

MINE LINES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MINE WARFARE ASSOCIATION,
<WWW.MINWARA.ORG>

DECEMBER 2002

ANNOUNCING

MINWARA SPRING 2003 REGIONAL CONFERENCE

**SEA MINE WARFARE:
SECOND ASSESSMENT UPDATE**

MAY 5-8, 2003

**BAYPOINT MARRIOTT RESORT
PANAMA CITY FL**

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THE MINE WARFARE ASSOCIATION

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

This Minelines issue provides a brief review of the Fifth International Symposium on Technology and the Mine Problem, held in April, 2002, at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey CA (see page 5). More than 300 members of government, industry, and academia attended the symposium. The symposium provided a rich, robust review of science and technology/research and development efforts to deal with the sea and land mine problem.

MINWARA conducted our annual members' meeting in March 2002. The MINWARA business portion of the meeting included unanimous election of the proposed slate of officers and directors. They are listed at www.minwara.org.

Our biannual regional conference on mine warfare in Panama City FL is now scheduled for 5-8 May 2003 at the Baypoint Marriott Resort. As before, Coastal Systems Station, Panama City will co-sponsor this event with MINWARA. Our theme for this conference will be Sea Mine Warfare: Second Assessment Update. This continues from where we left off, at the last similar regional conference in July 2001. We have reprinted the summary of the last regional conference, since the issues discussed are still relevant and have been further refined by concepts, studies, events and budget issues.

I believe it will be extremely appropriate to revisit the old issues and new ones, which have risen, relative to sea mine warfare, in our Navy and internationally since the last regional conference. We plan to attract the same level of senior Navy – Marine Corps leadership, as before, to address these issues. Since the last conference, a number of key conceptual statements and studies have directly addressed sea mine warfare as follows:

- The 2001 Navy “Carrier Battle Group/Amphibious Ready Group Mine Warfare Concept of Operations”.
- The 2001 Naval Studies Board report on mine warfare.
- The 2001 CINCLANTFLT (now COMLANTFLT) study on “Mine Warfare – The Way Ahead”.
- The October 2002 CNO U. S. Naval Institute Proceedings article titled “Sea Power 21 – Projecting Decisive Joint Capabilities”.
- November 2002 U. S. Naval Institute Article on Sea Shield: Projecting Global Defensive Assurance

These recent concepts and studies cast additional light on the future of sea mine warfare. However, many of the associated sea mine warfare issues require further development. Our regional conference should provide a useful forum for enlightenment by senior Navy – Marine Corps leadership, and for detailed discussion of these sea mine warfare issues.

YOUR ANNUAL MINWARA MEMBERSHIP IS DUE ON JANUARY 1, 2003

The Mine Warfare Association (MINWARA) was formed in 1995 to create an awareness of mine warfare issues and to assist government, industry, and academia in optimizing their combined contributions to solving the challenges associated with military sea and land mine warfare. The MINWARA believed that many of the solutions would be found in emerging technologies.

Accordingly, the MINWARA adopted a program of conducting symposia to expose as many personnel and organizations as possible to these emerging technologies and their potential application to the mine problem. MINWARA remains the only professional association, which deals only with land and sea mine warfare and its associated problems.

The symposia are an effort to cross - pollinate knowledge about mine warfare among government, industry, and academia. Symposia address military doctrine, policies, organization, concepts of operations, ongoing and needed research and development, acquisition programs, and logistics and training programs.

The Mine Warfare Association looks forward to continuing this educational effort in support of military mine warfare and the associated challenges and problems.

If you attended a symposium or regional conference in 2002, you are a MINWARA member. To continue your membership in 2003, please forward a membership form (see page 3) with your check or credit card number to the DMC Companies (our association management company).

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Copy, fill in and mail with payment

The Mine Warfare Association

c/o DMC Companies

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Remittance: U.S Dollars Check or Money Order payable to Mine Warfare Association. Please note that VISA government credit cards issued by Bank of America with account numbers beginning with 4486 1200 are not authorized for use.

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MINWARA NEWS

MINWARA Summer 2001 Regional Conference Sea Mine Warfare: An Assessment Update

Fourteen flag and general officers, representing the most senior leadership in the U. S. Navy and U. S. Marine Corps provided speeches or presentations. In addition, five senior industry leaders presented their views, relative to improving mine warfare capabilities and programs. Six retired flag officers were in attendance.

The key speakers included Admiral Vern Clark, USN (CNO), Admiral Bob Natter, USN (COMLANTFLT), Admiral Stan Arthur, USN (Ret), BGEN Gordon Nash, USMC, and a senior flag leadership panel (Oponav N70, N75, N76B, N77B, and N780).

A wide spectrum of issues was discussed, based on the presentations above and on remaining presentations. These included, in part:

- Future retention of the MCS functional capability/replacement of USS INCHON
- Retention/replacement of MH-53E's
- Operational/host platforms for MH-60's
- Modernization of dedicated mine warfare forces
- Balance of resources between organic and dedicated mine warfare forces
- C4ISR requirements for mine warfare operations
- Sensor – Engagement – Weapons grid for undersea warfare (ASW and MIW common operational/tactical picture) and associated capabilities
- A modern, adequate mining capability with associated mining infrastructure support to update/replace declining mining capability
- Far term, dedicated mine warfare force structure and characteristics, including possible multi-warfare mission capabilities
- Very shallow water capability force structure and characteristics
- UUV delivery from host platform to MCM mission area under clandestine conditions

In summary, many important issues were discussed between senior USN/USMC leadership and the mine warfare community, both military and industry.

MINWARA NEWS

Fifth International Symposium on Technology and the Mine Problem

This symposium and the four preceding symposia at NPS have showcased a great deal of new, interesting, and relevant technology that can be applied to the mine problem on land and at sea. Much of this technology is still at the “proof of concept” or 6.2 stage of exploratory development. It remains, in most cases, to take the technology to possible system levels, to evaluate performance, and to determine relative cost-effectiveness among the possible approaches. That the process of the development cycle is slow and tedious does not in any way detract from the high urgency of finding technology-based solutions to the seemingly intractable mine problem.

The papers at the Symposium again illustrated an important aspect of the interaction between the “operator” or user and

the technical community. Guests such as LT GEN Flowers, USA and LT Gen Hanlon, USMC provided a general statement of the problem. That problem statement is couched in operational terms that may not map very well with what might be thought of as a technical description of the need. It is up to the technical community to parse the requirements statements into a set of what in mathematics is termed a “well-posed set of problem statements - statements that suggest the avenues for technical solution”. It is then up to the technical communities to carry out a further transformation to describe the specific technical parameters that serve as surrogates for the more general operational statements of need. This is the process of problem identification and solving and usually rewards patient pursuit.

HISTORY LOCKER

Imagine many of you have enjoyed the academy award winning film titled “The Bridge on the River Kwai”. For those who may not have seen it, it’s a story of allied POW’s in a Japanese prison camp in Burma. The POW’s are being used as forced labor to complete a railroad bridge across the River Kwai. The Japanese critically needed to complete the railroad bridge for their supply route from Singapore and Bangkok to the India – Burma front to counter Lord Louis Mountbatten’s army forces operating from India.

Did you also know that the reason this railroad bridge was so critical is based on the use of sea mines?

Beginning in 1943, allied bombers, based in India, laid significant numbers of mines in the near shore waters along the coast of Thailand and the coast of Burma and south along the Malay Peninsula to Singapore. This reduced waterborne

traffic flow to a trickle of smaller wooden hull ships and junks. The reduction of war materials and supplies to Japanese troops in Burma forced the flow to shift to railroad traffic, largely from Singapore overland to the Burma area, including across the River Kwai.

These sea mines also forced abandonment of a German and Japanese submarine base on the Malay Peninsula, which threatened all sea traffic through the Straits of Malacca

Once again, sea mines provided a significant force multiplier for allied sea and land forces.

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