

U.S., Israel Complete Unmanned Naval Exercise in Gulf of Aqaba



[Release from U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs](#)

By U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs | | May 11, 2023

MANAMA, Bahrain – Forces from U.S. 5th Fleet completed a four-day exercise with Israel in the Gulf of Aqaba, May 11, that focused on unmanned systems and artificial intelligence integration into maritime operations.

The exercise, called Digital Shield, included members of U.S. 5th Fleet's unmanned systems and artificial intelligence task force, Task Force 59, as well as a MANTAS Devil Ray T-38

unmanned surface vessel. U.S. forces trained alongside Israeli counterparts during maritime awareness and vessel boarding drills.

“By working together to advance unmanned systems innovation we can enhance regional security and strengthen our collective ability to address emerging threats,” said Capt. Colin Corridan, Task Force 59’s commander.

NAVCENT established Task Force 59 in September 2021 to integrate new unmanned systems and artificial intelligence into U.S. naval operations across the Middle East. Since its launch, the task force has operated a suite of new unmanned systems from regional hubs in Bahrain and Aqaba, Jordan.

Task Force 59 also conducted a Digital Shield exercise last September with Israeli naval forces. The task force regularly trains and operates with maritime partners in the Middle East to accelerate the integration of cutting-edge unmanned technology into daily operations.

U.S. 5th Fleet’s area of operations encompasses approximately 2.5 million square miles of water area and includes the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea, parts of the Indian Ocean and three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, Suez Canal and Strait of Bab al Mandeb.

<https://www.cusnc.navy.mil/Media/News/Display/Article/3392055/us-israel-complete-unmanned-naval-exercise-in-gulf-of-aqaba/>

USCGC Thetis returns home following 66-day multi-mission Caribbean Sea patrol



[Release from Coast guard 7th District](#)

USCGC Thetis returns home following 66-day multi-mission Caribbean Sea patrol

KEY WEST, Fla. – The crew of the USCGC Thetis (WMEC 910) returned to their home port in Key West, Thursday, following a 66-day patrol in the Florida Straits and Caribbean Sea.

Thetis' crew contributed to the interdiction, care and repatriation of 125 migrants from Haiti and Cuba while patrolling the Seventh Coast Guard District's area of responsibility in support of Operation Vigilant Sentry and

Homeland Security Taskforce – Southeast.

During the patrol, Thetis' crew rescued 31 Cuban migrants from an overcrowded, adrift and homemade vessel in the South Florida Straits. The boarding team safely embarked the migrants aboard Thetis, where Petty Officer 1st Class William Ice, a health services technician assigned to Thetis, provided a lifesaving emergency procedure for one of the migrants. During another case, Thetis watch standers spotted a Haitian sailboat in distress and provided rescue assistance to the 13 Haitians.

Additionally, working with Bahamian Customs Department, Thetis safely returned 54 Haitian migrants to their point of departure in the Bahamas after their overcrowded and unseaworthy vessel was intercepted in transit to West Palm Beach, Florida.

"I am so proud of the crew's hard work and professionalism this patrol," said Cmdr. Gavin Garcia, commanding officer of Thetis. "It takes a great deal of teamwork within the ship as well as coordination with other organizations to meet the demands of two of the Coast Guard's main missions in the South Florida Straits: search and rescue and maritime law enforcement."

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

Navy Orders Four CMV-22B Osprey COD Aircraft, Bringing Total to 48



SASEBO, Japan (Feb. 23, 2022) A CMV-22B Osprey tiltrotor aircraft assigned to the “Titans” of Fleet Logistics Multi-Mission Squadron (VRM) 30, prepares to land at Commander, Fleet Activities Sasebo (CFAS) while conducting passenger and cargo transfer operations. For 75 years, CFAS has provided, maintained, and operated base facilities and services to empower forward-deployed U.S. and Allied Forces while providing superior support to their families and the community. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Jeremy Graham)

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Navy has ordered four additional CMV-22B Osprey carrier-onboard delivery aircraft, according to a March 5 Defense Department contract announcement.

The Bell Boeing Joint Project Office, Amarillo, Texas, was awarded a \$482.3 million contract modification by the Naval Air Systems Command for the four CMV-22Bs, the announcement said. The order follows a Feb. 26 order for four CMV-22Bs.

The order completes the Navy's plan to procure 48 CMV-22Bs. The aircraft are scheduled to be delivered by June 26 under the June 2018 multiyear procurement contract.

The Navy's CMV-22B replaces the C-2A Greyhound for the Carrier On-Board Delivery (COD) mission. Its mission is to transport personnel, mail, supplies and cargo from shore bases to aircraft carriers at sea.

The CMV-22B differs from the MV-22B by having a high-frequency radio, extra fuel capacity, improved fuel dump capability, improved lighting for cargo handling and a public address system. The aircraft can carry up to 6,000 pounds up to a range of 1,150 nautical miles. It is capable of internally carrying the F-135 engine power module for the F-35 Lightning II.

The first CMV-22B squadron, VRM-30, is working up a detachment to deploy on board USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70). VRM-30 detachments have completed two deployments to the Western Pacific.

Full operational capability of the CMV-22B is scheduled for 2024.

L3Harris and BigBear.ai Team

to Deliver Artificial Intelligence for Autonomous Surface Vessels

LAFAYETTE, La., May 9, 2023 – L3Harris Technologies (NYSE:LHX) entered into a teaming agreement with BigBear.ai (NYSE:BBAI) to deliver advanced autonomous surface vessel (ASV) capabilities and artificial intelligence (AI) for current and future maritime defense programs.

Under the agreement, L3Harris' [ASView system](#) will be integrated with BigBear.ai's forecasting computer vision technology to better identify and classify vessels, enhance situational awareness and support manned-unmanned teaming missions.

“Integrating L3Harris' ASView technology and BigBear.ai's AI solutions will increase our ASVs' sophistication by improving contact identification accuracy and pattern-of-life detection for autonomous fleets to inform effective maneuver decisions,” said Anthony Nigara, President, Maritime, L3Harris. “Partnering with BigBear.ai reinforces our commitment to delivering dependable and comprehensive autonomous C5ISR-T capabilities to increase survivability and readiness for the fleet.”

“We are thrilled to partner with L3Harris and combine our cutting-edge AI technology with a key leader in unmanned and autonomous systems,” said Mandy Long, Chief Executive Officer, BigBear.ai. “Our advanced AI capabilities enable autonomous vessels to operate with unparalleled efficiency and safety, supporting higher-risk missions, expanding operational reach, and most importantly, saving lives. As the battlespace evolves, autonomous systems will play an increasingly

significant role. We look forward to the limitless possibilities that lie ahead.”

U.S. Marine Corps activates first-ever Marine Innovation Unit, hosts defense innovation roundtable event



[Release from the Marine Corps Communications Directorate](#)

NEWBURGH, NY, UNITED STATES

05.05.2023

Story by [1st Lt. Kevin Stapleton, Marine Forces Reserve \(MARFORRES\)](#)

NEWBURGH, N.Y. – In accordance with the 38th Commandant's Planning Guidance and Force Design 2030, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Reserve formally activated the Marine Innovation Unit (MIU) during an activation ceremony at Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh, New York, on Friday, May 5, 2023.

The activation symbolizes the Marine Corps' renewed focus on innovation and experimentation in support of the Total Force as it continues to modernize the service in preparation for the future fight.

"We are extremely grateful for the advocacy provided by Gen. David Berger, Sgt. Maj. Troy Black, Lt. Gen. David Bellon, Sgt. Maj. Carlos Ruiz, and other leaders around the service," said Col. Matthew C. Swindle, commanding officer of MIU. "MIU exists to act as a strategic connector between industry and the entire Marine Corps. Our Marines are eager to provide that critical capability and enable success for our customers throughout the Total Force."

The unit activation ceremony, hosted at the unit's command post in Newburgh, was widely attended by key stakeholders from around the U.S. Department of Defense and federal government.

Notable ceremony attendees included guests of honor Rep. Pat Ryan (D-NY-18); the Honorable Carlos Del Toro, 78th Secretary of the Navy; and Lt. Gen. David G. Bellon, commander of U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Reserve and U.S. Marine Corps Forces, South.

Just before the ceremony, the unit hosted the Department of the Navy's first-ever Defense Innovation Roundtable.

The roundtable discussion hosted approximately 250 guests with representatives from industry, finance, academia, state and federal government, and the Department of Defense to help accelerate the transition of key capabilities from the private

sector to the national security sector.

The roundtable actioned the unit's unique connection to the civilian talent marketplace – specifically leveraging reserve Marines' civilian backgrounds and experiences to tackle some of the challenges facing today's Marine Corps.

The unit is already doing just that – in the weeks and months leading up to the activation ceremony and roundtable, MIU Marines hit the ground running, conducting several annual training educational periods to establish a unit-wide common operational picture before proceeding to engage with clients around the Marine Corps.

MIU is perhaps the only place in the Marine Corps where one might find lance corporals and lieutenant colonels working together on the same team to problem solve while on “engagements” – or the unit's moniker for projects and supporting activities that align with Force Design 2030; Talent Management 2030; or the Marine Forces Reserve Campaign Plan 2030.

Sourcing talent for these engagements does not come in the form of an operations or fragmentary order. Instead, the Marines self-select work based on their civilian education and expertise once the unit's leadership appropriately scopes an engagement.

MIU Marines are made up of chief executives; acquisitions and contracting experts; professional educators and investment professionals; cyber and coding gurus; researchers and data scientists; and self-funded entrepreneurs and innovators – just to name a few of the numerous career fields that define the service members in the unit.

This is the type of civilian experience and background needed by the Fleet Marine Force to solve some of Force Design 2030's

chief objectives and related initiatives, which are supported by the unit's lines of operation that target areas like contested logistics; data management & integration; and even command, control, computers, communications, cyber-defense & intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and targeting (C5ISR-T).

Whether in the form of experimentation for Force Design 2030; modeling the way ahead for talent management, training, and education; or developing enterprise-wide solutions in contested logistics as the service prepares to deploy onto the distributed battlefields of tomorrow, the Marines of MIU are working quickly to partner with key Active Component clients and discover, manufacture, and implement actionable results – at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels – around the Corps.

MIU is here to help Marines innovate and win – today and in the years ahead. And the unit is actively recruiting its newest cohort of reservists before achieving full operational capability (FOC) later this year.

“Regardless of their uniquely qualifying civilian experience and background, our Marines first wear the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor on their uniforms just like all Marines,” said Sgt. Maj. Robert K. Lusk, sergeant major of MIU. “And alongside our colleagues in the Fleet, our Marines continue to prioritize mission accomplishment by, with, and through our partners throughout the force.”

Interested Marines may apply to join the unit by visiting <https://miu.applytojob.com>. Prospective candidates may submit applications through May 21, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. PDT, with selection results released on or about June 30, 2023.

To learn more about MIU, please visit

<https://www.marforres.marines.mil/MIU/>.

Marines receive first MQ-9 Reaper under latest procurement contract



[Release from Naval Air Systems Command](#)

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md.—The Marine Corps recently received the first of eight MQ-9 Reapers, which was delivered under a joint contract with the U.S. Air Force.

The Navy's Multi-Mission Tactical Unmanned Air System program team (PMA-266) at Pax River leveraged the U.S. Air Force's Agile Reaper Enterprise Solution (ARES), an Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) type contract, to procure U.S. Air Force MQ-9 Reaper aircraft, associated spares, and support equipment for the Marine Corps.

The Air Force has enabled the Marine Corps to move fast standing up the Medium Altitude Long Endurance portion of the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) Uncrewed Expeditionary (MUX) family of systems, a key component of Marine Corps Force Design 2030

"The U.S. Air Force has been a great partner and a major enabler in the Marine Corps' pursuit to acquire group 5 UAS," said Lt. Col Leigh Irwin, Marine Corps MQ-9 program director for PMA-266. "Group 5 UAS will give the Marines the ability to conduct ISR [intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance] and network extensions in support of the MAGTF in support of stand-in forces and the Joint Force."

Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron (VMU)-1 in Yuma will utilize this aircraft for operational missions overseas, she said.

The MQ-9 Reaper is filling an immediate need for a long-range, long-endurance, land-based Group 5 UAS to conduct ISR and data relay in the Indo-Pacific Command area of responsibility.

Currently, the Marine Corps has two operational MQ-9A aircraft to support a wide range of operations such as coastal and border surveillance, weapons tracking, embargo enforcement, humanitarian assistance /disaster relief, peacekeeping and counter-narcotic operations.

U.S. Seizes \$80 Million Heroin Shipment in Gulf of Oman



[Release from U.S. Naval Central Forces Command Public Affairs](#)

MANAMA, Bahrain – A U.S. Coast Guard fast response cutter seized \$80 million worth of heroin from a fishing vessel transiting the Gulf of Oman, May 10, during the ship's second drug bust this week.

USCGC Glen Harris (WPC 1144) was operating in support of Combined Task Force (CTF) 150 when a boarding team discovered 1,964 kilograms of heroin on a vessel transiting international waters after departing Chah Bahar, Iran. Glen Harris also seized \$30 million worth of methamphetamine and heroin two

days ago from another fishing vessel that departed the same port.

“I’m very proud of my crew and all we’ve been able to accomplish as a team this week,” said Lt. Nick Jabs, Glen Harris’s commanding officer. “We’re out here to work with regional partners and disrupt any destabilizing maritime activity at sea. We will continue getting after it.”

Glen Harris’s previous seizure on May 8 included 580 kilograms of methamphetamine and 35 kilograms of heroin.

The ship arrived in the Middle East last year as part of a contingent of U.S. Coast Guard cutters that are forward-deployed to the region under Patrol Forces Southwest Asia.

CTF 150 is one of four task forces that form the world’s largest multinational naval partnership, Combined Maritime Forces. Naval forces supporting CTF 150 have now seized illegal drugs worth a combined estimated U.S. street value of more than \$250 million in 2023. These efforts help ensure legitimate commercial shipping transits the region free from non-state threats.

<https://www.cusnc.navy.mil/Media/News/Display/Article/3390650/us-seizes-80-million-heroin-shipment-in-gulf-of-oman/>

NGC’s AARGM-ER Completes 5th Consecutive Successful Test



A U.S. Navy F/A-18 Super Hornet carries the AARGM-ER. (Photo Credit: U.S. Navy)

[Release from Northrop Grumman](#)

LOS ANGELES – May 8, 2023 – Northrop Grumman Corporation (NYSE: NOC) announced the fifth consecutive successful flight test of the U.S. Navy’s AGM-88G Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile Extended Range (AARGM-ER). The missile successfully detected, identified, located and engaged an advanced, land-based, emitter target.

- First firing overland against operationally-representative modern air defense system targets
- AARGM-ER deliveries will begin later this year to support initial operational capability for the Navy in 2024
- The missile is being integrated on the Navy F/A-18E/F Super Hornet and EA-18G Growler as well as the Air Force F-35A, Marine Corps F-35B and Navy/Marine Corps F-35C.

Experts:

Gordon Turner, vice president, advanced weapons, Northrop Grumman: "AARGM-ER provides the Navy with a demonstrated capability to stay ahead of adversary threats. This successful live fire continues to prove the missile's extended range, readiness and effectiveness."

U.S. Navy CAPT Alex Dutko, Navy program manager for Direct and Time Sensitive Strike (PMA-242): "AARGM-ER once again demonstrated high-speed employment of lethal effects against an air defense system target. This is another successful step in our government-industry team's effort to deliver this critically needed capability to our warfighters."

Details on AARGM-ER:

[AARGM-ER development](#) uses digital modeling and integrated advanced [AARGM](#) sensors and electronics in a new high-performance air vehicle with upgraded propulsion and an optimized warhead. The new missile will provide the Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps with a vital counter-air-defense capability that can engage advanced and long-range threats while pilots remain outside of lethal engagement ranges. The AARGM-ER government-industry team recently received the [William J. Perry award](#), recognizing their exceptional contributions to precision strike systems which strengthen national security and shapes the nation's precision strike combat advantage.

GE Power Conversion reports

demand for its electric ship solutions to future-proof the latest generation of naval vessels

[Release from GE Power Conversion](#)

GE Power Conversion reports demand for its electric ship solutions to future-proof the latest generation of naval vessels

This week, GE Power Conversion convened with the world's leading navies and industry at IMDEX Asia, to showcase its electric ship power and propulsion solutions.

IMDEX represents a respected platform within the large Asia Pacific maritime sector in Singapore, where GE Power Conversion showcased electrification technologies that are helping the world's leading navies to energize their missions.

GE Power Conversion has an industry-leading, complete range of electric ship technologies, and decades of naval sector experience with 13 different navies around the world.

Solutions range from full naval-specification, high voltage electric grids for power and propulsion, to cost-effective hybrid electrification options.

Through integrated electrification, energy management, automation and control, power in the ship's electric grid can simultaneously supply high-energy defense systems, and propulsion. Energy-efficient electric architectures also serve as an effective way to integrate new, cleaner, energy sources

as they emerge, and host digital technologies to implement more autonomous systems.

GE Power Conversion is reporting increased intensity of customers wanting to engage to understand how they can best use energy across their fleets to create a capability advantage. The business says there is a growing recognition that electrification is critical to new generations of networked mission systems and the right architecture to 'plug-in' new energy sources.

Shaopeng Ji, Commercial Operations Leader- Asia Pacific, at GE Power Conversion explains: "In an emerging new naval era, fleets need to be more mission configurable, highly capable for military advantage, adaptable for technology insertion and affordable. Increasing power demands on vessels means that more customers are seeking help in future-proofing their ships for higher energy needs, partnered by a roadmap to emissions reduction."

GE Power Conversion brings capability from having extensive electric and hybrid naval ship system references, leading in applications from the largest, complex warships to the latest support ships. Expert services offerings and full scale land based test and emulation facilities are structured to provide a complete life cycle solution, reducing risk, increasing reliability and helping to optimize operation of assets.

With three decades of expertise of providing power and propulsion capability for the world's navies' largest combat vessels (GE's technology powers more than 90% of the UK Royal Navy large vessel fleet, including Queen Elizabeth Class, Type 45 and Type 26 vessels), GE Power Conversion is now seeing an increased customer demand for smaller combat vessel solutions. By combining extensive commercial electric drive ship expertise with deep domain naval and coast guard experience, GE Power Conversion provides cost-effective electrification solutions for light combat corvettes and offshore patrol

ships, undertaking reconnaissance and submarine deflection missions.

Shaopeng Ji continued: “The Ship’s Electric Grid is hugely versatile, and electric drive ships are just as suited to smaller, lower voltage, more commercial-spec ships in naval and coastguard fleets as to the biggest, higher voltage combat ships. Both are able to combine power for propulsion and on-board equipment in one system. Electric and hybrid power systems are viable choices for modern, multi-role ships seeing increased mission system power demand but needing sustainable, energy-efficient performance for patrol duties.”

HII CHRISTENS VIRGINIA-CLASS ATTACK SUBMARINE MASSACHUSETTS (SSN 798)



[Release from HII](#)

NEWPORT NEWS, Va., May 06, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII (NYSE: HII) today christened the *Virginia*-class submarine *Massachusetts* (SSN 798) at the company's Newport News Shipbuilding division.

“Shipbuilding is a noble calling, and you can see our pride in the craftsmanship before you,” NNS President Jennifer Boykin said. “When *Massachusetts* joins the fleet, she will be the latest in innovation and power, forging ahead in defense of our freedom, just like Paul Revere on his famous midnight ride. As SSN 798 supports the Navy's critical missions around the world, she will carry with her the patriotism of her shipbuilders.”

[Sheryl Sandberg](#), founder and chair of the Sandberg Goldberg Bernthal Family Foundation, and former chief operating officer of Meta (formerly Facebook), serves as the ship's sponsor. Sandberg performed the traditional honor of breaking a bottle of American sparkling wine across the submarine's bow during the ceremony.

Photos accompanying this release are available at: <https://hii.com/news/hii-christens-virginia-class-attack-submarine-massachusetts-ssn-798>.

“I was raised to be deeply grateful for our freedom and all those who risk their lives to defend it,” Sandberg said. “So it was an honor when then Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus asked me to sponsor *Massachusetts* eight years ago. I couldn't be more excited to be in Newport News to celebrate this boat with the shipbuilders who have worked so hard to bring her to life. Today is more than just a christening of a vessel. It is also a celebration of progress. This is one of the first submarines intentionally built to allow both men and women to serve and it will make our military stronger. It is an honor

to christen *Massachusetts* and spend the day with service members, shipbuilders and their families. They are a living legacy of all that America represents.”

The ceremony took place outside of Module Outfitting Facility at NNS and was attended by more than 2,000 guests, including NNS employees who are building *Massachusetts*, members of the submarine’s crew, Navy personnel and other government officials.

Under Secretary of the Navy Erik Raven provided the keynote address.

“From design, to delivery, to employment, each person here is making their vital contribution to maintaining our nation’s maritime dominance and the freedom that we all cherish,” Raven told the crowd. “We are able to deploy exquisite capabilities across the globe in great part to our dedicated shipbuilders. These talented women and men are able to turn raw steel into the world’s most sophisticated undersea capabilities.”

Massachusetts is the 25th *Virginia*-class submarine and the 12th to be delivered by NNS.

“The crew and I are excited to share in this historic event with our sponsor, the shipbuilder, and all our families,” said Cmdr. Mike Siedsma, commanding officer of the pre-commissioning unit. “We look forward to operating *Massachusetts* in support of our nation’s defense. We are honored to establish the ‘Iron Patriots’ legacy as an enemy to tyrants.”

NNS is one of only two shipyards capable of designing and building nuclear-powered submarines for the U.S. Navy. The advanced capabilities of *Virginia*-class submarines increase firepower, maneuverability and stealth.

A video of the ceremony, along with additional information on *Massachusetts*, Sandberg and the *Virginia*-class submarine

program, can be found at: www.HII.com/SSN798