabilised Gun System (NSGS) replaces the 40mm BOFORS L70 gun and enhances the MCMVs ability to deal with surface threats. The Typhoon NSGS is highly accurate and minimises the need for crew to be exposed as it can be operated remotely within the ship.



The Combat Management System (CMS), which is located in the CIC, serves as the “Nerve Centre” of the MCMV. It collects and integrates information from ship’s sensors and mine hunting equipment. Multi-Function Consoles (MFCs) and the Mine Information System (MIS) allow the mine hunting team to effectively plan and execute mine hunting operations.

The Towed Synthetic Aperture Sonar (TSAS) works in tandem with the Mine-Hunting Sonar – the former scans a wide area that the latter can subsequently zoom in to verify the presence of mines. The TSAS has a wider detection range and is able to operate even when the ship travels at faster speeds, which allows the MCMV to carry out the underwater survey more rapidly.

The torpedo-like **Expendable Mine Disposal System (EMDS)** is armed with a warhead and able to accurately and effectively neutralise sea mines. It is remotely controlled by personnel in the Combat Information Centre (CIC), and can manoeuvre towards the mine before detonating it.

Deep Sea Diving

The REMUS is small and portable, weighing approximately 45kg. Its small size means the REMUS is able to conduct survey operations in areas deemed unsafe to reach with traditional mine hunting vessels.

It can also be easily deployed. After conducting the seabed scan, the REMUS can automatically surface and return to the launch platform.

The REMUS was successfully deployed for the first time during the International Mine Countermeasure Exercise 2012 in Bahrain.

During the exercise, the RSN team was involved in the full spectrum of AUV operations. These included mission planning, launch and recovery operations and a post-mission data analysis.

Notably, the RSN team assisted Japan's Maritime Security Task Force's autonomous underwater vehicle team to correctly classify a mine-like target, which was later identified to be one of the mines in the exercise.

The **Mine Hunting Sonar** is the "eye" of the MCMV, which uses acoustic signals to search for objects in the water column or on the sea bed. The upgraded Mine Hunting Sonar provides a clearer picture of underwater objects and allows the operator to detect and classify underwater objects faster and more accurately.



BAND OF BROTHERS

Story and Photos by S Mitra
Selected photos courtesy of 188 Sqn

Operationally Ready National Servicemen are an integral part of the Navy family. Through the years, they have worked alongside our active servicemen, standing ready to protect our waters and sea lines of communication. Navy News takes a look at how they contribute to the defence of Singapore.



LTA (NS) Rony Seah, one of the NSmen who returned for his ICT, gives instructions to the crew during their sailing.

Training for readiness

ME2(NS) William Neo assumed the role of a buffer when he reported to 188 Squadron for his In Camp Training (ICT) in August last year. The 38-year-old led the crew in seamanship and deck evolutions.

During his time in service, ME2(NS) Neo had served on board the missile corvettes (MCV) for eight years, and given his experience in deck operations, he had no qualms in taking on the buffer role.

“Seamanship skills are similar to the skills for riding a bicycle,” said ME2(NS) Neo, “once acquired, you will never lose it.”

But he accedes that after working as a civilian for some time, there is a need to refresh his operational skills and knowledge.

The Executive Officer of RSS *Valour*, CPT Chong Zhan Tao, said that the MCV ICT is specially designed to provide progressive training for the NSmen.

National Servicemen like ME2(NS) Neo go through refresher trainings so that they remain sound in their fundamentals and are able to operate the ship professionally and safely.

“During ICT, our trainers guide each NSmen in detail on how to execute each evolution. Once we



NSmen in action on the upper decks during their seamanship evolutions.



Despite time spent away from the Navy, the NSmen of RSS Vigilance prove that they have what it takes to serve alongside the best of the RSN.

are satisfied with the competency of every team member, the trainers will supervise the NSmen team in harbour training before they go out to sea to conduct the evolutions,” said CPT Chong.

Drawing on deep expertise

Last year, the Expertise Conversion Scheme was conceived for the SAF to tap on the talent and skills of NSmen.

Those with civilian experience in relevant fields such as shipping can apply for the scheme, which gives them a role that better utilises their skill set.

ME4(A) (NS) Krishna Kumar S/O Manoharan, a commissioning manager of Keppel FELS Ltd, is

one such example. Previously an NSman of the 24th Singapore Artillery Battalion, the 35-year-old joined the Military Domain Expert Course (Mercantile) to share his professional expertise with the Navy.

He said, “The concept of running offshore platforms and ships is largely similar. I believe my 10 years of experience in running oil rigs can be put to good use with the Navy.”

Conducted by the Naval Military Experts Institute, the course is specifically tailored for professionals in the marine industry, to expose them to naval operations like naval warfare, gunnery and communications.

“It is important for me to know more about the RSN’s operations, so that I, as a marine engineer, will know how to best support these operations,” he said.

ME4(A)(NS) Krishna is currently waiting for his next ICT call-up, during which he will go through shipboard induction and training before turning into a full-fledged marine engineer with the RSN.

Looking ahead, he plans to volunteer in the MINDEF Reserve list after serving his NS obligation,



CPT (NS) Toh Thiam Wei (middle) bonding with the team during his time as a regular serviceman.

to share his knowledge and expertise with the Navy.

Volunteering for overseas missions

ME4(A)(NS) Krishna is not alone in wanting to serve our nation. NSmen have volunteered for exercises and operations, flying the Singapore flag beyond our shores.

In March 2014, CPT(NS) Esmond Han opted to deploy with a frigate, RSS *Tenacious*, to the Gulf of Aden as part of multinational counter-

piracy coalition Operation Blue Sapphire (Maritime) (OBS(M)).

Having previously served on board a frigate for four years, CPT(NS) Han is no stranger to multilateral operations.

He had planned and participated in many large-scale multilateral exercises such as Rim of the Pacific Exercise when he was an operations officer.

“The RSN has equipped me with valuable skills to plan, organise, sense-make and execute exercises

and operations in bilateral and multilateral settings, and OBS(M) is no different,” said the 32-year-old, who left active service in the Navy in 2013.

His counterpart CPT (NS) Toh Thiam Wei, who served abroad the same deployment, said, “The RSN has equipped me with valuable life skills, which include the ability to organise and execute complex plans in dynamic and often stressful scenarios. I am glad I was able to use the same skill sets for OBS(M).”



rest of the ship during his overseas deployment on Operation Blue Sapphire (Maritime). He had previously served aboard RSS *Tenacious*

TRI-SERVICE TRIDENT

*Story by Clara Lock
Photos by Tay Kok Boon*

The three services of the Singapore Armed Forces come together in Exercise Trident to transfer assets and personnel from ship to shore.

Off the coast of Queensland, in an area known as Shoalwater Bay Training Area (SWBTA) that is over four times the size of Singapore, Landing Ship Tank (LST) RSS *Persistence* anchors.

In the swarth of water that surrounds the LST, Chinook helicopters fly in and conduct underslung operations with Light Strike Vehicles Mark II on her flight deck.

Below, in the well dock, Guards troopers board Fast Crafts Equipment and Personnel (FCEPs) and Army personnel from the Third Transport Battalion load up LARC V vehicles that can transport food, water and equipment to shore.

The exercise provides training for the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), preparing personnel for a spectrum of operations such as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief and conventional warfare for the defence of Singapore.

They operate in a challenging setting – the waters of SWBTA can be choppy, and the strong surf and winds demand skill and competence from the Fast Craft Training Unit (FCTU) operators to beach the craft safely.

Drive the Fast Craft Utility (FCUs) too far inland and they run the risk of being unable to back up; beach too far out and assets and troops may not be able to disembark safely.

Above all, it takes three services working as an integrated, seamless whole – sharing platforms and standard operating procedures – to achieve mission success.



➔ The three services of the SAF come together during



Exercise Trident to carry out ship-to-shore operations at Shoalwater Bay Training Area in Queensland, Australia.



1 Chinook helicopters conduct underslung operations, where they unload assets such as Light Strike Vehicles Mark II on the flight deck of the LST.

2 From the LST, Guards planners from the Singapore Army coordinate the distribution of supplies, assets and personnel to ground units. These are distributed via fast craft or LARC V vehicles. The latter can operate both on water and on land.

3 Wave Commanders LTA Nathanael Woodburn and LTA V Santosh, each lead a wave of craft to ensure that they land in a pre-planned formation on the beach.

For both full-time national servicemen, taking part in Exercise Trident has broadened their perspective and allowed them to see the bigger picture of how the SAF operates.





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4 “Back at home, Fast Craft Training Unit (FCTU) usually operates independently, but now we are working with the other services, such as Army personnel from Third Transport and Guards. It has given me a better understand of how the different parts of the SAF come together,” said FCTU Wave Commander LTA Santosh.

5 At the landing beach, Army and Navy personnel marshal assets off the fast craft. These assets, which include five-tonners and land rover ambulances, travel along traffic lanes to inland routes.

PHOTO STORY

6 LTA (NS) Ng Shi Yang oversees a team that prepares the beach for personnel and assets to unload. “Being able to lead men to achieve real results makes me feel like I have a stake in Singapore’s defence policy,” said LTA (NS) Ng. This is his second time taking part in Exercise Trident.

7 Troopers from the 7th Royal Australian Regiment (RAR) Adelaide were involved in the ship-to-shore component of Exercise Trident, together with Guards from the Singapore Army.

“Putting the RAR troops through new training scenarios, such as being on board these fast craft, makes them more innovative, imaginative and all round better soldiers,” said CAPT Tom LeCornu, Platoon Commander of the RAR Troopers.





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8 CPT Chong Hong Hao heads the navigation department in his first deployment as Navigation Officer. During the exercise, RSS *Persistence* transited 3,500km from Singapore to SWBTA. “The whole team pulled together to put in long hours planning for this ocean passage. I’m proud to sail with them,” said CPT Chong.

9 The six-week deployment is 19-year-old LCP Poh Cai Jia’s longest time away from home, but the medic draws motivation from small ways he can help unwell personnel. “When you help someone, when they feel better and they thank you, you naturally feel happy,” he said.

ONWARDS AND UPWARDS

Story and photos by Leon Lam

Life in the Navy is also a lifetime of learning – one that guides its people through multiple journeys of success. RSN personnel share with Navy News how they have grown.

Learning journey

ME5 Ramesh Kumar S/O S Rajamanickam, a section head in the Submarine Maintenance and Engineering Centre (SMEC), plays a vital role in the operation of the RSN's submarines. Together with his team, he is responsible for the mechanical systems on board the submarines, such as Air-Independent Propulsion systems.

“We have to make sure that everything is working as it should be, so that the crew can go out, carry out the mission, and get home safely. This means that all of us must have the required skill set to do our jobs,” says ME5 Ramesh.

“Everyone on board the boat depends on the condition of its systems. Every one of them is someone's father, someone's husband, someone's son,” adds the 46-year-old.

This motivation has led ME5 Ramesh to push himself beyond his limits from the moment he joined the RSN 28 years ago as a Private. He began as a mechanic, working on Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering.

It was a fascinating, yet challenging job – there was always something new to learn, some new approach to discover. The technical knowledge required was far greater than what he had learnt in school, but ME5 Ramesh found that his more experienced colleagues were always willing to lend a hand.

Shortly after the RSN made the decision to purchase submarines, he was selected for the first submarine maintenance course in 1996.

He has since been with the squadron for almost two decades, but still keeps his knowledge up to date.

In order to do so, ME5 Ramesh reads manuals and documents on submarine systems, frequently discussing what he learns with colleagues. He also goes on courses to refresh what he knows.

He says: “Technology is always advancing, so I have to keep studying. Working hard, being humble learning and keeping a positive, ‘never say die’ attitude helps me to constantly improve myself.”

“ Everyone on board the boat depends on the condition of its systems. Every one of them is someone’s father, someone’s husband, someone’s son. ”

– ME5 Ramesh





171 SQUADRO

Role models

SLTC Kee Kiang Peng remembers his early time on the old landing ship tank RSS *Perseverance* for the port calls and the Navy friends he met from other countries.

“The most memorable times on board were calling into foreign ports and attending cocktails as ambassadors of the RSN and Singapore. I learnt a lot about various cultures and practices, both naval and otherwise,” said SLTC Kee, reminiscing about the time when he was a young officer, having applied to join the RSN fresh from his ‘A’-levels.

Be it on a surface ship or beneath the sea, SLTC Kee sees overseas exposure as an opportunity for growth – his own, and that of the people around him.

He later went on to join the silent service, and recalls a particular lesson during his time as a junior officer in a submarine.

During a training sortie in Sweden, the boat was transiting back to base when she met a densely packed group of trawlers.

As Officer-of-the-Watch, he suggested surfacing and going around the ships, which would be easier than transiting while submerged.

But then-CO, COL(NS) Tan Wei Ming, saw an opportunity for the crew to hone their

skills. COL(NS) Tan took over the sonar and periscope, leading his men to successfully pass the group of ships.

“I learnt that as a CO I should always be looking out for opportunities to improve the skills of myself and my men, and that I should always be ready to lead by example,” says SLTC Kee.

He has since helmed two command tours of two submarines. SLTC Kee first assumed command of RSS *Conqueror* from 2004 to 2007 and is now holding command of RSS *Archer*.

Besides serving on board the boats, SLTC Kee was also appointed as Head of the Anti-Submarine Warfare Branch in the Naval Warfare Group, now the Doctrine and Readiness Group.

SLTC Kee says: “I created opportunities where iron sharpened iron, through cross sharing between the RSN’s surface fleet and its silent service.”

In Singapore’s waters and beyond, his experiences have been rich and varied.

SLTC Kee says: “One of the qualities that I believe has helped me come this far is the ability to persevere, and my passion for long-term goals. A Navy career is not a 100-metre sprint but a marathon where one needs effort to overcome obstacles and challenges.”

“ A Navy career is not a 100-metre sprint but a marathon where one needs effort to overcome obstacles and challenges. ”

– SLTC Kee Kiang Peng



THE RUNNING MAN



Story by Leon Lam

Photos by Leon Lam and courtesy of 1SG (NS) Max Woon

1SG (NS) Max Woon started running in 2013 and lost over 20 kilos in less than two years. The avid runner tells us how he did it.



In August last year, 1SG (NS) Max Woon ran for 27 hours straight.

It was 1SG (NS) Woon's first attempt at an ultra-marathon, one that saw him cover a 96km run around the terrain of Mount Kinabalu's base in Sabah, East Malaysia.

But just a year and a half ago, 1SG (NS) Woon could not have completed even a hundredth of that distance without finding himself short of breath and perspiring uncomfortably.

"I used to go out drinking and partying almost every night," said 1SG (NS) Woon, who weighed 100kg at his heaviest.

"Shopping for clothes was really troublesome with my increasing waistline," said the 34-year-old assistant manager at the Singapore National Employers Federation.

He added: "My face became round like Doraemon and that made me hate being photographed."

Flab to fit

In June 2013, 1SG (NS) Woon decided to make a change and get in shape.

"The change in IPPT policy meant I couldn't just pay a fine to get out of retraining (RT), so I had to leave work early to attend the awkwardly-timed RT sessions," said the 1SG (NS) Woon, who is a radar plotter for 191 Squadron.

When he first started jogging around his block after work, he could only complete 400m runs before calling it quits.

But he persevered, and his training sessions progressed from 400m runs to 2.4km ones.

Although 1SG (NS) Woon still found himself dead tired at the end of each run, the fatigue was accompanied with a sense of achievement.

"It was the good kind of fatigue, the kind where you know you've improved from the day before," he said.

A race to fitness

In August 2013, his endurance and speed were enough to pass his 2.4km run.

He then completed the Nestle Omega Love Your Heart 10km Run in under an hour, but even that wasn't enough for him.

"I knew I could do more than that," said 1SG (NS) Woon, who now weighs a lean 77kg.

"So I kept pushing myself during training, and signed up for a half-marathon which I completed three months later."



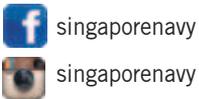


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Remember the rifle cleaning kit from Basic Military Training? Naval gunners use these tools on a giant scale, maintaining the 16mm calibre A-gun to ensure a straight shot each time.



Navy News Issue 4 (2014)
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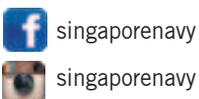


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Naval chefs cook for up to 200 people in one meal, and super-sized quantities need equally large tools for the job. Pictured are a regular sized fork and spoon, surrounded by the utensils chefs use in the galley.



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He completed the 21km race in Cambodia in under two hours, and found himself hooked.

“Running is like religion to me,” 1SG (NS) Woon said.

“It lets me ‘zone out’ and get in touch with myself, and after I completed a half-marathon I wanted to go even further.”

It also makes me more alert and focused in other aspects of life, including my In-Camp Trainings with 191 Squadron.

1SG (NS) Woon has since participated in even longer races, completing 42km marathons and 50km ultra-marathons.

The 96km he covered in Sabah is the longest distance he has clocked to date, although he fell short of the 102km needed to complete the run, called The Most Beautiful Thing (TMBT).

At 96km, he was nearing his physical and mental limit, and he realised he wasn't going to complete the race within the 30-hour time limit.

But 1SG (NS) Woon says that was his personal best distance, and an accomplishment in itself.

“The run is so painful that your rest period afterward is the most beautiful thing,” said 1SG (NS) Woon, who carried his own supplies such as water, a first aid kit, a blanket and a headlamp for the duration of the race.

Despite not completing the run, 1SG (NS) Woon is proud of what he has accomplished.

He said: “Like the actual marathon, the road to fitness is just about putting one foot in front of the other and moving forward step by step until you're where you want to be.”

“ The road to fitness is just about putting one foot in front of the other and moving forward step by step until you're where you want to be. ”

RUNNING THE RACE



Story and photos by Leon Lam

Whether you're a slow jogger or an experienced trailblazer, pick up some tips from ultra-marathoner 1SG (NS) Max Woon that suits the stage of your running journey.

Baby steps

1 Form a habit

The hardest challenge most new runners face is motivation. Find a reason to get off the couch and clock a 2.4km timing you can be proud of, and then stick to a training routine long enough for it to become a habit.

2 Slowly does it

Start out slow, alternating between walking and running if you have to. Gradually extend your running time and decrease your walking time until you can run for 30 minutes each session.

Hitting your stride

3 Keep a comfortable pace

At first, keep the "talk test" in mind - running at a pace that allows you to chat comfortably with a training partner. You can increase your pace gradually as you get more comfortable.

4 Kick it up a notch

Once you're comfortable running 2.4km, consider upping your stride to complete longer distances, from 10km runs to half marathons. Gradually increase your distance by approximately 10% each week to maintain steady progress while avoiding injuries from overworking your muscles. Cut the chatter as you grow fitter – at this point you should focus more on running than a conversation with your running buddy.

Run like the wind

5 Eat well

A balanced diet will complement your exercise routine and allow you to complete half to full marathons with energy to spare. Consuming simple carbohydrates an hour or so before a race helps you to keep energized, and increased protein intake after a race can speed up the recovery process.

6 Taper off

Approximately two weeks before a race, gradually reduce your running distance and intensity. It may seem counterintuitive, but tapering allows you to rest completely for the race and recover from your training runs.



BRING ON BRISBANE

Story by Hans Lim



Photo courtesy of lonelyplanet.com

Brisbane captures the bustling skyline of a big city and the laid back vibe so often associated with Down Under. We bring you the best of both worlds, where *RSS Persistence* docked on their way to Exercise Trident.

View from the top

Mount Coot-tha is the highest, and arguably the most famous of the many hills that surround Brisbane. The bushland area up and around Mount Coot-tha offers hiking and bike trails, but the less adventurous can always hop a car to the top, which has a panoramic view of the city that stretches out to the coast. The peak is best viewed at sunrise or sunset for the best photo opportunities.



Photo courtesy of visitbrisbane.com.au

On the waterway

If you're pressed for time, a cruise down the Brisbane takes you past all the major historic and cultural sights, including Parliament House, City Hall and Chinatown. Cruises are available at sunrise, in the day and at sunset, with meal options on board as you take in the sights of the city.



Pet a roo

Get acquainted with Australian natives such as the koala and kangaroo, which visitors can hand feed, cuddle and take photographs with at the Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary. The zoo also introduces other Australian animals like the dingo, platypus and Tasmanian devil. Children can learn about the sheep shearing process and birds of prey with live shows held throughout the day.



Photo courtesy of viator.com



Leap of faith

Get a bird's eye view of Brisbane's two amazing landmarks - Glasshouse Mountains and Moreton Bay - from 14,000 feet above. First-timers can do a tandem jump with a qualified skydiving instructor, which requires no prior experience. Many people report seeing whales and dolphins in the water on the way down - provided they can keep their eyes open.

Photo courtesy of australiaskydive.com.au

OPERATION FLYING EAGLE TEN YEARS ON

By Clara Lock



Dawn had barely broken on Boxing Day in December 2004 when the seabed beneath Sumatra in Indonesia rumbled with an earthquake that measured 9.1 on the Richter scale.

Cities such as Banda Aceh and Meulaboh that bordered the western coast of Sumatra bore the brunt of giant waves that snaked, unseen, across the Indian Ocean. When these waves crashed into the coastline and finally receded, they left behind a trail of destruction in their wake.

In the immediate aftermath of the tragedy, the SAF reached out. Operation Flying Eagle (OFE) was a tri-service Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operation, the largest one it had ever launched.

Swift response

The SAF regularly conducts HADR exercises, honing and refining their response plan over the years. But when the tsunami struck, it created devastation on an unprecedented scale.

These waters were murky, uncharted, and could be masking aftershocks. Moreover, delivering aid was not so easy along a coastline that had been ripped apart.

Roads that linked towns along west Sumatra were cut, submerged or blocked by landslides. The only ways in were by air and sea, to deliver relief supplies, equipment and personnel.



Landing Ship Tank (LST) RSS *Endurance* left Singapore just over 72 hours after the tsunami first struck. When it anchored after a two-day transit, it was the first foreign warship to arrive in Meulaboh.

RSS *Endurance* was quickly followed by two other LSTs, and was the first time the RSN had deployed all four of them for operations outside Singapore. The fourth ship, RSS *Resolution*, was conducting peacekeeping operations in the Northern Arabian Gulf.

Loading up

But the operation had commenced before the RSN's ships anchored off the coast of Sumatra.

Fitting all the necessary equipment and personnel on board the LST was like a real-life game of tetris - vehicles parked in a grid on the flight deck; pallets of relief supplies stacked wall-to-wall in the tank deck. Army logisticians took charge of the loading, as crews worked round the clock to prepare the ship for her voyage.

Complex Mission, Unprecedented in Scale

Even as our ships sailed off with their supplies and equipment, no one truly knew of the extent of destruction caused by the tsunami, or even what had survived the massive devastation. All the operation planners had to rely on was the assessment of the advance team and their best guess on what is required to ensure basic survival.

This is unlike the National Day Parade that the SAF puts together every year; where mammoth efforts are dedicated to planning and rehearsals for the better part of the year.

The men and women involved in OFE had no such luxury, only the knowledge that they had one chance to make a difference to those who sorely needed it. Operations kicked into full swing as the ships anchored in the waters off Aceh.

The fast craft coxswains brought the combat engineers to prepare the landing sites in preparation for the transfer of medical personnel and humanitarian supplies. At the same time, the ship crews worked with the air crew to prepare the helicopters for flights.

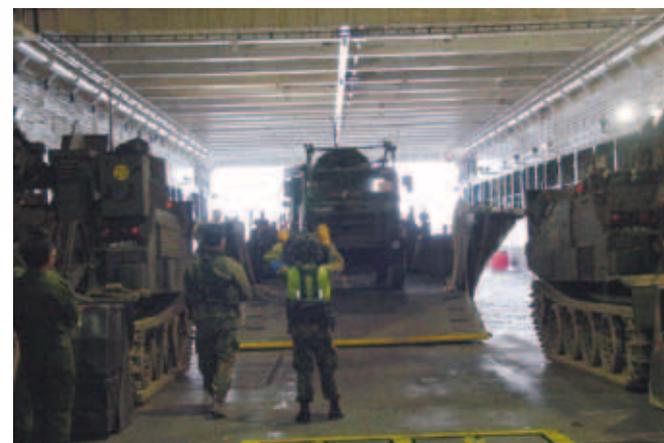
Even as the pilots ranged out to send supplies to those trapped inland, the ship crew was busy keeping the ship shipshape so that it could continue to function as a command HQ, and more important, be the home away from home for the dedicated SAF personnel.

They worked tirelessly on the ground, pulling 12 to 14-hour days for the three weeks the Humanitarian Assistance Support Group (HASG) was present.

During this time, RSN personnel worked closely with Indonesian National Defence Forces, ensuring that their needs were met in the humanitarian effort.

"The SAF and TNI were able to carry out their mission quickly and seamlessly because of the long-standing special relationship between the two militaries at all levels. This relationship was built over many years of close cooperation, regular exchanges and bilateral training," said Second Minister for Defence Chan Chun Sing when he represented Singapore at the Aceh Tsunami Commemoration Event on 26 December 2014.

Together they established suitable landing sites where heavy vehicles, engineering equipment and humanitarian supplies could be unloaded.





MAJ Vincent Yeo, then-Executive Officer of RSS *Endurance* said: "It was only when we were in Meulaboh that we truly understood the devastation by the tsunami. It was heartbreaking, but we had to tell ourselves that there were many people who needed our help. We were prepared to work fast and work hard, to help the people get back on their feet as soon as possible."

To get the job done, over 1,500 personnel, 12 helicopters, eight transport aircraft and three LSTs

worked together like gears in a machine, the constant motion of each individual cog driving the next one.

Ten years on, Manpower Minister Tan Chuan-Jin, who was the Commander of the HASG, recalls a defining memory of his stint as pride - pride in his team, the way they worked, and most importantly in the men and women who reached across the ocean to lend a helping hand.





ONE NAVY FAMILY

Photos courtesy of LTA Leow Tien Leng

The Navy Family came together at the inaugural RSN Family Day at Resorts World Singapore on 12 Dec 2014. Servicemen and women brought their families for an evening of fun at Universal Studios Singapore theme park and the SEA Aquarium. Chief of Navy RADM Lai Chung Han also turned up at the Water World show to thank the family members of RSN personnel for their support. The event was held to promote a healthy work-life balance, and to strengthen the bonds among the Navy Family.

ME1 Gabriel Goh, who attended the event with 32 of his classmates from the Intermediate Specialisation Course, said: "RSN Family Day gave us the opportunity to interact with one another outside the classroom, and to bond with members of the RSN family."

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REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE



BEYOND HORIZONS



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