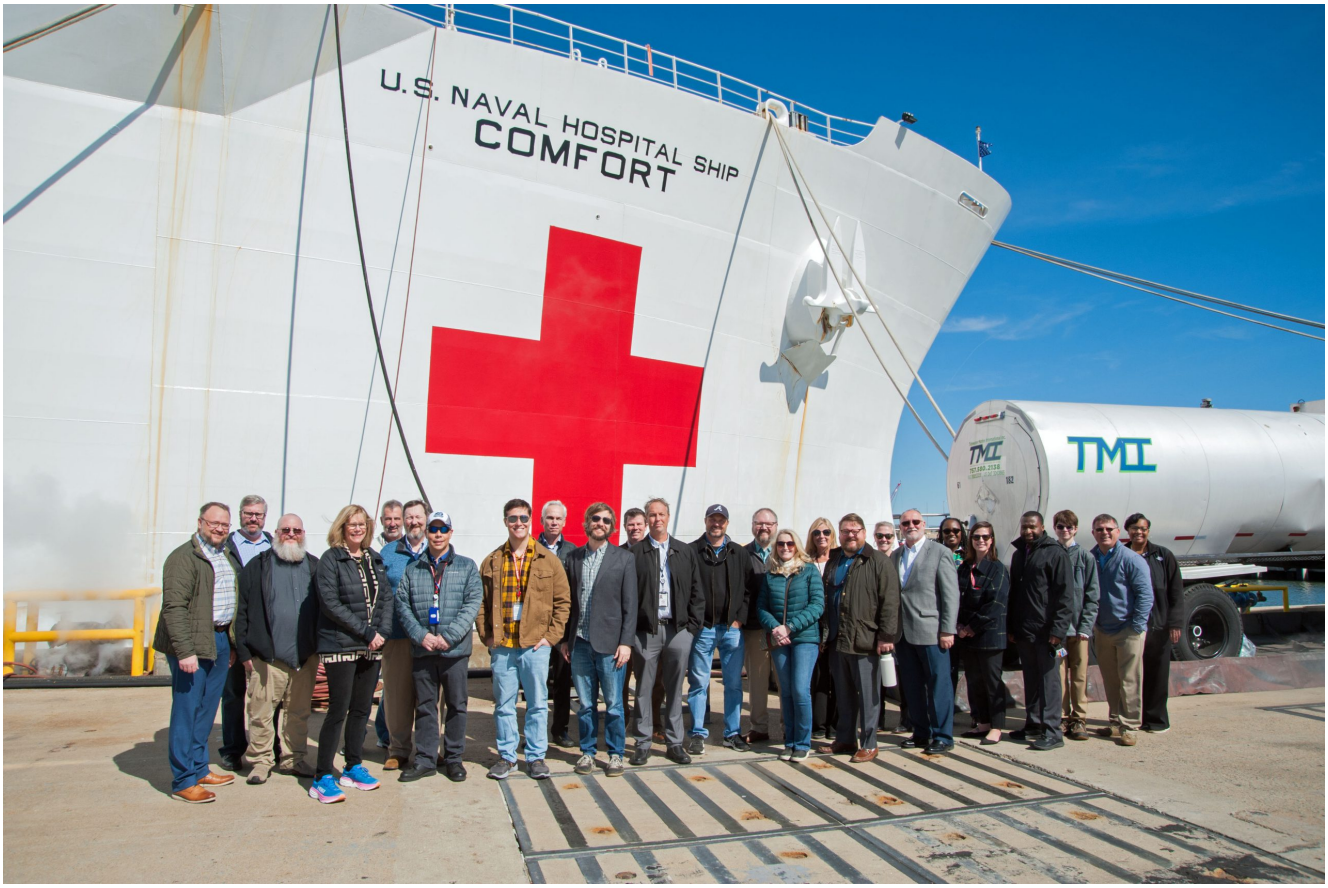
NIWC Atlantic Provides IT Solutions to the USNS Comfort



Release from Naval Information Warfare Center Atlantic.

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CHARLESTON, S.C. – Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Atlantic employees toured the USNS Comfort (T-AH 20), one of only two hospital ships, in early March to gain better insight of the information technology (IT) on-board with the goal of providing technological solutions.

“While touring the USNS Comfort, we were able to see the current onboard medical treatment facility IT infrastructure and the infrastructure challenges medical staff encounter while providing patient care including maintaining health record documentation and delivery of pharmacy services, radiology procedures, and laboratory testing,” said Shawn

Belcher, Defense Health Readiness Engineering (DHRE) lead. “As new hospital ships are constructed, we will provide input so that current and future critical IT infrastructure security needs are met, ensuring that the very best care for patients and care providers is available.”

The three-hour tour aboard USNS Comfort allowed employees to see IT equipment that NIWC Atlantic supports and interact with the shipboard users to better understand how support and services can be improved in the future.

“During the tour, we were able to get eyes on all areas of this hospital ship with humanitarian and combat mission related capabilities as well as the significant IT, power, and heat challenges faced in the delivery of care,” said Bruce Carter, Shore Command and Control, Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Integration Department head. “We are committed to teaming with appropriate organizations and helping them find solutions for these technical obstacles as well as address any that arise in the future during the construction of new of medical ships.”

The USNS Comfort provides emergency, on-site care for humanitarian missions, primarily in South America, and U.S. combatant forces deployed in war or other operations. Last summer, the ship went on a two-month humanitarian deployment to South and Central American countries where medical staff treated more than 13,000 patients. Prior to any deployment, NIWC Atlantic has multiple IT tasks to accomplish aboard the ship including verifying that user accounts are active and that the electronic health record system is functioning properly as well as providing equipment and technology training for patient administration personnel, pharmacy, radiology, and laboratory technicians that will be used aboard the USNS Comfort during deployment.

“Engaging with our customers and Sailors to gain a better understanding of their technology challenges is our top

priority," said Capt. Nicole Nigro, NIWC Atlantic commanding officer. "We take every opportunity to interact with the fleet, in their environment, to learn first-hand their limitations so we can provide them with the best solutions and capabilities possible."