



# RHUMB LINES

*Straight Lines to Navigate By*



September 15, 2008

## Navy in Current Conflicts: Iraq

*"U.S. and coalition naval forces conduct operations that are focused on reassuring regional partners of our commitment to help develop security and stability in Iraq. We are helping increase the capacity of Iraqi Security Forces through training: both ashore and afloat. Throughout the region, U.S. maritime forces provide assistance for the protection of key infrastructure nodes, which form the foundation of much of the world's stability, prosperity, and economic growth."*  
– Vice Adm. Bill Gortney, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command

With more than 6,400 U.S. Navy personnel serving on the ground in Iraq, 2,700 of whom are individual augmentees, it is important that we understand how we are carrying out the maritime strategy in that region.

### A glimpse into operations

- The U.S. Coast Guard, United States, United Kingdom, Singaporean and Australian Navies, as part of [Combined Task Force 158](#), operate in the North Arabian Gulf to provide maritime security, infrastructure protection and training to the Iraqi Navy.
  - CTF 158 operates jointly with Iraqi Navy sailors and marines, trained by members of the Navy Transition Team based in Umm Qasr.
  - CTF 158's primary mission is maintaining security in and around the Al Basrah and Khawr Al Amaya oil terminals in support of [U.N. Security Council Resolution 1790](#). The [oil terminals](#) are significant sources of revenue for the Iraqi people – revenue that is important to the rebuilding of Iraq.
- Naval Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) forces are contributing to important missions in Iraq.
  - Riverine Squadron 3 is supporting 1st Marine Expeditionary Force operations, securing critical infrastructure points such as Haditha Dam in Al Anbar province and conducting combat operations on lakes and waterways.
  - Explosive Ordnance Disposal platoons and companies are conducting operations enabling access throughout Iraq, which includes disarming and disposing of roadside Improvised Explosive Devices, destroying weapons caches and explosive remnants of war and supporting Special Operations Forces.
  - SeaBees as part of Naval Construction Forces are building living and office spaces as well as roads, weapons ranges and various other multi-use structures throughout the country.
  - The Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group (NAVELSG) conducts customs and cargo handling operations at major entry and exit points in Iraq.
- U.S. Navy aircraft fly close air support missions in Iraq supporting coalition ground forces. Naval aircraft are tactically flexible, highly disciplined and very effective.

### Key Messages

- Our job in Iraq is to provide security for the people and political process in the effort against violent extremists. We are also helping increase the capacity of the Government of Iraq and Iraqi Security Forces through training; both ashore and afloat.
- The Navy Reserve continues to provide capability and capacity in support of major combat operations.
- Operations in the 5<sup>th</sup> Fleet area of operations (AOR) are focused on reassuring regional partners of the U.S. commitment to global security and stability.

### Facts & Figures

- During USS Abraham Lincoln's (CVN 72) recent deployment to the U.S. 5<sup>th</sup> Fleet area of operations, they successfully flew nearly 1,100 sorties totaling more than 6,000 flight hours in direct support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.
- Coalition vessels have been providing security for oil terminals since March 2003.
- More than three quarters of Iraq's Gross Domestic Product is generated from the oil that flows through Iraq's oil terminals.