

NAVAIR Taps Mercury to Provide Advanced Data Transfer Systems for Navy Aircraft

ANDOVER, Mass., Oct. 21, 2024 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – Mercury Systems, Inc., a technology company that delivers mission-critical processing power to the edge, today announced it was awarded a five-year contract worth as much as \$131.3 million from the U.S. Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) to continue providing secure data transfer systems for naval aircraft.

Mercury has been delivering [Advanced Data Transfer Systems](#) (ADTS) and components to the Navy since 2017 to support numerous rotary-wing and fixed-wing aircraft. These rugged, flexible, and proven systems simplify the secure transfer of data between planners on the ground and aircraft, significantly improving operational readiness of these airborne assets. The new indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contract will allow Mercury to deliver upgraded power-thrifty ADTS units that incorporate the company's [JDAR](#) encryption module.

“Mercury has a strong partnership with the Navy, providing a range of data storage and transfer, video recorders, mission computers, and cockpit displays for the aircraft fleet,” said Roya Montakhab, Mercury’s SVP of Integrated Processing Solutions. “We are exceptionally proud to continue delivering ADTS systems that ensure critical government data is protected.”

Mercury’s ADTS features:

- Up to 3 TB (3 x 1 TB) solid state memory modules (each

module available from 128 GB, 256 GB, or 1 TB) with up to 450/300 MB/s read/write transfer rates

- Optional crash survivable memory module: Up to 30 GB of storage
- 1 SATA port: optional for crash survivable flight data recorder
- Up to 250ms of response time
- MIL-STD-1553B, four 1,000 BASE-TX Gigabit ethernet, analog/digital video/audio, and discrete interfaces
- External command over external communications circuit
- Manual zeroize capabilities: via front panel switch
- Meets information assurance requirements (S&U)

**Coast Guard Cutter Bear
Returns Home After 58-Day**

Operation Vigilant Sentry Patrol



A Coast Guard Cutter Bear (WMEC 901) small boat crew interdicts an overloaded vessel unlawfully bound for the United States by sea with over 100 migrants on board, Sept. 15, 2024, while underway north of Haiti. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Jeremy Wilbanks)

From U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, Oct. 22, 2024

PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Bear (WPC 901) returned to their homeport in Portsmouth, Oct. 7, following a 58-day homeland security and counter-drug patrol in the Windward Passage.

Bear's crew deployed in support of Homeland Security Task Force – Southeast (HSTF-SE) and Operation Vigilant Sentry (OVS) while underway in the Seventh Coast Guard District's area of responsibility, where crew members conducted maritime safety and security missions.

While on patrol, Bear crew members successfully deterred over 200 migrants aboard an overloaded vessel from reaching the United States unlawfully by sea, safely ensuring their return to Haiti. Bear's crew also intercepted 107 migrants in a joint operation with Coast Guard Cutter Kathleen Moore (WPC 1109). And during two separate events, Bear's crew repatriated 169 migrants to Haiti.

Additionally, Bear's crew effectively disrupted a drug-smuggling venture by sea, preventing the suspected trafficker's illegal narcotics from reaching the United States.

Bear conducted these missions alongside interagency and international partners including the U.S. Customs and Border Protection – Air and Marine Operations and the Haitian Coast Guard.

"This patrol was demanding and incredibly busy, and I couldn't be prouder of how the crew supported each other during such challenging operations," said Cmdr. Jorell Webb, commanding officer of Bear. "For many, this was their first experience with migrant interdiction operations. From the start to the end of the patrol, it was clear how the crew developed into a cohesive team."

The Coast Guard, along with its HSTF-SE partners, maintains a continual presence with air, land, and sea assets in the Florida Straits, the Windward Passage, the Mona Passage, and the Caribbean Sea in support of OVS. The HSTF-SE combined, multi-layered approach is designed to protect the safety of life at sea while preventing unlawful maritime entry to the United States and its territories.

Bear is a 270-foot, Famous-class medium endurance cutter. Bear's primary missions are migrant interdiction and counter-narcotics operations, living marine resources protection, and search and rescue in support of the U.S. Coast Guard

operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit [GoCoastGuard.com](https://www.go CoastGuard.com) to learn about active duty and reserve, officer and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found [here](#).

Remembering Two Trailblazing Aviators: Lt. Cmdr. Lyndsay “Miley” Evans and Lt. Serena “Dug” Wileman



From Commander, Naval Air Forces Public Affairs, 22 October 2024

Lt. Cmdr. Lyndsay "Miley" Evans and Lt. Serena "Dug" Wileman will be remembered as role models, trailblazers, and women whose influence touched countless people on the flight deck and well beyond.

In the world of U.S. Naval Aviation, very few names will be forever imprinted with their squadrons, their communities, and their shipmates. Among them are Lt. Cmdr. Lyndsay "Miley" Evans and Lt. Serena "Dug" Wileman, two highly skilled, combat-decorated aviators who tragically lost their lives during a routine training flight near Mount Rainier on Oct. 15, 2024. More than just names and ranks, they were role models, trailblazers, and women whose influence touched countless people on the flight deck and well beyond.

They had recently returned from a deployment with their squadron, Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 130, "Zappers," with whom they spent nine months at sea as a part of Carrier Air Wing Three (CVW-3) aboard USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) (IKE). Operating mostly from the Red Sea, they supported Operations INHERENT RESOLVE, PROSPERITY GUARDIAN, and POSEIDON ARCHER, where they were involved in the most dynamic combat action in defense of the strike group and freedom of navigation since World War II.

During their deployment, both Evans and Wileman distinguished themselves in combat operations. Their efforts directly contributed to the Navy's mission defending U.S. and Coalition forces while keeping the seas open and free with precision and purpose. These role models cemented legacies by making history that will inspire future generations of Naval officers and aviators.

Born to Lead: Lyndsay "Miley" Evans

Following her time at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Evans was commissioned through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) and earned her "Wings of Gold" as a Naval Flight Officer out of Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola. While familiar with the spotlight, Evans always carried herself as a humble yet strong leader – the quiet professional. As an EA-18G Electronic Warfare Officer (EWO) and veteran of two sea tours, she earned the respect of the entire Growler community for her tactical expertise, mentorship to those of all ranks and communities, and ability to bring out the best in everyone around her.

In 2023, Evans was part of the all-female Super Bowl flyover, a historic moment marking 50 years of women flying in the Navy. This event also symbolized the progress of women in aviation across all military branches. But for those who knew

her best, this was only one highlight in a notable career defined by high performance and distinction. After completing the challenging 12-week HAVOC graduate-level course at NAS Fallon (the TOPGUN of the Growler community), Evans earned the honor and responsibility of becoming a Growler Tactics Instructor (GTI). Living up to this responsibility daily, her approachable and knowledgeable demeanor enabled the training and development of countless junior EA-18G Pilots and EWOs. Therefore, it was no surprise to her mentors and peers when she was recognized as the FY2024 Growler Tactics Instructor of the Year, a prestigious honor earned through her tactical acumen and sustained leadership.

During her 2023-24 deployment with CVW-3 and the IKE Carrier Strike Group (IKE CSG) in the Red Sea, Evans coordinated and executed multiple combat strikes into Houthi-controlled territories in Yemen, making her one of the few women to fly combat missions over land. In her critical role as VAQ-130's Training Officer, she helped develop and execute new warfare tactics that required knowledge, innovation, and a comprehensive understanding of aerial warfare and electronic attack in a nascent theater against a constantly evolving threat. The tactics, techniques, and procedures for the EA-18G she pioneered defending against Houthi aggressions directly contributed to the successful defense of the entire CSG and will be used as a template for adaptability at the unrelenting pace of combat in future fights.

Evans was awarded two Single Action Air Medals for her exceptional performance during strikes on January 12 and 22, 2024. She also earned three Strike Flight Air Medals for her contributions to missions flown between December 21, 2023, and March 29, 2024.

The Heart and Soul: Serena "Dug" Wileman

A native of California and commissioned through Officer

Candidate School, Wileman was at the beginning of a promising and illustrious career. As a senior first-tour Naval Aviator, she established herself as an energetic, vocal, and positive influence in VAQ-130. Known for her heart of gold, passion, and unrelenting smile, Wileman was always committed to improve and grow, not only for herself but every Sailor and officer around her.

During her 2023-24 deployment, Wileman planned and subsequently flew multiple strikes into Houthi-controlled territories in Yemen, one of the few women to fly combat missions over land. Wileman's exceptional leadership was highlighted during VAQ-130's "Dirt Det," where she was designated the Officer in Charge. Overcoming the challenges of operating from an austere location, she successfully oversaw all detachment operations enabling the support of multiple flights in the defense of U.S. and Coalition forces in support of Operations INHERENT RESOLVE and PROSPERITY GUARDIAN.

Always a team player, Wileman was also a respected qualified Landing Signal Officer (LSO), a vital role in the squadron to ensure her fellow Naval Aviators safely recovered aboard the ship. Despite operating in a weapons engagement zone, her calm and collected demeanor under pressure showed during combat operations. Even when recovering alerts while IKE was being targeted and the CSG was under attack by Houthi terrorists, she executed flawlessly, bringing all CVW-3 aircraft aboard expeditiously and safely. From the LSO platform, Wileman always showcased her extraordinary composure and consistent ability to perform under pressure.

Due to her unrelenting efforts, Wileman accrued three Strike Flight Air Medals for her role in combat operations between December 17, 2023, and April 5, 2024.

Outside the cockpit, Wileman made everyone smile. She would brighten up any room and was known for her genuine care and

compassion for those around her. She always brought a sense of calm, in the good times and bad, whether it was through a joke, a game of cribbage, or a giant bear hug for a Sailor in need of one.

The Bonds That Endure

Evans' and Wileman's strong connection to their families were second to none. Evans was close with her parents, who were immensely proud of her many accomplishments and were overjoyed when welcoming her back to NAS Whidbey Island on July 13th.

Wileman met her husband, Brandon, during flight school. Also a Naval Aviator, Brandon shared in her passion for flight, and together they supported each other through the challenges and successes of their careers. Wileman's goal for follow-on orders after the Zappers was to remain co-located with Brandon.

Both Evans and Wileman shared lasting loyalty and commitment to their mentors, peers, and Sailors. They always lifted others up, even during the most challenging moments of deployment, knowing exactly how to take a quick break from the "stress" of the job and deployment and getting everyone's heads back in the game.

They also bonded over their love of dogs: Evans, a proud "dog mom" to Nyx (an Australian Shepherd), and Wileman to Riley (a Dachshund/Chihuahua mix – "Chiweenie"). The two often flew together, sharing a deep understanding of the intricacies of Naval Aviation, and complemented each other well. They shared many moments together, from leading critical missions in combat zones during deployment to helping their Sailors and each other weather the mental strain of long deployments.

These women's bond with each other reached well beyond the cockpit. They were both known for their humor and light-

hearted spirit. A memorable moment came at a beachside pool, where, during a liberty port in Souda Bay, Crete, Evans and Wileman shared a laugh as two male squadron mates struggled to move a heavy umbrella. "Centuries of oppression have finally paid off," they joked, representing the camaraderie and light heartedness that defined both of them.

A Legacy That Lives On

The legacy that Evans and Wileman leave behind is characterized by strength, courage, and inspiration. They embodied the very best of Naval Aviation and were examples that hard work, determination, and devotion to their passions could lead to exceptional achievements. They will remain role models for both women and men, embodying the true Navy warrior spirit.

Capt. Marvin Scott, Commander of CVW-3, said Evans and Wileman will be remembered for their tenacity, their outstanding contributions to the defense of others, and the positive energy they brought to Naval Aviation.

"I have personally flown with both of these Great Americans in both training and dynamic combat operations, and they always performed professionally and precisely. As true leaders in the Growler community, VAQ-130, and across my Air Wing, their contributions cannot be overstated; I could not be more proud to have served with each of them," said Scott. "Every member of the CVW-3 Battle Axe Team is heartbroken at the loss of these exceptional warriors; Dug and Miley truly represent the best that Naval Aviation has to offer, and they will absolutely be missed."

As the Navy mourns the loss of these two exceptional aviators, their stories will continue to inspire generations of service members. They represent the best of the Navy and Naval Aviation: warriors who were steadfast in the face of danger,

always prepared to lead, and compassionate to their fellow Sailors. Their memories will endure with the men and women of the Zappers, CVW-3, and the entire IKE CSG. Their legacies will live on, immortalized in the hearts of their families, friends, and all who had the privilege to serve alongside them.

USS Washington (SSN 787) Awarded Presidential Unit Citation



[By MC1 Justin E. Yarborough](#)

18 October 2024

The Virginia-class fast-attack submarine USS Washington (SSN 787) prepares to moor pierside during the boat's homecoming at Naval Station Norfolk, Dec. 15, 2023. Washington returns following a deployment that supported national security interests and maritime security operations at sea. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Cameron Stoner)

NORFOLK, Va. – The Virginia-class fast-attack submarine USS Washington (SSN 787) was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation (PUC) for “outstanding performance in action while conducting operations within U.S. SIXTH Fleet” during their recent six-month deployment.

Capt. Timothy Poe presented the award to Washington's crew on behalf of the President during the submarine's change of command ceremony July 19 at Naval Station Norfolk.

“The award of the Presidential Unit Citation to the USS Washington is a profound honor, signifying the crew's exceptional dedication and strategic impact,” said Vice Adm. Rob Gaucher, commander, Submarine Forces. “Their work in challenging, high risk environments completing vital national level missions demonstrates the key role our submarines play in ensuring maritime security and global stability.”

The PUC is awarded to any U.S. military unit that has distinguished itself by outstanding performance and heroism in action against enemy forces and is the highest unit award in the Department of the Defense.

During Washington's deployment, the submarine, also known as the Blackfish, completed three demanding missions vital to national security that resulted in obtaining sensitive and

unique intelligence information, where it executed the Chief of Naval Operations' maritime strategy by supporting national security interests and maritime security operations.

"The men and women onboard BLACKFISH are justifiably proud of this award and of joining the distinguished list of previous recipients," said Cmdr. Keith Turnbull, Washington's commanding officer. "It goes without saying that the crew could not have accomplished what they did without the immense efforts of our support staffs ashore, including the training staff in Norfolk and several other organizations."

The crew's superb planning, discipline, and material management ensured the submarine remained on task through long periods without readily accessible support.

"The crew spent countless hours on training, maintenance, and certification to ensure BLACKFISH was ready to execute all tasking," said Senior Chief Machinist's Mate (Auxiliary) Austin Gilbert, Washington's chief of the boat. "While deployed, their resiliency was crucial to their success and the shipmates fully embody the meaning of true undersea warriors. Fear the BLACKFISH!"

Additionally, Washington garnered more days on station than any east coast deployment on record, had the first chief Intelligence Specialist to earn the submarine warfare qualification, known as 'dolphins', and had the most women ever deployed on a fast-attack submarine, including one chief petty officer.

Washington steamed more than 37,000 nautical miles with the crew supporting diplomatic relationships by conducting port visits in Faslane, Scotland, and Grotsund, Norway. In recognition of the Blackfish's exceptional service and dedication during operations in the strategic Arctic region, the Washington was awarded the newly announced Arctic Service

Medal.

Forty-four enlisted Sailors and five officers earned their submarine warfare qualification, and 10 officers promoted to their next rank.

Fast-attack submarines are multi-mission platforms enabling five of the six Navy maritime strategy core capabilities – sea control, power projection, forward presence, maritime security, and deterrence. They are designed to excel in anti-submarine warfare, anti-ship warfare, strike warfare, special operations, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, irregular warfare and mine warfare. Fast-attack submarines project power ashore with special operations forces and Tomahawk cruise missiles in the prevention or preparation of regional crises.

□

The Virginia-class submarine is 377 feet long and 34 feet wide, and weighs about 7,900 tons when submerged. Underwater, it can reach speeds in excess of 25 knots.

USS Harpers Ferry Returns to Homeport After Indo-Pacific Deployment



U.S. Navy Sailors assigned to amphibious dock landing ship USS Harpers Ferry (LSD 49) man the rails as the ship pulls into Naval Base San Diego, Oct. 18, 2024. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Class Evan Diaz)

By Petty Officer 2nd Class Sang Kim, Oct. 18, 2024

SAN DIEGO – Amphibious dock landing ship USS Harpers Ferry (LSD 49) returned to homeport in San Diego, following a seven-month deployment in the U.S. 7th and 3rd Fleet areas of operations with embarked elements of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), Oct. 18, 2024.

Carrying over 700 Sailors and embarked Marines, Harpers Ferry participated in multiple, multi-national exercises and operations in the Pacific, displaying interoperability and the U.S.'s commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

“The accomplishments of USS Harpers Ferry and its Navy and Marine Corps team are quite impressive,” said Cmdr. Gabriel Burgi, the commanding officer of Harpers Ferry. “Together, we steamed tens of thousands of miles from home, away from our friends and families, and completed important missions

necessary to protect high seas freedoms. We took part in several bilateral and multinational exercises, and we were great ambassadors of the United States. I couldn't be more proud of how well the crew and Marines worked together to accomplish many 'firsts' for the ARG-MEU team."

This deployment was an opportunity for the Marine Corps' newest amphibious ship-to-shore connector, the amphibious combat vehicles (ACV), to gather operational data and lessons learned that will shape future deployments of the new platform in expeditionary environments.

"This deployment was the first ever for the Marine Corps' first new amphibious vehicle in over 50 years," said Burgi. "All eyes were on us as we set the precedent for deployed operations of the ACV, and we helped write doctrine for future deployments. We launched and landed the first ACVs in foreign waters and on foreign shores, and the world was watching."

Harpers Ferry departed San Diego in March to begin a regularly scheduled, Western Pacific deployment. During the deployment, Harpers Ferry and embarked elements of the 15th MEU participated in Exercise Balikatan 24 (BK24), the largest, annual, bilateral exercise conducted between the U.S. and the Philippines. Elements of the embarked 15th MEU conducted a command-and-control exercise (C2X), Humanitarian Civic Assistance (HCA) projects and engagements, and a series of field training events.

ACVs made their operational debut during BK24 in May, splashing from Harpers Ferry in Oyster Bay to conduct a waterborne live-fire gunnery exercise.

“Throughout this deployment the landing force accomplished many firsts for the Marine Corps,” said Maj. Joe Santos, the ACV liaison officer, 15th MEU, and the commander of troops aboard Harpers Ferry. “The 15th MEU deployed with the Amphibious Combat Vehicle for the first time, which marked many more firsts for the Navy and Marine Corps. The Harpers Ferry and landing force was the first to achieve amphibious warfare certifications with the ACV; first to conduct ACV intermediate maintenance underway; first to conduct waterborne gunnery with the ACV; and first to operate within the Indo-Pacific.”

While in the Philippines, Marines and Sailors of the 15th MEU also participated in the Amphibious Coastal Defense Continuum (ACDC), partnering with Philippine Marine Corps’ 3rd Marine Brigade to enhance the Philippine Marine Corps’ coastal defense strategy while supporting the modernization efforts of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

After BK24 and ACDC, the ship made its way north to Busan, South Korea, for Exercise Ssang Yong 24, a bilateral field training exercise with the Republic of Korea Marine Corps (ROKMC), and U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) in vicinity of Pohang.

Ssang Yong was another landmark event for the ACV, marking the first time ACVs conducted a ship-to-shore amphibious assault overseas, partnered with ROKMC amphibious forces.

“Harpers Ferry and their embarked Apache Company and ACV Platoon proved that we could safely and expeditiously launch and recover ACVs,” said Burgi. “The ACVs on deployment was a major milestone for the Navy-Marine Corps team. From onboard maintenance to overseas launch and recovery, almost everything

we did with the ACVs was a first for our services. Deploying also gave the ACV platoon confidence in their weapon systems and in their ability to operate far from home without the benefit of onsite maintenance facilities.”

After Ssang Yong, Harpers Ferry transited home to San Diego following a successful seven-month deployment.

“I have seen this ship and her crew go from exiting the shipyards to the completion of a 7th Fleet deployment. This ship and her crew has been tasked over and over, and has exceeded the expectation of fleet commanders every time,” said Burgi.

“There is no other crew or ship I would rather go to sea with. This crew has delivered miracles selflessly and tirelessly. I couldn’t be more proud of them; being the commanding officer to this crew has been the utmost privilege and highlight of my nearly 30-year career.”

Santos echoed Burgi’s thoughts on the deployment.

“I am excited for the Marines and Sailors to go home after this deployment knowing that they have accomplished so much,” said Maj. Santos. “They are a part of naval history and will remember this for the rest of their lives. It’s a beautiful day to be on the USS Harpers Ferry!”

F-35B Test Jet Begins Sea

Trials with Japanese Destroyer in Eastern Pacific



An F-35B Lightning II lands aboard JS Kaga (DDH-184) off the southern coast of California to begin developmental testing. (Darin Russell)
21 October 2024

From Michael Land

PACIFIC OCEAN – A U.S. F-35 Lightning II aircraft landed aboard Japan's Izumo-class multi-functional destroyer JS Kaga (DDH-184) for the first time Oct. 20 off the southern coast of California to begin developmental test aboard the allies' largest ship.

A test pilot flew a specially instrumented F-35B short takeoff and vertical landing (STOVL) variant of the 5th generation air system and touched down about 3:15 p.m.

Sea trials will leverage the ship's recent modifications to conduct fixed-wing aircraft operations. Changes to the Kaga included painting its flight deck with heat-resistant material that tolerates the F-35B's vectored-thrust engines, installing lights for nighttime operations, and reshaping the flight deck's bow from a trapezoid to a rectangular shape.

The trials will also pave the way for allies' increased ability to operate in conjunction with each other.

"This test is essential for strengthening Japan's defense capabilities and is of utmost importance. We will do our best to achieve good test results together with the ITF," said Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Capt. Shusaku Takeuchi, commanding officer, JS Kaga. "This test does not merely enhance the capabilities of the Maritime Self-Defense Force. It also improves the interoperability between Japan and the U.S., strengthening the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. alliance, thereby contributing to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region."

The F-35 is detached from Air Test and Evaluation Squadron Two Three (VX-23), Naval Air Station Patuxent River (NAS Pax River), Maryland. It joins a test team from the F-35 Pax River Integrated Test Force (Pax ITF), who embarked the ship in San Diego.

In addition to F-35 test pilots, the Pax ITF team includes aircraft maintainers, flight test engineers, flight test control engineers, flight deck personnel, logisticians, and others, with support from the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps.

"We are proud to be part of this joint effort to test the compatibility of F-35B aboard JS Kaga," said Seth Dion, Pax ITF team lead. "Our team has prepared meticulously for this mission, and we are committed to working closely with our allies to achieve our shared goals and strengthen our

partnership.”

The sea trials are scheduled to take approximately three weeks.

JS Kaga set sail from its homeport at Kure Naval Base, Japan, in early September.

TACAMO community announces name for new mission aircraft: E-130J



Oct 21, 2024

NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The U.S. Navy’s Airborne Strategic Command, Control and Communications Program Office (PMA-271) and Strategic Communications Wing 1 (SCW-1)

today announced the name selected for the Navy's new Take Charge and Move Out (TACAMO) mission aircraft: E-130J.

The E-130J – previously called the E-XX while awaiting naming – will relieve the Navy's E-6B Mercury fleet of the TACAMO mission, which connects the president, secretary of defense and U.S. Strategic Command with naval ballistic missile forces.

E-130J is the aircraft's mission design series (MDS). The E stands for special electronic installation; 130 is the design number and reflects the aircraft's origins as the EC-130; and J is the series, demonstrating that it will be modified from a proven C-130J-30 Super Hercules airframe. The common name – e.g., Mercury – has not been selected.

At the request of PMA-271, the U.S. Air Force approved the MDS this month. The Air Force approves all military aircraft names.

PMA-271 is procuring the E-130J through the TACAMO Recapitalization Program. The solicitation, which closed in April 2024, is for a prime contractor to integrate TACAMO mission systems, including the Collins Aerospace Very Low Frequency (VLF) subsystem, into government-furnished C-130J-30 aircraft. Contract award is scheduled for January 2025.

"I am proud to announce that the U.S. Navy's new TACAMO aircraft will be the E-130J," said PMA-271 Program Manager Capt. Adam Scott. "This is an important milestone as we work toward delivering the next generation of TACAMO aircraft to the warfighter."

Those warfighters are the SCW-1 squadrons home based out of Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma. They include the "Ironmen" of Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron (VQ) 3, "Shadows" of VQ-4 and "Roughnecks" of VQ-7.

"I'm excited as SCW-1 continues to work together with PMA-271

to deliver new capabilities and strengthen America's nuclear deterrence," said SCW-1 Commander Capt. Britt Windeler. "The E-130J will assure that our nation's leadership maintains control of its strategic forces as the E-6B gets closer to end of life, and enable it to focus on the performance of other critical missions until sundown."

The E-6B Mercury is a communications relay and strategic airborne command post aircraft. It provides survivable, reliable, and endurable airborne Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications (NC3) for the president, secretary of defense and U.S. Strategic Command.

PMA-271 is part of Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) and headquartered at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland. Its mission is to deliver and support survivable, reliable and endurable airborne command, control and communications for the president, secretary of defense and U.S. Strategic Command.

The mission of SCW-1 is to receive, verify and retransmit Emergency Action Messages (EAMs) to U.S. strategic forces.

Navy awards Leidos \$248M Contract to Provide Autonomous Systems Design and Engineering

SEAPOWERS

The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

RESTON, Va. (Oct. 17, 2024) – [Leidos](#) (NYSE:LDOS), a FORTUNE 500® innovation leader, was recently awarded a follow-on contract by the Naval Information Warfare Center Pacific (NIWC PAC) to support unmanned and automated systems for maritime intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR). This single-award task order has an estimated value of \$248 million with a five-year period of performance.

“This award enables Leidos to accelerate the technology needed to enhance ISR capabilities and harden the foundation for Navy operations,” said Dave Lewis, Leidos senior vice president for sea systems. “We look forward to strengthening our partnership with NIWC PAC and addressing their needs with artificial intelligence and autonomy, integrated sensing, and cyber solutions.”

Under the contract, Leidos will continue to perform a range of support services, including research and analysis for the collection and processing of ISR capabilities to develop multi-sensor, unmanned underwater vehicles and other unattended and unmanned systems platforms. Additionally, the company will provide technology assessment and development, software and hardware design, rapid prototyping, integration, lab- and sea-based testing, and recovery and repair

activities.

This contract was awarded under the Department of Defense Information Analysis Center's (DoDIAC) multiple-award contract vehicle. DoDIAC, sponsored by the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC), provides technical data management and research support for DOD and federal government users. These contract task orders are awarded by the U.S. Air Force's 774th Enterprise Sourcing Squadron to develop and create new knowledge for the enhancement of the DTIC repository and its users.

Established in 1946, the IAC program serves the DOD science and technology and acquisition communities to drive innovation and technological developments by enhancing collaboration through integrated scientific and technical information development and dissemination.

Navy Announces Site for New Navy Museum



Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro addresses the crowd at the site selection ceremony on Oct. 18. Also pictured are Nina Albert, deputy mayor of the District of Columbia for planning and economic development, and Rear Admiral Samuel J. Cox (retired), director of the Naval History and Heritage Command. *Seapower | Brett Davis*

WASHINGTON – Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro highlighted a site selection ceremony for the future of the National Museum of the United States Navy on Oct. 18.

“This is a moment of immense pride and anticipation for the Navy, for our nation, and for all who cherish maritime heritage,” Del Toro said, standing near two dilapidated buildings that will be part of the new museum campus.

The site is adjacent to the Navy Yard in Washington and a short walk from the current Navy museum, housed in an aging facility largely off-limits to the general public. The new museum is intended to be a state-of-the-art look at the U.S. Navy, will be open to the public and is near a vibrant neighborhood that also boasts the stadiums for the Washington

Nationals baseball team and the DC United, DC Power FC and Washington Spirit soccer teams. It's expected to attract up to two million visitors annually, well over the 100,000 annual attendance of the current museum, most of whom are already in the Navy.

Del Toro said he is well aware of the draw of Nationals Stadium, and said "I want half of them over here before the game and after the game."

Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton, the district's congressional representative, highlighted the city's historic ties to the Navy. She said 30,000 city residents are veterans and "deserve the full equality of statehood," as district residents don't have voting rights in Congress.

A Long Road Ahead

While service officials now know where the museum will be located, they haven't yet raised the money, don't know what it will look like and don't yet know what artifacts will be in it. All of those efforts are underway by the organizations that will create it: the Navy Museum Development Foundation that will raise the money (\$475 million or more) and construct the building and the Naval History and Heritage Command that will select what goes in it. Once the museum is built, the foundation will give it to the Navy, which will staff and operate it.

Rear Admiral Samuel J. Cox (retired), director of the Naval History and Heritage Command, gently poked fun at the museums of the Marine Corps and Army, which he described as being "out in the wilds of Virginia" while the new Navy museum will be next to an all-hours neighborhood.

The new museum, still years away – a groundbreaking is tentatively planned for next October and the first phase likely won't open until 2030 – has already been a long time coming. Nina Albert, D.C.'s deputy mayor for planning and

economic development, was one of the speakers at the event and noted she had served on a Navy museum site selection committee 17 years ago.

“The vision will be worth the work and it will be worth the wait,” she said.

Part of the delay was a prolonged and what Cox called “tortuous” process to acquire the land from the city in a swap that saw the Navy Yard give up some of its land on the other side of the base near the river to acquire the plot that will house the new museum.

The museum will ultimately be 240,000 square feet and filled with meaningful artifacts, such as the bell from the USS Jacob Jones, sunk in 1917 off the coast of Cornwall, England, by a German U-boat and rediscovered in 2022. It was the first U.S. Navy destroyer sunk by enemy action. The bell, recovered by the British Ministry of Defence and transferred to the U.S. Navy earlier this year, is being prepared for display, said Vice Chief of Naval Operations Admiral James J. Kilby.

The museum is carrying high hopes for Navy officials. Former Secretary of the Navy Kenneth J. Braithwaite II said “it will not be a musty old hall with a bunch of old artifacts ... it will be the spark that will draw people to the service of our country in the uniform of the United States Navy. This will be a new crown jewel in this city.”

Update on Growler Mishap Near

Mt. Rainier



ARABIAN SEA (May 26, 2021) An E/A-18G Growler attached to the “Zappers” of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 130 launches from the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) during flight operations in the Arabian Sea, May 26, 2021. (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Cameron Pinske)
17 October 2024

From CNAF Public Affairs

The following are news releases from Commander, Naval Air Forces Pacific pertaining to the Growler Mishap near Mt. Rainier in Washington state on Oct. 15, 2024.

YAKIMA COUNTY, Wash. – The U.S. Navy, along with local law enforcement and partner agencies, continue search and rescue efforts on the mountain where a U.S. Navy EA-18G Growler crashed on Oct. 15.

The wreckage rests at approximately 6,000 feet altitude in a

remote, steep and heavily-wooded area east of Mount Rainier.

Soldiers from 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) based at Joint Base Lewis-McChord are assisting in the search. 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) brings specialized mountaineering, high-angle rescue, medical, and technical communication skills necessary to navigate the difficult terrain associated with the Cascade Mountain Range that is inaccessible by other means.

The status of the crew cannot be confirmed without a site assessment of the debris area.

“Our priority is to locate our two aviators as quickly and as safely as possible,” said Capt. David Ganci, commander, Electronic Attack Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet. “Adhering to Dept. of Defense procedure, we cannot identify or confirm the names of aircrew involved in a mishap until 24-hours after their next of kin have been notified of their status. Please remain patient and limit speculation about the incident. That is one of the best ways we can respect the privacy of the loved ones who are impacted by this tragic event.”

There are no known hazards to the public.

“We appreciate the community support as experienced personnel respond around the crash site,” said Capt. Nathan Gammache, commanding officer of NAS Whidbey Island. “We are confident that we have the capability we need at this time, and will request any additional capabilities, if needed, via official channels in coordination with the on-site incident commander.”

The cause of the crash is under investigation.

The U.S. Navy will continue to provide updates. More information is available on NAS Whidbey Island’s website and

official social media accounts.

OCT 16, 2024

4 p.m. PDT ☐ Update 2

YAKIMA COUNTY, Wash. – Just after 12:30 p.m. PDT, aerial search crews located the wreckage of the EA-18G Growler that crashed on Oct. 15. The crash site rests on a mountainside east of Mount Rainier.

The status of the two crew members is unknown while the search effort continues.

An Emergency Operations Center has been established on NAS Whidbey Island to coordinate response efforts, and the U.S. Navy is making preparations to deploy personnel to secure the remote area that is not accessible by motorized vehicles.

“I am thankful for the tremendous teamwork displayed by the NAS Whidbey Island squadrons – VAQ, VP, VQ, TOCRON 10 and SAR – as Team Whidbey continues to respond to our tragic mishap,” said Capt. David Ganci, commander, Electronic Attack Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet. “I am also grateful to local law enforcement, responders, and tribal communities whose partnership has been essential in planning our critical next steps for access to the site.”

The cause of the crash is under investigation. More information will be released as it becomes available.

OCT 16, 2024

11:10 a.m. PDT ☐ Update 1

NAVAL AIR STATION WHIDBEY ISLAND, Wash. – The U.S. Navy, in coordination with Yakima County tribal and local authorities, continue to search for the EA-18G Growler aircraft that crashed yesterday afternoon.

Aerial operations continued through the night, launching from NAS Whidbey Island and searching in the area 30 miles west of Yakima, Wash. Responders are facing mountainous terrain, cloudy weather, and low visibility as the search is ongoing.

As of 11 a.m. on Oct. 16, neither the crew nor wreckage has been located.

Additional units supporting search and rescue include: U.S. Navy Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron One (VQ-1), Patrol Squadron (VP-46), NAS Whidbey Island Search and Rescue, and U.S. Army 4-6 Air Cavalry Squadron out of Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

The cause of the crash is under investigation.

More information will be released as it becomes available.

OCT 15, 2024

NAVAL AIR STATION WHIDBEY ISLAND, Wash. – At 3:23 p.m. PDT, a U.S. Navy EA-18G Growler aircraft from Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 130 crashed east of Mount Rainier during a routine training flight.

Multiple search and rescue assets, including a U.S. Navy MH-60S helicopter, launched from NAS Whidbey Island to locate the crew and examine the crash site.

As of 7 p.m. on Oct. 15, the status of the two crew members

remains unknown.

The cause of the crash is under investigation.

More information will be released as it becomes available.

The “Zappers” of VAQ-130 are based at NAS Whidbey Island, and recently completed a combat deployment on USS Dwight D. Eisenhower as the only E/A-18G Growler squadron with Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 3.

The EA-18G Growler is a variant in the F/A-18 family of aircraft that combines the proven F/A-18F Super Hornet platform with a sophisticated electronic warfare suite. All EA-18G squadrons are stationed at NAS Whidbey Island, with the exception of one squadron (VAQ-141) attached to CVW-5, Forward Deployed Naval Force, based at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan.

The U.S. Navy fact file on the EA-18G Growler can be found at the following link:

<https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2166036/ea-18g-growler-airborne-electronic-attack-aircraft>