USS Florida Returns to Kings Bay Following 727-Day Deployment

From Petty Officer 1st Class Travis Alston, 1 August 2024

KINGS BAY, Ga. – Ohio-class guided-missile submarine USS Florida (SSGN 728) returned to Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia, following a 727- day deployment to 5th, 6th, and 7th fleet areas of operations, July 31.

Assigned to Commander, Submarine Group Ten, USS Florida departed in August 2022 and conducted five crew swaps, before returning to Kings Bay.

“We have demonstrated the versatility of SSGN platform to operate anywhere at any time,” said Capt. Peter French, blue crew commanding officer. “We operated in several different oceans. It’s very uncommon for East Coast submarines to deploy

to the west coast, but we managed to do an exceptional job completing the mission.”

During their deployment, the crews conducted vital missions crucial to national security, enhancing operational capabilities and reinforcing deterrence effort, while traveling more than 60,000 nautical miles. The crews also had the opportunity to visit Greece, Guam, Diego Garcia and the United Kingdom, as part of routine port calls.

“Our Sailors are the true strength for our boat and the Navy,” said Master Chief Electronics Technician Submarine, Navigation Christopher L. Martell, gold crew chief of the boat. “They consistently impress me with their unwavering dedication to the submarine force. We train and we fight as a family, and I’m excited to get the crews back home to the actual families and enjoy some much needed time off.”

USS Florida entered Norfolk Naval Shipyard in July 2003 to undergo a refueling and conversion from an SSBN to an SSGN. The conversion was completed in April 2006 and is homeported in Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia.

On May 25, 2006 the boat had a return to service ceremony at Naval Station Mayport, Florida.

Submarine Group Ten is the nation’s preeminent provider of sea-based strategic deterrence, Tomahawk Land Attack Missile strikes, and unique submarine-based special operations capabilities. The base is home to all east coast Ohio-class submarines.

For more news from Commander, Submarine Group 10, visit Commander, Submarine Group 10 (navy.mil) and http://www.facebook.com/submarinegroupten

Chad Cary to Lead NOAA Corps and NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations

Rear Adm. Chad Cary will serve as the director of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps and NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations. (Image Credit: NOAA)

By David Hall, NOAA Communications, August 2, 2024

The U.S. Senate confirmed on Thursday President Biden's nomination of NOAA Rear Adm. Chad Cary to lead the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps (NOAA Corps) and NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO).

"Supporting the nation's environmental and economic security is one of the Biden-Harris Administration's top priorities and the NOAA Corps, NOAA's fleet, and the dedicated professionals who operate these critical components of our infrastructure are vital in fulfilling that mission," said U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. "Rear Adm. Cary's leadership will

ensure that we can continue to provide essential services to the public – from hurricane forecasts to nautical charts. I congratulate him on his confirmation to serve as the next director of OMAO and the NOAA Corps and thank him for his service to our nation."

In addition to leading the NOAA Corps – one of the nation's eight uniformed services – Cary will oversee NOAA's fleet of 15 research and survey ships and 10 specialized aircraft, including the agency's "hurricane hunters," all of which are operated by a combination of NOAA Corps officers and civilians.

"Rear Adm. Cary is a proven leader who has the skills, experience and dedication needed to advance NOAA's science, service and stewardship mission," said NOAA Administrator Rick Spinrad, Ph.D. "I am confident he will lead the NOAA Corps and NOAA fleet both capably and effectively as we work together to meet the challenges of a dynamic world."

Cary has served in many operational and management assignments with NOAA, most recently as deputy director of the NOAA Corps and OMAO's deputy director for operations. In that capacity, he oversaw the day-to-day operations of OMAO's marine, aviation and uncrewed systems operations, as well as OMAO's health and cyber services.

He has held command positions aboard NOAA ships Reuben Lasker and John N. Cobb. He has also served as the director of the NOAA Corps Commissioned Personnel Center and applied his at-sea and shoreside operational experience and expertise to support NOAA Fisheries, NOAA's National Weather Service and NOAA headquarters.

"I am grateful for this opportunity to continue serving the nation alongside our highly skilled and dedicated workforce," said Cary. "I would also like to thank my predecessor, Vice Adm. (select) Nancy Hann, for her vision, courageous

leadership and service to the nation.”

Cary was born and raised in Alaska. He earned a bachelor’s degree in environmental science with an emphasis in marine sciences from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill before joining the NOAA Corps in 2001. He also holds a master’s degree in geography from Portland State University and a graduate certificate in legislative studies from Georgetown University.

VMFT-402 begins standup at Fighter Town East

10 Jun 2024 | Lance Cpl. Kyle Baskin, Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION BEAUFORT, S.C. – Three F-5N Tiger IIs arrived to Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Beaufort, South Carolina, on May 30, 2024, as part of Marine Fighter Training Squadron (VMFT) 402's stand up process to serve as an adversary squadron.

"It's a huge day in the lifecycle of our squadron," said Lt. Col. Andrew Christ, commanding officer, VMFT-402, Marine Aircraft Group 41 (MAG-41), 4th Marine Aircraft Wing (4th MAW), "we just delivered the first F-5N Tiger IIs, and it marks a significant milestone in our stand up towards activation."

VMFT-402 will serve as the Marine Corps' second adversary squadron; VMFT-401 located at MCAS Yuma is already in operation. Both VMFT-401 and VMFT-402 will be assigned to MAG-41, 4th MAW, Marine Forces Reserve.

"This is a unique collaboration between the air station and the parent unit of VMFT-401, which will remain MAG-41 in Dallas Fort Worth, Texas and 4th MAW," said Bortnem, "so this is a very unique partnership that we have with our ability to host aircraft and units that are both part of 2nd MAW and 4th MAW."

"We are expanding to establish a second adversary squadron that is VMFT-402, here in Beaufort, South Carolina," said Maj. Erin Mathis, operations officer, VMFT-402, Marine Aircraft Group 41, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing.

An adversary squadron acts as opposing forces during training with other squadrons. Pilots with adversary squadrons study the tactics and maneuvers of foreign adversaries to employ them in training to create realistic scenarios.

"We, as experts in adversary tactics and experts in the way the adversary fights, provide the fleet units with a unique look at basically what the adversary does," said Mathis.

“The ability for us to have on-station adversary support is absolutely critical to the development of both our fleet F-35 pilots in the future and our current training F-35 pilots,” said Bortnem.

Having a local adversary squadron allows for more training opportunities, an easier planning process and allows for VMFT-402 to provide in person debriefs.

“We have a rapidly growing F-35 fleet particularly on the East Coast now and Marine Corps aviation has an insatiable need for as much adversary support and training as they can receive to prepare them for the next fight that’s coming,” said Christ.

Due to available space to house and support the squadron, and the proximity to Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 501 and the closest training ranges, MCAS Beaufort was chosen to be the home of VMFT-402, said Bortnem.

“This has been Fighter Town East since 1950. VMFT-401, the previous squadron, had been here many, many times before. So the ability for VMFT-402 to be housed here just makes perfect sense,” he said.

The unit will officially reactivate as Marine Medium Helicopter Training Squadron (HMMT) 402 in September 2024, and will then be redesignated as VMFT-402.

Originally, HMMT-402 was stood up in 1967 and trained helicopter pilots for the Vietnam War, before it was decommissioned in 1972, said MSgt. Jason Tracoma, senior enlisted advisor, VMFT-402.

“Our short term goals will evolve over the course of the summer, we’re going to go through a number of maintenance inspections to make sure that we’re safe for flight operations autonomously,” said Christ.

“It’s been a long time coming, we’ve needed this capability on

the East Coast for a number of years and can’t come soon enough,” said Christ, “we need to get our house ready for the high fight.”

MCAS Beaufort provides support to the 2nd MAW and attached II Marine Expeditionary Force units. The air station is the operational base for Marine Aircraft Group 31 and its associated squadrons. MCAS Beaufort is home to Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 501, the premiere F-35 training squadron on the East Coast.

Royal Australian Air Force Welcomes First Northrop Grumman MQ-4C Triton

The multi-intelligence MQ-4C Triton operates at higher altitude and has longer endurance than medium-altitude systems to provide commanders with unmatched persistent maritime surveillance. (Northrop Grumman)

Australia's Triton program remains on track with three additional aircraft currently in production

From Northrop Grumman, July 31, 2024

TINDAL, Australia – July 31, 2024 – Northrop Grumman Corporation (NYSE: NOC) joined the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) to welcome its first MQ-4C Triton uncrewed aircraft during a ceremony at RAAF Base Tindal, Northern Territory. The arrival of the high-altitude, long-endurance Triton enables Australia to deploy the most advanced maritime intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and targeting capability available today.

- The first MQ-4C Triton arrived at RAAF Base Tindal on June 16 following a three-segment flight from Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland.

- Northrop Grumman personnel worked closely with their RAAF counterparts to prepare for the aircraft's arrival and support basing activities.

- Australia's Triton program remains on track with three additional aircraft currently in production at Northrop Grumman's Palmdale, California, facility.

Experts:

Christine Zeitz, chief executive and general manager, Australia & New Zealand, Northrop Grumman: "As one of the most advanced intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and targeting systems in the world, and a product of a cooperative development program between Australia and the United States, Triton is a proven multi-mission, multi-domain national security asset vital to the Australian Defence Force during this critical time.

Capt. Josh Guerre, U.S. Navy Triton program manager: "The delivery of Australia's first MQ-4C represents a significant step in a collaboration between the U.S. and Australia to drive the future of multi domain intelligence collection. The U.S. Navy is thrilled to collaborate with Australia to deliver this game changing intelligence capability into the 7th Fleet area of responsibility."

Program Details:

Built for the U.S. Navy and the RAAF, the multi-intelligence MQ-4C Triton supports a wide range of missions, including maritime patrol, signals intelligence and search and rescue. These aircraft deliver unmatched persistent surveillance for the prediction of an adversary's behavior, enabling better planning and enhancing joint military responses. Key attributes include:

- Higher operating altitude and longer endurance than medium-altitude systems

- Ultra-long operational range of 7,400 nautical miles (8,515 miles)

- Simultaneous multi-intelligence sensor operations delivering an exponential increase in mission information

Northrop Grumman successfully completed the first flight of Australia’s MQ-4C Triton uncrewed aircraft at its Palmdale facility in November 2023. The remaining three Australian Tritons currently under contract are progressing as planned through their production schedules. Once fully fielded, Triton will be operated by the Number 9 Squadron from two locations to perform surveillance over the Indo-Pacific region: RAAF Base Edinburgh in South Australia, and RAAF Base Tindal in the Northern Territory.

Northrop Grumman is establishing a dynamic support environment for the progressive delivery of the Triton systems into Australia, including establishing ground stations at RAAF Base Edinburgh and facilitating aircraft integration into RAAF Base Tindal. The company is building a highly qualified Australian workforce across both locations, leveraging extensive knowledge and experience gained from supporting U.S. Navy Triton operations.

Marine Corps’ Second F-35C Squadron Declares Initial Operational Capability

U.S. Marine Corps F-35C Lightning II aircraft assigned to Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 311, Marine Aircraft Group 11, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, are staged during a live ordnance training event at the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar combat aircraft loading area, California, July 24, 2024. This was the first time VMFA-311 conducted live ordnance operations independently and a milestone for the squadron, which declared initial operational capability on July 31, 2024. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Jennifer Sanchez)

From III Marine Aircraft Wing

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, Calif.—Demonstrating the Marine Corps’ commitment to aviation advancement, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 311, Marine Aircraft Group 11,

3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, declared initial operational capability on July 31, 2024.

Achieving initial operational capability is a key milestone for the squadron as part of the Marine Corps tactical aviation (TACAIR) transition plan, the transition from the AV-8B Harrier and F/A-18 Hornet to the F-35. Receiving this qualification means that VMFA-311 has the operational F-35C Lightning II aircraft, trained pilots, maintainers, and support equipment to sustain its mission essential tasks. These tasks include close air support, strike coordination and reconnaissance, anti-air warfare, suppression of enemy air defenses and electronic attacks.

“I am incredibly proud of the Marines and Sailors in this squadron as they hit this critical milestone that ensures greater lethality and operational readiness for the Wing, the Marine Corps, and the joint force,” said Maj. Gen. James Wellons, commanding general of 3rd MAW.

Formerly VMA-311, the “Tomcats” of VMFA-311 reactivated in April 2023 as part of the Marine Corps’ transition to an all fifth-generation force. VMFA-311 achieved its “Safe for Flight” certification in September 2023, allowing the squadron to conduct independent flight operations.

The squadron flew more than 900 sorties, approximately 1,700 hours, and completed more than 800 simulator hours and 2,400 maintenance actions to reach initial operational capability.

“Initial operational capability is a milestone and achievement in readiness,” said Lt. Col. Michael Fisher, commanding officer of VMFA-311, “It’s all on the backs of the Marines out there. What they do in their day-to-day actions is what made this possible.”

In addition to achieving initial operational capability,

VMFA-311 Marines have trained at the most advanced aviation schools offered by the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. Maj. Timothy Potter, an F-35C pilot, graduated from the U.S. Navy Strike Fighter Tactics Instructor Program, more commonly known as TOPGUN, becoming a pilot instructor and increasing the squadron's ability to train other pilots. Warrant Officer John Page, an aviation ordnance officer, graduated from the Marine Corps Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course. Marines completed lightning tactics instructor qualifications, air combat maneuvering qualifications, division lead and section lead qualifications.

The next step for VMFA-311 is full operational capability, attained when VMFA-311 receives its complete inventory of ten F-35C aircraft, projected for fiscal year 2025.

"Nothing changes for us, our pursuit of excellence and how we carry ourselves, initial operational capability is a byproduct of daily competency and being good at our job," Fisher said. "It is a great accomplishment, but when we wake up the next day, we are going to keep doing the same thing. Now full operational capability is the goal."

The Marines of VMFA-311 are actively training and preparing for potential future deployments with the F-35C, continuing the squadron's legacy as a vital component of Marine Corps aviation.

VMFA-311 was originally commissioned as VMF-311 on December 1, 1942, in Cherry Point, North Carolina and has had a notable history of "firsts" for Marine Corps aviation.

Over the last 80 years, VMFA-311 has flown a variety of aircraft, including the F4U Corsair, F9F Panther, A-4 Skyhawk, AV-8B Harrier II, and currently the F-35C Lightning II. VMFA-311 was one of the first Marine Corps squadrons to transition to jet aircraft with the F9F Panther.

Now the squadron leads the way alongside VMFA-314 as one of the first Marine Corps F-35C Lightning II squadrons.

“The Tomcats have a storied history that includes legends such as Ted Williams and John Glenn, and participation in every major conflict since World War II,” Wellons said. “Today’s Marines add another chapter to that legacy with the introduction of the F-35C and fifth-generation capabilities to VMFA-311.”

In 2020, the squadron, then VMA-311, deactivated its legacy Harrier, and began preparing for its reactivation in April 2023, as VMFA-311, the Marine Corps’ second F-35C Lightning II squadron. Starting with 84 Marines and one aircraft, the reactivation was part of ongoing modernization efforts across the Marine Corps to make the force more lethal, effective, and survivable.

The F-35C’s multirole capabilities enable Marine Corps aviation to adapt to a wide range of mission requirements, including air-to-air combat, air-to-ground strikes, reconnaissance and electronic warfare. As operational challenges evolve, the F-35C’s versatility enhances the Marine Corps’ ability to respond.

“As a previous F/A-18 Hornet pilot, the F-35 is our bid for success for the future,” Fisher said. “It is where the Marine Corps is going for TACAIR.”

The Marine Corps has eight operational F-35B squadrons and two training squadrons, operating more than 100 F-35B aircraft around the world. The Marine Corps’ two F-35C squadrons, VMFA-311 and VMFA-314, are both home-stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar.

Each variant of the F-35 brings slightly different

capabilities to the joint force. The F-35C is specifically engineered for carrier-based operations, with heavier landing gear and enlarged, foldable wings designed to facilitate flight operation on naval vessels.

The transition to the F-35C Lightning II is a testament to the Marine Corps' continued evolution and commitment to maintaining cutting-edge capabilities in modern aerial combat.

USS Preble to Forward Deploy to Japan

USS Preble (DDG 88) leaves Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Oahu, Hawaii on March 20, 2024 in preparation for U.S. Missile

Defense Agency’s Flight Test Aegis Weapon System-32 (FTM-32), held in cooperation with the U.S. Navy. (courtesy photo)
by Petty Officer 1st Class Brian Reynolds

01 August 2024

YOKOSUKA, KANAGAWA, JAPAN – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Preble (DDG 88) will move to Yokosuka, Japan, as part of a scheduled rotation of forces in the Pacific, the U.S. Navy announced today. This move will be a permanent change of station for the crew and family members.

Preble will replace USS Benfold (DDG 65), which will depart Yokosuka and move to Everett, Washington.

The forward presence of Preble 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. Preble 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 positions the most capable ships forward. This posture allows the most rapid response times 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 a forward-deployed naval force 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.

General Dynamics Announces Rayha to Succeed Graney as President of Electric Boat

From General Dynamics, August 1, 2024

RESTON, Va. – General Dynamics (NYSE:GD) announced today that Kevin Graney, who currently serves as president of Electric Boat, has informed the company that he will retire at the end of the year. He will be succeeded by Mark Rayha, who currently serves as senior vice president and chief operating officer of Electric Boat, effective December 1.

"Kevin has served General Dynamics with distinction for nearly

30 years, including tenures as president of both NASSCO and Electric Boat. His shipbuilding expertise and strong leadership have been instrumental to the performance and continuous improvement of both NASSCO and Electric Boat," said Phebe Novakovic, chairman and chief executive officer. "Mark is a 35-year veteran of General Dynamics and is a proven and capable leader. His experience as CFO and COO of Electric Boat will ensure that we continue to grow to support our nation's need for submarines."

Graney joined General Dynamics in 1995 and served in a variety of leadership roles at Electric Boat and NASSCO before becoming a general manager and then president of NASSCO from 2013 to 2019 and president of Electric Boat in 2019.

Rayha joined General Dynamics in 1989 at Land Systems. He became CFO of General Dynamics Mission Systems in 2015. He joined Electric Boat in 2020 and served as CFO from 2021 to 2023. He became chief operating officer in 2023.

General Dynamics is a global aerospace and defense company that offers a broad portfolio of products and services in business aviation; ship construction and repair; land combat vehicles, weapons systems and munitions; and technology products and services. General Dynamics employs more than 100,000 people across 65 countries worldwide and generated $42.3 billion in revenue in 2023. More information about General Dynamics is available at www.gd.com.

U.S. Navy Awards Leonardo DRS

$417 Million Contract for Submarine Combat System Hardware

ARLINGTON, Va. July 31, 2024 – Leonardo DRS, Inc. (NASDAQ: DRS) announced today that it was awarded a contract by the U.S. Navy to provide critical electronic combat control and sonar systems equipment for installation across the service's fleet of submarines and allied fleets. The contract ceiling is more than $417 million.

The Technology Insertion Hardware TI-26 indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contract will provide design, procurement, production, sparing, test, installation, and support of displays, workstations, processors, and network systems; the production of subsequent systems, kits and enclosures; and engineering and technical services. The contract was awarded by the U.S. Navy's Naval Undersea Warfare Center, Keyport.

TI-26 is the latest generation of a continuously evolving

family of display, processor, and network systems in support of the US Navy's Submarine Warfare Federated Tactical System family of systems required on U.S. Navy submarines. This contract combines purchases for the U.S. Navy, the Foreign Military Sales program, and the Royal Australian Navy.

"We are very proud to again be selected as the design agent on TI-26 and are honored to support this critical submarine combat control and sonar system hardware program for the U.S. Navy and allied partners," said Cari Ossenfort, senior vice president and general manager of the Leonardo DRS Naval Electronics business unit. "DRS is uniquely qualified for this program because of our agility, proven engineering processes, and experienced team, and that is also the reason we remain a trusted partner to Naval Sea Systems Command and Program Executive Office Submarine."

This work is an example of DRS's deep experience as a leader in complex design and manufacturing supporting a wide range of missions and capabilities. The company's abilities extend across all domains to support naval, ground, air, space, and cyber missions in areas of sensing, force protection, computer networking, as well as naval power and propulsion systems.

Navy Reserve Reaches Unprecedented C-130 Readiness

by MCC Chelsea Milburn of Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve Public Affairs

29 July 2024

SAN DIEGO – In the less than two years since working toward

expanding its capabilities to provide mission-critical logistics support around the globe, the Navy Reserve's Fleet Logistics Support Wing (FLSW) has delivered record C-130T readiness.

The wing increased mission capable aircraft from an average of six aircraft in January 2022 to a peak output of 16 aircraft in June 2024, an unmatched Type/Model/Series improvement across the Naval Aviation Enterprise.

In recent years, the Navy has called for Navy leadership across the fleet to "Get Real, Get Better" (GRGB). This call to action encourages Navy leaders to improve readiness with a foundation of honest self assessment, embracing problem areas as opportunities and constantly seeking ways to innovate and improve.

Shortly after beginning his tour as Commander, Naval Air Force Reserve (CNAFR) in 2022, Rear Adm. Brad Dunham recognized a gap between the fleet's needs for Navy Unique Fleet Essential Airlift (NUFEA) support and what the Navy Reserve's Fleet Logistics Support Wing (FLSW) was able to provide. He called upon FLSW leadership to evaluate how they could maximize C-130 readiness to close the gap.

In the less than two years since working toward expanding FLSW's readiness to provide mission-critical logistics support around the globe, FLSW has delivered record C-130T readiness. The wing increased mission capable aircraft from an average of six aircraft in January 2022 to a peak output of 16 aircraft in June 2024, an unmatched Type/Model/Series improvement across the Naval Aviation Enterprise.

"We recognized in January of 2022 that the average of six mission-capable C-130Ts was missing the mark, and our phenomenal team of professionals dug in to make a tangible change," said FLSW Commodore Capt. J.T. Ward. "We joined the Commander, Naval Air Forces Atlantic Maintenance Operation

Center (MOC) to streamline maintenance processes. We adopted best practices from civilian counterparts and the United States Air Force to improve sustainment. We established processes to remove administrative barriers up and down the chain of command. Combined, these changes resulted in the highest performance outcomes in the history of the Navy C-130T legacy program, evidenced by today's mission capable rates."

Dunham expressed his pride in FLSW's hard work that not only resolved the issue but achieved record-breaking success.

"FLSW leadership approached C-130 readiness with a laser focus on performance improvement to bring 'Get Real, Get Better' tenets to the forefront," said Rear Adm. Brad Dunham. "The unprecedented success of these efforts and their impact to the fleet illustrate the Naval Air Force Reserve's commitment to current readiness and developing future warfighting advantages."

The increased availability of mission-capable C-130T aircraft has greatly enabled increased global NUFEA mission execution. Since January 2022, the wing has provided more than 50,000 mishap-free flight hours and delivered more than 200,000 passengers and 40 million pounds of cargo in support of Navy units operating around the globe.

FLSW is a Navy Reserve air wing with 11 squadrons flying the K/C-130T Hercules and C-40A Clipper. FLSW and the Navy Reserve's Naval Aviation Logistics Office work together as the Navy's sole organic intra-theater airlift capability operating worldwide.

LSU and Integer Technologies Announce $9.8M ONR Contract, Partnership

Navy funding advances intelligent autonomy for maritime vessels, supporting LSU research priorities in Coast, Defense and Energy

COLUMBIA, S.C. – July 30, 2024 – LSU and Integer Technologies announce the Office of Naval Research has awarded their team a $9.8 million contract to research and develop new solutions for improving the intelligence, autonomy and decision-making ability of distributed networks of maritime intelligent autonomous systems for naval operators.

The program, titled Intelligent Data Management for Distributed Naval Platforms, will support the U.S. Navy's goal of transitioning to uncrewed and autonomous vessels to achieve Distributed Maritime Operations. The LSU-Integer team will research and develop digital engineering and artificial intelligence and machine learning approaches to enable naval autonomous vessels with three essential functions: 1) make sense of limited data to determine its importance to the mission, 2) communicate securely, effectively and efficiently with other assets, and 3) independently determine best actions through global models, particularly in scenarios with high uncertainty.

In support of the program, Integer Technologies has established a permanent research and development office in the Louisiana Digital Media Center on LSU's flagship campus in Baton Rouge. The Integer office will be home to scientists, engineers and staff to establish a dedicated Department of Defense capability in Louisiana, supported by a pipeline of qualified LSU graduates.

“With our proud military legacy and flagship mission, LSU continues to serve and protect Louisiana and the nation,” LSU President William F. Tate IV said. “We have world-class problem solvers in coastal science and engineering, in cybersecurity and energy, and are excited to partner with Integer Technologies to put our research faculty and outstanding students and graduates in a position to support the U.S. Navy in defense of our great nation, in a way that creates jobs right here in Louisiana.”

“Our work with Integer is an example of a true partnership,” said Greg Trahan, director of economic development at LSU, and university lead on the project. “Our research capabilities and outstanding students are the reasons Integer is opening their Baton Rouge office and, collectively, we’re building a competitive advantage in technology and talent development for the Navy, here in Louisiana.”

“We’re excited about this partnership as the breadth and depth of the research capacity and the entrepreneurial spirit we’ve found at LSU is outstanding,” said Duke Hartman, CEO of Integer Technologies. “This partnership has absolutely huge potential for the state, and has already led to additional high-impact, multi-million-dollar proposals between Integer and LSU. I couldn’t be more pleased to announce this partnership, hire LSU grads and establish a permanent office in Baton Rouge.”

The program positions LSU and Integer to build broader capabilities to meet Navy needs, including to secure maritime and cyber-physical critical infrastructure along the Gulf Coast. The research team will develop and test prototypes in waters off Louisiana’s ports and coast in real-world conditions, with an eye toward dual-use technologies with applications in domestic port security, offshore energy, and ocean and coastal remote sensing.

“My administration is committed to the continued economic

growth of our great state of Louisiana," Governor Jeff Landry said. "Supporting our military, increasing port security and supporting the offshore energy industry through projects like this will bring continued investment and high-earning jobs to the hardworking men and women of Louisiana."

"Keeping our country safe in the future is all about how well we can gather and make sense of data and intelligence," said Senator Bill Cassidy. "This partnership between LSU and Integer Technologies helps our Navy defend our nation better. Louisiana can be proud that LSU is who the Navy is working with."