

# Special Submarine USS Connecticut Strikes Underwater Object



The Seawolf-class fast-attack submarine USS Connecticut (SSN 22) departs Puget Sound Naval Shipyard for sea trials following a maintenance availability in this 2016 photograph. *U.S. NAVY / Thiep Van Nguyen II*

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii – The submarine USS Connecticut (SSN 22) “struck an object while submerged on the afternoon of Oct. 2, while operating in international waters in the Indo-Pacific region,” the Navy said Oct. 7.

There were no life-threatening injuries, according to the release.

“The submarine remains in a safe and stable condition,” the Navy said. “USS Connecticut’s nuclear propulsion plant and spaces were not affected and remain fully operational. The extent of damage to the remainder of the submarine is being assessed. The U.S. Navy has not requested assistance. The incident will be investigated.

The Connecticut, commissioned in 2005, is the third boat of the Seawolf class but is unique in that it features a 100-foot hull extension aft of the sail. The multi-mission hull extension houses enhanced payloads that allow the submarine to conduct special missions and research and development projects that aid in the advancement of future submarine technologies and capabilities.

In January 2005, the Los Angeles-class attack submarine USS San Francisco (SSN 711) struck a sea mount while submerged southeast of Guam. The submarine’s bow sonar dome was crushed, but the pressure hull was not compromised. Dozens of crewmen

were injured and one later died of injuries. The submarine was repaired and returned to fleet service in 2009 with the bow from the ex-USS Honolulu installed.

---

## **DoN Concludes Investigations into Assault Amphibious Vehicle Tragedy**



An AAV7A1 assault amphibious vehicle conducts a wet-gap amphibious crossing on Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, Aug. 10, 2021. *U.S. MARINE CORPS / Lance Cpl. Jacqueline C. Arre*  
ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps released findings of separate investigations into the assault amphibious vehicle (AAV) tragedy that occurred July 30, 2020, the Navy said Oct. 6.

The investigations revealed that a combination of maintenance failures and human error caused the deaths of eight Marines and one Sailor.

The Navy investigation, conducted by commander, 3rd Fleet, examined the Navy's role in the incident and revealed gaps in doctrine and procedures by the Navy and Marine Corps.

“The Navy and Marine Corps learned from this tragedy and we are codifying the lessons we have learned as an organization so that the deaths of these Marines and Sailor are not in vain,” said Vice Adm. Roy Kitchener, commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet. “We are reworking procedures and doctrine, clarifying aspects of amphibious operations, and instituting new training requirements to prevent future

tragedies.

"The investigation by 3rd Fleet led to comprehensive updates to the Wet Well Manual to include clarification regarding safety boat requirements, ship requirements to ensure positive control of AAVs during evolutions, as well as additional improvements to the integration of training between the Navy and Marine Corps," Kitchener said. "Additionally, all Navy commanding officers will attend the Senior Amphibious Warfare Course before taking command. Future AAV operations will require a comprehensive and integrated communications plan to be submitted before AAV operations can occur."

The Marine Corps previously concluded two investigations: a safety investigation, Oct. 1, 2020, and a command investigation, Feb. 25, 2021. As a result of these initial investigations, the Marine Corps directed 23 institutional actions to ensure the safe execution of AAV waterborne operations. These actions fall into one of three categories, equipment, procedures or training.

Equipment actions include a combination of equipment advances and additional inspections such as procurement and sustainment of a Waterborne Egress Capability program, electronic tablets for crewmembers to manage associated technical and procedural manuals, and new criteria for hull watertight integrity, bilge pump function, communications systems, and emergency egress lighting systems.

To address procedural actions, the Marine Corps administered publication and policy reviews to operating procedures, technical manuals, and safety structure requirements during training. These include updates to training and qualification prerequisites, authority and decision-making procedures, and safety boat requirements.

Finally, training actions include implementing additional standards for water survival, underwater egress training for

both crew members and embarked personnel, and standardized knowledge tests for crew members.

Recently, the Marine Corps concluded a subsequent command investigation, led by Lt. Gen. Carl E. Mundy, focused on the formation of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). The investigation found a confluence of factors, including COVID-19 impacts, task-saturation and reduced manning, poor communication and inadequate training and equipping played significant roles in contributing to the conditions that allowed for the tragedy to occur. The investigation's recommendations include a comprehensive review of relevant orders, programs and training curricula as well as increases in material inspection and reporting requirements, leadership manning, preparation and oversight.

Senior Marine Corps and Navy personnel are conducting a Strategic Review of Amphibious Operations to build upon the findings and recommendations of these investigations. That review will assess all aspects of current amphibious operations with special consideration for future concepts of amphibious operations.

To view the Navy investigation, visit the [SECNAV FOIA website](#).

To view the Marine Corps Investigation, visit the [USMC FOIA website](#).

The Navy Command Investigation will be posted on the SECNAV FOIA reading website. Due to technical issues there may be a slight delay. A copy of the Navy investigation is [available in the meantime here](#).

---

# SENEDIA to Award \$2M in Reimbursement Subsidies for Submarine Workforce Training



The Virginia-class attack submarine USS California (SSN 781) makes its way up the Thames River and past the city of New London, Connecticut, returning home to Naval Submarine Base New London on Saturday, June 12, 2021 following an extended docking selected restricted availability at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine. *U.S. NAVY / John Narewski*

MIDDLETOWN, R.I. – The Southeastern New England Defense Industry Alliance (SENEDIA) is offering \$2 million in training reimbursement subsidies to strengthen the New England submarine shipbuilding workforce, the alliance said in an Oct. 7 release. Applications are currently being accepted for this Incumbent Worker Trade/Industrial Skills Training Program, made possible through financial support from the Department of Defense Industrial Base Analysis and Sustainment National Imperative for Industrial Skills program.

Eligible employers can receive \$30,000 in total to train their current workforce, up to \$10,000 per trainee.

“By investing in our employees today, we are ensuring the strength of our industry tomorrow,” said Molly Donohue Magee, executive director of SENEDIA. “We know that the demand for highly skilled workers in submarine shipbuilding will continue to increase, so we urge employers to take advantage of this exciting opportunity to advance both the skills of their current employees and the prospects of their companies.”

This funding is available for trades and industrial skills training for New England-based (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont) incumbent – or currently employed – workers. Companies that

currently support or could support the submarine shipbuilding supply chain are encouraged to apply. Applications will be reviewed on a first-come/first-served basis, with applications remaining open only until the available funding has been exhausted. To learn more about this program or to apply, visit [www.BuildSubmarines.com/Training](http://www.BuildSubmarines.com/Training).

“We were the first organization to sign up for this opportunity, because we recognize that this direct investment in our talent pipeline will pay dividends both in the professional skill of our employees, and in the future growth of our company,” said Colin McClennan, vice president and general manager of Evans Capacitor Company, a division of Quantic Electronics. McLennan serves as the Rhode Island co-chair for the partnership and is the vice chair for Membership on the SENEDIA Board of Directors.

Tom Spock of CIRCOR is the Massachusetts co-chair for the partnership.

“Our region is the hub for submarine shipbuilding nationally, and this workforce development initiative serves to further reinforce the strength of our industry in New England,” said Spock, CIRCOR vice president. “I encourage employers across Massachusetts and beyond to reach out to SENEDIA and our growing group of co-chairs to learn more. This is a first come, first served program, so you should act without delay in order to extend this exciting and rewarding opportunity to your employees.”

Employers that are interested in participating in the Incumbent Worker Trade/Industrial Skills Training Program can also learn more at an upcoming webinar on Oct. 21 at 9 a.m. EST. At this session, SENEDIA team members will walk companies through the process of signing up and accessing funds, as well as helping employers to identify whether they are eligible. To register for the webinar, visit [www.BuildSubmarines.com/Training](http://www.BuildSubmarines.com/Training).

“With \$2 million on the table and up to \$30,000 available per employer with no matching required, this is a no-brainer for defense industry companies,” said Zenagui Brahim, president of the New Hampshire Manufacturing Extension Partnership, a Regional Stakeholder in the partnership. “The New Hampshire MEP and my colleagues across the region are proud to partner with this effort to provide valuable training and education to incumbent workers, while expanding and strengthening the supply chain. If you aren’t sure whether or not you qualify, reach out to learn more before these funds are exhausted.”

SENEDIA has additionally included a training organization database on the BuildSubmarines website, to help connect training organizations with program applicants. Training organizations that wish to be included in this database can enter their information at [www.BuildSubmarines.com/Training-Organization-Form](http://www.BuildSubmarines.com/Training-Organization-Form).

“Small business owners do not often have the time or resources to explore professional development or talent recruitment opportunities. This program, and all the avenues to connect and collaborate that SENEDIA offers, allows employers to expand current capacity and invest in the future success of their workers at no cost to them,” said Christopher Jewell, chief financial officer and principal of Collins and Jewell Company in Connecticut and the Connecticut co-chair for the partnership. Collins and Jewell will be offering training to its employees on welding quality management and a process auditing and corrective action through this program.

SENEDIA invites interested organizations to join the Next Generation Submarine Shipbuilding Supply Chain Partnership, the mission of which is to help the New England submarine shipbuilding supply chain with workforce and economic development initiatives. This industry-led partnership is supported by more than 40 regional stakeholders from state/local government, institutes of higher education, and regional workforce and economic development agencies.

---

# U.K. First Sea Lord Appointed Chief of Defence Staff



Adm. Sir Tony Radakin, U.K. Royal Navy First Sea Lord and pending chief of the defense staff, is saluted aboard USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) by Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, Ford's commanding officer, May 6, 2021. The First Sea Lord and a U.K. delegation spent two days in Hampton Roads as part of the U.S./ U.K. Counterpart visit series, meeting with U.S. Navy fleet leadership to discuss strengthening collective maritime security efforts in this maritime era of great power competition. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Zachary Melvin*

LONDON – Adm. Sir Tony Radakin KCB ADC has been appointed new chief of the defense staff in the United Kingdom by the Queen, the U.K. Ministry of Defence said in an Oct. 7 release. He will take over the post from Gen. Sir Nicholas Carter on Nov. 30.

Radakin has been the First Sea Lord and chief of naval staff since June 2019. Commissioned in 1990, his operational service has involved the Iran/Iraq Tanker War, security duties in the Falklands, NATO embargo operations in the Adriatic, countering smuggling in Hong Kong and the Caribbean, and three command tours in Iraq – both ashore and at sea. He has commanded from lieutenant to rear admiral of ashore, afloat and international forces. This includes HMS Blazer and Southampton University Royal Naval Units, HMS Norfolk, the Naval Training Team in Iraq, the Iraqi Maritime Task Force, Portsmouth Naval Base, and commander of U.K. Maritime Forces and NATO's High Readiness Maritime Component Commander.

"I'm delighted to congratulate Adm. Sir Tony Radakin on his

appointment as chief of the defense staff, a post he will take up on Nov. 30," said U.K. Defence Secretary Ben Wallace. "Adm. Tony brings an unparalleled wealth of experience to the role at a time of significant change for the armed forces and Ministry of Defence. We are modernizing to address the challenges posed by an increasingly unstable world and I know he will lead the armed forces with distinction in his new post.

"Adm. Tony has been an outstanding First Sea Lord and chief of naval staff overseeing a period of transformation in the Royal Navy that has seen more ships deployed, for longer, all over the world," Wallace said. "That includes the inaugural voyage of HMS Queen Elizabeth at the head of our new Carrier Strike Group, which set sail in May."

"I am delighted to welcome Admiral Sir Tony Radakin as the next Chief of the Defence Staff," said Prime Minister Boris Johnson. "He has proven himself an outstanding military leader as First Sea Lord and chief of the naval staff and I have every confidence he will be an exceptional chief of the defense staff. Under his command we have more Royal Navy sailors on the front line, more warships at sea – including our two world-class aircraft carriers – and we are leading a shipbuilding renaissance which is creating jobs and protecting lives around the U.K."

"I am humbled to have been selected as the next chief of the defense staff," Radakin said. "It will be an immense privilege to lead our outstanding people who defend and protect the United Kingdom. I would like to thank Gen. Sir Nick Carter for his leadership and wise stewardship of the U.K.'s armed forces over the last three years.

"I am looking forward to working further with The Rt. Hon. Ben Wallace MP and the rest of the department's senior leadership team as we modernize the armed forces and implement the integrated review. The government has given us clarity and

additional resource to counter the threats we face as a nation. It is now time to get on and deliver.”

---

# **U.S. Coast Guard to Commission 45th Sentinel-Class Cutter**



PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The U.S. Coast Guard will commission the USCGC Emlen Tunnell (WPC 1145), Patrol Forces Southwest Asia’s fourth Sentinel-class cutter, into service at Penn’s Landing in Philadelphia at 10 a.m. ET, the Coast Guard Atlantic Area said in an Oct. 7 release.

Due to COVID mitigation, in-person attendance is limited, and the event is not open to the public.

Adm. Karl Schultz, commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, will preside over the ceremony. Yvonne Gilmore Jordan, the eldest first cousin to Tunnell, is the ship’s sponsor.

The cutter’s namesake is Steward’s Mate 1st Class Emlen Tunnell, a native of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, who served in the U.S. Coast Guard from 1943 to 1946. During this time, he rescued two shipmates. The first was aboard the USS Etamin at anchor in Papua New Guinea in 1944. When a crewman became engulfed in flame following a Japanese torpedo attack, he beat out the fire, sustaining burns, and carried him to safety. The second rescue came aboard the USCGC Tampa in 1946 when a shipmate fell overboard off Newfoundland. Tunnell risked the 32-degree Fahrenheit water suffering shock and exposure to save him. The U.S. Coast Guard awarded the Silver Lifesaving

Medal to Tunnell posthumously for his heroism.

Tunnell was also a lauded athlete beginning in high school and then college before he joined the service. While in the Coast Guard, he played football and basketball, and upon his departure, he resumed college. Tunnell went on to play professional football for the New York Giants and the Green Bay Packers. He also served as an assistant coach for the Giants. Notably, Tunnell is the first African American to play for the NY Giants, African American talent scout, and African American full-time assistant coach. He is also the first African American inducted into the Pro-Football Hall of Fame.

The Emlen Tunnell was officially delivered to the U.S. Coast Guard on July 1 in Key West, Florida. It is the 45th Sentinel-class fast response cutter. Each of these cutters carries the name of a U.S. Coast Guard enlisted hero. While the ship is commissioning in Philadelphia, it will homeport in Manama, Bahrain, part of U.S. Coast Guard Patrol Forces Southwest Asia (PATFORSWA).

Established in 2002 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, PATFORSWA played a crucial role in maritime security and maritime infrastructure protection operations. PATFORSWA is a maritime humanitarian presence on the seas, providing U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet with combat-ready assets. Utilizing the U.S. Coast Guard's unique access to foreign territorial seas and ports, our crews formulate strong and independent relationships throughout the Arabian Gulf and leverage the full spectrum of flexible vessel boarding capabilities at sea and maritime country engagements onshore.

---

# Navy Awards Austal USA \$144 Million Contract for T-ATS Ship



A rendering of the Navajo-class Towing, Salvage and Rescue Ship (T-ATS). *AUSTAL USA*

MOBILE, Ala. – The U.S. Navy awarded Austal USA a \$144 million two-ship Towing, Salvage, and Rescue Ship (T-ATS) detailed design and construction contract Oct. 5, the company said in an Oct. 6 release.

This contract award marks the first steel new ship construction program for the company. Austal USA will utilize its proven ship manufacturing processes and innovative methods that incorporate lean manufacturing principles, modular construction, and moving assembly lines, all housed under the company's new state-of-the-art enclosed steel production facility set to open in April.

“The Austal USA team is excited to get to work on this program and leverage our new steel manufacturing line to support the U.S. Navy's and U.S. Coast Guard's requirements for steel ships,” Austal USA President Rusty Murdaugh said. “Our consistent on-budget and on-schedule delivery of quality ships continues to lead the industry. Our highly skilled workforce prides itself on maintaining the excellence our customers have come to know and expect from Austal.”

This award follows the Navy's \$3.6 million T-ATS functional design contract awarded to Austal USA in June.

T-ATS will provide ocean-going tug, salvage, and rescue capabilities to support U.S. fleet operations and will be a multi mission common hull platform capable of towing heavy ships. These ships will be able to support current missions,

including oil spill response, humanitarian assistance, and wide area search and surveillance. The platform also enables future capability initiatives like modular payloads with hotel services and appropriate interfaces.

Austal USA broke ground on its \$100 million steel manufacturing facility in March 2020. The line will be ready to cut steel in April.

The T-ATS award is one of several steel shipbuilding programs the company is pursuing as it diversifies its capabilities. Austal USA previously announced it submitted a bid to build the U.S. Coast Guard's Offshore Patrol Cutter and continues to execute a Light Amphibious Warship concept studies and preliminary design contract for the Navy and Marine Corps. Austal's new steel line and facility expansion also positions it well to be the follow-on frigate yard for the U.S. Navy.

---

## **IMSC Stakeholder Conference Yields Greater Alliance with Maritime Industry**



The Royal Saudi Naval Force frigate Makkah (814), back, and the guided-missile destroyer USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81), not pictured, provide overwatch as the Royal Bahrain Naval Force patrol warship Al Zubara transits the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, Nov. 20, 2020. The International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) maintains the freedom of navigation, international law and free flow of commerce to support regional stability and security of the maritime commons. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Louis Thompson Staats IV*

NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY BAHRAIN – The International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) held its third Stakeholders Conference for maritime industry professionals virtually from Naval Support Activity Bahrain, Sept. 30, Coalition Task Force Sentinel said in an Oct. 4 release.

During the conference, industry stakeholders considered topics such as regional security and IMSC's mission directives. The forum gave participants an opportunity to discuss current maritime challenges from an industry perspective with IMSC's leadership.

Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces opened the conference by highlighting the role of IMSC's operational task force in promoting security and freedom of navigation in the Arabian Gulf.

"Ships under Coalition Task Force Sentinel have been busy conducting countless overwatch transits through critical chokepoints because this is important work," said Cooper. "Successfully preventing aggression against member-nation merchant traffic is critical to maintaining regional security and stability."

The industry-focused conference, with a theme of partnering for better outcomes, featured speakers from the United States Maritime Administration (MARAD) and INTERTANKO, an organization that aims to promote safe transport for merchant tankers, cleaner seas, and free competition.

Royal Navy Commodore Gordon Ruddock, the commander of IMSC, moderated the conference and introduced both Cameron Naron, the director of the Office of Maritime Security at MARAD and INTERTANKO's Marine Director Dr. Phillip Belcher.

Naron began his remarks with a high-level overview the MARAD's maritime alerts and advisories system, the Maritime Security Communications with Industry (MSCI). He detailed how the

alerts and advisories were established through a partnership between a number of U.S. Government agencies and the U.S. maritime industry. The system – while designed to more efficiently communicate information on threats in the maritime domain to U.S. maritime industry stakeholders and U.S. mariners – is today used by mariners and shipping companies from across the world, and closely aligned with various regional navigation and safety at sea constructs from across the globe.

“Our primary audience and the guidance in these is targeted toward U.S. maritime stakeholders, but we publish all alerts and advisories publicly and many are picked up in the maritime press.” he said.

He explained that MSCI replaced the legacy State Department “Special Warning” and Department of Transportation “MARAD Advisory” system, as well as international maritime-security related information previously published under the U.S. Coast Guard’s Marine Safety Information Bulletin system.

“The alerts are meant to go out to the maritime community very quickly, we usually aim to send them out within two hours,” said Naron, who noted that the last advisory from MSCI detailed how tanker crews could address the recent threat of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles at sea.

As government agencies continue to explore ways for alerting mariners to threats, industry must continue to manage the wide-ranging impacts of maritime incidents. During his brief, Belcher talked about significant challenges the tanker industry faces in the Arabian Gulf and offered his assessment of how to address threats, vulnerabilities, and risks.

“The tanker industry is a service industry; we go where our customers need but service doesn’t mean subservient, and we have to look at how we manage and own the risk but it needs to take an intelligent approach to risk,” he said, noting that

most threats are external to the industry but that vulnerabilities are still directly owned by tanker companies.

Types of threats, Belcher explained, could include state actors, rebel forces in Yemen, piracy, the so-called tanker war, and even refugee or migrant crises.

Belcher added that the coronavirus pandemic had significant impacts on crew morale, shipping of goods, and fuel availability. On a positive note, he mentioned that vaccination rates continue to increase among ships' crews, which is helping mitigate risks posed by the pandemic. Finally, he noted how critical it was for industry and constructs like IMSC to remain in constant communication and partnership to help counter these threats and risks.

Ruddock closed the conference with an assurance that IMSC would continue its vital work with industry partners to promote and protect the free flow of commerce; reassure the merchant shipping community through regular communication and response as required; and, through continued partnership, cultivate an understanding of risks and challenges posed to the shipping community.

"IMSC is committed to refining industry and coalition relationships, cultivating new partnerships, and forging ahead with its maritime security operations," said Ruddock. "I ask for your commitment to help our task force units identify, document, and respond to activity you may consider to be out of place or a physical threat to normal business."

---

# U.S. Coast Guard, Canadian Navy Crews Conduct Joint Exercise Near Dutch Harbor



The Coast Guard Cutter Kimball crew and a Royal Canadian Navy crew, aboard the military vessel Harry DeWolf, transit alongside one another off the coast of Dutch Harbor, on Sept. 23, 2021. The crews exchanged radio communications after rendering honors along the ship railings. *U.S. COAST GUARD* JUNEAU, Alaska – U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Kimball and Royal Canadian Navy (RCN) crews conducted a joint exercise off the coast of Dutch Harbor, Alaska, on Sept. 23, the Coast Guard 17th District said in an Oct. 5 release.

The Coast Guard Cutter Kimball crew and an RCN crew, aboard the military vessel Harry DeWolf, operated alongside one another to exchange radio communications after both crews lined their respective ship's port railings to properly salute in formation, rendering honors.

The joint exercise was a significant opportunity that allowed the crews to demonstrate international operability and reaffirms the longstanding relationship between the U.S. and Canada. The mutually beneficial alliance between the two Arctic nations continues to contribute to maritime security in this increasingly critical region.

“Our exercise with the Harry DeWolf is just the latest in a long history of maintaining a strong bond with our close friend, Canada, as well as our commitment to work with all the Arctic nations,” said Capt. Thomas D’Arcy, the Kimball’s commanding officer. “The maritime partnership between the United States and Canada enhances each nation’s regional stability, while providing mutually beneficial economic

opportunities. With the increased importance of the Arctic and activity in the region, our trust and partnership in the maritime domain will promote each nation's interests and provide opportunities to protect the environment."

The Coast Guard provides a continuous physical presence in the Bering Sea and throughout Alaska to carry out search and rescue and law enforcement missions and to conduct interagency and international cooperation, building on current regional partnerships.

The Bering Sea, considered the gateway to the Arctic, encompasses 900,000 square miles of the U.S. exclusive zone off the Alaskan coast. The joint operations conducted by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Royal Canadian Navy bolster the ability to operate in this critical region at a time when the Arctic is becoming increasingly accessible.

The Kimball, homeported in Honolulu, Hawaii, is one of the Coast Guard's newer 420-foot Legend-class National Security Cutters and boasts a wide array of modern capabilities helping the crew to complete their varied missions.

---

## **U.S. Navy Super Hornet Crashes in Death Valley National Park**



An F/A-18F Super Hornet, attached to the Diamondbacks of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 102, transits across the flight deck of the U.S. Navy's only forward-deployed aircraft carrier

USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) in this Oct. 5 photo. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Gray Gibson*

SAN DIEGO – An F/A-18F Super Hornet crashed in Death Valley National Park, California, at approximately 3 p.m. (PDT), Oct. 4, the Navy said in a release. The pilot was treated for minor injuries at Sunrise Hospital and Medical Center in Las Vegas and released later that night.

The aircraft was assigned to Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 9 based at Naval Air Weapons Station (NAWS) China Lake.

Search and rescue units from NAWS China Lake, Fort Irwin Army Base, and Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron (MAWTS) 1 from Marine Corps Air Station Yuma responded to the scene and rescued the pilot.

No civilians were harmed as a result of this incident. The aircraft crashed in a remote area in southern Death Valley National Park. The National Park Service and Navy will work together to coordinate cleanup of this Wilderness area.

This incident is currently under investigation and the U.S. Navy is cooperating fully with local authorities.

---

## **USS Ralph Johnson Joins Forward-Deployed Naval Forces in Japan**



The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Ralph Johnson (DDG 114) arrives at Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka as one of the newest additions to Commander, Task Force 71/Destroyer Squadron 15. *U.S. NAVY / Tetsuya Morita*

YOKOSUKA, Japan – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, USS Ralph Johnson (DDG 114), arrived Oct. 4 to its new forward-deployed location in Yokosuka, Japan, Commander, Task Force 71/Destroyer Squadron 15 Public Affairs, said in a release.

Ralph Johnson is a Flight IIA multi-mission destroyer, capable of embarking two MH-60 variant helicopters with air warfare, submarine warfare, and surface warfare capabilities; designed to operate independently or with carrier strike groups, surface action groups, or amphibious ready groups.

“Ralph Johnson and her crew look forward to joining the forward-deployed team in Yokosuka and to building relationships with our allies and partners in the region,” said Cmdr. Colin Roberts, commanding officer of USS Ralph Johnson. “It’s an honor to join the DESRON 15 team and an honor to know that Ralph Johnson will play a role in ensuring the future of a free and open Indo-Pacific.”

The United States values Japan’s long-term hospitality and contributions in hosting U.S. forward-deployed forces. Along with their counterparts in the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, U.S. forces frequently operate together in the Indo-Pacific Region.

“Ralph Johnson comes over as one of the newest and most capable destroyers in the U.S. Navy,” said Capt. Chase Sargeant, commander, Task Force 71/Destroyer Squadron 15. “The addition of Ralph Johnson demonstrates our unwavering commitment to maintain maritime security in the Indo-Pacific alongside our alliances and partnerships.”