C4F’S HYBRID FLEET COMPLETES TARGET DETECTION TEST



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By USNAVSOUTH/4TH FLEET PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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KEY WEST, Florida – Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-South) and Saildrone successfully completed an evaluation of the unmanned surface vessel Saildrone Voyager’s radar and electronic sensors against surface targets in the vicinity of Key West September 29, 2023.

Part of U.S. 4th Fleet's campaign to inform the hybrid fleet, the evaluation looked at how many Saildrones the fleet would need to cover a given area of water and optimize the probability that the Saildrones would detect suspected drug runners at sea.

"This successful detection test is the completion of one small step in our campaign to inform the hybrid fleet," said Capt. David Fowler, U.S. 4th Fleet's Maritime Operations Center Director. "This is the type of testing and development that we can conduct even as we move toward continuous hybrid operations in the Caribbean."

Right now continuous operations are underway with Operation Windward Stack. The U.S. 4th Fleet operation deploys long-dwell Saildrone unmanned surface vessels (USVs) to the Windward Passage in the Caribbean order to operationalize the combination of unmanned and manned systems in normal day-to-day operations.

In the coming months, other long-dwell USVs, interceptor USVs, long range UAVs, and VTOL UAVs will join the Saildrones in Operation Windward Stack. These systems will combine with traditional naval surface vessels to expand maritime domain awareness (MDA) and define combinations of unmanned and manned forces that work best for specific operations.

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet supports U.S. Southern Command's joint and combined military operations by employing maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships in order to enhance regional security and promote peace, stability and prosperity in the Caribbean, Central and South American region.

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