

BAE Systems to Develop Next-Generation Airborne Decoy Countermeasure

SEAPOWER

The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

From BAE Systems

NASHUA, N.H. – May 15, 2024 – BAE Systems has been selected by the U.S. Navy to develop Dual Band Decoy (DBD), one of the most advanced radio frequency (RF) countermeasures in the world. DBD is a cutting-edge RF self-protection jammer that shields fighter jets from enemy attacks.

Expanding the capabilities of BAE Systems' combat-proven [AN/ALE-55 Fiber-Optic Towed Decoy](#), DBD consists of a towed unit connected by fiber-optic cable to [electronic warfare](#) equipment onboard the aircraft. The decoy delivers the latest jamming technology to disrupt enemy radars and lure missiles away from the aircraft. DBD can be launched by the pilot or automatically in response to threats, offering critical protection in highly contested airspace.

“With Dual Band Decoy, we are building on the ALE-55’s years

of mission success as a high-powered jamming system,” said Don Davidson, director of the Advanced Compact Electronic Warfare Solutions product line at BAE Systems. “Dual Band Decoy delivers broad capability that can be installed on a variety of aircraft and is upgradeable to address future threats.”

Dual Band Decoy incorporates the company’s custom integrated circuits, enabling higher performance and more capability with reduced size, weight, and power. DBD is an integral part of BAE Systems’ [Intrepid Shield™ approach](#) to creating a protective sphere around platforms in highly contested battlespaces using the full electromagnetic spectrum to detect, exploit, and counter advanced threats.

DBD will be initially fielded on the U.S. Navy’s F/A-18E/F Super Hornet. Work on DBD will be performed at the company’s state-of-the-art facilities in Nashua, N.H.

May 30 U.S. Central Command Update

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From U.S. Central Command, May 30, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – Between approximately 3:15 and 5 p.m. (Sanaa time) on May 30, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed eight uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAV) in Iranian-backed Houthi controlled areas of Yemen and over the Red Sea.

Additionally, USCENTCOM forces alongside UK Armed Forces conducted strikes against 13 Houthi targets in Iranian-backed Houthi terrorist-controlled areas of Yemen in self-defense.

It was determined that these UAVs and sites presented a threat to U.S. and coalition forces and merchant vessels in the region. These actions are necessary to protect our forces, ensure freedom of navigation, and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S., coalition, and merchant vessels.

Marine Corps Launches Talent Acquisition Pilot for Cyber, Signals Intel

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QUANTICO, Va. – Manpower and Reserve Affairs announced the Marine Corps Talent Acquisition Pilot (MCTAP) program today, a groundbreaking initiative aimed at identifying and recruiting highly skilled individuals to fill critical roles within the active and reserve components of the 1721 Cyberspace Warfare Operator military occupational specialty and the active component of the 2629 Signals Intelligence Collection Manager MOS. The two-year pilot program commences June 2024.

As a 21st century fighting organization, the Marine Corps must creatively and critically address how to employ talent. The MCTAP explores a pathway for exceptionally talented Americans to join the service at a rank appropriate for their education and experience, up to Gunnery Sergeant, in two pre-determined fields.

“The time and investment in identifying, acquiring, and developing talent is significant, especially in these fields,”

said Lt. Gen. James Glynn, deputy commandant, Manpower and Reserve Affairs. "This initiative enhances readiness and contributes to lethality by leveraging proven private sector talent to rapidly meet critical areas of capability."

All applicants accepted into the pilot with no prior Marine Corps experience will complete Marine Corps recruit training and earn the title of Marine. Applicants who previously served in the Marine Corps as successful graduates of recruit training will not be required to retrain.

"For those who have acquired the skills outlined in this MARADMIN and feel called to serve the Nation in uniform, I look forward to your applications," said Glynn. "Join our prestigious team; we have a place for you."

Read [Marine Administrative Message 253/24](#) for more information and how to apply.

Winds Damage Navy TH-73 Training Helicopters at Whiting Field



By Richard Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – A strong wind that swept through Naval Air Station Whiting Field caused damage more than three dozen new TH-73 Thrasher training helicopters earlier this month, according to a Navy spokesman.

The following statement was issued by the Commander, Naval Air Training Command (CNATRA):

“On May 13, at approximately 10:35 a.m. CST, a significant weather event involving high winds up to 71 knots (gusting) caused damage to 41 TH-73 Thrasher helicopters assigned to Training Air Wing (TAW) 5. No injury to personnel occurred during the incident and there has been no reported damage to any TH-57 Sea Ranger or T-6 Texan II aircraft positioned on the flight line. All aircraft were parked aboard Naval Air Station Whiting Field during the incident. The full extent of the resources needed to restore the fleet has not yet been finalized, however, repairs are not expected to exceed a month. No operational impact to the CNATRA mission is expected

due to the availability of CNATRA's fleet of TH-57 Sea Ranger helicopters that remain undamaged."

The TH-73A, built by Leonardo's AgustaWestland Philadelphia Corp., is a military version of the Leonardo TH-119. The TH-73A was procured by the Navy to replace the Bell TH-57 Sea Ranger with the role of training rotary-wing and tilt-rotor pilots for the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. The TH-73A was first delivered to TAW-5 in August 2021 and began training pilots in September 2022.

The Navy has ordered a total of 130 TH-73As. The Thrasher fleet is expected to complete replacement of the TH-57B/C during fiscal 2025 and serve through 2050, according to the Navy.

Kratos Defense Celebrates 200th Launch of BQM-177A in Support of U.S. Navy Exercises



May 28, 2024 at 8:00 AM EDT

SAN DIEGO – Kratos Defense & Security Solutions, Inc. , a technology company in the defense, national security and global markets and provider of high-performance, jet-powered unmanned aerial systems, announced that on Tuesday, April 2, the Kratos BQM-177A flew in support of the U.S. Navy's AIM-9X mission at Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, California. This event marked the 200th launch of the BQM-177A by Pacific Target and Marine Operations (PTMO) and resulted in the successful completion of the exercise.

The BQM-177A is the U.S. Navy's next-generation Sub-Sonic Aerial Target (SSAT). While it provides formidable threat emulation for air-to-air engagements, the BQM-177A's aerodynamic design and unmatched performance capabilities make it the best choice for highly dynamic, high-subsonic, sea-skimming anti-ship cruise missile threat emulation.

Capable of speeds in excess of 0.95 Mach and a sea-skimming altitude as low as 6.6 feet, the BQM-177A has no equal when it comes to delivering realistic anti-ship missile threat emulation.

This highly versatile aerial target supports a variety of mission requirements by carrying a wide array of internal and external payloads, including proximity scoring, Identification Friend or Foe (IFF), passive and active RF augmentation, electronic countermeasures, infrared (IR) augmentation (plume pods), chaff and flare dispensers, and towed targets.

Steve Fendley, President of Kratos Unmanned Systems Division, said about the program's bicentennial milestone, "Because of its high-performance capabilities and demonstrated reliability, the BQM-177A has proven to play a crucial role in the training of today's warfighters. With a global shift toward the use of drones in military applications, this platform is only becoming more relevant in the unmanned

landscape of today's battlefield. The 200th launch is an indicator of just how valuable the 177 is to executing the Navy's objectives, and I am very proud of the role we have to play in preparing our nation's warfighting personnel to be ready for what's next."

Acknowledging this significant program milestone, Greg Crewse, Program Manager for the Navy's Aerial Targets Program Office (PMA-208), said, "The 200th launch of the BQM-177A is a significant achievement that reflects the dedication and skill of our collective team. We are committed to supporting our warfighters' need for next-generation target threat capability and are excited to continue improving aerial target systems to ensure that our Navy is ready for any challenge."

Cubic Awarded NAVAIR Contract to Provide Secure Live Virtual and Constructive Advanced Training Environment (SLATE)

From Cubic Defense, 29 May 2024

SAN DIEGO – [Cubic Defense](#), the world's leading provider of advanced air combat training, is awarded a contract modification with Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) to provide engineering support services for a demonstration in Guam, Valiant Shield '24.

"Cubic's SLATE technology injects synthetic entities and

computer-generated forces to bring the realism of the pacing multi-domain high-end threat environment to the live cockpits and operator consoles,” said Paul K. Averna, VP and GM, Advanced Training Solutions for Cubic Defense. “Tomorrow’s fight will be different, and our Joint and Coalition operators deserve a fully vetted system that ensures combat readiness today.”

29 May Red Sea Update

From U.S. Central Command, May 29, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – At approximately 8:40 p.m. (Sanaa time) May 28, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed two missile launchers in an Iranian-backed Houthi-controlled area of Yemen.

Separately, at approximately 11:30 p.m. (Sanaa time) on May 28, Iranian-backed Houthis launched two anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM) from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen into the Red Sea. There were no injuries or damage reported by U.S., coalition, or commercial ships.

The following day, between 1:26 and 1:38 a.m. (Sanaa time) on May 29, USCENTCOM forces successfully destroyed two uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) over the Red Sea launched from an Iranian-backed Houthi controlled area of Yemen.

It was determined these missiles and systems presented an imminent threat to U.S., coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region. These actions are taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure.

F-35B Crashes in New Mexico En Route Test Assignment



ATLANTIC OCEAN (Oct. 18, 2023) U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Alex Horne, assigned to Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 23, conducts flight operations from the Royal Navy aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales (R09) in the Atlantic Ocean, Oct. 18, 2023. (U.S. Navy photo by Kyra Helwick)

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – An F-35B Lightning II strike fighter crashed shortly after takeoff from Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, on May 28. The pilot ejected and was hospitalized with serious injuries.

The Marine Corps F-35B was en route to deliver to Edwards Air Force Base, California, for assignment to test duties. The

aircraft was flying from the Lockheed Martin factory in Fort Worth, Texas, for delivery to Edwards.

According to press reports, the pilot was an Air Force officer assigned to the Defense Contract Management Agency's Fort Worth office.

Marine Operational Test and Evaluation Squadron One, headquartered at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Arizona, has a detachment at Edwards Air Force Base for F-35 test and evaluation.

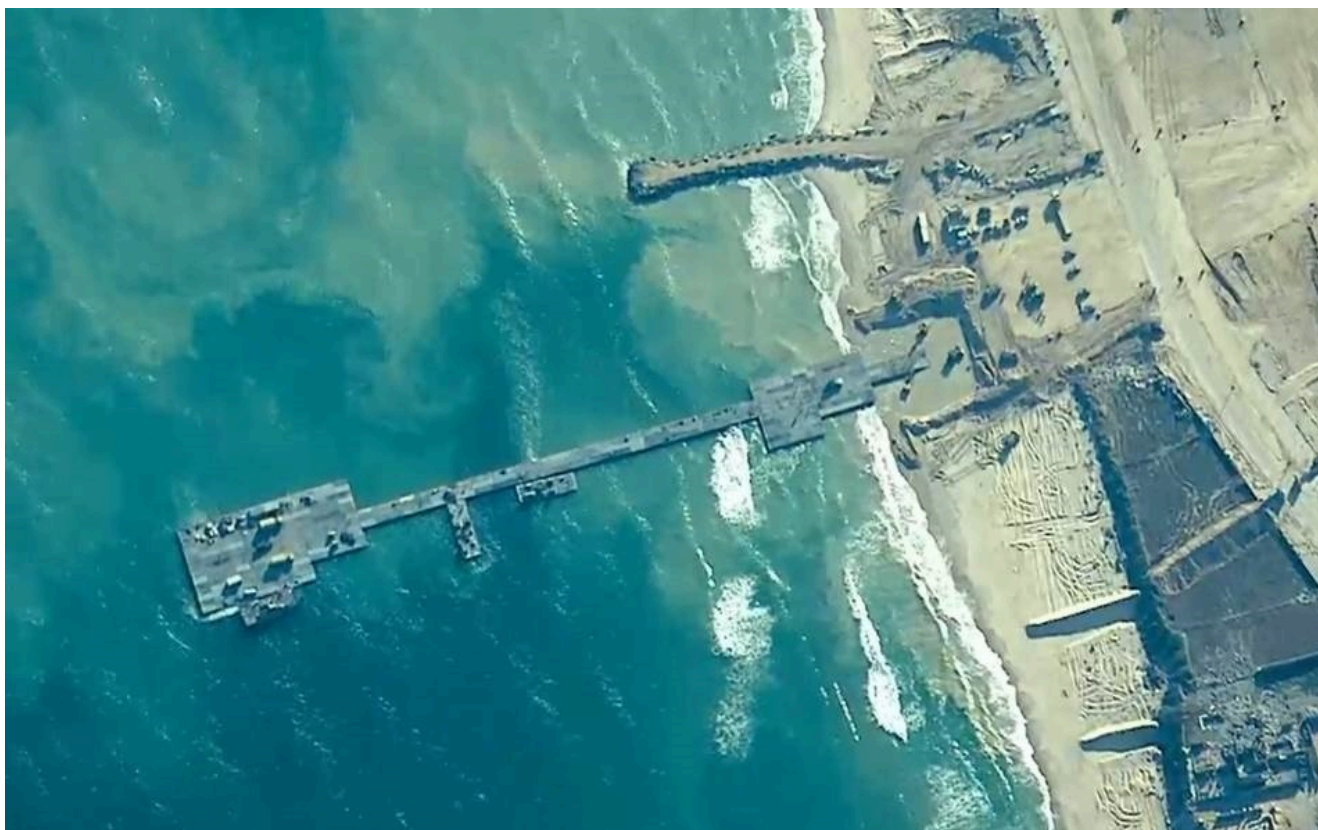
Rep. Rob Wittman, chairman of the Tactical Air and Land Forces subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee issued a statement on the mishap:

"I am incredibly grateful to the first responders who promptly aided the pilot after this crash and relieved to hear the pilot is in stable condition. I am praying for the pilot and their family as they undergo treatment for serious injuries.

"Any crash of our military aircraft is of utmost concern. While we know that expanding F-35 test capacity is the first step to fundamental F-35 transformation, this incident exacerbates the already urgent need to expand it. That's why I authored an amendment in this year's National Defense Authorization Act to increase F-35 test capacity by 50%, ensuring that the U.S. military can accelerate tests associated with our nation's largest defense acquisition program.

"This incident will undoubtedly cause a technical setback for F-35 modernization and warrants an extensive and thorough investigation to determine the exact cause of this crash."

Defense Department Conducts Recover, Repair Mission for Temporary Pier After Heavy Sea States



May 28, 2024 | By Matthew Olay, DOD News

The Defense Department is working to recover three of four vessels associated with its temporary humanitarian aid pier in Gaza after rough seas caused the motorized sections to run aground May 25, the Pentagon announced today.

The vessels, which are part of U.S. Central Command's Joint Logistics, Over-the-Shore capability – and which are used to stabilize the trident pier – broke free from their anchors and beached ashore after suffering a loss of power, Deputy Pentagon Press Secretary Sabrina Singh told reporters.

“As of today, one of the Army vessels that was beached on the

coast of Israel near Ashkelon has been recovered. The second vessel that was also beached near Ashkelon will be recovered in the next 24 hours, and the remaining two vessels that were beached near the Trident pier are expected to be recovered in the next 48 hours," Singh said, adding that the Israeli Navy is assisting in the recovery efforts.

The U.S is not authorizing any American boots on the ground in Gaza, and that is not hindering efforts to recover the three vessels, Singh said.

In addition to the JLOTS vessels running aground, high sea states and a North African weather system caused a portion of the trident pier to detach from the pier that is currently anchored into the Gaza coastline earlier today, resulting in damage to the trident pier and necessitating a need to rebuild and repair it, Singh said.

Over the next 48 hours, U.S. forces will remove the pier from its anchored position on the coast and tow it back to the Israeli coastal city of Ashdod to begin repairs.

"The pier proved highly valuable in delivering aid to the people of Gaza. Thus, upon completion of the pier repair and reassembly, the intention is to re-anchor the temporary pier to the coast of Gaza and resume humanitarian aid to the people who need it most," Singh told reporters, noting that, to date, over 1,000 metric tons of aid has been delivered to the pier for humanitarian organizations to distribute to Palestinians.

Meanwhile, Singh said, U.S. forces are currently loading humanitarian aid into vessels in Cyprus for transport to Gaza so that it can roll out immediately once the repaired pier is reattached to the shoreline in the coming days.

First announced March 8 of this year after President Joe Biden called on the military to lead the temporary humanitarian aid operation, the JLOTS pier became operational May 17.

When questioned as to whether the pier is durable enough to complete its mission, Singh said DOD is optimistic.

“I think, unfortunately, we had a perfect storm of high sea states and ... this North African weather system also came in at the same time, creating not an optimal environment to operate the JLOTS,” Singh said.

“But we believe that – given the time of year – we will be able to re-anchor this pier; and it will be able to be operational; and, hopefully, weather conditions won’t hinder it anymore.”

When further pressed as to whether the pier, which is budgeted at roughly \$300 million, is worth the cost, Singh reiterated how much aid the pier was able to get into Gaza in just a short period of time.

“... t’s pretty important for the people that are suffering right now – that are in a dire humanitarian situation – to get whatever aid they can, by whatever means,” Singh said.

“We want to do everything possible to help; and it is our forces – our men and women – who are running toward the problem and doing everything they can to find a solution.”

Centcom anticipates repairs to the pier to take approximately one week.

Coast Guard Cutters Sea Dog, Sea Dragon Decommissioned in

St. Marys, Georgia



Coast Guard members salute during the playing of the national anthem during a decommissioning ceremony for the Coast Guard Cutters Sea Dog and Sea Dragon in St. Marys, Georgia, May 29, 2024. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Ryan Dickinson)

U.S. Coast Guard 7th District, May 29, 2024

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The Coast Guard decommissioned the U.S. Coast Guard cutters Sea Dog (WPB 87373) and Sea Dragon (WPB 87367), Wednesday, during a ceremony in St. Marys, Georgia.

Rear Adm. Douglas M. Schofield, Coast Guard District Seven commander, presided over the ceremony honoring the years of service the Sea Dog and Sea Dragon provided to the nation.

The Sea Dog and Sea Dragon were 87-foot marine protector-class cutters assigned to Coast Guard Maritime Force Protection Unit Kings Bay in the Coast Guard's Seventh District.

Maritime Force Protection Unit Kings Bay is designed to support the Navy's efforts to provide anti-terrorism and force protection for its Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines and to assist in meeting its Presidential mandates for ballistic weapon security.

The Sea Dragon was commissioned in January 2008 and the Sea Dog was commissioned in July 2009.

"The men and women of the cutters Sea Dog and Sea Dragon, past and present, have exemplified unwavering professionalism and dedication, safeguarding our nation's waters and supporting critical defense missions," said Capt. David Vicks, commanding officer of Maritime Force Protection Unit Kings Bay. "I extend my profound gratitude to these courageous crews as we honor their steadfast service."

Following the decommissioning ceremony, the cutters will be transferred to Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point.

The Coast Guard cutters Sea Devil (WPB 87368) and Sea Fox (WPB 87374) have relocated from Bangor, Washington, to replace the Sea Dog and Sea Dragon.