
BOTTOM TIMES

Volume 2, Issue 2

January 2006

News from The Front

So far all we've been doing is security swims, un-fouling Coast Guard Cutters, and presently Steel tubular cutting on two tug boats. The PL and I have visited the EOD in the surrounding countries and hopefully will take on some of their security swim missions allowing them to focus their specialties in other areas. We are also trying to get on the oil platforms to check out their pipelines and refurbish some of their security fencing (nuts and bolts). We may be able to act in the QA/QC role for the current contractors emplacing the fencing system, still looking into this concept.

We are also working on setting up some salvage missions up North if it pans out; we are still clamoring for that mission. We have also talked to the Chief of Engineers about our capabilities and what we could do in theater. He now knows n that he has us in his toolbox to use anytime. There is plenty to do in these parts and we will do our best to satisfy the needs of our Army.

MDV

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Chief Diving Supervisor

By MSG Timothy Pagel

First and foremost I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year. This year promises to bring about many significant changes in the Dive Community.

I would also like to congratulate MSG Spaw, SFC(P) Musser, and SFC(P) Haney on their selections to the rank of MSG.

This past quarter has kept us here at USAES busy putting together the information and documents needed to restructure the Dive units to better serve the Army and DoD. Unfortunately, from the outside, not much change can be seen yet. All is moving forward though.

I would like to remind all key leaders to send every dive mission/job AAR to my office. We must have these to help justify, quantify, and qualify our futures. This information is not just for restructuring but equipment acquisition, training and use of our teams by other DoD entities. Word of our capabilities is getting out to over 12,000 senior leaders in this newsletter alone. We also brief at the pre-command course and have been requested to brief ECCC and EOBC. We must keep the leadership at USAES informed of all we do and how vital we are to the Department of Defense.

Keep up the good work, stay wet and be safe.

V/R MSG Pagel

My e-mail is pagelt@wood.army.mil.

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TACOM – SFC(P) Haney

Working Issues: PM-SKOT Diving Systems, is currently working on several issues that will impact future equipment shortfalls. Two of the hot items that seem to need immediate resolution are the Hydrographic Survey Set and the Underwater Photo Support set. As with the current HYSS we are trying to resolve a temporary fix for battery and cable issues while moving forward with research on a complete new system. I currently have three different systems to test and evaluate, which should give the field a sense of direction as to what we need. Each Command must evaluate and provide input as to what Key Performance Parameters (KPP) should be incorporated into the new system. The Photo support set is also under review due to the non-availability of replacement cameras which will also affect the housings. The recompression chamber is also under further review for functionality and possible design updates.

I also encourage all past and present military divers to provide feedback as to what could enhance the field's capabilities with respect to equipment or employment of Engineer Divers. As you may notice the office falls under Product Manager Sets, Kits, Outfits, and Tools (PM-SKOT) The product manager is LTC Jeffery Carr. LTC Carr has helped to take diving equipment off of the back burner and strongly encourages customer satisfaction. Our focus is to provide any and all assistance possible to enhance the ability of the soldier to perform their mission. I am also including a link to the PM-SKOT web site which will eventually afford soldiers with the ability to link directly to the TM's SC's and technical information for all diving equipment remember this is a work in progress. You are also able to see various products managed by this office. [PM Sets, Kits, Outfits, and Tools \(PM SKOT\)](#).

Training Developer Desk

By SFC von Keyserling

All is well in the training developer world. I would ask that you continue to forward me your AARs and Lessons Learned. I received far less than normal this last quarter. Over the last three months, I have focused on getting the new Marine Engineer Dive Officer course added to the Army database, finalized a new video for the units to use in their local recruiting missions, and sent out some sample posters for the dive teams to place in prominent areas like pools, gyms, etc. In this next quarter I will continue to work on the STP, taking it to Hawaii to be reviewed during their squad evaluations. Upon return from Hawaii; I will turn in Skill Level one and two to the editors for final review then hopefully onto publication.

I am also working on updating all FM's that divers should be linked too and submit changes to update the FMs in question. I urge all of you that in your daily duties to jot down any FM's that you think information on diving should be placed, to include simple references to FM 3-34.280. Simply put the FM number, title, page number in question, and how you see our role in supporting a mission. Then Shoot me an e-mail and I will do the 2028s and the necessary staffing to get the rest of the military informed about how great and wonderful we divers are...

Fort Eustis Dive Company

COMMANDER DEEP SEA!!

Hello all and Happy Holidays! Again, you, the leaders, Soldiers, and families of the Company, have continued to impress me in your day-to-day devotion to duty, desire for personal and professional excellence, contagious motivation, and understanding. I want to take this time to wish our fellow comrades of the 511th a safe and Happy Holiday season. All of our guys are in my thoughts and prayers everyday. I understand that this deployment has impacted everyone in different ways and especially family members, we all can't wait until our guys come home. We couldn't be more proud of what they have accomplished. I also want to wish the 544th and their families Happy Holidays. I know that this is an anxious time awaiting their deployment; however, know that our guys have the best leadership, training, and equipment available. The Soldiers and leadership of the 544th are trained and ready to go. They will continue the proud tradition set forth by the other teams that have already deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and will make all of us proud.

I also want to recognize the hard work and efforts of the rest of the Company. These past few months have been extremely busy with cleaning up around the Company and welcoming new Soldiers to the command. The 74th is preparing for Operation Deep Chocolate, while the 86th just returned from a successful demolition mission out at FT Pickett. I appreciate all of the hard work that has been done and I especially appreciate the understanding of all the family members as your spouses have been working long days.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Company's Thanksgiving/544th Deployment Party. I appreciate the hard work the Soldiers and families put into preparing the food. I think it is safe to say that everyone who went had a great time. Special thanks to the Mendoza family for allowing the Company to use their house and for being such gracious hosts. I would also like to personally thank Sandra Slate, Audrey West, Meagan Malone, Melanie Ramirez, and everyone else who pitched in and lent a helping hand for the FRG Day at Busch Gardens. Everyone who went had a wonderful day and we will try to continue this function next year.

This year has been extremely busy and everyone deserves the time off for the Holidays. I hope everyone has a great time and very happy New Year. HOO-YAH!!! DEEP SEA!!!

CPT PJ Inskeep

COMPANY FIRST SERGEANT

The Holiday season is upon us and while we were hoping that would mean things would slow down it doesn't look like that is going to happen. We have the 74th hosting the Deep Chocolate exercise that is getting ready to happen at Yorktown. That will be a good opportunity for the Diving Supervisors and others to work off their checklists. Hopefully that means we will have a few new diving rates to award for Christmas. After that we have a field exercise/range week in January.

From all accounts the party at SFC Mendoza's house was a resounding success. There was plenty of food and more than enough beer. This team will do very well on their deployment. Thanks again to him and Janie for allowing everyone to come to their house. It was a great way to send the 544th off. We will be doing something similar to that when the 511th returns.

Congratulations to the 86th for a very successful demolition mission at Ft Pickett. The bunker was completely demolished. If you haven't seen the article in the Ft Eustis newspaper, you should pick up a copy since they have a very good write up. 86th has just been given another mission that will test their skills in another way. There is a swimming platform in Texas that they may be working on next year. It looks like they may not be able to use demolitions on this one so it will be a lot of manual labor.

I would like to wish everyone a great holiday season and look forward to another successful year in the Dive Company. Hoo-Yah Deep-Sea.

1SG Andrews

569th HOO-YAH!!!

Hello again to everyone. Due to the busy schedule of the 569th, the past few months have flown by. We would like to welcome the newest additions to the 569th: SSG Moir has moved up to the head-shed from the 544th, SSG Lufholm moved up from the 74th, and SSG Slate has returned from convalescent leave and is filling the position of Ops NCO. SGT Pittman is also now a member of the 569th and is taking over from SGT McFarlin.

The Team would like to thank Sandra Slate and everyone else who was involved in the numerous FRG functions over the past few months. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the chili cook-off and ate more than their fill. SSG Slate earned the honors of first place, narrowly beating out Meagan Malone, who came in close second (I think she should have won). SFC Ramirez's chili was voted third best rounding off the top three.

The FRG also put together a Busch Garden's family day in which all the Soldiers and their family got the day off work to enjoy the Busch Garden's theme park. Divers and family members alike enjoyed the catered lunch and numerous rides throughout the day. A great time was had by all.

The 569th would also like to bid a fond farewell to SSG Tremblay, SPC Tupacz and SSG Roman. These divers have contributed numerous years to the Dive Company and their presence will truly be missed.

1LT Joe Malone

Joseph.e.malone@eustis.army.mil

74th POSEIDON

The past few months in the 74th has been filled with a lot of exciting change. First off, the 74th would like to welcome a couple of new divers to the family. Donovan Polivka, son of Dana and SPC Viktor Polivka, and Jacob Lufholm, son of Stephanie and SSG John Lufholm, will be a great addition to the Dive Company! Unfortunately, SSG Lufholm has been moved to 569th and has assumed the position of Platoon Sergeant.

The 74th has also had a couple of promotions as PFC Daniel Gorman was promoted to the rank of Specialist and SPC Jeb Dunham was promoted to the rank of Sergeant. Congratulations to these Soldiers, they have definitely earned it.

Finally, SSG Curtis Custer has just recently returned from SAPPER school. It is good to have him back in Virginia, but he will be taking 30 days of convalescent leave due to an injury that occurred in Missouri. He is expected to make a 100% recovery.

Upcoming on the radar, the 74th will be conducting Deep Chocolate in the York River from November 30th until December 9th. The Soldiers are looking forward to this exercise to get them out of the routine grind and back into the water. After Deep Chocolate, the 74th would like to extend Holiday Cheer as Christmas and the New Year rapidly approach.

2LT Trent Geisler

THE MIGHTY 86th

The Mighty 86th has been staying busy the last two and a half months. Highlighted training events included the Company FTX out at Little Creek, VA, maintenance certification training on the SL-17K, EXO, and the M-48 Super Mask. A representative from SeaTrepid came out and certified everyone on ROV maintenance and use. However, nothing compared to the bunker demolition mission we conducted for Fort Pickett's Range Control in the beginning of November.

For the demolition mission, 10 members from the 86th deployed to Fort Pickett for three days to destroy an old reinforced concrete observation bunker that Range Control needed removed. The plan was to internally place C4 charges in the back wall and the 38 inch thick ceiling slab. The first day, the team worked into the night and finished drilling a total of 42 holes, all 16-17 inches deep and 2 inches in diameter, into the bunker. A total of 10 breaching charges, each made up of 17 blocks of C4, were placed on the exterior walls to force the blast into the bunker in order to minimize scattered debris. The plan worked perfectly, and the bunker was completely reduced to rubble and rebar with no pieces being larger than two cubic feet. It was a great team building mission, and everyone played an important part in its success. The mission also made the cover story in the November 10th issue of the local Fort Eustis newspaper, "The Wheel."

It's unfortunate, but we are saying goodbye to SPC Andy Weekly, SSG Robert Wieder, and SGT Bryan Haldeman within the next month. SPC Weekly is leaving the Army altogether and moving back home to Washington State where his wife and baby are waiting for him. SSG Wieder plans to continue working for the government, but not in an Army

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uniform. SGT Haldeman is moving to Hawaii to join the 7th Dive Detachment. We are losing great Soldiers, but we know they will continue to do great things. On a good note, the Dive Company congratulates SGT Haldeman and SSG Tracy Bower. SGT Haldeman's wife Sara had a baby girl, Elaina Joe, on the 3rd of November and SSG Bower's wife, Melissa is expecting a baby girl in April.

We are looking forward for the training planned in the near future where we have Deep Chocolate, chamber computer training, and Range Week scheduled. Even though our numbers will be small, the Soldiers of The Mighty 86th are ready for any endeavor.

2LT Tim Mitroka

511th TRIDENT

Seasons greetings from Kuwait. While the 511th is gearing up to come home, missions are still going on. In Nov the 511th played host to a team of engineers from the states. Providing them with manpower, small boats and hydraulic tools, assisting them in some destructive testing used to asses the load capacity of a 30 year old pier structure. We are also busy with force protection missions in Qatar and just picked up a big underwater cutting job on two Kuwaiti tug boats that will be passed on to the 544th. 2LT Hallman and SFC Adams, SGT Rowley and SGT Parmenter recently returned from Iraq where they did some PR work with the local Engineer assets and arranged movement of our pre-staged gear back to Kuwait for redeployment. Everyone is getting excited that the end is near and are looking forward to getting home. See you all soon! Hoo-Yah Deep Sea!!

SFC Adams

544th SEA MONKEY

“Nothus de prep Profundum”

The 544th has been busy in preparation for our up coming deployment. We spent a wonderful week down in Fort Story, VA for the Company Field Training Exercise. Only a week because the 544th performed outstanding during the ship's salvage training. Upon return to Fort Eustis we continued to pack our equipment for deployment before our well earned block leave period during the month of October. SSG Vaughan held down the fort for October and prepared some awesome convoy training while the team was gone. November was reserved for training the Soldiers as our equipment was shipped off across the pond. We are looking forward to the Thanksgiving Holiday as our days before deployment quickly pass by. I would like to take the time to thank everyone in the Dive Company family and Dive community for your support and we will see you back in a year, an early Merry Christmas to all as we will miss you. We hope you all can manage without us.

1LT Tom Darrow

ON THE HOMEFRONT

Greetings Dive Company families, thank you to everyone who attended our Family Fun Day at Busch Gardens. The day was perfect for riding roller coasters and earning an honorary brew master's degree. A special thanks to Sandra Slate for organizing the event and providing us with a catered lunch as well. The next event for FRG is an Ethnic Food Pitch-In at the Dive Det on 16 December. Families are encouraged to participate and attend the lunch.

FRG is in the process of ordering Dive T-shirts for families and friends of the company. There will be a variety of styles including short and long sleeve as well as hooded sweatshirts in all sizes available once printing is complete. Price range will be from 7 to 20 dollars. Thanks to Melanie Ramirez for helping us with this project. We need help with the FRG workload. Sandra Slate is looking for a person interested in helping with the fundraising of future events or any other smaller activities. Please contact her if you are willing with help. Also, a Women's Day/Night Out is tentatively schedule for late Jan early Feb. Some of the wives want to get out and do something together-whatever and wherever that may be. We will contact when plans are finalized. Rumor has it CPT Inskip will find us child care if needed.

Lastly we would like to give a BIG THANK YOU to SPC Tupacz for all of his hard work and long hours as the supportive liaison for the Dive Company's FRG program. Welcome to SSG Moir, whom we know will do a great job as our new liaison. The next FRG meeting will be on January 10th at 7pm in the office. Food will be provided. We hope to see you there.

Mrs. Meagan Malone

7th Engineer Dive Detachment

Aloha from the Divers of the Pacific! With the holiday season over, the divers of the Pacific are gearing up for some exciting events in 2nd Quarter. Here are some highlights of the last three months as well as our many new additions from the schoolhouse and abroad. First and foremost, we received three highly motivated Second Class divers from Panama City, FL this quarter. PFC John Geffert, PFC Adam Petersen, and PFC Jeremy Tomlin, with his wife Kim and son Kathan all are all in-processed and ready to work. PFC Petersen got married while on PCS leave. His wife Diane is patiently waiting at Fort Hood, TX, while the command sponsorship paperwork is finished on this end. The happiest diver in the Detachment is SPC Nathan Haney, as his official title of the “new guy” and the responsibilities of the guidon were passed down to the new divers.

SSG Bryan Haldeman, his wife Sara, and newborn baby Elana arrived safely from Virginia. SGT Haldeman also pinned on Staff Sergeant in December, so congratulations to him and his family on the promotion, pay raise, and added responsibilities. SSG Jason Kennedy arrived from Virginia as well, but was grabbed up by the S3 shop while he heals up from his injuries and profile. SGT Mauricio Toro, our new Supply SGT also arrived from 536th Maintenance Company to fill the vacancy left by SGT Terrell Roe who moved to Fort Hood, TX. We also had to change out our Medics, as SGT Jonathan Hodrick has left to stand-up the Battalion aid station. SGT Bradley Peterson and his wife Oksana, came to us from the Special Forces community in Germany. As a qualified CDQC diver, we will have the added benefit of having the ability to use our Medic as another diver for some operations.

The 7th Engineer Detachment (Dive) spent two weeks in October at Iroquois Point, Pearl Harbor, working on the collective Underwater Demolition Battle Drill. We use the facilities and dive locker owned by the Navy EOD Mobile Unit stationed at Iroquois Point. The facility has its own land demolition range and bunker, demolition storage locker, dive locker, and access to the Pearl Harbor channel, which leads to the underwater demolition range approximately 2 nautical miles southwest of Iroquois Point.



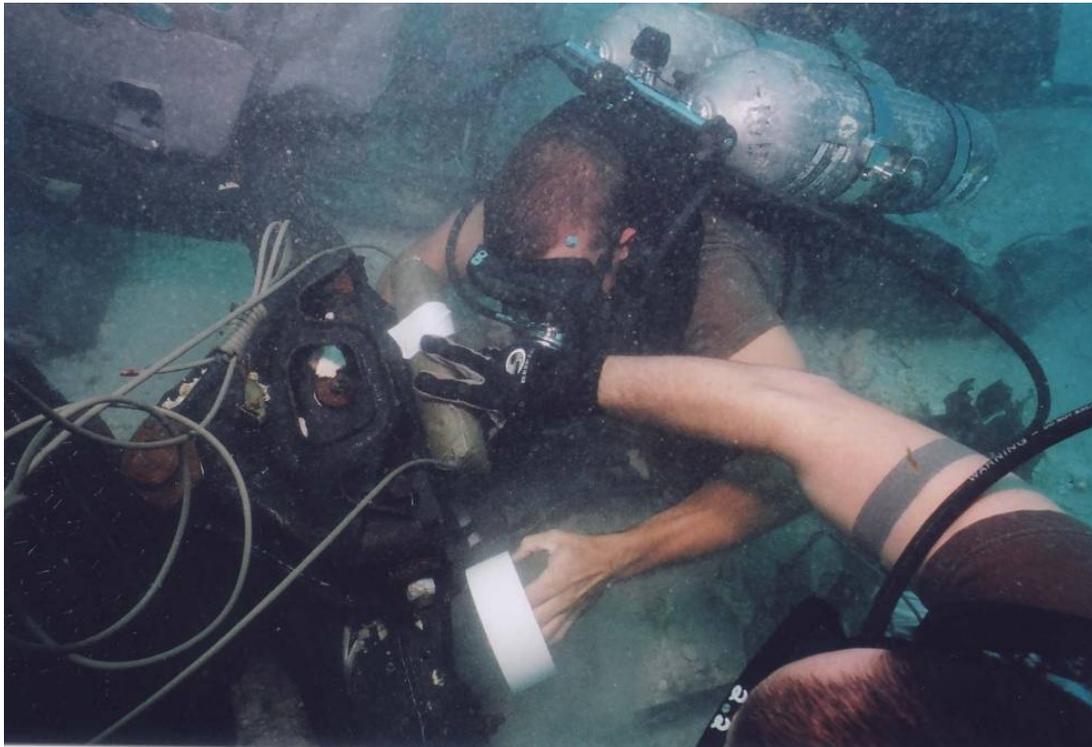
Zodiacs on line moving to the demolition site
off of Iroquois Point, Pearl Harbor

The divers led by 1LT Charles Denike and SSG Jonathan Larrew front-loaded the Field Training Exercise by training on key Warrior Tasks and land demolition skills. This helped to focus the divers on the individual tasks that would ultimately establish the building blocks for success with the collective drill. With only a two-pound shot limit on the land demolition range, the divers practiced setting small charges against simulated improvised explosive devices. They also moved into a series of rehearsals and demolition preparations for the underwater portion of the drill.

The underwater demolition drill involved the use four Zodiac inflatable boats, each with their own task and purpose; a demo boat, dive boat, safety boat and initiating boat. For three days, the divers practiced the drill, making improvements after each iteration. To keep the divers senses heightened, each NCO was given a chance to act as the Squad Leader and develop the Troop Leading Procedures prior to execution. The divers set up a ring main for underwater use by incorporating a nylon-braided line with the detonation cord that was carried down to the project.

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In this scenario, the divers prepped one Bangalore torpedo and six blocks of C-4. The initiation system is the only part that remains dry. The safety diver, after verifying charges were placed correctly initiated the time fuse on the float board. The divers then move off to the safe 300 m stand-off distance to wait for the blast. The divers successfully detonated approximately 250 pounds of explosive over the course of three days.



Divers place blocks of C4 on demolition project during our Underwater Range in October

The uniqueness of this training exercise was the leadership opportunities afforded by the drill itself. After a few iterations, the procedures became redundant. This battle drill focused on the steps to make the operation more efficient and organized as each NCO had a chance to lead the squad. As a result, the underwater battle drill went under many revisions and modifications until there was an approved method. The divers also became certified in underwater demolition handling technique, and completed their check-offs in this area.

One of the most important aspects of training is safety and ensuring that the systems are in place for emergency medical evacuations. This year we executed the most comprehensive emergency diving casualty evacuation drill in the unit's history during the underwater demolition training in October 2005. In an attempt to validate the MEDEVAC, EMS, and recompression chamber services available on the island, the 7th Engineer Detachment sought out to verify that our emergency dive bill could react to a diving casualty in a timely manner. The degree of difficulty came with the involvement and coordination amongst the US Coast Guard Dolphin helicopters from Barbers Point, the Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One (MDSU-1) and the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) at Hickam Air Force Base.

SGT John Williams was chosen to simulate the "diving casualty". SGT Jonathan Hodrick, our Medical Technician reacted to the scenario and applied an intravenous line and placed the diver on 100% Oxygen while waiting for the helicopter. Within 20 minutes of the call, the US Coast Guard MEDEVAC arrived at our location and executed

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a litter rescue that successfully transported the affected diver to Hickam AFB. The EMS services of Honolulu then transferred the casualty to the hyperbaric recompression chamber on Hickam where the MDSU-11 chamber team was standing by to treat the affected diver. After recompressing the diver to 60 feet, a normal treatment depth, the drill ended.



SGT Jonathan Hodrick treated SGT Williams, our “diving casualty,” in the zodiac with an Intravenous treatment and 100% O2 while the US Coast Guard Dolphin helicopter was dispatched

Overall, the training was a complete success as the team validated the MEDEVAC drill. More importantly, the Soldiers of the Detachment now feel more confident every time they dive, knowing that the evacuation system will work should there ever be a real diving casualty.

The 7th Engineer Detachment (Dive) annually schedules an event called “Make a Difference Day” where the Soldiers can use their diving capabilities to work on a community project. This year, the Detachment conducted a hull inspection, bottom cleaning, and ROV survey of the USS Bowfin. The USS Bowfin is a WWII submarine that is open for tours as part of the USS Bowfin Submarine Museum and Park next to the USS Arizona Memorial. She was credited with the sinking of over 20 ships during WWII from 1943 to 1945. The park serves as a memorial to all of the heroic men who have served as part of the “Silent Service.” Standing in the park is a memorial to the 52 American submarines and more than 3,500 submariners lost during WWII. The park is part of the Pacific Fleet Submarine Memorial Association which receives no federal or state funding, therefore relying on volunteers such as the divers from the 7th Engineer Detachment (Dive) to keep much of the park running. Not only is it a unique experience for the divers to work on a WWII era submarine, but is very rewarding knowing that thousands of visitors, young and old, will benefit from the Detachment’s volunteer efforts.

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Army Divers SGT Christopher Faille (left), SGT John Williams (center), and 1LT Charles Denike (right) in front of the USS Bowfin prior to their inspection swim.



SSG Matthew Hayden displays our ROV capability to a group of tourists from the mainland visiting the USS Bowfin as we took video of the hull during the inspection.

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In November, The Detachment made history by becoming the first Army dive unit to receive training and become certified in NITROX. NITROX, or enriched air, is a breathing media comprised of a higher percentage of Oxygen than standard air. The advantages of using NITROX over standard air are that it allows for longer bottom times at prescribed depths and less decompression time. For operational purposes, the Detachment would use NITROX in support of the Joint POW/MIA for Accounting Command's investigations to find human remains and wreckage underwater. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provided the instruction for the Detachment during a two-day tailored course, which now carries 15 certified divers to dive the mix. The Detachment also has 6 dive supervisors qualified to blend the gas allowing for mixes from 22% to 40% Oxygen. Our certification dives are planned for 2nd Quarter, and we look forward to working with the mix for future operations.



The Detachment slowed down significantly this December, as I went through my annual inventories and cleared some white space on the calendar for the new Soldiers in-processing and much needed family time during the half-day schedule. We also conducted a Diver professional development and toured the University of Hawaii's Underwater Submersibles dive locker and were exposed to another aspect of deep sea exploration.



Divers receive a tour of the mini subs; they are most famous for locating a Japanese Mini sub in the deep waters off the coast of Pearl Harbor, which is believed to be the first casualty of the attack on 7 December, 1941

We are looking forward to another M16 range in January to qualify the new personnel and complete our Battle Drill development on the Engineer Reconnaissance missions in February. Lastly, the quarter will culminate in a SQUADEX, where the squad leaders will be evaluated on the Reconnaissance drills by SFC Von Keyserling from Fort Leonard Wood, MO and the Command team in Hawaii. We also are looking forward to working on the salvage project in

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April at Panama City, FL, with some potential deep dives with Fort Eustis, VA in early May during their Deep Blue exercise in Florida.

V/R,
"Triton 6"
CPT George A. Mitroka, Commander, 7th Engineer Detachment (DIVE)



As for equipment issues:

Better Underwater Photo equipment: I don't know how the rest of the teams are doing with their underwater camera's our housing, but here we have looked into replacing the "Mavicas" since they have turned out to be very unreliable. Here is all the information on the camera and housing, the underwater housing is a Gates Underwater Products (Baja Housing) the camera is a Sony (DCR-PC 1000 Handy Cam) this one system will do both video and still. The total cost is about \$3,500 complete. MDV Heikkinen worked with the NOAA scientists who had five of them on the last NOAA mission to Saipan and they really like the set-up! We should look into getting these to replace our camera sets. The housings are aluminum so there almost bullet proof.

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