



## NEWS RELEASE

## COMMUNIQUÉ

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### SEVEN NATION PACIFIC RIM EXERCISE TESTS REGENERATED CANADIAN NAVY

ESQUIMALT, B.C. — Canadian ships and aircraft will test their re-constituted readiness in the multi-national exercise RIMPAC 2004 during July in waters off Hawaii. Participating nations include Australia, Canada, Chile, Japan, Peru, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States. Observer nations are Ecuador, Malaysia, Mexico, the Philippines, Russia, Singapore and Thailand.

Commodore Roger Girouard, Commander Canadian Fleet Pacific, is the Multi-National Force Sea Combat Commander aboard HMCS ALGONQUIN leading a force comprised of units from the United States, Australia, Chile and South Korea. The exercise will assist in the regeneration of Canada's naval capability after the intense two-year program of deployments in the war against terrorism.

In addition to ALGONQUIN, Canada's contribution includes HMC ships PROTECTEUR, REGINA and BRANDON, with two CH-124 Sea King Helicopters and air detachments from 443 Squadron at Pat Bay, and a team of clearance divers from Fleet Diving Unit (Pacific). Two Aurora CP-140 Maritime Patrol Aircraft from 407 Squadron at 19 Wing Comox round out air force support.

The Maritime Coastal Defence Vessel HMCS BRANDON left Esquimalt May 25 to sail to San Diego to rendezvous with US Navy ships for trip to Pearl Harbor. The ship, its crew of naval reservists, with a remotely operated vehicle will support an exercise mine-clearing operation to allow for the evacuation of non-combatants and an amphibious landing. The other ships leave Esquimalt on June 19. Following RIMPAC, REGINA will carry on to the Western Pacific to make port visits in Japan, South Korea and China.

During the workup portion of the exercise HMCS ALGONQUIN will fire surface-to air missiles with telemetry packages at remote-controlled drone targets and REGINA will fire specially programmed torpedoes at a live target. Both ships will participate in a naval gunnery exercise against a retired USN vessel.

The first RIMPAC exercise took place in 1971 and now occurs every second year. This year is the 19<sup>th</sup> exercise in the series. RIMPAC is intended to enhance the tactical proficiency of the participants in a wide array of combined operations at sea. By enhancing interoperability, RIMPAC helps to promote stability in the Pacific Rim region to the benefit of all participating nations. This year's exercise includes more than 40 ships, seven submarines, 100 aircraft and 18,000 sailors, marines, soldiers and aircrew. Canadian personnel number about 1,100 at sea and ashore.

The United States Third Fleet, commanded by Vice Admiral Michael McCabe, is responsible for the overall coordination of the exercise. Each of the participating countries maintains national command and operational control of its forces throughout the exercise.

-30-

#### NOTE TO EDITORS/NEWS DIRECTORS:

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To cover the RIMPAC exercise, return the attached accreditation form by fax to Lt.-Cmdr. Gerry Pash, at Navy Public Affairs, 250-363-5202. Arrangements can be made for reporters to sail in the ships to Hawaii or alternately in Hawaii reporters may be embarked in the ships during the exercise.