Saildrone Completes Autonomous Survey of Gulf of Maine to Identify Potential Deep-sea Coral Habitat

Saildrone has surveyed 1,500 sq. nm in the Jordan and Georges Basins that had never before been mapped in high resolution.

From Saildrone, August 20, 2024

PORTLAND, Maine – Saildrone has mapped 1,500 square nautical miles in the north-central Gulf of Maine in support of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)'s efforts to survey deep-sea coral habitat. The Gulf of Maine is a productive and dynamic marine environment, with a diverse array of marine life, productive fisheries, unique underwater habitats, and a complex topography of deep basins, shallow

banks, and steep slopes. However, there is extremely limited mapping data available, especially in deeper waters.

Two Saildrone Voyager uncrewed surface vehicles (USVs) gathered data at depths up to 300 meters around the Jordan and Georges Basins. The data has revealed a complex and varied underwater landscape, reflecting its glacial history and dynamic oceanographic processes.

“The Saildrone Voyagers are filling in a substantial gap in seafloor data in the Gulf of Maine. NOAA and partners are very interested in better understanding habitats in the region that may support fish production. These high-resolution seafloor maps will inform future surveying and modeling efforts, as well as aid in the New England Fishery Management Council’s fishery management decisions,” said Heather Coleman, a researcher with the NOAA Fisheries Office of Habitat Conservation’s Deep Sea Coral Research and Technology Program.

These high-resolution maps will guide visual surveys of coral and sponge habitats using remotely operated vehicles for multiple NOAA cruises in 2024 and 2025. The data will also inform new species distribution models in the Gulf of Maine, which until now was not possible because of the lack of high-resolution seafloor information.

“This is the first successful demonstration of Saildrone Voyager mapping capabilities, pushing the envelope of what is possible using autonomous systems for shallow to mid-depth EEZ mapping. Its state-of-the-art Norbit multibeam echo sounder combined with near-silent operations and classification from the American Bureau of Shipping, make Saildrone’s Voyager the USV of choice for near-shore mapping. These capabilities can be applied for any number of missions, from habitat exploration to safety of navigation to site characterization for offshore wind,” said Brian Connon, Saildrone’s VP of Ocean Mapping.

Saildrone has been operating autonomous data collection missions for ocean research, seafloor mapping, and maritime security since 2015. To date, Saildrone has built more than 140 USVs across the three Explorer, Voyager, and Surveyor classes. The Saildrone fleet has already spent more than 42,000 days at sea and sailed more than 1,300,000 nautical miles from the High North to the Southern Ocean.

Secretary of the Navy Advances Maritime Statecraft in Copenhagen

From SECNAV Public Affairs, 19 August 2024

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro visited A.P. Moller-Maersk during a trip to the Kingdom of Denmark last week. During the visit, he met with A.P. Moller-Maersk CEO Vincent Clerc, and stated that the U.S. Navy would continue to protect commercial ships and mariners against unprovoked Houthi attacks on civilian shipping in the Red Sea.

During the visit, he met with A.P. Moller-Maersk CEO Vincent Clerc, and stated that the U.S. Navy would continue to protect commercial ships and mariners against unprovoked Houthi attacks on civilian shipping in the Red Sea. As during each of his previous Maritime Statecraft engagements with global maritime industry leaders, Secretary Del Toro encouraged investment in American shipbuilding. Discussions were productive and centered on attracting demand and investment in constructing commercial sealift vessels in the United States.

The visit reflects ongoing efforts to renew the foundations of

American seapower, since Secretary Del Toro announced his new maritime statecraft initiative at the Harvard Kennedy School on Sept. 26, 2023.

“With some of the world’s most technologically advanced shipbuilders already heeding our call to invest in integrated commercial and naval shipbuilding facilities in the United States, the next step in our maritime statecraft strategy is to attract the world’s foremost commercial shipping firms to signal their demand for new ships built in American shipyards,” Secretary Del Toro said.

In a more recent speech to the Naval War College on Aug. 8, Secretary Del Toro explained that “long-term solutions to many of the Navy’s challenges require we renew the health of our nation’s broader seapower ecosystem.” He added “Making naval shipbuilding more cost effective requires we restore the competitiveness of U.S. commercial shipping and shipbuilding.”

Secretary Del Toro’s visit follows months of collaboration with interagency partners – such as the U.S. Department of Energy and U.S. Department of Transportation Maritime Administration – and Congress to find innovative ways to leverage existing authorities and craft new incentives to build and flag commercial ships in the United States. For example, the Department of Energy’s Title 17 Clean Energy Financing program now permits the U.S. Government to offer low-interest loans for U.S.-built dual-fuel commercial ships. “Our calculus is that bringing a larger portion of the newbuild orderbooks of the world’s biggest shipping firms to American shores in the coming years will offer significant returns to Navy shipbuilding and sealift.”

Managed by the U.S. Maritime Administration, the Maritime Security Program (MSP) maintains a fleet of commercially viable, militarily useful U.S.-flagged merchant ships in international trade to support military sealift requirements

during times of conflict or in other national emergencies.

Secretary Del Toro said he and his team were looking forward to continuing discussions with the leadership of A.P. Moller-Maersk on their next visit to the United States in the coming weeks.

U.S. Coast Guard Completes Operation Island Chief in Pacific Region

U.S. Coast Guard personnel from District Fourteen and Air Station Barbers Point pose for a photo with a member of the

Royal New Zealand Air Force and Forum Fisheries Agency at the Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre (RFSC) in Honiara, Solomon Islands, Aug. 13, 2024. (U.S. Coast Guard courtesy photo)

From U.S. Coast Guard District 14 External Affairs, Aug. 19, 2024

HONOLULU — The U.S. Coast Guard completed Island Chief, a 13-day operation to safeguard the invaluable marine resources of Pacific Island nations and the Western Central Pacific Ocean.

From Aug. 5-16, an HC-130 Hercules airplane crew from Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point patrolled the South Pacific High Seas in and around the exclusive economic zones of Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Nauru, Republic of Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu to detect, investigate and report any illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing activity.

The Hercules crew worked with the Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre, a part of the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) in Honiara, Solomon Islands, to reinforce the conservation work of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

Coast Guard participation in Operation Island Chief is part of Operation Blue Pacific, an overarching multi-mission Coast Guard endeavor promoting security, safety, sovereignty and economic prosperity in the Pacific while strengthening relationships between partner nations.

The Coast Guard conducted Operation Island Chief alongside the Pacific Quadrilateral Defense Coordinating Group (Pacific QUAD), in support of the Pacific Islands FFA and its members.

FFA Director General Dr. Manu Tupou-Roosen highlighted the significance of the FFA-led Operation Island Chief 2024, coordinating surveillance efforts for participating Members.

“Operation Island Chief reinforces FFA’s commitment to sustainable fisheries management and maritime security in the Pacific,” said Dr. Tupou-Roosen. “This operation exemplifies the spirit of regional collaboration and determination among Pacific Island nations. The compliance checks of vessels and operators through a robust regional surveillance operation ensures effective management regime and preserving our marine resources, as well as securing the livelihoods and food security of our people.”

“Given the vastness of the Pacific region, close collaboration between U.S. Coast Guard personnel, patrol assets and regional partners is integral to sustained success in combatting IUU fishing across the region,” said Marc Stegman, IUU fishing strategic advisor, Coast Guard District Fourteen.

Joint efforts for Operation Nasse covered over 7 million square miles, with the Coast Guard contributing:

Over 37 hours of flight time

Over 10,500 miles flown

Over 232,100 square miles searched

Three missions flown from Vanuatu and four missions flown from Solomon Islands

70 vessels sighted and analyzed

Located in Honolulu, U.S. Coast Guard District Fourteen covers more than 14 million square miles of land and sea, conducting operations over the Hawaiian Islands, American Samoa, Saipan, Guam, Singapore and Japan.

U.S. Navy Awards SAIC Three Contracts for Engineering Services

PHILIPPINE SEA (Jan. 29, 2024) An EA-18G Growler, assigned to the "Gauntlets" of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 136, taxis on the flight deck of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70). (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Isaiah B. Goessl)
From SAIC, August 15, 2024

Contracts to support work at Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division, Point Mugu, California

RESTON, Va.–(BUSINESS WIRE)–Aug. 15, 2024– Science Applications International Corp. (NASDAQ: SAIC) has been awarded three contracts worth $58.2M to support the Airborne Electronic Attack (AEA) Integrated Product Team (IPT) Jammer Technique Optimization (JATO) Program, the International Program, and the AEA IPT EA-18G Program.

“These three contracts are a testament to SAIC’s reputation of delivering mission-critical solutions and dedicated support to the Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division, Point Mugu,” said Barbara Supplee, executive vice president, Navy Business Group at SAIC. “This work goes beyond technical services. We are contributing to the sustainment of engineering services as well as airborne jammer optimization and effectiveness data collection and reporting for the Navy.”

Under the JATO contract, SAIC will deliver a wide range of technical services including jammer technique development, test and evaluation engineering, interoperability testing and analysis, threat analysis, tactics development, mission data development and production and Fleet liaison activities. This work will play a crucial role in optimizing jamming techniques, enhancing the effectiveness of Electronic Warfare (EW) platforms and systems and ensuring the readiness of the EA-18G aircraft and other EW assets.

Under the AEA IPT International contract, SAIC will continue to provide support to the international service project by performing maintenance of existing AEA simulations and development of tools and new simulations. SAIC will also perform the engineering, technical and policy support services for the international program teams, supporting Foreign Military Sales (FMS), Cooperative Development and other relationship programs for the Electronic Attack (EA) and Electronic Warfare products.

Additional support to AEA IPT includes engineering services for the development and sustainment efforts of both the United States Navy (USN) and Foreign Military Sales (FMS) configurations of the EA-18G. Engineering services will include cooperative and collaborative engineering support to other laboratories and will include general management, engineering support, product support and systems engineering, integration, and test for the EA-18G team.

Final VH-92A Presidential Helicopter Delivered

From U.S. Naval Air Systems Command, August 19, 2024

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, Patuxent River, Md. – Presidential Helicopters Program Office (PMA-274) and the Marine Corps accepted delivery of the final VH-92A helicopter, built by Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin Company, in August. The achievement signifies the completion of the program of record to deliver 23 new presidential helicopters in support of the executive lift mission.

The total inventory of 23 VH-92A aircraft will consist of 21 operational and two test aircraft. This quantity allows for aircraft to be ready to support the executive lift mission, undergo various levels of maintenance, lifecycle upgrades, and

provide assets for pilot/aircrew training.

“This exceptional team has successfully completed the program of record for the VH-92A within budget and schedule,” said Brigadier General David Walsh, program executive officer for air anti-submarine warfare, assault, and special mission programs. “This helicopter not only embodies the hard work and dedication of those responsible for building and delivering the aircraft, but it will remain a recognizable patriotic asset known around the globe for safety, security, and reliability.”

In May 2014, PMA-274, with approval from the Navy, awarded Sikorsky a contract to build the next presidential helicopter, the VH-92A, a derivative of the commercial S-92.

The new presidential helicopter was built to increase performance and payload over the VH-3D and VH-60N. It will provide enhanced crew coordination systems and communications capabilities in addition to improving availability and maintainability.

The Marine Corps works with the White House Military Office, PMA-274, and HMX-1 to ensure the conditions are set for a successful transition from the current in-service VH-3D and VH-60N aircraft to the VH-92A. Currently there are ten VH-3Ds, six VH-60Ns, and nine VH-92As that support various missions assigned to HMX-1.

“Between the program staff and artisans within Sikorsky and PMA-274, we have the best and brightest. These great Americans are experts at their craft and put their all into this platform,” said Colonel Alex Ramthun, PMA-274 program manager. “Not only have we delivered increased performance and reduced maintenance costs and time over the current fleet of presidential helicopters, but we have also delivered the next phase of Marine One helicopters. Knowing those who step aboard

any of the 21 VH-92As will have absolute top-notch execution, maintenance, and service for the life of the aircraft makes me proud to be part of this amazing team.”

The VH-92A Patriot is in the midst of a phased plan to ensure a smooth, safe, and timely transition from the legacy VH-3D and VH-60N aircraft.

PMA-274 expeditiously provides safe, ready, high-performing, and affordable aircraft, capabilities, and support to HMX-1.

U.S. Navy Investigating Incident Involving Two MH-60S Seahawks at Naval Air Station Fallon

PHILIPPINE SEA (June 10, 2024) Sailors stand by to assist as an MH-60S Sea Hawk, attached to the Golden Falcons of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 12, lands on the flight deck of the U.S. Navy's only forward-deployed aircraft carrier, USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), during flight operations in support of Valiant Shield 2024 in the Philippine Sea, June 10. (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Kazia Ream)

From Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, 16 August 2024

FALLON, Nev. – The U.S. Navy is investigating the cause of an incident involving two MH-60S Seahawk helicopters assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 12 on the training ranges of Naval Air Station (NAS) Fallon, Nevada, at approximately 7:25 p.m. (PDT) on Aug. 15.

The two helicopters, each with a crew of five personnel, were conducting routine training at the time of the incident. All ten crew members were transported to a nearby hospital for medical treatment and have been released from the hospital following medical treatment for non-life threatening

injuries.

The cause of the mishap remains under investigation. Security personnel from NAS Fallon have secured the mishap site, which is on the Fallon Range Training Complex in a remote location.

Assigned to Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5, HSC-12 is currently at NAS Fallon for comprehensive, integrated training in both real and simulated environments. CVW-5 is the ready, reliable and proven Forward-Deployed Naval Forces-Japan (FDNF-J) carrier air wing. CVW-5 will remain the FDNF-J air wing following the planned hull swap with Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73).

USS Halsey Returns Home from Westpac Deployment

The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Halsey (DDG 97) returns from a seven-month deployment to its homeport at Naval Base San Diego, Aug. 16, 2024. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Maria G. Llanos)

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Maria Llanos, Aug. 16, 2024

NAVAL BASE SAN DIEGO, Calif. – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Halsey (DDG 97) returned to Naval Base San Diego Aug. 16, following a seven-month deployment to U.S. 7th Fleet.

Halsey departed San Diego on Jan. 10 as part of the Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group and served as a carrier escort before detaching to conduct independent operations in the Indo-Pacific region.

“I am tremendously proud of my Sailors’ sense of ownership and dedication to each other and the mission,” said Cmdr. Sara Lynch, Halsey’s commanding officer. “We operated successfully across a wide spectrum of operations with allies and partners

from around the world and displayed the immense capability of Halsey Sailors and the U.S. Navy.”

While deployed to U.S.7th Fleet, Halsey conducted operations across multiple warfare areas, providing regional stability and supporting a free and open Indo-Pacific. Halsey participated in various multi-nation exercises such as Noble Dingo, Milan, Tiger Triumph, Tenacious Trident, and Valiant Shield, which reinforced America’s commitment to allies and partners throughout the Indo-Pacific region and increased force interoperability.

Across U.S. 7th Fleet, Halsey contributed to enduring partnerships critical to maintaining an international rules-based order, including key tri-lateral operations with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and Republic of Korea Navy during Freedom Edge. Halsey participated in several operations with the Royal Australian Navy, including flight operations, tactical maneuvering and a personnel exchange before participating in Exercise Milan 2024, a multinational exercise in India with maritime events from anti-submarine warfare to live fire engagements of an unmanned aerial vehicle.

“I am incredibly proud of this crew for always rising to the occasion,” said Lynch. “I am also extremely grateful to the families and friends back home who supported our Sailors during these last seven months.”

An integral part of U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. 3rd Fleet leads naval forces in the Indo-Pacific and provides the realistic, relevant training necessary to flawlessly execute our Navy’s role across the full spectrum of military operations—from combat operations to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. U.S. 3rd Fleet works together with our allies and partners to advance freedom of navigation, the rule of law, and other principles that underpin security for the Indo-Pacific region.

Aug 16-18 U.S. Central Command Update

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

From U.S. Central Command

August 18, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – In the past 24 hours, U.S. Central Command forces successfully destroyed one Iranian-backed Houthi uncrewed aerial vehicle (UAV) in a Houthi-controlled area of Yemen.

It was determined the UAV presented an imminent threat to U.S. and 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.

Aug. 16, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – In the past 24 hours, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed one Iranian-backed Houthi Unmanned Surface Vessel (USV) in the Red Sea.

It was determined this USV presented a clear and imminent threat to U.S. and coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region. This action was taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S., coalition, and merchant vessels.

AUSTAL USA Expands Advanced Technology Operations

From Austal USAMOBILE, Ala. – Austal USA cut the ribbon for an expanded research center at the Austal USA Advanced Technologies (AT) facility in Charlottesville, Va. With the addition of 10,000 square feet, the now 25,000 square-foot facility houses equipment for Industry 4.0 application development and will allow the team's capabilities to grow substantially over the next 12 months.

The expansion is necessary to support the company's growing

role in the U.S. Navy's additive manufacturing program. Austal USA Advanced Technologies is spearheading the Navy's effort to revolutionize their supply chain through the implementation of additive manufacturing for castings, forgings, and fittings. Leading a team of industry partners, Austal USA Advanced Technologies operates the Navy's Additive Manufacturing Center of Excellence (AM CoE) in Danville, Va., the U.S. Navy's flagship for additive manufacturing of components for shipbuilding and ship repair. Austal USA Advanced Technologies is also leading efforts to implement other Industry 4.0 tenets to advance shipbuilding practices. This includes piloting extended/augmented reality tools for workforce training and enhancing and furthering shipyard automation.

The growth of Austal USA's footprint in Charlottesville comes as the Navy's AM CoE in Danville passed a major milestone in printing the 100th part in support of the Navy submarine and surface fleet. This milestone is on the path to creating a build-to-print capability in the submarine industrial base and Navy supply-chain at large. This capability chiefly supports Columbia- and Virginia-class submarine new construction as well as sustainment of Virginia- and Ohio-class submarines.

"The expansion of our Advanced Technologies research center demonstrates Austal USA's recognition of the importance of the U.S. Navy's submarine program to our Nation's maritime defense," commented Austal USA President, Michelle Kruger. "Not only are we a principal player in the additive manufacturing function but we are also building modules for both the Virginia- and Columbia-class submarines in our Mobile, Ala. new construction facility, a testament to our highly talented and capable workforce."

The 100th part printed is a copper-nickel, angle valve (PL114) manufactured using an EOS M400, laser powder-bed fusion additive manufacturing printer at the Danville AM CoE. The Puget Sound Naval Shipyard requested the part for installation

on USS Pennsylvania (SSBN-735), an Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine commissioned in 1989.

The consortium of companies that operate additive manufacturers at this facility began printing first-articles-of-manufacture on-site in April 2023. AM data files produced at the Danville AM CoE will be available to submarine industrial base suppliers as manufacturing guidance where an alternative is sought to casting or forging of those parts. A plan for installation of the first articles printed at the Danville AM CoE is underway.

As the installation of the first 100 printed parts is completed or in-progress, the Danville AM CoE is becoming a significant contributor to the 100-part challenge issued by PEO SSBN Executive Director, Matt Sermon. In April 2024, at the Navy League’s Sea-Air-Space conference, Sermon encouraged ship builders and submarine industrial base suppliers to supply and install 100 AM-printed parts on Navy vessels by the end of calendar year 2024.

In addition to its role as the on-site heat treatment lead, Austal USA Advanced Technologies directs the production workflow and integrates the engineering, additive manufacturing, machining and post-processing, and quality inspection and testing capabilities of its AM partners. The Austal USA team ensures that the rigorous requirements of its Navy customers are met while delivering installable parts that demonstrate the ability of new manufacturing processes to shorten lead times for many parts that are traditionally cast or forged.

Navy to Pursue a Block Buy of 4 Amphibious Warfare Ships

August 15, 2024

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

WASHINGTON — The secretary of the Navy has notified Congressional leaders that the Navy will pursue a block buy of four amphibious warfare ships — one America-class amphibious assault ship (LHA) and three San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ships (LPDs) — through fiscal year (FY) 2029.

The move potentially would save U.S. taxpayers "nearly $1 billion through additional efficiencies," said U.S. Senator Roger Wicker, R-Mississippi, the highest-ranking Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee, who released the following statement in response:

"Today is a great day for American shipbuilding and our Navy's ability to deter China in the years ahead," Wicker said. "As I have long noted — including in my recent "Peace Through

Strength” report – the multi-ship buy of warships is a cost-effective way to provide stability for the industrial base on key shipbuilding programs. I look forward to seeing these contracts through to their execution, and I believe that additional benefits could be obtained if we increase funding for material procurement in bulk.”

Specifically, the block-buy would encompass the following ships:

- LPD 33 in FY25
- LPD 34 in FY27
- LHA 10 in FY27
- LPD 35 in FY29

Paul Roden, chairman of the Amphibious Warfare Industrial Base Council, issued the following statement regarding the block-buy decision:

“Today is a historic day for the amphibious warship industrial base. Our suppliers have been advocating for a multi-ship buy for years. So, we are thrilled to see lawmakers, the Navy and Marine-Corps listen to our concerns and reach this deal, which will provide the predictable funding that our suppliers urgently need. Not only will this block buy save the taxpayers nearly $1 billion, but it will provide over 650 companies across 39 states with the stability we need to invest in our skilled workforce, get ahead of inflation and ensure on time deliveries. The companies of the amphibious warship industrial base are extremely proud of their contributions to our national security and will deliver the highest quality parts and services for these future amphibious

warships.”

The three LPDs would be built in the Block II configuration, which features the Raytheon-built SPY-6(V)2 Enterprise Air-Search Radar.

The four ships in the procurement would be built at the HII Ingalls Shipbuilding shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi.