



# Offshore Combat Force: *Leading the way* Ahead to Navy 2020

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**T**he Offshore Combat Force celebrated its 28<sup>th</sup> Founding Anniversary on March 1, 2016 with the theme: "OCF: Leading the Way Ahead to Navy 2020." Commo. Robert A. Empedrad AFP thanked the men and women of OCF for their selfless dedication and service that brought the unit to its state of being the primary force in naval defense. For 2015, OCF was able to fulfill its deployment target of eight capital ships on ready for sea (RFS) and in deployed status throughout the year. The unit also garnered an overall rating of 97.9% during the Annual General Inspection (AGI) conducted by the Fleet Inspector General (FIG). The deployment of BRP Pangasinan (PS-31) in Eastern Mindanao Area of Responsibility (AOR) after her regular dry docking and refurbishment further enhanced the overall operational readiness profile of OCF.

During the anniversary celebration, BRP Ramon Alcaraz (PF-16) was awarded as OCF Patrol Ship of the Year 2016 for her operational accomplishments in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) and Eastern Mindanao AOR, total number of RFS days and participation in bilateral exercises Balikatan 2015, CARAT 2015, MALPHI LAUT 2015 and PN-PAF DAGIT 2015 with Capt. Juario C. Marayag PN(GSC) as Commanding Officer. The OCF Enlisted Personnel of the Year was awarded to EM3 Gerrydyl T. Diolazo PN as member of the Mobile Repair Team (MRT) who conducted various engineering repairs aboard OCF vessels, thereby saving the amount of PHP4,920,000.00 in favor of the government based on labor tariffs. Other anniversary activities include the Inter-Color Games, donation of trash cans to Sangley Elementary School and High School and planting of 2,500 mangrove propagules at vicinity of NAVSOG breakwater. OCF has successfully fulfilled its traditional role while preparing for future capabilities and platforms in line with the PN Sail Plan 2020 and Revised AFP Modernization Plan (RAFPMP).





### **Frigate Acquisition Project (FAP)**

On March 16, 2016, the Public Bidding for the PN Frigate was conducted at the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) conference room, DND Building, Quezon City. The bidding was intended for two units of frigate with launchers only (less ammunition) as shipbuilders are not necessarily makers of weapons and ammunitions. Commo. Empedrad led the members of the PN TWG for the Frigate Acquisition Project during the Submission and Opening of Bid Envelopes (SOBE), attended by proponents from Garden Reach Systems Engineering (GRSE) of India, Daewoo Shipbuilder and Marine Engineering (DSME), Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) of South Korea and Navantia of Spain. The PN frigate shall have a minimum of 2,000 tons displacement and shall be equipped with weapon systems for Submarine Warfare (SuW), Anti-Air Warfare (AAW), and Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW). Following the technical specifications prepared by the PN TWG for FAP, the proponents presented their technical compliance based on a platform of their own proven design, the Kamorta Class ASW Corvette for GRSE, Incheon Class Frigate for DSME and HHI, and Avante 2200 Corvette for Navantia. DSME and Navantia's bid documents were declared failed for non-compliance with technical specifications and lack of supporting

documents and literature, while GRSE and HHI's proposals were both declared as passed. With an Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) for two units of frigate with launcher amounting to Sixteen Billion Pesos (PHP16B), GRSE was declared the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) and HHI as the second LCB. However, GRSE was "Post Disqualified" due to low Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFFC). After a several Post Qualification, the DND BAC declared HHI as "Post Qualified" and Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bid.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Del Pilar Class Frigate (DPCF) and Pohang Class Patrol Combat Corvette (PCC)**

On March 28, 2011 in the United States, USCG Cutter BOUTWELL (WHEC-715) home ported in San Diego, California, was decommissioned from active service of the US Coast Guard for eventual transfer to the Government Republic of the Philippines. The acquisition of the third DPCF was officially announced by no less than the President of the United States, His Excellency Barack H. Obama during his visit aboard BRP Gregorio Del Pilar (PF-15) in January 2016 in Pier 13, South Harbor, Manila during the APEC Summit. The capabilities of the three DPCFs shall be enhanced to perform AAW role with ANS/SPS-77 radars to complement the SAG of the future.





In the same manner, the ex-ROKS MOKPO (PCC-759), a Pohang Class Patrol Combat Corvette was committed by South Korea's Minister of Defense for transfer to the Philippine Navy. Ex-Mokpo is armed with 76mm Oto Melara gun and equipped with SONAR which will enhance OCF's ASW and SuW capabilities. The Combined Diesel or Gas (CODOG) propulsion configuration of Motor Transport Unit (MTU) diesel engines and LM2500 gas turbine with controllable pitch propellers (CPP) move the ship to a top speed of 25 knots. OCF Training School has conducted initial training to the Pohang Sailing Crew followed by shipboard training aboard DPCF vessels PF-15 and BRP Ramon Alcaraz (PF-16) on seamanship, engineering, damage control and WCEIS. Capt. Oscar C. Faeldon PN(GSC), Chairman of the TWG for Pohang, is negotiating for the transfer of the ship, training of the sailing crew in Korea and voyage to the Philippines. Funds for the acquisition of the third DPCF and the first of possibly 3 PCC are for approval of the Office of the President (OP).

### **Doctrines Development**

In order to update its war fighting doctrines, OCF has completed the Anti-Surface Warfare (ASuW) Manual which is for approval by the Higher Headquarters. The ASuW Manual was conceptualized through the efforts of Capt. Socrates M. Daza PN(GSC) and Cmdr. Nerelito P. Martinez PN as Chairman and Vice Chairman, respectively, of the ASuW PMT. Likewise, the Del Pilar Class Frigate Operations Manual is subject for approval by the Fleet Doctrines Board.

OCF is aggressive and resolute in pursuing the modernization of its capital ships, enhancing present capabilities, acquiring modern platforms, updating its doctrines and improving the competence of OCF personnel. OCF shall remain the primary force at sea well into the future.