HM-15

Illustration by Tasheka Arceneaux

NAVAL RESERVIST serves at the tip of the spear

Navy missions operating out of Bahrain in the Arabian Gulf illustrate this total force concept. Reserve and active duty Sailors based here work along side one another on dangerous missions everyday.

JO2 Edward Flynn
Navy Information Bureau 101 New England

MANAMA, Bahrain – The pilot makes the final safety checks on his ME-53 Sea Dragon before taking off from an airfield. Today, he and his crew are conducting live-fire training with 50-caliber machine guns. Yesterday, they flew a load of cargo and passengers onto the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise (CVN 65). Tomorrow, they are scheduled to conduct anti-mine operations in the Arabian Gulf.

It's all just part of the job for LCDR Lawrence C. Braman, a Naval Reservist assigned to Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron 15 Detachment 2 (HM 15) of Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas.

Braman and HM-15 prove it is truly one Navy. Today, Naval Reservists from commands and squadrons throughout the force are deployed around the globe, including the Middle East. They are part of a single "total force" envisioned by the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) ADM Vern Clark.

Navy missions operating out of Bahrain in the Arabian Gulf illustrate this total force concept. Reserve and active duty Sailors based here work along side one another on dangerous missions everyday.

The CNO set a bold new course for the Navy with Sea Power 21.

"Sea Power 21 is our vision to align, organize, integrate, and transform our Navy to meet the challenges that lie ahead," Clark said. The goal of this alignment is for the citizen-Sailors of the Naval Reserve to be able to step right into their Navy jobs whenever called.

HM-15 consists of active duty and Reserve Sailors serving in Bahrain on six-month rotations. Deployed since Oct. 2003, Braman serves as a Sea Dragon pilot and squadron administrative officer. The squadron patrols the Arabian Gulf, assisting with mine sweeping operations, cargo and personnel transports to underway ships and special assignments in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

"The duties are difficult and often hazardous, but it is a privilege to put on this uniform and serve my country," said Braman.

Braman, who holds a master's degree and is a businessman in civilian life, described the close working relationship among the pilots and crew. He said his unit does everything possible to ensure the Reserve pilots are fully trained, qualified, and deployable.

"It is not a one weekend a month requirement," he said. "Just like the active duty helicopter pilots, I must fly at least 100 hours a year. I also put in long hours of study. I could not be successful without exceptional support from the active duty pilots. They are always willing to give me the right training whenever I need it."

LCDR Richard B. Hencke, officer-in-charge of the squadron's daily operations in Bahrain, said he would be hard pressed to do without talented Reserve Sailors such as Braman.

"His professionalism and expertise benefit the entire squadron from the maintenance crew to his fellow pilots," Hencke said. "Braman's 'can do' attitude typifies the Reserve Force."

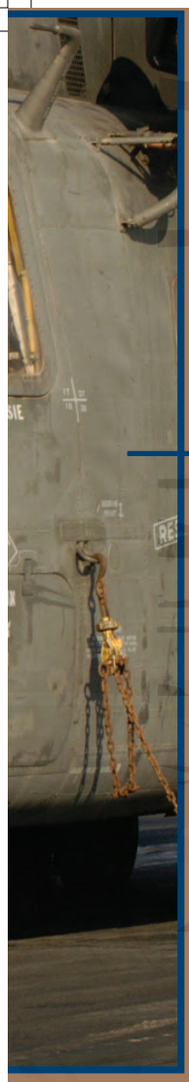
Braman and his colleagues in HM-15 have taken the CNO's call to heart. They prove working as part of one team – one Navy – Reservists can make a real difference at the 'tip of the spear.'

Photo by JO2 Mark O'Donald

HM-15

An MH-53E Sea Dragon assigned to the "Blackhawks" of Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron One Five (HM-15), a Naval Reserve squadron, lands on the flight deck aboard USS Enterprise (CVN 65), while the guided missile cruisers USS Gettysburg (CG 64), top, and USS Philippine Sea (CG 58), center, come along her port side. The Enterprise Carrier Strike Group (CSG) is in the Arabian Gulf region conducting missions in support of Operation *Iraqi Freedom* and the Global War on Terrorism.

Photo by PHAN Rob Gaston



Naval Reservist, LCDR Lawrence Braman of Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron Fifteen Detachment Two (HM 15) prepares his Sikorsky MH-53E Sea Dragon for take-off from the flight deck of USS Enterprise (CVN 65). Braman and HM 15 crew were departing following a cargo drop retrieve.

Photo by JO2 Mark O'Donald

Crewmembers of Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron Fifteen Detachment Two (HM 15) perform a pre-flight inspection on thier Sikorsky MH-53E Sea Dragon prior to taking off for a cargo delivery to an aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf. HM 15, comprised of Naval Reservsits and active duty Sailors, regularily provides support to the Fleet in the Middle East.

Airwing maintenance crew perform a pre-flight inspection on a F-14 Tomcat fighter jet on the flight deck of USS Enterprise (CVN 65). Reservists are regularly embarked on the carrier, assigned to the staff of RADM James Stavridis, Commander, Cruiser Destroyer Group Twelve and Enterprise Carrier Strike Group.

Photo by PHAN Rob Gaston