

Second Cadre of Royal Australian Navy Officers Graduate from Nuclear Power School while First Enlisted Sailors Enter



Release from Naval Reactors and AUKUS I&A Public Affairs

Oct. 30, 2023

By Naval Reactors and AUKUS I&A Public Affairs

Goose Creek, South Carolina –

A further three Royal Australian Navy (RAN) Officers graduated

the U.S. Navy's Nuclear Power School (NPS), Oct. 27, marking continued progress in Australia's goal to operate conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines (SSNs).

This second cohort of RAN Officers started NPS in April 2023, and followed the RAN personnel to graduate in July. NPS is one of the U.S. Department of Defense's most rigorous and demanding schools.

The three students started NPS in April 2023, becoming the second group of RAN personnel to graduate one of the Department of Defense's most rigorous and demanding schools.

"I had heard that nuclear power school was extremely challenging and it definitely was," said one of the students. "Being here in the U.S., attending school, and ultimately helping to prepare Australia for its own SSN capability is a true honor. I already loved being a submarine officer, and am really excited to become a nuclear-qualified submarine officer."

The RAN Officers' will follow the July graduates for further training in an operating nuclear propulsion plant. The officers will then complete a Submarine Officer Basic Course before assignment to an American Virginia-class SSN to continue their training and qualifications with on-board experience.

In another AUKUS milestone, the first cohort of RAN enlisted sailors arrived in Charleston, South Carolina and commenced their training at the Naval Nuclear Power Training Command. Similar to their officer counterparts, these sailors will complete Nuclear Power School and nuclear prototype training before being assigned to a Virginia-class submarine.

NPS trains officers and enlisted sailors in the science and engineering principles that are fundamental to the design, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants.

“The officers and sailors graduating from the U.S. Navy’s nuclear training programs will form the nucleus of the RAN’s nuclear-qualified submariners,” said Capt. Lincoln Reifsteck the AUKUS Integration and Acquisition Program Manager. “Through them, Australia will develop its sovereign ability to operate and supervise their own conventionally armed nuclear-powered submarine fleet.”

“Today marks yet another step forward in building the Royal Australian Navy’s sovereign nuclear-powered submarine capability,” said Vice Adm. Jonathan Mead, the Director-General of the Australian Submarine Agency. “Through AUKUS, Australia is leveraging the decades of nuclear propulsion experience to safely operate, build and maintain our own fleet of conventionally-armed nuclear-powered submarines.”

There will be more than 15 RAN officers and sailors enrolled in nuclear training by the end of this year.

“I could not be more proud of all of the Royal Australian Navy officers and sailors who have attended the U.S. Nuclear Power School,” said the Chief of the Royal Australian Navy, Vice Adm. Mark Hammond. “It’s exciting to see our second cohort graduate from the program. These exceptional members of our Navy are charting the course for our future, receiving incredible training for our future submarine capability.”

Supporting Australia’s acquisition of conventionally armed nuclear-powered submarines for the Royal Australian Navy is the first major initiative under [AUKUS](#).

The leaders of the three partner nations announced the [Optimal Pathway](#) for the acquisition on March 13, 2023.

Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group Enters the Mediterranean Sea



[Release from Carrier Strike Group Two \(CSG-2\) Public Affairs](#)

Oct. 30, 2023

By Carrier Strike Group Two (CSG-2) Public Affairs

STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR – The Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group (IKECSG) transited the Strait of Gibraltar on October 28.

As a part of the U.S. Navy's globally-deployed forces, IKECSG will join the Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group in support of the defense of Israel and to deter aggression throughout the region.

By direction of the Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III,

IKECSG will transit to U.S. Central Command to demonstrate its readiness to flex to any contingency. IKECSG remains committed to ensuring the security of allies and partners.

“Our arrival in the Mediterranean, en route to CENTCOM, provides reassurance to our allies and partners that we are committed to ensuring their security and well-being,” said Rear Adm. Marc Miguez, commander, Carrier Strike Group 2 (CSG-2), IKECSG. “Our presence, along with that of the Gerald R. Ford Carrier strike group, demonstrates the combat power and proficiency of the Navy’s deployed forces.”

The strike group is comprised of the flagship aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN69), the guided-missile cruiser USS Philippine Sea (CG 58), the guided-missile destroyers USS Mason (DDG 87) and USS Gravelly (DDG 107) of Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 22, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 3 with its nine squadrons, and the Information Warfare Commander.

Squadrons of CVW-3 include the “Gunslingers” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 105, the “Fighting Swordsmen” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 32, the “Rampagers” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 83, the “Wildcats” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 131, the “Screwtops” of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 123, the “Zappers” of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 130, the “Dusty Dogs” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 7, the “Swamp Foxes” of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 74 and the “Rawhides” of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 40.

SECNAV Del Toro Names Future Medical Ship USNS Balboa (EMS 2)

Release from Secretary of the Navy Public Affairs

27 October 2023

SAN DIEGO – Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced today that a future Bethesda-class expeditionary medical ship will be named USNS Balboa (EMS 2), during a ceremony at Naval Medical Center San Diego, Oct. 27.

The future USNS Balboa honors the legacy and commitment of Navy doctors, nurses, corpsmen, and staff of Balboa Naval Hospital in caring for the needs of U.S. Service Members.

“The contributions of this medical center over the past 100 years, represented by the care its personnel delivers to our Sailors, Marines, and families, are absolutely incredible. This hospital’s personnel continue to conduct ground-breaking medical research, discover new and innovative approaches to the delivery of world-class medical care, and provides a medical residency program for over a dozen medical specialties to develop our next generation of military doctors,” said Secretary Del Toro. “The guiding principle of Navy Medicine is to align its people and platforms in order to enhance warfighter health, wellness, and performance. I can say, with full confidence, that Naval Medical Center San Diego achieves this on a daily basis.”

The name selection follows the tradition of naming expeditionary medical ships after U.S. military hospitals.

As the informal name for Naval Medical Center San Diego,

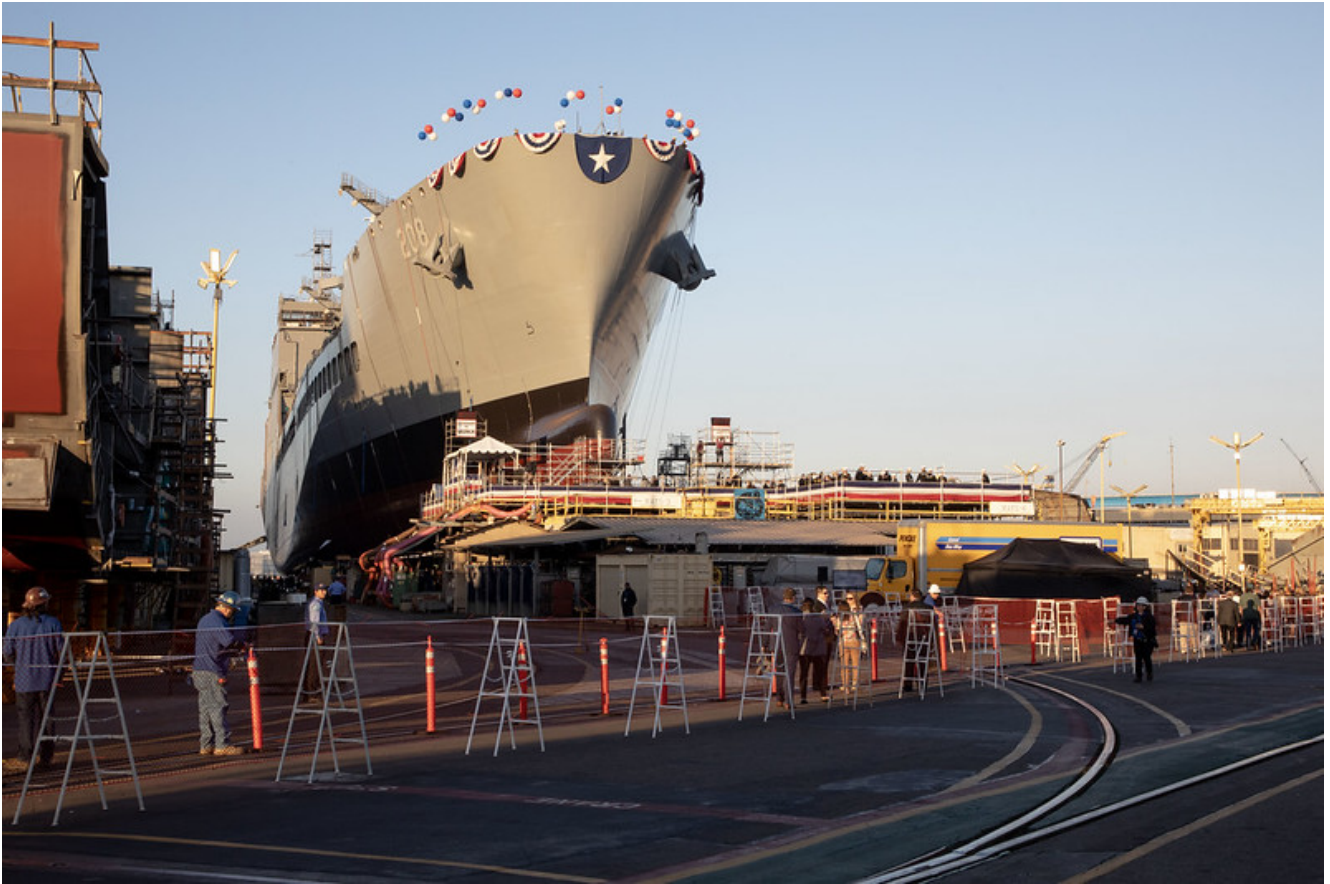
“Balboa” began as a naval hospital tent erected in December 1914 in support of the Panama-California Exposition (1915–1917) held in San Diego’s Balboa Park. When the United States entered World War I, the Navy converted the deserted exposition grounds into a training center containing a war dispensary and a camp hospital. In September 1919, San Diego officials set aside 17.35 acres of the park at Inspiration Point for the construction of a permanent naval hospital, often referred to as the “Pink Palace,” for its stucco façade. Commissioned in 1922, the complex added a hospital corpsman school in 1928 and continued to grow throughout World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, adding a surgical building, medical library, and outpatient clinic over time. By the early 1970s, the Balboa complex was among the largest military hospitals in the world. A new hospital compound to replace aging structures was completed in 1988 on land adjacent to Inspiration Point with the former site reverting to the City. Today, Balboa leads the way as one of the largest naval medical teaching and research facilities in the nation, in addition to supporting five medical mobilization teams and USNS Mercy (T-AH 19).

In addition, Secretary Del Toro announced that Mrs. Deborah Paxton, MSN, RN, agreed to be the ship’s sponsor. Mrs. Paxton, wife of retired Marine Corps General John Paxton, the 33rd Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, has spent her life in support of the Marine Corps and a decade of work serving the Marine Corps’ Wounded Warrior Regiment as the mental health advisor to the regiment.

“I am beyond grateful that Secretary Del Toro chose me for this great honor, and I pledge my commitment to USNS Balboa and her crew,” said Deborah Paxton. “I feel such confidence and comfort knowing that EMS 2 will operate where Marines and Sailors are engaged in either combat or humanitarian relief providing access to world-class medical care in critical times.”

[Bethesda-class expeditionary medical ships](#) are designed as a dedicated medical ship that optimizes hospital-level medical care in support of distributed maritime operations (DMO). EMS will feature a shallow draft enabling greater reach and allowing direct access to shallow austere ports, while also providing a flight deck that accommodates military helicopters. This design provides a full range of medical capabilities including triage/critical care, three operating rooms, medical laboratory, radiological capability, blood bank, dental, mental health, OB/GYN and primary care, rapid stabilization and follow-on evacuation of multiple casualties and combat search and rescue including recovery at sea. The primary mission of the EMS as a high-speed forward-deployed medical ship is to provide rapid responsive sea-based and near-shore hospital level critical care, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, non-combatant evacuation operations and special operations. The EMS is designed to respond and provide care at a more rapid pace than their predecessors, USNS Mercy and USNS Comfort, sailing at speeds of at least 30 knots with a range of 5,500 nautical miles at 24 knots.

**General Dynamics NASSCO
Christens & Launches the USNS
Robert F. Kennedy (T-AO 208)**



[Release from NASSCO](#)

Posted on [October 28, 2023](#)

SAN DIEGO – General Dynamics NASSCO christened and launched the future USNS Robert F. Kennedy (T-AO 208), the fourth ship for the U.S. Navy’s John Lewis-class fleet oiler program, today. House Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi served as the principal speaker at the ceremony, with additional remarks from Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Carlos Del Toro and NASSCO representatives. As is tradition, the ship’s sponsor and daughter of the namesake, the Honorable Kathleen Kennedy-Townsend, christened the ship by breaking a champagne bottle alongside the hull.

“As did its namesake, this vessel represents courage and strength. The shipbuilders of NASSCO are proud to have ensured the legacy of Robert F. Kennedy will live on in this ship,” said David Carver, president of General Dynamics NASSCO. “On

behalf of the 48-hundred employees of General Dynamics NASSCO, I am proud to present the USNS Robert F. Kennedy for christening to our sponsor the Honorable Kathleen Kennedy-Townsend.”

The ship honors Robert F. Kennedy, a U.S. Navy veteran who served as U.S. attorney general from 1961 to 1964 and as U.S. senator for New York from 1965 to 1968. As attorney general, Kennedy battled against organized crime and fought for African American civil rights. During his time in the Senate, he continued his advocacy for human rights and the underserved.

General Dynamics NASSCO was awarded a contract to design and build the first nine ships of the next generation of fleet oilers, the John Lewis-class (T-AO 205). Designed to transfer fuel to U.S. Navy carrier strike group ships operating at sea, the 742-foot vessels have a full load displacement of 49,850 tons, with the capacity to carry 157,000 barrels of oil, a significant dry cargo capacity, aviation capability, and can sail at a speed of up to 20 knots. The first two ships in the class, the USNS John Lewis (T-AO 205) and the USNS Harvey Milk (T-AO 206) have been delivered to the Navy. The future USNS Earl Warren (T-AO 207), the future USNS Lucy Stone (T-AO 209), and the future USNS Sojourner Truth (T-AO 210) are currently under construction.

General Dynamics NASSCO specializes in the design and construction of Navy and commercial ships and is a major provider of repair services for the U.S. Navy, with capabilities in San Diego; Norfolk, Virginia; Mayport, Florida; and Bremerton, Washington. More information about General Dynamics NASSCO is available at www.nassco.com.

U.S. Coast Guard dispatches assistance to Vanuatu in the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Lola



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

Oct. 28, 2023

HONOLULU – The U.S. Coast Guard was on scene to provide timely assistance and support to the island nation of Vanuatu following the devastating impact of Tropical Cyclone Lola, Oct. 26, 2023.

Tropical Cyclone Lola moved through the South Pacific island chain earlier this week inflicting significant damage. The Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-hazards Department, Port Vila,

issued the final warning, indicating that the storm was no longer a threat to the island nation prompting assessment and the disaster relief process.

The Coast Guard received the request in the afternoon of Oct. 25 from the U.S. Embassy Port Moresby to support the Government of Vanuatu with post-storm overflight and assessment of ports and critical infrastructure following Tropical Cyclone Lola.

“The Coast Guard’s C-130 mission is a testament to our commitment to provide critical support and capabilities to Vanuatu during these challenging times,” said Cmdr Andrew Williams, the enforcement branch chief for District 14. “Our C-130, deployed in support of the Forum Fisheries Agency – Operation Kuru Kuru, has been diverted to perform post-storm assessments of the affected areas, contributing to response and recovery efforts.”

Vanuatu is a South Pacific island nation, roughly made up of 80 islands with a population of approximately 335,000 individuals. It is located about 1,090 miles east of Australia. Vanuatu has two shipping ports, the Port of Vila and the Port of Luganville in Santo, that ensure supplies are delivered to the island and its inhabitants.

The Coast Guard leverages unique capabilities and expertise as a first responder to all threats and hazards in the maritime environment and lifesaving service. Coast Guard aircraft capabilities serve multiple functions including damage assessment of the affected area, search and rescue, real-time situational awareness for senior leaders, logistical support for safe transportation and supply delivery, environmental hazard monitoring, and public safety communication.

The Coast Guard remains dedicated to assisting the international community in times of need. This mission exemplifies the organization’s commitment to ensuring the

safety and well-being of those affected by natural disasters, even in distant corners of the world.

Coast Guard establishes first California-based Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) program



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard District 11](#)

Oct. 28, 2023

SAN DIEGO – The U.S. Coast Guard announces the establishment of its first California-based Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) program. Rear Adm. Andrew M. Sugimoto, Eleventh District Commander, announced the program's official West Coast launch at Mission Bay High School in San Diego, Friday morning.

The Coast Guard JROTC program aims to inspire and develop young leaders by instilling the values of teamwork, discipline, and service to the community. This initiative will provide high school students with a unique opportunity to explore careers in the Coast Guard and gain valuable leadership skills that will benefit them in their future endeavors.

"The Coast Guard JROTC program will empower our youth to become future leaders with a great foundation," said Sugimoto. "The goal is to foster a sense of duty, integrity, and respect, we aim to cultivate a new generation of individuals committed to serving their communities and our nation."

Sugimoto was joined by school officials, educators, and community leaders who recognize the significance of this milestone in the Coast Guard's history.

During the event, Rear Adm. Sugimoto outlined the program's objectives, curriculum, and the benefits it offers to participating students. Students will have the opportunity to learn more about the Coast Guard's mission, its role in safeguarding our nation's maritime interests, and the numerous career paths available within the organization.

The Coast Guard established its first JROTC unit in 1992, in Miami. Under recent federal legislation, the Coast Guard is expanding the JROTC program to every Coast Guard District by 2025. The Mission Bay High School JROTC program, activated in August of 2023, marks the first West Coast program.

Fairbanks Morse Defense Expands Product Portfolio with American Fan Acquisition

Defense contractor adds axial and centrifugal fan design, manufacturing, and servicing to its portfolio, expanding turnkey marine solutions

Release from Fairbanks Morse Defense

BELOIT, Wis. – October 30, 2023 – [Fairbanks Morse Defense](#) (FMD), a portfolio company of Arcline Investment Management (Arcline), has acquired American Fan, a leader in axial and centrifugal fan technology. Located in Fairfield, Ohio, American Fan’s breakthroughs in aerodynamics, acoustics, vibration control, and motor performance over the past 50 years position the company as a trusted maritime defense supplier and an essential addition for FMD to provide the OEM parts and turnkey service solutions to their core customers.

“Now more than ever, Fairbanks Morse Defense remains committed to expanding our growing array of OEM equipment to ensure that our fleet is always mission-ready,” said George Whittier, FMD CEO. “American Fan has a long track record of delivering high-quality products to the U.S. Navy, and its addition to our portfolio strengthens our ability to meet the continually evolving needs of our military and marine customers.”

American Fan’s products and services are currently specified

in 30 U.S. Navy shipbuilding programs, including LCS, LPD, LHA, DDG, FFG, and more. They are utilized in a broad range of onboard air-moving applications, from compartment ventilation to gas turbine air supply.

“American Fan and Fairbanks Morse Defense customers rely on us to deliver quality, speed, and expertise, and we have a shared commitment to exceeding these expectations for every customer engagement,” said American Fan General Manager Paul Brown. “As part of the FMD brand family, we are excited to expand our customer service through FMD’s six service centers, its network of highly trained field service technicians, and its global channel partners.”

The acquisition of American Fan continues to solidify Fairbanks Morse Defense’s position as an integrated defense contractor and turnkey solutions provider to the U.S. Navy, Military Sealift Command, and U.S. Coast Guard. In recent years, FMD has completed multiple acquisitions to better serve defense customers, including [Federal Equipment Company](#) (FEC), [Hunt Valve](#), [Maxim Watermakers](#), [Research Tool & Die](#) (RT&D), [Ward Leonard](#), and [Welin Lambie](#).

BofA Securities served as financial advisor to Arcline in connection with the transaction.

SECNAV Del Toro Releases One Navy-Marine Corps Team: Advancing Department of the

Navy Priorities



[Release from the Office of the Secretary of the Navy](#)

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES

10.26.2023

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro released his updated strategic guidance today – One Navy-Marine Corps Team: Advancing Department of the Navy Priorities. The document informs activities within the Department of the Navy to include planning, investments, budgeting, and prioritization of personnel and resources.

“For more than two years, I have had the privilege of serving as your Secretary of the Navy, and I am unbelievably proud of

our achievements to date. As we look forward, we will continue to advance our three enduring priorities: Strengthening Maritime Dominance, Building a Culture of Warfighting Excellence, and Enhancing Strategic Partnerships. The future of the Navy hinges on the modernization and readiness of our fleet today. Together, we strive to build a combined Navy and Marine Corps team that is modern, highly capable, and fearlessly dedicated to our mission of combat-readiness,” said Secretary Del Toro.

On the priorities, Secretary Del Toro added, “We have made smart choices in strengthening our maritime dominance relative to the pacing threat. We are building a culture of warfighting excellence fostering talent and innovation, while taking care to improve the quality of our members’ time in service. Moreover, we are enhancing our strategic partnerships throughout the world, and specifically in the Indo-Pacific. Our objective is clear: we will continue to provide a Navy and Marine Corps that can deter high-end conflict with a rapidly improving peer competitor while simultaneously protecting and advancing the global maritime interests of the Nation.”

Download Document here:

https://media.defense.gov/2023/Oct/26/2003328880/-1/-1/1/ADVANCING%20DON%20PRIORITIES_FINAL.PDF/ADVANCING%20DON%20PRIORITIES_FINAL.PDF

Coast Guard offloads nearly \$500 million in illegal

narcotics at Port Everglades



Coast Guard 7th District

MIAMI – The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter James offloaded over than 33,200 pounds of cocaine and 12,400 pounds of marijuana worth approximately \$448 million in Port Everglades, Thursday.

The offloaded drugs were interdicted during 13 separate cases in the international waters of the Eastern Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea due to the combined efforts of:

- U.S. Coast Guard Cutter James (WMSL 754)
- U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Thetis (WMEC 910)
- U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant (WMEC 617)
- U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Valiant (WMEC 621)
- U.S. Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Team – South

- U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Team
- USS Farragut (DDG 99)
- Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Air and Marine Operations (AMO) aircrews
- Joint Interagency Task Force South

“This offload is about national security,” said Vice Adm. Kevin Lunday, commander U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area. “It represents one part of a very large and strong interagency team that works closely with our allies and international partners to interdict maritime smuggling of dangerous and illegal drugs into the United States.”

Numerous U.S. agencies from the Departments of Defense, Justice and Homeland Security cooperated in the effort to combat transnational organized crime. The Coast Guard, Navy, Customs and Border Protection, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with allied militaries and international partner agencies, play a role in counter-drug operations.

“Our success hinges on our people. For the past 113 days, the women and men of James worked around the clock in support of the counter-narcotics mission,” said Capt. Donald Terkanian, commanding officer of James. “That being said, we cannot do this mission alone. We appreciate the immense support and dedication from our interagency and international partners that join us here today.”

The fight against drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea requires a unity of effort in all phases, from detection and monitoring to interdiction and apprehension, through criminal prosecutions by international partners and U.S. Attorneys’ Offices in districts across the nation. The Joint Interagency Task Force South in Key West,

Florida conducts the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs. The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean is conducted under the authority of the [Coast Guard 11th District](#), headquartered in Alameda, California, and the law enforcement phase of operations in the Caribbean is conducted under the authority of the [Coast Guard 7th District](#), headquartered in Miami. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the U.S. Coast Guard.

These interdictions relate to Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) designated investigations. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

James falls under the command of U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area. Based in Portsmouth, Virginia, U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area oversees all Coast Guard operations east of the Rocky Mountains to the Arabian Gulf. In addition to surge operations, Atlantic Area also allocates ships to deploy to the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific to combat transnational organized crime and illicit maritime activity.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit GoCoastGuard.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](#).

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Norway to Add Sikorsky MH-60R Helicopters for Critical Maritime Missions



[Release from Lockheed Martin](#)

OWEGO, N.Y., Oct. 26, 2023 – The U.S. Navy awarded Lockheed Martin a contract to produce six multi-mission MH-60R Seahawk helicopters for the Norwegian government. Designed and built by Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company, MH-60R aircraft will enable Norway to perform multiple maritime missions, including search and rescue and coastal and offshore patrol.

“Sikorsky and the U.S. Navy have 40 years of experience designing, building and improving Seahawk helicopters for

operations in extreme maritime environments, and preparing militaries worldwide for ever-evolving threats,” said Hamid Salim, vice president, Sikorsky Maritime Systems.

Norway and other nations can depend on the Seahawk aircraft for:

- high reliability
- advanced mission systems and sensors
- low flight-hour costs, and
- low maintenance and sustainment costs.

Norway’s order marks the second MH-60R contract award in less than a month. On October 12, the U.S. Navy awarded Lockheed Martin a contract for eight Spanish Navy MH-60R aircraft.

Sikorsky has delivered 330 MH-60R aircraft to five countries. Sixty-four more are on order or in production for India, Greece, South Korea, Australia, Spain, and Norway.

“This platform has a long and proven track record of reliability and flexibility in operational environments similar to those faced by the Norwegian Air Force and Coast Guard. This is why we believe the MH-60R is the solution that best meets Norway’s current requirements, and why we are very pleased to see this contract moving forward,” said Brigadier General Jarle Nergård, head of the Air Systems Division of the Norwegian Defence Materiel Agency.

A first-time operator of Seahawk helicopters, Norway is expected to receive all six MH-60R aircraft by 2027.

“The MH-60R is designed for all aspects of land and maritime operations from the vast majority of air-capable ships,” said Capt. William Hargreaves, program manager, H-60 Multi-mission Helicopter Program Office. “We are confident in Norway’s selection of this unmatched, multi-mission helicopter to support their coast guard.”