



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON DC 20350-1000

April 08, 2022

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

House Report 117-118 to accompany the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022, page 219, directs the Secretary of the Navy to prepare a brief to the House Committee on Armed Services that details the findings associated with the USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6) accident investigation, to include any deficiencies identified that would have allowed Navy to more adequately respond to the loss of the USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6). The House report also directs the Secretary to develop a fire boat response plan at major U.S. naval bases, which should include, at a minimum, the scope, budget, and timelines necessary to implement such plan.

Attached is the Navy's brief outlining the Navy's position regarding "Fire Boats" and the response plan at major U.S. naval bases. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carlos Del Toro".

Carlos Del Toro

Enclosure:
As stated

Copy to:
The Honorable Mike D. Rogers
Ranking Member

Response to Congress

Navy's Waterborne Firefighting Capability

2 March 2022

Prepared by:

**COMMANDER, NAVY INSTALLATIONS COMMAND
WASHINGTON NAVY YARD
WASHINGTON DC 20374-5140**

The estimated cost of this report or study for the Department of Defense is approximately \$0 for the 2021 Fiscal Year. This includes \$0 in expenses and \$0 in DoD labor.

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I. REPORT REQUIREMENTS

The HASC Report to accompany the FY2022 NDAA (117-118) - NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022 directs the Secretary of the Navy to prepare a brief to the House Committee on Armed Services by March 1, 2022 that details the findings associated with the USS BONHOMME RICHARD (BHR) incident investigation and deficiencies identified that would have allowed Navy to more adequately respond to the loss of the BHR; and, develop a fire boat response plan at major Navy Bases.

The committee opines there is a lack of fire boats at U.S. Navy Bases, and that this lack of access to dedicated fire boats may be a safety hazard to Sailors and civilian workers and may expose warships worth tens of billions of dollars to unnecessary danger. The committee is particularly concerned about the loss of the BHR in 2020 and that fire boat access may have contributed to the complete loss of this warship.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following the BHR incident, where firefighting-equipped Navy tug boats were employed, the Navy has reinforced the importance of waterborne and airborne firefighting capability and has ensured both are incorporated into Navy installation emergency response plans. The Navy assesses that existing waterborne firefighting capability and capacity is sufficient and there is no requirement for dedicated fire boats to support shipboard firefighting requirements.

III. INTRODUCTION

As stated, Navy tug boats have inherent firefighting capabilities. Since the BHR incident, Commander, Navy Installations Command issued a directive (enclosure 1) to ensure that Navy installation emergency response plan functional area annexes and major shipboard fire hazard specific appendices include tug boat firefighting capabilities.

IV. BACKGROUND

The lack of dedicated fire boats does not directly equate to a lack of firefighting capability. The Navy maintains a fleet of tug boats with firefighting capability at Navy ports. These tug boats were utilized extensively during the BHR incident. The BHR investigation did not identify any specific deficiencies related to fire boats that would have enabled the Navy to respond more effectively.

V. REPORT ELEMENTS

The Navy's installation emergency response plans for major ports now include a formal process to utilize tug boats to respond to and supply water by hose-lines or water deluge nozzles to aid in firefighting, as needed. Any future firefighting investments would be better applied to increased firefighters, fire trucks and other shore capabilities to support ship's force and their fire response and firefighting capabilities.

Scope: Commander, Navy Installations Command currently has tug boats (both government-owned and time-chartered) with fire-fighting capabilities providing support to major Navy ports, including: Guam; Yokosuka, Japan; Pearl Harbor, HI; the Pacific Northwest (comprised of

Naval installations at Bangor, Kitsap, and Indian Island WA); San Diego, CA; Mayport, FL; Kings Bay, GA; Norfolk, VA; New London, CT; Portsmouth, NH; and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Budget: The current budget supporting operation of tugs at the aforementioned ports is considered adequate. No additional resources are required, at this point.

Timeline: The Tugs are currently operational and operate on a minimum one-hour response, by most tugs, per CNIC WASHINGTON DC P291913Z Jan 21 (Naval Message), Subject: "CNIC emergency management planning inclusion of air and port CNIC emergency management planning inclusion of air and port operations in installation firefighting efforts".

VI. CONCLUSION

The Navy assesses that the lack of dedicated fire boats did not have an appreciable effect on the BHR incident or loss of this ship. And, in fact, waterborne firefighting capability, readily available on Navy tug boats, was brought to bear in this incident and has been formally accepted into Navy installation emergency response plans. The Navy does not intend to request or pursue dedicated fire boats at this time.

VII. ENCLOSURES

1. CNIC WASHINGTON DC P291913Z Jan 21 (Naval Message), CNIC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING INCLUSION OF AIR AND PORT CNIC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING INCLUSION OF AIR AND PORT OPERATIONS IN INSTALLATION FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS

Enclosure 1:

P 291913Z JAN 21 MID600050190364U
FM CNIC WASHINGTON DC
TO COMNAVREG MIDLANT NORFOLK VA
COMNAVDIST WASHINGTON DC
COMJTREG MARIANAS GU
COMNAVREG EURAFCENT NAPLES IT
COMNAVREG JAPAN YOKOSUKA JA
COMNAVREG NW SILVERDALE WA
COMNAVREG PEARL HARBOR HI
COMNAVREG SE JACKSONVILLE FL
COMNAVREG SW SAN DIEGO CA
COMNAVFORKOREA BUSAN KOR
UNCLAS

SUBJ/CNIC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING INCLUSION OF AIR AND PORT CNIC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING INCLUSION OF AIR AND PORT OPERATIONS IN INSTALLATION FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS//

REF/A/MSG/ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR BONHOMME RICHARD FIRE FOLLOW UP ACTIONS, 24 OCT, R 220242Z OCT 20 ZYB MID200000394463S//

AMPL/REF A IS COMPACFLT INCORPORATION OF COMMANDING OFFICERS FROM ADM FOGGO, ADM GRADY, AND ADM AQUILINO - IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TO ENSURE THE FLEET IS BEST POSTURED TO PREVENT AND RESPOND TO SHIPBOARD FIRES.//

POCS/RISLEY/CIV/UNIT: CNIC N31 JAMES.RISLEY(AT)NAVY.MIL AND YOUNG/CIV /UNIT: CNIC N32 LAURENCE.YOUNG(AT)NAVY.MIL//

GENTEXT/REMARKS/1. THIS MESSAGE REFINES CNIC REGION AND INSTALLATION EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POLICY BY FORMALLY INCORPORATING AVIATION FIRE-FIGHTING ASSETS - WHERE AVAILABLE - AND EMERGENCY USE OF TUGS FOR EMERGENCY TOWING AND FIREFIGHTING AT NAVY PORTS. REGIONS WILL ENSURE THAT PROCEDURES TO REQUEST HELICOPTER AND TUG SUPPORT FOR SHIPBOARD FIREFIGHTING ARE INCORPORATED IN REGION AND INSTALLATION EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN FUNCTIONAL AREA ANNEXES AND MAJOR SHIPBOARD FIRE HAZARD SPECIFIC APPENDICES.

2. BACKGROUND: THE USS BONHOMME RICHARD FIRE IN JULY 2020 HIGH-LIGHTED THE VALUE OF HELICOPTER SUPPORT AND TUG FIREFIGHTING ASSETS FOR RAPID RESPONSE DURING MAJOR SHIPBOARD FIRE INCIDENTS INPORT.

3. EMPLOYMENT OF TUGS: REGION AND INSTALLATIONS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS WILL BE UPDATED TO INCLUDE THE PROCESS FOR EMPLOYING STATIONS ASSIGNED TUGS TO ASSIST WITH SHIPBOARD FIREFIGHTING. PER THE CHAIN OF COMMAND OUTLINED IN OPNAVINST 3440.18, IN THE CASE OF A MAJOR SHIPBOARD FIRE INPORT REQUIRING RESPONSES BY MULTIPLE ORGANIZATIONS COORDINATED THROUGH AN INCIDENT COMMANDER, ALL PORT OPERATIONS DEPARTMENTS COGNIZANT FOR TUGS WILL ENSURE ASSIGNED TUGS WHETHER NAVY-OWNED OR CONTRACTED ARE AVAILABLE AND READY IN ALL RESPECTS TO ASSIST IN SHIPBOARD FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS. THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN WILL OUTLINE THE STEPS NECESSARY TO ENGAGE ASSIGNED TUGS IN SHIPBOARD FIREFIGHTING AND LIST AVAILABLE TUGS TO SUPPORT FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS AND REQUIRED SHIP MOVES.

- A. COGNIZANT OFFICIAL, I.E., FIRE CHIEF, INCIDENT COMMANDER (IC), OR OTHER RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL, SUBMITS A REQUEST FOR SUPPORT (RFS) TO THE EOC/AREA COMMANDER PER OPNAVINST 3440.18.
 - B. EOC-AREA COMMANDER, IN TURN, SUBMITS RFS TO THE REGION OR INSTALLATION PORT OPERATIONS OFFICER, AS APPROPRIATE.
 - C. APPROPRIATE PORT OPERATIONS OFFICER RESPONDS, EITHER APPROVING THE RFS AND ASSIGNING TUGS (SPECIFIC NUMBER) TO SHIPBOARD FIREFIGHTING DUTIES OR DISAPPROVING THE RFS. IF DISAPPROVED, THE PORT OPERATIONS OFFICER WILL PROVIDE RATIONALE FOR THE DISAPPROVAL AND IMMEDIATELY SET EVENTS IN MOTION TO MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR TUGS FROM ANOTHER SOURCE SUCH AS COMMERCIAL TOWING COMPANIES.
 - D. ONCE THE RFS IS APPROVED, THE IC TAKES CONTROL OF ASSIGNED TUGS.
4. EMPLOYMENT OF AIR ASSETS: IN COORDINATION WITH AIRPAC AND AIRLANT, CNIC HAS DEVELOPED A CONOPS TO UTILIZE HELICOPTER SUPPORT WHERE AVAILABLE AND TO INCORPORATE THOSE PROCEDURES INTO AFFECTED INSTALLATION EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS. CNIC WILL HELP COORDINATE COMNAVREG SW AND COMNAVREG MIDLANT EFFORTS TO DEVELOP MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING WITH COMNAVIRPAC AND COMNAVIRLANT, RESPECTIVELY, TO OUTLINE TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR HELICOPTER SUPPORT TO MAJOR SHIPBOARD FIRES INPORT.
 - A. PER THE CHAIN OF COMMAND OUTLINED IN OPNAVINST 3440.18, IN THE CASE OF A MAJOR SHIPBOARD FIRE INPORT REQUIRING RESPONSES BY MULTIPLE ORGANIZATIONS COORDINATED THROUGH THE INCIDENT COMMANDER – WHERE HELICOPTER ASSETS ARE AVAILABLE THE IC RELAYS A REQUEST FOR SUPPORT TO THE EOC-AREA COMMANDER.
 - B. EOC-AREA COMMANDER RELAYS THE REQUEST TO THE PRIMARY COMMANDER OR NAVY COMPONENT COMMANDER WHO CAN DIRECT THE TYPE COMMANDER TO PROVIDE HELICOPTER FIREFIGHTING SUPPORT FOR THE AFFECTED SHIP.
 - C. TYPE COMMANDER DIRECTS THE RESPECTIVE TYPE WING (HSCWINGPAC OR HSCWINGLANT AS APPROPRIATE) TO TASK THE APPROPRIATE HELICOPTER SQUADRON TO PROVIDE SUPPORT.
 5. CNIC REGIONAL PROGRAM DIRECTORS FOR AIR OPERATIONS, PORT OPERATIONS, FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES, AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS WILL PROVIDE MONTHLY UPDATES TO CNIC HQ PROGRAM DIRECTORS REGARDING THE STATUS OF INCORPORATION OF HELICOPTER AND TUG SUPPORT PROCEDURES WITHIN INSTALLATION EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS AND HAZARD -SPECIFIC ANNEXES UNTIL COMPLETION.
 6. SCHEME OF MANEUVER.
 - A. FOR HELICOPTER SUPPORT IN SAN DIEGO FLEET CONCENTRATION AREA, COMNAVREG SW WILL COORDINATE MOU DEVELOPMENT WITH COMNAVIRPAC FOR HELICOPTER SUPPORT TO SHIPBOARD FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS AT NAVBASE VENTURA COUNTY POINT MUGU, NAVBASE SAN DIEGO, NAVBASE CORONADO, WPNSTA SEAL BEACH AND NAVBASE POINT LOMA. COMNAVREG SW WILL ENSURE THAT NAVY PORTS UPDATE THEIR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS AND HAZARD-SPECIFIC ANNEXES TO INCORPORATE PROCEDURES TO REQUEST HELICOPTER SUPPORT TO MAJOR SHIPBOARD FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS.
 - B. FOR HELICOPTER SUPPORT IN NORFOLK FLEET CONCENTRATION AREA, COMNAVREG MIDLANT WILL COORDINATE MOU DEVELOPMENT WITH COMNAVIRLANT FOR HELICOPTER SUPPORT TO SHIPBOARD FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS AT NORFOLK NAVAL SHIPYARD, JEB LITTLE CREEK-FORT STORY, NAVSTA NORFOLK AND WPNSTA YORKTOWN. COMNAVREG MIDLANT WILL ENSURE THAT NAVY PORTS UPDATE THEIR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS AND HAZARD-SPECIFIC

ANNEXES TO INCORPORATE PROCEDURES TO REQUEST HELICOPTER SUPPORT TO MAJOR SHIPBOARD FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS.

C. FOR TUG SUPPORT: ALL REGIONS WILL ENSURE THAT NAVY PORTS WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AOR UPDATE THEIR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANS AND HAZARD-SPECIFIC ANNEXES TO INCORPORATE PROCEDURES TO REQUEST TUG SUPPORT TO MAJOR SHIPBOARD FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS.//

B. CNIC WILL INCORPORATE AFOREMENTIONED REQUIREMENTS IN THE NEXT REVISION OF CNICINST 3440.17.

Appendix A: Acronyms

ADM	Admiral
AIRPAC	Air Forces, US Pacific Fleet
AIRLANT	Air Forces, US Atlantic Fleet
AMPL	Amplification
AOR	Area of Responsibility
CA	California
CNIC	Commander, Navy Installations Command
CNICINST	Commander, Navy Installations Command Instruction
CONOPS	Concept of Operations
COMJTREG	Commander, Joint Region
COMNAVAIRLANT	Commander, Naval Air Force US Atlantic Fleet
COMNAVAIRPAC	Commander, Naval Air Force US Pacific Fleet
COMNAVDIST	Commandant, Naval District
COMNAVREG	Commander Navy Region
DC	District of Columbia
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
FL	Florida
FM	From
GENTEXT	General Text
GU	Guam
HASC	House Armed Services Committee
HI	Hawaii
HSCWINGLANT	Helicopter Combat Support Wing US Atlantic Fleet
HSCWINGPAC	Helicopter Combat Support Wing US Pacific Fleet
IC	Incident Commander
IT	Italy
JA	Japan
JEB	Joint Expeditionary Base
KOR	Korea
MID	Message Identification
MIDLANT	Middle Atlantic
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSG	Message
NAVBASE	Naval Base
NAVSTA	Naval Station
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
OPNAVINST	Office of the Chief of Naval Operations Instruction
POC	Point of Contact
REF	Reference
RFS	Request for Support
SW	Southwest
SUBJ	Subject
UNCLAS	Unclassified
VA	Virginia
WA	Washington
WPNSTA	Weapons Station
ZYB	Administrative Message