

# Ike, San Jacinto Break Navy At-Sea Record



An F/A-18E Super Hornet prepares to launch from the flight deck aboard the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower on June 20. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kody A. Phillips

ARABIAN SEA – As of June 25, the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower and its escort ship, the guided-missile cruiser USS San Jacinto, have been continuously at sea for 161 days, setting a new record for the U.S. Navy, Carrier Strike Group 10 said in a release.

Both ships departed their homeport of Norfolk, Virginia, on Jan. 17, for the strike group's composite training unit exercise (COMPTUEX) and follow-on deployment to the U.S. 6th and 5th Fleet areas of operation.

Although Naval History and Heritage Command does not track continuous days underway for naval vessels, it has two modern documented days-at-sea records, both of which are now broken.

In February 2002, the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt operated for 160 days straight in support of post-9/11 response. And it was again the Ike that held the record of 152 straight days underway during the Iran hostage crisis in 1980.

"Our ships remain undeterred in the face of adversity and this monumental feat will only make our crews and the Navy stronger," said Capt. Kyle Higgins, the Ike's commanding officer. "I'm so proud of the young men and women I see on the deck plates each and every day. Their dedication to the mission is what makes our Navy the greatest fighting force the

world has ever seen.”

Due to the novel coronavirus, Ike and its accompanying strike group have remained at sea to minimize the crews’ exposure to COVID-19.

“In March, I suspended liberty port visits to reduce the chance of spreading and contracting the virus across the fleet,” said Vice Adm. Jim Malloy, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet, and Combined Maritime. “Throughout this pandemic, maintaining the fleet’s warfighting readiness while ensuring the safety and well-being of our Sailors has been my top priority.”



The Ike transits the Arabian Sea on June 12, deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Aaron Bewkes  
Both the Ike and the San Jacinto’s crews have maintained mission readiness and effectiveness despite restrictions related to COVID-19.

“San Jacinto and Eisenhower have proven their ability to remain a flexible, adaptable and persistent force while staying on station in the Arabian Sea,” said Capt. Edward Crossman, commanding officer of the San Jacinto. “Both crews have been resupplying and refueling, performing repairs and upkeep, and maintaining overall readiness while continuously at sea. The two ships have spent the last five months conducting operations and exercises with foreign partners, other U.S. service branches, and U.S Navy ships in the region.”

The ships also participated in a “rest and reset” period at sea, coming off-station for a short period of time to allow the crew to relax and reenergize with morale events such as swim calls and steel beach picnics.

While all deployments bring challenges, especially ones of

record-breaking duration, they also bond Sailors together through shared memories that last a lifetime.

“We’ve made it this far and I’m incredibly proud of the crew for all their hard work,” Crossman said. “The fact of the matter is our work isn’t done. We aren’t headed home yet, and we’re on path to blow the previous record out of the water. The San Jacinto Gunslingers are the most motivated, professional Sailors I have ever served with.”

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*Capt. Edward Crossman, commanding officer of the San Jacinto*

The Ike and San Jacinto remain at sea, deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operation in support of naval operations to ensure maritime stability and security in the Central Region, connecting the Mediterranean and Pacific through the Western Indian Ocean and three critical chokepoints for the free flow of global commerce.

“Ike and San Jacinto, along with the rest of the Ike CSG, have continued to stand the watch in this critical region of the world, conducting routine operations and maintaining constant readiness and I couldn’t be prouder,” Malloy said.

An interesting fact, the first USS San Jacinto was also underway during a yellow fever epidemic during the Civil War. On May 5, 1862, under the orders of President Lincoln, that San Jacinto and other Union warships bombarded Sewell’s Point, Virginia. On August 1, 1862, it was reported that yellow fever had broken out on the ship, so San Jacinto sailed north, laid anchor and quarantined for four months.

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# CH-53K King Stallion Completes First Sea Trials



A CH-53K King Stallion helicopter (left) flies over the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland in April after connecting with a drogue towed behind a KC-130J tanker aircraft during an aerial refueling test. The helicopter just finished two weeks of sea trials. U.S. Navy/Erik Hildebrandt

NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The CH-53K King Stallion completed a two-week period of sea trials in the Atlantic earlier this month, the Naval Air Systems Command said in a June 24 release. This was the first opportunity to see the aircraft working in a modern naval environment.

Testing took place on the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp.

“I’m very pleased with how the ship tests went,” said Col. Jack Perrin, H-53 helicopters program manager. “We were able to assess the K taking off and landing day, night and with night-vision goggles, and it performed extremely well.”

According to the CH-53K integrated test team, the sea trials are a series of tests to evaluate the performance of the aircraft at sea. Tests performed during the two weeks included: launch and recovery; rotor start and shutdown; blade fold; and shipboard compatibility testing – all in increasing wind speed and varying wind directions relative to the aircraft.

“The bulk of the testing was in launch and recovery,” said Perrin, “and we nailed it every time, no matter what the wind/sea conditions were. The 53K is now a ‘feet-wet’ warrior from the sea.”

Ship compatibility testing includes towing the aircraft around the deck and in the hangar, performing maintenance while aboard the ship, ensuring the aircraft fits in all the locations it needs to around the ship deck and hangar, and evaluating chain/tie-down procedures.

The CH-53K King Stallion continues to execute within the reprogrammed CH-53K timeline, moving toward completion of developmental test, leading to initial operational test and evaluation in 2021 and first fleet deployment in 2023-2024.

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## **GE to Supply Gas Turbines for New Turkish Fleet Replenishment Ship**

EVENDALE, Ohio – GE Marine has received a contract from Sefine Shipyard to provide two LM2500 marine gas turbines to power the Turkish Naval Forces' new fleet replenishment ship, GE said in a release.

Known as the DIMDEG project, this new-generation ship will satisfy the fuel, water transport and supply needs of Turkey's surface combatants in the open seas around the world.

"The LM2500 is GE's most popular marine gas turbine and we are excited it was selected for the DIMDEG project," said Kris Shepherd, vice president and general manager, GE Marine. "The powerful LM2500 brings quick start capabilities, easy on-board maintenance, and an outstanding worldwide fleet performance of greater than 99% reliability and more than 98% availability."

GE has long been a trusted supplier to the Turkish Naval

Forces. In fact, all four of Turkey's Ada-class MILGEM multipurpose corvettes are powered by a GE LM2500 and two diesel engines in a combined diesel and gas turbine configuration. Total propulsion power is 31,000 kilowatts, allowing each ship to reach maximum speed in excess of 29 knots. Each corvette has an overall length of 99 meters with a displacement of 2,300 tons. Additionally, 24 LM2500s operate aboard the Turkish Navy's Barbaros- and Gabya-class frigates.

With a GE gas turbine, navies have worldwide support whether onshore or at sea, and interoperability benefits with other allied ships. GE has delivered gas turbines onboard 646 naval ships serving 35 navies worldwide and provides 97% of the commissioned propulsion gas turbines in the United States Navy fleet. With GE's split casing compressor and power turbine design, in-situ maintenance is allowed, often making a gas turbine removal unnecessary; navies save millions of dollars a year and weeks/months of ship unavailability.

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## **Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant Returns Home After Counter-Drug Patrol**



Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant crew members package bales of cocaine to be offloaded at Port Everglades, Florida, on June 23. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 3rd Class Brandon Murray CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. – The Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant crew returned home to Cape Canaveral on June 24 following a 40-day counter-drug patrol in the western Caribbean, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

During their patrol, the Vigilant's crew participated in a four-day multinational counter narcotics joint operation with the Honduran armed forces and later worked with the Colombian navy in the interdictions of three suspected drug-smuggling vessels around the Colombian Basin.

The cutter was augmented by a Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron armed helicopter crew capable of disabling drug-smuggling vessels. The aircrew assisted in the interdiction of two suspected drug-smuggling vessels in a period of less than 24 hours, which resulted in interdiction of about 6,800 pounds of cocaine with an estimated wholesale value of \$118.3 million.

The Vigilant's patrol efforts were in direct support of the president's enhanced counter-narcotics surge announced in early April. The U.S. Coast Guard, working with U.S. Southern Command, began this surge effort in the Caribbean Sea and eastern Pacific Ocean, putting increased pressure on the drug trafficking organizations operating in Central and South America.

Before returning home, the crew conducted the narcotics offload in Port Everglades, Florida, on June 23.

The Vigilant is a 210-foot medium-endurance cutter. The cutter crew's primary missions include search and rescue, illegal drug interdictions, alien migrant interdictions ensuring safety of life at sea and enforcing international and domestic maritime laws.

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# Fairbanks Morse Wins Navy Contract for LPD 31's Engines

BELOIT, Wis. – Fairbanks Morse has been awarded a purchase order by Huntington Ingalls Industries to build and deliver the four main propulsion diesel engines that will power the U.S. Navy's newest landing platform/dock (LPD) ship, LPD 31, Fairbanks Morse said in a release. The ship is the second of 13 in the LPD Flight II class of ships.

"We are proud to carry on our tradition of supplying the U.S. Navy with the critical components of our fleet," said George Whittier, CEO of Fairbanks Morse.

"We make every engine with care, knowing that our service members rely on them to perform their duty. The LPD Flight II ships will be a critical part of the Navy's expeditionary warfare mission set, which includes opposed landings, and we take great pride in making engines that may go in harm's way."

Based on the existing San Antonio-class hull, the LPD Flight II design has been modified with several additional features including an improved flight deck, a well deck, hospital facilities and defensive features. The LPD Flight II ships also have sufficient vehicle and cargo capacities to support and sustain more than 500 combat-equipped Marines for up to 30 days.

The four sequentially turbocharged 16-cylinder FM | Colt-Pielstick PC 2.5 diesel engines feature common rail fuel injection technology and will deliver over 31 MW of propulsion power. The common rail system technology uses a high-pressure fuel header, high-pressure pumps, electronically controlled fuel delivery, an electronic governing system and a new control system to deliver the optimal amount of fuel.

Among the largest medium-speed diesel engines manufactured in the U.S., they will allow the LPD 31 to cruise at speeds over 22 knots. The engines will be delivered to Huntington Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Mississippi, where Fairbanks Morse will support the installation, testing and sea trials for the LPD 31.

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## **Collins Aerospace Aids Navy, Marine Corps Pilots With New Visual Acuity System**

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa – Collins Aerospace Systems, a unit of Raytheon Technologies Corp., is helping the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps transition from analog to digital night-vision systems with the company's new Enhanced Visual Acuity (EVA) system, the company said in a release.

The system, recently selected for use by rotary-wing and tilt-rotor aircrews, is the first to provide advanced digital night vision and display technology that increases flight safety and mission effectiveness for the warfighter.

Currently in development, EVA is a digital day/night vision solution that will integrate a helmet-mounted binocular display to provide wider, higher-resolution imagery and improved night vision performance at Very-Low-Light-Levels (VLLL) – when the rotary-wing pilot needs it the most. In addition, the design will minimize head-borne weight to reduce pilot fatigue while increasing comfort and safety.

“Digital night vision is a big step forward in providing enhanced situational awareness to the warfighter and is a

foundation we'll continually build on to ensure mission success," said Dave Schreck, vice president and general manager for military avionics and helicopters at Collins Aerospace.

Work on the new developmental contract is taking place at Collins Aerospace facilities in Iowa, California and Massachusetts and will be completed by March 2023.

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## **First CMV-22B for Fleet Operations Arrives at Naval Air Station North Island**



Maintainers assist the first CMV-22B Osprey assigned to VRM 30 in landing June 22 at Naval Air Station North Island. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Chelsea D. Meiller

NAVAL AIR STATION NORTH ISLAND, Calif. – Bell Textron Inc. and Boeing delivered the first CMV-22B Osprey for fleet operations to the U.S. Navy on June 22. The CMV-22B is assigned to Fleet Logistics Multi-Mission Squadron (VRM) 30 at Naval Air Station North Island in San Diego.

"We are thrilled to bring the Osprey's capabilities as a warfighting enabler and its ability to provide time-sensitive logistics to the men and women deployed around the world in support of U.S. Navy operations," said Kurt Fuller, Bell V-22 vice president and Bell Boeing program director.

This aircraft is the third overall delivery to the Navy. Bell Boeing delivered the first CMV-22B at Naval Air Station

Patuxent River in February for developmental testing, followed by a second in May. The Navy-variant V-22 will take over the carrier onboard delivery mission, replacing the C-2A Greyhound.

“This first fleet delivery marks a new chapter of the V-22 tilt-rotor program providing enhanced capabilities and increased flexibility to the U.S. Navy as they conduct important operational missions around the globe,” said Shane Openshaw, Boeing vice president of tilt-rotor programs and deputy director of the Bell Boeing team.



VRM 30 was established in late 2018 to begin the Navy’s transition from the C-2A Greyhound to the CMV-22B. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Chelsea D. Meiller

The CMV-22B and C-2A Greyhound conducted a symbolic passing of the torch flight in April.

“The CMV-22B will be a game-changing enabler to the high-end fight supporting the sustainment of combat lethality to the carrier strike group,” said Navy Capt. Dewon Chaney, commodore, Fleet Logistics Multi-Mission Wing. “The multi-mission capabilities of the CMV-22B, already recognized, will be realized in Naval aviation’s air wing of the future. The arrival of this aircraft is the first of many steps to that becoming reality.”

The CMV-22B carries up to 6,000 pounds of cargo and combines the vertical takeoff, hover and landing (VTOL) qualities of a helicopter with the long-range, fuel efficiency and speed characteristics of a turboprop aircraft.

Bell Boeing designed the Navy variant to have the expanded range needed for fleet operations. Two additional 60-gallon tanks and redesigned forward sponson tanks can cover more than 1,150 nautical miles.

The CMV-22B also can provide roll-on/roll-off delivery of the F135 engine power module for the F-35 Lightning II strike fighter.

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## **State Department Approves Possible Sale of Mark VI Patrol Boats to Ukraine**



A Mark VI patrol boat operates in the Indian Ocean in May. The State Department has approved the possible sale of up to 16 of the boats and related equipment to Ukraine. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Griffin Kersting

WASHINGTON – The U.S. State Department has approved the possible foreign military sale of up to 16 Mark VI patrol boats and related equipment to Ukraine for an estimated cost of \$600 million, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) said in a June 17 release. The DSCA has delivered the required certification to Congress of the possible sale.

Ukraine's government had requested the boats along with 32 MSI Seahawk A2 gun systems; 20 Electro-Optics-Infrared Radar systems (16 installed and 4 spares); 16 Long-Range Acoustic Device five-kilometer loudspeaker systems; 16 Identification Friend or Foe systems; and 40 Mk44 cannons (32 installed and eight spares).

As part of the sale, Ukraine also requested communication equipment; support equipment; spare and repair parts; tools and test equipment; technical data and publications; personnel training and training equipment; U.S. government and

contractor engineering, technical and logistics support; and other related elements of logistics support.

“The proposed sale will improve Ukraine’s capability to meet current and future threats by providing a modern, fast, short-range vessel,” the release said. “Ukraine will utilize the vessels to better defend its territorial waters and protect other maritime interests.”

The prime contractor will be SAFE Boats International of Bremerton, Washington.

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## **Navy Awards Austal USA \$43 Million Contract for LCS Post-Delivery Services**

MOBILE, Ala. – Austal USA has been awarded a modification to previously awarded contract with a total potential value of \$43,362,000 by Naval Sea Systems Command to exercise the options for littoral combat ship (LCS) class design services, material to support LCS class design services and the integrated data product model environment (IDPME), the company said in a June 23 release.

“The continued award of LCS post-delivery services contracts reflects the Navy’s ongoing confidence in Austal to perform quality work throughout the life cycle of the ship,” Austal USA President Craig Perciavalle said. “Austal’s post-delivery service and supply team’s performance will help continue Austal’s outstanding support to the fleet well into the future.”

Austal will provide LCS class design services to all LCS ships and services may include program management, fitting out services, change processing, software maintenance, engineering and lifecycle efforts. Austal will also maintain an IDPME that shall enable Navy access to enterprise LCS data management.

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## **Coast Guard Cutter Valiant Returns to Jacksonville After 60-Day Patrol**



The Coast Guard Cutter Valiant conducting flight operations with Air Station Miami MH-65 Dolphin Helicopter in order to qualify flight deck team members mid-May 2020, in the Caribbean. U.S. COAST GUARD

JACKSONVILLE – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Valiant (WMEC-621) returned home to Naval Station Mayport, Florida, June 22, after completing a nine-week patrol conducting operations in the Windward Passage between Haiti and Cuba in support of Coast Guard 7th District and Operation Southeast Watch, the 7th District said in a release.

Coast Guard Cutter Valiant patrolled over 11,000 nautical miles in the Caribbean, working closely with the Navy and Coast Guard cutters Diligence (WMEC-616), Resolute (WMEC-620), Kathleen Moore (WPC-1109), William Trump (WPC-1111) and Raymond Evans (WPC-1110).

Valiant increased Coast Guard presence along the northern coasts of Haiti, Dominican Republic, Cuba and the Windward Passage, working to prevent an anticipated surge of illegal immigration and human smuggling amid the COVID-19 global

pandemic. Throughout this patrol, Valiant served as the Cutter Tasking Unit, directing all Coast Guard assets supporting Operation Southeast Watch in the Windward Passage. In order to deter an illegal exodus from Haiti, Valiant maintained an overt presence by frequently transiting the Canal de la Tortue, a heavily trafficked, deepwater passage between the Tortuga Island and the Northern Haitian coastline.

Early in the patrol, Valiant conducted vital training with two MH-65 Dolphin helicopters from Air Station Miami. The first evolution involved a vertical replenishment between the cutter and an airborne helicopter and aided in the qualification of Valiant's flight deck crew as well as two pilots for shipboard operations in preparation for hurricane season. The second evolution included multiple day and night touch and go landings, as well as a helicopter in-flight refueling, ultimately leading to the qualification of numerous crew members.

Valiant unloaded nearly 14,000 pounds of cocaine and marijuana and nine detained suspected drug smugglers during the patrol. The contraband and detainees were seized by multiple Coast Guard and Navy assets and transferred to other Coast Guard cutters for future disposition stateside.

Valiant also assisted in the transfer of a Coast Guard 45-foot Response Boat-Medium (RB-M) from Coast Guard Sector Miami to Coast Guard Sector San Juan. The Valiant crew took on the tow of the RB-M from Coast Guard Cutter Diligence in the Windward Passage and towed the vessel the remaining 360 nautical miles to Sector San Juan, saving the Coast Guard over \$100,000 in shipping costs.

"Valiant's crew has a unique ability to be at their best in the most challenging of times, and this patrol was no exception," said Cmdr. Matthew Waldron, Valiant's commanding officer. "Demonstrating exceptional fortitude, they adapted and overcame all challenges associated with the worldwide

pandemic to safely conduct a two-month patrol in the Windward Passage. Using overt presence to deter migrant departures from Haiti, we prevented attempts of dangerous and illegal maritime voyages to the Bahamas and Florida. The crew's efforts proved highly effective, as migrant departures from Haiti were kept well below historic norms during this period, allowing first responders in the U.S. and the Bahamas to focus on pandemic response efforts."

The Valiant is a multimission 210-foot medium-endurance cutter. Missions include search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, marine environmental protection, homeland security. and national defense operations.