

8/76

PRESS RELEASE FOR RSN MINESWEEPERS

The Republic of Singapore Navy has acquired two coastal minesweepers, RSS Mercury and RSS Jupiter from the United States Navy. The two minesweepers were on the US Navy reserve list and were deactivated and in a state of preservation at the time of procurement. Activation work on the minesweeper was started in November 1975 in California by a team of Republic of Singapore Navy Engineering personnel to prepare the ships for sailing home. The ships were drydocked and refitted at a commercial shipyard and were successfully tested and operated in February 1976.

2 A crew of 9 officers and 48 other ranks was sent to USA where they attended special training courses in minesweeping, fire fighting, engineering, storekeeping, and sonar electronics from October '75 to February '76. They took over control of the ships for work-ups and other preparations on 14 February '76. The ships are 370 tons each, and 144 feet in length.

3 The ships under the command and control of officers and men of the Republic of Singapore Navy, departed San Francisco on 30 March '76 for Singapore. The 8341 miles journey across the Pacific Ocean is estimated to last 45 days, including calls at Pearl Harbour, Guam and Subic Bay for fuelling, replenishment of supplies and other services. They are expected to arrive at Singapore on 25 May '76. They are accompanied on the journey by a U.S. Naval Ocean tug boat up to Subic Bay.

4 The minesweepers will be used in training Mine Counter Measures for the Republic of Singapore Navy. They are equipped with instruments for countering the moored mines (mines that are suspended in water from a

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wire anchored in the sea-bed and detonated on physical impacts by ships) and the ground mines (mines that rest on the sea-bed and detonated by magnetic or sound waves generated by ships). The methods employed in countering these mines are by wire, magnetic and acoustic sweepings. Their acquisition will greatly enhance the RSN's capability in protecting our coastal waters and vital sea lanes.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

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