

Adm. Trost lauds crew for devotion

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WASHINGTON — The Navy's top admiral sent a special message yesterday to the surviving crew members of the USS Stark, lauding them for their "devotion to duty."

"I send my profound respects and admiration to each crew member of Stark for your endurance in the aftermath of the missile attack and to the families of Stark crewmen as you await word of your loved ones . . .," wrote Adm. Carlisle A.H. Trost, chief of naval operations.

"Our hearts go out to all who have suffered. Your devotion to duty throughout the current deployment has provided an example of the time-honored tradition of patriotism and service to country.

"While we mourn those whom the sea has taken, we are comforted by the knowledge that they served so willingly in the cause of peace and freedom. The entire Navy shares in your loss," the message said.

Trost's message was dispatched yesterday after the Pentagon raised the death toll from Sunday's missile attack on the frigate to 37.