

MINE LINES

TOPICS IN THE ART OF MINE WARFARE
Awareness Precedes Preparedness

Volume 7, Number 1

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To Enhance Communications within the Mine Warfare Community

ANNOUNCING

*The Second Australian - American Joint Conference
On the Technology of Mine Countermeasures*

(Sydney MCM 2001)

MARCH 27-29, 2001

Co-Sponsors

Australian Defence Science and Technology Office

U. S. Office of Naval Research

U. S. Naval Postgraduate School

U. S. Naval Facilities Engineering Command (Pacific Division)

The Mine Warfare Association

*MINWARA Summer 2001 Regional Conference
Sea Mine Warfare
Mainstreaming Mine Warfare /
The Fleet Engagement Strategy*

An Assessment Update

JULY 23-26, 2001

Co-Sponsors

Coastal Systems Station, Panama City, FL

The Mine Warfare Association

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Colleagues,

I have recently had the privilege of serving as a member of the Navy Studies Board Mine Warfare Assessment Committee. This group, under the National Academy of Sciences, was tasked by the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) to assess the status of mine warfare in the U. S. Navy. The report is expected to be available in June 2001.

Two other MINWARA board of directors members have been participating on the assessment committee with me. They are Mr. Lee Hunt and MGEN Ron Beckwith, USMC (Ret.), our vice presidents for Academic Affairs and Marine Corps affairs respectively.

We have all been privy to extensive briefings and discussions with resource sponsors, program managers, research laboratories, and, most importantly, the leadership and key players in the fleet mine warfare organizations. We have learned much and, I believe, will provide the CNO with a valuable assessment, with recommendations for future directions.

Otherwise, we continue to plan for our two significant conferences in the year 2001.

First, the "Second Australian – American Joint Conference on the Technologies of Mine Countermeasures (SYDNEY MCM 2001) will be held in Sydney, Australia on March 27-29. As

before, MINWARA is a co-sponsor, along with the Australian Defence Science and Technology Office, the U. S. Office of Naval Research, the Naval Postgraduate School, and the Naval Facilities Command (Pacific Command). An interesting menu of abstract papers has been submitted, and the conference will have many relevant topics in the area of mine countermeasures. More information is available, starting on page 4 of this newsletter. We expect significant participation and presentations from a variety of Pacific Rim countries in addition to Australia.

Second, the MINWARA Summer Regional Conference will be co-hosted with the Coastal Systems Station in Panama City on July 23-26. The theme will be "Mainstreaming Mine Warfare/The Fleet Engagement Strategy: An Assessment Update", keying off our last conference in Panama City in 1999. We expect to have presentations and interaction from senior Navy leadership, relative to our conference theme. I also expect to have a presentation on the Navy Studies Board Mine Warfare Assessment Report, assuming it is finished on the anticipated schedule. This report briefing will be an excellent baseline for our conference theme.

John D. Pearson
Radm, USN(Ret)
President

MINWARA SUMMER CONFERENCE

JULY 23 - 26

What's happened in the main battle fleet in the last two years to mainstream mine warfare and what progress has been made in the VCNO's fleet engagement strategy, which was the primary directive for the mainstreaming mine warfare?

This question will be the central theme of the MINWARA summer conference in Panama City FL on July 23-26, 2001. Various aspects of this question include delivery of systems and equipment to the fleet, the associated doctrine and tactics, and the education and training of fleet personnel and supporting organizations.

A number of fleet battle experiments have occurred, which have attempted to address the conduct of mine warfare using carrier battle groups (CVBG's) and the CVBG platforms equipped with mine warfare systems. Some useful lessons have been learned, and some complex questions have been derived, concerning future mine warfare operations in the fleet.

Mine warfare in support of operational maneuver from the sea, specifically ship to objective maneuver (STOM), has been exercised in fleet battle experiments, and wargaming has been

ongoing to further identify the questions to be answered and the lessons learned to be implemented.

The Navy Studies Board, tasked by the CNO, is presently engaged in an assessment of mine warfare in support of Navy and Marine operations. Assuming a report of this study is available by July (which is presently anticipated), we will report the results regarding mine warfare requirements and the existing capability gaps and shortfalls in concepts, tactics, techniques, and procedures.

This agenda should point government and industry toward a cooperative and complex endeavor to solve remaining issues in mainstreaming mine warfare and implementing the fleet engagement strategy.

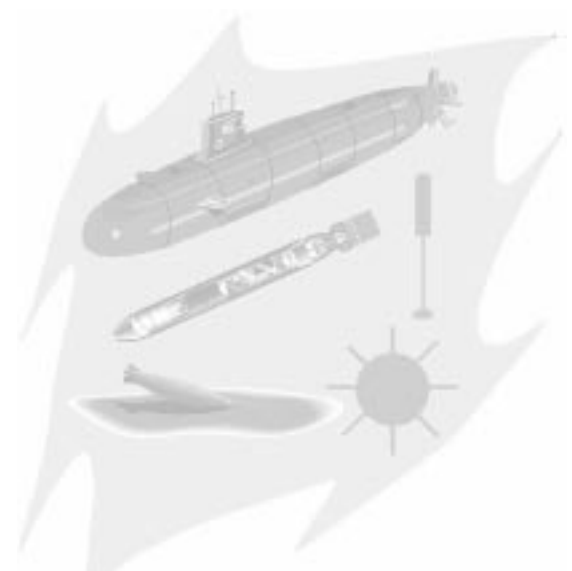
The conference venue is the Bay Point Marriott conference center in Panama City, a very pleasant meeting place with ample resort facilities. Put this one in your future plans for attendance. Details for reservations will be forthcoming in the April 2001 issue of Minelines. www.minwara.org will also carry this information, as soon as it is available in the next month or two.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

THE MINE WARFARE ASSOCIATION

c/o Larry Kelly, CAPT, USN (Ret), Secretary-Treasurer
6436 Randall Dr., Hughesville MD, 20637 Tel. 301-932-8954

Concerning all aspects of Sea-Land Mine Warfare and Explosive Ordnance Disposal.



Date _____

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CLASS OF MEMBERSHIP

(All schedules except Life Membership are on an annual basis)

Individual Memberships

- Student \$15
- Annual Membership \$25
- Life Membership \$250

Individual and Corporate Memberships

- | | | (LIFE/ANNUAL) |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bronze | \$500 | (0/2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Silver | \$1000 | (0/4) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gold | \$2000 | (1/2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Platinum | \$5000 or Greater | (2/2) |

Grants from private or corporate foundations will be accorded (Life/Annual) memberships as per the above schedule.

Remittance:

U.S Dollars Check or Money Order payable to Mine Warfare Association

PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS

Operational:

- Naval Land
- Demining Research and Development
- Management Economics
- Field Work Fundraising
- Unexploded Ordnance Public Education
- Political Liaison

Geophysical Interests:

- Land Beach
- Surf Zone Shallow Water
- Deep Water

Language skills (Please specify):

Willingness to Serve MINWARA:

- Board Member Officer
- Conference Organizer Membership
- Clerical Assistance Corporate
- Fundraising Presenter
- Other (Please specify):

UPDATE ON THE SECOND AUSTRALIAN-AMERICAN JOINT CONFERENCE

ON THE TECHNOLOGIES OF MINE
COUNTERMEASURES, SYDNEY, MARCH 27-29, 2001.

Registration Information

Please see the Conference Website at
www.dsto.defence.gov.au/corporate/conferences/minwara

Please note the Feb 16 deadline for completed papers (A CD-ROM Proceedings is planned). These papers should be sent electronically directly to the Conference Secretary, Ms. Jane Cleary at
jane.cleary@dsto.defence.gov.au

Early Registration is urged as space is somewhat limited. Please note that Registration is \$AUD330 prior to March 1, 2001, and \$AUD385 after March 1. These rates are inclusive of the GSI tariff.

Some Anticipatory Highlights

Sponsorship: In a recent Decision Memorandum the Commandant of the Marine Corps, GENERAL James L. Jones, USMC, ordered that the USMC become a major sponsor of this Second Conference. The USMC joins the Office of Naval Research, the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School, and the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Pacific Division, as sponsors. The other U.S. Sponsor is the Mine Warfare Association.

Australian Sponsors: Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO), and the following Australian industry groups; Thomson-Marconi Sonar, BAE SYSTEMS, ADI, and MINELAB (a participant in the Kaho'olawe UXO Site Remediation Project in Hawaii).

Some Program Highlights:

As of January 19, 2001, the following plenary speakers have been identified:

LTGEN Frank Libutti, USMC, CGMARFORPAC

RADM Charles Kubic, USN, Commander NAVFACENGPAC

RADM Michael A. Sharp, USN (PEO Mine and Undersea Warfare)

Dr. Tim Coffey, Director Naval Research Laboratory

Dr. Doug Todoroff, ONR

Dr. Jim Putnam, NAVFACENGPAC Kaho'olawe Project Australia and Pacific Rim

Dr. Alan Theobald, DSTO, Australian Co-Chair, Vice Chief of the Australian Defence Staff

LTGEN Peter Cosgrove, RAA, Chief of Army

Vice Admiral Dave Shackleton, RAN, Chief of Navy

LTGEN Vasu Chanarat, The Director General of the Thailand Mine Action Center

Dr. Ian Chessell, Chief Defence Scientist

Dr. Vernon Joynt, South Africa

There are over 80 contributed papers. Please watch the DSTO Website for the actual program.

The Counter-Ordinance Technology Society (COTS)

This new professional technical society will focus on the basic research and the emerging technologies and applications of the technologies for countering and removing mines and unexploded ordnance. Please see www.demine.org for further details and membership information.

The Fifth International Symposium on Technology and the Mine Problem,

April 15-19, 2002, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA

Please note this fifth in the Symposium Series and watch the websites www.minwara.org and www.demine.org for further information. This constitutes a preliminary Announcement of the Symposium and a Call for Papers.

For Questions or Comments on the 2nd Australian-American Joint Conference Contact:

The U.S. Co-Chair, Albert M. Bottoms
104 Reynard Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22901 USA
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For DSTO Australia

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THE HISTORY LOCKER

IN STRIDE - BIG TIME

With 3,000,000 men, 16,000,000 tons of supplies, 5,000 large ships, 4,000 smaller ships and landing craft, and 11,000 aircraft, Operation Overlord was the largest opposed amphibious assault in history. From dusk to dawn on the night of June 5-6, 1944, 306 minesweepers, closely followed by supporting cruisers and destroyers, swept 10 channels (The Spout) from the Piccadilly Circus assembly area south of the Isle of Wight to a half mile off the Normandy invasion beaches in rough seas – a distance of approximately 80 miles. The great minesweeping armada operated under orders similar to those given the First Minesweeping Flotilla: “The clearance of Channel 9 is to be continued to the lowering position regardless of enemy interference or casualties. In the event of enemy attack, the sweeping formation must be preserved and the attack fought off with the best available means. No ship must be allowed to sink in the swept channel.”

Following the landings the minesweepers had the larger job of clearing the ports and coastal approaches of Cherbourg, Le Havre and Antwerp for heavy logistics before the advance into the heart of Europe could begin. The job took the remainder of 1944, and resulted in mine casualties to over 89 minesweepers, 6 destroyers and 20 percent of all landing craft casualties. The lessons learned from that great minesweeping operation resonate to this day.

The principal danger lies in being unprepared – in numbers of MCM ships and craft, in trained personnel, and in up-to-date research.

The minesweeping forces were considered to be a “private navy.” Ignorance of the sweeper’s methods and problems among the officers of larger ships were considered deplorable. This was balanced by the enthusiasm of the sweeper crews and their close working relationship with the scientific community – a relationship never perfected by the Japanese.

Intelligence, thought inadequate, was critical, particularly in the recovery and examination of new mine types. The only workable counter to the German pressure mine (Oyster Mine) was developed within 48 hours after the first one was recovered.

Surveillance (Mine Watching) of minelaying activity significantly added to the efficiency with which MCM resources were allocated.

Virtually any small craft with shallow draft and low acoustic and magnetic signature can be adapted for minesweeping.

In the final analysis, the training, motivation and innovativeness of the crew is the most valuable MCM asset.

The introduction of ship counts and the pressure mine made it inevitable that minehunting would have to be added to minesweeping.

Though many techniques were tried, massive explosive attack in the form of swimmer-attached charges, aerial bombing, and gun, mortar and assault rocket fire were found to be the only effective means of clearing mines and obstacles from the invasion beaches.

In an opposed amphibious assault, clearing mines and obstacles for the initial landing is but the beginning of the much larger MCM task of broadening the lanes and clearing harbors (if available) needed to support the Marines, Army and Air Force with heavy logistics.

Had the Germans used their 4,000 secret pressure mines and placed more emphasis on bottom influence mines in advance of the invasion, rather than after, General Eisenhower would likely have had to issue the message he had prepared in the event that Operation Overlord was a disaster.

(Elliott, Peter, “Allied Minesweeping in World War II,” Naval Institute Press, 1979, Pages 106-145)

LH

HOW TO CONTACT MINWARA

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See our home page at: www.minwara.org

MINE LINES

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