The U.S. Navy Collaborates with Colleges and Universities to Transition Cutting-Edge Capabilities to the Fleet

New "Investment Horizons" Framework Accelerates Technology Transitions from Academia to Defense

ARLINGTON, Va., August 27, 2024 – As the world grapples with increasing geopolitical tensions and the race for technological dominance intensifies, the Office of Naval Research (ONR), led by Corey Love, PhD, is partnering with Stanford University's **Technology Transfer for Defense (TT4D)** program, led by Jeff Decker, PhD, to take decisive action to ensure the U.S. military remains at the forefront of innovation. The partnership between the two institutions is accelerating the transfer of technologies from dozens of academic labs around the country to military application. The "**Investment Horizons**" framework, recently developed under the guidance of Acting Chief Technology Officer Justin Fanelli, is a groundbreaking initiative designed to streamline and fastrack the transition of emerging technologies from academic research to military application.

The new framework used by the ONR-Stanford partnership, is redefining how the U.S. Navy identifies, develops, and integrates innovative solutions, ensuring technological superiority in an increasingly competitive global landscape. Transitioning these cutting-edge technologies addresses national security threats in an era defined by rapid change and strategic competition. The results are already tangible. Technologies developed in university labs are being scaled and

deployed across the military, enhancing the operational readiness of U.S. forces and strengthening the defense industrial base. “Investment Horizons” categorizes technologies into four strategic stages:

- Horizon 3 (Evaluating): Technologies that offer new capabilities, such as advanced energy storage solutions, are identified and assessed for potential military application. For instance, Nickel-Zinc battery research by Prof. Chris Rhodes and Dr. Debra Rolison at Texas State University, is currently under evaluation for use in Undersea Underwater Vehicles, with funding from ONR. The NiZn technology has already been fully vetted and is commercially scalable and now its military use is under evaluation.

- Horizon 2 (Emerging): Promising technologies undergo pilot programs to evaluate their scalability and integration into military operations. An example of Horizon 2 under the ONR NEPTUNE program, is the work of Prof. Steve Leeb at MIT who is testing new methods of energy management and monitoring on shipboard systems. These methods utilize AI-assisted electrical load-balancing technologies, which already exist, but these technologies must be assessed for their potential to be integrated and scaled across the U.S. Navy’s fleet in such a way that maintains the operational effectiveness of U.S. naval vessels.

- Horizon 1 (Investing/Extracting): Proven technologies are scaled for widespread deployment across the Navy, ensuring sustained operational effectiveness. Many university labs across the country conduct pilot tests of basic science applications which may or may not yield meaningful solutions to current and anticipated Navy

challenges. The U.S. Navy invests in new potential technologies at institutions around the country to ensure the future of the US industrial base.

- Horizon 0 (Retiring): Outdated technologies are phased out, allowing resources to be reallocated to more promising innovations aligned with the Navy's strategic goals.

"The urgency of what is currently going on in our world in terms of conflict, demands that we accelerate the transition of game-changing technologies into the military, ensuring our forces are equipped with the most advanced tools available," said Justin Fanelli, acting chief technology officer with the United States Department of the Navy. "Through collaboration with institutions like Stanford University, we're now able to move from research to deployment faster than ever, which is essential given today's global challenges."

ONR's NEPTUNE program and Stanford's Technology Transition for Defense program play a pivotal role in this effort. Dr. Decker emphasizes the strategic importance of aligning academic research with military needs.

"The collaboration between Stanford University and the U.S. Navy is a powerful example of how academia can drive significant advancements in defense technology," said Dr. Decker, managing director of the Technology Transfer for Defense program at Stanford University and with the Precourt Institute for Energy and a Social Science research scholar at Stanford. "The Investment Horizons framework is not just about adopting new technologies – it's about ensuring that these innovations are strategically aligned with the long-term needs of the military at a time when global competition is at its fiercest."

With ongoing global conflicts in Africa, Middle East, Europe,

and the Indo-Pacific, the need for rapid and effective technology transitions has never been more critical. The Investment Horizons framework, supported by the innovative efforts of ONR programs like NEPTUNE and NURP and academic partnerships, is positioning the U.S. Navy military to maintain its edge in this new era of Great Power Competition.

To learn more about the ONR Investment Horizons framework, visit onr.navy.mil; for more information on the Technology Transfer for Defense program at Stanford University, visit techtransferfordefense.stanford.edu.

National Call to Maritime Service Website launched

27 August 2024

WASHINGTON – Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), the Hon. Franklin R. Parker today announced the launch of the National Call to Maritime Service (NCTMS) and Naval Civilian Careers (NCC) websites in Syracuse, New York.

During a joint Navy Week Proclamation with Onondaga County Executive, Ryan McMahon, and Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh, the Hon. Parker highlighted the broad range of opportunities to serve in the Department of the Navy, both in and out of uniform, and appealed to the audience to explore how they might answer the call.

“Service to country looks different for everyone—it might be in a uniform or public service or as a volunteer in your local

community, but as a life path, it carries profound personal and national significance," said Hon. Parker. "We need every generation to understand the important role service plays in the fabric of our Nation, and we are encouraging the next generation to take part in building the Nation's maritime defense and, ultimately, protecting our national security."

In May 2024, the Secretary of the Navy, Carlos Del Toro, issued the NCTMS to emphasize the benefits and importance of service to country. NCTMS is a call to our Nation's youth, educators, veterans and leaders, as well as every citizen who values freedom, to consider how they might contribute. NCTMS encourages everyone to explore the different career paths within the DON at www.secnav.mil/calltomaritimeservice.

Developed as a portal, the website allows individuals to embrace their curiosity around service and explore areas they may never have considered. It helps determine what best resonates with the individual and directs them to adjoining sites where they can learn more about the wealth of opportunities offered with the Navy and Marine Corps, as well as other jobs in support of maritime service – both military and civilian.

"We are grateful to have Secretary Parker here to officially kick off Syracuse Navy Week and make such an important announcement about the National Call to Maritime Service," said Mayor Walsh. "Syracuse, and the hard-working, service-oriented nature of our citizens, is the perfect backdrop for this announcement, and we are standing by to answer the call."

The Navy Week program has served as the Navy's principal outreach effort into areas of the nation without a significant Navy presence, with over 300 Navy Weeks held in 95 different U.S. cities. The program is designed to share with Americans how their Navy is deployed around the world and around the clock, and why a strong Navy is vital to protecting the

American way of life.

To learn more about the NCTMS and the various ways that you can serve your country, please visit https://www.secnav.navy.mil/calltomaritimeservice/Pages/default.aspx.

Navy Awards Contract For Continued AN/UPX-50 Interrogator Redesign

Operations Specialist 3rd Class Rikisha Cormier, assigned to the amphibious assault ship USS Boxer (LHD 4), identifies air contacts from the combat information center during a previous

underway in the eastern Pacific Ocean. The new contract enhances the combat information center with the continued redesign of the AN/UPX-50(C) digital interrogator assemblies.
Aug 28, 2024

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, Patuxent River, Md.—The U.S. Navy awarded a $24 million contract to BAE Systems for the continued redesign of the AN/UPX-50(C) digital interrogator assemblies.

The cost-plus-fixed-fee contract is a modification to a previously issued basic ordering agreement to address parts obsolescence and implement solutions to achieve compliance with the latest specifications, qualification and certification standards for the Navy. Additionally, this order adds tasking for the integration of Target Report Processing capabilities into the Common Core DI, formerly hosted in the Interrogator Set, AN/UPX-24(V).

The redesigned interrogator features a common modular design and systems architecture that allows for customized configurations and performance optimization. The design of this next generation interrogator allows for faster updates to Identification Friend or Foe technology in air defense, weapon systems, air traffic control and range instrumentation for several decades.

Work is scheduled to be complete in late 2026.

RTX’s SeaVue Multi-role Radar Provides Critical Targeting

Data at RIMPAC

Radar proves its long-range target detection ability

HONOLULU, Hawaii (Aug. 28, 2024) – Raytheon, an RTX (NYSE: RTX) business, successfully demonstrated the SeaVue Multi-role Radar's superior long-range target detection at the U.S. Navy's Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) – the world's largest international maritime exercise.

Performing a Sink Exercise, or SINKEX, an MQ-9B SeaGuardian® Unmanned Aircraft System from General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. used SeaVue Multi-role Radar (SVMR) surveillance and imaging to survey multiple targets and send track data to F/A-18 E/F Super Hornet aircraft. The aircraft were able to use the data provided by the radar to successfully fire a Long-Range Anti-Ship Missile (LRASM) at a decommissioned amphibious assault ship, the USS Tarawa (LHA-1), showcasing SVMR's net-enabled, long-range weapons employment capabilities.

"SVMR proved its ability to capture high fidelity targeting data needed for successful weapons engagement in a maritime

environment," said Bryan Rosselli, president of Advanced Products & Solutions at Raytheon. "The live-fire exercise enabled us to test and validate SVMR to ensure it can provide the situational awareness required in an operational environment – allowing faster decision making and more efficient kill chains."

SVMR is a modern, software-defined radar that provides all-weather surveillance and superior multi-mission performance for crewed and uncrewed aircraft, including fixed, rotary-wing and aerostat platforms.

Leveraging over 60 years of surveillance radar innovation, SVMR provides extended range and small target detection from operational altitudes, enabling a more capable and efficient method for monitoring and protecting. It features a modular and scalable architecture that supports affordable upgrades and sustainment and has been developed and extensively flight tested for low and high-altitude surveillance modes.

Navy Partners with Shield AI to Enhance Autonomy in Naval Aviation

A BQM-177 aerial target conducts test flight from China Lake, Calif. The Navy integrating artificial intelligence software into the BQM-177 to test capability for future autonomous operations. (U.S. Navy photo)
Aug 27, 2024

Naval Air Systems Command, Patuxent River, Md. – The Navy's Strike Planning and Execution program (PMA-281) and Aerial Targets program (PMA-208) recently partnered with Shield AI to integrate autonomy and artificial intelligence software into the BQM-177A sub-sonic aerial target, marking a significant milestone in furthering autonomous systems for real-world applications in naval aviation.

The Navy competitively awarded this effort to Shield AI, an industry leader in autonomous command and control of aviation platforms, Aug. 16, under an Other Transaction Authority (OTA) agreement facilitated by the Naval Aviation Systems Consortium (NASC).

"This collaborative effort between PMA-281, PMA-208, and Shield AI not only expands and improves the existing spectrum of validation but also offers a scalable solution that benefits the entire naval aviation community," said Capt.

Jerick Black, PMA-281 program manager. “By laying the groundwork for future advancements, this initiative ensures that the Navy remains at the forefront of technological innovation and operational excellence in naval aviation.”

Under the agreement Shield AI will integrate its Hivemind AI pilot software and deliver a robust prototype test bed using the BQM-177.

“This configuration of the aerial target facilitates rapid iteration by continuously refining and updating AI algorithms through real-world feedback, ensuring that the systems are robust, reliable, and ready for operational deployment,” said Johann Soto, PMA-281 software modernization team lead.

This test approach creates a seamless connection between simulation-based testing and live testing, allowing for a comprehensive and continuous feedback loop that enhances the effectiveness of the AI systems being developed, Soto said. A technical demonstration is planned for late 2025.

“By leveraging the BQM-177A’s lower unit cost and cost per flight hour, this initiative provides a flexible and cost-effective testing environment that drives innovation at an accelerated pace,” said Greg Crewse, PMA-208 program manager.

The BQM-177A replicates modern subsonic anti-ship cruise missile threats in support of fleet training for both developmental and operational tests. It can support a variety of mission requirement by carrying a wide array of internal and external payloads.

USCGC Frederick Hatch Wraps up a Successful Patrol in the Blue Pacific

The crew of the USCGC Frederick Hatch (WPC 1143) conduct training with Station Apra Harbor in Apra Harbor on Aug. 8, 2024. The towing exercise with a Station Apra Harbor 45-foot Response Boat-Medium crew enhanced inter-unit coordination and operational proficiency. (U.S. Coast Guard photo)

From U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam, Aug. 26, 2024

SANTA RITA, Guam – The crew of the USCGC Frederick Hatch (WPC 1143) successfully concluded a productive patrol period from July 22 to Aug. 12, 2024, under the ongoing Operation Rematau, showcasing the U.S. Coast Guard's dedication to maritime

safety, security, and stewardship in the Blue Pacific.

This patrol saw the crew cover over 1,252 nautical miles and engage in various operations, from maritime law enforcement boardings to community outreach and crucial training.

During this patrol, the Frederick Hatch team boarded two foreign-flagged fishing vessels in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) operational area on the high seas, with no violations reported, ensuring the safety and security of the region's maritime activities.

"Our mission underscores the vital role we play in ensuring safe and lawful maritime activities in the Pacific," said Lt. Niki Kirchner-Hope, commanding officer of USCGC Frederick Hatch. "The successful execution of these boardings reflects our crew's high level of professionalism and dedication to the mission."

The cutter's crew participated in significant community relations events in Tinian, Northern Mariana Islands, including the March-On for the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Tinian. They also engaged in a local festival and were invited back for more in October, continuing to foster strong relationships with the local community and enhancing regional presence.

The Frederick Hatch crew, which experienced a substantial turnover this transfer season, with over 55 percent of members swapping out, benefited from extensive training during the patrol. They completed multiple training programs, including Marine Emergency Drills, Damage Control Training Team exercises, and small boat training.

"Training and mentoring our new crew members are key to our success and long-term effectiveness," said Petty Officer 1st Class Joseph Mendiola of the engineering team. "Routinely

operating thousands of miles from homeport makes this training even more crucial. It’s what makes sure our team is ready to handle anything that comes our way with confidence and skill, really boosting our mission readiness and impact out here in the Pacific.”

Key accomplishments of the patrol include completing anchor training in Agat Bay, successful law enforcement and tactical training, and vital inter-agency collaborations. The cutter crew participated in a towing exercise with a Station Apra Harbor 45-foot Response Boat-Medium crew, enhancing inter-unit coordination and operational proficiency.

The patrol also saw personnel achievements, including one crewmember advancing to E-5 and several others achieving new qualifications. These underscore the team’s commitment to ongoing professional development and mission readiness. They will now focus on post-patrol debriefings to refine communication and operational procedures, further enhancing their capabilities for future missions.

“On behalf of the entire team aboard Hatch, I want to extend our gratitude to the personnel from USCGC Myrtle Hazard, Station Apra Harbor, the Forces Micronesia Sector Guam Sector Boarding Team, and the Base Guam MAT/WAT. Your support throughout this patrol, from filling critical TDY assignments to assisting with complex training and law enforcement evolutions, has been invaluable in ensuring Hatch’s success and the well-being and readiness of our crew. Thank you for being so dedicated to others and for standing the watch with us in this demanding environment,” said Lt. Kirchner-Hope

Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane Returns Home Following 68-day Operation Blue Pacific Patrol in Oceania

The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane (WMEC 903), a 270-foot medium endurance cutter homeported in Honolulu, Hawaii, poses for a photo following the Royal Tongan Navy's International Fleet Review in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, July 4, 2024. The U.S. Coast Guard participated in the review to celebrate King Tupou VI's 65th birthday and the 50th anniversary of the Tongan Navy. (U.S. Coast Guard photo, courtesy Cutter Harriet Lane)

From Coast Guard District 14 External Affairs, Aug. 26, 2024

HONOLULU — The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane (WMEC 903) returned to Honolulu Friday following a 68-day patrol in support of Coast Guard District Fourteen's Operation Blue

Pacific in Oceania.

The Harriet Lane crew departed Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in June and traveled more than 13,400 nautical miles spanning from the Hawaiian Islands to Tonga. Patrolling in support of Operation Blue Pacific, the cutter's crew worked alongside Pacific Island Countries to forge and advance relationships with like-minded allies and partners who share a common vision for maritime governance.

The crew's efforts included enhancing maritime domain awareness, combatting illegal fishing activities across Oceania, and participating in exercises to bolster partner capacity and interoperability. Leveraging bilateral maritime law enforcement agreements with Tuvalu, Tonga, Samoa and the Cook Islands, the Harriet Lane crew conducted six boardings alongside Pacific Island partners in their respective exclusive economic zones (EEZs). Additionally, Harriet Lane law enforcement teams conducted four fishery boardings on the high seas in concert with the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

During Harriet Lane's patrol, the crew made port calls in Tonga, American Samoa, Samoa, the Cook Islands and French Polynesia. While offshore Niue, the Harriet Lane crew hosted key leaders for a maritime roundtable discussion, offered local high students a tour of the cutter, and sent personnel ashore to assist with community service endeavors.

While transiting home, the Harriet Lane crew conducted the medevac of a 53-year-old fishing vessel crewman experiencing stroke-like symptoms approximately 480 miles offshore Oahu.

"This patrol was another resounding success for the crew of Harriet Lane and reinforces the Coast Guard's commitment to delivering as a trusted partner across Oceania," said Cmdr. Nicole Tesoniero, commanding officer, Cutter Harriet Lane.

“This patrol took us to the far reaches of the South Pacific that most crew could have never dreamed of seeing and they continue to serve as model ambassadors for our unique mission set. In the final days of our patrol, Harriet Lane answered the call to render aid to a local fisherman in need of medical assistance nearly 500 miles from Oahu. While every aspect of this mission is incredibly rewarding, the knowledge that we were able to assist a member of the local community in a moment of need truly resonated with the crew. I am proud of their tremendous commitment to operational success and look forward to watching Harriet Lane’s impact continue to grow.”

Commissioned in 1984, Cutter Harriet Lane is a 270-foot medium endurance cutter homeported in Honolulu to support Coast Guard missions in the Pacific region. The service’s medium endurance cutter fleet supports a variety of Coast Guard missions including search and rescue, law enforcement, maritime defense, and protection of the marine environment.

USS Kingsville Commissioned in Corpus Christi

Corpus Christi, Texas (August 24, 2024) The crew of the Navy's newest littoral combat ship USS Kingsville (LCS 36) brings the ship to life during its commissioning ceremony in Corpus Christi, Texas. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Nicholas V. Huynh)
Release from U.S. Pacific Fleet

By Lt. Brinn Hefron of Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – The U.S. Navy commissioned Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Kingsville (LCS 36) at the Solomon P. Ortiz Center, August 24.

In the week preceding the ceremony, the crew built ties with their namesake city and visited the King Ranch for a luncheon at the Henrietta Memorial Museum and a tour of the historic ranch. The crew visited with the mayor of Kingsville, the ship's sponsor, Ms. Katherine Kline, and her parents Dr. Rich and Mrs. Sue Sugden. The U.S. Navy prides itself on a strong tradition of the relationship between a ship and their namesake community or family. These enduring ties at the

beginning of Kingsville's service will strengthen bonds between the ship and the communities of Kingsville and its commissioning location of Corpus Christi.

Leaders and distinguished guests wished the crew of Kingsville fair winds and following seas as they brought the ship to life and began its commissioned service.

Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Financial Management and Comptroller, the Honorable Russell Rumbaugh, delivered the commissioning ceremony's principal address. The ceremony also featured remarks from Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Integration and Capabilities and Resources, Vice Adm. Brad Skillman, United States Representatives, the Honorable Vicente Gonzalez, Jr. and the Honorable Michael Cloud, the Mayor of Kingsville, the Honorable Sam Fugate and the Mayor of Corpus Christi, the Honorable Paulette Guajardo.

"A ship commissioning is one of the ways the U.S. Navy keeps itself tied to the nation it serves. It's why we name ships after cities and states. And what better moment to celebrate our long and intimate relationship than commissioning a ship named after Kingsville," said Rumbaugh. "This ship will provide maritime security in each of our fleet operations. We in the Department of the Navy are proud of the Littoral Combat Ships."

During the ceremony, Kingsville's commanding officer Cmdr. Ludwig Mann III, reported the ship manned and ready, and ship sponsor, gave the traditional order to "Man our ship and bring her to life!" Helping to welcome the ship to the fleet, T-45C aircraft assigned to VT-21 at Naval Air Station Kingsville flew over the ship as the crew ran aboard the ship – bringing her to life.

"This experience is a unique one and should be cherished. You will create a culture that I am sure will last as the

Kingsville way for decades to come," said Skillman. "To the triad, Cmdr. Mann, Cmdr. Kavanaugh, Command Senior Chief Moran, I also know you and the crew are ready to get out there and do the Navy and the nation's business around the globe. Tough and confident, go get them."

The night prior to commissioning, the Kingsville Commissioning Committee held an evening reception onboard the USS Lexington Museum where the committee recognized the crew of Kingsville for their service and dedication that ended with a fireworks display.

Kingsville, the 18th Independence-variant LCS, is the first to bear this name and pays homage to the city of Kingsville and the King Ranch. The ship's sponsor is a member of the sixth generation of the King Ranch family, descendants of steamboat captain Richard King who founded in the King Ranch in Kingsville in 1853. The King Ranch continues to foster a relationship with Naval Air Station Kingsville which was founded in 1942 and is located three miles from the city's center.

Independence-variant littoral combat ships are fast, optimally manned, mission-tailored surface combatants that operate in near-shore and open-ocean environments, winning against 21st-century coastal threats. LCS integrate with joint combined, manned and unmanned teams to support forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence missions around the globe.

The mission of CNSP is to man, train, and equip the Surface Force to provide fleet commanders with credible naval power to control the sea and project power ashore.

Kongsberg to Build Missile Factory in Australia

From Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace, Aug. 23, 2024

The government of Australia has announced its decision to invest in the construction of a new factory for Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace (‘KONGSBERG’) strike missiles in Newcastle, Australia.

The factory will manufacture and service KONGSBERG’s strike missiles to be used by the Australian Defence Force (ADF). Construction of the factory is expected to start later this year, the Australian government said in a press release.

The Australian government announced it would contribute up to AUS $850 million in partnership with Kongsberg Defence Australia to manufacture and service missiles in Newcastle, including constructing a new factory in the Newcastle Airport precinct in New South Wales, about 120 km north of Sydney.

“Strong international demand for our strike missiles means we are expanding our footprint in selected countries. The missile factory will be the first to open outside Norway, which is testament to the strong and growing relationship between KONGSBERG, Norway and Australia in cooperating to develop current and future defence capabilities,” said Eirik Lie, president of Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace.

The government also announced its decision to include Kongsberg Defence Australia as one of its strategic partners in the Guided Weapons and Explosive Ordnance (GWEO) Enterprise. The GWEO Enterprise is backed by a commitment of $16 to $21 billion over the coming decade through the Government’s 2024 Integrated Investment Program.

“We are honoured to have been selected as a strategic partner in the GWEO Enterprise and look forward to continue to invest in Australia to support the armed forces, while generating jobs and economic benefits in the local area,” said John Fry, managing director at Kongsberg Defence Australia.

NSM & JSM

The NSM is an anti-ship missile with superior operational performance and high survivability against all enemy defence systems. The missile was developed by KONGSBERG and first deployed in 2012 by the Norwegian Navy. The air-launched JSM is currently being integrated on the F-35 fighter aircraft.

The NSM is the main weapon for the Norwegian Navy’s frigates and coastal corvettes, and has been selected by 13 other countries, including Australia. The JSM has so far been selected by Norway, Japan and the US Air Force.

Coast Guard Offloads Nearly $50 Million in Illegal Narcotics Interdicted in Eastern Pacific Ocean

The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba pose with more than 3,400 pounds of cocaine and 4,410 pounds of marijuana with a combined assessed street value of approximately $50 million in Port Everglades, Florida, Aug. 23, 2024. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Eric Rodriguez)

From the U.S. Coast Guard 7th District, Aug. 23, 2024

MIAMI – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba (WMEC 907) offloaded more than 3,400 pounds of cocaine and 4,410 pounds of marijuana with a combined assessed street value of approximately $50 million in Port Everglades, Friday, Aug. 23.

The Escanaba crew embarked a Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron aircrew, and Law Enforcement Detachment 107 from Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Team Pacific. They worked alongside interagency and international partners to interdict illicit narcotics in the international waters off South America in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

Coast Guard crews often deploy to the U.S. Southern Command joint operating area, which includes the Caribbean Sea and the Eastern Pacific Ocean, to conduct counter drug missions under Joint Interagency Task Force-South. Deployments for cutters assigned to the Coast Guard Atlantic Area Command include Panama Canal transits to deny transnational criminal organizations access to maritime trafficking routes in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

“The Coast Guard’s presence in the Eastern Pacific is vital to our mission of disrupting the flow of illicit narcotics and safeguarding our nation’s security. The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba, through their unwavering professionalism and dedication, has once again demonstrated the critical role our people play in these complex operations,” said Vice Adm. Nathan Moore, commander, Coast Guard Atlantic Area. “By maintaining a strong presence in this region, we continue to protect our communities and uphold the highest standards of service. Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba’s success is a direct reflection of our commitment to mission excellence and the core values that guide us.”

The following assets and crews were involved in the interdictions:

- Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba (WMEC 907)
- Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON) Jacksonville

- Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) 107 from Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Team – Pacific (PAC TACLET)

- Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-South)

- Eleventh Coast Guard District

“The counter narcotics mission continues to be a vital mission of the Coast Guard,” said Cmdr. Jared Silverman, commanding officer of Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba. “The crew of Escanaba, alongside our shipmates from HITRON and TACLET, executed the mission in outstanding fashion and ensured that the spirit of operational excellence lives on.”

Seven suspected smugglers were transferred to federal custody and face prosecution by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Detecting and interdicting illicit drug traffickers on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination. The Joint Interagency Task Force-South based in Key West, Florida conducts the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs. Once interdiction becomes imminent, the law enforcement phase of the operation begins, and control of the operation shifts to the U.S. Coast Guard throughout the interdiction and apprehension. Interdictions in the Eastern Pacific Ocean are performed by members of the U.S. Coast Guard under the authority and control of the Coast Guard’s Eleventh District, headquartered in Alameda, California.

These interdictions relate to Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces’ Strike Force Initiatives and 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.

The Coast Guard is the United States' lead federal maritime law enforcement agency with authority to enforce national and international laws on the high seas and waters within U.S. jurisdiction. Coast Guard HITRON aircrews are uniquely qualified to conduct airborne use of force for non-compliant vessels, enhancing the Coast Guard's ability to react to maritime security threats and to better secure our maritime borders since the program's inception in 1999. For 25 years, HITRON crews have forward deployed aboard Coast Guard cutters and U.S. Navy or foreign allied warships to conduct drug interdiction operations.

Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba is a 270-foot Famous-class medium endurance cutter with a crew of 100 homeported in Portsmouth, Virginia.