

NAVSCIATTS AND SFA



**GLOBAL
PARTNERS
SERIES**

NAVSCIATTS Receives First NSWG 4 Security Force Assistance Craft

Tucked away just inside the southwest Mississippi border lies John C. Stennis Space Center. Although the base is known as NASA's rocket propulsion testing ground, it has become much more. In 1999, Naval Small Craft Instruction and Technical Training School (NAVSCIATTS) was established and has since used the area as an international training locale where more than 75 countries have participated in training exercises.

While striving to provide international military students with the best and most challenging patrol craft training possible, NAVSCIATTS took delivery of four, 25-foot Security Force Assistance Combat Craft Small (SFA-CCS) from NSW Group 4 Nov. 3.

Group 4 spearheaded the purchase of the SFA-CCS for its subordinate commands: NAVSCIATTS, Special Boat Teams (SBT) 12 and 20. Each are scheduled to receive SFA-CCS under an agreement between USSOCOM, NAVSEA Combatant Craft Program Management Office, and WARCOM.

The new craft are expected to expand Group 4's capacity to train international students in small craft skills and improve U.S. and partner nation maritime force interoperability worldwide, according to Cmdr. Bill Mahoney, NAVSCIATTS commanding officer.

"Group 4 chose the SFA-CCS specifically to match the craft purchased by partner nations via the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program and to improve Group 4's training with partner nation forces both in the United States at NAVSCIATTS, as well as through deployed SBT detachments," said Mahoney.

The SFA-CCS enables synergy between NAVSCIATTS, SBTs and partner nation forces through NSW Maritime SFA initiatives, according to Mahoney.

"The individualized and basic operational skills the students learn at NAVSCIATTS will increase coastal and over-the-horizon capabilities of partner nation forces and substantively improve their operational and procedural proficiency for more advanced interoperability with SBTs during deployed joint combined exercise training and combined littoral and coastal operations," he said.

The new SFA-CCS also provide interim capacity for a new Patrol Craft Officer Coastal (PCO-C) course in direct support of both NSW and Theater Special Operations Command (TSOC) SFA engagement initiatives worldwide.


"This strategy bridges Title 22 CONUS training with Title 10 global engagement, as each builds partner capacity that enhances partner nation coastal maritime ability and of equal importance, improves interoperability with U.S. forces," Mahoney said.

The new PCO-C will pilot at NAVSCIATTS in January 2011 to include 16 partner nation students from U.S. African Command (AFRICOM), U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) and U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) areas of responsibility (AOR).

According to Mahoney, pairing the newly purchased SFA-CCS with the innovative PCO-C course will support SOUTHCOM Enduring Friendship and other TSOC maritime initiatives in U.S. Central Command, AFRICOM and PACOM AOR. The international students will return to their respective countries with a significantly improved capability and capacity to conduct underway operations, while technicians will receive maintenance and repair fundamentals to ensure sustainment.

"The defender class safe boats were an excellent choice for the new PCO-C course," said Chief Special Boat Operator Joey Istre, NAVSCIATTS training chief. "Many partner nation countries already have these boats in their inventory. The training they receive here will be exactly what they need in order to operate their own military craft."

Based on input from partner nations, as the U.S. shifts away from direct coastal and over-the-horizon capabilities and adopts a more indirect approach, global demand for small craft training is expected to continue to grow.

"Continually and exponentially increasing FMS to partner nations to build their maritime capacity will require commensurate increases in operational and maintenance training as well as synchronization of funding and authorities to optimize U.S. government support to enhance our mutual maritime security worldwide," Mahoney said. 

NAVSCIATTS Public Affairs

Petty Officer 1st Class David Alegria, lead petty officer for training at Naval Small Craft Instruction and Technical Training School (NAVSCIATTS), troubleshoots the radio and intercom system on a 25-foot Security Force Assistance Combat Craft Small (SFA-CCS).

