

This is How Task Force 66 Works

Task Force 66 -- an antisubmarine carrier task group -- is a special force which periodically augments the Sixth Fleet.

The WASP, an Essex-class carrier which has been specifically converted for antisubmarine warfare (ASW) work, is the center of this task force at the present time.

The Commander of Carrier Division FOURTEEN, Rear Admiral Edward A. Hannegan, USN, also is serving as Commander of Task Force 66. From his

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RADM Edward A. Hannegan
Commander, Task Force 66

Flagship, the WASP, Admiral Hannegan directs operations of the antisubmarine carrier task group made up of the WASP, her embarked air squadrons and these seven destroyer escorts:

USS DEALEY (DE-1006), USS CROMWELL (DF-1014) and USS JOHN WILLIS (DE-1027) of Escort Squadron TEN; and USS VAN VOORHIS (DE-1028), USS LFSTER (DF-1022), USS J. K. TAUSSIG (DE-1030) and USS HARTLEY (DE-1029) of Escort Squadron FOURTEEN.

Here's how the task force works:

When a submarine for any reason betrays its presence, the high mobility of the ASW carrier and her escorts enables the task force to race toward the contact. As the group approaches the submarine's estimated position, the escorts in a line ahead of the carrier search the surface of the water with their radar to catch the sub on the surface or -- if she has submerged -- they search beneath the water with their sonar.

The Tracker aircraft, meanwhile, are launched, and they fan out over the possible contact area. During each hour, these planes can search thousands of square miles of the sea's surface.

Far from the carrier and the destroyers, a radar operator aboard one of the Trackers might observe a dot on his radar scope, indicating a possible contact. Word is radioed back to the task group. The attack force then moves into "high gear." While helicopters and additional Trackers are launched, a destroyer unit is dispatched from the main group to close the contact area for search in conjunction with the aircraft.

If the submarine eludes the original detector, teamwork among the units is of greatest importance. The Trackers intensify the search, and the helicopters arrive to add the detection capability of their sonars to the search effort.

The search and kill potential of the antisubmarine units at the contact is greatly increased with the arrival of the destroyers. Their sonar and radar search continuously for the sub, and their weapons are ready for attack when contact is gained.

During routine ASW exercises, the overall mission is to develop coord-

dination between the ships and airborne craft in searching for and attacking submarines and in convoy screening and protection.

In addition, opportunity is provided to the participating submarines for practice in convoy detection, screen penetration and attack.

Another important purpose of these exercises is to develop and improve new tactics, doctrines and operating procedures in the field of antisubmarine warfare.

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CAPT E. T. Utter
Commanding Officer, USS WASP

Sixth Fleet

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Mediterranean. The rest of the Fleet's time is spent in visits to ports lining the million-square-mile inland ocean.

At sea the job of the Fleet is to achieve and maintain a peak of combat readiness. In port the Fleet's mission is to promote goodwill, understanding, respect and acceptance -- both through official contacts and simple people-to-people relationships.

Each Navyman is considered an ambassador of goodwill. The Fleet has been so active for so long in promoting good international relations that many of its activities have become institutionalized.

In a normal year as many as 1500 individual shipboard parties are given for underprivileged children in ports around the Mediterranean.

Sports contests between ship teams and local teams are a common

feature of port visits.

Church parties from ships worship in churches ashore.

Exchanges of official calls and entertainment are a fixed part of all visits.

Ships of the Fleet are opened for public visiting all over the Mediterranean.

Ship bands play public concerts before enormous crowds.

Navy men of the Fleet can be found on tour in all the great, historic or simply interesting cities of the Mediterranean.

Activities such as these, along with the traditional willingness of the Fleet to respond to disasters such as earthquakes and floods and the legendary generosity of American Navy men in helping those in need, have won for the Sixth Fleet a reputation as "The Friendly Fleet."