



RHUMB LINES

Straight Lines to Navigate By



February 1, 2010

Haiti Relief Update – Sustaining the Force and Supporting the Relief Agencies

“The military personnel here are working non-stop, around the clock coordinating the air and sea assets to deliver immediate, life-saving supplies to Haiti. The timely delivery of this aid is only possible due to the close proximity of Naval Base Guantanamo Bay to the affected area. Guantanamo Bay is a critical asset to meet the strategic needs in this region.”

– Rear Adm. Patricia Wolfe, Commander Task Force 48, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

The Navy continues support to Operation Unified Response with a variety of capabilities afloat and ashore in support of the joint, interagency and international effort.

From First Responders to Sustained Support

The speed and agility of Navy ships made them key first responders to the Haitian earthquake. As more sustained, tailored humanitarian capabilities are in place, some naval forces can be released with no impact to the relief mission.

- The Navy continues to work in support of the Government of Haiti, the United Nations Mission for Stability in Haiti, the United States Agency for International Development, and other U.S. government agencies along with coordinating efforts with several non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- The Navy is redeploying USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70), USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) and USNS Henson (T-AGS 63) as the capabilities they provided are now being provided by other units, nations, institutions, and services. Helicopter airlift capabilities have transferred ashore and to other ships in the sea base. The U.S. will continue to move supplies and medical patients quickly to respond to needs on the ground.
- The decision to release Carl Vinson, Bunker Hill and Henson was based on assessments by the Task Force commanders concerning the transitional phases of this relief effort. Their release does not impact the sea base's level of support to Joint Task Force-Haiti.

Sustaining the Force and Supporting the Relief Agencies

A key element to sustaining [humanitarian assistance and disaster response for the Haitian people](#) is the ability to air and [sea lift supplies](#) into the affected area. That process is being managed and coordinated by [Task Force 48](#) at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. A variety of air and sea assets are being used to lift relief supplies into Haiti and to other multinational assets operating off the coast.

- Just 170 miles from Port-au-Prince, Guantanamo Bay provides an ideal location from which to move food, water and medical supplies. From this [Joint Logistics Hub](#), Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard cargo planes and helicopters transport relief supplies and personnel to Haiti and to more than 14 Navy units at sea.
- Sustaining relief operations has required a multinational effort. One example of this was the on load of U.S. [Navy Mobile Dive and Salvage Unit \(MDSU\) 2](#), Task Force 42, and its equipment on board the [Dutch navy ship HNLMS Pelikkan \(A 804\)](#) on Jan. 22 for transfer to Haiti.
- Maritime prepositioning ships have been critical to moving relief supplies. [1st LT Jack Lummus \(T-AK 3011\) offloaded supplies and vehicles](#) critical to sustaining humanitarian assistance in support of Haiti relief efforts.
- The Navy is supporting NGOs and other agencies in relief efforts. [Red Cross personnel](#), whole blood donations, platelets, insulin and dozens of [pallets of medical supplies](#) have been airlifted to [USNS Comfort \(T-AH 20\)](#) and Haiti.

Key Messages

- The Navy continues to work in support of the joint, interagency and international relief effort in Haiti.
- Navy personnel play a vital role in supporting this humanitarian effort; including making the logistics chain possible and distributing life-saving assistance.
- The people of Haiti continue to have the support of the U.S. in the urgent effort to deliver humanitarian relief that Haitians need.

Facts & Figures

- USS Carl Vinson and its air wing distributed more than 1.1 million pounds of aid for earthquake survivors.
- Nineteen helicopters embarked aboard Carl Vinson flew more than 1,000 hours and evacuated 435 patients since their arrival off Haiti Jan. 15.
- Ten helicopters from the carrier will remain with Joint Task Force-Haiti and will continue to support international relief efforts from other U.S. Navy ships.
- For the latest information visit www.navy.mil/Haiti.