

NASSAU STRIKE GROUP TIMES



Volume I / Issue 003

NASSAU STRIKE GROUP NEWSLETTER

Phoenix Express 2008

SOUDA BAY, Crete – Four U.S. Navy ships will participate in Phoenix Express 2008 (PE 08), a U.S.-hosted, multinational exercise designed to strengthen regional maritime partnerships and foster the ability to operate jointly, from April 8-22.

Two ships from the Nassau Strike Group, the amphibious assault ship USS Nassau (LHA 4) and the amphibious transport dock USS Nashville (LPD 13); along with the frigate USS John L. Hall (FFG 32) and the fleet replenishment oiler USNS Patuxent (T-AO 201) will represent the United States in this two-week exercise. Ten other nations also send representatives, to include Spain, Turkey, Greece, Portugal, Italy, France, Malta, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia.

A comprehensive and robust training agenda will provide participants with numerous opportunities to operate together and develop productive relationships. Exercises like PE 08 enable participants to advance information sharing which is crucial to maintaining a region free from transnational threats, as well as enhance capability to conduct multinational peacekeeping missions.

PE 08 is comprised of two large phases, inport and at sea. The exercise will include communications, maritime interdiction operations (MIO), search-and-rescue operations (SAR), division tactics, medical training and ashore maritime coordination.

Inport events, hosted at Naval Support Activity Souda Bay, Crete, will focus on medical training, MIO training and combined Maritime Forces will conduct workshops in Helicopter Operations and Safety, Damage Control and

Four U.S. Ships to Participate in Phoenix Express 08

From Nassau Strike Group Public Affairs Office



PHOENIX EXPRESS 2008 (PE 08), a U.S.-hosted, multinational exercise designed to strengthen regional maritime partnerships and foster the ability to operate jointly. Layout by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class (SW/AW) Rustum Rivera.

Firefighting, Navigation, Deck Seamanship, SAR, Small Boat Operations and a Leadership round table.

Underway events will focus on maritime domain awareness (MDA) and the automatic identification system (AIS) including interaction between forces afloat and a maritime operations center ashore. Combined Maritime Forces will also conduct serials in Force Protection, MIO, SAR, RAS, Towing and Helicopter Operations.

“Phoenix Express 2008 aims to improve maritime security in the Mediterranean Sea through increased interoperability and cooperation among regional allies from the United

States, Africa and Europe,” said Capt. Robert G. Lineberry, commander, Nassau Strike Group. “PE 08 demonstrates U.S. and partner nations’ commitment to regional stability and maritime security. This exercise will allow all participants to become more familiar and continue to build our partnerships.”

PE 08 is the third annual exercise in a long-term effort to improve regional cooperation and maritime security. The principal aim is to increase interoperability by developing individual and collective maritime proficiencies of participating nations, as well as promoting friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation. ☐

Multinational Navies Train for Maritime Interdiction Operations at NMIOTC

Exercise Phoenix Express 2008 offers blending of techniques

By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Coleman Thompson

SOUDA BAY, Crete – The North American Treaty Organization's (NATO) Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) is proving to be the meeting ground for several servicemembers from different nations as they work together to improve maritime interdiction operations capabilities during Exercise Phoenix Express 2008 (PE 08).

PE 08 is broken up into two large phases inport and at-sea. The inport multi-lateral training focuses primarily on maritime interdiction operations (MIO) boarding techniques and shipboard training. With a mission dedicated to the combined training for NATO MIO teams, the newly opened and NATO-certified NMIOTC is quickly becoming a focal point for PE 08's inport training sessions.

"The mission of our center is to conduct training necessary for NATO forces to better execute surface, sub-surface and aerial surveillance and special operational activities in support of maritime interdiction operations," said Hellenic Navy Commodore Konstantine Ifantis, commanding officer, NMIOTC. "We are sure the NMIOTC will become a very useful tool to the alliance."

The center, recently certified by NATO on Apr. 2, 2008, offers classroom training to the participants, as well as simulator training and practical exercises. Throughout the courses, students can learn small boat handling, small arms training and proper container inspection.

"The global security environment has

led the alliance to seek new capabilities and define new training requirements. The alliance, recognizing this, decided that Greece would assume the responsibilities as host nation and establish the NMIOTC," said Ifantis. "The center has the potential to not only train Naval units in MIO, but also to provide proposals for new doctrines, tactics, methods and equipment in this growing field of maritime security operations."

The day's training session saw Sailors and Marines from different nations and backgrounds training together on one training ground as a single unit. Ultimately, this highlights one of the prime benefits the center offers: servicemembers from several nations coming together to better their training, tactics and procedures as a whole.

"It's a good learning experience, you get to learn what others know from the experiences that they have in their countries or other countries that they have had experience dealing with in their combat situations," said Marine Corps Cpl. John Young, squad leader for the Supreme Allied Command's Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team (SACFAST), 6th Platoon. "So we get to learn from them and they get to learn from us. You get different points of view of what might happen in certain situations."

PE 08 is a two-week long exercise designed to strengthen regional maritime partnerships, and is focused on the development of increased maritime domain awareness, better information sharing practices and the ability to operate jointly.

In This Issue

Four U.S. Ships to Participate in Phoenix Express 08 page 1

Multinational Navies Train for Maritime Interdiction Operations at NMIOTC page 2

PE 08 Images pages 3, 4

PE 08 Fact Sheet page 4

Nassau Hosts "DC Olympics" for Phoenix Express 2008 page 5

USS Nashville Visits Crete During Phoenix Express 08 page 6

Nassau Hosts Phoenix Express Medical Professionals page 6



Exercises like PE 08 enable participants to advance information sharing which is crucial to maintaining a region free from transnational threats, as well as enhancing the capability to conduct multinational peacekeeping missions. 📷



Nassau Strike Group(NASSG) Times

This is an unofficial US Navy newsletter approved for release by the Commander, Nassau Strike Group. News and information within are intended solely for its crew and family members. Any questions regarding its content may be directed to NASSG Public Affairs Office at nassgpao@lha4.navy.mil.

Capt. Robert Linebery
Commander, Nassau Strike Group

Cmdr. Bradley Borden
NASSG Chief Staff Officer

MMCM(SW) Herbert Broughton
NASSG Senior Enlisted Advisor

Lt.j.g. Anthony Falvo
NASSG Public Affairs Officer

NASSG Public Affairs Staff
MC1(SW/AW) Rustum Rivera
MC3 David Wyscaver
MC3 Coleman Thompson
MCSN Cory Rose
MCSN Ryan Steinhour
MCSN Mandy Hunsucker

MCC(SW/AW) Christopher Hoffpauir
USS Nassau Public Affairs Officer

USS Nassau Public Affairs Staff
MC1(SW) Charmin Covington
MC2(SW) Michael Cortez
MC2 Andrew King
MC2 Sean Stafford
MC2 Amanda Clayton
MC3 Steven Smith
MCSA Jonathan Pankau



◀The amphibious assault ship USS Nassau (LHA 4) prepares to pull into Souda Bay, Crete. Nassau is participating in Phoenix Express 2008 (PE 08), the third annual exercise in a long-term effort to improve regional cooperation and maritime security.

▶Servicemembers from Algeria practice proper ways to take down personnel at the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) in Souda Bay, Crete. U.S. Navy photos by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Coleman Thompson (RELEASED)



▲Ens. Lawrence Cyle of USS Nashville (LPD 13) makes a point as he shows a group of Turkish Sailors around Nashville's focsle, Apr. 9. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Charles L. Ludwig (RELEASED)



Phoenix Express 2008



▲Cpl. John Young instructs proper ways to take down personnel at the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) in Souda Bay, Crete. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Coleman Thompson (RELEASED)

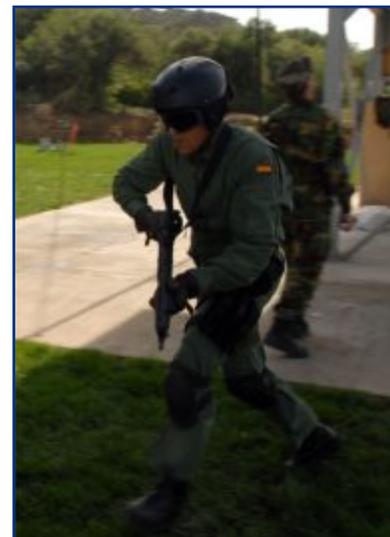


▲A servicemember from Spain sets an overwatch shortly after performing a fast rope descent at the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) in Souda Bay, Crete.

◀A servicemember from Spain performs a fast-rope descent at the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) in Souda Bay, Crete.

▶A servicemember from Spain rushes out of the way shortly after performing a fast-rope descent at the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) in Souda Bay, Crete.

U.S. Navy photos by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Coleman Thompson (RELEASED)



Phoenix Express 2008 (PE 08) Fact Sheet April 8-22, 2008

What is Phoenix Express 2008?

PE 08 is the third annual exercise in a long-term effort to improve regional cooperation and maritime security. The principal aim is to increase interoperability by developing individual and collective maritime proficiencies of participating nations, as well as promoting friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation.

Who is participating?

In total, 11 countries participated in Phoenix Express 08:

▶ United States, Spain, Turkey, Greece, Portugal, Italy, France, Malta, Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia.

When is Phoenix Express?

PE 08 will be conducted from April 8-22, 2008, and will be composed of two large phases:

▶ April 8-13: In-port multi-lateral training will be conducted at Naval Station Activity Souda Bay, Crete, and will be focused primarily on Maritime Interdiction Operations (MIO) Boarding techniques and shipboard training.

▶ April 14-20: Underway events driven by a scenario that supports Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) and the Automated Identification System (AIS) including interaction between forces afloat and a MMOCCAshore.

▶ April 21-22: A post-exercise discussion and lessons learned meeting will wrap up the exercise in Augusta Bay, Sicily.

What are the goals of PE 08?

▶ To demonstrate U.S. and participant nation commitment to regional stability and maritime security.

▶ To help all 11 participant forces to achieve higher levels of interoperability and maritime capabilities.

▶ To foster trust between participant nations by promoting friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation. 📷

Maritime interdiction operations (MIO) teams practiced helo fast rope scenarios during training evolutions for Phoenix Express 2008 (PE 08) in Souda Bay, Crete on Apr. 11. ▶

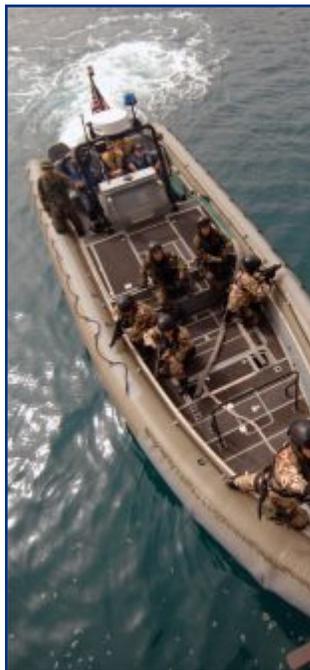
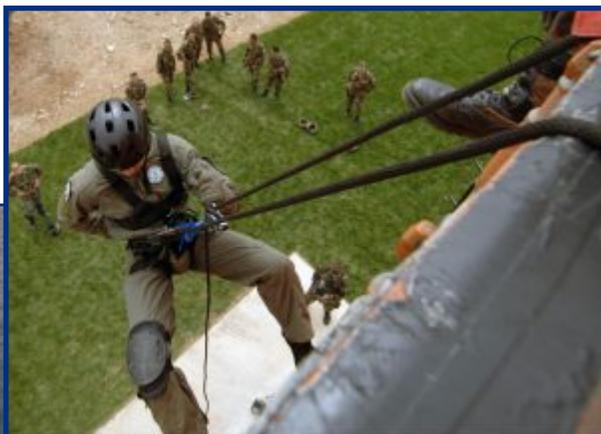


▶ MIO teams practiced helo fast rope scenarios during training evolutions for Phoenix Express 2008 (PE 08) in Souda Bay, Crete on Apr. 8.

▶ Spanish MIO specialists prepare to board a helo in preparation for MIO fast rope drills in Souda Bay, Crete for Phoenix Express 2008

▶ U.S. Navy photos by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class (AW) James C. Davis (RELEASED)

▼ U.S. Navy photos by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class David R. Quillen. (RELEASED)



▶ Servicemen from 11 nations practice the techniques involved in searching multi-story cargo containers as part of Exercise Phoenix Express 2008 (PE 08) at the Naval Maritime Interdiction Operations Training Center (NMIOTC) in Souda Bay, Crete on Apr. 9.

◀ Servicemen from 11 nations practice the techniques involved in searching and boarding a ship during maritime interdiction operations (MIO) training as part of Exercise Phoenix Express 2008 (PE 08) at the NMIOTC center in Souda Bay, Crete.

Capt. Robert G. Lineberry, Commander, Nassau Strike Group, gives opening remarks at a briefing held at the NATO Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre (NMIOTC) in Souda Bay, Crete. Servicemembers from several nations have gathered in Souda Bay to participate in Phoenix Express 2008 (PE 08), the third annual exercise in a long-term effort to improve regional cooperation and maritime security. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Coleman Thompson. (RELEASED)

Servicemembers from 11 nations visit USS Nassau for an invitational reception for the Phoenix Express 08. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Sean Stafford. (RELEASED)



PE 08 Covers. U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class David R. Quillen. (RELEASED)



Sailors of USS Nassau (LHA-4), as well as Sailors from 10 other nations, don fire fighting protective gear during a timed, friendly competition as part of training given aboard Nassau on Apr. 10, 2008 during exercise Phoenix Express 2008 (PE 08). U.S. Navy photos by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class David R. Quillen (RELEASED)

Nassau Hosts "DC Olympics" for Phoenix Express 2008

By Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Jonathan Pankau

SOUDA BAY, Crete – The amphibious assault ship USS Nassau (LHA 4) hosted international military members from 10 countries for damage control training and demonstrations during Exercise Phoenix Express 2008 (PE 08) onboard, April 10.

In addition to the Nassau's crew, Sailors from the amphibious transport dock ship USS Nashville (LPD 13), the guided missile frigate USS John L. Hall (FFG 32), and international military members from nations around the Mediterranean Sea participated in the "Damage Control Olympics."

"Each team competes in damage control events to see who can get the best time," Nassau Damage Control Assistant Lt. Cmdr. Scott Gray said. "The real reward is the time spent

together and collaborative efforts in training our multinational partners to learn these necessary skills."

Training events included relay races, operating portable fire pumps, and setting up de-smoking fans. There were also demonstrations showing the use of portable hydraulic access and rescue equipment and the self-contained breathing apparatus.

Damage Controlman 3rd Class Joseph Mendel, a member of the Nassau Flying Squad, said sharing information, techniques, and training practices among multinational partners is a critical part of PE08.

"It's important to collaborate with all these countries because all of us have so many different ways to go about

shipboard firefighting," Mendel said. "If there's a more efficient way to go about shipboard damage control, this exercise pools all of our thoughts together."

PE 08 is the third annual exercise in a long-term effort to enhance regional cooperation and maritime security. The principal aim is to increase interoperability by developing individual and collective maritime proficiencies of participating nations, as well as promoting friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation.

Exercises like PE 08 enable participants to advance information sharing which is crucial to maintaining a region free from transnational threats, as well as enhance capability to conduct multinational peacekeeping missions.



USS Nashville Visits Crete During Phoenix Express 08

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Charles L. Ludwig

SOUDA BAY, Crete -- Sailors aboard the amphibious transport dock ship USS Nashville (LPD 13) visited the port of Souda Bay, Crete and the nearby city of Chania, Crete Apr. 8-14, as part of Phoenix Express 2008 (PE 08), the third annual maritime exercise devoted to improving regional cooperation and maritime security in the Mediterranean Sea.

This year, there are 11 countries participating in PE 08, including the United States, Spain, Portugal, Algeria, Greece, Morocco, Tunisia, Malta, France, Italy, and Turkey. Together, the countries took the week in Souda Bay to focus efforts on maritime interdiction operations, ship visit and boarding techniques, and medical and shipboard training.

As part of Nashville's role in the exercise, Sailors aboard welcomed members of the various navies to take part in seamanship training, senior enlisted leadership discussions, and the ship also served as a training platform for the U.S. visit, board, search and seizure teams (VBSS) that will be participating. International visits centered on tours of the ship's workstations – including the foc'sle, well deck and flight deck.

The visits were meant to give visiting Sailors an idea of what working on an American ship would be like, according to Boatswain's Mate 1st Class Justin House, who helped conduct one of the tours.

"We wanted to show them a little bit of what we use on Nashville on a day-to-day basis," he said. "Getting to show off our ship and the way we do things is always a good thing."

Nashville Sailors took pleasure in six days of liberty in the Chania area, but also took the time to help the local community and Naval Support Activity (NSA) Souda Bay, Crete through a pair of community relations projects in tandem with other ships from the Nassau Strike Group.

On April 8-9, Nashville's Chaplain, Lt. Edward D. Bass, led 28 Sailors from the amphibious transport dock in projects at the Chania Senior Citizens

Home and the NSA Souda Bay Base Chapel, assisting in cleaning up the facility, as well as handing out clothing, food and other supplies.

"These projects are important because it gives the Sailors an outlet to do something very positive for others, on their own time. The fellowship and camaraderie experienced is very special when you know the vital effort is helping others and the work wouldn't have gotten done without us," Bass said. "I know the base chaplains were elated. They considered the timing of our help absolutely God sent, as they had to make the move on very short order."

The Chania Senior Citizens' Home is an assisted living facility for 125 elderly people run by the city. Volunteers there painted, worked on landscaping, and visited the residents. The base chapel, which currently serves as a site for

emergency supplies, required a different set of skills. According to Bass, that project was intended to make the chapel more assessable for worship services.

"We completely emptied out a large building of boxes, furniture and shelving (exhausting work) and moved it into several other buildings, then we moved the contents of the old chapel space into the emptied out building and cleaned it all up. The chapel will now have suitable space for Sunday school classes, counseling offices, and work spaces," he said.

After leaving Souda Bay, Nashville will continue its participation in PE 08 with the rest of the Nassau Strike Group during the exercise's underway portion. Nashville will serve as a boarding platform to combined forces' MIO and VBSS teams to hone their ship boarding skills. ■

Nassau Hosts Phoenix Express Medical Professionals

By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Steven Scott Smith

SOUDA BAY, Crete – USS Nassau (LHA 4) hosted foreign military medical professionals from ten countries on the first full day of training during Exercise Phoenix Express 2008 (PE 08) onboard, April 9.

PE 08 is the third annual exercise in a long-term effort to improve regional cooperation and maritime security. The principal aim is to increase interoperability by developing individual and collective maritime proficiencies of participating nations, as well as promoting friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation.

Exercises like PE 08 enable participants to advance information sharing which is crucial to maintaining a region free from transnational threats, as well as enhance capability to conduct multinational peacekeeping missions.

Fleet Surgical Team Two (FST-2), embarked on Nassau, and the ship's own medical department exchanged medical knowledge and discussed capabilities and procedures with teams from nations around the Mediterranean Sea.

Cmdr. Timothy Quiner, Nassau Strike Group surgeon and FST-2 officer in charge, stressed on the importance of teamwork and collaborative efforts with multinational partners in the region.

"Collaborative effort between these countries is important because it enables us to provide better medical care and training," Quiner said. "Phoenix Express enables us to work as a team and meet their medical training needs so they are prepared for medical emergencies on the high seas."

During the exercise the teams will review medical evacuation procedures, airway management and evaluation of trauma victims. The training within Nassau's medical facility will also include lab training, demonstrating blood transfusions, general lab chemistry and the proper use of medical equipment.

"We can expand our abilities by incorporating their ships and their people into our operations and our needs for better global cooperation and safety," Quiner said. ■