

Coast Guard Cutter to Deploy to U.S. 5th Fleet; Escort New FRCs to Bahrain



A U.S. Navy MH-60R Sea Hawk, from Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 37, transfers suspected contraband to U.S. Coast Guard National Security Cutter Bertholf (WMSL-750), July 20, 2020. One of the Bertholf class of cutters will be deployed to the U.S. Fifth Fleet area of responsibility. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Andrew Langholf ARLINGTON, Va. – The Coast Guard plans to deploy one of its Bertholf-class national security cutters (NSCs) to the U.S. Fifth Fleet area of responsibility to escort some new fast response cutters for basing in the Persian Gulf, the Coast Guard Commandant said.

Speaking Dec. 3 in a Navy League Special Topic Breakfast webinar, Adm. Karl Schultz, commandant of the Coast Guard, said the NSC will deploy in 2021 through the Mediterranean Sea and Red Sea to the Persian Gulf while escorting two new Sentinel-class fast response cutters (FRCs) for duty in the Gulf.

The FRCs will be the first of six to be forward deployed to the Coast Guard's Patrol Force Southwest Asia, where they will participate in maritime security operations under the auspices of the Navy's U.S. Fifth Fleet. The 154-foot-long FRCs will replace six 110-foot-long Island-class patrol boats in the Gulf.

Schultz praised the capabilities of the service's FRCs, 41 of which have been delivered by Bollinger Shipyards. The FRCs already have been extending the Coast Guard's reach into the South Pacific from Hawaii and now Guam, with two of three FRCs for Guam already in place.

The Coast Guard has made three deployments to the Western Pacific with NSC. Bertholf and Stratton deployed there in 2019 and performed such missions as enforcing sanctions against North Korea and engaging with allied and partner nations. While the Navy destroyers USS John McCain and USS Fitzgerald were going through repairs from collisions, the two NSCs were able to assume missions and free up destroyers and cruisers for the ballistic-missile defense role in the Sea of Japan.

The Waesche deployed to the Western Pacific in 2020 but suffered a fire and is in Japan for repair. In addition, the Kimball deployed to the South Pacific for fisheries patrols near Fiji. The Bertholf was diverted from a counter-drug patrol in 2020 and sent to the Galapagos Archipelago where it used its ScanEagle unmanned aerial vehicles to observe possible Chinese fishing fleet violations of the Ecuadorian Exclusive Economic Zone.

Schultz also said the service's newest NSC, the Stone, would be deployed on its shakedown cruise in 2021 off the Atlantic coast of South America to, among several missions, counter illegal and unreported fishing violations.

First Marine Corps F-35C Squadron Achieves Initial Operational Capability



Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314 declares their initial operational capability (IOC) for the F-35C Lightning II, having met the standards set forth by Headquarters Marine Corps. U.S. Marine Corps / Lance Cpl. Juan Anaya

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, Calif. – In a time characterized by rapidly evolving tactics and modernized equipment, the Marine Corps has taken the next step in maintaining air superiority as Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314 declares its initial operational capability (IOC) for the F-35C Lightning II, 1st Lt. Charles Allen, a spokesman for the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW), said in a Dec. 1 release.

Initial operational capability declaration marks a significant accomplishment for 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW), enabling VMFA-314 to deploy the F-35C onto aircraft carriers where they will be able to support combat operations anywhere in the world.

“The F-35 is an expeditionary platform that extends the reach of our Marines and machines, and increases our ability to support joint and allied partners at a moment’s notice,” said Maj. Gen. Christopher Mahoney, 3rd MAW commanding general. “By effectively employing the F-35, MAGTF [Marine Air-Ground Task Force] commanders have the potential to dominate our adversaries in a joint battlespace, in the air and out at sea.”

Having the most advanced stealth fighters in the world is only the beginning. A strategic and tactical understanding of how to operate and properly maintain the F-35 and its advanced capabilities is essential to its employment in an increasingly non-permissive maritime domain.

To receive this qualification, squadrons must meet the Headquarters Marine Corps standards, which define the minimum number of trained Marines, mission ready aircraft and trained pilots needed in order for a squadron to become IOC complete.

“Our maintenance department was critical to the success of IOC. In addition to accepting and inspecting the multiple aircraft that arrived throughout the year, the Marines

maintained a high level of aircraft readiness,” said Lt. Col. Duncan French, VMFA-314 executive officer. “Those mission capable aircraft allowed the pilots to train in the appropriate missions required of IOC, as well as contributed towards the readiness metrics of IOC.”

The F-35’s ability to combine advanced stealth capabilities, integrated avionics and the most powerful sensor package the Department of Defense has ever seen allows it to operate in contested areas and gives the Marine Corps an unparalleled ability to maintain air superiority in dynamic, unpredictable and competitive environments.

French continued, “VMFA-314’s declaration of IOC is a significant milestone not only for 3rd MAW but also the Marine Corps. VMFA-314 is the first F-35C squadron in the Marine Corps. The F-35C’s unique capabilities, compared to the F-35B and legacy aircraft, provide the Marine Corps with a complementary increase in combat projection and the ability to operate from the U.S. Navy’s aircraft carriers.”

As tactics and equipment used in the current battlespace continuously change, 3rd MAW commander’s willingness to develop their understanding of emerging technologies and to utilize them empowers the Marine Air Combat Element with the flexibility to solve dynamic problems that Marines will face in the future.

“This achievement ultimately would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the Marines, Sailors, and civilian contractors assigned to VMFA-314,” said Lt. Col. Brendan Walsh, VMFA-314 commanding officer. “The successful transition of the Black Knights to the F-35C culminating in this IOC declaration is a testament to the squadron’s distinguished legacy of pioneering new aircraft.”

The capability to employ the F-35 alongside 3rd MAW’s other capabilities further enables support of fleet Marines and

joint and allied partners preserves 3rd MAF's ability to dominate the battlespace for the MAGTF and joint commanders.

Navy/Marine Corps Wish List: Subs, Hypersonics, Training and Education



Adm. Michael Gilday, CNO, shown here in a 2017 photo, says he would buy more submarines and hypersonic weapons if he had more money to spend. The head of the Marine Corps said he would use such a hypothetical surplus on personnel, training and education. U.S. Navy / Petty Officer 2nd Class Robert A. Hartland

ARLINGTON, Va. – More submarines and hypersonic weapons for the Navy, and more personnel and training for the Marine Corps, top the wish list, say the U.S. sea services' commanders, if Congress added an imaginary \$5 billion to their budgets.

The last question posed to Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday and Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David Berger at a Dec. 3 live-streamed panel discussion on transforming the fleet's architecture was what would they buy if, hypothetically, Congress gave them each an extra \$5 billion.

Gilday told participants at the U.S. Naval Institute's Defense Forum Washington webcast that some of the money would go to shipbuilding, "most notably submarines." In terms "of things I need to close down on now, I'd go faster with respect to the fielding of hypersonics." The CNO added that he would go "way faster" on laser technology. "I need to be able to knock down

missiles.”

Gilday said he would also put money in Project Overmatch, the plan to create a massive data network linking weapons and sensors across all domains. “We have to get that right, and that remains a priority for me,” Gilday said. If he had any money left over, he would put it in live, virtual constructive training and “ready learning” to use technology to train Sailors faster.

“Hypersonics, the network and lasers would be the top three on my list,” he said.

Berger said he would put all his money in manpower, personnel, training and education, noting the maxim “Don’t buy anything you can’t maintain.” Instead of a thing, he would invest in people and their training. “To elevate and modernize a force, you have to pour the resources into those areas,” Berger said, adding that he was shrinking the size of the Marine Corps, “based on my assumption that we’re not going to have a higher topline, more money,” in coming defense budgets.

If someone did write him a check for \$5 billion, Berger said his second question would be “Is this a onetime deposit in my bank account or is this a sustained effort? Because we’re not going to have a hollow force.”

**Pentagon Leaders Say
Preparing for a Biological**

Attack is Among Lessons Learned from Pandemic



Naval Aircrewmen (Tactical Helicopter) 2nd Class Isaac Lynn with Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron 37 attached to the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS William P. Lawrence, verifies his information with U.S. Army Capt. Danielle Crawford, Joint Task Force-Bravo Combat Support Hospital commander prior to a COVID test at Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras, Nov. 26. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Russell Scoggin

ARLINGTON, Va. – Among the lessons learned from the coronavirus pandemic is a better understanding of what it will take to defend against a biological attack or other weapons of mass destruction, leaders of the U.S. Navy and Defense departments said Dec. 2.

“We are today a better force, prepared for nuclear, biological, chemical warfare in the future because of the lessons we’ve learned from this pandemic,” Navy Secretary Kenneth Braithwaite told a Senate hearing on Navy and Marine Corps readiness.

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, “caught the [Navy] Department off-guard, as it did the entire world,” Braithwaite told Senate Armed Services Committee’s Readiness and Management Support subcommittee, adding, “the Navy in particular struggled through the early weeks of this because the close proximity in which our Sailors live aboard ship made this a real threat to our ability to operate at sea.”

He praised Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday for identifying ways to mitigate the risk and “keep our ships operating. We have over 100 ships today at sea.”

In a separate, live-streamed discussion the same day at a

Washington think tank, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark Milley said it wasn't likely a nation state would attack the United States with a biological weapon but he was more concerned that a terrorist organization might try.

"We know some organizations are, in fact, looking into that," Milley told viewers on the Brookings Institution's website. "They don't have that yet, but it's something that's a possibility, something we need to be on guard against."

In addition to "interdicting, disrupting and destroying any capability" to weaponize a virus or other disease, Milley said "we also need to take the lessons learned from this current pandemic and roll those into capabilities to defend ourselves," including stockpiles of PPE (personal protective equipment), organizations capable of rapid deployment, protocols and procedures to limit the effects of any biological weapon.

"We have a very rigorous lessons learned program ongoing with the current crisis," he added.

At the Senate hearing, Gilday said the Pentagon is working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on two plans to distribute COVID-19 vaccine. Ten Defense Department locations across the continental United States will distribute Pfizer's vaccine, which must be stored at minus 70 degrees Celsius. Three or four overseas locations will distribute the Moderna vaccine, which only requires refrigeration at minus 20 degrees Celsius for up to 30 days before use.

The vaccination plan grew out of lessons learned from the Defense Department's tiered COVID-19 testing program, Gilday said. It calls for health care and emergency and safety personnel to be vaccinated first because they're more likely to be in contact with the infected, strategic forces, such as the crews on nuclear missile submarines, followed by forces to

be deployed within the next three months.

SECNAV: U.S. Atlantic Fleet to be Resurrected from U.S. Fleet Forces Command to 'Align to Today's Threat'



A U.S. Fleet Forces change of command ceremony in 2009, aboard USS Harry S. Truman at Naval Station Norfolk. Fleet Forces Command will be re-designated the U.S. Atlantic Fleet, the secretary of the Navy announced Dec. 2. U.S. Navy / Petty Officer 2nd Class Todd Frantom

ARLINGTON, Va. – The secretary of the Navy has announced that the U.S. Fleet Forces Command would be re-designated the U.S. Atlantic Fleet in acknowledgement of the realities of great power competition, particularly with Russia.

Navy Secretary Kenneth J. Braithwaite, testifying Dec. 2 before the Readiness and Management Support subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee, took the opportunity to announce the forthcoming change, noting that the changing world requires that the Navy must evolve to meet the threat.

“Our existing structure operates on the premise that we still live in a post-9-11 state, where NATO’s flanks are secure, the Russian Fleet is tied to the pier, and terrorism is our biggest problem,” Braithwaite said. “That is not the world of today. As the world changes, we must be bold, evolved, and change with it. Instead of perpetuating a structure designed to support Joint Forces Command, we are aligning to today’s

threat.

“To meet the maritime challenges of the Atlantic Theater, we will rename Fleet Forces Command as the U.S. Atlantic Fleet and will refocus our naval forces in this important region on their original mission, to controlling the maritime approaches to the United States and those of our allies,” he said. “The Atlantic Fleet will confront the reassertive Russian Navy, which has been deploying closer and closer to our East Coast with a tailored maritime presence, capability and lethality.”

The U.S. Atlantic Fleet commander will have two numbered fleets assigned, U.S. Second Fleet, headquartered in Norfolk, Virginia, and U.S. Fourth Fleet, headquartered in Mayport, Florida. The U.S. Second Fleet was reestablished in August 2018 to confront the increasing Russian activity.

The original commander, U.S. Atlantic Fleet staff, has a long pedigree that began in 1906, when the North Atlantic Squadron and South Atlantic Squadron were combined. The fleet existed in various forms until 2006, when the chief of naval operations renamed Commander, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, to Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, which assumed the duties of the former fleet plus the mission of the former Commander, Fleet Forces Command, which was “to serve as the primary advocate for fleet personnel, training, requirements, maintenance and operations issues,” according to the Fleet Forces Command website.

For a detailed history of the commander, U.S. Atlantic Fleet and Fleet Forces command staff, see <https://www.usff.navy.mil/About-Us/History/> .

SECNAV Selects USS Congress as Name of Second Constellation Frigate



A painting of the fourth USS Congress, commissioned in 1841. The second new Constellation-class guided missile frigate will now bear that name, the seventh U.S. naval vessel to do so. U.S. Naval History and Heritage Command

ARLINGTON, Va. – The secretary of the Navy has announced the name he selected for the second Constellation-class guided-missile frigate.

Navy Secretary Kenneth J. Braithwaite, testifying Dec. 2 before the Readiness and Management Support subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee, took the opportunity to announce that the second frigate would be named USS Congress.

The new frigate would be the seventh U.S. naval ship named Congress.

The first [USS Congress](#) was a row of the Continental Navy that fought on Lake Champlain during the American Revolutionary War. Built in 1776, the ship fought in the Battle of Valcour Island. The ship was severely damaged in the battle, which killed more than 20 of its crew. The ship was run aground and burned after only a week of naval service.

The second USS *Congress* was a 28-gun [frigate](#) built in New York for the [Continental Navy](#). Before it completed fitting out to fight in the Revolutionary War against Great Britain, it was burned in October 1777 in order to prevent its capture.

The third USS *Congress* was one of the [six frigates](#) authorized by the [Naval Act of 1794](#) and designed by Joshua Humphreys. The 38-gun wooden-hulled, three-masted [heavy frigate](#) was launched

in 1789 and participated in the Quasi War with France, the First Barbary War, and the War of 1812. The frigate captured or assisted in the capture of 20 British merchant ships. The ship was laid up in 1913 for lack of repair funds but returned to service in the Second Barbary War in 1915. The frigate participated in anti-piracy operations in the Caribbean and later became the first U.S. Navy ship to visit China. The ship served as a receiving ship (a training barge) from 1824 to 1834.

The fourth [USS Congress](#) was a 52-gun sailing frigate commissioned in 1841. It served in the Mediterranean Sea and the South Atlantic Ocean, participating in a blockade of Uruguay. Decommissioned in 1845 but recommissioned later in the same year, the frigate operated in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. During the Mexican War, its crew fought in two land battles and the occupation of Los Angeles. The ship also attacked enemy fortifications in western Mexico. Returning to the Atlantic in 1848, the ship was placed in reserve. In 1850, the ship was assigned to the South Atlantic to counter the slave trade before being decommissioned in 1853. Recommissioned in 1855, the frigate operated in the Mediterranean before again being decommissioned in 1858. Recommissioned in 1859, the ship served in the Brazil Squadron until 1861, when it joined in the blockade of the Confederacy. The frigate was sunk in Hampton Roads, Virginia, by the Confederate ironclad CSS Virginia on March 8, 1862, with the loss of 120 Sailors in its crew.

The fifth [USS Congress](#) was a screw sloop commissioned in 1870. It served in the South Atlantic Ocean, Arctic, Caribbean Sea, and Mediterranean Sea before being decommissioned in 1876.

The sixth *USS Congress* (ID-3698) was a privately owned fishing vessel that was acquired in 1918 and commissioned as a patrol vessel, serving along the U.S. East Coast until 1919.

Kaney Receives Navy SBIR Award to Develop Sonobuoy Power Amplifier

ROCKFORD, Ill. – The U.S. Navy has selected Kaney Inc. for the Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) program to apply advanced power amplifier technologies to the next block upgrade of AN-SSQ/125 sonobuoys, the company said in a Dec. 1 release.

Under this effort, Kaney teams in Rockford, Ill and Dayton, Ohio, will develop a low-distortion Class D power amplifier using high-efficiency, high-power density, wide-bandgap semiconductors. Microprocessor-based distortion reduction algorithms and specialized output filtering will be used to meet distortion requirements. Amplifier design upgrades are required to support a wide range of input voltages, high-bandwidth, high-power, low-distortion and lower volume than the legacy power amplifier. The SSQ-125 sonobuoys are used by the U.S. Navy for anti-submarine warfare operations. The SSQ-125 is air launchable from fixed or rotary-wing aircraft. It is also easily deployable from the deck of a surface vessel.

“Our team has unparalleled experience in advanced technology and manufacturing critical military and aerospace products that will be leveraged for this new product development,” said Jeffrey J. Kaney Sr., chief executive officer of Kaney Inc.

Guam's Second Fast Response Cutter Arrives in Apra Harbor



The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Oliver Henry (WPC 1140) arrives at the cutter's new homeport in Santa Rita, Guam, Nov. 30, 2020. The Oliver Henry is the second of three scheduled Fast Response Cutters (FRC) to be stationed in Guam. U.S. Coast Guard / Petty Officer 3rd Class Katherine Hays

SANTA RITA, Guam – The Coast Guard Cutter Oliver Henry (WPC 1140) arrived at its new homeport in Santa Rita, Guam on Monday, following a 10,620 nautical mile journey from Florida, the Coast Guard 14th District said in a Nov. 30 release.

During the voyage to its new homeport the crew of the Oliver Henry participated in drug interdiction operations in the Eastern Pacific while also assisting in a search for an overdue fishing vessel off Saipan.

"I am extremely proud of the crew, who did an exceptional job preparing and sailing the cutter nearly 11,000 nautical miles from Key West, Florida, to Santa Rita, Guam, during the global COVID-19 pandemic," said Lt. John Hamel, the Oliver Henry's commanding officer. "Not only did we deliver the highly capable Fast Response Cutter to our new operational area in the Western Pacific but we also conducted operations while transiting the Eastern Pacific, seizing a cocaine shipment worth \$26.7 million in support of the United States Southern Command's Operation Martillo."

The Oliver Henry is the second of three scheduled fast response cutters (FRCs) to be stationed in Guam. The FRCs are replacing the 30-year old 110-foot Island Class Patrol Boats and are equipped with advanced command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems and boast greater range and endurance.

Like the Island-class patrol boats before them the FRC's are designed as multi-mission platforms ranging from maritime law enforcement to search and rescue. The new cutters represent the Coast Guard's commitment to modernizing service assets to address the increasingly complex global Maritime Transportation System.

"Oliver Henry will significantly increase the capabilities of the Coast Guard throughout the region," said Capt. Christopher Chase, commander, Coast Guard Sector Guam. "I am excited to welcome the crew of the Oliver Henry home and look forward to them conducting operations with our partners in the near future."

The cutter is named after Oliver T. Henry Jr., an African American Coast Guardsman who enlisted in 1940 and was the first to break the color barrier of a then-segregated Service. During World War II, Henry served under Lt. Cmdr. Carlton Skinner, who later became the first civilian governor of Guam and played a critical role in developing the Organic Act in 1950. Henry blazed a trail for minorities in the U.S. military as he climbed from enlisted ranks while serving on 10 different Coast Guard cutters, finally retiring as a chief warrant officer in 1966.

Each FRC has a standard 24-person crew. This will bring over 70 new Coast Guard members to Guam, along with a projected 100 family members. In addition to the crews of the three ships additional Coast Guard support members and their families will also be in Guam.

Raytheon Intelligence & Space to Deliver and Repair Sub Communications System



Raytheon Intelligence & Space has been awarded a \$70 million contract to provide test, inspection, evaluation and restoration of Submarine High-Data Rate mast components. LSIS
Richard Cordell

ARLINGTON, Va. – Raytheon Intelligence & Space, a Raytheon Technologies business, was awarded a multi-year \$70 million indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contract by the Naval Undersea Warfare Center to provide for test, inspection, evaluation and restoration of Submarine High-Data Rate mast components, the company said in a Dec. 1 release. In addition, RI&S will fabricate spare SubHDR Mast components under the contract.

“The SubHDR system was created to support protected high-data rate communications for submarines,” said Denis Donohue, vice president, Communications and Airspace Modernization Systems for Raytheon Intelligence & Space. “SubHDR mast is a protected, secure and survivable system to support all communications needs, from day-to-day messaging to ensuring the commander-in-chief can stay connected with his commanders.”

SubHDR links submariners to the Global Broadcast Service, the Milstar satellite constellation and the Defense Satellite Communication System, via a unique mast antenna that connects them to the above-sea world. The system vastly improves a submarine’s mission capability and the quality of life for submariners by affording them high-data rate communications with the world outside of the sub.

The SubHDR System gives submarines high-data rate, multi-band

satcom capability. Operating via military satellites, SubHDR enables underwater forces to be full participants in coordinated fleet battle group and joint task force network centric operations. The mast-mounted satcom system transmits secure wideband multimedia, secure and non-secure internet access, voice and data traffic, imagery and video teleconferencing.

According to the U.S. Navy's Submarine Communication Program Office, "SubHDR makes optimal use of high efficiency, small antenna, multi-band technology and state-of-the-art packaging to provide bandwidth without sacrificing submarine stealth."

The SubHDR contract will repair and deliver sustainment spares for active fleet submarines for the next five years.