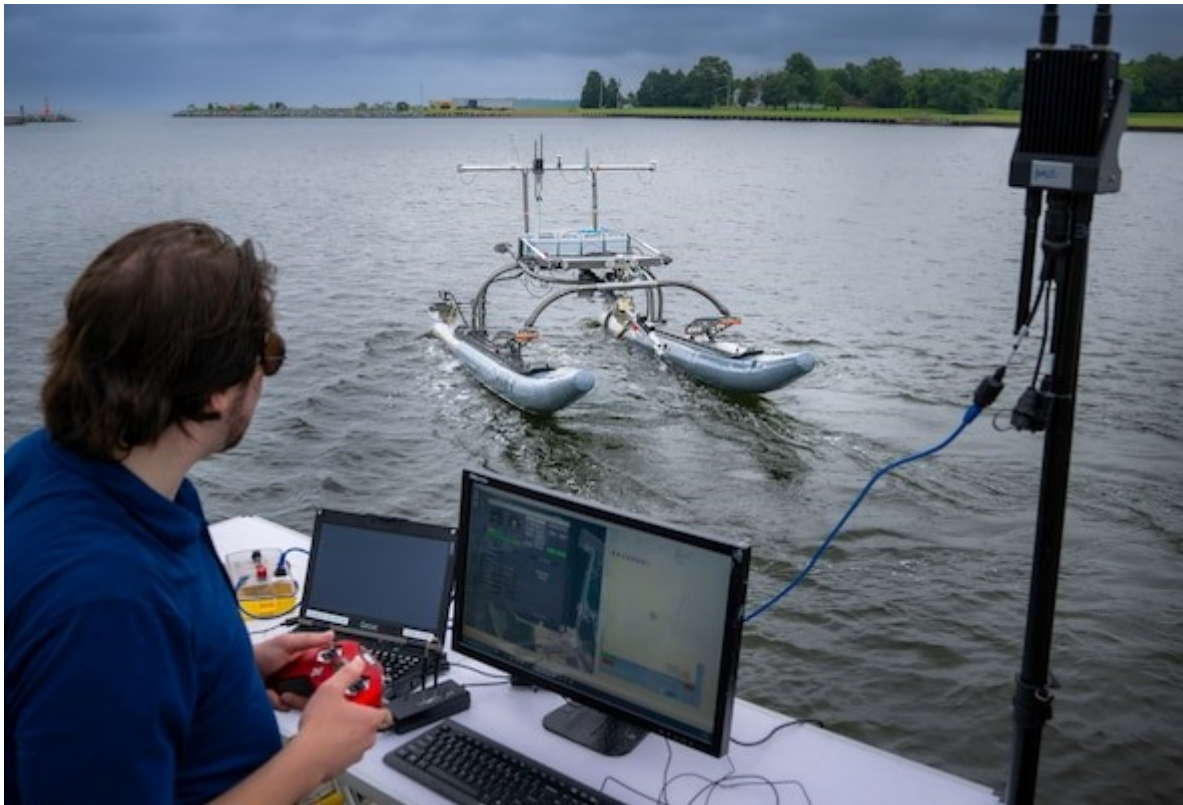


Navy Successfully Demonstrates Swarm Mission Planning Tech



Raymond Koehler, a mechanical engineer at the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division, demonstrates unmanned swarm mission planning software at Naval Air Station Patuxent River's West Basin Marina in Md. on June 17, 2025. The software helps the Navy plan missions with unmanned systems by simulating drone, sensor, and arrangement combinations to achieve mission goals at sea ultimately providing warfighters faster and more effective decision making. (U.S. Navy photo by Todd Frantom)

From Naval Air Systems Command, June 25, 2025

The Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD) successfully demonstrated innovative mission planning software for swarms and other configurations of unmanned air, surface, and underwater systems at its headquarters.

The new Optimized Cross Domain Swarm Sensing (OCDSS) software

program helps the Navy plan missions using groups of unmanned aircraft. By running thousands of computer simulations, it determines the best combination of drones, sensors, and arrangement to achieve mission goals at sea.

“Autonomy is the decisive edge for maritime dominance,” said NAWCAD Commander Rear Adm. Todd Evans. “This technology is critical to enhancing operations across domains and represents a significant step forward for manned-unmanned teaming.”

OCDSS helps the Navy and Marine Corps get the most out of their unmanned systems while saving time and money. The software uses computer simulations to predict how different drones perform together in various missions, enabling planners to choose the right number and type of vehicles for the job.

“OCDSS quickly runs thousands of simulations to predict how different unmanned systems might perform together,” said NAWCAD Mechanical Engineer Raymond Koehler, OCDSS’ lead software developer. “This software gives warfighters faster and more effective decision making – that’s competitive advantage.”

By providing a virtual testing environment, OCDSS also reduces the cost and time associated with real-world testing in defense acquisition programs, which aligns with industry practices where simulation drives up to 90% of the development process. The technology successfully operated at ANTX Coastal Trident in August 2024, focusing on port security, providing data for future development and deployment.

“OCDSS levels-up how unmanned systems are used in a wide range of missions, and we’re ready to scale this autonomy to operational teams or test programs across the Navy and Marine Corps,” said Koehler.

Operational users and defense programs interested in learning

more about OCDSS should contact NAWCAD tech team lead Derek Alley (derek.m.alley.civ@us.navy.mil) for more information.

Koehler earned the Assistant Secretary of the Navy's 2025 Dr. Delores M. Etter Top Scientists and Engineers of the Year Award as an Emergent Engineer for his outstanding contributions to swarm autonomy. The team he supports also earned a NAWCAD award for its collaboration on the effort with the Naval Surface Warfare Center Carderock Division.

NAWCAD's military, civilian, and contract personnel operate test ranges, laboratories, and aircraft in support of test, evaluation, research, development, and sustainment for all Navy and Marine Corps aviation platforms. Based in Patuxent River, Maryland, NAWCAD also has major sites in St. Inigoes, Maryland; Lakehurst, New Jersey; and Orlando, Florida.

USNS Comfort Departs Grenada During Continuing Promise 2025



ST. GEORGE'S, Grenada (June 16, 2025) The Mercy-class hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) departs from St. George's, Grenada, during Continuing Promise 2025, June 16, 2025. Continuing Promise 2025 is the 16th iteration of the U.S. 4th Fleet/U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command-led mission since 2007, which aims to foster goodwill, strengthen existing partnerships with partner nations, and form new partnerships between host nations, non-federal entities, and international organizations. (U.S. Army photo by Cpl. William Hunter)

[by U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command / U.S. Fourth Fleet Public Affairs – Continuing Promise Detachment](#) June 24, 2025

SAINT GEORGE'S, Grenada – The Mercy-class hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) departed St. George's, Grenada, June 16, 2025, concluding a seven-day mission as part of Continuing Promise 2025 (CP25).

This visit marked the third Continuing Promise mission stop to Grenada since 2007, and the second visit to Grenada by Comfort.

“Our ability to provide life-changing medical and dental care alongside our Grenadian counterparts is a testament of our commitment to the region,” said Capt. Ryan Kendall, commodore, Destroyer Squadron 40 and CP25 mission commander. “From medical and dental care to construction projects and community relations events, we were able to make a positive and lasting impact on the community and further strengthen our friendships and partnership.”

During the seven-day mission stop in Grenada, the CP25 team treated 1,653 patients, including 189 dental operations, 526 eye examinations and 52 surgeries that were performed aboard Comfort. Additionally, the combined CP25 team filled 2,003 prescriptions, fabricated and distributed 541 glasses and 459 sunglasses, held a 2-day geriatric care course in Carriacou, and held 5 days of subject matter expert exchanges to include side-by-side surgeries, preventative medicine care courses, and humanitarian aid and disaster response courses.

“Helping people out and seeing them smile and not in pain is very rewarding,” said Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Cody Romero, a dental assistant assigned to Comfort. “It’s fulfilling work, helping the patients who need care they may not have access to.”

The medical care provided by the CP25 team brought new hope to Grenada. Capt. Shelton Viola, a pediatric physician assigned to Comfort, recalled a pediatric oncology case that his team encountered during the mission stop.

“There was word that came through when we were in Grenada that there was a young child with cancer and was very sick, so our team here reached out to let them know that there was a pediatric oncologist onboard,” said Viola. “I went over to the hospital and was expecting to find a child who was very ill with few treatment options, but I actually found a beautiful 3-year-old that was very ill, but had a very curable and very

treatable form of childhood leukemia.”

B-cell acute lymphoblastic leukemia, the 3-year-old’s diagnosis, has a 94% survivability with proper treatment. After visiting with the family, Viola and his team developed a treatment plan with remote follow-ups and monitoring to maximize the child’s chances of success.

“I’ve totally changed my tune after this first mission stop, [we’re] altering this child’s trajectory for cancer care,” said Viola. “Hopefully this case can be a model for Grenada to develop a pediatric cancer program and start to question if there’s a more that can be done for these types of cases than they thought.”

In addition to medical care, the CP25 team conducted community relations events in Carriacou and band events with the Royal Grenadian Police Force band throughout Grenada.

Following its departure from Grenada, Comfort will continue to Panama, City, Panama, for the second mission stop of CP25.

CP25, the 16th mission to the region since 2007 and the eighth aboard Comfort, aims to foster goodwill, strengthen existing partnerships with partner nations, and encourage the establishment of new partnerships among countries, non-federal entities, and international organizations.

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet supports U.S. Southern Command’s joint and combined military operations by employing maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships in order to enhance regional security and promote peace, stability and prosperity in the Caribbean, Central and South American region.

Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group Departs for Deployment



From Commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet Public Affairs, June 24, 2025

NORFOLK, Va. – Nearly 4,500 Sailors assigned to the Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group departed Naval Station Norfolk and Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, June 24, for a regularly-scheduled deployment to the U.S. European Command (EUCOM) area of responsibility.

The strike group deployed as an integrated naval force in support of economic prosperity, national security, and national defense.

“Carrier Strike Group Twelve is the most capable, adaptable, and lethal naval mission package in the world,” said Rear Adm. Paul Lanzilotta, commander of Carrier Strike Group Twelve. “Our force stands prepared and ready to execute sustained,

multi-domain operations at sea, wherever and whenever tasked, in support of American security and economic prosperity.”

Deploying units include flagship USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), commanded by Capt. Dave Skarosi; the nine squadrons of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 8, commanded by Capt. David Dartez; Arleigh Burke-class destroyers within Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 2, commanded by Capt. Mark Lawrence; and Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81), homeported at Naval Station Mayport and commanded by Capt. Judson Mallory.

“I am beyond proud of the work the warfighters on this ship have put in to prepare for this deployment, and thankful for the families and friends who continue to support them,” said Capt. Dave Skarosi, commanding officer of Gerald R. Ford. “I have no doubt that this ship and crew will face and overcome any challenges with overwhelming force and fortitude, showcasing the power and lethality of the Ford-class carrier to the world.”

Guided-missile destroyers of DESRON 2 include USS Mitscher (DDG 57), USS Mahan (DDG 72), USS Bainbridge (DDG 96), and USS Forrest Sherman (DDG 98). Forrest Sherman deployed from Naval Station Norfolk on May 6, 2025.

Squadrons of CVW 8, embarked aboard Gerald R. Ford include Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 37, “Ragin’ Bulls”; Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 213, “Blacklions”; Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 31, “Tomcatters”; Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 87, “Golden Warriors”; Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 142, “Gray Wolves”; Airborne Command and Control Squadron (VAW) 124, “Bear Aces”; Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 9, “Tridents”; Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 70, “Spartans”; and a detachment from Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 40 “Rawhides.”

The Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group provides combatant

commanders and America's civilian leaders increased capacity to underpin American security and economic prosperity, deter adversaries, and project power on a global scale through sustained operations at sea.

For more information on the Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group, please visit: <https://www.c2f.usff.navy.mil/csg12/>. For more information on USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), please visit: <https://www.airlant.usff.navy.mil/cvn78/>.

Coast Guard Cutter Campbell Returns Home After 62-Day Patrol in the Windward Passage



Coast Guard Cutter Campbell (WMEC 909) is underway during a patrol in the Windward Passage, June 5, 2025. Campbell's crew conducted a two-month patrol to protect the safety of life at sea and deter illegal alien migration in the region. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Chief Petty Officer Robert Zergman)
From U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, June 23, 2025

NEWPORT, R.I. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Campbell (WMEC 909) returned to their home port in Newport, Friday, following a 62-day patrol in the Windward Passage.

Campbell deployed in support of Operation Vigilant Sentry to advance the primary missions of safety of life at sea and deterrence of illegal alien ventures in known transit zones. Campbell's crew conducted maritime safety and security missions while protecting America's maritime borders from unlawful entry.

While operating in the Seventh Coast Guard District's area of

responsibility, Campbell's crew worked alongside the Coast Guard Cutters Diligence (WMEC 616), Vigorous (WMEC 627) and Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer USS Gravelly (DDG 107) with an embarked Coast Guard law enforcement detachment (LEDET) to support maritime counter-drug operations by maintaining custody of 14 suspected smugglers apprehended in the Caribbean Sea.

Campbell also successfully completed a three-day Aviation Standardization inspection in Miami, Florida which evaluated the crew's equipment, training and proficiency for conducting shipboard-helicopter operations at sea. These inspections reinforce Coast Guard readiness for interdiction operations, long-range patrols, and search and rescue. Additionally, Campbell partnered with Coast Guard Station Miami and Vigorous for advanced boat tactics training.

"The Campbell and our Department of Homeland Security and Defense partners stood the watch day and night to deter irregular migration while helping the U.S. Coast Guard maintain full operational control of our southeastern maritime border," said Cmdr. Jonathan Harris, commanding officer of Campbell. "I am very proud of this crew's teamwork, ingenuity and professionalism throughout this patrol."

HSTF-SE serves as the Department of Homeland Security lead for operational and tactical planning, command and control, and acts as a standing organization to interdict unlawful maritime migration attempts with federal, state and local partners. HSTF-SE continues to enhance enforcement efforts in support of OVS, which is the 2004 DHS plan to respond to mass maritime migration in the Caribbean Sea and the Florida Straits.

Campbell is a 270-foot, Famous-class medium-endurance cutter. The cutter's primary missions are counter-drug and alien interdiction operations, enforcement of federal fishery laws, and search and rescue in support of U.S. Coast Guard

operations throughout the Western Hemisphere. The cutter falls under the command of U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, which is based in Portsmouth, Virginia.

For more information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit GoCoastGuard.com to learn about active duty, reserve, officer and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found [here](#).

RTX's Raytheon Awarded \$250 Million Contract From MELCO for ESSM Block 2 Licensed Production



Contract represents the latest milestone in the companies' longstanding partnership

From RTX, June 24, 2025

TUCSON, Ariz. (June 24, 2025) – Raytheon, an RTX (NYSE: RTX) business, has been awarded a \$250 million contract from Japan's Mitsubishi Electric Corporation (MELCO) for ESSM Block 2 licensed production.

Under the Direct Commercial Sale contract, Raytheon will provide missile kits, parts, and components as well as technical support for missile production at MELCO in Japan.

“This innovative licensed production arrangement is the culmination of decades of partnership,” said Barbara Borgonovi, president of Naval Power at Raytheon. “As Japan invests in this critical weapon system, it will strengthen their defense capabilities while reinforcing the vital security alliance between our nations.”

Raytheon and MELCO have a longstanding partnership spanning over 50 years on critical defense programs. This contract represents the latest chapter in their collaborative relationship and allows Japan to enhance its domestic defense manufacturing and missile defense capabilities, while also strengthening the broader U.S.-Japan security partnership.

ESSM Block 2 is a short to medium-range, ship-launched, dual-mode, guided missile that has increased maneuverability and improved performance over its Block 1 predecessor. The newest variant reduces dependence on shipboard illumination and is integrated on a wide variety of combat systems and launchers, delivering improved performance in stressing marine environments, and has significant digital processing margin to keep pace with evolving threats through software improvements.

Japan is a customer nation of ESSM, which is managed by the NATO SEASPARROW Consortium composed of 12 nations.

Marine Corps General Tapped for JAG of the Navy



From U.S. Department of Defense, June 24, 2025

ARLINGTON, Va.—Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth announced today that the president has made the following nomination:

Marine Corps Maj. Gen. David J. Bligh for appointment as judge advocate general of the Navy. Bligh is currently serving as the staff judge advocate to the Commandant of the Marine

Corps, Headquarters, Marine Corps, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Below is the official biography of Major General Bligh:

Major General Bligh was raised in Athens, Pennsylvania. He is a 1988 graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania and a 1997 graduate of the University of Georgia School of Law.

Major General Bligh was commissioned through the Platoon Leaders Course program in 1988. He initially served as a Platoon Commander and Company Commander at 2nd Assault Amphibian Battalion, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. He later served as a Series Commander at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, South Carolina.

Upon completion of the Naval Justice School, Major General Bligh served as a civil law officer, trial counsel, and officer-in-charge of legal assistance at Camp Lejeune. He was then assigned as Director, Joint Law Center, Marine Corps Air Station New River, North Carolina. During this assignment, Major General Bligh deployed for OIF-I with Task Force Tarawa.

Major General Bligh has served as the Staff Judge Advocate for 3rd Marine Division and III Marine Expeditionary Force in Okinawa, Japan, and Marine Corps Forces Command in Norfolk, Virginia. Prior to assuming his current duties, Major General Bligh served as the Deputy Staff Judge Advocate to the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and later as the Assistant Judge Advocate General of the Navy (Military Law).

Austal USA Completed Acceptance Trials on 19th Independence-variant LCS Pierre



From Austal USA, June 24, 2025

MOBILE, Ala. – Austal USA successfully completed acceptance trials on the company’s 19th Independence-variant Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), the last ship in the class. Future USS Pierre (LCS 38) returned to port late on June 11 after conducting trials.

“The completion of LCS 38 sea trials marks the achievement of an important milestone at Austal USA, the last LCS to go out to sea under our control,” said Harley Combs, Austal USA Vice President of Surface Ship Programs. “Congratulations to our

Austal USA shipbuilders, vendors and our Navy teammates who coordinated to accomplish this successful milestone preparing the ship for delivery in a couple of weeks.”

Acceptance trials involve comprehensive testing conducted on the ship’s major systems and equipment in order to demonstrate their successful operation and mission readiness. The U.S. Navy’s Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) participates throughout the trials to validate the quality of construction and compliance with Navy requirements.

Sea trials are a team effort and the Austal USA team has consistently proven their excellence as evidenced by the number of successful LCS trial events that have been approved by INSURV. Successfully completing sea trial require expertise from across the company including test and activation/trials, program management, engineering, operations, site services, and supply chain management.

Pierre will be the 19th Independence-variant Littoral Combat Ship and will soon transition to her home port of San Diego. With the delivery of Pierre, Austal USA will have delivered 19 LCS to the Navy in just over 15 years. At times during the program Austal USA delivered three Independence-variant LCS in a year.

In addition to Pierre, Austal USA is also constructing seven more Navy and Coast Guard ships as well as modules for both the Virginia- and Columbia-class submarine programs and aircraft elevators for the Ford-class aircraft carrier fleet.

Tripoli Arrives in Sasebo, Japan, for Duty with U.S. 7th Fleet



From Lt. Nicholas Spaleny, June 23, 2025

SASEBO, Japan – The America-class amphibious assault ship USS Tripoli (LHA 7) arrived in Sasebo, Japan, June 23, as part of a scheduled rotation of forces in the Indo-Pacific.

Tripoli's forward-deployment ensures that the most capable surface ships and superior technology is best positioned to honor the United States' security commitment with their Japanese allies.

"Tripoli is proud to join the long history of committed partnership in the region," said Capt. Eddie Park, Tripoli's commanding officer. "Our Sailors and Marines are ready to join

the capable team of Forward Deployed Naval Forces and contribute to the security, stability and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region.”

The forward presence of Tripoli supports the United States’ commitment to the defense of Japan, enhances the national security of the United States and improves its ability to protect strategic interests.

The security environment in the Indo-Pacific requires the most capable ships to enable rapid response times for maritime and joint forces.

“Today is only the first day of what will be a positive and longstanding relationship between USS Tripoli and the people of Sasebo, Japan,” said Park. “We are all looking forward to becoming a welcome and active part of the Sasebo community.”

Tripoli departed San Diego on May 19, and is the second America-class amphibious assault ship to be forward deployed to Japan. Tripoli was commissioned July 15, 2020, and is the second America-class amphibious assault ship built for the United States Navy. The ship is named after the U.S. Marine Corps victory against Tripoli at the Battle of Derna during the First Barbary War in 1805.

U.S. 7th Fleet, the U.S. Navy’s largest forward-deployed numbered fleet, which routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

USCGC Stratton Arrives in Kagoshima, Leads Joint Operations with Partner Coast Guards



Japan Coast Guard members wave U.S. and Japanese flags to welcome the arrival of the Legend-class U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Stratton (WMSL 752) to Kagoshima, Japan, June 16, 2025 during a trilateral exercise with U.S. and Philippine Coast Guards. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Senior Chief Petty Officer Matthew S. Masaschi)

From U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area, June 20 2025

KAGOSHIMA, Japan – U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Stratton (WMSL 752) arrived in Kagoshima, Japan, June 16 to conduct the first-ever trilateral operations between the U.S. Coast Guard, Japan Coast Guard (JCG) and Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) within Japan's territorial waters. This engagement builds on

Operation SAPPHIRE, the U.S.-Japan Coast Guard bilateral effort aimed at strengthening interoperability to support maritime governance, peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

Stratton led and participated in crew exchanges and ship familiarization tours. The ships held reciprocal tours, highlighting capabilities and assets to improve interoperability and generate combined effects at sea.

“These shoreside engagements in Kagoshima are opportunities to build on the already close working relationship we have with the Japan and Philippine Coast Guards,” said Capt. Brian Krautler, commanding officer of Stratton. “Stratton is scheduled to conduct several trilateral engagements with the JCG and PCG, both during this port call and at sea, to increase interoperability and cooperation with our partners who share our deeply rooted values and respect for the rule of law. Our coast guard services stand shoulder-to-shoulder in strengthening maritime safety and security in the region and serving as the unique instruments bridging national safety and security, and law enforcement.”

At sea, Stratton will conduct joint search and rescue training and exercises with JCG and PCG assets, including the deployment of vessels, boats, helicopter and unmanned system.

During the current Western Pacific patrol, Stratton is scheduled to engage with regional partners and participate in joint operations to support and enhance maritime governance, safety and security.

Commissioned in 2012, Stratton is one of ten legend-class National Security Cutters (NSC) and one of four homeported in Alameda, California. NSCs are 418-feet long, 54-feet wide, and have a 4,600 long-ton displacement. They have a top speed of 28 knots, a range of 12,000 nautical miles, and sail with a crew of up to 170. NSCs routinely conduct operations

throughout the Pacific, where their unmatched combination of range, speed, and ability to operate in extreme weather provides the mission flexibility necessary to conduct vital strategic missions.

The namesake of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Stratton is Capt. Dorothy Stratton, the first female commissioned officer in the Coast Guard. Captain Stratton led the service's all-female reserve force during World War II, commanding more than 10,000 personnel. The ship's motto is "We Can't Afford Not To."

7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy's largest forward-deployed numbered fleet and routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

Hegseth, Caine Laud Success of U.S. Strike on Iran Nuke Sites



June 22, 2025 | By Matthew Olay, DoD News

During a press conference at the Pentagon today, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth and Air Force Gen. Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, lauded the success of the U.S. Central Command's overnight strike on three Iranian nuclear facilities.

Dubbed "Operation Midnight Hammer," Centcom deployed multiple combined assets to inflict significant damage at the sites of Fordo, Natanz and Isfahan.

“The order we received from our commander in chief was focused, it was powerful and it was clear. We devastated the Iranian nuclear program,” Hegseth said at the outset of his remarks, also noting that the operation did not target Iranian troops or citizens.

“Initial battle damage assessments indicate that all three sites sustained extremely severe damage and destruction,” Caine told the media.

After proceeding quietly and with minimal communication for 18 hours from the U.S. to the target area, the first of seven B-2 Spirit stealth bombers dropped two 30,000 GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator “bunker buster” bombs at the Fordo site yesterday at approximately 6:40 p.m. EDT, Caine said.

The initial mission package also included several decoy aircraft that flew west over the Pacific Ocean as “a deception effort known only to an extremely small number of planners and key leaders here in Washington and ,” Caine said.

Such tactics were also used in support of the main strike package of aircraft.

“The U.S. employed several deception tactics – including decoys – as the fourth and fifth generation aircraft pushed out in front of the strike package at high altitude and high speed, sweeping in front of the package for enemy fighters and surface-to-air missile threats,” Caine said.

Following the initial strike on Fordo, the remaining B-2s went on to deploy their ordnance, eventually totaling 14 MOPs hitting the targeted areas.

This was the first operational use of the GBU-57 MOP, Caine noted.

In addition to the MOPs, Caine said a U.S. submarine operating

in Centcom's area of responsibility launched more than two dozen Tomahawk land attack cruise missiles at key infrastructure targets at the Isfahan site, bringing the overall total of precision-guided weapons employed during the operation to approximately 75.

Caine stated there was no detectable retaliation to the strikes.

"We are unaware of any shots fired at the package on the way out. Iran's fighters did not fly, and it appears that Iran's surface-to-air missile systems did not see us," he said, adding, "Throughout the mission, we maintained the element of surprise."

Both Hegseth and Caine shared praise for the military personnel who worked to execute the mission.

"I want to recognize the pilots who flew those bombers, who flew those fighters, who flew those refuelers; warriors. I want to recognize the sailors on those destroyers, in those subs, on those carriers; warriors, all of them," Hegseth said, also recognizing soldiers who conducted air and base defense.

"Every American involved in this operation performed flawlessly," he added, also giving recognition to the Israeli government for its contribution to the positioning and preparation of the effort.

"This was a complex and high-risk mission, carried out with exceptional skill and discipline by our joint force," Caine said, also noting that the mission demonstrated the "unmatched reach, coordination and capability of the United States military."

“In just a matter of weeks, this went from strategic planning to global execution,” he said, adding that he concurs with President Donald J. Trump’s assessment that

“no other military in the world could have done this.”

When asked about the overall intent of the strikes, Hegseth said the mission was specifically focused on preventing Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

“This mission was not, and has not been, about regime change. The president authorized a precision operation to neutralize the threats to our national interests posed by the Iranian nuclear program and the collective self-defense of our troops and our ally, Israel,” Hegseth said.

As to the potential for Iran attempting retaliation for the U.S. strikes, Caine said Centcom is operating under elevated force protection measures throughout the Middle East region and that any retaliation by Iran or its proxies would be “an incredibly poor choice.”

“We will defend ourselves. The safety of our service members and civilians remains our highest priority,” he said.