NAVAIR STATEMENT ON V-22 Osprey Grounding

Release from Naval Air Systems Command

*****

06 December 2023

From NAVAIR Public Affairs

Out of an abundance of caution, following the AFSOC operational stand down, NAVAIR is instituting a grounding bulletin for all V-22 Osprey variants Dec. 6. This decision comes after the V-22 Osprey mishap on Nov. 29, off the shore of Yakushima, Japan.

Preliminary investigation information indicates a potential materiel failure caused the mishap, but the underlying cause of the failure is unknown at this time. While the mishap remains under investigation, we are implementing additional risk mitigation controls to ensure the safety of our service members.

The Joint Program Office continues to communicate and collaborate with all V-22 stakeholders and customers, including allied partners.

The safety of pilots and air crews is our number one priority. For more information, please contact, NAVAIR Public Affairs: marcia.t.hart3.civ@us.navy.mil.

NOAA, U.S. Navy award construction contract for new NOAA Marine Operations Center

Release from NOAA

*****

BY Keeley Belva, Dec. 5, 2023

Today, the U.S. Navy, on behalf of NOAA, has awarded $146,778,932 to Skanska USA, from New York, to design and build a new NOAA facility on Naval Station Newport in Rhode Island. This facility will eventually be the new home of NOAA's Marine Operations Center – Atlantic.

While the details of the facility's design are still being finalized, requirements include having a pier that will accommodate four large vessels, a floating dock for smaller vessels, space for vessel repairs and parking and a building to be used for shoreside support and as a warehouse. Construction is anticipated to be completed by 2027.

"The Biden-Harris Administration's Inflation Reduction Act, a key pillar of Bidenomics, has made it possible for NOAA to

make more crucial investments in infrastructure over the coming decade," said U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. "As we work to combat the climate crisis, building climate resilient facilities, like this one in Rhode Island, is critical to ensuring our infrastructure stands the test of time."

The design and construction of the facility is funded in part by the Inflation Reduction Act – a historic $3.3 billion investment to help communities, including tribes and vulnerable populations, prepare, adapt and build resilience to weather and climate events in pursuit of a climate-ready nation. The act also supports improvements to weather and climate data and services, and strengthens NOAA's fleet of research airplanes and ships.

"By co-locating with Naval Station Newport, we are able to make our ship operations more efficient and increase long-term cost savings through sharing common capabilities," said NOAA Corps Rear Admiral Nancy Hann, director of NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations and the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps. "We are excited to take this step in creating a state-of-the-art marine operations center for NOAA in Rhode Island."

"Naval Station Newport looks forward to continuing its support for the missions of NOAA from our installation waterfront," stated Capt. Henry Roenke, the installation commander. "An expanded NOAA footprint here punctuates the value and diversity of the missions and partners at the base and makes the Naval Station a vital community and asset for military and non-military operations."

The center and ships are an operational component of NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations. The ships in NOAA's Atlantic fleet collect data essential to protecting marine mammals, coral reefs and historic shipwrecks, managing commercial fisheries, understanding climate change and producing nautical charts that help keep mariners safe. NOAA ships also deploy

and help maintain buoys that gather oceanographic and weather information and warn of tsunamis.

“I’ve been proud to work with Secretary Raimondo and her predecessors over several years to secure the commitment and the funding to create this hub for ocean research at Naval Station Newport. This announcement marks another win for the Ocean State, for NOAA, and for local workers as we develop our Blue Economy. Soon we’ll be able to put steel in the ground and put Rhode Islanders to work,” said Senator Reed, who has worked with NOAA for over a decade to develop a permanent NOAA homeport and marine operations center in Rhode Island.”

“Thanks to Democrats’ Inflation Reduction Act and Senator Reed’s leadership, we’re bringing NOAA’s new Atlantic Marine Operations Center to beautiful Newport, Rhode Island,” said Senator Sheldon Whitehouse. “This new facility will support our Atlantic fleet in the collection of data that protects marine animals and ocean ecosystems, and advances our understanding of the effects of climate change on the oceans.”

“I am thrilled that a brand-new home for NOAA’s Atlantic Marine Operations Center is going to be right here in the First Congressional District on Naval Station Newport. This facility will be an economic boon to the Ocean State for years to come,” said Congressman Gabe Amo. “Due to the historic passage of the Inflation Reduction Act by Congressional Democrats, Rhode Island will accelerate its leadership in our nation’s efforts to combat climate change, build new climate resilient infrastructure, and improve our national security and non-military operations. I want to express my gratitude for the work of Senator Jack Reed and Secretary Gina Raimondo for helping to bring this new facility to our district. I am committed to continuing to work together to support this project as it moves forward.”

This contract was awarded following a request for proposals

that was open from January to August 2023.

NOAA's fleet of 15 research and survey ships are operated, managed and maintained by NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations. Ranging from large oceanographic research vessels capable of exploring the world's deepest ocean, to smaller ships responsible for charting the shallow bays and inlets of the U.S. The fleet supports a wide range of marine activities, including fisheries surveys, nautical charting and ocean and climate studies. NOAA ships are operated by NOAA Corps officers and civilian professional mariners.

Successful JAGM-MR Guided Flight Test Demonstrates Tri-Mode Seeker, Multiple Target Discrimination

[Release from Lockheed Martin]

*****

CHINA LAKE, Calif. (Dec. 5, 2023) – Lockheed Martin successfully conducted a JAGM-MR guided flight test on Dec. 2, 2023, at China Lake Test Range in California. The successful flight test demonstrated JAGM-MR's tri-mode seeker and its ability to aid the missile to successfully discriminate between multiple targets.

"This next-generation weapon system offers greater accuracy in both target discrimination and recognition, delivering mission-focused capabilities that will provide our customers with an innovative 21st century security solution," said Joey Drake, program management director of Air-to-Ground Missile Systems at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control. "The enhanced tri-mode seeker provides a new level of precision guidance and defense capabilities, allowing JAGM-MR to lock onto the selected target even when there's multiple targets in the field."

JAGM-MR's tri-mode seeker employs a near-infrared (NIR) sensor, which is a third sensor incorporated into the guidance

system compared to JAGM, which utilizes a dual-mode sensor system. The NIR sensor enhances missile performance, allowing for improved target tracking and guidance over a range of conditions and target sets.

“We’re investing in the future of our JAGM product line because not only will it help address much-needed capabilities by our customers, but it will provide them with a turnkey solution for the challenges that they face in today’s complex threat environment,” said Drake.

While last year’s successful live fire event demonstrated JAGM-MR’s 16 km increased range capability, this year’s guided flight test demonstrated the maturity of the fully functioning tri-mode seeker while concurrently highlighting its ability to target engagement at an increased stand-off range.

JAGM is designed and developed in Orlando, Florida. The weapon system is manufactured across various Lockheed Martin facilities in Dallas; Orlando and Ocala, Florida.; Archibald, Pennsylvania.; and Troy, Alabama. With more than 125,000 HELLFIRE and JAGM missiles produced, JAGM and JAGM-MR are the next-generation systems of choice in critical, precision engagement opportunities.

Navy to complete rapid delivery of new counter-UAS system to Ukraine

Release from Naval Air Systems Command

*****

Dec 6, 2023

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md.—The Navy will complete the delivery of a new Counter-Unmanned Air System (UAS) weapon system to Ukraine this month as part of the Department of Defense aid package.

Last year, the contingency operations team for the Direct and Time Sensitive Strike program office (PMA-242) began working

an urgent requirement to deliver rocket-launching platforms, known as Vehicle Agnostic Modular Palletized ISR Rocket Equipment (VAMPIRE) systems, to support wartime efforts in Ukraine.

VAMPIRE is a compact, palletized rocket-launching platform that consists of a sensor ball and four-shot Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System (APKWS) launchers designed to mount to any truck with a flatbed. The U.S. Navy and Army have traditionally against air-to-ground targets. With VAMPIRE, the laser-guided rocket can defend against unmanned aerial threats.

“We delivered the first four systems in only six months by leveraging an innovative contracting strategy and working diligently to keep pace with the system’s rapid development,” said Cmdr. Kevin Raspet, PMA-242 foreign military sales deputy program manager.

PMA-242’s Contingency Operations Case Manager Robert Galan said the team had placed a heavy emphasis on speed to the warfighter and was able to explore several contracting authorities to streamline the process and focus on building and delivering an operationally effective system.

In coming weeks, the PMA-242 CO team also plans to deliver the first ever APKWS with proximity fuze warheads, a key enabling technology for the C-UAS mission, Galan said. The proximity fuze incorporates an RF sensor that enables APKWS to target Group 2 and Group 3 UAVs.

“Early reports indicate the weapon system is having an immediate impact in the ongoing Ukrainian wartime effort,” said Capt. Alex Dutko, PMA-242 program manager. “This activity is another example of our team responding to urgent requirements with unprecedented speed and agility.”

PMA-242 will deliver 14 VAMPIRE systems to Ukraine’s ground forces for targeting and neutralizing UAVs and defending

against ground threats.

U.S. Navy to start recovery operations for downed Army Blackhawk

Release from U.S. Sixth Fleet Public Affairs

*****

From U.S. Sixth Fleet Public Affairs

MEDITERRANEAN SEA – The U.S. Navy contracted the multi-purpose support vessel, NG Worker, for search and recovery operations of an Army Blackhawk aircraft that crashed into the Mediterranean Sea, Nov. 10. The aircraft was conducting routine training when the crash occurred.

The NG Worker, equipped with the U.S. Navy Supervisor of Salvage and Diving team, is set to depart to the crash location from Augusta Bay, Sicily, in the coming days.

Once on station, salvage experts will deploy a shallow water intermediate search system (SWISS) and towed pinger locator (TPL) to search for the aircraft. The SWISS is a towed side-scan-sonar (SSS) and the TPL is used to locate emergency relocation pingers on downed military and commercial aircraft. The TPL will use passive sensors to “listen” for the aircraft pinger’s frequency.

Recovery of the aircraft will take place using the Deep Drone remote operated vehicle (ROV). Deep Drone is a 4,100 pound ROV designed to meet the Navy’s mid-water salvage requirements to

a maximum depth of 8,000 feet. Every effort will be made to recover the aircraft and the fallen Soldiers.

NG Worker is a 288-foot offshore supply vessel that is outfitted with advanced, state-of-the-art underwater survey and positioning equipment.

Assigned to U.S. Army Special Operations Command the Blackhawk was carrying five special operations aviation Soldiers when it crashed. All Soldiers on board were killed.

The cause of the crash is under investigation. For information regarding the incident, contact the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Public Affairs office at 910-432-6005, or by email at PAO-USASOC@socom.mil.

Headquartered in Naples, Italy, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa (NAVEUR-NAVAF) operates U.S. naval forces in the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) and U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) areas of responsibility. U.S. Sixth Fleet is permanently assigned to NAVEUR-NAVAF, and employs maritime forces through the full spectrum of joint and naval operations.

Coast Guard to SLEP, Expand MH-60T Helicopter Fleet as Sikorsky Delivers First New Airframe

Sikorsky delivered the first of 45 new airframes to the Coast Guard for the service-life extension of the service's MH-60T helicopter fleet.

*****

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va.—The U.S. Coast Guard has confirmed plans to expand is MH-60T Jayhawk helicopter fleet and make it the standard service-wide helicopter. The service life-extension of the current MH-60T fleet is being highlighted as Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company, delivers the first of 45 replacement MH-60T airframes to the Coast Guard.

Sikorsky on Nov. 30, 2023, delivered the first new "hull," as the airframe is called, which consists of the nose, cabin, and aft transition structure, combined as a single assembly, Sikorsky said in a release. Upon delivery, the new hull will be used to rebuild an older MH-60T with new and updated components by the Coast Guard's Aviation Logistics Center (ALC) in Elizabeth City, North Carolina starting in December 2023.

The Coast Guard's MH-60T fleet, the first of which originally began service as an HH-60J in 1990, is approaching the end of its service life of 20,000 hours per aircraft, with a current

average of 16,000 flight hours per aircraft.

During the SLEP of 45 MH-60Ts, “the Coast Guard ALC will remove all dynamic (moving) components, digital cockpit, mission systems, and engines, then rebuild each aircraft around an all-new airframe,” Sikorsky said, noting that the company’s Troy, Alabama, facility is the site of the hull manufacture.

Sikorsky President Paul Lemmo told reporters at a Nov. 30 teleconference that the new hulls would be identical to those in the HH-60Js delivered between 1990 and 1996, but also would receive an anti-corrosion sealant in the joints.

The Coast Guard awarded Sikorsky a $374 million contract to deliver all 45 MH-60T airframes to the ALC at a rate of 12 per year through 2027. Full-rate production will begin with fabrication of the fourth hull. The MH-60Ts going through SLEP will retain their Coast Guard serial numbers.

Rear Adm. Michael Campbell, Coast Guard director of Acquisition Programs and program executive officer, also speaking at the teleconference, said that the Jayhawk fleet went through an earlier SLEP during which the airframe life was extended from 10,000 to 20,000 flight hours. He said that without the SLEP the MH-60T fleet would have to be grounded by 2028. With the current SLEP, the MH-60T fleet would serve into the late 2040s.

The first MH-60T with the new hull is expected to fly in June at the ALC.

The Jayhawks are put through overhaul every four years, with six in overhaul at any given time.

The Coast Guard currently operates 48 MH-60Ts, three of which will not receive the new hulls under this program because they were re-built with ex-U.S. Navy SH-60F or HH-60H helicopters. Some of the 45 Jayhawks receiving the new hulls also are ex-

U.S. Navy H-60s that were re-built as Jayhawks.

According to the Coast Guard, the H-60 Jayhawk medium range recovery helicopter fleet has saved more than 11,900 lives during more than 48,300 search and rescue missions since 1990, accumulating more than 730,430 flight hours," Sikorsky said in the release.

Campbell said the Coast Guard plans to increase the size of its Jayhawk fleet because of the capabilities of its national security cutters and forthcoming offshore patrol cutters and polar security cutters to hangar H-60 helicopters. The rotors and tail rotor boom of the MH-60T can be manually folded, but the rotors of the Navy H-60s have the capability to be electrically folded. The Coast Guard plans to install the electrical fold capability beginning in 2024.

The Coast Guard also plans to replace its fleet of 98 MH-65 Dolphin helicopters with MH-60Ts.

"The Coast Guard is moving forward with plans to transition the service's rotary wing fleet to a standardized, single-platform fleet of MH-60Ts," said Loretta Haring, Office of Strategic Planning and Communication (CG-925) Acquisition Directorate, in an email to reporters. "The Service plans to operate 127 airframes nationwide and intends to source the additional MH-60T hulls (termed "fleet growth") through a combination of both newly manufactured hulls and Navy conversion hulls. The number of each to be used has not yet been determined. The initial phase of fleet growth likely will be 36 hulls."

Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association and CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation become Navy Seabee Foundation

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

Release from the Navy Seabee Foundation

*****

On December 2, 2023, the boards of the Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association and the CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation signed an agreement to merge the two organizations and become the Navy Seabee Foundation. The agreement will take effect on December 31, 2023. This was the culmination of nearly two years of research, discussion and negotiations.

The purpose of the Navy Seabee Foundation is the preservation and protection of the history and heritage of the U.S. Navy Seabees and the U.S. Navy Civil Engineer Corps; the awarding of scholarships to deserving family members of Seabees, CEC Officers, and all who served with the Naval Construction

force; supporting the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, monuments, memorials, and other heritage sites dedicated to the U.S. Navy Seabees; and supporting current and former members of the Seabee/CEC Community and their families.

The board of directors of the Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association and the board of trustees of the CEC/Seabee Historical Foundation will merge to lead the Navy Seabee Foundation. RADM Kevin Slates, CEC, USN, Ret., and RDML Lou Cariello, CEC, USN, Ret., will serve as chair and vice chair respectively and the new position of Vice Chair, Senior Enlisted Leader will be filled by CMDCM Doug Heiner, USN, Ret. Dan Miller, currently Executive Director of both organizations will continue as Executive Director. The Navy Seabee Foundation will be headquartered in Springfield, Virginia and have an office at the Seabee Heritage Center in Gulfport Mississippi.

From Kevin Slates, *"I am thrilled about the combination of the Seabee Historical Foundation and the Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association into a single Seabee nonprofit, and the opportunities it will bring to allow us to better support Seabees and their families. It's long overdue and a huge milestone for all Seabees (past, present, and future)."*

From Lou Cariello, *"This is a watershed moment in the history of non-profit organizations serving Navy Seabees. The merger of the Seabee Historical Foundation with the former Seabee Memorial Scholarship Association (now Navy Seabee Foundation) represents a golden opportunity to further unify all former and current Seabees and enhance the pride that we have, and future generations will have, for our wonderful Seabee community."*

From Doug Heiner *"This merger is very exciting because we are streamlining our operations to expand our capabilities and strengthens our commitment to serving Seabees and their families now and into the future."*

From Dan Miller, *"I look forward to continuing the events and activities around the country that bring Seabees and Seabee supporters together. I'm so excited to see what the future holds for the Navy Seabee Foundation."*

For additional information contact Dan Miller at danmiller@seabee.org or 859-327-1830.

Sri Lanka Joins Combined Maritime Forces in Middle East as 39th Member

Release from Combined Maritime Forces Public Affairs

*****

December 05, 2023

MANAMA, Bahrain – Combined Maritime Forces welcomed Sri Lanka, Nov. 20th, as the 39th member of the world's largest maritime security partnership.

"We are excited to have Sri Lanka as part of CMF," said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, CMF commander. "We welcome them into a growing international naval coalition in the Middle East, which protects some of the world's most important waterways."

In accepting the invitation to join CMF, the country's naval commander, Vice Adm. Priyantha Perera, said Sri Lanka "is eager to collaborate with the CMF and other partner nations in joint exercises, patrols and operations…to uphold the principles of the CMF and contribute to its success."

CMF is comprised of a headquarters staff and five combined task forces focusing on defeating terrorism, preventing piracy, encouraging regional cooperation, and promoting a safe maritime environment. The naval partnership upholds the international rules-based order by supporting security and stability across 3.2 million square miles of water encompassing some of the world's most important shipping lanes.

Navy Announces Completion of P-8A Poseidon Salvage Operation

Release from Commander, 3rd Fleet Public Affairs

*****

KANEOHE BAY, Hawaii – The Navy completed salvage operations of the P-8A Poseidon in Kaneohe Bay on Dec. 3, the on-scene commander told reporters Dec. 4.

“The aircraft is out of the bay, and the salvage operation is complete,” said Rear Adm. Kevin P. Lenox, who is also commander of Carrier Strike Group 3. “The team worked smoothly through the weekend under ideal conditions and everything happened according to the plan.”

After staging all of the required equipment on Thursday, Nov. 30, and Friday, Dec. 1, Navy Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit (MDSU) 1, working alongside local and off-island specialists, and Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) Supervisor of Salvage (SUPSALV) arrived before sunrise on Saturday, Dec. 2, to begin inflating the salvage roller bags used to extract the aircraft from the water. Under the close observation of divers, the

aircraft was lifted higher in the water and off any coral by 8:30 a.m. The aircraft was rotated and floated into position next to the runway by 10:30 a.m.

“The team spent a lot of time using bags of different sizes – inflating and deflating – to make small adjustments to the aircraft,” said Lenox. “Sometimes it took an hour to get everything right just to move the aircraft five feet.”

Once on land, the salvage crew reinforced the bags and wheels, locked down the gears on the pulling machines, and placed absorbent material between the aircraft and the bay as a precaution. They continued pulling the aircraft on bags up the ramp to a flat area on the runway. The team then lowered the plane onto jacks, swapped out all six tires, inspected the landing gear – assessed it as sound, and then towed the aircraft to the washrack for a freshwater rinse.

“I again want to thank Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH), Navy Supervisor of Salvage, SMIT Salvage, and Center Lift for their safe and professional execution of the salvage operation,” said Lenox.

Additionally, Dec. 3, divers from the Hawaii Dept. of Land and Natural Resources Division of Aquatic Resources conducted a preliminary dive to observe the site, and plan to continue their underwater assessment Dec. 4.

“Yesterday, we were able to get into the water with our federal partners for about two and a half hours,” said Kim Fuller, aquatic biologist with the Hawaii Dept. of Land and Natural Resources’ Division of Aquatic Resources, during the Dec. 4 joint press conference. “We were able to delineate the majority of what we believe is the primary impact of the airplane. Our assessment was just preliminary, so right now we’re just working to understand the extent of the damage and spatial delineation of the impact.”

The Navy and Marine Corps remain committed to working with

appropriate local and federal authorities to ensure the correct actions are taken to understand, measure, and mitigate any impacts to the local habitat.

“We will continue the work that needs to be done to characterize the state of the coral and damage that was done in the area,” said Col. Jeremy Beaven, commanding officer, MCBH. “In my role as the commanding officer, I have oversight responsibilities and obligations that I take on willingly. And, I will certainly be working with our state partners and agencies, again, in deference to their expertise.”

The aircraft is in a parking spot where it will be available for the investigating teams and where Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing Ten will begin the reclamation and repair process.

“The Navy is conducting a thorough investigation of the mishap to determine the cause and prevent similar mishaps in the future,” said Lenox.

The P-8A crew, assigned to Whidbey Island, Washington-based Patrol Squadron (VP) 4 “Skinny Dragons,” was on a detachment in support of maritime homeland defense when the aircraft overshot the runway and ended up in Kaneohe Bay Nov. 20. There were nine crewmembers on board – three pilots and six crewmembers (two officer and four enlisted). All crewmembers safely evacuated the aircraft and no injuries were reported. The incident is under investigation.

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter

Tahoma and crew return to homeport following 65-day patrol in the Florida Straits

Release from U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area

*****

Dec. 5, 2023

NEWPORT, R.I. – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Tahoma (WMEC 908) and crew returned to their homeport in Newport on Tuesday, after a 65-day patrol in the Florida Straits.

Tahoma deployed in support of Homeland Security Task Force – Southeast and Operation Vigilant Sentry within the Coast Guard Seventh District's area of responsibility. During the patrol, Tahoma's crew conducted maritime safety and security missions while working with other Coast Guard cutters to detect, deter, and intercept unsafe and illegal maritime migration ventures

bound for the United States.

During the patrol, Tahoma contributed to the care and repatriation of 82 migrants. Tahoma interdicted six vessels bound for the United States. Tahoma also responded to a search and rescue case, assisting a Cuban mariner who had become lost at sea.

“It was an honor to serve as Commander, Command Task Unit 44.7.9 in support of Operation Vigilant Sentry,” said Cmdr. Piero Pecora, commanding officer of Tahoma. “The homeland security task force continues to provide cooperative capability to effectively integrate forces from across the spectrum of DHS, state, and local force providers towards the enduring mission of securing our Southern Maritime Border while safeguarding life at sea.”

HSTF-SE serves as the Department of Homeland Security lead for operational and tactical planning, command, and control, and acts as a standing organization to interdict illegal maritime migration attempts with federal, state, and local partners. HSTF-SE continues enhanced enforcement efforts in support of OVS, the 2004 DHS plan to respond to irregular and unlawful mass maritime migration in the Caribbean Sea and the Florida Straits.

Tahoma is a 270-foot, Famous-class medium endurance cutter. The cutter’s primary missions are counter-drug operations, migrant interdiction, enforcement of federal fishery laws, and search and rescue in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit GoCoastGuard.com to learn about active duty, reserve, officer and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found here.