



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**

USS GRAPPLE (ARS 53)  
C/O FPO AE NEW YORK 09570-3223

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Ser CO/081  
25 Sep 03

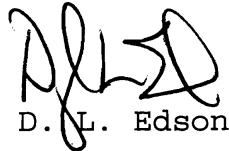
From: Commanding Officer, USS Grapple (ARS 53)  
To: Director of Naval History, Naval Historical Center,  
(Attn: N09BH) Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C.  
20374-5060

Subj: USS GRAPPLE (ARS 53) COMMAND HISTORY CY 2002

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 5750.12F

Encl: (1) Command Composition and Organization  
(2) Ship's Schedule CY 2002  
(3) Narrative 2002

1. Per reference (a), enclosures (1) through (3) are submitted.

  
D. L. Edson

## COMMAND COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

### Commanding Officer

01 Jan 2001 - 08 Mar 2002: LCDR Alan P. Tupman  
08 Mar 2002 - 31 Dec 2002: LCDR Douglas L. Edson

### Executive Officer

02 Aug 2001 - 31 Dec 2002: LT William J. Kaelber

### First Lieutenant

01 Jan 2001 - 14 Jun 2002: LTJG Dennis Mojica  
14 Jun 2002 - 30 Sep 2002: CWO4 Jerry Stephens  
30 Sep 2002 - 31 Dec 2002: LTJG John P. Bauer

### Engineering Officer

01 Jan 2001 - 03 Jun 2002: LTJG Bobby Gaskin  
03 Jun 2002 - 31 Dec 2002: LT Leon S. Abrams

### Operations Officer

01 Jan 2001 - 08 Mar 2002: LTJG Autumn J. Kosinski  
08 Mar 2002 - 31 Dec 2002: LTJG Sara H. Olsen

### Supply Officer

31 Dec 2001 - 08 Mar 2002: ENS Christopher R. Rose  
08 Mar 2002 - 30 Sep 2002: ENS John P. Bauer  
30 Sep 2002 - 31 Dec 2002: ENS Sean S. Kido

### Command Senior Enlisted Advisor

01 Jan 2001 - 03 Jun 2002: SKCS Robert Lombard  
03 Jun 2002 - 10 Jul 2002: SKCS Brian Hill  
10 Jul 2002 - 31 Dec 2002: BMCN Eric Frank

Commanding Officer: A. P. Tupman, LCDR, USN  
Change of command 08MAR02 to D. L. Edson, LCDR, USN

ISIC: Commander, Combat Logistics Squadron Two

### Mission:

USS Grapple (ARS 53) is homeported out of Naval Amphibious Base Little Creek, Norfolk, Virginia. Grapple is the newest of

Enclosure (1)

the 50 Class Rescue and Salvage vessels constructed for the U.S. Navy.

Grapple's mission is to provide rescue and salvage services to the fleet. Her capabilities include:

**SALVAGE:** A disabled ship may require varied assistance before towing can be attempted. In her 21,000 cubic feet salvage hold, the Grapple carries transportable cutting and welding equipments, hydraulic and electric power sources, de-watering gear, salvage and machine shops, and hull repair materials to effect temporary hull repairs on stranded or otherwise damaged ships. Grapple also has a 7 ½ ton capacity boom forward and a 40 ton capacity boom aft to off-load a disabled ship, and handle heavy equipment during salvage operations.

**DIVING:** The Mark 21 (MK-21) air diving system provides Grapple divers with the capability of tethered diving to depths of 190 feet of seawater on air and, with the use of a Fly-Away Mixed Gas System, depths of 300 feet of seawater on helium-oxygen mixtures. For shallow underwater inspections, searches, and other tasks that require mobility, divers can use SCUBA. The onboard recompression chamber is used for treatment of divers suffering from decompression sickness or for routine surface decompression.

**TOWING:** Grapple is capable of both rescue and open ocean towing. The ship can develop a bollard pull of 120,000 lbs with an installed double drum towing machine rove with 3,000 feet of 2 ¼ inch wire rope on each drum. The ship also has a traction winch for limited towing using a synthetic hawser.

**BEACH GEAR:** A stranded vessel may be retracted from the beach using up to six sets of beach gear and Stato anchors carried by Grapple. Two beach gear ground legs can be rigged on board Grapple, and up to four beach gear ground legs can be rigged on the stranded vessel. Utilizing modified legs of beach gear and the large spring buoys, Grapple can lay a multi-point open ocean moor to station herself for diving and ROV operations.

**OFF SHIP FIRE FIGHTING:** There are fire monitors located at the forward and aft ends of the O-4 Level (top of the pilothouse). A third fire monitor is located on the forecastle. These monitors are supplied with up to 1000 gallons per minute of either seawater or aqueous film forming foam (AFFF) to fight fires on other ships.

HEAVY LIFT: The heavy lift system is made up of bow and stern rollers, deck machinery, and tackle. The rollers provide a low friction fairlead for the lift wires or chain. The deck machinery and tackle supply the required hauling force of up to 150 tons, 75 tons to each lift. The two main bow rollers or the two stem rollers, each carrying one-half of the load, are used to accomplish lifts to 150 tons. A static tidal lift of 300 tons can be made using the main bow rollers and stem rollers simultaneously with the tide.

SHIP'S SCHEDULE 2002

21DEC01 - 22JAN	HOLIDAY STAND DOWN
23JAN - 24FEB	FLEET MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY INSURV PREPARATIONS
26FEB - 01MAR	INSURV
02-10MAR	IPT LITTLE CREEK, VA
08MAR	CHANGE OF COMMAND
11MAR - 19JUN	DPMF COLONNA'S SHIPYARD
29-30MAY	CREW CERTIFICATION
03-07JUN	AVCERT / ARE ASSIST VISIT
12-14JUN	LIGHT OFF ASSESSMENT
17JUN	PROPULSION PLANT LIGHT OFF
18JUN	DOCK TRIALS / FAST CRUISE
19JUN	SEA TRIALS
20JUN - 10JUL	IPT LITTLE CREEK, VA
24-26JUN	SAR PHASE I, II EVAL
24-28JUN	AVCERT / ARE
27-28JUN	DIVING SAFETY SURVEY
11JUL	DEAD STICK MOVE TO COLONNA'S SHIPYARD
12-22JUL	IPT COLONNA'S SHIPYARD; DPMF EXTENSION
22JUL	FAST CRUISE
23JUL	DEAD STICK MOVE TO NORFOLK NAVAL BASE
24-25JUL	CRANKSHAFT DEFLECTIONS
26-27JUL	U/W WLANT FOR SEA TRIALS
28-30JUL	IPT LITTLE CREEK, VA
31JUL - 02AUG	U/W WLANT; INDEPENDENT STEAMING EXERCISES
03AUG	U/W FAMILY DAY CRUISE
04-11AUG	IPT LITTLE CREEK, VA TOW MACHINE GROOM SUPPLY MANAGEMENT ASSIST
12AUG	U/W WLANT NAVCHECK RIDE ASSIST
13-14AUG	U/W 2 PT MOOR VACAPES FOR VF-101 F-14B RECOVERY
15-18AUG	IPT LITTLE CREEK, VA
19-22AUG	U/W WLANT INDEPENDENT STEAMING EXERCISES
23-26AUG	IPT LITTLE CREEK, VA
27-29AUG	U/W CHES BAY SALVAGE TRAINING OFF SHIP FIRE FIGHTING TRAINING
30AUG-02SEP	IPT LITTLE CREEK, VA
03SEP	U/W WLANT ENROUTE EARLE, NJ
04SEP	IPT EARLE, NJ
05-06SEP	U/W WLANT ENROUTE BOSTON, MA ISIC NAVCHECK RIDE

07-11SEP	IPT BOSTON, MA
12-13SEP	U/W WLANT ENROUTE LITTLE CREEK, VA
14-30SEP	IPT LITTLE CREEK, VA
01-02OCT	U/W WLANT ENROUTE PHILADELPHIA, PA
	DEAD SHIP TOW OF EX-USS PETERSON
03-06OCT	IPT PHILADELPHIA, PA
07-08OCT	U/W WLANT ENROUTE LITTLE CREEK, VA
	UNREP WITH USNS LEROY GRUMANN
09-28OCT	IPT LITTLE CREEK, VA
17-18OCT	FIELD CALIBRATION CERTIFICATION
17OCT	ARQ
21-25OCT	SUPPLY MANAGEMENT INSPECTION
29-30OCT	U/W WLANT ENROUTE PHILADELPHIA
31OCT-10NOV	U/W WLANT ENROUTE ROOSEVELT ROADS, PR
	DEAD SHIP TOW OF EX-USS CARON
11-15NOV	IPT NAVAL STATION ROOSEVELT ROADS, PR
16-20NOV	U/W CARIBBEAN ISO DIVE TRAINING
21-24NOV	IPT ST THOMAS, USVI
25-27NOV	U/W CARIBBEAN ISO ENGINEERING TRAINING
28NOV-02DEC	IPT NAVAL STATION ROOSEVELT ROADS, PR
03-04DEC	U/W PUERTO RICAN OPERATING AREAS
	TOW OF EX-USS CARON TO RANGE
	OFF-SHIP FIREFIGHTING ISO DD(X) WET
	PROJECT
05-07DEC	IPT NAVAL STATION ROOSEVELT ROADS, PR
08-12DEC	U/W WLANT ENROUTE LITTLE CREEK, VA
13DEC-13JAN03	IPT LITTLE CREEK, VA - HOLIDAY LEAVE
	PERIOD
17DEC-17JAN03	DIESEL INSPECTION
30DEC-17JAN03	FLEET MAINTENANCE AVAILABILITY

## NARRATIVE 2002

With the Board of Inspections and Survey (INSURV) due to arrive late February for Grapple's five year inspection, the crew worked diligently preparing the ship. SIMA Norfolk provided a four week Fleet Maintenance Availability during these preparations in which one of four main propulsion diesel engines was rebuilt.

The INSURV team arrive on 26 FEB and conducted a thorough material inspection of the entire ship from mast to keel. Grapple crewmembers were lauded by the President of INSURV for their positive attitude and proactive behavior in correcting discrepancies.

On March 8, 2002, LCDR Douglas Edson became Grapple's eighth Commanding Officer, relieving LCDR Alan Tupman. Three days following change of command, Grapple arrived at Colonna Shipyard to commence an extensive yard period.

Throughout the DPMF, Grapple crewmembers worked alongside contractors to affect several major repairs and SHIPALTs, including new oily waste separator and AFFF system. The rapport that the crew created with contractors along with their knowledge of the ship allowed Grapple crew to make suggestions that saved the ship and the Navy tens of thousands of dollars.

Grapple's CNO maintenance availability ended on 27 July, 2002. The ship had spent the time at Colonna Shipyard training for upcoming inspections and certifications in order to align herself with some of the changes to the SURFORTRAMAN that was published earlier in the year.

In the midst of this training, Grapple was tasked with the salvage of a VF-101 F-14B off the Virginia Capes. She expertly accomplished this mission in only two days, allowing her to continue with scheduled engineering exercises and off-ship firefighting training.

September brought tow preparations for USS Peterson. Grapple liaised with Peterson to ensure a safe tow that complied with the U.S. Navy Towing Manual (App H). The dead-ship tow of the Ex-USS Peterson from Norfolk, VA to Philadelphia Naval Business Center was completed 02 OCT.

During October, Supply department completed a successful SMI; Engineering received their Field Calibration Certification; Deck accomplished their ARQ; and Operations department, having just completed ISIC observed NAV check ride, was preparing for Grapple's next mission to Puerto Rico.

NAVSEA PMS 500, DD(X) team, requested Grapple's assistance to conduct one of only four ever Weapons Effect Tests (WET). Grapple was tasked to complete a dead-ship tow of Ex-USS Caron from Philadelphia to Naval Station Roosevelt Roads in 10 days.

Once on station, the Ex-Caron had test and evaluation instrumentation installed by NAVSEA and their contractors for a fire spread WET. Grapple spent this time training three teams to board Ex-Caron at sea for fire boundary watch, overhaul, and firefighting as needed. She was also responsible for training NAVSEA personnel in boarding and disembarking procedures.

The early IDTC salvage and firefighting training coupled with a month of training on the Ex-Caron in Puerto Rico prepared Grapple for any possible contingency that arose as a result of the weapon induced fire.

After installation and training had been completed, Grapple towed Ex-Caron to the PROA range. The weapon detonated and successfully induced a fire in the after portion of the ship. Grapple teams boarded Ex-Caron following a one-hour stability observation period.

An unplanned secondary explosion caused the Ex-Caron to list rapidly, creating loss of stability. Grapple safely disembarked all military and civilian personnel from Ex-Caron. Once a positive head count had been accomplished and verified Grapple small boats returned to the vicinity of the Ex-CARON to recover vital test data. As a result of her efforts, NAVSEA was able to interpret the saved data for further use in the proposed design of DD(X).

Grapple returned to homeport 12 DEC 2002 for holiday leave period. During the last month of the year, she started both an availability period and her periodic diesel inspection.