



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
USS SAFEGUARD (ARS-50)
C/O FLEET POST OFFICE
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 96678-3221

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From: Commanding Officer, USS SAFEGUARD (ARS 50)
To: Director of Naval History, (OP-09BH) Washington Navy Yard, Washington DC 20374

Subj: COMMAND HISTORY

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12D
(b) CINCPACFLTINST 5730.3C

Encl: (1) USS SAFEGUARD (ARS 50) Command History for 1987

1. Per references (a) and (b) enclosure (1) is submitted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. J. O'Moore".

M. J. O'MOORE

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CINCPACFLT
COMNAVSURFPAC
COMSERVRON 5

BASIC HISTORY

COMMAND ORGANIZATION AND MISSION

USS SAFEGUARD is a diving and salvage ship based in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, under the control of Service Squadron FIVE. Lieutenant Commander Kenneth D. Harvey, U. S. Navy, , was in command until 7 August, 1987. Commander Robert R. Wells, U. S. Navy, , Commander Service Squadron FIVE, was Commanding Officer from 7 August to 3 September. Lieutenant Commander Michael J. O'Moore, U. S. Navy, , assumed command on 3 September. Lieutenant Jeffrey B. McDonell, U. S. Navy, , was Executive Officer throughout calendar year 1987. The following officers also served onboard: Lieutenant Kevin G. McDermott, U. S. Navy, , Lieutenant Patrick B. McElerney, U. S. Naval Reserve, ; Lieutenant (junior grade) Gail M. Spalding, U. S. Naval Reserve, . Lieutenant (junior grade) Lloyd G. Eukers III, U. S. Navy, -- Lieutenant (junior grade) James B. Biles, U. S. Naval Reserve, Lieutenant (junior grade) David C. Austin, U. S. Naval Reserve, and Chief Warrant Officer Paul L. Fears, U. S. Navy, .

CHRONOLOGY FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 1987

- 01-05 Jan 87: Christmas leave and upkeep period in Pearl Harbor. SAFEGUARD is host ship to His Thai Majesty's Ship Rattanakosin.
- 06-15 Jan 87: Preparations for WESTPAC Deployment.
- 16 Jan 87: SAFEGUARD commences WESTPAC 87 Deployment.
- 16-29 Jan 87: Transit to Guam
- 29-30 Jan 87: Arrival in Guam. YRST-1 inspected for later tow.
- 31 Jan-5 Feb 87: Transit to Subic Bay.
- 6-8 Feb 87: Arrival in Subic Bay. Liberty for the crew.
- 8-13 Feb 87: Local operations with SEAL Team Three members and USS BARBEL (SS 580)
- 13-15 Feb 87: Inport upkeep period.
- 16-23 Feb 87: Ship-to-shop (S) availability with the USS PRARIE (AD 15).
- 24-27 Feb 87: Transit to Hong Kong.
- 27 Feb - 5 Mar 87: SAFEGUARD serves as the support ship for USS SAM HOUSTON (SSN 713)
- 5-9 Mar 87: Transit to Sasebo, Japan.
- 9-12 Mar 87: Upkeep period in Sasebo.
- 12-13 Mar 87: Transit to Shibushi, Japan.
- 13-16 Mar 87: Inport Shibushi, Japan, for successful public relations visit.
- 16-17 Mar 87: Transit to Sasebo.
- 17 Mar 87: SAFEGUARD arrives in Sasebo to onload an SDV team, departing that afternoon for Chinhae ROK.
- 18-21 Mar 87: SAFEGUARD arrives in Chinhae for a brief upkeep period. Preparations are made for upcoming SDV support operations and the 1987 Salvage Exercise (SALVEX 87) with ROK Service Squadron 55.
- 21 Mar 87: Local operations with the SEAL SDV Team are attempted, but aborted due to high seas.
- 23 Mar 87: SALVEX 87, part of Team Spirit 87, is inaugurated with a dinner hosted by ROK Service Squadron Five Five.

24-25 Mar 87: Technical assist from NAVSEA indicates the need for immediate repairs on the port reduction gear. SALVEX 87 is postponed.

26-27 Mar 87: Transit to Sasebo, Japan, to effect repairs on port reduction gear.

27 Mar-10 Apr 87: Port reduction gear repaired. SDV Team offloads and disembarks.

10-14 Apr 87: SAFEGUARD departs Sasebo for Hong Kong but alters course to Subic Bay 14 April due to failure of the gyrocompass. While enroute from Sasebo to Hong Kong, SAFEGUARD conducts a Freedom of Navigation Transit of the Taiwan Straits.

14-16 Apr 87: Transit to Subic Bay.

16-29 Apr 87: SAFEGUARD arrives in Subic Bay and starts a twelve day restricted availability with Ship Repair Facility, Subic Bay, on the 17th.

29-31 Apr 87: SAFEGUARD tows an AFDB section to Scarborough Shoals to be used as an air-to-ground bombardment target.

1-4 May 87: Upkeep period in Subic Bay.

5-6 May 87: Local diving operations to certify SRF Subic Bay, FADS System.

7-12 May 87: Upkeep period in Subic Bay.

12-18 May 87: Transit to Chinhae, ROK.

18-26 May 87: SALVEX 87.

27-28 May 87: Transit to Pusan, ROK.

28-29 May 87: SAFEGUARD takes APD-827 in tow to Sasebo Japan, from Pusan.

30 May-1 June 87: Transit from Sasebo to Pusan.

1-2 Jun 87: SAFEGUARD delayed in Pusan due to bad weather.

3-4 Jun 87: Transit to Sasebo with APD-828 in tow.

4 Jun 87: APD-828 delivered to Fleet Activities Sasebo. SAFEGUARD immediately departs for Guam.

4-9 Jun 87: Transit to Guam.

9-11 Jun 87: Final preparations are made for tow of YRST-1 to Pearl Harbor.

12 Jun-4 Jul 87: Transit to Pearl Harbor.

4 Jul 87: Arrival in Pearl Harbor. End of WESTPAC 87.

4-19 Jul 87: Leave and upkeep period.

20 Jul-14 Aug 87: Restricted availability with SIMA, Pearl Harbor.

6 Aug 87: SAFEGUARD is visited by the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS).

7 Aug 87: Lieutenant Commander Kenneth D. Harvey is relieved of his duties as the Commanding Officer of USS SAFEGUARD. Commander Robert R. Wells, Commander, Service Squadron Five, assumes command.

15-16 Aug 87: Inport upkeep period.

17 Aug 87: Local operations conducted off the Reef Runway of Honolulu International Airport. During a liberty boat transit from the anchorage to Alpha Docks, two sailors drown when the liberty boat capsizes in heavy surf.

3 Sept 87: LCDR Michael J. O'Moore assumes command of USS SAFEGUARD.

4 Sept-6 Oct 87: SAFEGUARD participates in CNO Project Julius.

6-20 Oct 87: Upkeep status inport Pearl Harbor.

20 Oct-6 Nov 87: SAFEGUARD participates in a JCS Pony Express Operation.

6-15 Nov 87: Inport upkeep period in Pearl Harbor.

16-20 Nov 87: ISIC Engineering Readiness Assessment (IERA). SAFEGUARD evaluated as the best diesel ship in the Pacific Fleet.

21-29 Nov 87: Inport upkeep period.

30 Nov-11 Dec 87: Salvage Training. Commanding Officer MDSU-1 comments that SAFEGUARD's Salvage Plan is the best he has seen in years.

12-18 Dec 87: Inport upkeep period.

19-31 Dec 87: Christmas leave and upkeep period.

1987 opened with SAFEGUARD acting as host ship for His Majesty's Thai ship Rattanikosin, a corvette constructed in Bremerton, Washington, en route to Thailand after it's commissioning. Rattanikosin departed on 5 January 1987.

On 5 January the Christmas-New Year leave and upkeep period ended. Final preparations were made for the upcoming deployment, with SAFEGUARD departing as scheduled for WESTPAC on 16 January.

SAFEGUARD arrived in Guam on 29 January. After an uneventful transit from Pearl Harbor, SAFEGUARD spent two days in Guam in order to take on stores and fuel as well as inspect YRST-1, due to be towed to Pearl Harbor at the completion of SAFEGUARD's deployment. YRST-1 was undergoing extensive repairs due to damage sustained during a typhoon while being towed to Guam for overhaul. The inspection indicated that repairs could be affected on schedule.

Arrival in Subic Bay on 5 February was welcomed by all onboard. After some well deserved liberty, the operational tempo quickly picked up. On 8 February SAFEGUARD got underway for local operations in support of members of SEAL Team Three conducting training exercises with USS BARBEL (SS 580). SAFEGUARD returned to Subic Bay on 13 February.

Following three days of inport upkeep, SAFEGUARD started a ship-to-shop (S) availability with the USS PRARIE (AD 15) which lasted until 23 February.

On 24 February SAFEGUARD departed for Hong Kong, arriving on the 27th, where she served as support ship for USS SAM HOUSTON (SSN 713).

SAFEGUARD departed Hong Kong on 5 March for Sasebo, Japan, arriving on 9 March.

On 12 March SAFEGUARD left Sasebo for Shibushi, Japan, arriving on 13 March. This was a public relations port visit. No U. S. Navy ship had ever visited Shibushi before. A large and enthusiastic reception upon arrival was a taste of the outstanding hospitality extended throughout the visit to the entire SAFEGUARD crew by the citizens of Shibushi. The visit was an unqualified success from every point of view.

On 16 March, SAFEGUARD departed Shibushi for Sasebo, arriving on 17 March. An SDV team was taken onboard and SAFEGUARD departed that afternoon for Chinhae, Republic of Korea, in order to participate in Team Spirit 87.

On 18 March SAFEGUARD arrived in Chinhae for a brief upkeep period to prepare for the upcoming SDV support operations and the 1987 Salvage Exercise (SALVEX 87) with ROKN Service Squadron 55.

SAFEGUARD departed Chinhae on 21 march for local operations with the SEAL SDV unit. The operation, however, was cancelled due to high seas, resulting in SAFEGUARD returning to port that same day.

The officers of Service Squadron 55 hosted the SAFEGUARD wardroom to a traditional Korean feast on the night of 23 March to inaugurate SALVEX 87.

On 24 March a technical representative from NAVSEA inspected the port reduction gear. It had begun to emit an unusual rumbling noise some weeks prior. Ship's force had been unable to determine the cause. Upon inspection, the NAVSEA representative found signs of abnormal wear on several gear teeth. To avert the possibility of a major engineering casualty, it was decided to postpone SALVEX 87 and proceed immediately to Sasebo for repairs.

On 26 March SAFEGUARD departed Chinhae for Sasebo on the starboard shaft only, arriving on 27 March. Repairs began immediately. The SDV was unloaded and the SEAL team disembarked. Repairs to the port main reduction gear proved completely successful.

SAFEGUARD departed Sasebo for Hong Kong on 10 April. The ship's gyrocompass went out of commission upon leaving Sasebo. Attempts to fix it proved unsuccessful, thus forcing SAFEGUARD to alter course on 14 April for Subic Bay to effect repairs, after successfully completing a Freedom of Navigation transit through the Taiwan Straits.

On 16 April SAFEGUARD arrived in Subic Bay where she underwent a successful twelve day restricted availability with Ship Repair Facility, Subic Bay.

On 29 April SAFEGUARD took a drydock section in tow to be placed inside Scarborough Shoals as an air-to-ground bombardment target. The section had to be grounded in the shoals, which have an extremely narrow opening unsafe for navigation. The solution was to "slingshot" the section into the opening with a subsequent assist from SAFEGUARD's work boats. Successfully in place, the bottom of the section was blown out to complete a perfect placement. SAFEGUARD divers used the opportunity for diving and demolition training on this beautiful and isolated reef. SAFEGUARD returned to Subic Bay on 31 April.

The final days spent in Subic Bay were in an upkeep status, with local diving operations on the 5th and 6th of May for Subic Bay SRF FADS certification and SAFEGUARD diver training.

On 12 May SAFEGUARD left Subic Bay for Chinhae for the rescheduled SALVEX 87, arriving on 18 May. The SALVEX with SERVON FIVE FIVE included diving using US and ROK divers, demolition training and heavy bow lifts with ROKNS GUMI. The bow lift operations were observed by the ROK Vice Chief of Naval Operations, Vice Admiral Chueng on 26 May. SALVEX 87 was successful in all respects, demonstrating a **heightened** degree of professional **expertise** on the part of the Koreans. SAFEGUARD divers also got an opportunity to demonstrate their skills under stress. A diver's stage shackle failed, fouling two SAFEGUARD divers in 160 feet of icy water with zero visibility. Tragedy was only averted by the cool professionalism of the divers and the topside support team.

On 27 May SAFEGUARD departed Chinhae for Pusan, arriving on the 28th to tow APD-827 to Sasebo. With APD-827 in tow, SAFEGUARD departed that same day to arrive in Sasebo on 27 May for a brief stay, departing again for Pusan on 30 May to take APD-828 in tow. SAFEGUARD arrived in Pusan on 1 June, but

could not leave with its tow until 3 June due to high winds and seas. Tugs took custody of APD-828 inside Sasebo Harbor on 4 June, allowing SAFEGUARD to continue on to Guam without pause.

SAFEGUARD arrived in Guam on 9 June. Final preparations were made to tow YRST-1 to Pearl Harbor. SAFEGUARD and her tow departed Guam on 12 June. Due to age and an inherently deficient design for open ocean towing, the YRST-1 had to be towed at less than six knots and was manned by a detachment from Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit One for damage control purposes. On 4 July SAFEGUARD returned to Pearl Harbor, bringing WESTPAC 87 to a successful close.

After a two week leave and upkeep period SAFEGUARD entered a restricted availability with SIMA, Pearl Harbor, on 20 July, which lasted until 14 August.

The Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services (DACOWITS) visited SAFEGUARD on 6 August, as part of a general tour of Western Pacific United States military activities. Their mandate was to review the conditions under which women in uniform worked throughout the region. SAFEGUARD was visited as it was the only ship in port at the time with women crew members. On 7 August, Lieutenant Commander Kenneth D. Harvey was relieved of his command as a result of allegations uncovered by DACOWITS. He was relieved by Commander Robert R. Wells, Commander, Service Squadron Five, until a permanent relief could assume command.

On 17 August, SAFEGUARD anchored off the Reef Runway of Honolulu International Airport to begin what was to have been a week of diving operations. Liberty parties went ashore in one of the thirty five foot work boats. The second liberty party which went ashore departed after sunset. At the entrance to Pearl Harbor channel a set of unusually large waves capsized the boat. Two sailors, RM2 Ronald E. Urbani and QM3 Lorenzo M. Kemp, drowned in the incident. The others onboard managed to regroup through heroic effort and swim to shore. In the exhaustive rescue effort which followed only the body of QM3 Kemp was recovered. Memorial services were held onboard SAFEGUARD.

LCDR Michael J. O'Moore assumed command of SAFEGUARD on 3 September.

On 4 September, SAFEGUARD departed for Adak, Alaska on a CNO Special Project, returning to Pearl Harbor on 6 October. SAFEGUARD was then in an upkeep status until 20 October when she departed on Pony Express operations in the Broad Ocean Area, returning to port on 6 November.

Upon returning, SAFEGUARD went into an upkeep period and finalized preparations for the 16 to 20 November ISIC Engineering Readiness Assessment (IERA). The IERA was an outstanding success. The Mobile Training Team (MTT) conducting the assessment declared SAFEGUARD to have the best diesel Engineering Department in the Pacific Fleet.

Following IERA, SAFEGUARD went into an upkeep period until the 30 November - 11 December Salvage Training, which was also successful.

SAFEGUARD went into an upkeep status after salvage training until 18 December when the Christmas leave and upkeep period began, lasting through the end of 1987.