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Hello and welcome to another edition of the PeleNews. The week went by very quickly, but we were able to get a lot done. We even started the planning of the 2010 Tiger Cruise; can you believe it? I know a lot you have been asking about the Tiger Cruise.

There are some restrictions and very detailed information will be coming out as soon as next week, to include pricing, many frequently asked questions and the actual sign up sheets. The age limitations are that all Tigers must be at least eight years of age. If any of your Tigers have any medical issues, they will need to provide a screening form from their medical provider, then it will be reviewed by our medical folks. The cruise will be in two phases. Phase I will be from Hawaii to San Diego and Phase II will be an overnighter from Camp Pendleton to San Diego.

So without being able to put out exact dates, what can you start doing now? You can start letting your divisional and department Tiger Cruise reps know if you have friends or family members that are interested in taking advantage of either the full cruise from Pearl Harbor or the one-night cruise from Camp Pendleton. It is important that we get a solid start so we can plan on the number of crew that will be flying back to make room.

Some things your guests may want to consider bringing include comfortable clothing, some warm clothes (remember, it will be December), basic toiletries, and maybe a good book to help pass the time. I would recommend that your Tigers pack tight since space is limited. There will be plenty of activities to keep the Tigers entertained but try to schedule your days out for the younger Tigers to keep them busy as well.

So start planning now and we will ensure the Tiger Cruise committee gets all the information out soonest. Have a great week and remember stay safe, and keep sending in those shout outs.

Go Navy, and “Keep Charging PELELIU”
It's big enough to host an arena football game but is generally a congested area with high ceilings, two giant doors and people in different colored jerseys directing and moving aircraft to their designated areas to be fixed or just stowed temporarily.

It's the V-3 division Aviation Boatswain Mates, Handler or ABH who ensures all aircraft are positioned correctly. The cavernous Hangar Deck is a giant garage onboard Peleliu. Its primary function is the stationing of aircraft for maintenance and repair, but since it is the largest space inside the ship, there's a lot more happening there than just aviation business.

The Hangar Deck is big enough to gather Peleliu's crew for special events like all hands calls or pinning ceremonies. Let's not forget events ranging from basketball tournaments to Steel Beach Picnics, the MCMAP and fitness classes, Cinema at Sea and Damage Control Olympics. The ABHs of V-3 assist by arranging aircraft, cargo or anything else located on the Hangar Deck to make room for these events.

"We always like helping with special events," said ABH1 (AW/SW) Richard Aguirre, V-3 Leading Petty Officer. "Being out to sea for long periods of time, we assist by moving aircraft to the Flight Deck or moving gear on the Hangar Deck" to enable Supply, Food Service, MWR and others execute their evolutions. "We'll do whatever we can to make it feel like home."

Each job on the Hangar Deck is designated by the color of the jersey or "shirt." The "Yellow Shirts" are the Hangar Deck aircraft directors. They orchestrate the placement of the jets and helicopters that are brought down from the Flight Deck with a "Spotting Dolly." This is a low profile, diesel(JP5)-powered tractor that hooks to the aircraft for movement on the Hangar Deck. The "Blue Shirts" are the backbone of aircraft movement. They are the chock and chain crewmen who, just like their Flight Deck counterparts, secure each aircraft to the deck using chocks and chains. For the newly assigned "Blue Shirts," the job can be somewhat exciting as well as busy.

"I like my job but at the same time you have to stay focused. Certain situations happen and you have to take control of the situation at hand," said Aviation Boatswain's Mate Airman Recruit Justin Smith. "For example, the brakes on the spotting dolly could stop working when a yellow shirt is maneuvering the aircraft, and it could roll the spotting dolly and the aircraft along with it toward another aircraft?" (Editor's note: AR Smith has been onboard for about a week J).

The Elevator Operator Petty Officer(EOPO) is the linchpin between the Flight and Hangar Decks. Sitting in Hangar Deck Control, an observation space visible amidships on the starboard bulkhead that oversees the entire Hangar Deck, the EOPO maintains communications with the Flight Deck for transferring aircraft from the Hangar Deck to the Flight Deck and vice versa. They coordinate the movement of embarked aircraft and cargo on the Hangar Deck.

"Their job is to let us know what and how many aircraft are needed on the Flight Deck or to be transferred to the Hangar Deck for maintenance," said ABH1 Aguirre. "They are the liaison between the Aircraft Handling Officer (ACHO) and V-3."

All in all, the job of the Hangar Deck ABH is important for the mission and for the Peleliu crewmembers' morale. They can be somewhat of magicians on the Hangar Deck. One minute the Hangar is packed with aircraft, stores and equipment, and then before you know it, it all disappears to other locations throughout the ship.

"I think what we do on the Hangar Deck is one of the major elements toward the mission," said ABH1 Aguirre. "So I and the Hangar Deck crew of V-3 will keep doing our job to the best of our ability."
The Peleliu Amphibious Ready Group (PEL ARG) and 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) reached the halfway point of deployment while operating as the theater reserve force in the 5th Fleet area of responsibility (AOR).

In more than three months since departing San Diego in May, the PEL ARG and 15th MEU have completed multilateral military training, maritime security operations, close air support operations in Afghanistan, counter-piracy operations, and is currently off the coast of Pakistan conducting humanitarian aid and disaster relief (HA/DR) operations in support of the Government of Pakistan.

The PEL ARG and 15th MEU’s first exercise came in 7th Fleet where amphibious assault ship USS Peleliu (LHA 5), the flagship of PEL ARG, and amphibious dock landing ship USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) participated in Exercise Crocodilo in Timor-Leste. The goal of this exercise was to enhance military training in a tropical environment and cross-train with the Timor-Leste Defense Forces and the International Security Forces from New Zealand and Australia.

Amphibious transport dock ship USS Dubuque (LPD 8) conducted Marine Exercise 2010, a bi-lateral exercise promoting cooperation through community relations programs and military training with Indonesia.

Dubuque next went to the Maldives, and Pearl Harbor arrived in Sri Lanka before the two ships departed 7th Fleet. Sailors and Marines conducted training on a variety of shipboard evolutions, to include damage control, visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS), and ship to shore movements.

In 5th Fleet, the PEL ARG and 15th MEU conducted maritime security operations and sustainment training after arriving in the AOR and worked with partner nations to improve relations and engage in valuable military to military training.

While PEL ARG was engaged across the 5th Fleet AOR, the heaviest monsoons in recent history caused devastating floods throughout the country of Pakistan. Peleliu and the 15th MEU were mobilized in response to the Government of Pakistan’s urgent request for flood relief, and were directed to move off the coast of Pakistan. The ship with her embarked Sailors and Marines arrived in the vicinity of Karachi on August 9.

PEL ARG and 15th MEU provided 15 heavy and medium-lift helicopters and supplies to support the Pakistani government in their efforts to assist the people affected by the natural disaster. To date, the combined efforts of the PEL ARG and 15th MEU have resulted in the movement of more than 8,000 internally displaced persons and the transfer of more than 3 million pounds of relief supplies and equipment.

The combined PEL ARG and 15th MEU aircraft have flown for more hours in the first half of deployment than they were scheduled to complete during the entire deployment. Some of these hours were flown by the AV-8B Harriers assigned to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 165 (Reinforced) in close air support missions for Operation Enduring Freedom, which were flown concurrently with Peleliu’s HA/DR mission.

While Peleliu was stationed off the coast of Pakistan, Dubuque responded to distress calls from M/V Magellan Star, a German vessel that was hijacked by suspected pirates. The 15th MEU’s Maritime Raid Force aboard Dubuque boarded the hijacked ship, rescued 11 crew members, and took custody of the suspected pirates without firing a shot.

As the theater reserve force, the ships of PEL ARG and the 15th MEU have flexed their unique capabilities to conduct simultaneous combat operations and humanitarian relief in multiple and far-reaching parts of the AOR. The deployment exemplified what the amphibious Navy and Marine Air Ground Task Force can accomplish.

The PEL ARG and 15th MEU are executing a regularly scheduled deployment to the region in support of ongoing maritime security operations, and serve as the theater reserve force for U.S. Central Command. The team reports directly to Expeditionary Strike Group 5, which is responsible for all amphibious forces deployed to U.S. 5th Fleet, and oversees the planning and execution of contingency response missions and maritime HA/DR operations.
By MC2 (EXW) Andrew Dunlap

Staff Writer

The year was 1975, on the continent down under, in the city of Melbourne a soft-rock duo consisting of Graham Russell as guitarist and singer song-writer and Russell Hitchcock as lead vocalist. The pair had a succession of hits worldwide including eight Top Ten hits in the United States in the early 1980’s, which included “All Out of Love.” With a simple change of the noun from Air to Aviation the band is “Out of the Picture” and S-6 Division rises to the main stage.

S-6 Division is the primary source for all aircraft supplies on board Peleliu.

“We issue various aircraft parts to the aviation squadrons and AIMD (Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department), which allows the mechanics to install the functioning part on the aircraft, keeping it operational and maintaining mission readiness,” said Logistics Specialist (SW/AW) 2nd Class Joseph White, S-6’s supply application administrator.

The mission has called for the Iron Nickel to consistently conduct a grueling flight quarters schedule, which keeps the Aviation Supply Division active.

“It’s not a glamorous life. People think we just sit in our air-conditioned office, but when an aircraft goes down, we have to quickly find the part in our storeroom and issue it,” said White. “We have 12 storerooms on board, and none of them have a temperature below 100 degrees.”

The dozen storerooms on board are used to hold aircraft parts, determined by demand, as well as rivets, zip ties, surge protectors and other consumable items not found in S-8’s storerooms.

“We determine the aircraft parts needed to be stored on board from a list created by AVCAL (Aviation Consolidated Allowance List), a system overseen by SURFOR (Surface Forces), which provides us a list of parts to keep on board depending on what aircraft are embarked,” said White.

All but one of the embarked aircraft squadrons on board are Marines, which turns the S-6 office into a blue/green team workspace throughout deployment.

“Having aviation supply Marines in the division makes it easier to communicate with the squadrons and what parts they need because it’s green to green,” said White.

Whether it’s the Marine or Navy squadrons, when an aircraft part has to be fixed off the ship, S-6 organizes all the logistics.

“We coordinate with ATAC (Advanced Traceability and Control) to ship all broken aircraft parts that can’t be repaired here to an ATAC facility located throughout the world,” said White. “Not only aircraft parts, but all the ship’s DLR (Depot Level Repairable) maintenance from valves to computers to engines come through us to get shipped out.”

Coordination is a critical role inside Aviation Supply Division especially when it comes to moving helicopter blades in the Hangar Bay.

According to White, moving blades in the Hangar Bay is an orchestrated event which includes: Aviation Boatswain’s Mates (Handling) of V1 Division working on the flight deck, Aviation Boatswain’s Mates of V3 Division working in the hangar bay, AIMD and the Auxiliary Machinery Division. Flight Deck ABHs move the 20k forklift from the flight deck onto the elevator, Machinist’s Mates from Auxiliary Division line up all the valves for the elevator’s movement, Hangar Bay ABHs lower the elevator to bring the forklift into the Hangar Bay and AIMD provides S-6 with the forklift as well as moving any ground support equipment that is in the way of the blade racks. This weekly arrangement is done to put up old, broken blades and bring down new ones, from anyone of the 10 blade racks lining the upper bulkheads in the Hangar Bay, for an aircraft in need.

Whether it’s a weekly blade swap in the Hangar Bay or a monthly location audit in their storerooms, Logistic Specialists of S-6 understand the importance of maintaining an accurate inventory.

“When a LS checks into the ship from ‘A’ School they’re put into S-8,” said White. “They work their way up in supply and depending on what positions are available either go to S-6 or S-1. I’ll stay in S-6 every ship I go to because they’ll read my evaluation and see my experience in S-6.”

On this 820 foot floating airport of sovereign territory, aircraft take off and land more than George Clooney’s character in “Up in the Air.” Neither pilots nor passengers receive the embrace of a caring flight attendant nor do they get a platinum card upon reaching flying milestones, but with the support from S-6, they’re no longer “so lost without you.”
Greetings from the home front to our Sailors and Marines, our thoughts, hearts, and prayers are with you as you continue to make us proud with everything that you do. This week marked the official beginning of fall, and another season down, as we get closer to the much dreamed-of reunion.

Last Sunday, we held our monthly FRG meeting and we were very excited to have Misty Cedrun speak to the group, as well as our wonderful Ombudsmen. We had such an amazing and diverse group in attendance including some Marine spouses. Please know that we welcome everyone as we are all one big happy Peleliu family! As the anticipation builds for homecoming, let’s get together and make it the best one ever. Just saying it is an electric feel!

Saturday, October 2nd is the halfway party. For those local to San Diego, it is not too late to RSVP, if you would like to come. Email us for payment options; it is $20 per adult, children are free and you can pay using PayPal, or mail us a check. The party is from 2-6 p.m. and we will be showing the halfway video that the ship made at 4 p.m. If you are not local to San Diego and would like to view the halfway video, you can Skype in to view it. Our email address is peleliufrg@gmail.com. Let us know what information you need so we can get it out to you. We have many fun activities planned for the children and adults, and bring your bathing suits as well if you would like to swim.

Join us for our other upcoming October events, including Craft Day October 10th, adults Halloween party October 23rd, and a children’s Halloween party October 31st. (Can you believe the next edition of the PeleNews will be in October?!) There are many other fun events in the works for November including a spa day and a wine tour in Temecula...stay tuned! We always welcome newcomers, the more the merrier so please email us to get on the list to receive information about upcoming events.

We have secured some amazing prizes to raffle off at the halfway party, and donations are starting to come in for future events and our biggest event, homecoming. If you have any ideas for donations, work for a company that may want to donate, or have fundraising ideas, please let us know. The FRG has non-profit status and we have an EIN so it is a tax write off!

To all of you out there on the big blue from all of us here at home, thank you for what you do everyday. The message is making it to the home front and we love to see news of the operations out there.

As always, we welcome suggestions and ideas. Have a safe and enjoyable week!

FRG President and Vice-President