

National Security Leaders Underscore Urgency in Complex Threat Landscape



Release from SENEDIA

Led by SASC Chair, SECNAV, and Navy VCNO, Conference Speakers Call for Innovation and Collaboration to Maintain American Competitiveness

NEWPORT, R.I. – SENEDIA, the alliance for defense tech, talent, and innovation, yesterday concluded Defense Innovation Days, an important national defense convening that featured three days of policy discussion, industry networking, and planning for the future in an increasingly-complex national security landscape.

Senator Jack Reed, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, participated in multiple sessions, providing critical insight and underscoring the urgency of the moment.

“Our defense industry leaders understand the urgency and enormity of the challenges we face today in a constantly changing national security landscape,” said Reed. “Our adversaries have found ways to exploit this environment, and in order to keep pace, we need to transform the Department of Defense to innovate at the speed of progress. Innovation must be nourished and maintained. We must work smarter and harder to regain ground lost.”

Urgency, innovation, and collaboration emerged as key themes at this year’s 9th annual event, with speakers warning of the potential consequences if investments stall in research and development, workforce training, or military deterrence.

“Defense Innovation Days brings together the most influential voices in national security, paired with the most innovative leaders of the defense industry, and this year’s event illustrated the power of that partnership,” said Molly Donohue Magee, Executive Director of SENEDIA. “When we collaborate in service of our nation—guided by a desire to support our men and women in uniform—we can maintain and advance our strength at home and abroad.”

Among the key takeaways are:

- China and climate change are among the greatest threats and sources of instability facing our national security landscape.
- We are in a “decade of maximum danger,” which calls for a “decisive decade” of investment, training, and strategic planning in return.
- By working with and learning from private industry, as well as investing in its own internal capacity, DoD is

rapidly scaling up the development and deployment of innovative and emerging technologies. Innovation must concurrently include the ability to scale to meet the demand.

- Collaboration is essential to accelerate progress, including connecting supply chain companies to DoD contracts, investing in workforce development, and enacting meaningful public policy like AUKUS.

Distinguished speakers at this sold-out event with more than 400 registrants included the Honorable Carlos Del Toro, Secretary of the Navy; Adm. Lisa Franchetti, Vice Chief of Naval Operations; Dr. William LaPlante, the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment; and Rear Adm. John Mauger, Commander of the U.S. Coast Guard First District.

Urgency: Navigating a Complex Threat Environment

America faces a range of threats at home and abroad, including the short- and long-term impacts of climate instability. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse ticked off a list of threats to the military created or worsened by the changing climate, such as sea level rise threatening coastal Naval bases.

“Climate is also a huge catalyst of conflict. A lot of that will have to do with migration and a lot of that will have to do with the battle over resources,” said Whitehouse. “It gets real in a hurry.”

Multiple speakers referenced DoD efforts to reduce climate emissions, including Rear Admiral John Mauger, Commander of the First Coast Guard District. The Coast Guard and their counterparts across branches have increasingly had to navigate severe storms, fires, floods, and other weather-related challenges.

“Reflecting on all of this, I can’t help but feel that this level of complexity is our new normal. As complex as these situations are, I understand that command, control, multi-domain warfighting is even more complex,” he said.

China was the other major threat highlighted extensively throughout the convening. Dr. Andrew Erickson, a Professor of Strategy at the Naval War College and Research Director of its China Maritime Studies Institute, offered a sobering conclusion, calling this the “decade of maximum danger,” as China maximizes its capabilities and investment.

Innovation: Transforming Government and Industry, Together

With the challenges clearly laid out, [Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro emphasized that, across the board, innovation is a key solution](#), particularly in the undersea environment.

“Our nation expects us to be ready with the necessary capabilities and capacity to prevail now and in the future. We cannot do that without a tremendous and continuous push to innovate,” he said. “Our competitors have invested huge amounts of money into building up their capabilities and we must maintain the pace.”

Innovation is happening as the Navy modernizes its fleet, with 86 ships under contract and 54 in construction, reducing maintenance delays in the process. Dr. William LaPlante, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, likewise pointed to billions of dollars in investments to industrial base activities and the supply chain and called on the audience to find additional ways to work together to drive progress.

“We cannot be complacent in the undersea domain,” he said, [pointing to the New England Submarine Shipbuilding Partnership—an initiative powered by SENEDIA](#) that has supported the training of more than 3,400 defense professionals since 2020—as an example of ensuring that the

armed services have the talent and technology they need to be effective. "It has been a poster child of how we can work together."

Task Force 59, charged with rapidly integrating unmanned systems and artificial intelligence into maritime operations, is a hotbed for technology being tested, developed, and deployed. "We're learning a lot. We're failing fast. We're iterating and we're getting better," said Captain Colin Corridan, Commodore of Task Force 59.

Nickolas Guertin, Director of Department of Defense Operational Test and Evaluation, noted that some of the innovation needed is not just in the technologies and systems used, but in the processes behind them and the organizational culture that inspires people to think outside the box.

"We need to better understand what it takes to move people in a different direction," he said. "We need to embrace what we don't know."

Collaboration: Making Connections to Accelerate Progress

Complex challenges demand multi-pronged solutions. Most of all, said Vice Chief of Naval Operations Lisa Franchetti, they require collaboration. She said we are in the midst of a "decisive decade," and compared the heightened need for defense investments today to the pre-war readiness efforts of the 1930s.

"A decisive decade requires a decisive Naval force," she said. "Only a concerted effort across the executive branch, Congress, Navy, and industry can provide and maintain the fleet America needs to deter, fight, and win wars at sea. The stakes are too high, and the time is too short, to act otherwise."

AUKUS was cited as a strong example of the power of collaboration. Lisa Radocha, Executive Director of the Program

Executive Office Attack Submarines, and Vice Admiral William Houston, Commander, Naval Submarine Forces, served on a panel about the trilateral security pact between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Radocha called it a “monumental opportunity” and a “generational endeavor,” stressing that undersea warfare is one of the most important missions in the DoD.

Defense Innovation Days is one of the mechanisms SENEDIA uses to increase collaboration between industry and DoD. On the exhibitor floor, best-in-class technology, products, and programs were on display [as 30 sponsors connected with one another](#). During open questions across the three days, companies learned more about how to do business with and compete for contracts with the Department of Defense.

Other speakers featured at Defense Innovation Days include Congressman Seth Magaziner; Dr. Brett Seidle, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, Test, and Engineering; Marie Bussiere, acting Technical Director for the Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division Newport and DASN RDT&E Digital Transformation Executive for the Naval Undersea Warfare Center; and Brigadier General David Trybula, Deputy Commanding General, Combat Capabilities Development Command and Senior Commander of Natick Soldier Systems Center.

The 10th annual Defense Innovation Days will take place 26-28 August 2024 in Newport, RI. Registration will open in January.

U.S. and Republic of Palau sign agreement to strengthen ties with new chapter in maritime security and stewardship in the Pacific



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard 14th District](#)

SANTA RITA, Guam – As part of a continued commitment to enhancing maritime governance and promoting regional sovereignty, representatives of the United States and the Republic of Palau signed an expanded bilateral law enforcement agreement on Aug. 23, 2023, on the sidelines of the Joint Heads of Pacific Security conference in Palau.

“The United States and the Republic of Palau share common interests and values supporting a free and open Indo-Pacific. This agreement will help us meet our security commitments in Palau by increasing maritime domain awareness and preventing IUU Fishing within Palau’s EEZ,” said U.S. Embassy Koror’s Chargé d’Affaires, Andrew J. McLean.

This significant regional milestone agreement enables the U.S. Coast Guard to enforce regulations at sea in Palau’s exclusive economic zone (EEZ) on behalf of Palau without a Palauan officer present.

“This agreement helps Palau monitor our exclusive economic zone, protect against Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated fishing, and deter uninvited vessels from conducting questionable maneuvers within our waters,” said President Surangel S. Whipps, Jr. “It’s these types of partnerships that help us work toward our common goal of peace and prosperity in the region.”

This advancement follows the similar agreement signed with the Federated States of Micronesia in October 2022, under which the U.S. Coast Guard has conducted boardings for FSM. Additional recent regional security advancements also include the bilateral defense agreement signed with Papua New Guinea in May 2023, recently ratified by the parliament, which will enable U.S. Coast Guard boarding officers alongside their Papua New Guinea counterparts to conduct boardings in PNG’s EEZ for the first time later this year.

Through Operation Rematau, an integral part of Operation Blue Pacific and led by U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam, U.S. Coast Guard personnel actively exercise several of the 12 bilateral maritime law enforcement agreements with Pacific Island Countries annually. These agreements, which include the landmark enhanced shiprider arrangement with FSM, reinforce maritime law enforcement operations, bolster

maritime domain awareness, and foster security, safety, sovereignty, and economic prosperity throughout Oceania.

The Republic of Palau, a sovereign nation known for its hospitality, vibrant culture, and stringent marine conservation laws, comprises about 340 islands, islets, and atolls. With approximately 17,000 people, Palau is committed to protecting its rich marine environment, including some of the world's most renowned diving spots. The Palauan economy is mainly based on tourism, alongside an essential fishing industry and small-scale subsistence farming.

"We're thrilled to deepen our partnership with the Republic of Palau, an island nation with a rich history and a strong commitment to protecting their maritime resources," said Capt. Nick Simmons, U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam commander. "This agreement, in alignment with the Pacific Partnership Strategy, significantly strengthens our collective efforts to counter illicit maritime activities in the region and reflects our shared dedication to safeguarding the people of the Pacific. It provides an avenue for our teams, including our proven Fast Response Cutter crews, to increase our support to our partners in Palau."

The shiprider program supports regional coordination and aligns with the Pacific Partnership Strategy, contributing to the U.S. Coast Guard's Operation Blue Pacific and Operation Rematau. The bilateral agreements enacted in the Pacific convey the United States' ongoing investment in protecting shared resources and an interest in maritime safety and security. They also embody the U.S. Coast Guard's unwavering commitment to maritime safety, security, and stewardship in Oceania. They comprise more than 600 members in Hawaii and 300 members based in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

With this historic agreement, the U.S. continues demonstrating

an enduring presence in the Pacific, facilitating increased regional stability, security, and resilience for U.S. partners. This unity of effort with Pacific Island Countries, including the collaboration with Palau, amplifies our collective ability to protect resources and maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific for all nations who observe the rule of law.

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Active returns from 58-day counternarcotics patrol



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area](#)

PORT ANGELES, Wash. – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Active (WMEC 618) and crew returned to homeport, Thursday, after a 58-day counternarcotics patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

Sailing over 12,000 nautical miles, from the cutter's homeport in the Pacific Northwest, Active patrolled in support of a Joint Interagency Task Force South counternarcotics mission. Active's crew of 70 Coast Guard men and women worked over the course of multiple hours to locate and interdict a drug laden "go-fast" vessel using the cutter's embarked small boats. A total of 130 kg of cocaine was seized and four suspects were interdicted.

In addition to counternarcotic operations, Active played a role in the response to a search and rescue case of a missing American sailor last seen departing Mexico. In a joint effort with the Mexican Navy, Active located and investigated the sailing vessel Defiant, found overturned over 200 miles from nearest land. Active searched over 1,500 square miles of the Pacific but was unable to locate the sailor.

Active's crew successfully rescued three endangered loggerhead sea turtles that had become tangled in abandoned fishing gear. Active removed the derelict gear and properly disposed of it to prevent further harm to wildlife.

"I am very proud of the cutter and the crew's performance," said Cmdr. Adam Disque, commanding officer of the Active. "We were able to interdict illegal narcotics, assist in an international search and rescue case, and participate in a professional exchange with our partners in the Mexican Navy. The crew demonstrated professionalism and resiliency as we worked through a variety of logistical and engineering issues to keep Active mission ready. It was a great patrol and now we are looking forward to returning to cooler latitudes and spending some time with our families and friends."

Commissioned in 1966, Coast Guard Cutter Active,

affectionately nicknamed, “The Li’l Tough Guy,” is one of three medium endurance cutters homeported on the West Coast and is the oldest of all the Pacific Area major cutters. The medium endurance fleet supports all of the Coast Guard’s law enforcement, living marine resource, and search and rescue missions throughout the world.

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Munro arrives in Japan, conducts training and engagements with Japan Coast Guard



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area](#)

Aug. 21, 2023

YOKOSUKA, Japan – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Munro (WMSL 755) arrived in Yokosuka, its first international port visit while deployed in the Indo-Pacific Aug. 6.

While in Yokosuka, Munro's crew hosted several members of the Japan Coast Guard for professional exchanges including showcasing the Munro's small boat and aerial capabilities, and search-and-rescue operations. The visit enabled members from both services to discuss shared mission objectives and shared maritime security challenges.

"We are thrilled to have the opportunity to meet with the Japan Coast Guard and share each other's successes," said Capt. Rula Deisher, Munro's commanding officer. "It is a privilege for Munro and crew to work alongside our partners to support a free and open Indo-Pacific."

In May of 2022, the U.S. Coast Guard and Japan Coast Guard formally expanded cooperative agreements through a memorandum of understanding. The new perpetual operation is an expansion of an agreement made in 2010, focusing on maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific. The [2022 agreement is named SAPPHIRE](#), which stands for Solid Alliance for Peace and Prosperity with Humanity and Integrity on the Rule of law-based Engagement.

The Munro, a 418-foot national security cutter, departed its homeport, Alameda, California, June 23 for a months-long deployment to the Western Pacific.

Operating under the tactical control of the U.S. 7th Fleet, the cutter and crew will engage in professional exchanges and capacity-building exercises with partner nations while patrolling the region in support of maritime security. Munro follows on the heels of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Stratton (WMSL 752), who [recently completed an Indo-Pacific patrol](#).

Munro is operating as part of Commander, Task Force (CTF) 71, U.S. 7th Fleet's principal surface force. CTF 71 is responsible for the readiness, tactical and administrative responsibilities for forward-deployed Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers as well as any surface unit conducting independent operations in the region.

U.S. 7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy's largest forward-deployed numbered fleet, and routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area is responsible for U. S. Coast Guard operations spanning across six of the seven continents, 71 countries and more than 74 million square miles of ocean. It reaches from the shores of the West Coast of the United States to the Indo-Pacific, Eastern Pacific, Arctic and Antarctic regions. Pacific Area strives to integrate capabilities with partners to ensure collaboration and unity of effort throughout the Pacific.

As both a federal law enforcement agency and an armed force, the U.S. Coast Guard is uniquely positioned to conduct defense operations in support of combatant commanders on all seven continents. The service routinely provides forces in joint military operations worldwide, including the deployment of cutters, boats, aircraft and deployable specialized forces.

Commissioned in 2017, Munro is one of four Coast Guard legend-class national security cutters homeported in Alameda, California. National security cutters are 418-feet long, 54-feet wide, and have a 4,600 long-ton displacement. They have a top speed more than 28 knots, a range of 12,000 nautical miles, endurance of up to 90 days and can hold a crew of up to 170.

National security cutters feature advanced command and control capabilities, aviation support facilities, stern cutter boat

launch and increased endurance for long-range patrols to disrupt threats to national security further offshore.

U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia Sector/Guam's Fast Response Cutters bolster Pacific Partnership Strategy and strengthen Pacific Island Country relations



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard 14th District](#)

Aug. 18, 2023

SANTA RITA, Guam – In a robust display of maritime commitment,

U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam's Fast Response Cutters conducted four patrols over 44 days, enhancing safety and prosperity in the Pacific Islands region while combatting illicit maritime activity, including illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing and the illegal and unsafe transport of passengers.

The crews of USCGC Frederick Hatch (WPC 1143), USCGC Myrtle Hazard (WPC 1139), and USCGC Oliver Henry (WPC 1140):

- Conducted seven boardings and five observation reports.
- Completed over 20 training evolutions.
- Qualified 18 new shipboard members.
- Supported the investigation into the transport of 11 people aboard an overloaded vessel transiting to Guam from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands on an illegal charter following their rescue by DoD partners.
- Supported operations such as Operation Blue Pacific, Operation Rematau, Operation Nasse, and Operation Koa Moana.

“Our Fast Response Cutter crews exhibit both efficacy and presence as a consistent and trusted partner in the region. Our Pacific Island Country partners’ warmth and regard for the Coast Guard is a testament to the strong connections we have nurtured over the years. It is our commitment to the people of the Pacific Island Countries to protect Oceania and its resources for them from undue strategic competition that would undermine those relationships and destabilize the region,” said Cmdr. Greg Sickels, deputy sector commander of U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam.

Operational Achievements and Highlights

- USCGC Frederick Hatch (June 21 – July 2 and July 18 – Aug. 3): Enhanced international relations, streamlined boarding processes, qualified new personnel, and improved communication with FSM Maritime Police.

- USCGC Myrtle Hazard (July 3 – 16): Strengthened connection with CNMI, ensured maritime law enforcement presence in less patrolled areas, and enhanced collaboration with customs and public safety departments.
- USCGC Oliver Henry (July 18 – 23): Increased U.S. presence, enforced fishing regulations, and fostered crew readiness with weapons proficiency and collaboration.

These accomplishments underscore the U.S. Coast Guard's pivotal role in promoting maritime governance, ensuring good relations, and fostering strategic competition in the Pacific Islands region. The U.S. Coast Guard remains a consistent and reliable partner, working collaboratively with Pacific Island Countries to achieve shared objectives and bolster regional security.

Operation Rematau, an integral part of Operation Blue Pacific, is spearheaded by the U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam. This initiative fosters security, safety, sovereignty, and economic prosperity throughout Oceania. Rematau translates to "people of the deep sea" and embodies the Coast Guard's unwavering commitment to safeguarding the people of this region.

The U.S. Coast Guard actively exercises 12 bilateral maritime law enforcement agreements with Pacific Island Countries, reinforcing maritime law enforcement operations and domain awareness in the region. In October 2022, the Service, on behalf of the U.S., signed the first enhanced bilateral agreement with the Federated States of Micronesia. This landmark agreement builds on the existing shiprider arrangement, allowing the U.S. Coast Guard to conduct boardings in the FSM's exclusive economic zone with prior approval working with the FSM National Police, but without an FSM officer physically present. This expansion significantly

amplifies the FSM's capacity to protect its sovereignty and resources across an area spanning 1 million square miles and more than 600 islands. Boardings have already been conducted under this enhanced shiprider agreement, attracting interest in similar arrangements from other nations in the area.

In May 2023, the U.S. signed a new bilateral agreement with Papua New Guinea, richly endowed with natural resources like gold, copper, oil, and natural gas. While its formal sector focuses on exports of these commodities, most of its people rely on subsistence agriculture. As of 2020, agriculture, forestry, and fishing reportedly account for nearly 19 percent of PNG's GDP. The agreement aligns with the PNG government's efforts to safeguard their islands and 1.2 million square miles of EEZ, which are vital to their economic well-being. Recently ratified by their parliament, this partnership, at the request of the Papua New Guinea government, further extends the reach and impact of maritime law enforcement efforts. In line with this initiative, a U.S. Coast Guard cutter from Guam will be collaborating with Papua New Guinea to enact their new agreement shortly, continuing to foster security and collaboration across the Pacific.

U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam comprises more than 300 members based in Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands spread across shoreside and afloat units committed to maritime safety, security, and stewardship in Oceania.

For more information on the U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia Sector/Guam's operations and achievements, please visit the official [DVIDS account at https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/USCG-FMSG](https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/USCG-FMSG).

Coast Guard Cutter Dauntless Returns Home Following 42-day Multi-Mission Patrol



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area](#)

Aug. 19, 2023

PENSACOLA, Fla. – The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Dauntless (WMEC 624) returned to their homeport in Pensacola Saturday following a 42-day patrol in the Windward Pass.

Operating under the Seventh Coast Guard District's area of responsibility in support of Operation Vigilant Sentry and

Homeland Security Taskforce – Southeast, Dauntless' primary mission was deterring dangerous, illegal migration.

Notably, Dauntless' crew contributed to the protection of life at sea by detecting an overloaded 60-foot vessel with 274 persons aboard. Dauntless worked with other Coast Guard assets to safely interdict the vessel at sea and handle the subsequent care and repatriation of the individuals.

In addition, the Dauntless crew also supported the Coast Guard's counterdrug mission by detecting one go-fast vessel suspected of carrying illegal narcotics in Haitian waters.

"I am extremely impressed with the crew's excellent performance during the ship's first patrol in more than nine months following an extended maintenance period," said Cmdr. Aaron Kowalczyk, commanding officer of Dauntless. "The Dauntless' crew continues to provide for the safety of mariners and the enforcement of maritime laws and treaties."

Dauntless is a 210-foot Reliance-class medium endurance cutter. The cutter's primary missions are counter-narcotics operations, migrant interdiction, living marine resource protection, and search and rescue in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

Blue Ridge Returns to Yokosuka, Concludes Summer Patrol



[Release from U.S. 7th Fleet](#)

From Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Matt Hall, USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19) Public Affairs

YOKOSUKA, Japan – U.S. 7th Fleet flagship, USS Blue Ridge (LCC-19) returned to Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Aug. 17, after a patrol in the Indo-Pacific region.

The patrol, which began July 8, saw Blue Ridge make port visits to Singapore; Jakarta, Indonesia; Muara, Brunei; and Puerto Princesa, Philippines, enabling dialogue and relationship building among allies and partners.

“I am extremely proud of the hard work and flexibility that the crew showed during this patrol,” said Blue Ridge Commanding Officer, Capt. Dale M. Gregory. “Their professionalism and teamwork led to a successful patrol and allowed us engage with partners across the Indo-Pacific. It is in creating these people-to-people ties with our partners that

we are able further our shared interests in preserving peace and prosperity and a free and open Indo-Pacific.”

At the beginning of patrol, Blue Ridge visited Jakarta, Indonesia July 27 – 29; the ship’s first visit to the country since 2019. Thomas conducted talks with Chief of the Indonesian Maritime Security Agency (Bakamla) Vice Adm. Aan Kurnia; U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia, Ambassador Sung Y. Kim; Chief of Staff the Republic of Indonesia Fleet Command, Rear Adm. Didong Rio Duta; and other key-leaders. Additionally, members of the Seventh Fleet staff conducted staff-talks with their Indonesian Navy counterparts, aimed at improving interoperability and addressing shared maritime security challenges.

The visit to Jakarta included a by the U.S. 7th Fleet Band for local members of the Indonesian military at the @America cultural center. The band also spent time with a local school band, sharing their expertise and knowledge, later ending with a joint concert for friends and family members. Additionally, Blue Ridge and U.S. 7th Fleet staff Sailors took part in community outreach activities such as a beach clean-up, a sports day with the Indonesian Navy, and volunteering at local community programs for children.

Second, Blue Ridge conducted a post visit in Muara, Brunei Darussalam Aug. 3 – 5, the first visit to the country since 2002. There, Thomas conducted talks with U.S. Ambassador to Brunei, Her Excellency Caryn McClelland; the Minister of Defence II, The Honorable Pehin Datu Lailaraja; Major General (Retired) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi bin Haji Mohd Yussof; the Commander of Royal Brunei Armed Forces, Major General Dato Paduka Seri Haji Muhammad Haszaimi bin Bol Hassan; and other key-leaders from Brunei.

While in Brunei, Muslim Sailors had the opportunity to visit a local mosque for Friday prayers. Additionally, Blue Ridge and U.S. 7th Fleet Sailors took part in a sports day with members

of the Royal Brunei Navy, strengthening the bond between service members.

Finally, Blue Ridge conducted a port visit in Puerto Princesa, Philippines, Aug. 7 – 10, the ship's first visit there since 2019. In Puerto Princesa, Thomas and U.S. 7th Fleet leadership met with Vice Admiral Alberto Carlos, Commander, Western Command (WESCOM) and WESCOM leaders, where they discussed enhancing interoperability between the two militaries and finding ways to increase cooperation in the maritime domain. Additionally, the U.S. 7th Fleet Deputy Commander Captain Amy Bauernschmidt met with Captain Dennis Labay, the commander of Philippine Coast Guard District Palawan. Thomas and U.S. 7th Fleet staff also met with Puerto Princesa leadership including Atty. Jethro M. Palayon and Mayor Lucilo Bayron.

During the port call, the U.S. 7th Fleet Band performed in front of a live audience at SM City Mall with counterparts from the Philippine Air Force Western Command Band. Additionally, Blue Ridge hosted a tour of the ship to members of the Philippine Air Force Western Command.

Between port visits, Blue Ridge sailed 8,840 nautical miles through the Philippine Sea and the South China Sea, conducted three anchorages, 18 sea-and-anchor details, and four straight transits. 9,100 rounds of ammunition were fired in multiple live-fire exercises, and the "Golden Falcons" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 12 logged 21 hours of flight time in nine helicopter operations.

"I am extremely proud of the hard work and flexibility that the crew showed during this patrol," said Blue Ridge Commanding Officer, Capt. Dale M. Gregory. "Their professionalism and teamwork led to a successful patrol and allowed us engage with partners across the Indo-Pacific. It is in creating these people-to-people ties with our partners that we are able further our shared interests in preserving peace

and prosperity and a free and open Indo-Pacific.”

Blue Ridge is the oldest operational ship in the Navy, and as U.S. 7th Fleet command ship, is responsible for patrolling and fostering relationships within the Indo-Pacific Region.

For more news from USS Blue Ridge, visit <http://www.navy.mil/local/lcc19/>.

Coast Guard shifts response focus to maritime environment after Maui Fires



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard 14th District](#)

Aug. 14, 2023

HONOLULU – Coast Guard first responders are shifting the focus of response resources to minimizing maritime environmental impacts from the Maui fires while remaining ready to respond to any new reports of individuals in the water, Monday.

The Coast Guard has deployed pollution response teams and equipment to affected locations, to include a 100-foot boom placed at the mouth of the Lahaina Harbor, to contain potential hazardous contaminants and materials.

“While the Coast Guard is always postured for search and rescue operations, we are also focused on minimizing maritime environmental impacts as a result of the Maui fires,” said Cmdr. Kyra Dykeman, the deputy incident commander for the Coast Guard Maui fire response. “We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to the community we serve.”

The Coast Guard has a safety zone established from Wahikuli Wayside Park to Launiupoko Beach Park, extending one nautical mile seaward from the shoreline.

The safety zone, enforced by the Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team Honolulu, remains in effect as potential hazards in the waterway are still being evaluated. Safety zones are critical in protecting people, vessels, and the marine environment. In this response, the safety zone aids our partner agencies and first responders by allowing them to facilitate operational mandates and conduct thorough assessments without physical disruption by outside sources.

Coast Guard divers from Regional Dive Locker Pacific, in coordination with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration, are using Side-Scan Sonar and a Submersible Remote Operated Vehicle to map the Lahaina Channel and coastline off Lahaina in order to detect hazards that would make the channel unsafe for passage.

The Coast Guard National Strike Force (NSF) arrived on Maui Friday, to aid in the environmental response operation. The NSF provides highly trained, experienced personnel and specialized equipment to the Coast Guard and other federal agencies to facilitate responses to oil and hazardous substance pollution incidents in order to protect public health and the environment.

For those mariners with questions regarding transit of the safety zone, owners of vessels impacted by the Lahaina fires, and reports of pollution in and around Lahaina Harbor, please call 808-723-0008. For all other questions or concerns please contact the Maui Emergency Operations Center at (808) 205-9328.

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Healy, scientists deploy ice stations



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area](#)

Editor's Note: Click [here](#) for more U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Healy imagery

BEAUFORT SEA – U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Healy (WAGB 20) crew and embarked researchers ventured onto a floe of multi-year ice for the first of three multi-instrument ice stations in the Arctic Ocean Basin late July and early August.

As the Healy carefully approached and maintained position alongside an ice floe above 77 degrees north, the crew and a team of scientists, working in cooperation with the Office of Naval Research, (ONR) offloaded a diverse collection of equipment on to the floe carefully selected for its size and composition of multi-year ice.

The objectives included the installation of two major instruments: the Waves, Weather, Ice Mass, Balance, and Ocean (WIMBO) device, a massive weather buoy destined to remain at sea; and a Dynamic Ocean Topography device, collecting sea surface data. Science instruments like the WIMBO are

individual components of a greater project, the Arctic Mobile Observing System (AMOS), a network of robotic oceanographic instruments making years-long autonomous observations of ocean and sea ice physics.

The science party, headed by Dr. Craig Lee of the University of Washington's Applied Physics Laboratory is comprised of the foremost leaders in the field of oceanographic science.

"The ONR AMOS program focuses on developing technologies for making continuous, long-term scientific observations of the Arctic marine environment," said Lee. "The partnership between the U.S. Coast Guard and science is critical to these endeavors, as are the unique capabilities of Healy and the skill of its crew."

Healy is the Coast Guard's only icebreaker specifically designed for Arctic research, as well as the nation's sole surface presence routinely operating in the Arctic Ocean. The platform is ideal for projects like AMOS; providing access to the most remote reaches of the Arctic Ocean; areas barricaded by pack ice and insurmountable by most research vessels.

Its normal operations revolve around over-the-side science instrument deployments and Conductivity, Temperature, and Depth casts; both of which have been the focus during its month-long trip with ONR.

Healy proved capable of further support to the science party, precisely locating and keeping station along an ice floe, preserving its structural integrity for on-ice activity. The ability to delicately maneuver the 16,000 ton (displacement) ship while coordinating on-ice activities speaks to the crew's familiarity with the region. The unity of effort between the Coast Guard, the U.S. Navy, and the National Ice Center representatives that guided them there; further solidifies Healy as a permanent and experienced steward of the Arctic Ocean.

Healy is 1-month into a 5-month deployment in support of science missions across the Arctic region. Following the work in support of the Office of Naval Research, Healy embarks a team of international scientists to recover and redeploy oceanographic instruments as part of the Nansen and Amundsen Basin Observational System (NABOS). The NABOS instruments have collected Arctic data for more than 20 years, contributing to an international body of knowledge through the U.S. National Science Foundation's Arctic Observing Network.

Commissioned in 1999, the Healy is one of two active polar icebreakers and is the largest and most technologically advanced icebreaker in the Coast Guard. The crew compliment of 84 supports the primary mission of scientific support.

UPDATE 1: Coast Guard, agencies continue response to Western Maui Fires



[Release from Coast Guard 14th District](#)

Aug. 10, 2023

HONOLULU – The Coast Guard, along with federal, state, and local partners continue to respond following the Lahaina wildfires in Maui, HI.

A total of 17 lives were saved from the water and 40 survivors were located ashore by Coast Guard Station Maui boat crews. The Coast Guard has no reports of missing persons in the water, however Coast Guard aircrews and surface assets continue search and rescue operations.

“Today, our assets remain actively engaged in the search and rescue response and our responders are operating and searching as though there may still be survivors in need of assistance,” said Capt. Aja L. Kirksey, Sector Commander of Coast Guard Sector Honolulu.

U.S. Coast Guard aircrews are also supporting overflight assessments of the impacted area and are transporting additional personnel with specialized training and equipment to assist in the response efforts. Wednesday, Lt. Gov. Sylvia Luke flew aboard a Coast Guard C-130 to assess the fire damage and observe response efforts firsthand.

Response efforts include:

- Coast Guard Station Maui Response Boat Medium and Maui Fire Department jointly transported survivors from the shoreline to triage locations.
- Department of Defense asset support: U.S. Navy: (2) Black Hawks; U.S. Army: (1) Black Hawk; National Guard: (2) Chinooks.
- District 14 requested National Strike Team, Incident Management Assistance Team, Marine Safety and Security Team (MSST), and Dive Locker Pacific assistance. Two MSST crews, a Remotely Operated Vehicle, and Coast Guard Divers were transported via C-130 to supplement Station Maui.
- Air Station Barbers Point MH-65 launched to assist. 02 United States Navy H-60s from HSM-37 flying sorties. Coast Guard C-130 providing overflights and crew transfers to Maui.
- Search efforts have included 13 sorties covering 689 square nautical miles.
- A safety zone was established 3 nautical miles North and South of Lahaina and extending one nautical mile offshore.
- 02 USCG members are deployed to Maui County Emergency Operations Center.
- District 14 Public Affairs is supporting the newly established Joint Information Center at the State EOC.

We continue to urge residents to heed the safety warnings and adhere to evacuation orders and safety guidelines issued by local authorities. Officials have issued a safety zone and temporary flight restrictions in the vicinity of Lahaina Harbor and surrounding areas for the safety of first responders and the public.

Contact the Maui Emergency Operations Center for emergency operations information at (808) 205-9328.

Updates will be provided via the Fourteenth Coast Guard District's social media page: @USCGHawaiiPAC

Media requests for additional information may be directed to the District 14 Public Affairs Office at uscgd14mauifires@gmail.com.