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."

Future USS Daniel Inouye Sails for Homeport

1The Navy's newest guided missile destroyer, the future USS Daniel Inouye (DDG 118) sailed away from General Dynamics Bath Iron Works shipyard, Oct. 4. *BATH IRON WORKS*

WASHINGTON – The Navy's newest guided missile destroyer, the future USS Daniel Inouye (DDG 118), sailed from General Dynamics Bath Iron Works shipyard Oct. 4 en route to its homeport, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, for its scheduled commissioning in December.

"Following delivery to the Navy in March 2021, the entire team has continued to prepare DDG 118 for this important readiness milestone," Capt. Seth Miller, DDG 51 program manager, Arleigh Burke-class program office, Program Executive Office-Ships, said in a Team Ships release. "The fleet will soon be receiving an advanced warship capable of performing the core roles of sea control and power projection."

The future USS Daniel Inouye is named in honor of Daniel Inouye, who served as a United States Senator for Hawaii from 1963 until his death in 2012. He received the Medal of Honor on June 21, 2000, for his extraordinary heroism in action while serving with the 442nd Infantry Regimental Combat Team in Italy during World War II.

Arleigh Burke-class destroyers are multi-mission ships able to hold targets on land, at sea, in the air and underwater at risk with a suite of sophisticated weapons and sensors.

The other Arleigh Burke-class destroyers currently under construction at Bath Iron Works include Carl M. Levin (DDG 120), John Basilone (DDG 122), Harvey C. Barnum Jr. (DDG 124), Patrick Gallagher (DDG 127), Louis H. Wilson Jr. (DDG 126) and William Charette (DDG 130), as well as the Zumwalt-class destroyer Lyndon B. Johnson (DDG 1002).

U.S. Marine Corps Awards Production Contract to Kongsberg for C-UAS Capability

Kongsberg's RS6 remote weapon system for the Marine Air Defense Integrated System program. *KONGSBERG*

JOHNSTOWN, Penn. — The U.S. Marine Corps has awarded a production contract to Kongsberg Protech Systems USA to deliver remote weapon systems (RWS) as part of the Marine Air Defense Integrated System (MADIS) program, the company said Oct. 5.

The indefinite delivery / indefinite quantity contract has a ceiling of $94 million and includes a series of low-rate initial production systems and full-rate production units. This production contract award follows a September 2020 contract award from the Marine Corps to Kongsberg for test articles and activities, which included design verification

testing.

The Kongsberg RS6 RWS for MADIS leverages technology and competence drawn from multiple counter-unmanned aircraft systems and air defense programs. The system leverages commonality with the family of Protector RWS delivered and fielded with the U.S. Army and Marine Corps and will be integrated on the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle together with external sensors and effectors.

The first 30mm remote weapon system to be qualified on the JLTV platform, the Kongsberg RS6 RWS for MADIS RWS includes the XM914E1 30mmx113mm DC driven cannon with a co-axial M240 (7.62mm) machine gun, an integration kit for the Stinger Air-To-Air Launcher and provisions for future C-UAS defeat systems.

“The MADIS program with Kongsberg’s RS6 30mm remote weapon system signifies a powerful lethality capability for the Marine Corps, initiating a new era in U.S. Marine Corps ground-based air defense operations,” said Pål E Bratlie, executive vice president, Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace.

Kongsberg has delivered more than 20,000 RWS units to more than 20 countries worldwide. The company also is the sole provider of RWS and remote turrets to the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps. All RWS and remote turrets delivered to U.S. customers are manufactured in the Kongsberg Johnstown, Pennsylvania, facility.

Marine Corps F-35Bs Conduct

First Landing Aboard JS Izumo

A U.S. Sailor directs a Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II aircraft with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 242 aboard the Japanese Ship Izumo off the coast of Japan, Oct. 3, 2021. *U.S. MARINE CORPS / Lance Cpl. Tyler Harmon*

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI, Japan – At the request of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF), Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 242 successfully conducted the first landing of two F-35B Lightning II aircraft aboard the Japanese Ship Izumo on Oct. 3, Marine Aircraft Group 12 said in a release.

Following a series of modifications to the JS Izumo to enable short takeoff and vertical landing (STOVL) operations, a capability that the "B" variant of the F-35 specializes in, U.S. Marines embarked aboard the JS Izumo and worked directly with JMSDF personnel as part of a bilateral effort to ensure the capability test was both effective and safe.

"This trial has proved that the JS Izumo has the capability to support takeoffs and landings of STOVL aircraft at sea, which will allow us to provide an additional option for air defense in the Pacific Ocean in the near future," said JMSDF Rear Adm. Komuta Shukaku, commander of Escort Flotilla One.

Japan is one of 14 nations that participate in the F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter program and announced in August 2019 it would purchase 42 F-35B aircraft from the United States.

"We have work to do until the day the JSDF can regularly employ STOVL aircraft at sea, but I am confident that the strong partnership and mutual trust between our two counties will result in its realization," said Komuta.

The F-35 includes the latest stealth technology and has an

advanced suite of sensors that enables it to create a dynamic awareness of the battlespace. The F-35 is then able to rapidly share this information with other aircraft platforms and command centers, including those operated by multinational allies and partners, creating greater situational awareness for commanders.

“We have the utmost confidence in the Joint Strike Fighter and are eager for our Japanese allies to have the same capabilities in their hands, which ultimately contributes to our shared goal of maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific,” said Maj. Gen. Brian W. Cavanaugh, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing commanding general.

VMFA-242 is one of two F-35B squadrons permanently stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan, and is one of the many forward-stationed units that routinely train with Japan Self-Defense Forces. The F-35B represents the United States’ rebalance to the Indo-Pacific and its commitment to the defense of Japan and regional security with the most capable and modern equipment in the U.S. inventory.

LCS Fleet Introduction and Sustainment Program Office Realigned to NAVSEA 21

The LCS Fleet Introduction and Sustainment Program Office (PMS 505) realigned to Naval Sea System Command’s Surface Ship Maintenance, Modernization and Sustainment (NAVSEA 21) directorate during a small ceremony, Oct. 1. Participants included (left to right): Rear Adm. Eric Ver Hage, commander,

Navy Regional Maintenance Center and Director, Surface Ship Maintenance, Modernization and Sustainment, Vice Adm. William Galinis, commander, Naval Sea Systems Command , Frederick J. Stefany III, assistant secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition (Acting), Rear Adm. Casey Moton, program executive officer, Unmanned and Small Combatants, Capt. Stephen Marino, program manager, Littoral Combat Ship Fleet Introduction and Sustainment and Capt. Matthew Lehmann, master of ceremony. *U.S. NAVY / Dave Ferraris*

WASHINGTON – As part of the U.S. Navy's continuing efforts to integrate the littoral combat ship (LCS) with all other surface ship classes, the LCS Fleet Introduction and Sustainment Program Office (PMS 505) realigned to Naval Sea System Command's Surface Ship Maintenance, Modernization and Sustainment (NAVSEA 21) directorate during a small ceremony, Oct. 1, Team Ships Public Affairs and PEO USC Public Affairs said in a release.

PMS 505 was established in 2011 under the purview of PEO Unmanned and Small Combatants (PEO USC) to ensure the unique aspects of LCS sustainment were fully aligned under a single Program Executive Office.

"We are excited to have PMS 505 join our team of world class maintainers and sustainers," said Rear Adm. Eric Ver Hage, director, NAVSEA 21. "This transition will ensure LCS sustainment plans remain aligned with all other surface ship classes as we serve the fleet."

Under PEO USC, more than half of the 35-ship LCS class has been delivered, LCS ships are routinely deploying to combatant commands, and training facilities are successfully executing the Train-to-Qualify/Certify plan for the crews.

The move does not impact or affect the work of LCS ship construction or LCS Mission Modules.

"With 20 LCS in the fleet today, PMS 505 has accomplished the mission that it was created to perform," said Rear Adm. Casey

Moton, program executive officer, Unmanned and Small Combatants. “Fleet introduction and sustainment of LCS is on a solid pathway, thanks to this team, and PMS 505 will continue supporting the Navy’s efforts to mainstream LCS by joining SEA 21, the Surface Navy’s premier maintenance and modernization organization.”

As NAVSEA’s Directorate for Surface Ship Maintenance, Modernization and Sustainment, SEA 21 is the dedicated life cycle management organization for the Navy’s in-service surface ships and is responsible for managing critical maintenance, sustainment, modernization, training and inactivation programs.

Navy Establishes New MH-60R Helicopter Squadron

U.S. Navy Boatswain’s Mate 3rd Class Jonathan Shaffer, left, and Boatswain’s Mate 3rd Class Devante Sims remove chocks from an MH-60R Seahawk helicopter assigned to Helicopter Maritime Strike (HSM) 74, on the flight deck of the guided missile cruiser USS Gettysburg (CG 64) Nov. 24, 2013, in the Gulf of Oman. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Lorenzo J. Burleson/Released*

NORFOLK, Va. – The U.S. Navy establishes a new helicopter squadron, Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 50, onboard Naval Air Station (NAS) Mayport, Florida, Oct. 1, the commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic Public Affairs said in a release.

Primarily, HSM-50 “Valkyries” will be fully equipped with MH-60R Seahawks and will provide expeditionary aviation

detachments in support of littoral combat ships and expeditionary independent deployers to meet global force management missions.

“I’m honored and humbled to have the opportunity to serve as HSM-50’s first commanding officer,” said Cmdr. Carolyn Peterson. “Every member of Valkyries will have a major impact as we establish this squadron from the ground floor and create a strong, resilient, combat-ready unit prepared to deploy MH-60R detachments to fight and win at sea. I am excited and encouraged as we move forward as a team, face challenges head-on, and continue to serve in the defense of our nation.”

Peterson, a native of Nashville, Tennessee, served in a number of assignments including tours as an instructor pilot, a helicopter initial shore assignments officer, a Carrier Air Wing MH-60R operational squadron department head, and a joint planning officer in Anchorage, Alaska. She is a graduate of Air Force Air Command and Staff College Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) Phase One, and earned a Master’s of Science in Aeronautics: Safety Systems.

The MH-60R Seahawk, a versatile multi-mission platform, is used to support a number of operations spanning: anti-submarine warfare, electronic warfare, surface warfare, command and control, non-combat operations, and fleet support for operations and logistics. It can also integrate mission systems with other ships to provide early warning indications of surface contacts and longer-range pursuit of subsurface contacts.

HSM-50 is expected to conduct a formal establishment ceremony in the summer of 2022 and the squadron will fall under Helicopter Maritime Strike Wing Atlantic.

BAE Systems to Sustain U.S. Navy Critical Carrier Landing Systems

An F-35C Lightning II, assigned to the "Raiders" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 125, performs an arrested landing on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72). *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Javier Reyes*

MCLEAN, Va. – BAE Systems Inc. will continue providing lifecycle sustainment, integration, and engineering services to support U.S. aircraft carriers after being selected for a five-year, $68.5 million indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract, the company said Oct. 4.

Under the Air Traffic Control and Landing Systems Engineering Products & Technical Services contract awarded earlier this year, BAE Systems will leverage decades of program history to develop, produce, equip, test, evaluate, sustain, and update the AN/SPN-46(V) Automatic Carrier Landing System.

"With this win, BAE Systems retains a key air traffic control contract that we have held since 1973 to provide industry-leading systems integration capabilities and solutions that ensure the safety of critical carrier-based landing systems," said Lisa Hand, vice president and general manager of BAE Systems' Integrated Defense Solutions business.

BAE Systems' technicians deploy around the world to support the warfighter. The company's employees utilize established and proven methods as well as their systems engineering and software development expertise to sustain these critical

landing systems. The company's work results in improved hardware reliability, system precision, minimal downtime through onsite and remote technical assistance, and a certified landing system.

USCGC Reliance Returns from 63-Day Patrol

The crew of USCGC Reliance (WMEC 615) conducts a port assessment off the coast of Haiti following a major earthquake to allow vessels to enter the port safely and deliver aid on Aug. 19, 2021. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 2nd Class Zachary Pumphrey*

PENSACOLA, Fla. – The crew of USCGC Reliance (WMEC 615) returned to homeport in Pensacola Sept. 29 after a 63-day Caribbean Sea patrol, the Coast Guard Atlantic Area said in an Oct. 1 release.

The Reliance crew supported the U.S. Coast Guard 7th District throughout their patrol, aiding in missions to interdict and disrupt the flow of illegal drugs and migrant trafficking while supporting national security and strengthening relationships with regional partners throughout the Caribbean.

"I am extremely proud of our crew for their adaptability and professionalism throughout the patrol. Regardless of the mission set, whether that was responding immediately to the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in Haiti by conducting critical port assessments or stopping the flow of illegal narcotics, Reliance was always ready to respond to the needs of our service and our nation," said Cmdr. Robert Hill,

commanding officer.

Significantly, the crew supported the relief efforts in response to the earthquake in Haiti in August, conducting two separate port assessments on Haitian ports to ensure the harbors were safe for vessels to deliver vital aid and assistance to the region following the disaster.

During the patrol, Reliance's crew intercepted one vessel attempting to smuggle approximately 1,132 pounds of cocaine and detained a total of four suspected smugglers. Additionally, Reliance received more than 4,291 pounds of cocaine, 10 suspected smugglers and 96 migrants from other U.S. Coast Guard cutters operating in the region.

The crew also rescued 50 Dominican nationals from an unseaworthy vessel off the coast of Puerto Rico and repatriated 158 migrants to the Dominican Republic's navy.

The 63-day patrol was critical in allowing the cutter crew to work on shipboard training, qualifications, and proficiency to maintain operational readiness. This training enabled Reliance's team to complete a five-day major shipboard training exercise in Mayport, which tested their readiness in all aspects of damage control, seamanship, and navigational procedures.

Reliance is a 210-foot medium-endurance cutter homeported in Pensacola with a crew of 71. The cutter's primary missions are counter-drug operations, migrant interdiction, enforcing federal fishery laws, and search and rescue in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Navy Realigns Submarine Acquisition Workforce

NAVSEA Commander, Vice Adm. Bill Galinis, speaks at Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) May 19. *NORFOLK NAVAL SHIPYARD / Gregory Boyd*

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy's submarine acquisition community moved from a competency- to a platform-centric organization during an Oct. 1 change-of-office ceremony at the Washington Navy Yard, the Naval Sea Systems Command said in a release.

The change realigns two Program Executive Offices (PEOs) and initiates a third to better support submarine acquisition, operational capability and availability.

The Navy is committed to ensuring all decisions are aligned with and do not impact ongoing Columbia submarine construction.

"Aligning submarine acquisition and sustainment along platform lines, with cradle-to-grave ownership and accountability, is the most effective way to tackle the challenges we face and provide the nation with the most lethal undersea force possible," said Rear Adm. Scott Pappano, PEO Strategic Submarines (formerly PEO Columbia). "I look forward to the opportunity to proactively manage the Ohio-to-Columbia transition, including strategic shore infrastructure and industrial base capacity, to ensure uninterrupted sea-based strategic deterrent coverage into the 2080s."

Program Executive Office Attack Submarines (formerly PEO Submarines) aligns Virginia-class efforts under one flag officer.

"Consolidating attack submarine platform acquisition, development, and sustainment under a single PEO will ensure

our Navy maintains America's and our allies' competitive edge over our rivals," said Rear Adm. David Goggins, PEO SSN. "Specifically, aligning Virginia-class efforts under PEO SSN enables more effective planning for the lifetime of the boat and will ensure support smoother transitions from new construction to in-service for the Virginia-class."

Program Executive Office, Undersea Warfare Systems (PEO UWS) will enable the delivery of enhanced combat capability, with improved cybersecurity and resiliency, to all submarine platforms, the Navy said. Furthermore, the creation of PEO UWS best positions Team Submarines to ensure undersea sensors and warfare systems are integrated into the Navy Operational Architecture in support of distributed maritime operations.

"The realignment of Team Submarines provides a tighter focus on our three main platforms: strategic, attack, and warfare systems," said Rear Adm. Edward Anderson, PEO USW. "Standing up PEO UWS is a tremendous honor and will facilitate a greater focus on modernizing our sensors, combat systems and weapons, while improving our cybersecurity and platform resiliency."

"This realignment is about ensuring we're delivering combat power to the fleet," said Vice Adm. Bill Galinis, commander, Naval Sea Systems Command and ceremony host. "Our submarines, first and foremost, are what help ensure the freedom of the seas that is critical to long-term military and economic stability in this era of strategic competition."

The realignment does not require any new flag officer billets.