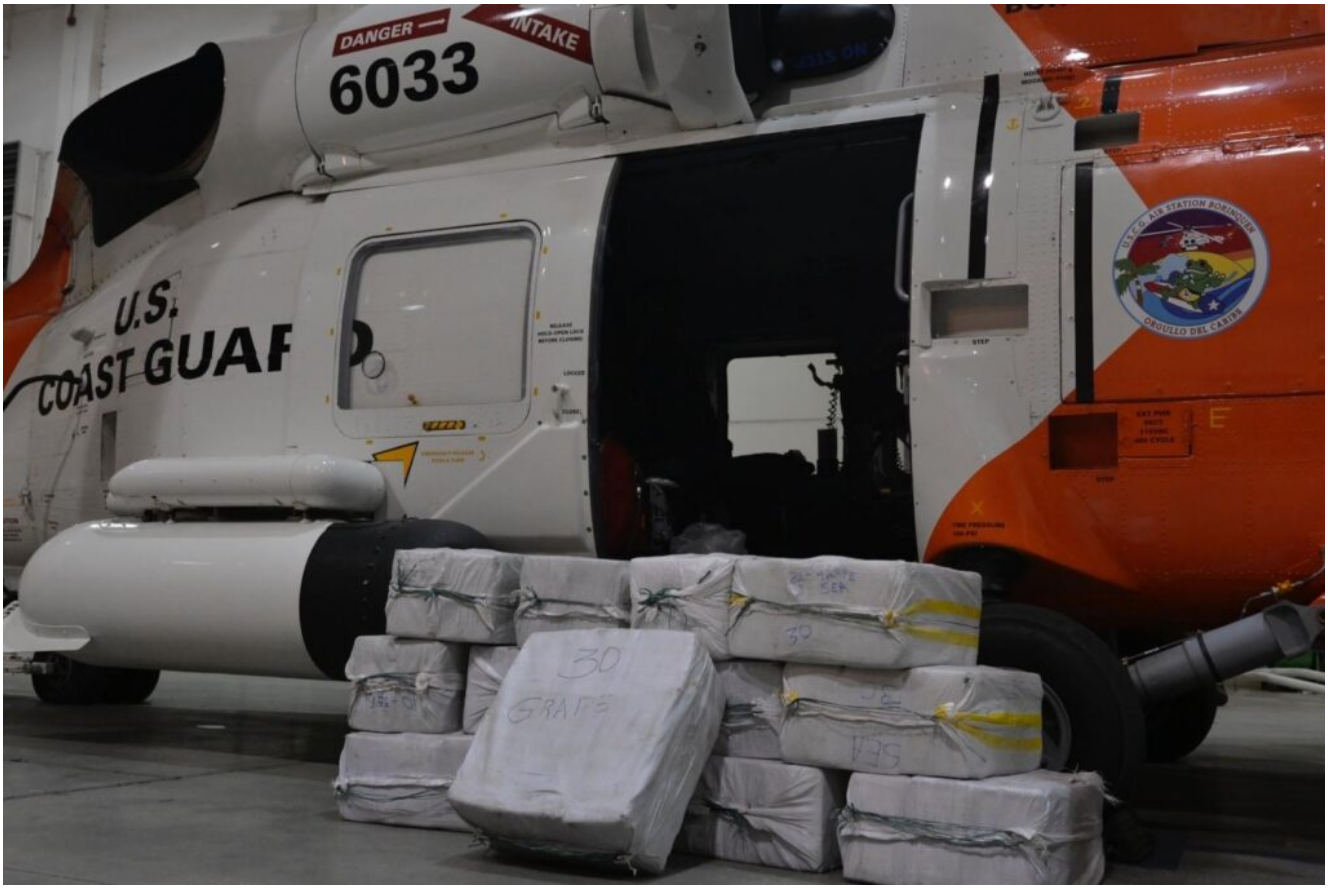
Joint operation leads to cocaine seizure in Bahamas



U.S. Coast Guard 7th District, March 29, 2024

MIAMI – U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen aircrews assisted the Royal Bahamas Police Force and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration with the transfer and disposition of approximately 391 kilos of cocaine worth an estimated value of $7.5 million, Tuesday, at the Mayaguana Airport in The Bahamas.

Operation Bahamas Turks and Caicos partners collaborated to interdict the contraband.

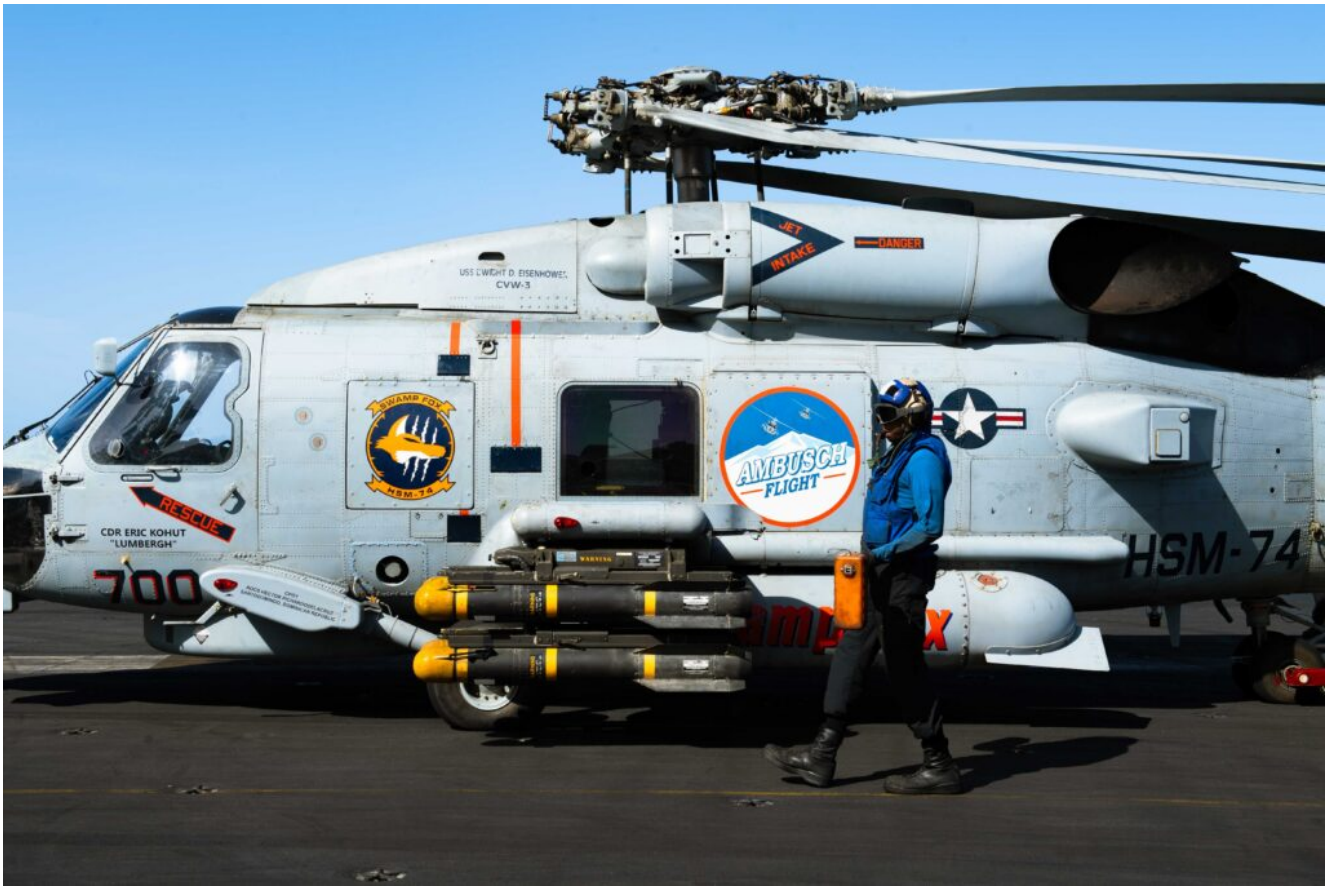
The Royal Bahamas Police Force Drug Enforcement Unit coordinated with Mayaguana Airport Police and DEA agents to seize a suspected smuggling aircraft and discovered the contraband.

The RBPF took custody of a suspected smuggler and the RBPF public affairs and communication department reported that the case investigation is ongoing.

The drug bust follows the recent 2024 Northern Caribbean Security Summit held in The Bahamas earlier this month. The NOCSS was the third-annual meeting between executive and law enforcement leaders from the United States, The Bahamas, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and the United Kingdom. At the summit, leaders discussed ways to modernize, integrate, and position joint security relationships to confront the complex threats of the 21st century. NOCSS partners continuously work across the region to dismantle criminal networks, block malign actors, support strong judiciaries, and stop the trafficking of drugs, guns, wildlife, and people.

OPBAT is a partnership between the DEA, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the U.S. Department of State, and law enforcement entities of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands to stop the flow of illicit narcotics through the Caribbean, destined for the United States or other jurisdictions. OPBAT assets also regularly assist with prosecuting human smuggling and search and rescue cases throughout its area of responsibility.

March 28 Red Sea Update

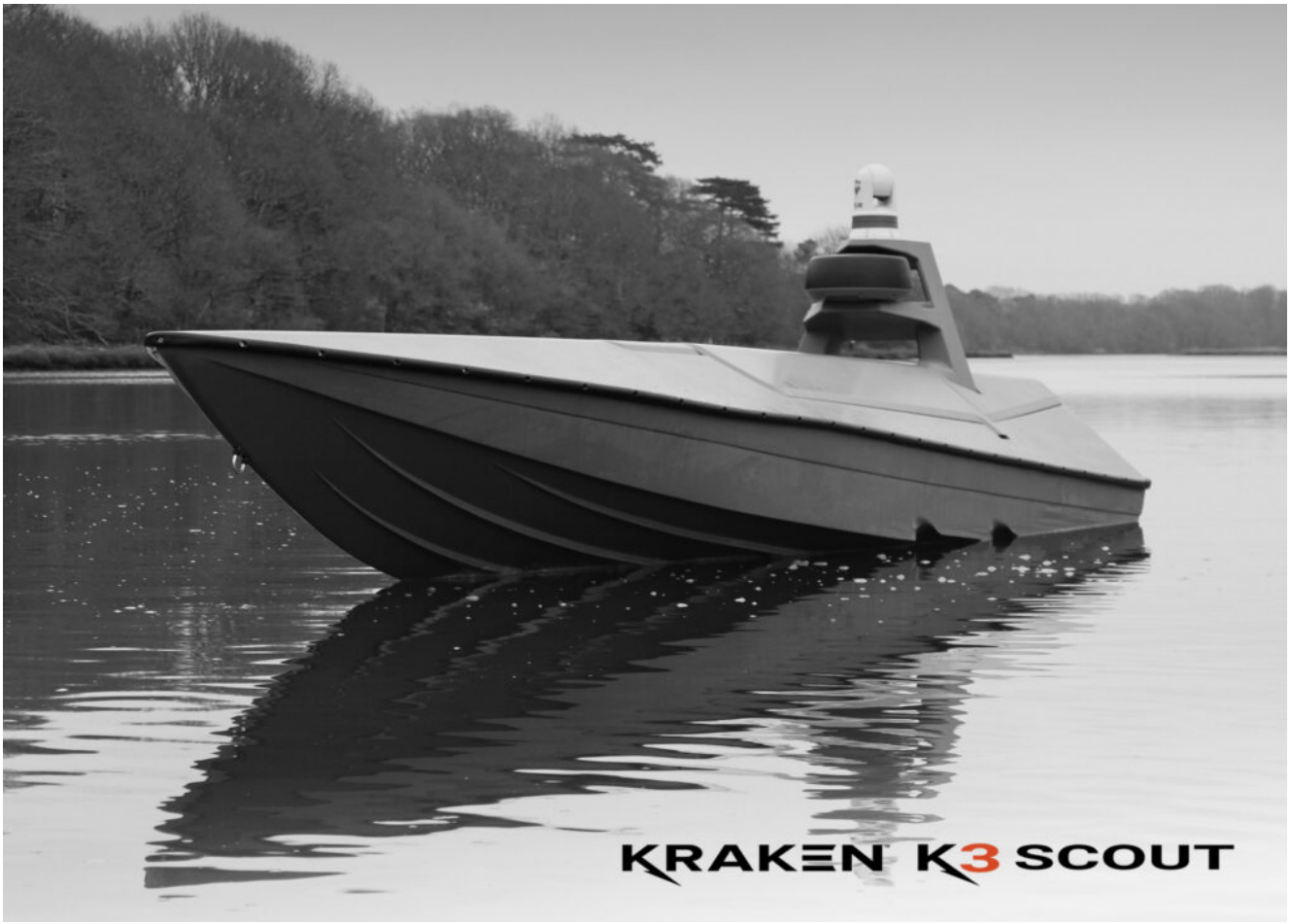


RED SEA (March 20, 2024) An aviation boatswain's mate (handling) taxis an MH-60R Sea Hawk helicopter from the "Swamp Foxes" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 74 aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) in the Red Sea, March 20, 2024. (U.S. Navy photo)
U.S. Central Command, March 28, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – Between 6:00 and 10:56 p.m. (Sanaa time) on March 28, and for the second day in a row, U.S. Central Command successfully engaged and destroyed four unmanned aerial systems (UAS) launched by Iranian backed Houthi terrorists in Yemen. These UAS were aimed at a Coalition vessel and a U.S. warship and were engaged in self-defense over the Red Sea. There were no injuries or damage reported to U.S. or coalition ships.

It was determined these weapons presented an imminent threat to merchant vessels and U.S. Navy ships in the region. These actions are taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S. Navy and merchant vessels.

Kraken Forms PartnershipWith Auterion to Boost Autonomous Capabilities in Security Boat Sector



LONDON, U.K., and ARLINGTON Va. – Kraken Technology Group, a maritime technology leader specialising in the disruptive design and manufacturing of high-performance platforms, and Auterion, the company building the software-defined future for mobile robotics and powering the world's leading drone manufacturers, have announced a strategic partnership to exponentially develop autonomous capabilities in the high-performance littoral security boat sector.

The partnership is focused around the development and implementation of modular, low-cost autonomy software and UxV systems for the maritime domain. The agreement will initially focus on integrated autonomy architecture for Kraken's K3 SCOUT and K4 MANTA uncrewed platforms.

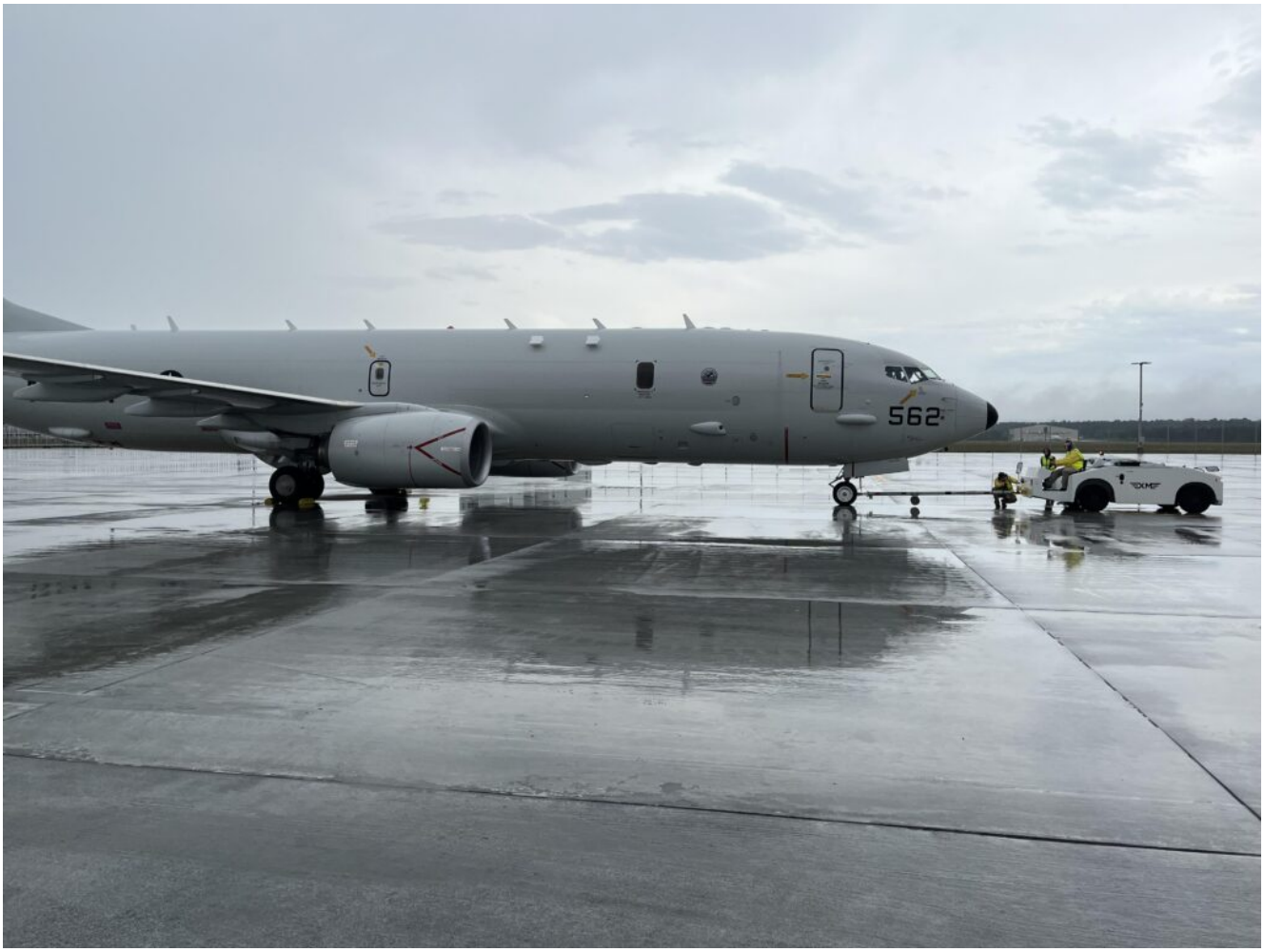
Auterion's Skynode X, AuterionOS and numerous capability 'Apps' have already been developed and integrated into Kraken's K3 SCOUT USV, which is currently undergoing open water sea trials. AuterionOS' open software architecture unlocks the ability to create new apps as needed, continuously expanding Kraken's ability to serve the wide variety of use cases necessary in maritime domains.

"We are thrilled to be able to extend our expertise into the maritime domain alongside like-minded pioneers and littoral platform experts Kraken. The work done and the progress achieved to date on the development of K3's uncrewed capability has been impressive and visionary," said Lorenz Meier, CEO at Auterion.

Mal Crease, Founder and CEO of Kraken Technology Group, said: *"Collaborating with Auterion on the rapid development of the K3 SCOUT USV has opened our eyes to the size and scale of the technical transformation already underway and has already delivered unique capabilities in record time. We very much look forward to an exciting future transforming littoral manoeuvre with Auterion."*

U.S. Navy Delivers First P-8A

Poseidon Aircraft for Increment 3 Block 2 Modifications



The U.S. Navy delivered the first P-8A Poseidon aircraft to be modified with Increment 3 Block 2 capabilities to Boeing on March 27. Modificationsare expected to be complete in late 2025.

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The U.S. Navy delivered the first P-8A Poseidon aircraft to be modified with Increment 3 Block 2 capabilities to Boeing on March 27, enabling the fleet to be outfitted with the full anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare (ASuW), and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities outlined in the P-8A program’s evolutionary acquisition strategy.

The P-8A is the Department of Defense's only long-range full-spectrum ASW, cue-to-kill platform, with substantial armed ASuW and networked ISR capabilities. Increment 3 Block 2 provides a significant upgrade to the P-8A airframe and avionics systems, and includes new airframe racks, radomes, antennas, sensors, and wiring. The modification incorporates a new combat systems suite with an improved computer processing and higher security architecture capability, a wide band satellite communication system, an ASW signals intelligence capability, a track management system, and additional communications and acoustics systems to enhance search, detection and targeting capabilities.

"Increment 3 Block 2 brings the capability that the P-8A was made for. These modifications will allow aircrews to search, locate and track the most advanced submarines in the world, enabling the fleet to pace the threat with the required capability and capacity to win the fight," said Capt. Erik Thomas, program manager for the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft program office, PMA-290. "This delivery demonstrates the PMA-290 team's outstanding work ethic, professionalism and dedication to the fleet."

Increment 3 Block 2 related modifications will begin at Boeing's Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul hangar at Cecil Airport in Jacksonville, Florida. The first fleet aircraft modification is expected to be complete in January 2025.

"P-8A Increment 3 is the next step in the spiral evolution of Poseidon. By design, and through the efforts of NAVAIR and industry teaming, Increment 3 Block 2 represents the baseline configuration the Navy needs to address tomorrow's high-end threat," said Rear Adm. Adam Kijek, Commander, Patrol and Reconnaissance Group/Patrol and Reconnaissance Group Pacific.

In response to evolving threats around the world, future P-8A modifications will be implemented via a sequence of rapid capability insertion efforts that build upon this new

Increment 3 Block 2 baseline.

As of March 2024, U.S. Navy fleet squadrons have taken delivery of 119 P-8A aircraft. P-8A active duty and reserve squadron transition training is complete for all 14 fleet squadrons and one fleet replacement squadron. In addition, the P-8A fleet has flown for more than 503,783 flight hours and recorded more than 440,558 landings.

PMA-290 manages the acquisition, development, support and delivery of the U.S. Navy's maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft.

March 27 Red Sea Update

SEAPOWER
The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

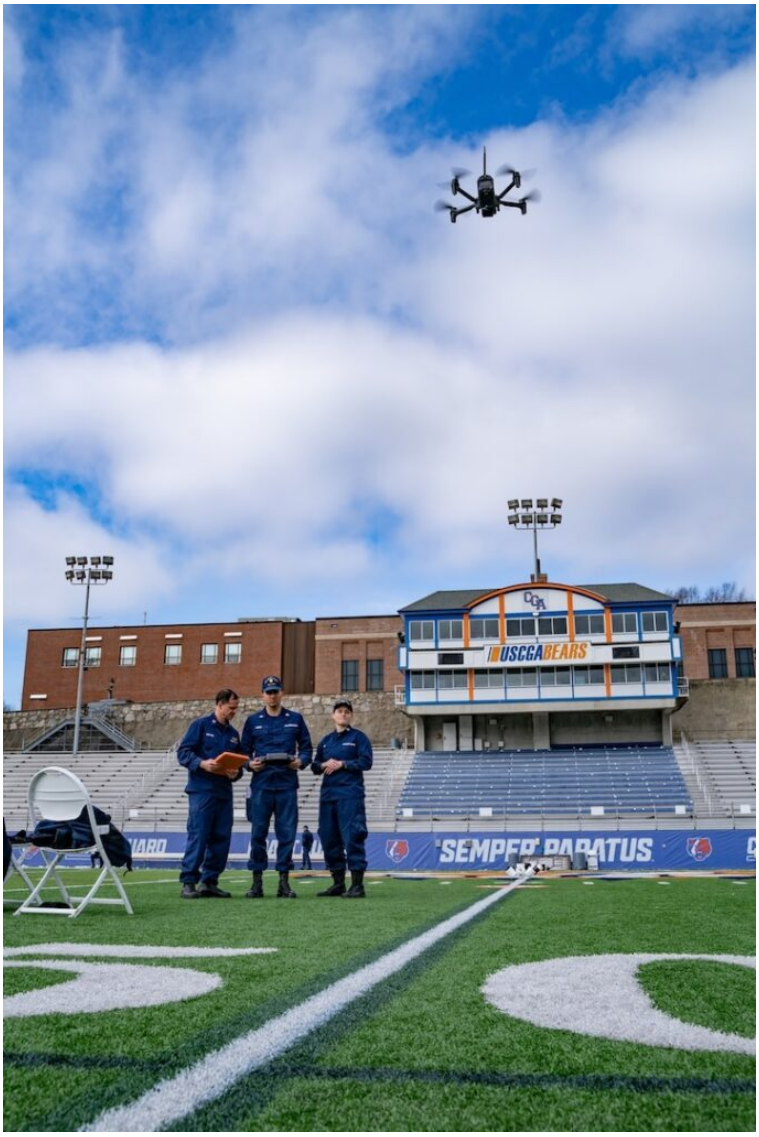
From U.S. Central Command, March 27, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – Between 2:00 and 2:20 a.m. (Sanaa time) on March 27, United States Central Command successfully engaged and destroyed four long-range unmanned aerial systems (UAS)

launched by Iranian-backed Houthi terrorists in Yemen. These UAS were aimed at a U.S. warship and engaged in self-defense over the Red Sea. There were no injuries or damage reported to U.S. or coalition ships.

It was determined these weapons presented an imminent threat to merchant vessels and U.S. Navy ships in the region. These actions are taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S. Navy and merchant vessels.

Unmanned Systems Help Coast Guard Members Navigate the Future



By David Santos, Coast Guard Academy External Affairs, March 27, 2024

U.S. Coast Guard leaders envision a future where Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) launched from Coast Guard cutters monitor air and surface contacts or fly autonomously inside large ships to inspect vessel tanks and other hazardous compartments.

Or, using sensors small enough to be installed on small UASs or Autonomous Underwater Vehicles (AUV), measure surface oil spill thickness and help direct assets to heavily impacted areas during oil spill responses.

These future scenarios are some of the strategic objectives outlined in the service’s Unmanned Systems Strategic Plan,

which was released last year.

The Coast Guard has been exploring the use of long, medium, and short range unmanned aerial systems since 2008 to provide a cost effective way to increase the operational presence of the service in an increasingly complex maritime environment.

Today cadets, faculty, and staff members at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy are taking the next step in helping to make this vision of the future a reality.

Capt. Brian Maggi and retired Capt. Daniel Burbank, faculty members from the Academy's Engineering Department, are helping to build a network of licensed drone operators. Their goal is to increase the number of Coast Guard members capable of using the technology in the fleet to help bridge the gap between the huge responsibilities the service is tasked with and the limited resources it is given.

As qualified Short Range Unmanned Aerial System (SR-UAS) Instructor Pilots, Maggi and Burbank are currently teaching a course to help a wide range of Academy personnel complete all the requirements to earn the Coast Guard SR-UAS qualification by the end of the semester.

"The initial solicitation for this course resulted in 60 cadet responses," Maggi said. "Many of our cadets are already experienced UAS pilots and know the capabilities of these systems better than we do. As Instructor Pilots, we can empower this group to help the Coast Guard innovate how UAS are integrated into operations and mission support. For the cadets and Coast Guard personnel with limited or no experience, the goal is to foster their curiosity to inspire them to grow into this community and create awareness of how these systems may be a force multiplier for all Coast Guard missions."

"It's very inspiring to see how quickly the cadets learn how

to precisely fly the drones and how to use the high resolution electro-optical and infrared imagers for target detection and identification," Burbank said. "They've got great 'stick and rudder' flying skills," he adds, "and are innovative in the ways they use the dozens of flight and imagery modes to get the most benefit from system capabilities."

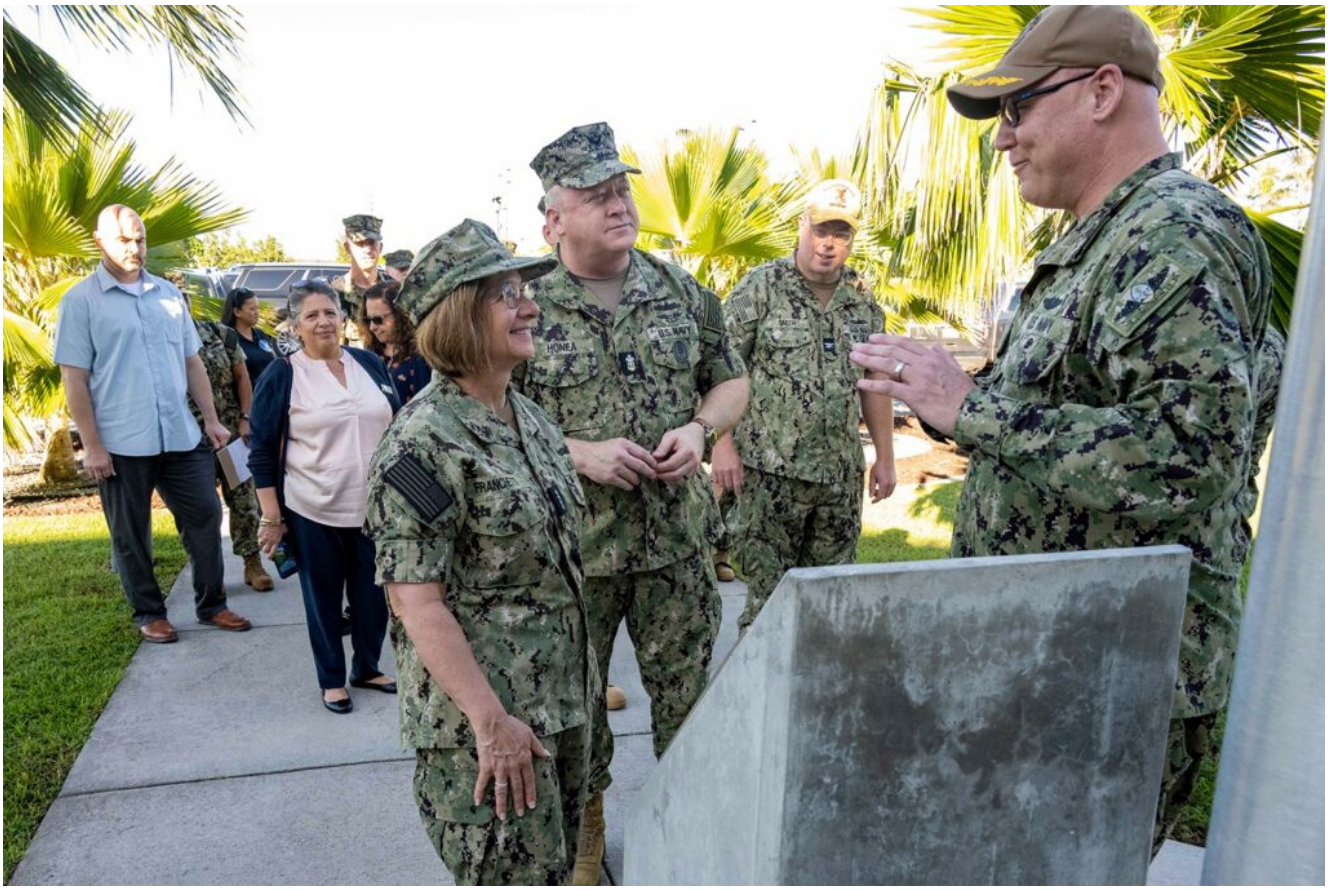
Future plans call for establishing a 3-credit course that would teach cadets how to acquire imagery and video for engineering, science, and Coast Guard mission support. From there an expansion into the Cyber Systems and Operations Research & Data Analytics majors is planned to support the use of this technology in a variety of Coast Guard missions.

"Having come from an organization where human operators routinely use robotic systems to augment and extend their reach and vision, this feels much the same," said Burbank, who completed several spaceflight missions as one of three Astronauts who have graduated from the Academy. "These systems with talented and trained humans-in-the-loop will make the Coast Guard much more effective just as they do NASA."

As our maritime infrastructure and environment becomes more complex, Coast Guard personnel will be ready to employ unmanned systems to advance the safety and security of U.S. ports and waterways.

Navy's Top Officer Credits Training, Logistics with

Meeting Red Sea Mission



By Matthew Olay, DOD News

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti yesterday said she credits both a recent transformation in the Navy's surface warfare training regimen and the quality of logistics operations for the service's ability to successfully counter recent attacks by Iranian-backed Houthi terrorists in the Red Sea.

Navy assets have been operating in the Red Sea since December as part of Operation Prosperity Guardian, a U.S.-led, multinational coalition established to counter attacks by Houthi terrorists on merchant and naval vessels.

"[Operation Prosperty Guardian] is a great coalition of nations that are really standing up for the rules-based international order as we work to preserve the free flow of commerce through the Red Sea, through the Bab el-Mandeb , and

on into the Gulf of Aden," Franchetti said.

During a discussion on the overall state of the Navy with the Defense One digital media platform in Washington, Franchetti was asked about what lessons the Navy has learned in the months since it first began participating in the coalition.

The first lesson, Franchetti said, relates to a transformation in surface warfare training that began roughly nine years ago. At that time, the Navy brought in highly trained instructors to teach members of the surface warfare community how to bring a tactical edge to the field.

"And now you see nine years later, … we've set up reach-back to our warfighting centers to be able to really understand what's going on in the operating environment, to be able to adjust tactics, techniques procedures," said Franchetti, who lauded the quality of Navy training across all surface-ship platforms and the entire joint force.

"I think the investments that we made are really paying off," she said, " those great lessons that we're learning about how to innovate while we're out there in the same battle space."

Franchetti also highlighted how the evolving quality of the logistics operations being conducted during Operation Prosperity Guardian is contributing to the Navy's overall operational readiness.

"We had to bring some of our ships out of the Red Sea, originally, to be able to do some of the things they needed to do," explained Franchetti. "But now we've been able to work with allies and partners to be able to do that right on station and really keep everybody in the fight."

Franchetti pointed out that the Navy is successfully conducting multiple logistics operations on a daily basis in

regions beyond the Red Sea.

“I’m really proud of how our forces are set up across all of our different regions to be able to respond and to be able to pull together to provide the resources we need to keep our operations going,” she said. “I think it’s a real testament to the work that’s been done in the past to enable us to do this work now and into the future.”

Houthi militants have attacked or threatened Navy and commercial vessels more than 100 times since late November of last year, according to U.S. Central Command. In response to these attacks, U.S. and coalition forces have conducted 50 self-defense strikes as of March 25.

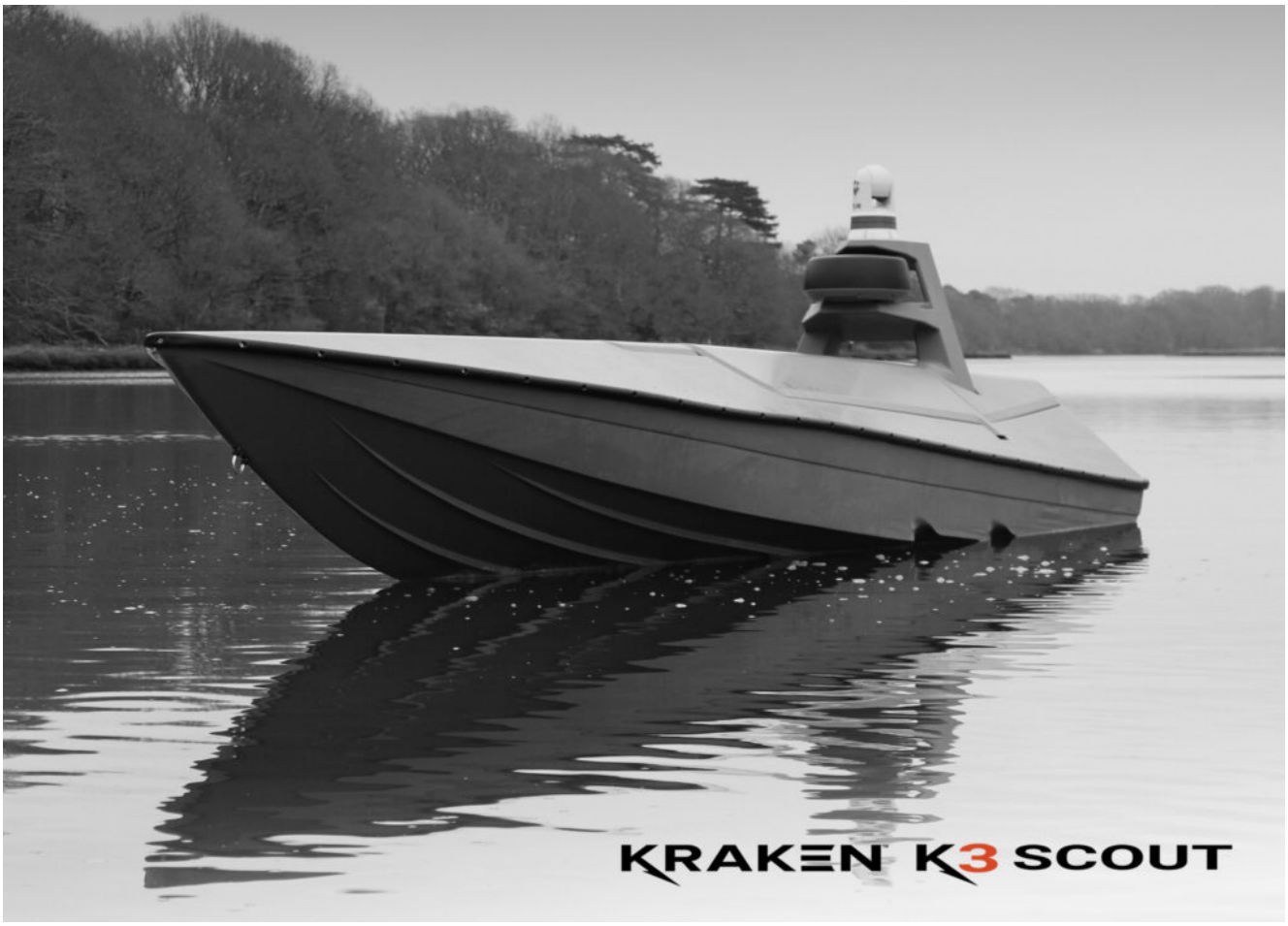
Beyond current and future naval operations, Franchetti, who was promoted to chief of naval operations last November, also discussed unmanned vehicles, shipbuilding, retention and quality of life.

“I could not be more proud of our Navy team or more focused on building the Navy that our nation needs to do all the missions that count on us to do every single day,” said Franchetti.

“And I’m really looking forward to working … with all of our stakeholders to be able to do that over the next four years that I’m here as CNO.”

Kraken Teams with Auterion to Boost Autonomous Capabilities

for Security Boats



Kraken’s K3 Scout USV. *Kraken Technology Group*

LONDON, UK, and ARLINGTON, Virginia – Kraken Technology Group and Auterion have announced a strategic partnership to exponentially develop autonomous capabilities in the high-performance littoral security boat sector.

The partnership is focused around the development and implementation of modular, low-cost autonomy software and UxV systems for the maritime domain. The agreement will initially focus on integrated autonomy architecture for Kraken’s K3 Scout and K4 Manta uncrewed platforms.

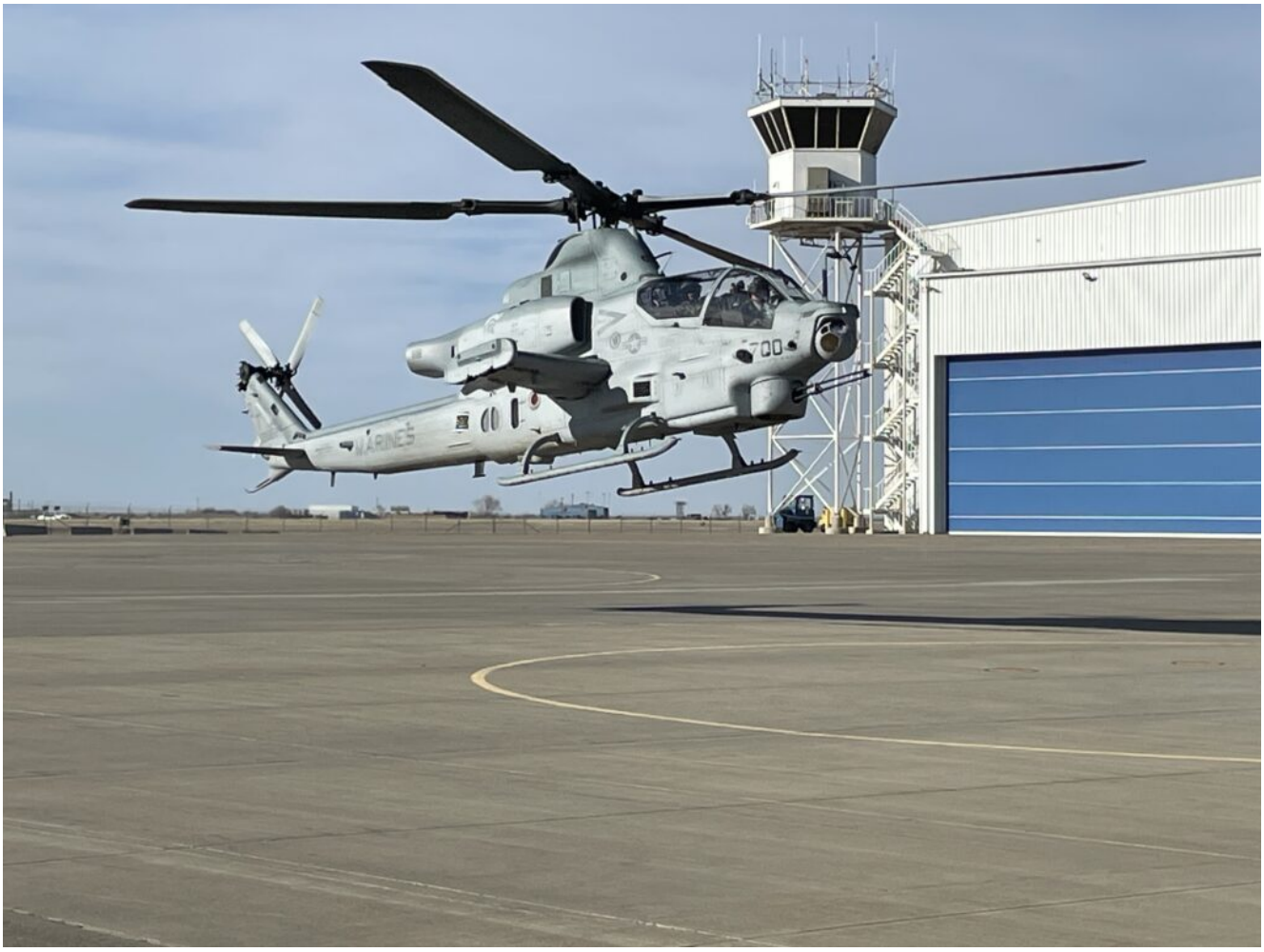
Auterion’s Skynode X, AuterionOS and numerous capability apps have already been developed and integrated into Kraken’s K3 Scout USV, which is currently undergoing open-water sea trials. AuterionOS’ open software architecture unlocks the ability to create new apps as needed, continuously expanding

Kraken’s ability to serve the wide variety of use cases necessary in maritime domains.

“We are thrilled to be able to extend our expertise into the maritime domain alongside like-minded pioneers and littoral platform experts Kraken. The work done and the progress achieved to date on the development of K3’s uncrewed capability has been impressive and visionary,” said Auterion CEO Lorenz Meier.

“Collaborating with Auterion on the rapid development of the K3 Scout USV has opened our eyes to the size and scale of the technical transformation already underway and has already delivered unique capabilities in record time,” said Kraken founder and CEO Mal Crease. “We very much look forward to an exciting future transforming littoral maneuver with Auterion.”

First AH-1Z to Receive SIEPU Upgrade Arrives at Bell Amarillo Assembly Center



The Bell AH-1Z arrives at the assembly center for the SIEUP modification. *Bell Textron*

AMARILLO, Texas – The first Bell AH-1Z set to receive the Structural Improvement Electrical Power Upgrade (SIEPU) modification to be provided by Bell Textron Inc. under a contract with the U.S. Marine Corps has arrived at Bell's Amarillo Assembly Center.

SIEPU modifications optimize the aircraft to improve mission capabilities, aircrew safety and interoperability by increasing the electrical power capacity on the aircraft and supporting the integration of additional cabin capabilities. SIEPU marks the start of the next chapter in the life of domestic H-1 helicopters, following the completion of the U.S. Marine Corps Program of Record in November 2022.

"The Bell AH-1Z Viper and UH-1Y Venom provide the backbone of attack and utility aviation support in the various battlespaces in which they are used, so SIEPU comes at an

important time for the future strategic implementation of this platform," said Mike Deslatte, Bell H-1 senior vice president and program director. "SIEPU will be immediately beneficial for today's operations, and also sets the H-1 up to quickly support future operational needs, some that may not even be conceived of yet."

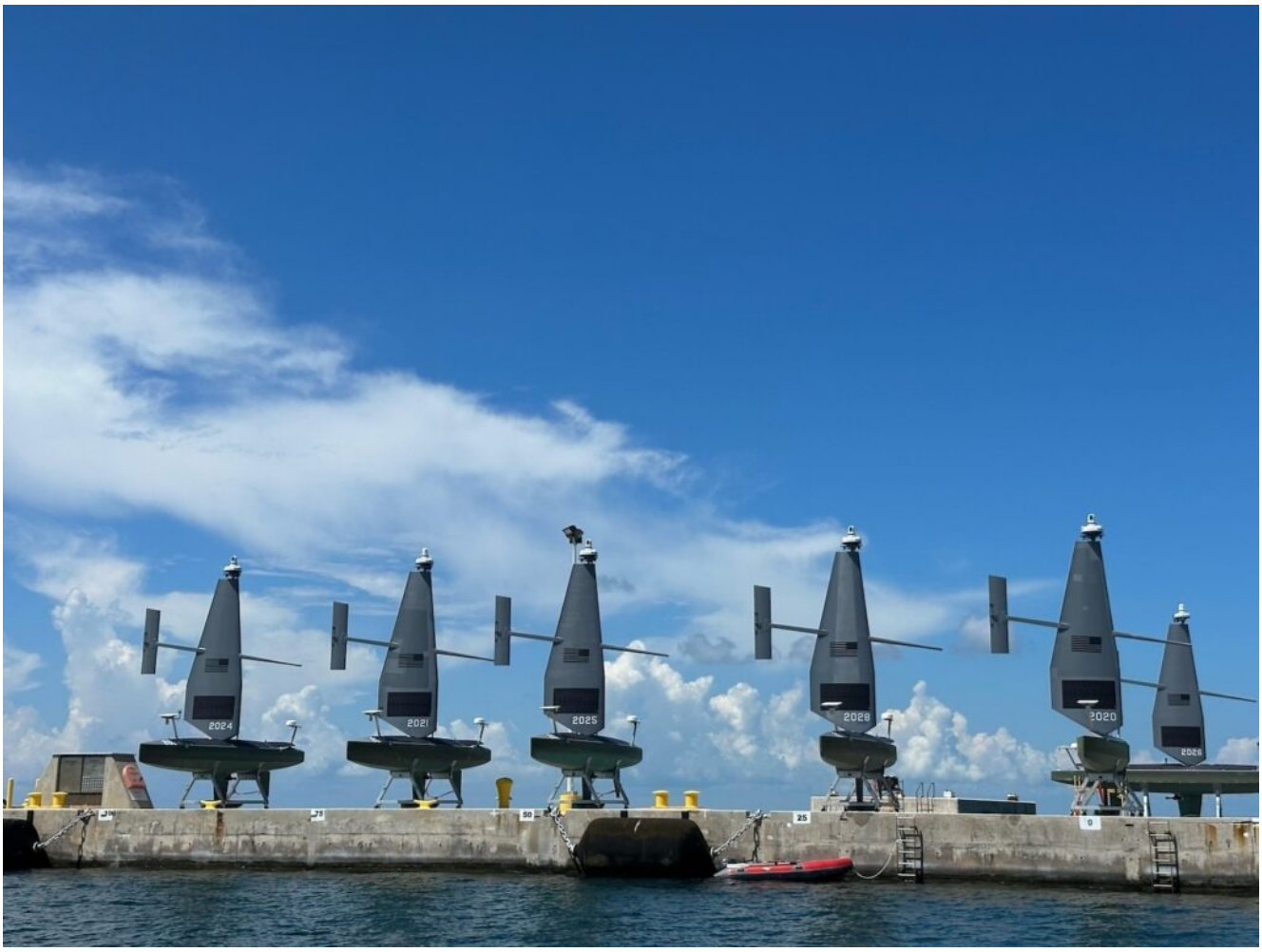
With SIEPU, H-1s will be able to upgrade to current weapons systems with next-generation capabilities, including kinetic long-range munitions and air launched effects as well as new non-kinetic capabilities. These upgrades greatly extend reach and range while simultaneously enhancing standoff distance.

While the H-1s have already demonstrated their capability to counter enemy unmanned aerial systems, SIEPU will also allow for there to be enough on-board power capacity for future weapons that are yet to be implemented.

"We are confident that SIEPU will help the Marine Corps expand mission essential tasks with more mission flexibility," said Danielle Markham, SIEPU program manager. "The important thing is to make sure the H-1 is in a position to take advantage of those opportunities as they become available."

Prior to arriving at the Bell Amarillo Assembly Center, the AH-1Z and UH-1Y completed datalink capabilities testing with the Marine Corps modifications at Camp Pendleton and testing with VMX-1 in Yuma. Bell plans to continue supporting the AH-1Z Viper and UH-1Y Venom through the 2040s in alignment with the Marine Corps Aviation Plan.

Benign 4th Fleet AOR Useful for Unmanned Vehicle Operationalization, Admiral Says



230913-N-N3764-1001 NAVAL STATION KEY WEST, Fl. – (Sept. 13, 2023) – Commercial operators deploy Saildrone Voyager Unmanned Surface Vessels (USVs) out to sea in the initial steps of U.S. 4th Fleet's Operation Windward Stack during a launch from Naval Air Station Key West's Mole Pier and Truman Harbor, Sept. 13, 2023.

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy's use of unmanned systems in the U.S 4th Fleet area of operations (AOR) is enabling the fleet to move from experimentation to operationalization of the

unmanned systems, even discovering unanticipated advantages of those systems.

The stability of the region and the relatively benign environment – from high-end threats – of the fleet's AOR has enabled the fleet to experiment with unmanned systems and develop trust in them, said Rear Admiral James Aiken, commander, U.S. 4th Fleet and commander, Naval Forces, U.S. Southern Command, in a March 27 Defense One webinar conversation.

"This is a take-risk AOR," Aiken said, noting that the environment allows the fleet to experiment in "creative ways" with unmanned systems.

"We want to take unmanned systems and operationalize them," he said.

For one example, he said that unmanned surface vessels can identify ships and boats engaged in illegal fishing.

The admiral said that leasing unmanned systems for experimentation – as opposed to procuring them – enables the fleet to more easily discontinue use of systems that prove inadequate. He mentioned one system – which he did not name – that proved to be deficient for its role in high sea states.

Aiken said that during the last UNITAS exercise with regional navies, a representative from the U.S. 5th Fleet attended as an advisor. The 5th Fleet's Task Force 59 has for several years conducted experimentation with unmanned surface vessels (USVs) in the Missile East.

Aiken said that one surprising discovery was the deterrent value of USVs. He said that the very presence of Saildrone USVs north of the northern coast of Haiti served as a deterrent to migrants seeking to reach another shore, including the United States.