



U.S. Navy's

Military Sealift Command

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USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) Hospital Ship



Ship Characteristics:

- **Length:** 894 feet
- **Beam:** 106 feet
- **Draft:** 33 feet
- **Displacement (full):** 69,360 long tons
- **Speed:** 17.5 knots
- **Delivered to U.S. Navy:** Dec. 1, 1987
- **Crew Size:**
 - Civil Service Mariners – ROS: 18, FOS: 65
 - Navy Medical Personnel – ROS: 58, FOS: 1,215

Mission:

USNS Comfort's primary mission is to provide an afloat, mobile, acute surgical medical facility to the U.S. military that is flexible, capable and uniquely adaptable to support expeditionary warfare. Comfort's secondary mission is to provide full hospital services to support U.S. disaster relief and humanitarian operations worldwide.

Reduced and Full Operating Status/Crew:

- When not deployed, Comfort is kept in reduced operating status in Baltimore where a small crew of civil service mariners and Navy medical personnel maintain the ship in a high state of readiness.
- When activated, Comfort can transition to full operating status in five days.
- Comfort is operated, navigated and maintained by a crew of civil service mariners working for the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command.
- Comfort's Medical Treatment Facility is crewed and maintained by medical personnel from the Navy's Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

Embarked Medical Treatment Facility Capabilities:

- Comfort has one of the largest trauma facilities in the United States.
- The hospital has a full spectrum of surgical and medical services including four X-rays, one CAT scan unit, a dental suite, an optometry and lens laboratory, a physical therapy center, a pharmacy, an invasive angiography suite and two oxygen-producing plants. Comfort also maintains up to 5,000 units of blood.
- Patients arrive aboard primarily by helicopter and sometimes by small boat.
- Patients are assessed for medical treatment in casualty receiving and routed to surgery or other services depending on their medical condition.

USNS Comfort Recent Missions:

- **Continuing Promise** – From April - July 2009, USNS Comfort served as the platform for humanitarian and civic assistance missions in Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Antigua and Barbuda, Panama, Colombia, El Salvador and Nicaragua. During the mission, more than 100,000 patients were treated.
- **Partnership for the Americas** – From June - Oct. 2007, Comfort conducted a four-month humanitarian assistance mission to Latin America and the Caribbean that treated more than 98,000 people in 12 countries. For this unique mission, the ship's hospital was staffed by medical professionals from the U.S. Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and Public Health Service as well as Canadian troops and civilian volunteers from a number of nonprofit organizations.
- **Hurricanes Katrina and Rita** – From Sept. - Oct. 2005, Comfort deployed to provide medical assistance to the Gulf Coast following the devastation of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. During 12 days in Pascagoula, Miss., Comfort's medical crew provided treatment to nearly 1,500 people. The ship then pulled into New Orleans, La., and provided care to residents and emergency workers.
- **Operation Iraqi Freedom** – From Jan. - June 2003, Comfort deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. During 56 days in the Persian Gulf, Comfort served as an afloat trauma center and provided expert medical care to nearly 700 people including wounded U.S. military personnel as well as about 200 injured Iraqi civilians.
- **Operation Noble Eagle** – Comfort activated the afternoon of Sept. 11, 2001, in response to the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. From Sept. 14 - Oct. 1, Comfort was pierside in Manhattan where the ship's crew provided meals, housing, medical and psychological services to volunteer and relief workers at ground zero.
- **Operation Uphold Democracy** – From Sept. - Oct. 1994, Comfort deployed to provide combat surgical support for U.S. contingency operations in Haiti off the city of Port-Au-Prince. Comfort medical personnel provided a 250-bed hospital facility for the 35,000 Cuban and Haitian migrants and assisted in an effort to rebuild the local health care system.
- **Operation Sea Signal** – From June - Aug. 1994, Comfort arrived at Kingston, Jamaica to function as the first-ever U.S. afloat migrant processing center for Haitian migrants. Comfort provided basic support services, and the medical crew aboard the ship established one operating room and a 50-bed inpatient capability.
- **Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm** – From Aug. 1990 - April 1991, Comfort deployed to the U.S. Central Command area of operations to treat wounded U.S. military personnel. The ship's medical personnel saw more than 8,000 outpatients, admitted 700 inpatients and performed 337 complex surgical procedures that could not have been done in combat hospitals ashore.

History:

USNS Comfort is the second of two Mercy-class hospital ships. A converted San Clemente-class supertanker, Comfort delivered to the Navy's Military Sealift Command Dec.1, 1987.

Military Sealift Command operates approximately 110 non-combatant, civilian-crewed ships that replenish U.S. Navy ships, chart ocean bottoms, conduct undersea surveillance, strategically preposition combat cargo at sea around the world and move military equipment and supplies used by deployed U.S. forces.