

BAE Systems Completes First Tactical Configuration Ground-Launched Test of APKWS Laser-Guided Rockets



An artist's depiction of the APKWS laser-guided rocket. BAE SYSTEMS

BAE Systems announced June 2 that it had completed test shots of its APKWS laser-guided rockets from a tactical configuration ground-based weapon system for the first time. The proof-of-concept testing demonstrated the APKWS rockets' ability to deliver standoff precision-strike capabilities for ground forces, providing a solution for warfighters engaging targets with greater range than small arms fire and without the need for air support.

BAE Systems tested the APKWS rockets at the U.S. Army's Yuma Proving Ground, in collaboration with the U.S. Navy and Arnold Defense, a manufacturer of rocket launchers. The team used Arnold's Fletcher 2.75-inch/70 mm Weapon System concept – a purpose-built laser-guided rocket launcher for ground vehicles – to fire several shots.

“Our customers see the value in low-cost, precision-strike capabilities that reduce the risk of collateral damage, and they want the flexibility to deliver them from the platform of their choice,” said Greg Procopio, director of Precision Guidance and Sensing Solutions at BAE Systems. “Demand is growing for ground-to-ground precision munitions that provide a safe standoff distance for small ground units. We’re working closely with our customer and partners to deliver that capability.”

Ground-launched APKWS rockets could provide mounted and

dismounted units with a unique way to engage soft and lightly armored targets from a variety of platforms, according to the company. The low size, weight and power requirements of ground-launched APKWS rockets make them useful for tactical lightweight vehicles, remote weapon stations, non-standard tactical vehicles and stationary platforms.



BAE SYSTEMS

“We designed Fletcher specifically as a ground launcher for precision-guided 70 mm rockets,” said Jim Hager, president and CEO at Arnold Defense. “Fletcher-launched APKWS rockets enable our military customers to engage targets from more than just airborne platforms. We envision Fletcher being used on everything from trucks and tracked vehicles to marine platforms in the future.”

APKWS laser-guided rockets are the only U.S. government program of record for precision-guided 70 mm rockets. All four U.S. armed forces use APKWS rockets, and it is available to U.S. allies via foreign military sales.

Lockheed Delivers First KC-130J to Marine Reserve Squadron VMGR-452

MARIETTA, Ga. – Lockheed Martin recently delivered the first KC-130J Super Hercules tanker assigned to VMGR-452, the Marine Forces Reserve squadron at Stewart Air National Guard Base, New York, the company announced.

A U.S. Marine Corps crew ferried the aircraft from Lockheed’s

facility in Marietta on May 28 to the aircraft's new home.

VMGR-452 is the second Marine Reserve squadron to operate KC-130Js and this delivery signifies the recapitalization of the squadron's existing KC-130T fleet. VMGR-452 – the “Yankees” – has operated Hercules tankers for more than 30 years, flying KC-130s in support of Operations Desert Storm, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom.

“The KC-130 Hercules tanker has been a pivotal part of Marine Corps aviation operations since 1960, a relationship that began with the KC-130F and R-models, transitioned to the KC-130T, and continues now with the KC-130J Super Hercules,” said Rod McLean, vice president and general manager of Lockheed Martin's Air Mobility and Maritime Missions line of business.

“Our C-130 team knows this delivery is significant and represents increased capability for VMGR-452. We are proud to support our Marine aviation partners as they continue to be ‘first to fight.’”

KC-130s are operated in support of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force commander by providing tactical in-flight refueling for fixed-wing, rotary-wing, and tilt-rotor aircraft; aviation-delivered ground refueling of aircraft or tactical vehicles; assault air transport or air-landed or aerial-delivered (parachute) personnel and equipment; pathfinder support, battlefield illumination; tactical aeromedical evacuation; and tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel support.

The KC-130J delivers increased speed and fuel efficiency, improved payload/range capabilities, an integrated defensive suite, automated maintenance fault reporting, high-altitude ramp and door hydraulics, and unmatched situational awareness with its digital avionics and dual head-up displays.

The KC-130J is one of nine production variants of the C-130J Super Hercules, the current production model of the legendary

C-130 Hercules. With 460-plus aircraft delivered, the C-130J is the airlifter of choice for 20 nations.

The U.S. Marine Corps operates the largest KC-130J Super Hercules fleet in the world. This delivery continues the U.S. government's transition to the C-130J as the common platform across the Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force and U.S. Coast Guard.

L3Harris to Provide DC Switchboards for Korean Navy

TULSA, Okla. – L3Harris Technologies has been awarded a contract to manufacture and deliver DC switchboards for Republic of Korea (ROK) navy submarines, the company said in a June 1 release.

L3Harris will supply direct current (DC) switchboards that provide 900-volt DC power from the ship's generators and batteries to the propulsion motor and other vital ships service loads. This award is a fully funded contract with the final delivery scheduled for June 2022.

“This award comes as a follow-on to similar products previously delivered to our ROK navy customer,” said Rosemary Chapdelaine, vice president and general manager, Maritime Power Systems. “L3Harris is excited to build upon our long-standing relationship with the ROK's navy submarine team and we look forward to continuing our partnership for many years to come.”

Coast Guard Seizes 3,350 Pounds of Marijuana From Smuggling Vessel



The Coast Guard Cutter James (WMSL-754) is shown with its deployed 26-foot over-the-horizon cutter boat and a go-fast vessel interdicted in the Eastern Pacific Ocean off the Coast of Central America in mid-May 2020. The James' crew boarded the boat and interdicted approximately 3,350 pounds of marijuana and four suspected smugglers. U.S. COAST GUARD ALAMEDA, Calif. – The Coast Guard seized approximately 3,350 pounds of marijuana in mid-May with an estimated value of approximately \$6 million from a go-fast vessel in international waters of the Pacific Ocean off Central America, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in a May 29 release.

A maritime patrol aircraft spotted a suspected smuggling vessel and diverted the crew aboard the Coast Guard Cutter James (WMSL-754) to the go-fast vessel's position.

Once on scene, James' crew initiated a pursuit of the suspected smugglers, who attempted to evade while throwing contraband overboard.

The James' Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON) MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew disabled the boat's engines and a Coast Guard crew boarded the vessel, discovering four suspected smugglers and approximately 3,350 pounds of marijuana aboard.

Braithwaite Sworn in as 77th Secretary of the Navy



Defense Secretary Mark T. Esper swears in retired Navy Rear Adm. Kenneth Braithwaite to serve as the next secretary of the Navy, May 29, 2020, in the Pentagon. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE / Marvin Lynchard

ARLINGTON, Va. – Kenneth J. Braithwaite was sworn in as the 77th secretary of the Navy on May 29, the Navy said in a release.

At the May 29 ceremony at the Pentagon, officiated by Defense Secretary Mark T. Esper, Braithwaite was joined by his family, the chief of naval operations and the commandant of the Marine Corps.

The secretary is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and the University of Pennsylvania. He began his military service as a naval aviator, later transitioning to public affairs officer. His military career culminated in service as the U.S. Navy's vice chief of information. As a civilian, Braithwaite worked in both public- and private-sector leadership roles. Prior to his current position he served as the 31st U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway.



Kenneth J. Braithwaite, shown here in his position as U.S. ambassador to Norway, was sworn in May 29 as the secretary of the Navy. U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Theron J. Godbold

Below is a message released on that date to the men and women of the Department of the Navy. It has been edited for grammar:

“To Sailors, Marines, and all men and women of the Department

of the Navy serving across this great world: Today marks the honor of my life, taking the oath of office to become the 77th but, more importantly, your Secretary of the Navy.

I am incredibly humbled to stand before you, the greatest Navy and Marine Corps in the world to accept this responsibility. For nearly 35 years, I, like you, have served our country, first as a U.S. naval officer deploying around the world to include sailing into harm's way, and most recently as our U.S. ambassador to Norway, a nation important to our national security. Never have I ever doubted why we serve – to protect and defend the greatest nation on earth, the United States of America.

For more than two centuries, the department has exemplified the strength and resilience of the nation we represent. Through tragedy and triumph, in both peace and in war, the source of our strength has been three simple but extremely powerful words: honor, courage and commitment.

As each of you know, they must be our guide stars as we navigate challenges around the globe. We can never forget that they are written in the blood of those who sailed before us: from John Paul Jones to Doris Miller, from Grace Hopper to Jason Dunham, all part of a formidable anchor chain of service through which each of you is an important part.

Make no mistake, we face significant challenges today. Our nation is up against perhaps the greatest test of our commitment to the ideals we hold dear than at any time in our history, surely since the end of World War II. We must recognize this challenge for all it is and all it presents, lurking in the shadows of deceit or the depths of dishonesty. However, our Navy and Marine Corps have faced tough times before. Each time we have prevailed, and we will persevere again. It is our sacred duty, and we shall do so by relying on our core values, the bedrock of our service and the key to our success: honor, courage and commitment.

The object of success for our service is simple: American sea power. America always has been and always will be a maritime nation. America and our principles of freedom rely on sea power delivered by a strong and capable Navy and Marine Corps. Each of you provides that power through your actions each day – actions that demonstrate our resolve to place service above self.

I look forward to the days ahead to do all I can on your behalf, ensuring that you have the opportunity to thrive and succeed in your service to our nation. American sea power will continue to defend our nation, and American sea power will continue to preserve peace while deterring any and all that would challenge our way of life. And when or if we find it necessary, American sea power will decisively win in battle, which is our solemn duty because there can be no alternative.

Please accept my personal appreciation, which I sincerely send to every one of you for your selfless service; your devotion to duty; and for your honor, courage and commitment. I am privileged to stand with you, the greatest Navy and Marine Corps the world has ever known in your service to the people of America. Godspeed to you and us all in this great endeavor!"

**U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Navy
and Royal Canadian Navy
Strengthen Partnerships**

Through Strategic Plan



Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112) passes by a foreign-flagged fishing vessel during an Oceania Maritime Security Initiative (OMSI) boarding mission. The OMSI program is a Secretary of Defense program leveraging Department of Defense assets transiting the region to increase the Coast Guard's maritime domain awareness, ultimately supporting its maritime law enforcement operations in Oceania. The Navy, Coast Guard and Royal Canadian Navy have engaged in a joint strategic plan this week. U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Danny Kelley

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Navy and Royal Canadian Navy signed a five-year strategic plan Tuesday, laying the foundation for future coordination and joint operations, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in a May 28 release.

Vice Adm. Linda Fagan, commander Coast Guard Pacific Area; Vice Adm. Scott D. Conn, commander Navy 3rd Fleet; Royal Canadian Navy Rear Adm. Bob Auchterlonie, commander Maritime Forces Pacific; and a small delegation of their staffs participated in a Three-Party Staff Talks (TPST) meeting via videoconference, which culminated in the signing of the strategic plan.

“Whether it’s combating criminal activity by international drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific or strengthening maritime governance and the rule of law to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific, we rely on our Navy and Canadian partners to maximize success,” Fagan said. “This strategic plan improves interoperability and coordination across our sea services, allowing us to more effectively secure our countries’ shared maritime safety, security and economic interests.”

Staff from the three services collaborated in February ahead of Tuesday’s TPST during a multi-day working group, where the

teams focused on joint operations, exercise planning and communications.

The TPST meetings and working groups provide a face-to-face forum for discussions and planning opportunities for improving defense readiness, homeland security, fisheries enforcement, counter-drug law enforcement and search-and-rescue operations between the services.

“We routinely operate together across many different mission sets,” said Conn. “However, we are always looking at ways to improve our interoperability and strengthen our partnership. Our staff talks provide a valuable forum to discuss and plan how we will continue working together to defend the homeland while ensuring a secure and stable maritime environment.”

Bollinger Delivers First of Three FRCs for Homeport in Guam



The fast-response U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Myrtle Hazard, delivered May 28 to the Coast Guard in Key West, Florida. The cutter, the 39th FRC, will be homeported in Guam. Bollinger Shipyards

LOCKPORT, La. – Bollinger Shipyards has delivered the fast-response cutter (FRC) Myrtle Hazard to the U.S. Coast Guard in Key West, Florida, the company announced on May 28.

The Myrtle Hazard is the 162nd vessel that Bollinger has delivered to the Coast Guard in 35 years and the 39th FRC delivered under the current program.

The cutter is the first of three FRCs to be homeported in Apra Harbor, Guam, increasing the presence for the Coast Guard in the Indo-Pacific. Later this year, Bollinger will deliver the first of six FRCs to be homeported in Manama, Bahrain, replacing Island-class patrol boats supporting the Patrol Forces Southwest Asia, the Coast Guard's largest unit outside the United States.

"Our latest delivery of the ... Myrtle Hazard is an important milestone in the FRC program as it is the first of several vessels that will expand and support the Coast Guard's operational presence and enhance the U.S.'s mission in the Indo-Pacific region – a focal point emphasized by both President Trump and [Coast Guard Commandant] Adm. [Karl L.] Shultz," said Ben Bordelon, Bollinger's president and CEO. "Building ships for the U.S. Coast Guard provides critical assets to bolster our national security interests, both domestic and abroad. We are proud and humbled to be partners in the FRC program."

The homeporting of three FRCs in Guam is part of the Coast Guard's "doubling down on Oceania," allowing more frequent and longer patrols in an area where the sea service has increased its presence over the past 18 months, aligning with priorities set in the 2018 National Defense Strategy to counter competitors such as China and Russia.

Schultz stressed the strategic importance of the service's presence in the region saying, "We're on a trajectory where the geostrategic importance of the Oceania region has not been higher here in decades, and it's a place that the Coast Guard's looking to be part of the whole-of-government solution set."

Each FRC is named for an enlisted Coast Guard hero who distinguished himself or herself in the line of duty. A young mother in 1918, Myrtle Hazard answered a help-wanted ad for a qualified radio operator after graduating from a radio and

telegraphy class at the Baltimore YMCA.

Skilled in telegraphy and Morse code, the Coast Guard enlisted Hazard in January 1918, and she became the sea service's first female electrician. Hazard worked at Coast Guard headquarters in Washington, D.C., as an electrician's mate third class and was promoted to electrician first class before being demobilized after the war ended.

Coast Guard Recovers 11 Bales of Adrift Cocaine



A Coast Guard Cutter Paul Clark crew member moves bales of interdicted cocaine from the small boat to the cutter 10 miles south of Desecheo Island, Puerto Rico, on May 22. U.S. Coast Guard

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard Cutters Paul Clark and Joseph Tezanos crews recovered 11 bales of cocaine about 10 miles southwest of Desecheo Island on May 22, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a May 27 release.

A Coast Guard MH-60 Jayhawk helicopter crew located a debris field about 10 miles southwest of Desecho Island. The cutter Paul Clark crew arrived on scene and recovered 10 bales of cocaine weighing about 1,000 pounds from the debris field. The cutter Joseph Tezanos crew recovered an additional bale of cocaine in the vicinity weighing about 100 pounds the following day.

All 11 bales of cocaine were transferred to the Coast Guard Investigative Service and the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force

personnel.

“The recovery of the 11 bales of cocaine offshore from Puerto Rico highlights the excellent work of the cutter Paul Clark, deployed to Puerto Rico from Miami and the MH-60 crew as well as the Puerto Rico based cutter Joseph Tezanos,” said Cmdr. Beau Powers, Coast Guard Sector San Juan chief of response.

“The Coast Guard could not complete the interdiction cycle of success were it not for the outstanding interagency coordination of the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force who supported the drug offload on a holiday weekend.”

Coast Guard Seizes 3,100 Pounds of Cocaine from Smuggling Vessel



The Coast Guard Cutter James interdicts a low-profile go-fast vessel in mid-May in the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Central America. U.S. Coast Guard

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The U.S. Coast Guard seized more than 3,100 pounds of cocaine in mid-May with an estimated value of \$53.5 million from a low-profile go-fast vessel in international waters of the Pacific Ocean off Central America, the Coast Guard 11th District said in a release.

A maritime patrol aircraft spotted a suspected smuggling vessel and diverted the crew aboard the Coast Guard Cutter James to the vessel’s position.

Once on scene, the James crew boarded the vessel to find four suspected smugglers and initially discovered a small amount of

cocaine aboard the vessel.

The boarding team members later discovered an area of the ship that had been closed off, where they discovered the majority of the 3,100 pounds of cocaine.

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, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration and Immigration and Customs Enforcement along with allied and international partner agencies play a role in counter-drug operations.

RE2 Robotics to Add Autonomy to Dexterous Maritime Manipulation System

PITTSBURGH – RE2 Robotics has received \$2.5 million in funding from the Office of Naval Research to continue the development and commercialization of its technology under the Dexterous Maritime Manipulation System (DM2S) program, the company said in a May 27 release.

RE2's DM2S technology will provide U.S. Navy personnel with the ability to autonomously perform mine countermeasure (MCM) missions.

In this next phase of the program, RE2 will upgrade its dual-arm prototype, known as the Maritime Dexterous Manipulation System (MDMS), for deep ocean use; apply computer vision and machine-learning algorithms to enable autonomous manipulation capabilities; and integrate with underwater vehicles that can autonomously navigate.

“In the first phase of this project, we successfully developed a dexterous underwater robotic system that was capable of teleoperation in an ocean environment,” said Jorgen Pedersen, president and chief executive officer of RE2 Robotics. “This additional funding enables our team to further expand and upgrade the capabilities of our underwater robotic arms to perform MCM tasks in deeper water through the use of autonomy. In addition, this advanced technology will allow us to pursue commercial opportunities, such as underwater inspection and maintenance in the oil and gas industry.”

Unlike other underwater robotic systems that are hydraulic-driven, MDMS uses an energy-saving, electromechanical system. This allows the system to perform longer-duration subsea inspection and intervention tasks while reducing system maintenance and downtime.

“With the development of our first MDMS prototype, we created a compact, lightweight system with a sealed, neutrally buoyant design that was successfully tested in the Pacific Ocean,” said Jack Reinhart, vice president of project management. “We’re now looking forward to improving upon that proven design by adding even greater functionality in deep water, including integration with new underwater vehicles and computer-vision-based autonomy.”