

Coast Guard Continues to Support Hurricane Ida Recovery Efforts



Coast Guard Capt. Wade Russell, commanding officer of Marine Safety Unit Houma, reviews navigation charts with a member of the Navy Supervisor of Salvage and Diving in Morgan City, Louisiana, Sep. 9, 2021. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

NEW ORLEANS – The Coast Guard continues to respond to impacts to the waterways and assess the environmental threats across Southeast Louisiana Sept. 9, post-Hurricane Ida, the Coast Guard 8th District said in a release.

In partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Navy Supervisor of Salvage and Diving (SUPSALV) the Coast Guard is continuing efforts to reopen waterways impacted by Hurricane Ida in the areas of Bayou Lafourche, Houma Navigation Canal and portions of the Intracoastal Waterway.

Obstructions to the affected waterways are being identified and removed to restore the area to pre-storm conditions.

To date, 25 obstructions comprised primarily of fishing vessels, crew vessels, and offshore supply vessels have been identified in the Bayou Lafourche channel. Additionally, 30 submerged targets have been identified in the Houma Navigation Canal. Fifteen of those targets in the Houma Navigation Canal have been cleared or removed.

The Coast Guard also continues to receive and investigate all reports made to the National Response Center.

Coast Guard crews are working to identify and prioritize threats to the environment and navigable waterways through overflights and surface inspections of areas impacted by the

storm.

The Coast Guard is working closely with the State of Louisiana, Environmental Protection Agency, and Department of Environmental Quality, to respond to reports of pollution.

Marine Corps' First MQ-9A Reaper Delivered to 3rd MAW



U.S. Marine Corps Captain Joshua Brooks, an unmanned aircraft system representative, and Master Sergeant Willie Cheeseboro Jr., an enlisted aircrew coordinator with Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron (VMU) 1, prepare to launch and operate the first Marine Corps owned MQ-9A Reaper on Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Arizona, Aug. 30, 2021. *U.S. MARINE CORPS / Lance Cpl. Gabrielle Sanders*

YUMA, Ariz. – Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron One (VMU-1), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing procured the Marine Corps' first MQ-9A Reaper remotely piloted aircraft after transitioning from contractor-owned, contractor-operated (COCO) to government-owned, contractor-operated (GOCO) at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma on Aug. 30, said Cpl. Levi Voss, a spokesperson for the wing.

To achieve the commandant of the Marine Corps' vision of future force design, VMU-1 has transitioned from the RQ-21 Group 3 unmanned aircraft to the MQ-9A. Since 2018, flight operations of the MQ-9A have fallen under a COCO construct. However, the MQ-9A has since transitioned to a GOCO unmanned aerial system, signifying the Marine Corps' ownership of these assets and progressing toward an organically trained and qualified aircrew. This noteworthy flight is the culmination

of three years of training, safety, and operational planning, contractor maintenance, process development, and staff analysis of risk management to ensure complete procedural adherence to Navy and Marine Corps aviation policies.

“VMU-1 is living the commandant’s vision of Force Design 2030 and our unit is laying the groundwork for future squadrons to execute similar missions within INDOPACOM [U.S. Indo-Pacific Command] or anywhere else that we are needed,” said Maj. Keenan Chirhart, executive officer of VMU-1.

VMU-1’s procurement of the Marine Corps’ first MQ-9A evolves the service as a force, making it capable of further integration of operations in naval, ground, air, and cyber domains. As the Marine Corps transitions to government-owned, government-operated employment of the MQ-9A, Force Design 2030 presents opportunities for similar implementation across the globe. This transition gives VMU-1 the capability of piloting the forward-deployed MQ-9A that aligns with the Commandant’s directive for persistent intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities, which have supported daily combat operations around the world.

“The MQ-9A is a medium-altitude, long-endurance Group 5 remotely piloted aircraft capable of conducting multiple mission sets to include multi-sensor imagery reconnaissance, unmanned aerial escort, and electronic support,” said Chirhart.

Aside from being the first Marine Corps-owned MQ-9A flight in history, this flight is also a huge step toward verification of policies and procedures that have been developed by VMU-1. With this transition to the MQ-9A, VMU-1 is currently engaged in executing maritime domain awareness operations in highly-contested areas, providing friendly forces a multi-domain reconnaissance capability across the electromagnetic spectrum.

Moreover, it proves that VMU-1 is uniquely positioned to

enable naval and joint force targeting from a remote location by a Marine aviator and sensor operator, while the aircraft is physically located within another combatant commander's area of operation.

The MQ-9A was developed by General Atomics Aeronautical Systems. The remotely piloted aircraft capability revolutionizes military operations by allowing the system operator to operate from ship and shore and employ both collection and lethal payloads while integrating with command and control centers, allowing the synchronization of remotely piloted aircraft with ground and air assets.

Carl Vinson CSG Enters South China Sea, Upholds Freedom of Seas



Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) transits the South China Sea with Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Tulsa (LCS 16), Sept. 7, 2021. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Haydn N. Smith*
SOUTH CHINA SEA – The Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group (VINCSG) is operating in the South China Sea for the first time during the group's 2021 deployment, said Ens. Charina Camacho, a spokesperson for the Carl Vinson.

While in the South China Sea, the strike group is conducting maritime security operations, which include flight operations with fixed and rotary wing aircraft, maritime strike exercises, and coordinated tactical training between surface and air units. Carrier operations in the South China Sea are

part of the U.S. Navy's routine presence in the Indo-Pacific.

"The freedom of all nations to navigate in international waters is important, and especially vital in the South China Sea, where nearly a third of global maritime trade transits each year," said Rear Adm. Dan Martin, commander, Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group. "As we've transited the Pacific from San Diego to the South China Sea, we have had the privilege and pleasure to work alongside our allies, partners, and joint service teammates in training, exercises, engagements and operations – all with a common goal to ensure peace and stability throughout the region. It is in all of our interest that the international community plays an active role in preserving the rules-based international order."

The carrier strike group is led by Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 1 and includes aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70); embarked Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 2; embarked staffs of CSG 1 and Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 1; Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Lake Champlain (CG 57); Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Chafee (DDG 90); and Independence variant littoral combat ship USS Tulsa (LCS 16).

In the month prior to entering the South China Sea, the VINCSG participated in Large Scale Exercise 2021, conducted interoperability flights with U.K. Carrier Strike Group (CSG-21), and conducted a bilateral exercise with Joint Maritime Self Defense Forces units.

The strike group is committed to upholding a rules-based international order with regional allies and partners, demonstrating the capability of forward-deployed naval forces to quickly respond across the region.

The Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group is deployed to the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations in support of a free and open

Indo-Pacific region. U.S. 7th Fleet conducts forward-deployed naval operations in support of U.S. national interests in the Indo-Pacific area of operations. As the U.S. Navy's largest forward-deployed fleet, 7th Fleet interacts with other maritime nations to build partnerships that foster maritime security, promote stability, and prevent conflict.

BAE Systems to Provide IFF Technology for E-2D Hawkeye



An E-2D Hawkeye aircraft assigned to the "Bluetails" of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 121 lands aboard USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77) during flight deck certification. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Bryan Valek*

GREENLAWN, N.Y. – The U.S. Navy has awarded BAE Systems a \$26 million contract for Identification Friend-or-Foe (IFF) spares for the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye aircraft, the company said in a Sept.9 release. Under the contract, BAE Systems will provide Beamforming Networks (BFNs), an integral part of antenna control for the AN/APX-122A IFF Interrogator system, onboard the carrier-capable tactical aircraft.

"These sets will provide situational awareness and early warning for U.S. Navy sailors and warfighters," said Donna Linke-Klein, director of Tactical Systems at BAE Systems. "The Advanced Hawkeye is essential for battle management command and control, and our interrogator systems enable operators to identify friendly forces and make informed decisions in a variety of threat environments."

The AN/APX-122A IFF Interrogator system provides positive

identification of friendly aircraft, giving E-2D Advanced Hawkeye operators the situational awareness they need to safely complete their missions. These missions include command and control, border security, search and rescue, and missile defense. The AN/APX-122A IFF Interrogator system is produced exclusively for the E-2D, due to the extraordinary requirements for this aircraft.

U.S., Canadian Crews Conduct Exercise during CGC Healy's Northwest Passage Transit



An aircrew aboard a Canadian coast guard Bell 429 helicopter prepares to land aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Healy (WAGB 20) while near Resolute, Nunavut, Canada on Sept. 6, 2021. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer First Class Michael Underwood*

ALAMEDA – The Coast Guard Cutter Healy's (WAGB 20) crew conducted a search-and-rescue exercise and professional exchange with members of the Canadian Coast Guard and Canadian Rangers near Resolute Bay in Nunavut, Canada, Sept. 6, 2021, during Healy's Northwest Passage transit, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in a Sept. 6 release.

The search-and-rescue exercise enhanced interoperability and effectiveness of response capabilities among the services.

U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Karl Schultz, Canadian Coast Guard Commissioner Mario Pelletier and Canadian Coast Guard Assistant Commissioner for the Arctic Region Neil O'Rourke were aboard Healy to meet with the crew and observe the joint training exercise.

“Training alongside our Canadian partners while underway in the Arctic during a historic circumnavigation of North America is a great example of enhancing our interoperability and mission capabilities,” said Schultz. “Healy is supporting oceanographic research with the science community during this deployment to the critically important Arctic region.”

The U.S. Coast Guard is the nation’s leader in Arctic surface operations and coordinates with international partners to maintain the region as safe, prosperous and cooperative by strengthening international and intergovernmental partnerships in the region through joint exercises and professional exchanges.

“Seeing the members of the Canadian Coast Guard work hand in hand with their counterparts from the Healy has been inspiring,” said Pelletier. “The vastness of the Arctic makes this a very difficult environment for emergency response making every opportunity for training valuable. These exercises ensure our two countries’ coast guards stand ready and able to assist should we be needed.”

Coast Guard icebreaker crews aboard Healy and the Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star (WAGB 10) deploy to conduct statutory Coast Guard missions in the Polar Regions such as search-and-rescue and the protection of marine resources. Additionally, the crews support oceanographic research in the Arctic and Antarctic.

The Healy crew is collaborating with the international science community and institutions from the U.S., Canada, Norway and Denmark to perform oceanographic projects throughout the Northwest Passage and within Baffin Bay to inform environmental change research.

The Healy, a 420-foot-long medium icebreaker, departed its Seattle homeport July 10 for a months-long Arctic deployment and circumnavigation of North America. Since departing, the

crew has been executing Coast Guard missions, supporting oceanographic research and conducting training to develop the Coast Guard's future Polar security cutter Sailors.

USCGC Escanaba Returns Home after Historic 50-Day Patrol



The crew of USCGC Escanaba (WMEC 907) greet their families as they return home to Portsmouth on Sep. 7, 2021, following a historic 50-day patrol in support of Operation Nanook in the Arctic region and the Labrador Sea. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Senior Chief Petty Officer Sara Muir*

PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The crew of USCGC Escanaba (WMEC 907) returned home to Portsmouth on Tuesday following a historic 50-day patrol in support of Operation Nanook in the Arctic region and the Labrador Sea, the Coast Guard Atlantic Area said in a Sept. 7 release.

Operation Nanook supports the Coast Guard Arctic strategy to develop international relations with like-minded Arctic states, enhance maritime domain awareness, and expand service capabilities within the region.

Escanaba deployed with the 154-foot Sentinel-class fast response cutter Richard Snyder and an embarked members of the Maritime Security Response Team East. The operation expanded the logistical boundaries of the FRC fleet and further refined the modular capabilities of deployable special forces to enhance a cutter's organic law enforcement capabilities.

Operation Nanook was made up of two phases, Tuugaalik and Tatigiit. The Tuugaalik phase brought

the crews of Escanaba, Richard Snyder, and the Royal Canadian navy together to exercise best practices and demonstrate responsive capabilities to potential terrorist or adversarial threats. The training exercises included were a live-fire surface gunnery exercise, close-quarters formation steaming, towing, small boat approaches, and communication drills. In the following phase, Tatigiit, the Escanaba, and Richard Snyder teams participated in a mass casualty and pollution event along the shores of Baffin Island. Both cutters crews seamlessly supported the Royal Canadian navy in rescue and assistance procedures and creating search and rescue patterns.

In addition to conducting law enforcement operations, Escanaba's crew participated in Frontier Sentinel, a training event with the U.S. and Royal Canadian navies. The exercise simulated a multi-national response to a maritime threat and strengthened interoperability between all three services.

USCGC Escanaba is a 270-foot Famous-class medium-endurance cutter, previously known as "The Pride of Boston," now re-homeported to Portsmouth.

Navy Awards 2nd Dry Dock Project for Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Modernization



Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Kittery, ME: Jun 22, 2021: USS Virginia (SSN 774) successfully exits dry dock at the shipyard. Virginia is at the shipyard for a scheduled maintenance period. *U.S. NAVY / Jim Cleveland*

NORFOLK, Va. – Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC) awarded a \$63-million construction project Aug. 30 for improvements to the Dry Dock 2 complex at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, the command said in a Sept. 3 release.

The two-year project, part of the Navy's comprehensive Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program (SIOP), adds enclosures and other facilities to the existing dry dock in order to increase the shipyard's capacity to maintain, modernize, and repair the Navy's attack submarines and return them to the fleet on time.

The enclosures include two towers, storage areas, railcar access, and bay work areas, as well as three bridge cranes and movable roofs.

"Our naval shipyards' mission to deliver ships and submarines on time to combatant commanders around the world is critical to U.S. national security." said Capt. Warren LeBeau, SIOP program manager. "This project will improve fleet readiness through improved facilities and infrastructure."

SIOP is a joint effort between Naval Sea Systems Command, NAVFAC, and commander, Navy Installations Command (CNIC) to recapitalize and modernize the infrastructure at the Navy's four public shipyards, including repairing and modernizing dry docks, restoring shipyard facilities and optimizing their placement, and replacing aging and deteriorating capital equipment.

"NAVFAC is the engine behind the Navy's SIOP efforts, swiftly and strategically providing the facilities engineering and construction support to our NAVSEA and CNIC partners," said Rear Adm. Lore Aguayo, commander, NAVFAC Atlantic. "The award of this contract is critical to meeting our nation's urgent strategic infrastructure needs, ensuring our Navy meets its readiness and lethality for generations to come."

Methuen Construction based in Plaistow, New Hampshire, was awarded the firm-fixed-price contract under a competitive process via the www.SAM.Gov website. The contract also contains six unexercised options which, if exercised, would increase the cumulative contract value to more than \$93 million.

Marine Corps Halts Waterborne Ops of New Amphibious Vehicle



U.S. Marines with Amphibious Vehicle Test Branch, Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity, drive new Amphibious Combat Vehicles along the beach during low-light surf transit testing at AVTB Beach on Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California, Dec. 18, 2019. *U.S. MARINE CORPS / Lance Cpl. Andrew Cortez*
ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Marine Corps has halted waterborne operations of its new amphibious armored vehicle pending resolution of a mechanical problem.

Maj. Jim Stenger, Marine Corps spokesperson, issued the following statement on Sept. 3:

“Out of an abundance of caution, the Marine Corps has suspended waterborne operations of the Amphibious Combat Vehicle [ACV] after identifying an issue with the towing mechanism. The Marine Corps is working on identifying and fixing the root cause of the problem. Realistic training is a vital component of readiness, and the Marine Corps is committed to ensuring Marines train under the safest conditions possible; this includes ensuring the functionality of vehicles and equipment.”

The ACV, built by BAE Systems, is replacing the AAV7 assault

amphibious vehicle in Marine Corps service.

Navy Shifts to Recovery of 5 Sailors in Helicopter Crash



Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) Airman Nathan Lopez observes an MH-60S Sea Hawk helicopter, assigned to the "Chargers" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 14, land on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72). A similar helicopter crashed Aug. 31, killing five of the six crewmembers. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Lake Fultz*

SAN DIEGO – The U.S. Navy has declared the five missing crewmembers of an MH-60S helicopter crash deceased. U.S. 3rd Fleet has shifted from search and rescue efforts to recovery operations as of Sept. 4, the U.S. 3rd Fleet said in a release.

Assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 8, the helicopter was conducting routine flight operations from USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) when it crashed into the sea approximately 60 nautical miles off the coast of San Diego at 4:30 p.m. (PST), Aug. 31. One Sailor was recovered.

The transition from search and rescue efforts to recovery operations comes after more than 72 hours of coordinated rescue efforts encompassing 34 search and rescue flights, over 170 hours of flight time, with five search helicopters and constant surface vessel search.

Units involved in the effort included assets from Coast Guard District 11, Abraham Lincoln, USS Cincinnati (LCS 20), and

helicopter squadrons from the U.S. Pacific Fleet Helicopter Sea Combat Wing and Helicopter Maritime Strike Wing.

On Sept. 5, the U.S. Navy released the names of the five Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 8 crewmembers who died, Aug. 31.

Names of the deceased are:

Lt. Bradley A. Foster, 29, a pilot from Oakhurst, California; Lt. Paul R. Fridley, 28, a pilot from Annandale, Virginia; Naval Air Crewman (Helicopter) 2nd Class James P. Buriak, 31, from Salem, Virginia; Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Sarah F. Burns, 31, from Severna Park, Maryland; and Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Bailey J. Tucker, 21, from St. Louis, Missouri.

“We are deeply saddened by the loss of five Sailors and those injured following the MH-60S helicopter tragedy off the coast of Southern California. We stand alongside their families, loved ones, and shipmates who grieve,” said Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday.

An investigation into the incident is underway.

Coast Guard Repatriates 35 Migrants to Cuba



The Coast Guard interdicted 13 Cuban migrants from an inflatable raft approximately 61 miles south of Key West, Florida Sep. 1. The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Raymond Evans' (WPC-1110) crew repatriated the migrants to Cuba, Sep. 4. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

MIAMI – Coast Guard Cutter Raymond Evans' crew repatriated 35

Cubans to Cuba, Sept. 4, following five interdictions off the coast of Key West, Florida, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

While on a routine patrol, a Coast Guard Air Station Miami HC-144 airplane crew notified Coast Guard Sector Key West watchstanders at 5:10 p.m., Aug. 29, of a rustic vessel with five people aboard approximately 63 miles south of Key West, Florida. They were brought aboard Coast Guard Cutter Raymond Evans and reported in good health.

While on a routine patrol, a Coast Guard Air Clearwater HC-130 airplane crew notified Sector Key West watchstanders at 5:40 p.m., Aug. 31, of a rustic vessel with 13 people aboard approximately 61 miles south of Key West. They were brought aboard the Cutter Raymond Evans and reported in good health.

A Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations airplane crew notified Sector Key West watchstanders at 9:40 p.m., Aug. 31, of a 20-foot fishing vessel with five people aboard approximately 25 miles south of Marathon, Florida. They were brought aboard the Cutter Raymond Evans and reported in good health.

A good Samaritan notified Sector Key West watchstanders at 10:15 a.m., Sept. 1, of a green raft with three people aboard approximately 23 miles southeast of Marathon. They were brought aboard the Cutter Raymond Evans and reported in good health.

A Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operations airplane crew notified Sector Key West watchstanders at approximately 12:10 a.m., Sept. 3, of a rustic vessel with nine people aboard approximately two miles south of Marathon. They were brought aboard Cutter Raymond Evans and reported in good health.

"Navigating the Florida Straits is difficult and unpredictable in rustic vessels," said Lt. Cmdr. Mario Gil, Coast Guard

Liaison Officer, U.S. Embassy Havana. "Taking to the seas on unsafe vessels is dangerous and can result in loss of life."