

Cutter Thetis Returns from 47-Day Counter-Drug Patrol



A Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron MH-65 Dolphin helicopter is aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Thetis during a patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, June 12, 2021. The Coast Guard Cutter Thetis returned home to Key West, Florida after completing a 47-day patrol to the Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific Ocean. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

KEY WEST, Fla. – The Coast Guard Cutter Thetis, a 270-foot Famous-class cutter, and crew returned to Key West, Saturday, July 3, following a 47-day deployment to the Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific Ocean working with U.S. Southern Command's Joint Interagency Task Force South, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

Thetis' crew interdicted three suspected smugglers and approximately 4,000 pounds of cocaine with a street value of \$75 million. The Thetis crew deployed with an MH-65 helicopter

and aviation detachment capable of conducting airborne use of force from the Coast Guard's Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron based in Jacksonville, Florida.

The Thetis crew also conducted joint counter-narcotic and seamanship training with the Panamanian navy, in which they participated in communications exercises, non-compliant vessel pursuit tactics and medical training while at sea with Panamanian partners.

"The Coast Guard maintains a consistent presence in the region while also leveraging support from our maritime partner nations," said Cmdr. Justin Nadolny, Thetis' commanding officer. "It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to train and operate with the Panamanian navy, they are a true group of professionals and together we continue to disrupt the flow of illicit contraband into the United States."

Cutter Alex Haley Returns to Kodiak from Bering Sea Patrol



Coast Guard Cutter Alex Haley boat crew members prepare to disconnect from the forward-davit connection during rescue-and-assistance training in the Bering Sea, May 28, 2021. Small boats deployed from Coast Guard cutters are used in a variety of missions including law enforcement and search and rescue.
U.S. COAST GUARD

KODIAK, Alaska –The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Alex Haley returned to homeport on Tuesday, June 29 following a 52-day Bering Sea patrol, the Coast Guard 17th District said in a July 2 release.

While deployed, the crew of the Alex Haley provided search and rescue capability to the fisheries in the Bering Sea. Their embarked MH-65 helicopter crew from Air Station Kodiak conducted a search and rescue mission in the coastal town of Akutan. The aircrew transported a severely injured resident to a higher level of medical care.

The crew also maintained a law enforcement presence throughout the Aleutian chain. They conducted 17 law enforcement boardings, ensured compliance with maritime laws and

regulations, and protected the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone by patrolling the maritime boundary line to prevent the illegal harvesting of U.S. fish stocks.

“Assuming the duties as commanding officer of Alex Haley during a patrol afforded me the opportunity to learn a great deal about the ship and its crew,” said Cmdr. Brian Whisler commanding officer of the Alex Haley. “While such a significant transition can prove challenging, the crew continually maintained impressive work ethic and professionalism in the execution of our primary missions. Their dedication to the people and communities we serve proves Alex Haley crew members is a vital asset in the Bering Sea region.”

The Alex Haley is a 282-foot medium-endurance cutter that has been homeported in Kodiak since 1999. The crew routinely operate throughout the Bering Sea, Gulf of Alaska, and Pacific Ocean. The cutter’s ability to operate in extreme weather conditions provides the mission flexibility necessary to perform search and rescue, fisheries law enforcement, and vessel safety inspections across Alaska.

USS Donald Cook Concludes Forward Deployment to U.S. 6th Fleet



The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Donald Cook (DDG 75) departed Naval Station Rota, Spain, for the last time as a Forward Deployed Naval Forces-Europe (FDFNF-E) destroyer, June 30, 2021. *U.S. NAVY*

ROTA, Spain – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Donald Cook (DDG 75) departed Naval Station Rota, Spain, for the last time as a Forward Deployed Naval Forces-Europe (FDFNF-E) destroyer, June 30, 2021, said Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kaila Peters, in a July 6 U.S. 6th Fleet release.

USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51), the lead ship of its class of Aegis-equipped guided missile destroyers with the latest AEGIS baseline 9 upgrade, replaced Donald Cook in the second of four scheduled homeport shifts to occur in support of the U.S. Navy's long-range plan to gradually rotate the Rota-based destroyers. USS Roosevelt (DDG 80) replaced USS Carney (DDG 64) in the first homeport shift.

"These Sailors distinguished themselves throughout their five years deployed overseas," said Capt. Joseph Gagliano,

Commander, Destroyers Squadron 60 and Task Force 65. "Their contribution to NATO security and freedom of navigation is a legacy that will now continue with Arleigh Burke."

Donald Cook bookended its operations in U.S. 6th Fleet by conducting operations in the Black Sea.

Upon arrival in U.S. 6th Fleet in 2014 as one of the first Rota-based FDNF-E destroyers under Commander, Task Force (CTF) 65, Donald Cook executed operational tasking immediately by conducting operations in the Black Sea following Russia's annexation of Crimea. After 11 patrols and numerous visits to the Black Sea, the ship wrapped up its last visit to the Black Sea in support of NATO Allies and regional partners, Feb. 10, 2021. During this last visit, Donald Cook conducted presence operations, demonstrated commitment to NATO allies and partners, and engaged in exercises that strengthened interoperability and collective readiness.

Donald Cook's commitment to NATO Allies and regional partners extended well beyond the Black Sea. During its time in Europe, Donald Cook operated from the Barents Sea above Europe, to the Gulf of Guinea along the west coast of Africa.

"Donald Cook's time in 6th Fleet has afforded this ship and her crew a number of invaluable experiences that are unique to this area of operation to include operating in the Black Sea, crossing the Arctic Circle, and a multitude of international operations," said Cmdr. Matthew Curnen, Donald Cook's commanding officer. "My time in 6th Fleet has been unlike anything else I've experienced in my naval career. I am extremely thankful for the opportunities and challenges it has presented that have helped all of us grow professionally and personally."

The agility and capabilities of the Arleigh Burke class destroyer has made it an ideal platform to integrate and strengthen relations with regional allies and partners.

Throughout Donald Cook's time in U.S. 6th Fleet, the ship participated in previous iterations of Exercise Sea Breeze, BALTOPs, Phoenix Express, Formidable Shield, Atlas Handshake, and other multi-lateral maritime training opportunities with partners to include Algeria, France, Georgia, Italy, Morocco and Norway. Mission sets during these exercises included surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, and anti-air warfare scenarios that focus on maintaining maritime stability and security.

Notable milestones include Donald Cook's Oct. 2019 visit to the High North for the first time. The ship's presence in the Arctic Circle reinforced the United States' commitment to regional security and stability, as well as the Navy's ability to deploy to many different environments on short notice, and the value of having forward-deployed naval forces available to operate in the region.

The visit also provided the crew the rare opportunity to become "Blue Nose" Sailors when the ship crossed into the Arctic Circle, a Navy tradition that only Sailors who have been to the Arctic can claim. Donald Cook's time in the High North followed a historic port visit to the Faroe Islands, with Donald Cook being the Navy's first destroyer to visit the island, and the first Navy vessel to visit in 33 years.

"It has been a bittersweet departure from Rota," said Operations Specialist Second Class Jory Fetterolf. "My time in Spain has been an amazing opportunity to experience a different culture and afforded me the opportunity to travel to places I would've never seen if I wasn't stationed here, however, I'm excited to return to the United States to be closer to family."

Donald Cook completed one final underway to the Aegean Sea to perform maneuver exercises with the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Roosevelt (DDG 80) to conclude its last patrol. The two destroyers formed a Surface Action

Group (SAG) led by Capt. Joseph Gagliano, commander, Task Force 65, who was embarked on the Roosevelt during this underway. The SAG conducted numerous scenarios to provide integrated training and test real-time response to combat situations.

Named after U.S. Marine Corps Col. Donald G. Cook, a prisoner of War during the Vietnam War who was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor, Donald Cook is scheduled to return to its former homeport of Mayport, Florida.

Forward-Deployed Naval Forces-Europe ships have the flexibility to operate throughout the waters of Europe and Africa, from the Cape of Good Hope to the Arctic Circle, demonstrating their mastery of the maritime domain.

CTF 65 and Destroyer Squadron 60, headquartered in Rota, Spain, oversee the FDNF of C6F's area of operation in support of regional allies and partners as well as U.S. national security interests in Europe and Africa.

U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allied and interagency partners, in order to advance U.S. national interests and security and stability in Europe and Africa.

**Oshkosh Defense Receives
\$152M Order for JLTVs to U.S.**

Military and NATO Allies



U.S. Marines with Battalion Landing Team 3/5, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), land on the beach in a joint light tactical vehicle (JLTV) to begin a light armored reconnaissance raid rehearsal at Camp Schwab, Okinawa, Japan, June 19, 2021. *U.S. MARINE CORPS / Sgt. Daisha R. Ramirez*
OSHKOSH, Wis. – The U.S. Army Contracting Command – Detroit Arsenal has awarded Oshkosh Defense, a wholly owned subsidiary of Oshkosh Corp., a \$152 million order for Joint Light Tactical Wheeled Vehicles (JLTV), companion trailers, and associated kits, the company said in a July 1 release.

The order includes Oshkosh JLTVs, trailers and kits for the U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force, and U.S. Navy, as well as NATO allies Lithuania, North Macedonia, Slovenia, and Romania.

Since winning the competitive JLTV contract in 2015, Oshkosh has built over 12,500 JLTVs, fielded vehicles to over 40 U.S. and international military installations, and received commitments from eight NATO, Allied, and Coalition partners.

“We’ve spent over 10 years developing our vehicle, followed by nearly six years of manufacturing the vehicle in both low rate and full rate production,” said George Mansfield, vice president and general manager of Joint Programs, Oshkosh Defense. “We’ve refined the manufacturing process, matured our robust supply chain, and fulfilled the light tactical vehicle capability gap in eight additional countries with our proven platform. No one else can say that. And we have no plans to stop building the Oshkosh JLTV anytime soon.”

The U.S. Army recently increased Oshkosh’s option ceiling under the current contract from 18,170 to 23,163 vehicles to support critical missions worldwide.

“Oshkosh Defense is incredibly pleased with the reception the JLTV continues to receive around the world,” said John Lazar, vice president and general manager of International Programs, Oshkosh Defense. “The JLTV provides unprecedented levels of off-road mobility, survivability, and hosted firepower on a light tactical vehicle platform. We had a busy Spring and the momentum surrounding the platform continues to grow.”

In May, the North Macedonia minister of defense, Radmila Sekerinska, was able to ride in the JLTV for the first time. Sekerinska later tweeted, “These new American-made light armored vehicles will become part of the Army facilities. Today at Krivolak, we were convinced of their exceptional performance. This is what our Army looks like in #NATO.”

Later in June, the Slovenian deputy prime minister and minister of defense Matej Tonin, remarked at a JLTV acceptance ceremony, “Modernization of the Slovenian Army has finally begun. With the new light armored vehicles Oshkosh 4x4, our Soldiers will be more successful and safer in tasks at home and abroad.”

To date, Oshkosh has received orders or commitments from the following NATO, Allied, and Coalition partners including the

United Kingdom, Belgium, Montenegro, Slovenia, Lithuania, Brazil, Romania, and North Macedonia.

First USMC F-35C squadron Declares Full Operational Capability



U.S. Marines with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314 and Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, conduct a new expeditionary landing demonstration with M-31 arresting gear Interim Flight Clearance (IFC), on Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., Dec. 3rd, 2020. *U.S. MARINE CORPS / Cpl. Leilani Cervantes*
MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, Calif. – As the Marine Corps

continues to make changes to meet the demands of the rapidly evolving future operating environment, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314 has reached a new milestone in Marine Corps history as they declare their full operational capability (FOC) for the F-35C Lightning II, according to 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (MAW) spokesman 1st Lt. Charles Allen in a July 1 release.

“VMFA-314 is the first F-35C squadron in the Marine Corps to declare FOC. They are now full up round and bring the incredible 5th generation capability to 3rd MAW. They will deploy as part of a Carrier Strike Group next year.” said Maj. Gen. Christopher Mahoney, 3rd MAW commanding general. “FOC for the Black Knights is yet another step forward in achieving Force Design objectives. The Black Knights are ready- 3rd MAW is ready.”

FOC is significant in its confirmation that VMFA-314 is fully prepared and equipped successfully deploy aboard U.S. Navy aircraft carriers, marking the first FOC declaration for Marine Corps. This inaugural event is met after VMFA-314 received their first F-35C on January 21, 2020, when their first jet arrived at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar from Naval Air Station Lemoore.

“Many hours were spent maintaining aircraft, launching and recovering aircraft in Miramar, at other military facilities, and aboard the ship to conduct the training required to meet these goals,” said Major Derek Heinz, VMFA-314 operations officer. “The Marines of VMFA-314 have gained confidence in fighting this aircraft and feel confident we can do so in combat if called upon.”

VMFA-314 is currently continuing its preparations toward future deployments by conducting tailored ship's training availability (TSTA), marking the first F-35C squadron to conduct TSTA in the Marine Corps. This training will consist

of communication rehearsals, medical drills, flight operations, and shipboard drills conducted while underway, ensuring the squadron is prepared to deploy in support of maritime campaigns.

President Nominates Two Marines for 3-Star Rank

ARLINGTON, Va. – Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced July 2 that the president has made the following nominations:

Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Christopher J. Mahoney for appointment to the rank of lieutenant general, and assignment as deputy commandant for programs and resources, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps. Mahoney is currently serving as commanding general, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing, San Diego, California.

Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Stephen D. Sklenka for appointment to the rank of lieutenant general, and assignment as deputy commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. Sklenka is currently serving as the J-5, director for strategic planning and policy, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, Oahu, Hawaii.

Bollinger Shipyards Delivers

45th Fast Response Cutter to Coast Guard



USCGC Emlen Tunnell in Key West, Florida. *BOLLINGER SHIPYARDS LOCKPORT, La.* – Bollinger Shipyards LLC has delivered the USCGC Emlen Tunnell to the U.S. Coast Guard in Key West, Florida, the company said in a July 1 release. This is the 168th vessel Bollinger has delivered to the U.S. Coast Guard over a 35-year period and the 45th Fast Response Cutter (FRC) delivered under the current program.

Named in honor of Coast Guard hero and National Football League great Emlen Tunnell, the cutter is the fourth of six FRCs to be home-ported in Manama, Bahrain. They will replace the aging 110-foot Island Class Patrol Boats, built by Bollinger Shipyards 30 years ago, supporting the Patrol Forces Southwest Asia (PATFORSWA), the U.S. Coast Guard's largest

overseas presence outside the United States.

“With recent incursions in the Arabian Gulf, it is a top priority to ensure that the brave men and women of the Coast Guard have the most state-of-the-art, advanced vessels as they work to ensure maritime security in the region,” said Bollinger President and CEO Ben Bordelon. “Bollinger is proud to continue enhancing and supporting the U.S. Coast Guard’s operational presence in the Middle East and ensuring it remains the preferred partner around the world.”

Earlier this year at the commissioning ceremony of the USCGC Charles Moulthrop, U.S. Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Karl Schultz lauded the “enhanced seakeeping” capabilities of the PATFORSWA-bound FRCs, saying “these ships are truly going to be game changing in their new theater of operations” and “offer increased opportunities for integrated joint operations with our Navy and Marine Corps colleagues” as the Coast Guard seeks to be part of the whole-of-government solution set in the region.

PATFORSWA is composed of six cutters, shoreside support personnel, and the Maritime Engagement Team. The unit’s mission is to train, organize, equip, support and deploy combat-ready Coast Guard Forces in support of U.S. Central Command and national security objectives. PATFORSWA works with Naval Forces Central Command in furthering their goals to conduct persistent maritime operations to forward U.S. interests, deter and counter disruptive countries, defeat violent extremism and strengthen partner nations’ maritime capabilities in order to promote a secure maritime environment.

Each FRC is named for an enlisted Coast Guard hero who distinguished themselves in the line of duty. Emlen Tunnell was instrumental in saving the lives of two shipmates in two different heroic actions. His exploits as a Coast Guardsman and then as a ground-breaking African American in the world of

professional sports, Tunnell, through his incredible achievements both on and off the field, demonstrated the Coast Guard's core values of honor, respect and devotion to duty.

Tunnell played college football at Toledo before and after World War II – he enlisted from 1943 to 1946 – and continued his collegiate career at the University of Iowa. After leaving college in 1948, he hitchhiked from his home in Pennsylvania to New York for a tryout with the New York Giants. Tunnell was the first Black player signed by the Giants and later played for the Green Bay Packers. He ended up playing 14 seasons in the NFL and when he retired as a player, he held league records with 1,282 interception return yards, 258 punt returns, 2,209 punt return yards, and 79 interceptions, the second most interceptions in NFL history today. He then became a scout and one of the league's first Black assistant coaches, helping fully integrate both the Giants and the Packers. In 1967, Tunnell was the first Black man and the first defensive specialist to be enshrined in Canton.

The FRC is an operational “game changer,” according to senior Coast Guard officials. FRCs are consistently being deployed in support of the full range of missions within the United States Coast Guard and other branches of our armed services. This is due to its exceptional performance, expanded operational reach and capabilities, and ability to transform and adapt to the mission. FRCs have conducted operations as far as the Marshall Islands – a 4,400 nautical mile trip from their homeport. Measuring in at 154-feet, FRCs have a flank speed of 28 knots, state of the art C4ISR suite and stern launch and recovery ramp for a 26-foot, over-the-horizon interceptor cutter boat.

ONR Awards Charles River Analytics Contract to Bring Intelligent Adaptive Training to Marines



Charles River Analytics was awarded a contract to develop Marine Adaptive Schoolhouse Training with eLearning Repetition Technology (MASTERY). *CHARLES RIVER ANALYTICS*

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – Charles River Analytics was awarded a contract of approximately \$1 million from the U.S. Navy Office of Naval Research to develop Marine Adaptive Schoolhouse Training with eLearning Repetition Technology (MASTERY), the company said in a June 30 release.

MASTERY brings principles of intelligent tutoring and learning sciences to Marine Corps courses, with an adaptation engine that quizzes students as they learn, monitoring knowledge acquisition and tailoring the presentation of content to focus students on the material they haven't yet mastered.

MASTERY is designed to interface with the existing Marine Corps Learning Management System (LMS), which gives students access to online course materials, quizzes, and course examinations. MASTERY will allow an instructor to easily apply intelligent, adaptive training to existing content in the LMS and seamlessly incorporates the student's results into existing instructor and student workflows.

10,000th AIM-9X Air-to-Air Missile Delivered



An AIM-9X Sidewinder missile. *U.S. NAVY*
PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The Navy’s Air-to-Air Missiles program office (PMA-259) has accepted delivery of the 10,000th AIM-9X Sidewinder air intercept missile for on May 27, the Naval Air Systems Command said in a June 29 release.

As a joint program with the U.S. Air Force, the Navy-led AIM-9X Block II missile is the most advanced short-range air-to-air missile in the world. The AIM-9X Block II+ missile is one of multiple variants that make up the fifth-generation Infra-red AIM-9X weapon system family.

“To reach this milestone is a great privilege and showcases our team’s ability to continuously produce and distribute quality products in support of the U.S. warfighter and our international partners,” said Cmdr. Sarah Abbott, PMA-259 deputy program manager for AIM-9X.

Nearly 3,000 AIM-9X Block II/II+ missiles have been procured on behalf of 25 countries globally. The program’s Foreign Military Sales team has accounted for an average of over 250 FMS missiles procured annually since 2012.

PMA-259 will join Raytheon in Tucson, Arizona later this year to celebrate this milestone achievement.

Coast Guard Repatriates 29 Migrants to Cuba



Coast Guard law enforcement crews interdicted 11 migrants off Carysfort Reef, Florida June 23, 2021. Coast Guard Cutter Charles David Jr's crew repatriated 11 Cubans to Cuba. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

MIAMI – Coast Guard Cutter Charles Sexton's crew repatriated 18 Cubans to Cuba, June 29, following three interdictions off Florida's coast, and Coast Guard Cutter Charles David Jr.'s crew repatriated 11 Cubans to Cuba, June 30, following an interdiction near Carysfort Reef, Florida, the Coast Guard 7th District said in two releases.

A good Samaritan reported a wooden vessel with four people aboard to Coast Guard Sector Key West watchstanders at 1:40 a.m. June 25. They were brought aboard Coast Guard Cutter Charles Sexton and reported in good health.

A good Samaritan reported a 16-foot wooden vessel with five people aboard to Coast Guard Sector Miami watchstanders at 4:20 p.m. June 25. Customs and Border Protection Air and Marine Operation law enforcement officers picked up the five people and brought them to the Charles Sexton. They were reported in good health.

A good Samaritan reported an adrift vessel with nine people aboard to Coast Guard Sector Key West watchstanders at 2:30 p.m. June 26. They were brought aboard Coast Guard Cutter Charles Sexton and reported in good health.

A good Samaritan reported a vessel with 11 people aboard to Coast Guard Sector Key West watchstanders at 12:20 p.m. June 28. Charles David Jr.'s crews arrived on scene and the migrants were brought aboard and reported in good health.

“The Florida Straits, especially during hurricane season, makes the seas even more unpredictable than usual,” said Lt. Cmdr. Mario Gil, Coast Guard Liaison Officer, Cuba. “These voyages can cost you your life.”

Since Oct. 1, 2020, Coast Guard crews have interdicted 512 Cubans compared to:

- 5,396 Cuban Migrants in Fiscal Year 2016
- 1,468 Cuban Migrants in Fiscal Year 2017
- 259 Cuban Migrants in Fiscal Year 2018
- 313 Cuban Migrants in Fiscal Year 2019
- 49 Cuban Migrants in Fiscal Year 2020

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and basic medical attention. Throughout the interdiction, Coast Guard crew members were equipped with personal protective equipment to minimize potential exposure to any possible case of COVID-19.