FROM THE CAPTAIN’S CABIN

I wanted to get this special edition of OCEAN Wave sent to you ‘out of turn’ in light of recent events and operational developments. You will all be aware that OCEAN has been re-tasked to render humanitarian assistance and disaster relief in the Caribbean following the devastation caused by Hurricane Irma and the potential for further damage from weather systems in the region that have yet to make land fall. Morale is high as the Ship’s Company prepare to deliver assistance to the Caribbean region and our overseas territories. I have no doubt that OCEAN will play a pivotal role in the UK response to this natural disaster; we have all the necessary tools at our disposal be it helicopters, landing craft or highly skilled personnel – we have trained extensively for this sort of operation and we are ready for the challenge that lies ahead. It’s early days yet so I am sure you will all appreciate that there is little I can tell you now that won’t change in the coming hours and days. May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued stalwart support which is critical to the success of this most important mission. As we proceed toward the Caribbean, you are all very much in our thoughts and I will strive to keep you updated with our progress.

Captain Robert G Pedre RN

ONCE MORE UNTO THE BREACH!

Here we go again! On the 8th September 2017 the call was made for the Royal Navy to send aid to the Caribbean following the devastating Hurricane Irma and it was HMS OCEAN that answered that call. As the Role 2 platform and Flagship for the Royal Navy, OCEAN has made an immediate about turn before it could even take over the reins of SNMG2 in order to provide humanitarian aid at such a crucial time. After an initial period of pre-deployment training OCEAN must now steam west, collecting vital supplies and personnel before making the journey across the pond to do what most if, not all Royal Navy Officers and Ratings signed up to do; to deliver aid to those who need it most. As you can imagine the atmosphere onboard the ship is one of mixed emotions and this impromptu edition of Ocean Wave has been released today to give you all as much information as we possibly can about what we are about to embark on, and to give you an insight into the lives of those onboard as they head towards what could be their most rewarding operation yet.

“As capable as the ship is and as excellent as my ship’s company are, the key to achieving operational success is the support by families and friends back home. This will be a particularly demanding period for them as well as the ship’s company. This is recognised and appreciated at all levels.”

Captain Robert Pedre RN
The change of plans came as a shock to all of us, not just the Marines on ship but the whole Ship’s company! After the news was broadcast on the ship’s main broadcast there was huge sigh of relief that we were going to do something that really matters, instead of the day to day routine of cleaning, doing exercises and squeezing in a bit of time for phys. For the Marines onboard, we will most likely be given the task of using Landing Craft for moving stores from ship to land to set up a base of operations, using Zodiacs (4m RIBs) to go further upstream in shallow waters to get help for people in areas others may not be able to reach and also to help in the maintenance of order around the area, stopping looting and other lawless acts often committed by people forced into desperate situations.

All in all it is 9 ASRM’s last trip before the squadron is likely to be decommissioned next year, so for us to do this as a way to once again do what the squadron has done over many years of service on HMS OCEAN, help people and make a difference. I for one think that is ‘hootling.’

Marine Dowie

Though we are away doing what we do best we never stop thinking about you or stop seeking to stay in touch by phone, e-mail or with a written word.

Last time we deployed we took the opportunity to record Story Book Waves in order to help keep in touch with our younger loved ones back home. Story Book Waves, which is run and sponsored by ‘Aggie Weston’s’ the sailors’ charity, is an incentive that helps us read bed time stories to our loved ones even when are not at home.

These recordings, such as the Gruffalo, Stick Man, Room on the Broom and many more can be read onboard and turned in to top quality CD’s, MP3’s and Audio-files by Aggie’s editors, who with their music and sound effects make them a highly treasured piece. Our generously donated recording kit helped us to record some 400 stories between Summer 16 and Spring 17!

Due to the popularity of these stories they have continued on and will continue to do so. So why not get your own OCEAN hero or heroine to make a recording for you! These stories are free and easy to do and though they don’t replace an actual bedtime story are as close to the real things as they could be, ask anyone who has got one!

Reverend Paul Andrew
In order to keep morale high the female junior rates are halfway through playing a rather competitive game of ‘Mess Cluedo’. Each player contributed 50p and picked the name of someone, a location and weapon. I was tricked to my death and I believe I was the second person to die! I have now teamed up with my oppo Wtr Kate Bowden in order to take down our other incredibly smug oppo Wtr Jasmine Brent. The 3 of us went through phase 1 and 2 training together and all reunited on HMS Ocean earlier this year so there is a certain amount of ‘fun’ rivalry between us! I shall update you on the next edition!

Wtr Hannah Morris

Did You Know?
Within 10 days the Ship’s Office consumed over 250 biscuits!!

CALM BEFORE THE STORM

After an exciting departure from Devonport we had a very busy first week! Thankfully all went well and since then we have had the opportunity to give everyone some well deserved downtime. The first experience was a Flight deck BBQ, organised by the Logistics department and every Loggy chipped in, chopping up salad through the day, cooking the food in the afternoon and then serving the rest of the crew throughout the evening. We all had the chance to grab a drink and relax at some point though with the beautiful weather and views up top.

A few of us have participated in Storybook waves and recorded ourselves reading our loved ones a bedtime story. It was a fun experience and we know our little ones will love it when they receive them (And apparently it’s quite normal for your voice to quiver at the end when you say ‘Goodbye’).

Our next mission will be to sail towards the devastation caused along the Caribbean and America by Hurricane Irma. We feel incredibly honoured to be able to help as this is one of the things HMS OCEAN was made for and we feel that with the skills of the crew we are most definitely capable of giving Humanitarian aid. As individuals this is what most of us signed up for so there is a sense of determination from the Ships company. We will give all that we have to the families and communities that have lost things precious to them.

Writer Marianne Pelter
The sea has been a vast expanse that sailors have always learned to respect and fear. It is at times beautiful and at others frightening. In this it has been a place that has drawn us to praise God in the wonder of its creation. It has also been a place that has made us seek his shelter, strength and protection. Its vastness has also, as you know, led us and all who have sailed on it to be away from those most dear to us. All these factors come into this old sea blessing on which we now leave you as we sail west:

**The Sea blessing**

*Lord God, be the boat that holds us in the sea of life;  
Be the rudder that keeps us on the straight course;  
Be the ballast that supports us in times of great testing.  
May your Spirit fill our sails to carry us through each day  
And keep us and those we love, fast to that anchor which is steadfast and sure,*

*The Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Amen*

---

**PRIDE OF THE WEST INDIES**

Hello everyone my name is Kevin Slater and I am a Leading Hand in the Royal Navy. I have been on OCEAN for over a year and am proud to say that I am from the beautiful Caribbean Island of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. One of my jobs onboard HMS OCEAN (nobody on board has just one job) is to deliver first aid treatment of the highest standard to those in need. On 8th August 2017 the Captain announced the news to us that we would be heading to the Caribbean to provide humanitarian aid to those that have been affected by the devastating Hurricane 'Irma.' How do I feel about this? I am so glad I have been given this opportunity to go and make a difference to those in need. I’ve been following the news, looking at pictures and videos showing the devastation that this hurricane has caused my people. Now I have the opportunity and more importantly the skills to do something I couldn’t have been more proud to do.

*Leading Steward Kevin Slater*
Scenes from Hurricane Irma, a reminder of why we are deployed this year:

From the Editors:
As Wtr Allan has moved on to pastures new I have taken over as co-editor with the loveable Wtr Raynor.

The news broke yesterday that our tasking had changed and we were on the way to assist with the devastation left by Hurricane Irma. Whilst the mood onboard is sombre due to the fact such a disaster has occurred, everyone on board is looking forward to getting over there and making a difference where possible.

We look forward to keeping you posted on Ocean’s endeavours whilst deployment. Your continued support is what keeps everyone going whilst away from our loved ones.

Wtr Morris & Wtr Raynor