

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.”

Navy Announces New Flag Officer Assignments

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Rear Adm. E. Andrew Burcher, then-commander, Submarines NATO, left, speaks to Capt. Cassidy Norman, commanding officer of the Blue Ridge-class command and control ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), aboard Mount Whitney, Nov. 6, 2019. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Drew Verbis*
ARLINGTON, Va. – The secretary of the Navy and chief of naval operations announced on Sept. 3 the following assignments:

Rear Adm. Eugene A. Burcher will be assigned as vice commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Norfolk, Virginia. Burcher most recently served as deputy chief of staff, Submarines, Maritime Command Headquarters, Northwood, Great Britain; and commander, Submarines, NATO, United Kingdom.

Rear Adm. (lower half) William L. Angermann will be assigned as reserve vice commander, U.S. Second Fleet, Norfolk, Virginia. Angermann is currently serving as reserve deputy commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic, Norfolk, Virginia.

Rear Adm. (lower half) Kenneth R. Blackmon will be assigned as reserve director for Maritime Operations, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Norfolk, Virginia. Blackmon is currently serving as deputy commander, Third Fleet, San Diego, California.

Rear Adm. (lower half) Gregory K. Emery will be assigned as commander, Navy Information Force Reserve, Fort Worth, Texas. Emery is currently serving as deputy director, Warfare Integration Directorate, N2N6, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, D.C.

Rear Adm. (lower half) Jacquelyn McClelland will be assigned as vice director, Navy Staff, Washington, D.C. McClelland is

currently serving as commander, Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group, Norfolk, Virginia.

Rear Adm. (lower half) Robert C. Nowakowski will be assigned as reserve vice commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. Fifth Fleet, Manama, Bahrain. Nowakowski is currently serving as deputy commander, Navy Recruiting Command, with additional duties as deputy commander, Naval Education and Training Command Force Development, Millington, Tennessee.

Rear Adm. (lower half) Ryan B. Scholl will be assigned as deputy director, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisitions and Sustainment, Washington, D.C. Scholl is currently serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group Eight, Norfolk, Virginia.

Rear Adm. (lower half) Larry D. Watkins will be assigned as reserve vice commander, U.S. Third Fleet, San Diego, California. Watkins is currently serving as director, Network Engagement Team, U.S. Southern Command, Doral, Florida.

Capt. Bradley D. Dunham, selected for promotion to rear admiral (lower half), will be assigned as reserve deputy commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic, Norfolk, Virginia. Dunham is currently serving as chief of staff, Navy Reserve, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Norfolk, Virginia.

Capt. Dennis E. Collins, selected for promotion to rear admiral (lower half), will be assigned as commander, Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group, Norfolk, Virginia. Collins is currently serving as commanding officer, Navy Reserve, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Detachment 401, Camp H. M. Smith, Hawaii.

Capt. Mark F. Haigis, selected for promotion to rear admiral (lower half), will be assigned as deputy commander, Naval Expeditionary Combat Command, Norfolk, Virginia. Haigis is currently serving as deputy chief staff officer, Operations and Plans, Navy Reserve Chief of Naval Operations for

Operations and Plans, Washington, D.C.

Capt. Scott W. Ruston, selected for promotion to rear admiral (lower half), will be assigned as deputy commander, Naval Education and Training Command Force Development, Pensacola, Florida. Ruston is currently serving as deputy commander, Navy Reserve, Navy Region Southwest Reserve Component Command, San Diego, California.

Capt. Douglas W. Sasse III, selected for promotion to rear admiral (lower half), will be assigned as reserve vice commander, U.S. Fourth Fleet, Jacksonville, Florida. Sasse is currently serving as reserve chief of staff, Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, San Diego, California.

Capt. Michael J. Schwerin, selected for promotion to rear admiral (lower half), will be assigned as deputy commander, Navy Personnel Command, Millington, Tennessee. Schwerin is currently serving as commanding officer, Navy Reserve, Officer Training Command, Newport, Rhode Island.

Capt. David R. Storr, selected for promotion to rear admiral (lower half), will be assigned as reserve deputy commander, Naval Air Systems Command, Patuxent River, Maryland. Storr is currently serving as Manager Navy Reserve Rapid Research and Development Detachment, Patuxent River, Maryland.

GA-EMS Launch and Recovery Systems Successfully Perform

During Ford Full Ship Shock Trials

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The aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) successfully completes the third and final scheduled explosive event for Full Ship Shock Trials while underway in the Atlantic Ocean, Aug. 8, 2021. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Jackson Adkins*

SAN DIEGO – General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems' (GA-EMS) Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS) and Advanced Arresting Gear (AAG) aboard USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) successfully performed as designed as the ship underwent full ship shock trials off the eastern seaboard during the months of June, July and August 2021, the company said in a Sept. 3 release.

Ford is the first aircraft carrier in more than three decades to undergo full ship shock trials, which provide crucial data for analysis to validate the shock hardness of the ship and all systems aboard to withstand battle conditions.

“The completion of this milestone is a validation of the critical steps we took early in the development process to work closely with the Navy to conduct preliminary shock qualification testing prior to delivering EMALS and AAG equipment to the shipyard for installation,” said Scott Forney, president of GA-EMS. “We actually mount equipment on floating barges, and detonate ordnance at various distances and underwater to simulate operation and combat situations. This process allows us to address any issues prior to delivery and installation on the carrier. More importantly, this additional step helps ensure we deliver extremely robust systems to all Ford-class carriers that will provide decades of reliable operational performance under the most challenging conditions.”

After completing full ship shock trials, CVN 78 enters a six-month planned incremental (PIA) availability period of modernization, maintenance and repairs. Prior to the recent shock test trials, EMALS and AAG successfully completed various additional milestones during the post delivery trials and test (PDT&T) period, including the completion of critical aircraft compatibility testing and flight deck certification involving F/A-18E/F Super Hornets, E-2C/D Hawkeyes and Advanced Hawkeyes, C-2A Greyhounds, EA-18G Growlers and T-45C Goshawks. At the end of the 18-month PDT&T period, EMALS and AAG successfully achieved and exceeded the Navy's target of 8,000 launches and recoveries aboard CVN 78.

"We will continue to work closely with the Navy to implement system upgrades during the PIA period to meet the ship's readiness requirements and upcoming deployment schedule," continued Forney. "We are extremely proud of our team, the crew, and of EMALS and AAG's successful progress in meeting the ship's performance milestones. We continue to work with the Navy as installation of these critical technologies moves forward aboard USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 79) and USS Enterprise (CVN 80), and as the Navy determines the production schedule requirements for the USS Doris Miller (CVN 81)."

GA-ASI Demonstrated Airborne MUM-T Using MQ-20 Avenger

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A recent flight demonstrated autonomous collaboration using command and control of an MQ-20 Avenger from a ruggedized tactical control tablet, integrated with Autonodyne's RCU-1000 Advanced Human Machine Interface. *GENERAL ATOMICS AERONAUTICAL*

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SAN DIEGO – General Atomics Aeronautical Systems (GA-ASI) continues to advance new levels of autonomous control for unmanned aircraft, successfully completing an airborne Manned-Unmanned Teaming (MUM-T) demonstration on Aug. 25, 2021, pairing a company-owned MQ-20 Avenger with a modified King Air 200 as a surrogate for fourth- and fifth-generation tactical fighters.

The flight demonstrated autonomous collaboration using command and control (C2) of the Avenger from a ruggedized tactical control tablet, integrated with Autonodyne's RCU-1000 Advanced Human Machine Interface, to provide real-time situational awareness combined with complex behavior tasking. The airborne node utilized a GA-ASI-modified King Air 200, which allowed for rapid integration and test of the C2 hardware.

"GA-ASI continues to innovate by integrating state-of-the-art technology, providing combatant commanders with tested solutions for persistent, affordable air sensing with challenging target sets," said Mike Atwood, senior director of advanced concepts at GA-ASI. "This flight builds on the previous long-wave IR [infrared] passive autonomous testing and continues to validate that persistent Group 5 UAS aircraft can perform complex Air Moving Target Indication."

The Avenger flight originated from GA-ASI's Desert Horizon facility in the Mojave Desert and the King Air took off from Montgomery Airport in San Diego. The demo lasted for approximately two hours. The successful test proves the ability for GA-ASI MUM-T to command airborne assets while autonomously executing behaviors and missions that provide increased awareness and effectiveness to the warfighter.

"Autonodyne was thrilled to work with GA-ASI to leverage our previous work in MUM-T C2 and apply it to such an impressive air vehicle," said Autonodyne CEO Steve Jacobson. "Tactical control combined with powerful autonomy capabilities is

critical to providing our warfighters the tools they need now.”

Coast Guard Offloads \$51 Million of Interdicted Cocaine in San Juan, Puerto Rico

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The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Richard Etheridge crew offloaded approximately 1,700 kilograms of seized cocaine at Coast Guard Base San Juan Friday, following the disruption go-fast vessel smuggling attempt by Coast Guard and British Virgin Islands authorities near Anegada, British Virgin Islands. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard Cutter Richard Etheridge crew offloaded approximately 1,700 kilograms of seized cocaine at Coast Guard Base San Juan Sept. 3, after Coast Guard and British Virgin Islands authorities thwarted a go-fast boat smuggling attempt near Anegada, British Virgin Islands, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

This disruption and seizure is the result of multi-agency efforts involving the Caribbean Border Interagency Group and the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force. The seized cocaine has an estimated wholesale value of approximately \$51 million dollars.

During a routine patrol the night of Aug. 27, 2021, the Coast Guard Cutter Richard Etheridge responded to the sighting of a suspect go-fast vessel, in waters northeast of the British

Virgin Islands. Coast Guard watchstanders in Sector San Juan directed the launch of a Coast Guard MH-60T aircraft from Air Station Borinquen to vector cutter Richard Etheridge to the go-fast vessel's position. Additionally, Coast Guard and British Virgin Islands authorities maintained communication to interdict the suspect go-fast vessel. As the cutter Richard Etheridge closed in on the go-fast vessel, the smugglers proceeded to jettison their cargo and flee the area at high speed. Afterwards, the Coast Guard helicopter crew proceeded to assist cutter Richard Etheridge in locating the jettisoned cargo. In total, the crew of cutter Richard Etheridge recovered 57 bales, which tested positive for cocaine.

"Despite the challenging sea state conditions and thanks to the close collaboration and coordination with our Royal Virgin Islands Police partners, our crews did an outstanding job in disrupting a major shipment of cocaine and keeping it from ever reaching the streets," said Capt. Gregory H. Magee, Sector San Juan commander. "Our strong partnerships, as in the case of the British Virgin Islands and island nations throughout our area of responsibility, are key to achieving safe and secure maritime borders from drug trafficking and other smuggling threats in the Eastern Caribbean."

"This is a great example of the close working relationship between the U.S. and the U.K. overseas territories," said Detective Inspector Mike Jones, head of Intelligence for the Royal Virgin Islands Police. "The excellent work of the U.S. Coast Guard forced the crew of the go-fast vessel to jettison their cargo. We will continue to work closely with all agencies and partners in order to disrupt and detect the movement of narcotics, illegal money and people trafficking."

Cutter Richard Etheridge is a 154-foot fast response cutter homeported in Miami.

Coast Guard Repatriates 91 Migrants to the Dominican Republic

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A makeshift boat, one of three illegal migrant voyages, interdicted by the Coast Guard and Caribbean Border Interagency Group partner agencies Sept. 2, 2021 in the Mona Passage just off Puerto Rico. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard Cutter Reliance crew repatriated 91 migrants to the Dominican Republic Sept. 3 from three at-sea interdictions in the Mona Passage off the west coast of Puerto Rico, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

These interdictions are the result of ongoing Coast Guard and Caribbean Border Interagency group partner efforts to deter and stop illegal voyages in the Mona Passage.

In the first interdiction, the Coast Guard Richard Etheridge located and interdicted an illegal voyage at 3:26 a.m. Sept, 2, comprised of a 17-foot makeshift vessel with 32 migrants onboard, 30 men and two women, in waters just off Rincon, Puerto Rico.

In the second interdiction, a Puerto Rico Police Joint Forces of Rapid Action marine unit interdicted a 30-foot makeshift boat at 7 a.m. Sept. 2 just off Aguadilla, Puerto Rico that was carrying 50 migrants onboard; 47 men and three women.

In the third interdiction, a Puerto Rico Police Joint Forces of Rapid Action marine unit interdicted a 15-foot makeshift boat at 9:20 a.m. Sept. 2 just off Rincon, Puerto Rico that

was carrying 12 migrants onboard, 11 men and a woman.

“These interdictions highlight the professionalism, commitment and unwavering resolve of the Coast Guard and our Caribbean Border Interagency Group partners in safeguarding the maritime border of Puerto Rico,” said Cmdr. Beau Powers, Sector San Juan chief of response. “We continue to implore anyone thinking about taking part in an illegal voyage that they not take to the sea. It is just not worth it, not only would you be putting your life at risk, but the life of everyone else if the voyage. You are also risking federal prosecution for attempting to enter illegally into the United States.”

In the last eight days, Coast Guard and Caribbean Border Interagency Group partner agencies have interdicted 10 illegal voyages with 211 migrants, who were traveling illegally to Puerto Rico aboard grossly overloaded makeshift boats. Since Oct. 1, 2021, the Coast Guard and CBIG federal and state partner agencies have interdicted and or apprehended over 2,100 migrants who were traveling illegally to Puerto Rico.

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and basic medical attention. Throughout the interdictions, Coast Guard crewmembers were equipped with personal protective equipment to minimize potential exposure to any possible case of COVID-19. There were no migrants in these cases reported to have any COVID-19 related symptoms.

The Coast Guard Cutter Richard Etheridge is a 154-foot fast response cutter homeported in Puerto Rico, while the Coast Guard Cutter Reliance is a medium-endurance cutter homeported in Pensacola, Florida.

Carl Vinson, U.K. Carrier Strike Groups Conduct Joint Interoperability Flights

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Pilots prepare to enter an F/A-18F Super Hornet assigned to the “Bounty Hunters” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 2, on the flight deck aboard Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70), August 26, 2021. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Isaiah Williams*

PACIFIC OCEAN – Fifth- and fourth-generation aircraft assigned to Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group (VINCSG), with embarked Carrier Air Wing Two (CVW-2), and U.K. Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 21 conducted joint interoperability flights in the U.S. Navy’s 7th Fleet, Aug. 26, USS Carl Vinson Public Affairs said in a Sept. 1 release.

During the joint interoperability flights, the aircraft conducted missions to validate joint integration techniques, tactics, and procedures; including mid-air refueling. This is the first time that VINCSG and CSG-21 have operated together.

“In a very short amount of time, we were able to seamlessly combine the collective 5th generation capabilities of joint strike fighter aircraft from two services and a partner nation together with the rest of the advanced capabilities of our entire air wing,” said Capt. Tommy Locke, commander, CVW-2. “Our strike group and air wing arrived in the Indo-Pacific ready to demonstrate the value of having agile 5th generation maritime power in the region – and make no doubt, we are ready to win.”

Participating aircraft from CVW-2 include: four F-35C Lightning IIs from Strike Fight Squadron (VFA) 147; five F/A-18E/F Super Hornets, assigned to Strike Fighter Squadrons

(VFA) 2 and 192; two EA-18G Growlers, from Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 136; and one E-2D Advanced Hawkeye, from Airborne Command and Control Squadron (VAW) 113.

Participating CSG-21 aircraft include: two U.S. F-35Bs from Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 211; and two F-35Bs from United Kingdom's No. 617 Squadron.

Coast Guard Works to Reopen Ports, Waterways Following Hurricane Ida

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U.S. Coast Guard Air Station New Orleans, shown here preparing for Hurricane Ida in New Orleans, Louisiana, Aug. 28, 2021.
U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 2nd Ryan Dickinson

NEW ORLEANS – The Coast Guard is continuously working to reopen the ports and waterways throughout Southeast Louisiana following Hurricane Ida, the Coast Guard 8th District said in a Sept. 2 release.

Capt. Will Watson, Coast Guard captain-of-the-port for the Port of New Orleans, is working in close coordination with federal, state, parish, city and maritime stakeholders to safely reopen maritime traffic along the Mississippi River and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. Some key areas along the river remain closed as recovery operations continue.

“We continue to work closely with the State of Louisiana and our maritime industry partners to reconstitute our ports,” said Watson. “This is a massive recovery effort and we are

doing our part to ensure that the commerce that sustains our Nation can continue to flow freely and safely over our critical waterways.”

Coast Guard crews conducted post-storm port assessments to reopen the Mississippi River and Gulf Intracoastal Water after Hurricane Ida passed through the area. The assessments were conducted to ensure maritime commerce is safe to resume.

Coast Guard crews continue to work with port partners on the identification and mitigation of grounded and submerged vessels along banks of the Lower Mississippi River.