19 Years Ago â€“ Life at Sea â€“ Part VIII

Description

This morning, back then, we set for and executed our 4th in a row unplanned sea and anchor details, arriving in Mayport. I donâ€™t recall the order, but we were part of a group of about 4-5 other vessels sent south.

What I do recall are two specific circumstances of the day. The first was seeing our HSL-44 Detachment crew standing on the pier to greet us, intermingled with so many others. There were pallets of supplies sitting there, having been collected by our on and off shipmates and their families and friends, all to be taken back to Charleston at some point in the future. While there had been many a day when surface sailors and their embarked aviation crews would like to keep separate, while stuck together, this day wasnâ€™t one of them. As is common with the team spirit of Americans in all our disasters, the big picture merges us into one entity to take care of the problems we face. After we were moored, the supplies of water, diapers, canned food, cleaning supplies, etc, were craned aboard and staged in the empty helo hangers.

default watermark

The other event of the day is one I have to report on hearsay: The Chief Staff Officer, upon us putting the brow down and declaring it secured, scampered aboard and went to see Captain Johnson. The CSO gave a little bit of a butt chewing to my CO, but then CDR Johnson had his turn to speak. The issue? It seemed that on the previous Wednesday morning there had been a meeting of the base commanders. At the meeting it was noted that USS CARR was inport already for storm evasion. Some direction about us was issued, I believe by the Base Commander, which I recall the Commodore of DESRON 8 rogered for. Shortly thereafter, they looked out the big picture window of the office towards our berth on the NE side of the basin, to see a bare slip. Jaw(s) dropped and the embarrassment factor increased all of a sudden, which then became a burr under the Commodoreâ€™s saddle. The CSO was the messenger to let my CO know he had done something wrong. Now Wade Johnson stated his defense: ON the evening of the prior Tuesday, he had contacted the CDS8 Duty Officer. He requested permission to get underway, and was granted same, with a promise from the Duty Officer, a chief petty officer, that the base authorities would be notified to provide us tugs, line handlers and a pilot to depart. The CO went on to indicate, professionally, that he had followed the normal chain of command, and also, that he was not in possession of the Commodoreâ€™s home phone number in any case, making it impossible to contact the Commander directly anyhow. He indicated to me that he followed with an obvious point: The Duty Officer failed to breif the rest of the staff on Wednesday morning, something he had no control over. That ended that.

The day went on, with some certainty in the uncertainty, as the crew now made their way to the phones on the base to try and call home.

Category

1. Navy

Date Created
September 25, 2008

Author
admin

default watermark