

# July 12-14 Central Command Update

## SEAPOWERS

The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

From U.S. Central Command

**July 14, 2024**

TAMPA, Fla. – In the past 24 hours, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed two Iranian-backed Houthi uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAV) over the Red Sea and one uncrewed surface vessel (USV) in the Red Sea.

USCENTCOM forces also successfully destroyed one Houthi UAV in a Houthi-controlled area of Yemen.

It was determined these systems presented an imminent threat to U.S., coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region. These actions were taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure.

**July 12, 2024**

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## **USS San Diego to Forward Deploy to Japan**

11 July 2024

The San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship USS San Diego (LPD 22) will move to Sasebo, Japan, to join the Forward Deployed Naval Forces Japan (FDNF-J), the U.S. Navy announced today. This will be executed as a permanent change of station for the crew and family members.

San Diego will replace USS Green Bay (LPD 20), which has been forward deployed to Sasebo for a decade. Green Bay will return to the United States at its new homeport of San Diego. The forward presence of San Diego supports the United States' commitment to the defense of Japan, enhances the national security of the United States and improves its ability to protect strategic interests. San Diego will directly support the Defense Strategic Guidance to posture the most capable units forward in the Indo-Pacific Region.

The United States values Japan's contributions to the peace, security and stability of the Indo-Pacific and its long-term

commitment and hospitality in hosting U.S. forces forward deployed there. These forces, along with their counterparts in the Japan Self-Defense Forces, make up the core capabilities needed by the alliance to meet our common strategic objectives.

The security environment in the Indo-Pacific requires that the U.S. Navy station the most capable ships forward. This posture allows the most rapid response times possible for maritime and joint forces and brings our most capable ships with the greatest amount of striking power and operational capability to bear in the timeliest manner.

Maintaining an FDNF capability with the most advanced ships supports the United States' commitment to the defense of Japan and the security and stability of the vital Indo-Pacific region.

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## **NAVAIR Selects Near Earth Autonomy for USMC Aerial Logistics Connector Program**



Near Earth will use Leonardo's AW139 helicopter for the Aerial Logistics Connector program.

PITTSBURG, Pa. – [July 12, 2024] – NAVAIR has selected Near Earth Autonomy (Near Earth) to lead one of the teams demonstrating optimized logistics using rotorcraft for the U.S. Marine Corps' Aerial Logistics Connector (ALC) program through an Other Transaction Agreement (OTA) under the Naval Aviation Systems Consortium (NASC). In collaboration with industry leaders Leonardo and Honeywell, Near Earth will showcase advanced autonomy on the Leonardo AW139 helicopter to provide logistical support during expeditionary operations in contested environments. The AW139, renowned for its versatility in defense, medical rescue, law enforcement, and energy operations worldwide, combined with Near Earth's logistics mission autonomy system, will be the centerpiece of this program.

The objective is to field a flexible solution capable of transporting various types of cargo and serving in casualty evacuation roles, operating in both crewed and uncrewed configurations. This dual capability will significantly expand the range of missions USMC rotorcraft will be able to undertake. Specifically, the 20-month initiative will demonstrate the rapid deployment of cargo up to 3,000 lb. over a 200 NM radius.

For the ALC program, Leonardo will implement a fast loading, securing, and unloading system for Joint Modular Intermodal Containers (JMIC) on the AW139 helicopter. This system will integrate seamlessly with the helicopter, maintaining payload capacity and structural integrity. Honeywell, which already provides the AW139's autopilot, will augment it to enable autonomous take-off and landing capabilities. As the prime contractor, Near Earth will demonstrate a fully integrated logistics system featuring onboard autonomy that guides the aircraft and modifies the flight trajectory to avoid hazards without requiring a remote operator. Additionally, Near Earth will demonstrate mission autonomy, enabling lightly trained personnel to request, dispatch, monitor, and retask supply deliveries in contested environments.

The ALC program marks an operational-scenario implementation of Near Earth's foundational vision – to pioneer autonomous solutions for full-scale helicopter logistics. This initiative underscores Near Earth's commitment to enhancing efficiency, safety, and reliability in aerial logistics.

Sanjiv Singh, CEO of Near Earth, stated, "We started the company in 2012 to demonstrate autonomous resupply operations in austere environments at an unprecedented scale. We proved feasibility in 2017 with an autonomous UH-1, and now the Aerial Logistics Connector program allows us to demonstrate a complete system that meets this operational need in the near future. We look forward to working with our partners at Leonardo, Honeywell and NAVAIR to build upon state-of-the-art to advance the efficiency and safety of military logistics. "

"Leonardo Helicopters is excited to introduce the USMC to the world-class AW139 helicopter for this next-generation FVL mission," said Scott Volkert, Dir. of USMC Programs for Leonardo Helicopters. "The combination of Near Earth's autonomy and AW139 platform will provide the Marines relief on their combat rotorcraft fleet and reduce their workforce requirements."

“The future of aviation will include several layers of autonomy, and Honeywell is proud to work with our partners to provide the cutting-edge technologies that enable safe and secure autonomy solutions across a range of vehicles, including the AW139,” said Matt Milas, president, Defense & Space, Honeywell Aerospace Technologies.

This project builds on Near Earth’s extensive experience with numerous defense logistics products and initiatives. In 2010, the founders demonstrated the [first autonomous helicopter flight](#) for the Army Combat Medic program. From 2012 to 2017, Near Earth focused on the [USMC Autonomous Aerial Cargo/Utility System \(AACUS\)](#), to demonstrate an aircraft-agnostic autonomy system suitable for logistics. Currently, Near Earth is actively integrating autonomy into [various other aircraft to support USMC logistics needs](#). Near Earth also leads [Project Crimson](#) to enable autonomous delivery of blood and medical supplies for Army Telemedicine and the Army [Heavy VTOL UAS program](#) to demonstrate a multipurpose uncrewed aerial system.

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## July 11 U.S. Central Command Update

U.S. Central Command

July 11, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – In the past 24 hours, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed five Iranian-backed Houthi uncrewed surface vessels (USV) in the Red Sea.

USCENTCOM forces also successfully destroyed two Houthi uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) over the Red Sea and one Houthi

UAS in a Houthi controlled area of Yemen.

It was determined these systems presented an imminent threat to U.S., coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region. These actions were taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters more safe and secure.

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## Progeny Systems to Develop Weapon Launch Modernization Upgrade for Virginia Class Submarines



From General Mission Systems, July 11, 2024

FAIRFAX, Va. – General Dynamics Mission Systems Progeny Systems announced today that it was [awarded](#) an \$11,996,038 cost-plus, fixed-fee modification to a previously awarded

contract to exercise options to provide engineering and technical support for modernizing Virginia Class Block I/II submarines with the Common Weapon Launcher (CWL) system, along with the continuance of other ongoing projects. Work will be performed in Manassas, Va., and is expected to be completed by July 2026.

“Progeny Systems has many years of experience supporting the U.S. Navy’s submarine programs, especially in combat systems. We are pleased that the Navy has contracted with us to modernize older Virginia Class submarines with the capable and flexible CWL system. The Progeny Systems team also offers software and hardware platforms for payload control, tactical control, torpedoes, acoustics, cybersecurity, electronic warfare and mission readiness. We look forward to delivering this modern weapon launch capability to our Navy customers,” said Laura Hooks, vice president and general manager of Maritime and Strategic Systems at General Dynamics Mission Systems.

[Progeny Systems](#) was acquired by General Dynamics Mission Systems in 2022. Headquartered in Manassas, Va., Progeny Systems provides a wide spectrum of capabilities and lifecycle support services for U.S. submarines and surface ships.

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**Arnold Magnetic Technologies**  
**Highlights Custom**  
**Electromagnetic Capabilities**

# for Aerospace & Defense Applications

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – Arnold Magnetic Technologies Corporation (Arnold), a subsidiary of Compass Diversified (NYSE: CODI) and leading global manufacturer of high-performance magnets and precision thin metals, highlights its custom electromagnetics used in aerospace and defense applications. Through exploring the deepest parts of space in search of near-Earth objects, Arnold's electromagnets (also known as solenoids) provide the flexibility needed in generating magnetic fields so necessary for critical waveguide applications.

As one of NASA's founding partners, Arnold's electromagnetics have been an integral part of nearly every government-sponsored satellite, including Doppler weather and radar systems and the US Air Force (USAF) Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS). Arnold is also bringing its deep expertise to the development of the next generation quadrupoles and dipoles being used in electromagnetics for large fusion and pulsed power projects.

Arnold manufactures a wide variety of custom electromagnets that generate uniform or proportioned magnetic field shapes and with a wide range of magnetic field intensities. These electromagnets are either made up of tape wound foil wafers or built up from coils of wire.

All Arnold tape wound electromagnets feature coils that are electrically controlled to the precise field strength desired. Depending upon specific requirements, magnetic field distribution may be uniform, or it may have peaks, plateaus, and valleys along the axial length of the electromagnet. Shaped field electromagnets can be custom-designed to specific configurations with great precision. Coils may be of various widths within the electromagnet and they can be made

interchangeable.

Customers can select nominal ID and OD to meet application size requirements. Also available are special designs that use chilled oil or liquid nitrogen to allow higher than normal current, generating up to 200 percent greater field intensity than an uncooled design.

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## **USS George Washington Arrives in San Diego for Japan Carrier Swap**



NAVAL AIR STATION NORTH ISLAND (July 10, 2024) – Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) arrives at Naval Air Station North Island, California, July 10, 2024.

(U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Class Aron Montano)

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) arrived at Naval Air Station North Island, California, July 10, 2024, after its “round-the horn” voyage from Norfolk, Virginia, around Cape Horn to the Pacific Ocean. The carrier soon will succeed USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) as the forward-deployed U.S. Naval Forces Japan aircraft carrier at Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan.

The George Washington departed Norfolk on April 25, 2024, and completed a series of U.S. Southern Command exercises with Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay, and conducted port visits planned for Brazil, Chile, and Peru. Embarked in the George Washington were the Carrier Strike Group 10 staff and aircraft and personnel of Carrier Air Wing Seven (CVW-7).

At North Island, the George Washington will embark Carrier Air Wing Five (CVW-5) from USS Ronald Reagan and replace that carrier as the one forward-deployed to the U.S. Seventh Fleet.

The George Washington was the forward-deployed carrier based in Japan from 2008 until 2015, when it was replaced in Japan by the Ronald Reagan. In 2017, the George Washington entered a Refueling and Complex Overhaul at the Huntington Ingalls Industries’ Newport News Shipbuilding yard in Virginia, an evolution that took six years, including the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. The George Washington’s nuclear propulsion plant is fueled to run another 25 years.

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# Bollinger to Play Critical Role in NEW POLAR PARTNERSHIP (“ICE Pact”)



As the only U.S. builder of heavy polar icebreakers, Bollinger to provide expertise and capacity to NATO allies

LOCKPORT, La., – July 11, 2024 – Bollinger Shipyards (“Bollinger”) today praised the White House’s announcement of the Icebreaker Collaboration Effort (“ICE Pact”), a trilateral agreement between the United States, Canada and Finland to contribute capacity and know-how for building polar icebreakers for the United States and its allies, and to counter the expanding presence of our nation’s adversaries and strategic competitors in the Arctic region.

The first and only shipbuilder in the United States to engineer and construct a heavy polar icebreaker in over 50 years, Bollinger will play a critical role in ICE Pact and its

efforts to strengthen the polar capabilities of the United States and its allies through the creation of a fleet of polar icebreakers. Bollinger is currently under contract to build the Polar Security Cutter (PSC) heavy polar icebreaker for the United States Coast Guard.

“As the premiere builder of American-made polar icebreakers, Bollinger Shipyards is proud to support the United States and our NATO allies with our deep expertise and capacity,” said Ben Bordelon, Bollinger Shipyards President and CEO. “We have made, and will continue to make, significant, long-term investments in our facilities, infrastructure and workforce. Our goal is to create a world-class American-owned shipyard capable of producing the first fleet of American-made polar icebreakers in over half a century, and we’re honored that responsibility lies with Bollinger.”

Earlier this year, Bollinger’s Pascagoula workforce exceeded 1,000 employees – a substantial reversal of a decade-long trend of declining employment under the Pascagoula facility’s previous owner and reflects Bollinger’s commitment to growth, innovation, and investment along Mississippi’s Gulf Coast.

Bordelon continued, “Our success in reaching this milestone is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our employees, as well as the strategic initiatives we’ve implemented to expand and grow our workforce and operations. We are incredibly proud that Bollinger Shipyards is a critical part of the industrial base for our military and are honored to play a part in ensuring the national security of our nation.”

Since acquiring the Pascagoula facility in 2022, Bollinger has invested more than \$40 million in upgrades to the facility’s infrastructure, technology, and personnel to establish a Center of Excellence in building world-class icebreakers. Bollinger has also launched innovative workforce development initiatives, such as its [Shipfitter Bootcamp](#), a comprehensive 14-week workforce development program in

partnership with Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College designed to equip current and future Bollinger employees with the essential skills and knowledge required to take their careers as shipfitters to the next level.

## **ABOUT THE POLAR SECURITY CUTTER (PSC) PROGRAM**

The U.S. Coast Guard requires polar icebreaking capability to support the country's economic, commercial, maritime and national security needs in the Polar Regions. The new Polar Security Cutters (PSCs) will be national assets that will ensure access to both polar regions and be capable of executing key Coast Guard missions, including defense readiness; marine environmental protection; ports, waterways and coastal security; and search and rescue. The ships will operate worldwide and face the range of extreme environmental conditions found in the polar, tropical and temperate regions.

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# **U.S. Coast Guard encounters People's Republic of China military naval presence in Bering Sea**

# SEAPOWERS

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U.S. Coast Guard 17th District, July 10, 2024

JUNEAU, AK –The U.S. Coast Guard encountered multiple People’s Republic of China military ships in the Bering Sea, Saturday and Sunday.

The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Kimball (WMSL 756) detected three vessels approximately 124 miles north of the Amchitka Pass in the Aleutian Islands, and an HC-130J aircrew from U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak detected an additional vessel approximately 84 miles north of the Amukta Pass.

All four of the People’s Republic of China vessels were transiting in international waters but still inside the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone, which extends 200 nautical miles from the U.S. shoreline.

“The Chinese naval presence operated in accordance with international rules and norms,” said Rear Adm. Megan Dean, Seventeenth Coast Guard District commander. “We met presence with presence to ensure there were no disruptions to U.S. interests in the maritime environment around Alaska.”

The Chinese vessels responded to U.S. Coast Guard radio

communication and their stated purpose was “freedom of navigation operations.” Coast Guard cutter Kimball continued to monitor all ships until they transited south of the Aleutian Islands into the North Pacific Ocean. The Kimball continues to monitor activities in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone to ensure the safety of U.S. vessels and international commerce in the area.

The Coast Guard, in coordination with U.S. Northern Command, was fully aware of and tracked the Chinese naval presence. In September of 2021 and 2022, Coast Guard cutters deployed in the Bering Sea also encountered Chinese surface action groups.

The Kimball patrolled under Operation Frontier Sentinel, a Coast Guard operation designed to meet presence with presence when strategic competitors operate in and around U.S. waters. The U.S. Coast Guard’s presence strengthens the international rules-based order and promotes the conduct of operations in a manner that follows international norms.

Coast Guard Cutter Kimball is a 418-foot Legend-class national security cutter homeported in Honolulu, Hawaii.

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## **U.S. Navy Purchases Persistent Systems Networking Devices to Support Littoral Operations**

# SEAPOWERS

The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

July 9, 2024

*MPU5 networking devices on unmanned surface vehicles (USVs) enable real-time sensor data streaming for expeditionary warfare.*

Persistent Systems, LLC (“Persistent”), a leader in mobile ad hoc network (MANET) technology, announced today that the U.S. Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Pacific awarded the company a \$1.3 million contract to supply the U.S. Navy with MPU5 networking devices and Integrated Sector Antennas in support of expeditionary/littoral warfare operations.

The sector antennas and MPU5s will establish a secure network among unmanned surface vehicles (USVs), individual operators, ships, and ground control stations (GCSs). This network will consolidate data to enhance situational awareness and expedite operations in littoral domains through a unified communications and command center.

“By integrating unmanned systems with our wireless Wave Relay® MANET technology, the U.S. Navy obtains real-time data, including radar, sonar, Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNe) information, in any littoral

theater to get their users to shore safely and maintain shipboard situational awareness in an area of operations (AO)," said Ed Leopold, Director of Business Development, U.S. Navy, for Persistent Systems.

Leopold noted, "wireless real-time data collection via the MPU5s is a dramatic improvement over current procedures, which require operators to manually recover a USV containing critical Area of Responsibility (AoR) data on an SD card, which they must then remove and insert into a designated computer to analyze the data."

According to company officials, the U.S. Navy has been testing Persistent's MANET technology in support of expeditionary warfare and other CONOPS for almost five years. However, this recent contract is the service's largest USV-centric MANET purchase to date.

"Our Wave Relay® MANET technology is currently employed on Navy USVs, rigid inflatable boats (RIBs), patrol boats, and other ships. Moving forward, testing will scale up with a larger number of MANET nodes within Line of Sight (LOS) and Beyond LOS (BLOS)," said Leopold.

This is the second contract with NIWC Pacific, Persistent Systems has been awarded. Earlier this year, the company announced it had been awarded a \$3.6 million contract to integrate MPU5s with Navy sensors.