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Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) 2011

"Relationships are crucial in Southeast Asia, and CARAT provides an exceptional venue to enhance relationships in this vital region. We work side by side with our Southeast Asian partners to tailor each CARAT program. As we plan and execute each series, we promote security and stability, discuss shared concerns and hone our professional skills.

– Capt. Dave Welch, commander, Task Group 73.1 / CARAT

Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training is a series of annual bi-lateral exercises between the U.S. Navy and [Marine Corps](#) and the maritime forces of eight Southeast Asian countries. Founded in 1995, CARAT began with six partner countries – Brunei, [Indonesia](#), [Malaysia](#), Philippines, Singapore and [Thailand](#). In 2010, [Cambodia](#) joined the exercise series, and Vietnam began participating in a CARAT-like event known as Enhanced Engagement Activity. Bangladesh has joined the CARAT series for 2011.

CARAT Exercise Series Overview

- Each CARAT phase spans seven to 12 days and is planned by the U.S. Navy and host nation maritime forces to gain an understanding of one another's training objectives at sea and ashore. Training is tailored to meet the mutually developed objectives of both nations.
- Shore-based activities include [medical](#), dental, [civil engineering](#) and [community service](#) projects; diving and salvage, fire fighting and subject matter expert exchanges; and military symposia.
- At-sea segments involving ships from the U.S. and host nation often include [amphibious operations](#), maritime patrol flights and exercises in: combined maneuvering; surface and air gunnery; communications; and visit, board, search and seizure.
- CARAT 2011 training involves complex training scenarios including anti-submarine warfare and amphibious operations. CARAT Indonesia saw the first at-sea training for the exercise in nearly 10 years.

Increasing Interoperability and Relationship Building

- CARAT contributes to regional maritime security by enhancing capabilities in areas such as maritime interdiction; amphibious operations; information sharing; anti-piracy and anti-smuggling; logistics, humanitarian assistance and disaster response planning; and combined operations at sea.
- U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard personnel train with host nation counterparts to increase each nation's operational readiness.
- CARAT events include personnel exchanges and the use of combined watch teams to promote tactical knowledge exchange. These exchanges allow junior Sailors to mid-grade officers to experience new cultures and build meaningful relationships with their counterparts that will endure for years.

Key Messages

- The overarching goals of CARAT are to enhance regional cooperation, promote understanding between participating military forces and bolster the operational readiness of participating forces.
- CARAT contributes to regional maritime security through capacity building and [fostering relationships](#) with partners.
- [CARAT partners](#) are skilled professionals, and this exercise series sharpens operational capabilities and increases interoperability.

Facts & Figures

- Approximately 1,800 U.S. personnel will take part in CARAT 2011.
- U.S. assets participating in various phases of [CARAT 2011](#) include: Commander Destroyer Squadron 31, [USS Tortuga \(LSD 46\)](#), [USS Howard \(DDG 83\)](#), USS Chung-Hoon (DDG 93), USS Ford (FFG 54), USS Reuben James (FFG 57), USNS Safeguard (T-ARS 50), 2nd Battalion 23rd Marines, Navy Mobile Construction Battalion 11, Amphibious Construction Battalion 1, [Riverine Squadron 1](#), a U.S. Coast Guard Training Team, U.S. Navy Mobile Security Squadron 7, and P-3C Orion and SH-60 Seahawk aircraft.