

2023-03-22 Wednesday Boats

AUKUS commentary starting to look like same cats running around the same stairs -so in minimise unless something really really pops up.

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1636050145337917458>

good ad 90 seconds

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1637348316311699457>

series of 212 leaving Portsmouth -pick any

<https://twitter.com/i/status/1637541785709817859>

<https://idrw.org/project-77-india-may-reduce-procurement-of-nuclear-attack-submarines/>

Last night I mentioned air and surface ASW being inward looking due to the Cold War Peace Dividend. Here's what the Pacific VP world looked like in 94-98 Adak closed via BRAC, Mt Pinatubo erupted, closing off Cubi for several years. VP-MAU shut down (a MAU was like a Reserve unit that you could embed in a squadron -way too simple explanation)). West coast squadrons went from 24 to something like 14-16. Moffett Field closed by BRAC, west coast RAG (replacement air group) shut down. They haven't recovered.

OK let's go for a real good sea story about a nuke - and the DGs star!

THE SAGA OF POGY (SSN 647)

Robert L. Huguenin, MMC(SS), USN ([story aired in 1994](#))

[Contributor's Note: Chief Petty Officer Robert Huguenin, MMC(SS) was serving on board the USS SEA ROBIN (SS 407) during an overhaul period in the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard in early 1968. He requested and was given permission to participate in the event described herein. As his Commanding Officer, I asked him to prepare an article describing the adventure. This was cheerfully done. Please enjoy a short 26 day sea-going tale as seen through the crusty eyes of an experienced top-performing submarine Machinist Mate.

Captain J. Denver McCune, USN (Ret.)

The story you are about to read may seem a little far fetched during this day and age, but it's true all right. [Grab a brew... this is a little different](#)

This saga really starts on January 8th, 1968 when the towing crew of POGY, consisting of Lieutenant Victor P. Default (OIC), Robert L. Huguenin MMC(SS), George M. Papillard MMI(SS), John H. Ballard

QM2(SS), David B. McCollum ETR2 and last but not least Terrence L. Howells EN3(SS) met together for the first time at Philadelphia Naval Shipyard. They were there to prepare USS POGY (SSN 647) for a tow of approximately 1800 miles from a berth at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, where she had laid idle from June until January, to a new constructing site at Ingalls Shipbuilding & Drydock Co., Pascagoula, Mississippi.

Preparing a ship like this (less than 50 percent complete) for a tow of that distance turns into a monumental task. Items that normally would be taken for granted on a submarine were not yet installed on POGY. There was no water, plumbing, or electrical systems, nor cooking or messing facilities, no berthing, no D.C. gear or emergency gear of any kind, and loose gear was adrift throughout the ship. All this had to be taken into consideration plus the fact of a tow past Cape Hatteras at the end of January, where weather could play havoc.

None of the men involved had ever been on a tow before, but all being good submarine men took to their new jobs with the typical naval *can-do* attitude and proceeded to get the job done. First of all, we had only seven full working days to get the numerous jobs done.

Three emergency diesel generators had been lowered into the upper level of the Operations Compartment. Two 10kw and one 30kw generator would be supplying all the power needed for lighting, refrigeration, hot plate electric griddle, space heaters, signal light, running lights and submersible pumps.

The next problem was fuel to keep the generators running for the 10+ days required for the trip. This turned into quite a headache. Six hundred gallons of #2 fuel oil was pumped into #1 MBT. The flood ports on all ballast tanks had been welded shut. Fuel lines were tapped into the main vent cover plate with a line extended into the fuel itself, a pressure of 12 psi was then put into the tank to provide the push to supply the fuel for our engines. The system was pressure tested and all leaks located and prepared one day prior to getting underway. The system was constructed so that it could be pressurized from below decks using installed nitrogen bottles. As an emergency back-up system, six 55 gallon drums were mounted topside and piped below decks.

A combination refrigeration/freezer was borrowed from the Reserve Fleet in Philadelphia and lowered into the upper level of the operations compartment to provide for the stowage of our food for the trip. (We intended to at least eat well). Our water problem was solved after much debate by buying 5 gallon poly bottles, with caps. These were set in the lower level of the Operations Compartment and filled with water. This gave us approximately 640 gallons of water, a little more than 10 gallons of water per man per day.

To solve our cooking problems we purchased a two-burner hot plate and an electric griddle (18" x 10"), three pots, a 30 cup electric coffee pot, 300 paper plates, 350 hot drinking cups, plastic knives, forks, and spoons. (Also in case we ran out of silverware we purchased 112 dozen stainless knives, forks and spoons). To determine what to bring in the line of food, we enlisted the aid of the submarine barracks chief cook (Robert Smith, CSCS(SS)). He prepared our menu and planned what we would need to make this trip. The food was then purchased at the base commissary.

For a sanitary tank we purchased one of Sears & Roebuck's portable toilets. Also from Sears & Roebuck we purchased four 9-mile range two-way radios (two for use by the sea-going tug and two were to be

used on board POGY}. Using the radios below decks we had to install an antenna. We did this by running a wire from the outer edge of our sail planes to the top of the sail then down through a stuffing tube and into the galley where we set up our communications center.

We installed our hot plate, coffee pot and grill in the galley. For our mess deck we scrounged up an old table and benches from Shop 17 and had them installed in the wardroom. For our head we installed our portable party pooper in the wardroom pantry. For berthing we scrounged up some old bunks and mattresses and had them installed in the crew's mess hall (keeping everything centrally located kept our lighting down to a minimum). Emergency equipment was borrowed from USS SEA ROBIN (SS407) and the Reserve Fleet in Philadelphia and loaded aboard.

The morning of January 18th arrived bright, sunny and crisp and at 0945 we tossed off our lines and bid farewell to the many people who helped us prepare for our long trip south. The trip down the Delaware River, through the Delaware Bay and out into the Atlantic proved uneventful and we settled down to our routine tasks of keeping the portable generator running, checking the towing rig, eating and sleeping. The temperature on the lower level of the Operations Compartment at this time was a chilly 41 °F. We spent the first two days checking for loose gear, preparing for what we expected to be a rough ride as we passed Cape Hatteras. As it turned out, the day we were towed past the Cape was a beautiful day, warm with a slight breeze and unbelievably calm seas. We then busied ourselves with adding some new comforts. We installed a shower (to the delight of all hands). Of course all water had to be hand carried in 5 gallon jugs to our new haven. We heated the water by placing the water jugs between the hot running emergency generator for a few hours. As we drew further south, heating was no longer a problem, and now we had to find ways to cool the ship down. The seas having been as smooth as silk enabled us to open our hatch on the main deck and we now devised a way to secure our 30kw and one 10kw and run with just one 10kw set on lighting. When we were cooking, we ran a second 10kw set. This reduced our heat load enough to keep the boat cool and habitable.

It might be noted that one member of the towing crew has to be a good cook. The food eaten on a trip is the only morale booster available, so if you eat well, morale will remain high. The cook also has to be a willing worker. His job under these conditions is no easy one. All the water has to be poured out of a 5 gallon jug. Washing dishes after a meal turns into quite a job.

All water has to be heated on the hot plate and there was no running water, hot or cold. In the galley we used anywhere from 25 to 30 gallons of water a day for cooking and washing pots and pans and dishes. With luck we were able to rig one of the deep sinks in the galley to drain into a sanitary tank or we would have had quite a job disposing of waste water from the galley.

The weather was so nice on the fifth day of our journey that we were able to go topside and sunbathe. After six days we discovered that no one had taken any lighter fluid for our lighters, so we made our own electric lighter using a battle lantern battery. It worked good! Our portable head provided us a source of amusement. On several occasions, while using this unique device, it collapsed, much to the delight of the non-users. Also our poly bags (used on the seat) were running short so we substituted our 5 gallon jugs and lined the southern U.S. Atlantic coast with some of the largest urine samples they have probably ever seen.

Seven days underway, just southeast of Cape Kennedy, Florida, our lives suddenly took on a new meaning. At 0300 on the morning of the 25th of January, the tow line parted and we were drifting free from our tug. The tow line parted on or near USS PAPAGO allowing approximately 1700 feet of 2" steel

cable to drop into the sea. Our watch woke the remainder of the crew and all six of us dressed in our special deck shoes, life jackets and newly designed life lines (shoulder harness types) and rushed topside to be greeted by a cool breeze and even cooler water.

Turning on our signal light in an attempt to light up our bow on this dark night enabled us to see to receive our shot line. To our dismay we found that the light had been mounted too far aft on the top of the sail and could not illuminate the main deck forward of the sail. But even so, it was an asset in the dark night. The sea rolled up over the deck, soaking the entire crew, and working was hard at best. The new life lines, combined with our Randy Boat Shoes were a welcome combination and work progressed until, at last, after several attempts we finally had a 7" nylon line attached to POGY. By now it was daylight and we attempted to retrieve the 2" steel tow cable. All attempts at this failed. To make matters worse, the 7" line snapped and we were again cast free of PAPAGO.

After what seemed like days of hauling line in, hand over hand, on a slippery cold wet deck we finally managed to get another 7" line made fast to us. During this last attempt PAPAGO and the POGY kissed which resulted in the building of several frames on PAPAGO and she started taking on a small amount of water. A radio message was now sent out and two other tugs were dis-patched to assist us. The USS KIOWA arrived on the scene at approximately 1530, later the SS CABLE (a civilian salvage ship) arrived, then the USS PAIUTE arrived. With all this help and talent we figured our problems would now be solved.

With PAPAGO damaged it was decided to link up to KIOWA so she could take us the rest of the way to Mississippi. We had now been towed close to shore just north of Cape Kennedy into shallow water. KIOWA moved into position to get a tow wire on us. (We were held at anchor by our 1700 feet of steel cable now dragging on the bottom). On her first pass, KIOWA shot wide of her mark and although we received her shot line and about 1000 feet of her messenger we were unable to drag in any more line and the line was released. KIOWA made another approach on us. On this approach she came in too close for the wind conditions and before we could get a line aboard she drifted into our bow and damaged her hull and bent some of the blades on her screw.

Now with two tugs out of the picture (as far as towing was concerned) a new approach to the problem was tried. USS PAIUTE moved into position forward of us and dropped both her anchors. This allowed her to drift down to within approximately 400 feet of our bow. Next, she lowered a rubber boat into the water with an outboard motor, and drove over to us with four men and equipment with their messenger and a snatch block. The seas at this time were running about 8 to 10 feet and on occasion were up to 20 to 25 feet. During this operation, darkness overtook us and to make matters worse the rubber boat came up under our ladder and was punctured and sunk. But not before we recovered all her gear and men.

It was now decided to wait until dawn to complete the hook-up. At first break of light a tired but determined crew mustered topside for a tough days work and by 1610 we were made fast to PAIUTE and after dropping our 1700 foot of steel cable to the bottom, we were underway again for Mississippi. At this time, PAPAGO and KIOWA were released to head for port for repairs. SS CABLE was to stay with us. It was a tired worn-out bunch that crawled into their bunks that night, but all were happy to know that we were now on our way again with a secure rig enroute to Mississippi.

The next morning at approximately 0900 on 28 January (the day we were supposed to pull into Mississippi) under the watchful eyes of two members of the towing crew, PAIUTE made an unusual

maneuver and ripped the bull nose right off the bow of POGY. The towing pad-eye at this time was still intact although weakened and bent at approximately a 300 angle. Radio contact was made with PAIUTE and this information was passed to them. The towing rig was now closely inspected by members of the POGY crew and the information relayed to the tug.

At approximately 0920 for some unknown reason~ the tug again changed course. When the towing cable came taut the towing pad-eye ripped free of the deck taking practically everything on the bow, with all the junk that flew everywhere. The back-up rig that had been installed never seemed to slow anything down, and once again those familiar words echoed across the sea: "POGY is drifting free again!". Only this time we had nothing to tie to for a tow except our retractable cleats and those had never been designed for towing.

It was a disgusted crew that finally hauled in a new 7" nylon line and made it fast to our retractable cleats. A new radio message had been dispatched for more help and once again we headed for shallow water. We arrived in shallow water off the shores of Fort Pierce, Florida and PAIUTE dropped her hook and it was decided to wait for help to arrive and also daylight to work in. We settled down for an uneasy night of watching the 7" line and weather. After approximately 2 hours, the watch, making his rounds discovered that the 7" line was fraying badly and a radio message was sent to the tug informing them of the situation.

The tug sent over a team of men to appraise the situation. It was decided to get underway again and shift POGY around and send over a 5" line (they had no more 7" line aboard). After things settled down again it was decided to wait until dawn to commence our temporary hook-up for towing us into Cape Kennedy for a permanent rig that would get us to Mississippi. The next morning arrived and it seemed like lady luck was finally on our side. The weather had calmed down and we proceeded to rig POGY for our tow to the Cape some 65 miles north of us. It had been decided to use 2-1/4" anchor chain looped around the conning tower.

Work progressed well and with the aid of the five salvage vessels now in our group we completed our hook-up and tied to USS RECOVERY. At 1610 we were underway for Cape Kennedy. The following morning after an uneventful night we were gallantly towed into Cape Kennedy. By now it was a very tired, dirty looking and disgusted crew that was seen topside of what must have looked like a rusted and battered looking hulk come limping into port.

Luckily for us, an FBM was in port and like any sub crew, they treated us like kings. Oh, how wonderful those hot showers and clean clothes felt. At least we felt human again. By now we should have been in Mississippi but here we were, only half way there and we had to be repaired before we could again put to sea. This gave us a chance to gather up more supplies and relax for a couple of days. Finally after 5 days of round the clock work by welders and burners from Electric Boat, we were ready to cast off all lines and continue on our way for Mississippi. We left the Cape at approximately 1330 on 4 February. We bid farewells again and started on our last leg of what we hoped would be an uneventful tow the rest of the way to Mississippi. This time we were to be towed by USS RECOVERY (twin screw ship).

That night we lost our main supply oil line from #1 MBT (it had been washed away). We shifted to our emergency supply, our six 55 gallon drums in a rack topside. This lasted until noon the next day. When the seas picked up and a wave hit the oil drums and knocked three drums loose breaking the supply line. Oil was spilling out on deck. Being our only oil left, it was decided to send two men topside to salvage the three remaining oil drums. At this time waves were breaking over the ship's sail planes and footing

on the main deck was at best extremely hazardous, but the remaining three drums had to be salvaged or we would have been without fuel for our diesels and therefore without lights. The job was accomplished without any injuries to any personnel and we rode out the remainder of the storm losing practically all of our gear topside and pushing in the forward part of the sail.

During the storm, a radio message was received by RECOVERY from Key West requesting we turn back and wait out the storm. However, it was requested by both from RECOVERY and POGY crew *to ride it out* – and ride it out, we did. We were glad we did, since now we could continue on to Mississippi and not lose any time. We finally arrived off the coast of Mississippi on 12 February, but due to strong wind and the coming of darkness it was decided to wait until daybreak to enter the narrow channel and up to the piers.

As luck would have it, we ran aground just south of buoy # 18. With the aid of two tugs and RECOVERY, we were finally pulled free of the soft bottom and continued on to the piers, arriving at approximately 1810. Our intended 10 day trip was over after 26 days. The actual time spent under tow was 21 days. When we pulled alongside the pier, we had enough fuel remaining for approximately 16 more hours of running time. We had enough food and water for 4 or 5 more days. But our hot plate had only one burner working and it only worked on medium range. Our sonar dome was flooded, our port running light had shorted out, our signal light had burned out, and our ballast tank was leaking fuel oil. But we had made it!

It was a happy crew that tied up the lines and prepared to leave POGY for the shipyard to build into the finest fast attack nuclear powered submarine ever to sail the seven seas!

Columbia Class Submarine: Construction Schedule Is Not Reliable

GAO-23-105683SU Published: Mar 20, 2023.

[Restricted access report quelle surprise](#)

Transparency warrior Rex Patrick takes FOI delays to court

Former independent senator Rex Patrick. (AAP Image/Mick Tsikas)

Former independent senator and self-described “transparency warrior” Rex Patrick is taking the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) to Federal Court over freedom of information (FOI) delays.

Patrick is seeking a judicial review on how long the information commissioner can take to make decisions, including what is an “unreasonable delay”. Currently, there is no statutory deadline for FOI decision reviews.

The former senator said he has more than 20 FOI applications under review, including on stage-three tax cuts, AHPPC information on state border closures during COVID-19, and details on Snowy 2.0 including the schedule and baseline payment.

Patrick commented that delay was the “enemy” of FOI.

“The information commissioner is still processing FOI review requests that are almost five years old,” Patrick said.

“Five years of delay on FOI reviews turns information that would otherwise be useful to engage in policy debates or conduct government oversight into information useful only to historians.

“Agencies can say ‘no’ to releasing information under FOI knowing, fully aware, that once it enters the Office of the Australian Information, the information is buried for another three-to-five years.”

The Grata Fund, a “non-profit strategic litigation incubator and funder”, is Patrick’s advocacy partner in this case.

The OAIC told *The Mandarin* it looks to resolve all IC reviews “as efficiently as possible and in accordance with all requirements under the relevant legislation”.

“A significant legacy caseload and an increasing number of IC reviews, combined with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, have affected our ability to deal with this caseload, given the resources we have available,” an OAIC spokesperson said.

“Last year alone, the number of IC Review applications rose by approximately 63%.

“Notwithstanding these challenges, the OAIC has significantly increased the number of IC reviews we finalise each year and we continue to seek to improve the timeliness of IC review processing.”

With regards to the proceeding, the OAIC spokesperson added the office was obliged to act as a “model litigant”.

“It is incumbent on the OAIC to respond to the matters raised by the applicant in the proceeding, to assist the court in determining those matters,” the spokesperson added.

“Accordingly, the Australian Information Commissioner has made submissions on the issues raised by the proceeding, including the remedies sought, and filed evidence.”

The office added it would not be making further comment as the case is before the court.

An upcoming report by think tank the Australia Institute found FOI decisions cost double what they cost in the past, three in ten are untimely, and one in two decisions are decided incorrectly after being reviewed.

The Australia Institute’s democracy and accountability director Bill Browne said both public servants and ministers were taking advantage of the delays to withhold information from the public.

“Australia’s democracy needs consequences for departments that abuse the FOI system, and a watchdog that is willing and able to hold them to account,” Browne said.

[Just a couple of weeks ago](#), FOI commissioner Leo Hardiman resigned from his position, citing delays in information commissioner reviews.

The former commissioner said changes were necessary and he felt unable to increase the timeliness of reviews without those changes.

Hardiman had been the first FOI commissioner in seven years, having been appointed by the former government.

Patrick’s court case is scheduled for Monday morning in the Federal Court in Melbourne, with a decision anticipated later in the year.

One of my oppos had 'fun' with Defence and FOI

A former air force officer has struggled for military justice, writes Paul Daley. ([back in 2009](#))

THE Defence Department has settled one of its longest-running, most contentious and costly legal disputes with a former Royal Australian Air Force officer it sacked for suffering depression.

After a decade-and-a-half of legal action costing taxpayers an estimated \$15 million, the Defence Department has made a generous settlement with former Wing Commander Russell Vance.

The settlement with Canberra-based Mr Vance, 55, is an admission of the Defence Department's liability for his loss of earnings, because his promising air force career was destroyed after a petty dispute involving subordinates. Defence also paid his \$1 million-plus legal bill.

Defence moved to settle the case in December when former defence minister Joel Fitzgibbon demanded answers about unsatisfactory aspects of the Defence Department's conduct of the case.

Mr Fitzgibbon intervened after the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department launched an investigation into whether the Defence Legal Office was conducting the case appropriately.

The Commonwealth requires its authorities involved in legal action to behave as model litigants. The Attorney General's Department found Defence had breached this obligation "by causing unnecessary delay in the handling of the litigation arising from a failure to undertake all reasonable and necessary inquiries" relating to the discovery of relevant documents.

The intervention by the Attorney-General's Department came after a judgement by ACT Supreme Court Justice Ken Crispin that the Commonwealth should no longer defend Mr Vance's unfair dismissal case.

Justice Crispin singled out evidence by a former Defence Legal Office lawyer who conceded he had given incorrect testimony in an affidavit about Mr Vance's case.

Mr Vance's solicitor, John Little, confirmed that Defence formally settled on May 15.

"I can confirm that after 15 years and after spending many untold millions of taxpayer dollars, Defence has made a generous settlement with Mr Vance and paid his considerable legal costs," Mr Little said. "This brings to an end a case that highlights that Defence operates as anything but a model litigant ... on the basis of what has happened to Russ you wouldn't let your dog — let alone your children — join Defence."

Mr Vance said: "I feel very sorry for other people in my situation who haven't had the luck or the serendipity to find people like John Little who will support their cases ... The money is really just compensation for them destroying my career."

Mr Vance's troubles began in 1993 when he was posted to Butterworth in Malaysia, with orders to fix an RAAF base reputed to be a "holiday camp".

Mr Vance, by his own admission a "tough bastard" and a stickler for military protocol, fell foul of his subordinates whose wives complained to a social worker about his abrasive approach. [I worked with Russell for several years - he was talking as Air Force being what we used to describe as the uniformed branch of the APS - so his version of 'tough bastard' and stickler for military protocol would, for a jolly jack, put him in about the same pretty good to work for class as Kim Pitt; or for the now day people - I'd guess Richard Lindsay based on the small but telling amount I have heard of him. And I pick him only because his style sounds like KPs when I worked with/for him. Russell was fitted so far up from where we in the trenches sat we thought it would be over in a week and then they apparently started to not find stuff, stuff that was so findable it was 1 mm from the public domain -pretty visible but totally unobtainable.](#)

When Mr Vance sought details under freedom of information, Defence ordered a board of inquiry on his conduct. The board sat in two continents for over two years at a cost of \$6 million.

It was scrapped when Mr Vance suffered a nervous breakdown and hastily reconvened when it was found he was working part time in Defence as part of his treatment.

After the inquiry findings criticised Mr Vance's management style, the RAAF sacked him, only to reinstate him when Mr Little began Federal Court proceedings.

The RAAF sacked Mr Vance again on the basis of his depression. The case rolled through the courts for another decade at an estimated cost of \$6 million as the Defence Legal Office continually appealed.

[And what better way to end a Sporty day than the last sentence of this APDR dit on the Ghost Bat](#)

Aside from expendability, low cost, and functioning as force multipliers, one of the other strengths of loyal wingmen is their significantly shorter development time compared to manned aircraft due mainly to smaller, simpler airframes that do not need to be tested as rigorously – development cycles of two years are not uncommon. Indeed, the technologies enabling loyal wingmen have been around for decades – as seen in the proliferation of UAVs in general – and are quite mature. Small and light guided weapons for loyal wingmen are widely available as well. However, secure datalinks, electronic warfare resistance, and doctrine still need to be developed further and improved. [you know - 3 of the big things that make you an instant loser if you don't have them sorted - and we've supposedly just committed](#)

and extra 600 mill to this - and you wonder why I just love those procurement professionals who tried to poke their noses into my risk management back in the day.