



HMS CHIDDINGFOLD  
OP Kipion  
BFPO 254

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Commodore (Ret'd) Pat Tyrell  
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Sir,

I hope this letter finds you well. MCM2 Crew 1 have now flown back to the UK and, after a successful regeneration, MCM2 Crew 3 have flown out to the Gulf and have taken command of Her Majesty's Ship CHIDDINGFOLD.

In true Crew 3 fashion, we immediately got back into the fold. The crew have recently completed an intense training and assurance package with the Fleet Operational Sea Training organisation, out in the Arabian Gulf. This included two phases; phase 1 was a test of the Ship's ability to deal with internal threats, such as major fires, floods, and casualties. This then started to slowly be incorporated into weapons training, machinery breakdowns so that we can FLOAT, FIGHT and MOVE! Phase 1 culminated in a day simulating an enemy attack from Fast Attack Craft, Aircraft and Missiles, in which the crew effectively demonstrated a robust response to be deemed successful in Phase 1.



Phase 2 consisted of testing our specialist capability; Mine Countermeasure Operations (MCM Ops). This consisted of 3 days spent in State 2 manning, requiring 50% of the Ship's Company to be awake and working at any given time, ensuring we can stay on task 24 hours a day. Firstly, we tested our ability to search and find underwater mines with our sonar operators. Once we had located the mines, we then moved into the classification phase; using either a remote-control underwater drone, the "Seafox", to investigate the target, or by sending one of our skilled mine clearance divers to survey the mine up close. Finally, once we had confirmed that the contact is a mine, we then move to the disposal phase. Similar to the classification phase, this required us to conduct a controlled demolition of the mine, using either our mine clearance divers, with carefully crafted plastic explosive charges, or using a variant of Seafox, fitted with a small explosive head.



With Phase 2 successfully completed, CHIDDINGFOLD earned her 'stamp of approval' from Fleet Operational Sea Training. She now stands ready to conduct not only Maritime Security Operations in the Gulf, defending the UK's interests in the region, but to also conduct mine countermeasure operations to keep merchant vessels in the area safe, providing and insurance policy to world trade, ensuring one of the world's key economic arteries remains open.

During the forthcoming months, CHIDDINGFOLD will work in-company with other Royal Navy ships and United States Navy ships; spending much of the festive period at sea on operations, whilst protecting the nation and her interests in the region, as well as gearing up for IMX 22 in the first quarter of next year, the world's largest MCM multinational exercise hosted by the US 5<sup>TH</sup> FLEET. We also look forward to celebrating Continuous 15 in January, which marks the 15<sup>th</sup> year the Royal Navy has continuously forward



deployed minehunters to the Arabian Gulf to conduct MCM Ops to keep the trade route open.



If you wish to be kept informed of our activities whilst deployed please follow us on Twitter @HMSchiddingfold.

*Yours sincerely,*

*Simon*

S J Reeves  
Lt Cdr RN  
Commanding Officer