

## **ROTA CRANE CREW CERTIFIES 35 TON AHEAD OF SCHEDULE**

By LT Ronald Jenkins, DET Rota

NAVSTA, ROTA, SPAIN – Recently, DET Rota’s Alfa Company Crane Crew certified a 35 – Ton Lattice Boom Crane marking the first NMCB ONE crane to be certified on their 2003-2004 world-wide deployment. The four-member crane crew, led by EO2 (SCW) Brian Blas, also consisted of EO2 (SCW) David Locke, CM3 James Watkins, and EOCN Joshua Taylor.

Cranes are normally condition inspected, load tested, and certified annually, as prescribed in the NAVFAC P-307. After the crane is pre-started and transported to the test pad, the crane crew supervisors assist the crane test director with set up of the weights for the weight-testing procedure. The crane crew supervisors must know the length of boom and the number of parts of line assembled on the crane. “When testing cranes, you must test all the sections of boom assigned to a crane during the crane test procedures. The supervisors take the boom length measurement and the number of parts of line and review the load charts to determine the maximum-rated allowable load that the crane can lift. In this case, we tested at 110 percent of the rated capacity”, stated CM3 James Watkins.

It is also essential to ensure that all rigging gear has been properly prepared prior to the certification. “Part of my job was to ensure that all rigging used in this crane load test had been previously tested to at least 150 percent of the rated working load,” said EOCN Joshua Taylor.

Each Battalion schedules every crane for periodic condition and load tests. “This crane certification was very important for the next Battalion to deploy to Rota because their tasking will require the use of a 35-ton crane. In order for the crane to be placed in operation, the crane had to be certified prior to them arriving here”, explained EO2 (SCW) Brian Blas.

Cranes stored or idle for six months or more must be inspected and tested before returning to service. Any crane that has had minor repairs or replacement of load bearing or controlling parts will also be tested before it is put back into service. The definitions of load bearing and controlling are only those parts and components that support the load and whose failure would result in uncontrolled dropping, shifting, or moving of the load. After the crane has passed the test procedures, the mechanics placed the NMCB ONE unit identification marking decal on the crane in the correct locations. “It was a great feeling to see the crane stenciled with the certification markings on it”, said EO2 David Locke.

The Naval Construction Force crane crew supervisor is assigned and designated in writing by the commanding officer. The person selected is normally the best crane operator available within battalion-wide assets. “We selected EO2 Locke because of his expertise and skill as an Equipment Operator”, stated LT Ronald Jenkins.

The certifying officer, crane test director, and the crane crew supervisor share the responsibility of ensuring that any crew that prepares, assembles, operates, or works with or around cranes are well trained in both safety and operation. “It’s phenomenal how the crane crew successfully completed the certification process ahead of schedule. This crew showed remarkable dedication to have accomplished this feat. It made me forget how junior they actually are”, said CMC (SCW) Ray Lenzi.