

Coast Guard Cutter Reliance Returns to Homeport After 36-Day Caribbean Patrol



Ensigns Ayleen Brewer, Allyson Holfinger and Zachary Brigham, (left to right) officers aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Reliance, are promoted to the rank of lieutenant junior grade during a promotion ceremony while underway in the Caribbean Sea Nov. 22, 2020. U.S. Coast Guard PENSACOLA, Fla. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Reliance returned to homeport in Pensacola Saturday, Dec. 19, after a 36-day Caribbean Sea patrol, the Coast Guard 8th District announced Dec. 21.

During the patrol the Reliance crew performed counter-drug operations in support of the U.S. Government's Joint Interagency Task Force–South, and intercepted three vessels attempting to smuggle more than 3,300 pounds of cocaine and detained a total of nine suspected smugglers. Additionally, the cutter crew received more than 8,875 pounds of cocaine that were interdicted by other U.S. law enforcement agencies. The patrol was also critical in allowing Reliance's crew to work on shipboard training, qualifications and proficiency to maintain operational readiness.

"I'm proud of my crew and what they were able to accomplish during our interdiction operations," said Cmdr. Robert P. Hill, commanding officer of the cutter Reliance. "We are essentially saving lives in a different way by keeping these illegal drugs out of our country."

The U.S. Coast Guard works alongside interagency and international partners to prevent and respond to dangerous and illegal maritime smuggling from Central and South America. Reliance supported these efforts by patrolling the

Southwestern Caribbean Sea in an effort to detect and deter maritime drug smuggling in the region.

Reliance is a 210-foot medium endurance cutter, which recently shifted its homeport from Kittery, Maine to Pensacola, Florida with a crew of 77. The cutter's primary missions are counter drug operations, migrant interdiction, enforcing federal fishery laws, and search and rescue in support of Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Bollinger Shipyards Delivers 42nd Fast Response Cutter, USCGC Robert Goldman



Coast Guard Cutter Robert Goldman, delivered to the service Dec. 22. Bollinger Shipyards

LOCKPORT, La. – Bollinger Shipyards LLC on Dec. 22 delivered the USCGC Robert Goldman to the U.S. Coast Guard in Key West, Florida. This is the 165th vessel Bollinger has delivered to the Coast Guard over a 35-year period and the 42nd Fast Response Cutter delivered under the current program.

The USCGC Robert Goldman is the second of six FRCs to be homeported in Manama, Bahrain, which 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.

“Bollinger is proud to continue enhancing and supporting the

U.S. Coast Guard's operational presence and ensuring it remains the preferred partner around the world," said Bollinger President & C.E.O. Ben Bordelon. "It is our top priority to ensure that the brave men and women of the Coast Guard stationed in PATFORSWA have the most state-of-the-art, advanced vessels as they work to build and maintain the necessary regional alliances to ensure maritime security in the region. Building ships for the Coast Guard provides critical assets to bolster our national security and advance America's interests, both at home and abroad."

At a PATFORSWA change of command ceremony earlier in the summer, U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area Commander Vice Adm. Steven D. Poulin emphasized the importance of the unit, saying, "During these historical times it is important, now more than ever, that we maintain maritime security operations throughout the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. [PATFORSWA is] pushing forward into the unknown to protect American interests 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.

The majority of the USCGC Robert Goldman build occurred despite the COVID-19 global pandemic and six named storms impacting the Gulf region, all of which affected Louisiana and two of which made landfall in the state as hurricanes, including Hurricane Laura, a Category 4 storm and the strongest to hit the state since the Great Storm of 1856.

Bollinger undertook precautions to ensure the health and safety of employees and not only maintained its schedule but delivered the vessel 3 weeks early.

Each FRC is named for an enlisted Coast Guard hero who distinguished himself or herself in the line of duty. Robert Goldman enlisted in the Coast Guard in October 1942 as a pharmacist's mate. In 1944 he reported for duty aboard the Coast Guard-manned, 328-foot Landing Ship, Tank-66, taking part in a campaign to retake the Philippines from the Japanese. On November 12, 1944, a Japanese kamikaze plane flew straight for the men gathered on the starboard side of the LST's stern. Goldman witnessed the enemy fighter crash into the deck and explode. Goldman's back was on fire from the aviation fuel, his right leg received shrapnel from the crashing fighter, and he suffered severe shock from the sudden crash and resulting carnage. Disregarding his own injuries, Goldman courageously treated the wounded and dying. For his heroic deeds, Goldman received the Purple Heart and Bronze Star medals.

Future USS Daniel Inouye Completes Builder's Trials



The future USS Daniel Inouye, a Flight IIA Arleigh Burke-class destroyer similar to the USS Jason Dunham shown here in a 2010 photo, has completed builder's trials. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Julie R. Matyascik

BATH, Maine – The future USS Daniel Inouye (DDG 118) successfully completed builder's trials Dec. 19 after spending four days at sea off the coast of Bath, Maine, Naval Sea Systems Command said in a Dec. 21 release.

Builder's trials consist of a series of in-port and at-sea demonstrations that allow the shipbuilder, General Dynamics Bath Iron Works (BIW), and the Navy to assess the ship's systems and its readiness for delivery.

"The successful completion of these trials is a critical step to ensuring full combat-readiness of the ship," said Capt. Seth Miller, DDG 51 class program manager, Program Executive Office (PEO) Ships. "The Navy and industry team is dedicated to adding DDG 118's critical warfighting capabilities to the fleet and strengthening the Navy's readiness."

Daniel Inouye is a Flight IIA destroyer, equipped with the Aegis Baseline 9 Combat System, which includes integrated air and missile defense capability and enhanced ballistic missile defense capabilities. This system delivers quick reaction time, high firepower, and increased electronic countermeasures capability against a variety of threats.

The future USS Daniel Inouye will return to sea to conduct acceptance trials with the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey early next year. During acceptance trials, all systems will be inspected and evaluated to ensure quality and operational readiness prior to the Navy accepting delivery.

BIW is also in production on the future Arleigh Burke-class destroyers Carl M. Levin (DDG 120), John Basilone (DDG 122), Harvey C. Barnum (DDG 124), Patrick Gallagher (DDG 127), and their first Flight III ship, Louis H. Wilson, Jr. (DDG 126), as well as the future Zumwalt-class destroyer, Lyndon B. Johnson (DDG 1002).

As one of the Defense Department's largest acquisition organizations, PEO Ships is responsible for executing the development and procurement of all destroyers, amphibious ships, special mission and support ships, and special warfare craft.

Coast Guard, Partners Interdict 7 Suspected Drug-Smuggling Vessels in the Caribbean over 10 days



The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier offloads 430 kilograms of cocaine at Sector San Juan in this photo from August. In more recent activities, the Napier took part in interdictions that netted more than 3,700 pounds of cocaine and 19 suspected drug smugglers over 10 days. U.S. Coast Guard / Ricardo Castrodad

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – Coast Guard, U.S. Navy, Customs and Border Protection, Air and Marine Operations and the Dutch Caribbean coast guard interdicted seven suspected drug smuggling vessels over 10 days near Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico in the Eastern Caribbean, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a Dec. 18 release.

The collaboration between the federal agencies resulted in more than 3,700 pounds of cocaine, worth more than \$64 million and 19 suspected drug smugglers being apprehended. These individuals may now face criminal charges by prosecution partners in the Department of Justice.

The assets involved in these disruptions include:

[Coast Guard Cutter Reliance](#)

[Coast Guard Cutter William Trump](#)

[Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier](#)

[Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Doyle](#)

[Coast Guard Cutter Donald Horsley](#)

[Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter](#)

[The dock landing ship USS Comstock](#)
[Customs and Border Protection Air Marine Operations aircraft](#)
[A Dutch Caribbean coast guard DH-8 aircraft](#)

“Seven successful drug smuggling ventures disrupted in 10 days is a clear example of the mission ready team we have here in the Seventh District’s area of responsibility,” said Rear Adm. Eric C. Jones, Seventh Coast Guard District commander. “I am proud of the diverse Coast Guard teams that enable us to deliver mission excellence anytime, anywhere. However, these cases represent the collective work of a larger interagency and international team whose unified efforts counter the nefarious activities of transnational criminal organizations that seek to disrupt and destabilize everywhere they operate. Thanks to our enduring partnerships and daily cooperation between numerous agencies, notably the US Navy, CBP Air and Marine Operations, and our fellow Dutch Caribbean coast guard teammates, we were able to disrupt drug smuggling efforts where they were most vulnerable; the maritime domain.”

On April 1, U.S. Southern Command began enhanced counter-narcotics operations in the Western Hemisphere to disrupt the flow of drugs in support of presidential national security objectives. Numerous U.S. agencies from the departments of Defense, Justice and Homeland Security cooperated in the effort to combat transnational organized crime. The Coast Guard, Navy, Customs and Border Protection, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with allied and international partner agencies, play a role in counter-drug operations.

The fight against drug cartels in the Caribbean Sea requires unity of effort in all phases from detection, monitoring and interdictions, to criminal prosecutions by international partners and U.S. Attorneys Offices in districts across the nation. The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the Caribbean Sea is conducted under the

authority of the Coast Guard 7th District, headquartered in Miami, Florida. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Caribbean Corridor Strike Force (CCSF) is a multi-agency Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force group operating in the District of Puerto Rico focusing on Caribbean and South American-based Transnational Criminal Organizations involved in the maritime and air smuggling shipments of narcotics from Puerto Rico to the Continental U.S. and in the laundering of drug proceeds using bulk cash smuggling and sophisticated laundering activities. CCSF signatory agencies include the DEA, HSI, FBI, CGIS, USMS, and the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Boeing Super Hornet Demonstrates Ski-jump Launch Capability



Boeing and the U.S. Navy proved recently that the F/A-18 Super Hornet can operate from a “ski jump” ramp, demonstrating the aircraft’s suitability for India’s aircraft carriers. Boeing Co.

PATUXENT RIVER, Md., Dec. 21, 2020 – Boeing and the U.S. Navy proved recently that the F/A-18 Super Hornet can operate from a “ski jump” ramp, demonstrating the aircraft’s suitability for India’s aircraft carriers, the company said in a Dec. 21 release.

The demonstrations, held at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland, showed the Super Hornet would do well with the

Indian Navy's short takeoff but arrested recovery (STOBAR) system, validating earlier simulation studies by Boeing.

"The first successful and safe launch of the F/A-18 Super Hornet from a ski jump begins the validation process to operate effectively from Indian navy aircraft carriers," said Ankur Kanaglekar, India fighter sales lead for Boeing. "The F/A-18 Block III Super Hornet will not only provide superior warfighting capability to the Indian navy, but also create opportunities for cooperation in naval aviation between the United States and India."

The Indian navy is evaluating its fighter options. If it selects the Super Hornet, it would benefit from billions of dollars invested in new technologies by the U.S. Navy and others. Those technologies include advanced networking, longer range through conformal fuel tanks, infrared search and track, and a new advanced cockpit system.

"This milestone further positions the Block III Super Hornet as a versatile next-generation frontline fighter for decades to come," said Thom Breckenridge, vice president of international sales for strike, surveillance and mobility with Boeing Defense, Space & Security. "With its proven capabilities, affordable acquisition price, known low documented life-cycle costs and guaranteed delivery schedule, the Block III Super Hornet is ideally suited to meet fighter aircraft requirements of customers in India, North America and Europe."

The ski jump demonstrations follow the delivery of two Block III flight-test aircraft to the U.S. Navy in June. Boeing is on contract to deliver next-generation Block III capabilities to the U.S. Navy beginning in 2021. The Super Hornet provides the most weapons at range in the U.S. Navy's fighter inventory, including five times more air-to-ground and twice the air-to-air weapons capacity.

Boeing's advanced aircraft and services focus play an important role in mission-readiness for the Indian air force and navy. Boeing is focused on delivering value to Indian customers with advanced technologies and is committed to creating sustainable value in the Indian aerospace sector – developing local suppliers and shaping academic and research collaborations with Indian institutions.

Boeing has strengthened its supply chain with 225 partners in India and a joint venture to manufacture fuselages for Apache helicopters. Annual sourcing from India stands at \$1 billion. Boeing currently employs 3,000 people in India, and more than 7,000 people work with its supply chain partners. Boeing's employee efforts and India countrywide engagement serves communities and citizenship programs to inspire change and make an impact on more than 200,000 lives.

Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard Release Maritime Strategy



The U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard released a new tri-service maritime strategy, directing the services to deepen their integration and pursue modernization. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Haydn N. Smith
WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard released a new tri-service maritime strategy, entitled Advantage at Sea, the Navy said in a Dec.17 release.

The document provides strategic guidance on how the sea services will prevail in day-to-day competition, crisis, and

conflict over the next decade. It also directs the services to deepen tri-service integration, aggressively pursue force modernization, and continue robust cooperation with allies and partners.

“Our integrated Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard must maintain clear-eyed resolve to compete with, deter, and, if necessary, defeat our adversaries while we accelerate development of a modernized, integrated all-domain naval force for the future,” wrote Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael M. Gilday, Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David H. Berger, and Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Karl L. Schultz in the strategy’s forward. “Our actions in this decade will shape the maritime balance of power for the rest of this century.”

Advantage at Sea places particular focus on China and Russia due to their increasing maritime aggressiveness, demonstrated intent to dominate key international waters and clear desire to remake the international order in their favor.

“China’s and Russia’s revisionist approaches in the maritime environment threaten U.S. interests, undermine alliances and partnerships, and degrade the free and open international order,” the document states. “Moreover, China’s and Russia’s aggressive naval growth and modernization are eroding U.S. military advantages.”

The strategy also emphasizes the maritime domain is integral not only to America’s security and prosperity but to those of all nations. The oceans connect global markets, provide essential resources, and link societies and businesses. Shared interests create opportunities for greater cooperation with allies and partners.

“As Sailors, we are on the leading edge of great power competition each and every day,” said Gilday. “Sea control, power projection and the capability to dominate the oceans must be our primary focus. Our forces must be ready today, and

ready tomorrow, to defend our nation's interests against potential adversaries at any time. This strategy helps us do exactly that."

The strategy directs the services to pursue an agile and aggressive approach to force modernization and experimentation. The future fleet will combine legacy assets with new, smaller ships, lighter amphibious ships, modernized aircraft, expanded logistics, resilient space capabilities, and optionally manned and unmanned platforms. To succeed in a dynamic operating environment, the services will also invest in warfighter development, delivering innovative training and education to ensure our Sailors, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen remain the world's premier naval force.

Advantage at Sea also reflects the dual roles of the service chiefs: advising on the employment of forces in day-to-day competition, crisis and conflict, and developing a modernized future force that deters potential adversaries and advances and defends U.S. interests.

"The Marine Corps is conducting a sweeping force design transformation to fulfill our role as the Nation's expeditionary force-in-readiness while simultaneously modernizing the force in accordance with the operating environment described in the National Defense Strategy and the tri-Service maritime strategy. We must embrace new ways of operating within the concepts of integrated U.S. naval power to deter future adversaries and generate better strategic choices," said Berger.

As the services pursue greater integration, to include training and education; capabilities and networks; plans, exercises, and experiments; analysis and wargaming; investments and innovation; and force design, Advantage at Sea states they will collaborate with allies and partners to build capability, enhance interoperability, and generate unity of effort. Alongside allies and partners, the services will be

able to establish sea denial and sea control where and when needed, project power, and hold critical adversary targets at risk.

“As the only military service in the Department of Homeland Security, the U.S. Coast Guard provides unique multi-mission and intelligence capabilities to complement the ability of our Marines and Navy to protect our national interests when necessary and deliver lethality across the globe,” said Schultz. “Our hallmark is working daily with partner agencies, sister sea services, and international navies and coast guards to counter maritime coercion and uphold the rules-based order – partnerships work.”

To read the full strategy, please visit: [Advantage at Sea](#)

SENEDIA Launches BuildSubmarines.com to Support Sub Building Workforce



The Southeastern New England Defense Industry Alliance has launched a new website, www.BuildSubmarines.com to serve as a one-stop clearinghouse for careers and workforce development programs to support the submarine shipbuilding supply chain. U.S. Navy / Seaman John Narewski

MIDDLETOWN, R.I. – The Southeastern New England Defense Industry Alliance (SENEDIA) has launched a new website, www.BuildSubmarines.com, which will serve as a one-stop clearinghouse for careers and workforce development

programs to support the submarine shipbuilding supply chain, the alliance said in a Dec. 16 release.

The site reinforces southeastern New England as the national hub for submarine shipbuilding and connects industry leaders and prospective employees with the opportunities they need to build their business or build a rewarding career in this high-wage, high-growth sector.

“SENEDIA is the bridge for the regional submarine shipbuilding supply chain. For employers, we provide resources on building their workforce and building their business. For prospective employees, we provide resources for building their careers,” said Molly Donohue Magee, SENEDIA’s executive director. “The southeastern New England submarine shipbuilding supply chain and the talented individuals who support it are integral to the security of our nation. This new website will make it easier for them to find new opportunities and grow our economy in the process.”

SENEDIA launches [BuildSubmarines.com](https://www.buildsubmarines.com) as part to its first Department of Defense contract, an \$18.6 million initiative to develop a robust regional workforce development partnership that will serve the needs of submarine shipbuilding employers and open up job exploration and employment opportunities to more than 5,000 potential workers.

CG Cutter James offloads More Than \$411.3M in Cocaine,

Marijuana at Port Everglades



Coast Guard Petty Officer 3rd Class Garret Byrd wraps bails at Port Everglades, Florida, Dec. 16, 2020. Coast Guard Cutter James is homeported in Charleston, South Carolina. Coast Guard / Petty Officer 3rd Class Jose Hernandez

MIAMI—The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter James offloaded more than 23,000 pounds of cocaine and nearly 8,800 pounds of marijuana worth more than \$411.3 million Wednesday at Port Everglades, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a Dec. 16 release.

The drugs were interdicted in international waters of the Eastern Pacific Ocean off the coasts of Mexico, Central and South America, including contraband seized and recovered during 20 interdictions of suspected drug smuggling vessels by eight American and United Kingdom ships:

- [Coast Guard Cutter James](#)
- [Coast Guard Cutter Seneca](#)
- [Coast Guard Cutter Reliance](#)
- [Coast Guard Cutter Legare](#)
- [Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Doyle](#)
- [USS William P. Lawrence](#)
- [USS Gabrielle Giffords](#)
- [RFA Argus](#)

“This patrol highlights our crew’s continued commitment to protecting the American people from our adversaries,” said Capt. Todd Vance, James’ commanding officer. “Despite COVID, the James crew demonstrated supreme resilience, and the results of their exceptional performance are being showcased today.”

“I am honoured to be able to pay tribute to the successes of the team here today, and recognize the role the Royal Navy and UK National Crime Agency has played in this joint operation,”

said Commodore Phil Nash, Royal Attaché, United Kingdom Embassy. "Working seamlessly with U.S. and international colleagues, the presence of RFA Argus has prevented the \$54 million of drugs offloaded here from reaching the streets in the last few months; taken together with a wider effort this year by UK ships HMS Medway and RFA Mounts Bay, around \$650 million of drugs have been stopped. This has been a genuine team effort. The key to success continues to be the close working relationship and collaboration between our nations."

Numerous U.S. agencies from the Departments of Defense, Justice and Homeland Security cooperated in the effort to combat transnational organized crime. The Coast Guard, Navy, Customs and Border Protection, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with allied and international partner agencies, play a role in counter-drug operations. The fight against drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean requires unity of effort in all phases from detection, monitoring and interdictions, to criminal prosecutions by U.S. Attorneys in districts across the nation.

During at-sea interdictions, a suspect vessel is initially detected and monitored by allied, military or law enforcement personnel coordinated by Joint Interagency Task Force-South based in Key West, Florida. The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the Eastern Pacific is conducted under the authority of the Coast Guard 11th District, headquartered in Alameda, California. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the U.S. Coast Guard.

The fight against drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea requires unity of effort in all phases from detection, monitoring and interdictions, to criminal prosecutions by international partners and U.S. Attorneys' Offices in districts across the nation. The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the Eastern Pacific

Ocean is conducted under the authority of the [Coast Guard 11th District](#), headquartered in Alameda, California, and the law enforcement phase of operations in the Caribbean is conducted under the authority of the [Coast Guard 7th District](#), headquartered in Miami. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the U.S. Coast Guard.

The cutter James is a 418-foot national security cutter home ported in Charleston, South Carolina. The cutter Legare is a 270-foot medium endurance cutter home ported in Portsmouth, Virginia. The cutter Seneca is a 270-foot medium endurance cutter homeported in Boston, Massachusetts. The cutter Reliance is a 210-foot medium endurance cutter homeported in Pensacola, Florida. The cutter Joseph Doyle is a 154-foot fast-response cutter homeported in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The USS William P. Lawrence is a 509-foot Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer homeported in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The USS Gabrielle Giffords is a 418-foot Independence-class littoral combat ship homeported in San Diego, California. The Royal Fleet Auxiliary Argus is a 574-foot ship homeported in Portsmouth, United Kingdom.

Accenture Federal Services to Help Navy with Organizational Transformation

ARLINGTON, Va. – [Accenture Federal Services \(AFS\)](#), a subsidiary of [Accenture](#), has been awarded a task order to help the U.S. Navy drive an enterprise transformation strategy to redesign its future plans and practices related to data,

cloud, cybersecurity, architecture, investments, and talent to achieve greater advantage and readiness, the company said in a Dec. 16 release.

Under the terms of the contract – valued at \$38 million over five years – AFS will provide information technology and management consulting services to the Navy, Marine Corps and senior leaders at the Department of Defense. The goal is to help the Navy fundamentally change the way it invests in enterprise capability modernization to position it for greater joint-domain capabilities.

AFS will help the Navy transform mission capabilities using innovative solutions that scale to meet future needs and improve operational outcomes. The work includes transformation for the department's enterprise through strategy, digital, portfolio planning, enterprise architecture, data management, modeling and architecture, cybersecurity, and organizational change management activities.

“We’re honored to help the Department of the Navy manage its digital, data and IT services so they can focus critical resources on mission-specific requirements,” said Vince Vlasho, who leads Accenture Federal Services’ Defense portfolio. “As commercial technology accelerates, we want to ensure that the DON adapts and has what it needs to maximize readiness and warfighting effectiveness.”

The Department of the Navy Organizational Transformation Support contract continues AFS’ ongoing support to the Navy. AFS currently works with several commands across the service, providing mission and back office-related IT implementations, management consulting, and operations as well as recruiting services for Navy Recruiting Command.

Cobham's Aerial Refueling Buddy Store Mounted During MQ-25 Test Flight



Boeing's MQ-25 test asset in flight with the Cobham Mission Systems underwing refueling buddy store. Boeing Co.

DAVENPORT, Iowa – [Cobham Mission Systems](#)' underwing mounted refueling buddy store was carried for the first time during a successful test flight of Boeing's MQ-25 test asset, known as T1, Cobham said in a Dec. 16 release. The test helped to validate the unmanned aircraft's aerodynamics when carrying existing refueling equipment. The flight marks a significant milestone in the development of MQ-25, the first operational, carrier-based unmanned aerial refueler for the U.S. Navy. The Navy's F/A-18 fleet currently operates the same Cobham 31-301 buddy store, when fulfilling this key aerial refueling role.

"This marks a significant milestone for the development of unmanned aerial refueling and we are proud that Boeing's MQ-25 test aircraft carried Cobham's underwing mounted equipment on this test flight," said Jason Apelquist, senior vice president for business development and strategy for Cobham Mission Systems. "It is encouraging to see how proven solutions are being leveraged to further new mission capability. We look forward to supporting next-generation technology and continue to work with our customers as a key partner to deliver the aerial refueling solution of the future."

The 2.5-hour flight was conducted by Boeing test pilots operating from a ground control station at MidAmerica St. Louis Airport in Mascoutah, Illinois, on December 9, 2020.

Future flights will continue to test the aerodynamics of the aircraft and the 31-301 Series Buddy Store at various points of the flight envelope. Insights from the tests will inform the eventual progression to the extension and retraction of the hose and drogue used in refueling.