

Spotlight on CARRIER STRIKE GROUP 11

Rear Admiral Peter Gumataotao Highlights RIMPAC 2012, Including Energy & Environmental Successes



USS Nimitz (CVN 68).
MC3 Ryan Mayes



On 14 August 2012, Rear Admiral Peter A. Gumataotao discussed this year's Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise and other issues with Kenneth Hess, acting director of communication and outreach at the Chief of Naval Operations Energy and Environmental Readiness Division (N45) and Bruce McCaffrey, managing editor of *Currents*.

Currents: Thanks for taking the time to speak with us today Admiral. Could you start by describing your responsibilities in your current position?

Rear Admiral Peter A. Gumataotao: I am the Commander of Carrier Strike Group 11; Nimitz Strike Group. The objective of the Carrier Strike Group is to support the combatant commander's (e.g. Pacific Command, Central Command) requirements in an Area of Responsibility (AOR)—and more specifically, Commander THIRD, FIFTH or SEVENTH Fleets—in a myriad of missions. Right now Carrier Strike Group 11 is in the process of working up for deployment later on in the year. So we're going through something called the Fleet Readiness Training Plan (FRTP) where we do all of the workups starting from the basic phase of training all the way up to the integrated phase.

Currents: Could you explain the mission of Carrier Strike Group 11?

Admiral Gumataotao: We're a very capable, multi-dimensional strike group with six explicit missions. Power projection is a very important role for us. Forward presence is very big. We can do sea control and deterrence, if called upon. We also get involved in maritime security operations—opening up sea lines of communication if necessary. Or even piracy. We can assist in disaster relief operations as the Ronald Reagan did in the coastal waters off Japan in the wake of the 8.9-magnitude earthquake and subsequent tsunami. So those pillars of our mission are key functions that we train up to so that we can be ready at short notice to do whatever the Combatant Commander needs us to do.

Currents: I understand that you and your staff played a major role in the 2012 RIMPAC exercise, which ran 27 June to 7 August, 2012. For those readers who may not be familiar, what is the purpose of RIMPAC?

Admiral Gumataotao: RIMPAC is a biennial, multi-national training exercise that started back in 1971 with three nations participating. It



RIMPAC really speaks to the value of maritime forces from an international perspective.

has evolved through the years—this is the 23rd exercise. This year we had the largest ever number of nations and ships participating—22 nations, over 40 ships, including six submarines. There were also more than 200 aircraft and close to 25,000 personnel. RIMPAC really speaks to the value of maritime forces from an international perspective. It's the world's largest international maritime exercise.

A lot of our leadership talk about the 70/80/90 formula. Seventy percent of the world is water, 80 percent of the world's population lives at or near the coast, and 90 percent of international commerce moves by sea. If you think of those 70/80/90 numbers, you can see why RIMPAC is a very important exercise. And we're a big part of it. We are a maritime nation. The most fundamental and important thing that I took away from RIMPAC as a carrier strike group commander, is that it improves the



Sailors participate in mooring the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) as it pulls into Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in support of RIMPAC 2012.

MC2 Jon Dasbach

readiness of my forces as well as the readiness of participating forces. It's a partnership that enhances interoperability and improves readiness—these are key themes that you see in RIMPAC from its inception back in 1971.

Currents: Is there something specific about RIMPAC in terms of its ability to improve your readiness that you don't get from other exercises?

Admiral Gumataotao: Just the magnitude of it and the challenges that we have establishing a coherent operating picture or plan among our many coalition forces. As robust as our FRTP is, this is something that we won't get day in and day out. We don't normally get a chance to operate with the Russians and the Singaporeans, the Australians, Canadians, the South Koreans, or the Japanese—in the way that we have in this exercise. What RIMPAC does is really enable us to use systems that we

I think that ability to partner with other nations is priceless.

would use operating abroad. And when we go overseas to accomplish those missions I referred to earlier—nine times out of ten it's never unilateral. We're always working with host nations and partners. For example, a Chilean was on board Nimitz as the Sea Combat Commander. And I established some good relationships with those senior officers, working day in and day out with them to develop the scheme of maneuver. I learned a lot from them. I know they learned a lot from us. But more importantly, when you're overseas and you already have that relationship with certain navies, you have a better understanding across the lifelines. And sometimes it's just easier to pick

THE BASICS ABOUT CARRIER STRIKE GROUP 11

THE MISSION OF Carrier Strike Group 11 (CSG 11) is to “build a warfighting team that honorably represents our country, completely deters or defends, and if necessary, wins decisively in combat.” The centerpiece of CSG 11 is the USS Nimitz. Nimitz is the lead ship of the world’s most powerful and capable class of warships (CVN-68). It carries the name of five-star Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, who held dual command of Commander in Chief, United States Pacific Fleet, for U.S. naval forces and Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas, for U.S. and Allied air, land, and sea forces during World War II. In addition to Nimitz, CSG 11 includes:

- USS Sampson (DDG 102)
- USS Pickney (DDG 91)
- USS William P. Lawrence (DDG 110)
- USS John Paul Jones (DDG 53)
- USS Vandergrift (FFG 48)
- USS Curts (FFG 38)
- USS Princeton (CG 59)

Source: [www.nimitz.navy.mil/uss-nimitz-\(cvn68\)-legacy.html](http://www.nimitz.navy.mil/uss-nimitz-(cvn68)-legacy.html)

USS Sampson (DDG 102).
MC2 Tiarra Fulgham



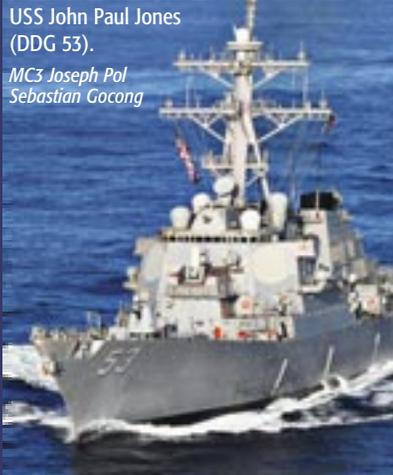
USS Princeton (CG 59).
MC3 Sean Furey



USS Curts (FFG 38).
MC2 James R. Evans



USS John Paul Jones (DDG 53).
MC3 Joseph Pol Sebastian Gocong



USS Pickney (DDG 91).
MC2 Daniel P. Lapiere



USS William P. Lawrence (DDG 110).
MC2 Scott A. McCall



USS Vandergrift (FFG 48).
MC1 Gerardo Jimenez



up the phone, then you're talking to somebody that you worked with before. You can't get that just training unilaterally within our own Navy.

Operating together allows us to be more efficient, to be more effective in supporting the combatant commanders wherever we are—be it in Indonesia, the Horn of Africa, or wherever the situation dictates. The ability to partner with other nations is priceless, and the magnitude of the number of aircraft and ships and submarines that we worked with here, really challenges me and my people and makes sure we're at our best—that we accomplish our mission safely and professionally. This all leads to us being better warfighters in the end.

Currents: What's unique about RIMPAC 2012?

Admiral Gumataotao: As I mentioned, RIMPAC started in 1971 with just three participants—the U.S., Australia and Canada. Even as recently



It is the first time during this international maritime exercise that non-U.S. officers held command functional component positions in the combined task force.

as 2010, we had 14 participants and in RIMPAC 2012 we had 22. That in itself is a great accomplishment.

The theme for RIMPAC 2012 that Vice Admiral Gerald R. Beaman (Commander, U. S. THIRD Fleet) had established from day one has been:

Capable, Adaptive, Partners. And we illustrated that with all the different countries and all the different procedures we have while operating at sea, all coming together safely and executing different events and scenarios very professionally.

THE EVOLUTION OF RIMPAC

RIMPAC IS A large-scale multinational power projection/sea control exercise. Conducted biennially (every even year) under the leadership of the U.S. THIRD Fleet, RIMPAC is designed to enhance the tactical capabilities and cooperation of participating nations in various aspects of maritime operations at sea.

RIMPAC started in 1971, with just three nations participating—the U.S., Australia and Canada. In 2012, the world's largest international maritime exercise included a record number of nations (22) and participants (25,000). It took place 29 June to 3 August around the Hawaiian Islands.

RIMPAC 2012 marked several important firsts, including the first time that non-U.S. officers commanded components of

the exercise, the first demonstration of a biofuel blend, and the addition of a humanitarian assistance/disaster relief event. This event facilitated training and certification for expeditionary forces to respond to foreign disasters as a Crisis Response Adaptive Force Package.

The exercises also included three sinking exercises, multi-force Military Operations on Urban Terrain training, live-fire exercises, surface-to-air engagements, air-to-air missile engagements, surface-to-surface engagements, amphibious assaults, vessel boardings, explosive ordnance disposal, diving, salvage operations, air-to-air refueling, and mine clearance operations.

Source: www.public.navy.mil/surfor/Pages/rimpac2012.aspx

I was really impressed with all of the participating countries. Many countries brought ships, many of them brought troops, and some of them brought observers.

Russia sent three ships—one of them was a Udaloy class—which I had the opportunity to visit while we were underway. (Note: The Udaloy class is a series of anti-submarine destroyers built for the Soviet navy, some of which are still in service with the Russian navy.) I even rode their Helix helicopter, which is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I never thought I'd do that.

So other than the size, I think there were some other significant points about RIMPAC 2012 worth a mention. It is the first time during this international maritime exercise that non-U.S. officers held command functional component positions in the Combined Task Force (CTF).

For example, the combined maritime component commander was Commodore Stuart Mayer from the Royal Australian Navy. We also had Brigadier General Mike Hood from the Royal Canadian Air Force commanding the air component. And we had other key leaders in the multinational force such as Rear Admiral Ron Lloyd from the Royal Canadian Navy who was the deputy commander to the CTF commander (Admiral Beaman). Having a deputy

commander for the CTF that had participated in a previous RIMPAC—really proved beneficial not just in providing continuity but improving upon what we accomplished in previous RIMPAC's. We also had the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force's Rear Admiral Kitagawa, the Vice Commander of the CTF, who worked directly with Admiral Beaman. The fact that the functional commanders were non-U.S., and that we were able to seamlessly execute all of the events remarkably well, speaks volumes about the professionalism of these countries and their Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Airmen.

As the commander for CTF 170, I worked for Commodore Stuart Mayer. We spoke daily of operational issues—things that we would be talking about if we were actually supporting a campaign crisis or Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief mission. I was pleasantly surprised to see how well that construct worked. I think Admiral Beaman ensured that all of these key component commanders had, in previous RIMPACs, observed those positions in another role. I think that helped. And I think that's going to be the process for the future—that if any other country wanted to take these key roles they would have to sit through and observe it closely before they could actually assume that role.

RIMPAC 2012 was the first RIMPAC that included a significant Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief type of event. We had an Expeditionary Strike Group along with marines from different navies and many other folks working with the Hawaii Crisis Response Teams, to include their medical facilities. They exercised statewide mass casualty drills and certifications. So this crisis response adaptive force package folded in very well—not just for the military but for the Honolulu crisis response team themselves. This event was specifically focused on testing out the

Rear Adm. Gumataotao celebrates the 120,000 aircraft trap of arresting engine three with the V-2 Division aboard the USS Nimitz (CVN 68).

MCS Ryan Mayes





Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Jonathan Greenert (left) and Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) the Honorable Ray Mabus observe as the USNS Henry J. Kaiser (T-AO 187) transfers biofuels to the USS Princeton (CG 59) during a replenishment at sea. The fueling was part of the Great Green Fleet demonstration portion of RIMPAC 2012.
Chief MC Sam Shavers

operability—the communications and some of the response capabilities among interagency partners. I was very happy to see that work out very well.

RIMPAC 2012 was the first time that we demonstrated the use of biofuel—what the Big Navy was calling the Great Green Fleet demonstration. Several months ago when I found out that my strike group would be participating, I started to have my folks read up on biofuels because we knew very little about it. We wanted to make sure that what we were taking on board our aircraft, our carrier and our other ships was safe to operate. Through much reading and research as well as information provided to us by OPNAV, my Sailors, officers, and

Through much reading and research as well as information provided to us by OPNAV, my Sailors, officers, and pilots felt very comfortable taking on the biofuel.

pilots felt very comfortable taking on the biofuel.

My criteria were that it was safe and transparent to operations. Both of those requirements were satisfied during the demonstration—cross platform utility using biofuel 50-50 mix with both my aviation fuels and also my Diesel Fuel, Marine (DFM).

Currents: Tell us about the Great Green Fleet demonstration. What were the highlights from your perspective?

Admiral Gumataotao: The demonstration of biofuels at sea in a strike group environment during normal operations was one of the key objectives of RIMPAC 2012. The goal was to demonstrate that you can use biofuels at sea with no impact on our ability to conduct our missions—a goal that was safely demonstrated and executed properly. In the Great Green Fleet, we had multiple types of aircraft that took on the biofuel mix from USNS Henry J. Kaiser. It was a 50-50 mix of the hydroprocessed

renewable jet fuel—HRJ-5. That fuel was blended with the aviation JP-5 fuel, and we put it in the aircraft, including the Carrier Onboard Deliveries that brought distinguished visitors out to observe the demonstration on the 18th of July. We put it in the H-60 Sierra helicopters (our personnel transfer helicopters), our H-60 Romeo helicopters, and our F/A-18 Hornets for demonstrating fixed wing operations. We also had surface ships that took on fuel—hydroprocessed renewable diesel (HRD-76). HRD-76 was blended with F-76 marine diesel fuel into a 50-50 blend. And while we had USS Nimitz running on nuclear power, we had USS Chafee (DDG-90), USS Chung-Hoon (DDG-93), USS Princeton (CG-59), and USNS Henry J. Kaiser (T-AO-187), all running on this blend. All in all, we used 700,000 gallons of 50-50 blended biofuels, using both the HRD-76 and the HRJ-5 in my strike group. We burned it all and, more importantly, it was done without any hiccups. I was pretty excited about that. There was no sub-optimization of my aircraft jet engines or my ships' gas turbines.

Currents: What were the most challenging aspects of the Great Green Fleet demonstration?

Admiral Gumataotao: Well, in terms of operational limits, we did not have any—the fuel was transparent. But it took a lot of leadership effort to make sure people

understood the significance of what we were trying to do in this demonstration. As you know, Sailors in the 21st Century are very informed. So we made a focused effort to put the word out about biofuel. In fact, when Admiral Beaman came out initially during RIMPAC when we were underway—this is before the biofuel demo—he was down on the mess decks talking to the crew, and he opened it up for Q&A like he normally does. A majority of the questions were about biofuels—which shows you where my Sailors' heads were. They were very informed, asking very educated questions. For example, one Sailor asked, “Will the use of biofuel change the ratings down in engineering?” and the answer is “No.” You operate all your systems the same way. Another Sailor asked, “Are there any restraints that we have to consider for our existing systems? Do we have to separate the biofuel from our service or storage tanks?” and the answer is “No.” You just use it like you would use any of your F-76 or your JP-5 that you would take on board.

This biofuel demonstration is only one of many other energy-efficient technologies that we are demonstrating at sea.

Look within the lifelines of what we have—the use of Light Emitting Diodes (LED) that are being used in our surface ships. We've seen that LEDs last longer than

fluorescent or incandescent fixtures. So you reduce your maintenance and manpower requirements by using LEDs. For our gas turbines, we have to shut them down to do a water wash. (Note: To maintain performance, gas turbines require periodic water washes to eliminate accumulated deposits.) It's very inefficient to shut off the gas turbines then bring them back up again. Not only does that take time, it also burns more fuel. We have this new energy-efficient technology in

The Honorable Ray Mabus and Rear Adm. Gumataotao visit with Sailors assigned to the aircraft launch and recovery equipment division of the USS Nimitz (CVN 68) during the Great Green Fleet demonstration portion of RIMPAC 2012.

MC3 Ian A. Cotter



our gas turbines that allows us to do water washes while the turbines are on-line. Our engineers can actually wash the compressors while the engines are running. This extends the life of our engines and reduces fuel consumption. Being able to water wash your gas turbine on-line is a simple solution but it saves a lot of money.

Many of our ships have the Ship-board Energy Dashboard that provides real-time awareness of the energy that is being used by on board equipment. This allows my Sailors to minimize their energy consumption and improve their efficiency by knowing how well their systems are performing.

We have installed stern flaps on the hulls of many of our surface ships. The flow at the hull actually impacts fuel consumption. You can equate that to airflow over a high-end sports car—minimizing airflow reduces drag and turbulence. Stern flaps on our surface combatant ships reduce the overall resistance across the hull fore to aft so you can actually be more efficient with the fuel that you use. These are the kind of things that I wanted to make sure my guys were focused on—not just the biofuels. We have a lot of initiatives underway



Rear Adm. Gumataotao addresses the Honorable Ray Mabus during an all-hands call aboard the USS Nimitz (CVN 68) during the Great Green Fleet demonstration portion of RIMPAC 2012.
MC3 Devin Wray

When I think about energy efficiency, I think about how it improves combat readiness.

which I think is good for us. Here's the bottom line—when I think about energy efficiency, I think about how it improves combat readiness.

If I can get more out of my fuel, I can get more legs on my surface combatants—to get to more places more quickly, to be able to operate longer on station. If you're on a Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) mission or another mission that requires you to be longer on station, fuel efficiency and reduced maintenance, and the extension of the equipment's life all comes down to improving the warfighting readiness of our ships.

Your best litmus test for a lot of these initiatives is, how transparent is it to the Sailor? How does it improve warfighting without Sailors having to do something other than running their engines and other systems? The benefits you get and the flexibility of being able to use these types of energy resources speak for themselves.

Currents: You were one of the most senior U.S. Navy officials participating in this RIMPAC. Did you have the opportunity to speak with Secretary Mabus about these energy initiatives while this was going on? If so, what insights can you share?

FOR MORE INFORMATION

FOR MORE INSIGHTS into shipboard energy initiatives, read our article entitled "NAVSEA Reducing Fleet Energy Consumption: Shipboard Efficiencies Include Hybrid Electric Drive" in the summer 2012 issue of *Currents*. Read the magazine on-line or subscribe via the *Currents* page on the Department of the Navy's Energy, Environment and Climate Change web site—at <http://greenfleet.dodlive.mil/currents-magazine>.



Admiral Gumataotao: The SECNAV flew out on a helicopter that was powered by a biofuel blend. I wanted to make sure that he had a chance to meet the Sailors and witness an in-flight refueling with an F/A-18 Rhino tanking in the air. We brought him on board Princeton and Henry J. Kaiser as it was taking on and transferring fuel respectively. We brought him on board Chafee, where he toured the engineering spaces and talked to some of our Sailors. He went over some of the energy initiatives; the Shipboard Energy Dashboard, the gas turbine online water wash, and the LEDs. I think he was very pleased with what he was seeing. I've been with the SECNAV before when I was stationed in Korea. Just like then, I saw that he was very interested in checking in with the Sailors, thanking them for their service, and more importantly, talking about how the sole focus for many of these initiatives is to improve the warfighting readiness of the Fleet. He spoke to the folks down in the hangar bay about how these initiatives are focused on increasing our capability and flexibility to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. I thought from the questions he was getting, our Sailors are very interested in these energy initiatives. I think the Navy writ large is an incredible steward of our environment and our Sailors reflect

that. Think about the average age of our Sailors—this is the millennial generation—the majority of them are 19 to 20 years old. They grew up in an environment where you had recycling and no smoking in restaurants. Today's Sailor is very health conscious, very energy conscious, very environmentally conscious.

So those are the preponderance of folks that the SECNAV was talking to. He had a smile on his face because he had a chance to talk to his Sailors, to see his ships and his aircraft, and a carrier operating at sea in full optimum mode on biofuel with no interruptions. He was extremely proud of all of this.

Currents: Let's talk for a minute again about combat capability, which you mentioned as a primary driver for these energy investments. What are some real-life examples of how energy initiatives have enhanced combat capability for Carrier Strike Group 11 or that have affected you as a career naval officer? Perhaps in RIMPAC or elsewhere?

Admiral Gumataotao: Our gas turbine engines consume a lot of fuel operating at sea. When we increase our speed to go from Point A to Point B, we suck up a lot of fuel. This requires us to refuel which, in turn,

means the FIFTH Fleet or SEVENTH Fleet commander needs to tether an oiler to certain strike groups, particularly for the surface combatants. So if you need to travel to a remote area—for piracy, sea lines of communication protection, or maritime security operations—you are much more limited because of the amount of fuel that you burn per day at higher speeds.

Rear Adm. Gumataotao speaks to the crew on board the USS Nimitz (CVN 68) during the Great Green Fleet demonstration portion of RIMPAC 2012.

MC3 Renee Candelario





Ships and submarines participating in RIMPAC 2012 are in formation in the waters around the Hawaiian islands.

Chief MC Keith Devinney

THE ABCs OF RIMPAC

HERE IS AN alphabetical list of the countries that participated in RIMPAC 2012:

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Australia | 12. New Zealand |
| 2. Canada | 13. Norway |
| 3. Chile | 14. Peru |
| 4. Colombia | 15. Philippines |
| 5. France | 16. Russia |
| 6. India | 17. Singapore |
| 7. Indonesia | 18. South Korea |
| 8. Japan | 19. Thailand |
| 9. Malaysia | 20. Tonga |
| 10. Mexico | 21. United Kingdom |
| 11. Netherlands | 22. United States |

For a complete list of participating vessels and personnel units, see www.cpf.navy.mil/rimpac/2012/forces.

I know of many times when our training scenarios were postponed because we had marine mammal sightings.

Your time away from station to refuel minimizes your ability to optimize executing your mission.

Hybrid electric drives are not resident within my carrier strike group, but some of the coalition forces that were with us at RIMPAC 2012 have hybrid electric drives on their ships. You lengthen your legs for your surface combatants if you use energy-efficient systems. That's point one.

Point two, with regard to extending the life of our equipment, like gas turbine engines, or saving money via the Shipboard Energy Dashboard or through the use of LEDs—those things add up. It adds up in terms of operational cost savings. So for a warfighter, we always look at where we are spending our money. Are we spending our money on things like unnecessary maintenance or inefficient processes?

The time spent by that Sailor and the money that we spend on the equipment and maintenance tools all come from my Operation & Maintenance account: Navy (O&MN) fund. And when I think about O&MN funds, that's the money that I use at sea to train my team and to maintain my equipment. The more O&MN funds we have available to us, the more we can train. So these energy efficiency ideas are fantastic. They provide us with more latitude as a warfighter to be more flexible and responsive to whatever is asked of us. We need to employ better ways that are less dependent on tethering oilers and allow us to stay on station longer for a BMD, Tomahawk strike, piracy mission, or a maritime security operation. The longer you can keep those surface combatants on station and actually operate your aircraft, provides you more freedom to maneuver and respond to any of the missions that are put before us by the combatant commander.

Currents: *Currents* is the Navy's energy and environmental magazine so we cover energy as well as environmental issues. As you know, the Navy has significant environmental compliance requirements to train our forces and test new equipment. Tell us about any environmental factors that impact your decision-making.

Admiral Gumataotao: I think that in the last 15 to 20 years operating at sea, serious attention to this has been embedded into our tactics, techniques, and procedures.

We emphasize being stewards of our environment. During the preparations for getting our ships underway as part of RIMPAC 2012—not just the U.S. ships but the coalition ships as well—we talked to them about the potential impact of the use of our equipment, especially our sonar, and what we need to do as environmental stewards to establish and maintain effective lookouts. If marine mammals are spotted in the area, then we immediately maneuver the force to avoid them and reduce or secure our sonar transmissions when appropriate. These safety procedures ensure that we do our part safeguarding marine mammals while continually training with our active sonar or with our use of live ordnance in designated Hawaiian operating areas. We are very prudent in our execution of operations if there is any indication that marine mammals are in the area. There are strict procedures that all ships comply with. I know of many times when our training scenarios were postponed because we had marine mammal sightings.

Currents: Regarding RIMPAC 2012 specifically, please describe any environmental considerations the U.S. Navy and other participants in the exercise had to take into account. What were the challenges in that regard?

Admiral Gumataotao: All U.S. Navy ships are required to be in compliance with all of the environmental protection tactics, techniques, and procedures that we have established as good stewards. We went out of our way to ensure that all of the other countries were aware of these measures and that they were being good stewards of the environment as well. And everybody was in compliance. When I talk about simple things such as the posting of the lookouts during sonar activities, I'm talking about everybody—every ship, every aircraft from each country that participated. All of our protective procedures had been covered in detail during the inport phase of RIMPAC with all of the countries that participated.

Currents: What insights did you gain about energy advancements from the other countries that participated?

Rear Adm. Gumataotao speaks with the Chilean Minister of Defense Andres Allamand during a visit aboard the USS Nimitz (CVN 68) as part of RIMPAC 2012.

MC3 Renee Candalario



Admiral Gumataotao: There were ships from more than one country that had the hybrid electric drives. I know we're installing these drives on our newer class ships—those drives are impressive. In a 10-ship, multinational force coming from San Diego to the Hawaiian operating area to participate in RIMPAC, folks were coming alongside every three to five days to take on fuel. But the ships with hybrid electric drives didn't need to take on fuel nearly as often. Under 18 knots or so, they were operating on their diesel engines and hybrid electric systems. It was only after a speed of about 18 or 19 knots that they needed to engage their gas turbines—those are the real gas guzzlers. One ship only utilized about 16 to 20 percent of their fuel capacity by staying on their hybrid electric fuel drive.

The Australian Navy, represented at RIMPAC 2012 by the HMAS Darwin and one of their helicopters, signed a statement of cooperation with the SECNAV in looking at energy efficient initiatives. It was good to see the Australians side-by-side with us yet again. Ever since I was a young ensign, we operated frequently with the Australian Navy. So in addition to the Nimitz, Chafee, Chung-Hoon, Princeton and Henry J. Kaiser, we had the Darwin off to our starboard side steaming in close formation.

Currents: Is there anything else you want *Currents* readers to know from your perspective?

Admiral Gumataotao: I want your readers to know how proud they should be of the young men and women that man the rails, the engineering spaces, and the flight decks



Rear Adm. Gumataotao speaks with Rear Adm. Jorge Portocarrero of the Peruvian navy during a visit aboard the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) as part of RIMPAC 2012.
MC3 Christopher Bartlett

There are many great Americans representing us—wearing our country's cloth—that you should be very proud of.

day in and day out. They don't look for any accolades.

I joined the Navy back in 1976 and it can be difficult operating at sea. I've been married for nearly 26 years and have a family. I am often asked, "Why do you stay in?" It's simple—because of the folks I'm associated with. They're very professional, very patriotic, and really believe in the team—they don't believe in the "me." As old as I am, I am still inspired when I watch these young men and women do their best in sometimes very dangerous situations.

There are many great Americans representing us—wearing our country's cloth—that you should be very proud of. I thank all of the Americans that take the time, stop for a

moment, and say thank you to these young men and women.

We had over 300 distinguished visitors while we were underway. And to a person, as they walked around the flight deck, as they felt the heat, saw these folks working so closely together, clearing the deck, setting the tension on the cable on the arresting gear while launching aircraft they said, "Thank you for your service."

So for those who have never served, I just want to ask that when you come across somebody in uniform, say "Thank you." It goes a long way.

Currents: Thank you for your time today, Admiral.

Admiral Gumataotao: Thank you very much and take care. 🇺🇸