



**TCDC Remarks for  
National Maritime Strategy  
Symposium  
14 Jan 2014**



**Vice Admiral William A. Brown**

## **OPENING/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- Good Morning. Chip (Jaenichen), thank you for that great introduction.
- I'm honored to be with you this morning and like everyone here I take great interest in the dialogue that will occur over the next several days and the eventual way forward for the United States and its maritime capabilities.
- I applaud Mr. Jaenichen and the Maritime Administration for making this gathering a reality and I hope this is just the beginning effort on a road that will see ever increasing health and opportunity for all aspects of the U.S. maritime industry.
- I come to you today representing General William Fraser, the Commander of the United States Transportation Command. USTRANSCOM is one of many users of the global lift, networks and infrastructure provided by the commercial maritime industry. American ships and American seafarers have always come

through for us during times of peace, war or national emergency. Through efforts like this today, we are hopeful the U.S. flag fleet will be well positioned to come through the next time and every time we call.

## **USTRANSCOM OVERVIEW**

- For those not familiar with USTRANSCOM, our total force team of over 150,000 men and women is dedicated to providing reliable and seamless logistical support to our warfighters and their families around the globe.
- On any given day we are responsible for over 600 aircraft flights (one is taking off or landing every 2 minutes), 25 special courier missions of critical sensitive cargo, 25 patients being aeromedically evacuated (getting those injured off the battle field and to appropriate medical care), 4,000 truck movements (includes about 2,000 HHG movements), 100 railcar shipments, 60 operational air refueling missions **and 26 ships (9 of which are either loading or unloading)**.
- Our active duty members, National Guard, Reserve, civil servants, government contractors in concert with our commercial partners and

merchant mariners, have met many recent challenges while maintaining a high operations tempo of both combat and humanitarian support operations.

- Our supply chain is a vast, interdependent enterprise, reliant on a worldwide infrastructure network of airports, highways, railroads & rail heads, seaports, cargo yards, pipelines and more.
- ...and the commercial maritime industry plays a huge part in our supply chain, and our success.
- Strategic sealift is essential to USTRANSCOM meeting its mission to deploy and sustain forces globally across the range of military support operations. The importance of preserving a strong U.S. flag commercial fleet as a critical component of our strategic sealift cannot be overstated.
- Relying on the privately-owned, U.S.-flag commercial merchant marine as a source for national defense sealift benefits the DOD in many ways; it provides global reach via “assured access” to commercial sealift and intermodal capacity to support the deployment and sustainment of U.S. military forces. This vast

commercial capability allows for a reduced U.S. military footprint and logistics tail.

## **NATIONAL POLICY/INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

- The significant interconnections between DOD and commercial industry are codified by National Policy and driven by innovative partnerships.
- Signed by the Bush Administration in 1989, **National Sealift Directive 28** directs that the “US-owned commercial ocean carrier industry, to the extent it is capable, will be relied upon to provide sealift in peace, crisis, war.”
- Although DOD augments this capability with reserve fleets to provide capabilities not resident in commercial industry, the policy clearly places the onus of capability on commercial industry.
- We are also guided by the **Military Cargo Preference Act of 1904** which requires military cargo to be shipped on vessels of the United States or belonging to the United States.
- USTRANSCOM’s partnership with commercial industry is formalized through agreements such as the Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement or VISA, the Maritime Security Program (MSP) and the Voluntary Tanker Agreement (VTA).

- VISA and VTA provide DOD an orderly transition from peace to contingency operations and creates a close working relationship between MARAD, DOD and VISA/VTA participants through which the contingency needs and the needs of the civil economy can be met by cooperative planning and action.
- MSP provides a fleet of active, commercially viable, militarily useful vessels to meet national defense and other security requirements, while maintaining U.S. presence in international commerce.
- More than 90% of the militarily useful vessels in the entire U.S. flag fleet are committed to VISA and over 75% of that capacity comes from MSP vessels.
- Given these close ties, our commercial transportation industry partners are vitally important to us. They are important to the Defense Transportation System. As current wars wind down, we must be mindful of the effect the decrease in workload will have on both our organic and our commercial capacity.

## STRATEGY OVERVIEW

- Our Nation is unique in its ability to rapidly project power and influence anywhere, anytime around the world.
- And at TRANSCOM we fully understand where that capability comes from and are working to preserve the partnerships that provide the global mobility and strategic enablers supporting our Nation.
- A primary tenet of a recently completed USTRANSCOM Command Strategy recognized the importance of commercial partnerships to the Defense Transportation System
- First and foremost in our new strategy, we need to **preserve readiness capability** by ensuring our Nation has access to necessary commercial and organic capability – within the fiscal constraints we've been given.
- What this means to you is we need to be transparent in our efforts to cultivate, strengthen and improve partnerships with the maritime industry.
- We recently stood up our Enterprise Readiness Center to help preserve our assets and keep planes, ships, trains and trucks busy, even as wartime operational demand drops off.

- And, the ERC is already tackling the quest to identify cargo not moving through the Defense Transportation System or DTS. We are researching the cargo owner's reasons for not selecting the DTS ... whether those reasons are cost, past performance, timing, and/or miscommunication. The ERC will lead the collaboration with the TRANSCOM staff, our components and partners to bring those customers back into the fold.
- We are putting on our marketing hat and looking for ways to increase business – through lower rates, increased reliability and old-fashioned customer service
- Transformation of this magnitude will not be easy or quick, especially because of the dynamic and challenging fiscal landscape
- We must make every dollar count, and we must continue to carefully balance current operations, crisis response and future operations

## **STRATEGY ON A GRAND SCALE**

- Thus, as we implement our command strategy, we welcome this forum as MARAD and all of you develop a National Maritime Strategy on a much grander scale.

- We welcome the invitation to participate in the dialogue on fundamental maritime issues facing the industry and the Nation.

## **SUMMARY**

- As I mentioned earlier, transformation won't be easy especially given the rapidly changing operating environment and the dynamic and challenging fiscal landscape that we all face as we look forward to the future
- Our task at USTRANSCOM is to position ourselves to reliably deploy, sustain and then redeploy our nation's forces effectively and efficiently
- A National Maritime Strategy aimed at improving the Nation's cargo opportunities and sealift capacity while ensuring future sustainability is a key enabler to our mission success
- Thank you for your time and let your voice be heard. Thank you!