

# News Release



**Allied Maritime  
Command Headquarters  
Northwood**



## **EXERCISE BOLD MONARCH 2011**

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### **RUSSIAN SUBMARINE WORKS WITH U.S. SUB RESCUE SYSTEM FOR FIRST TIME**

Earlier this week, during exercise Bold Monarch 2011, for the first time a Russian submarine mated with a U.S. submarine rescue system, the Submarine Rescue Diving and Recompression System (SRDRS), demonstrating they could work together and reach a milestone of international cooperation and interoperability.

“During Bold Monarch thirteen countries worked together to exercise rescuing submariners from the depths of the sea,” said NATO’s Deputy Commander Submarines Capt. David Dittmer (USN), who is in tactical command of the units involved in this exercise. Bold Monarch 2011 is a NATO exercise supported by both the Submarine Escape and Rescue Working Group (SMERWG) and the International Submarine Escape and Rescue Liaison Office (ISMERLO). Submarine escape and rescue is an international humanitarian aid effort that requires cooperation across national and alliance boundaries. ISMERLO was established 7 years ago, and is the international coordinating hub for global submarine rescue procedure, systems, equipment and support ships. It also ensures at least one of the world’s rescue systems is available to be deployed immediately should an emergency occur.

This exercise took place off the coast of Spain, and included submarines from Spain, Russia, Portugal and Turkey. All submarine rescue systems from the U.S., Russia, Italy and NATO were proven compatible with every submarine.

“We enjoyed this chance to work together. It was a demonstration of good will from all participants and an excellent demonstration of the compatibility of our systems,” said Russian Federation Navy Capt. George Shelest, from the Russian Federation Navy liaison office. “I think that it provides confidence of a positive rescue if something goes wrong.”

Bill Orr, coordinator of ISMERLO, said “The cooperation shown between all the contributors and observers of the exercise demonstrates the growing importance of international cooperation, and that there is a greater chance of ensuring a successful rescue if a submarine casualty occurs.”

For those operating the SRDRS when it mated with the Russian submarine SSK Alrosa, it was a historic moment.

“Deep Submergence Unit is unique. I never thought I’d be able to walk around on a Russian submarine,” said Machinists Mate 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Joel Rivera, forward attendant for SRDRS. His unit, DSU, is the U.S. Navy’s sole provider of submarine rescue capability. Rivera and Navy Diver 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Joe Olin presented the Alrosa’s Commanding Officer Col. Zaycer Anton with a plaque and American flag in honor of the cooperation between the submarine and rescue system. “Before I came to this unit, I didn’t know these rescue capabilities existed. As a submariner, I will be more comfortable going back to submarines knowing all of these countries are willing to help if something goes wrong.”

More than 40 countries are known to operate more than 440 submarines world-wide, making the confirmation of rescue abilities between nations vital. These exercises foster safety and the ability to work together on a survival level, and also promote understanding and a commitment to stability through regional cooperation.

Detailed information about Exercise Bold Monarch 11 can be found at:

<http://www.manw.nato.int/boldmonarch2011/default.aspx>

Information about NATO Military Committee can be found at:

[www.nato.int/ims](http://www.nato.int/ims)

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