

## TRAINING TO SURVIVE

Egress training prepares 3rd Med Bn

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## OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP HANSEN — Marines and sailors with 3rd Medical Battalion conducted modular amphibious egress training at Camp Hansen June 8.

The Marines and sailors with 3rd Med. Bn., Combat Logistics Regiment 35, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force, conducted the training to keep their combat readiness at a high level.

“The (MAET) is a great way to prepare yourself if you ever have to escape a downed helicopter,” said Petty Officer 2nd Class Alyson C. Runner, a surgical and field technician with the unit. “The reason why (3rd Med. Bn.) is doing this training is to make sure we are ready for anything.”

The MAET is a simulated helicopter fuselage that can be set up to simulate different scenarios in order for participants to be trained to escape successfully, according to Michael J. Duemas, an underwater egress trainer.

The evolution consists of three stages: classroom training, the shallow water egress trainer and MAET, according to Duemas.

“The shallow water egress trainer is the first thing we do, after (we leave the classroom),” said Duemas. “Here, we work out some of the (issues) and help participants overcome any fear they have.”

The SWET is a small, enclosed seat that flips participants upside down in shallow water, providing them the opportunity to practice escaping from a downed aircraft.

“A lot of Marines and sailors find out here it is not very easy escaping the SWET upside down under water,” he said.

Drowning is one of the hardest fears to overcome, according to Duemas. Some Marines and sailors find it very challenging.

“Before we started this class, I was really nervous and didn’t know what to expect,” said Runner. “Once the instructors helped me get comfortable, it began to get easier.”

After the Marines and sailors became proficient in the SWET, they advanced to the MAET.

“Having training like this available increases the survivability of troops, which is the most important thing,” said Seaman Alexander B. Barry, a field technician with the unit. “(Losing an aircraft is not good) but that can be replaced or repaired, (lives) cannot (be replaced).”

Being flipped upside down in a simulated helicopter and plummeted into water while having to escape can be difficult.

“You get so disorientated inside (the MAET),” said Barry. “Somebody strapping you down in a chair, flipping you upside down, and telling you to breathe can be strange.”

Marines and sailors endure strenuous training in order to overcome adversity when put to the test in real life.

When it comes down to it, good training saves lives, according to Duemas.

“(This training) gives you a chance to overcome your fears, as well as the opportunity to learn how to use the gear correctly,” said Barry.

This training increases survivability in a real-life situation, he added.

Marines, sailors and instructors brace for submersion during modular amphibious egress training at Camp Hansen June 8. By conducting MAET, the service members ensure they have the skills to escape a sinking helicopter to stay alive. The Marines and sailors are with 3rd Medical Battalion, Combat Logistics Regiment 35, 3rd Marine Logistics Group, III Marine Expeditionary Force. Photo by Pfc. Codey R. Underwood

Marines and sailors listen to instructions from Glen Bedard on how to use an air tank during modular amphibious egress training at Camp Hansen June 8. Bedard is an underwater egress trainer. Photo by Pfc. Codey R. Underwood

Marines and sailors prepare to be submerged while enclosed in a simulated helicopter fuselage during modular amphibious egress training at Camp Hansen June 8. The MAET is one of four designed for the Marine Corps. Photo by Pfc. Codey R. Underwood