

USCGC Alder returns to home port after conducting first high-seas boardings off the coast of Peru, under new SPRFMO measure



Release from U.S. Coast Guard District 11

Nov. 29, 2023

ALAMEDA, Calif. – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Alder, along with the crews of the Terrell Horne and an HC-130 Hercules aircraft recently completed the first high-seas boardings and inspections, in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, under a newly adopted conservation and management measure to monitor and inspect fishing and supply vessel operations at-sea in the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO) Convention Area.

The crew of the Alder performed many new operations that took them south of the equator, where they would participate in SPRFMO inspections, conducting boardings and overflights within the SPRFMO Convention Area on the high seas off the

coast of Peru. For years, the Coast Guard has executed counter-illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing operations and participated in high seas boarding and inspections (HSBI) around the globe. This operation was significant as it was timed to implement newly adopted rules in the SPRFMO Convention Area, which comprises nearly a quarter of the Earth's high seas. The SPRFMO Commission consists of 17 members from Asia, Europe, the Americas, and Oceania, as well as two cooperating non-contracting parties.

The Alder crew also conducted counter narcotics operations, trained two crew members for aerial drone missions launched from the cutter, and sailed with four small boats attached to maintain maximum operational capability during the patrol. The crew also hosted numerous high-level officials while in Paita and Lima, Peru.

The Alder crew participated in GALAPEX 2023, a recurring joint and multinational exercise hosted by Ecuador and executed in the vicinity of the Galapagos Islands. The crew conducted communications exercises, practiced counter-narcotics boarding scenarios, and hosted observers from Peru, Ecuador, and Brazil. GALAPEX culminated with full-scale exercises focused on a coordinated multinational response to counter IUU fishing. At the conclusion of the exercise, the Coast Guard patrolled south to focus on high seas boarding inspections off the coast of Peru.

IUU fishing has replaced piracy as the leading global maritime security threat. Areas out on the high seas, beyond any country's exclusive economic zone, can be exploited by fishers engaged in IUU fishing, as they fish beyond the reach of most law enforcement entities. The Coast Guard's actions provide inspection presence on the high seas among a distant water fishing fleet made up of more than 400 fishing and transshipment vessels. Much of the fishing in the Eastern Pacific is accomplished by these distant water fishing vessels, some which remain at sea for years at a time, and

many of which are supported by supply vessels. The Coast Guard's recent operation directly supported Central and South American partners and their desire to monitor and expand maritime domain awareness of fishing activity near their exclusive economic zones.

"Unprecedented missions like this give cutter crews purpose and meaning," said Lt. Cmdr. Paul Ledbetter, commanding officer U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Alder. "They help the Coast Guard's retention, and they give our sailors stories that they will carry with them forever. Suffice to say, our crew understood the importance of what we were doing, and we are proud of what we accomplished."

Iranian UAV Creates Safety-of-Flight Risk to IKE Carrier Strike Group in Arabian Gulf



U.S. Naval Forces Central Command public affairs

MANAMA, Bahrain – Statement from the commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, Vice Adm. Brad Cooper:

“Iranian unmanned aircraft took unsafe and unprofessional actions near USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) (IKE) during the course of routine flight operations in international waters, Nov. 28.

“The Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group (IKECSG) was conducting routine flight operations in the international waters of the Central Arabian Gulf when it detected an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). The UAV was visually identified as Iranian. Its closest point of approach to IKE was approximately 1,500 yards. Multiple hails and warnings were ignored by Iran.

“This Iranian action violated safety precautions outlined in a daily Notice to Airmen (NOTAM). The NOTAM directed manned and

unmanned aircraft to remain greater than 10 nautical miles from the aircraft carrier in order to ensure safety of flight of military and civilian aviation.

“No injuries were reported and no aircraft was damaged.

“This unsafe, unprofessional, and irresponsible behavior by Iran risks U.S. and partner nation lives and needs to cease immediately.

“U.S. naval forces remain vigilant and will continue to fly, sail and operate anywhere international law allows while promoting regional maritime security.”

Littoral Combat Ship, Unmanned Systems Pair Up to Advance Lethality in the Middle East



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

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jacob Vernier |
November 29, 2023

MANAMA, Bahrain – U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) continues advancing lethality at sea, utilizing the Freedom-class littoral combat ship USS Indianapolis (LCS 17) as a staging base and command center for a host of unmanned systems during live weapons firing exercises in the international waters of the central Arabian Gulf, Nov. 27.

Digital Talon 2.0, the second exercise of its type in as many months, showcased “manned-unmanned teaming” by meshing together Indianapolis, three unmanned surface vehicles, and an unmanned aerial vehicle to create a single common operating picture and what is known as a “mesh network” providing targeting data to all stations taking part in the exercise.

NAVCENT’s Task Force 59 – the Navy’s first Unmanned and Artificial Intelligence Task Force – partnered with Indianapolis to demonstrate the ability of unmanned platforms

to pair with traditionally crewed ships. The manned and unmanned teams identified, targeted, engaged and then destroyed simulated hostile forces at sea, represented through the use of a target boat.

“This second iteration of Digital Talon continues building on our earlier successes,” said Capt. Colin Corridan, TF-59 commodore. “We keep progressing toward fulfilling NAVCENT’s priorities of deterrence and de-escalation by demonstrating live firing from a tight ‘manned-unmanned teaming’ model.”

In multiple firing events, a T-38 Devil Ray unmanned surface vessel (USV), equipped with a Lethal Miniature Aerial Missile System, and successfully scored direct hits on the target boat each time. As with the previous Digital Talon exercise, a human operator ashore at TF-59’s Robotics Operations Center made the engagement decisions.

The unmanned vehicles taking part in the exercise included a Flexrotor unmanned aerial vehicle; an Arabian Fox MAST-13 USV; and an additional T-38 Devil Ray USV.

Digital Talon 2.0 took a significant step forward, Collidan said, noting the results from this event, “have proven these unmanned platforms paired with our manned combat ships can enhance fleet lethality. In doing so, we are strengthening regional maritime security and enhancing deterrence against malign activity.”

U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. 5th Fleet’s area of operations encompasses about 2.5 million square miles of water area and includes the Arabian Gulf, Red Sea, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea and parts of the Indian Ocean. This expanse, comprising 21 nations, includes three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal and the Strait of Bab al Mandeb.

Kratos Supports Successful US Navy and MDA Intercept Test Against Multiple Ballistic Missile and Anti-Ship Cruise Missile Targets

Release from Kratos Defense & Security

November 27, 2023 at 8:00 AM EST

SAN DIEGO, Nov. 27, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – Kratos Defense & Security Solutions, Inc. (NASDAQ: KTOS), a Technology Company in the Defense, National Security and Global Markets, announced today that its Defense & Rocket Systems business supported the successful [intercept test of two Short-Range Ballistic Missile \(SRBM\) targets](#), known as Aegis Readiness Assessment Vehicle (ARAV) by two Standard Missile 3 Block IA (SM-3 Blk IA) interceptors during the test event Vigilant Wyvern, also known as Flight Test Aegis Weapon System-48 (FTM-48). The successful test demonstrated the capability of a ballistic missile defense-configured Aegis ship to detect, track, engage and execute intercepts of two SRBM targets while concurrently demonstrating an Anti-Air Warfare (AAW) engagement of two subsonic anti-ship cruise missile drone targets. This live-fire, raid scenario represented one of the largest Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) events ever conducted in the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Area of Responsibility and demonstrated for the first time a concurrent Ballistic Missile Defense and Anti-Air Warfare

raid.

The successful intercepts by the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS CARL M. LEVIN (DDG 120) were the highlight of the Vigilant Wyvern/FTM-48 event and the culmination of a four-week campaign during which Kratos Rocket Systems business, along with its government and industry partners, integrated and launched the two SRBM targets from the Pacific Missile Range Facility (PMRF) in Hawaii. Both ARAV target systems, which have a long-standing, successful, flight-demonstrated heritage on test and intercept missions for the U.S. Navy and MDA, executed nominal trajectories while meeting target requirements.

“Our team works side-by-side with our government customers to deliver transformative and affordable target systems and vehicles from mission inception through successful launch operations. FTM-48, which was one of our largest recent mission campaigns, is just the latest example of this successful partnership,” said Dave Carter, President of Kratos Rocket Systems Division. “Kratos’ affordable systems allow our customers to cost effectively effect multi system raid scenarios like Vigilant Wyvern, and we are grateful to be able to continue supporting the U.S. DoD and its allies in this very important mission area.”

The BQM is a sub-sonic aerial target, capable of speeds greater than .09 Mach and minimum altitude of 6.6 feet, and has no equal when it comes to delivering realistic anti-ship missile threat emulation.

Kratos is a leading provider of products, solutions, and services supporting ballistic missile defense for Aegis Weapon System, hypersonic testing, atmospheric science research and technology maturation.

Vipers and Heavy Haulers Return Home from Indo-Pacific Deployment



MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, UNITED STATES

11.27.2023

By [Maj. Natalie Batcheler, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing](#)

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, Calif. – The Marines and Sailors of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron (HMLA) 169, and Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron (HMH) 462, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, returned from deployments in support of the

Unit Deployment Program and 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, to their home stations of Marine Corps Air Station Camp Pendleton and MCAS Miramar, California, respectively, earlier this month.

The HMLA-169 "Vipers" and HMH-462 "Heavy Haulers" demonstrated adaptability and versatility by task-organizing their squadrons into elements for two different deployments each.

The Heavy Haulers also attached the remaining third of their squadron to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 163, yielding a reinforced assault support squadron, which supported a bilateral exercise and relief efforts in the Philippines this summer.

UDP enhances the United States' forward presence and provides a consistent and rapid response capability. The program aims to maintain combat readiness, deter aggression, and strengthen alliances and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region. UDP reinforces the Marine Corps' ability to rapidly maneuver to key maritime terrain, establish resilient air command and control, and generate aviation combat power from distributed locations.

The 31st MEU is the Marine Corps' only permanently forward-deployed MEU, and is the nation's expeditionary force in readiness in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Vipers' UH-1Y Venom and AH-1Z Viper aircraft, and the Heavy Haulers' CH-53E Super Stallions operated across the Indo-Pacific, demonstrating the operational reach of Marine aviation.

They participated in exercises including Marine Aviation Support Activity, Talisman Sabre, Fuji Viper, Super Garuda Shield, and Korean Marine Exchange Program, and conducted training in Okinawa including a variety of flight operations

and qualifications; maritime integration; and joint and Marine Air-Ground Task Force integration.

“The Vipers executed an aggressive campaign that emphasized distributed operations across the Indo-Pacific theater,” said Lt. Col. Thomas Duff, commanding officer of HMLA-169. “We utilized strategic airlift, amphibious shipping, and self-deploying detachments to support five bilateral exercises and enhance interoperability with our partners in the region.”

The Vipers and Heavy Haulers played a key role in fostering relationships with allies and partners in the region, demonstrating a forward presence in the Indo-Pacific, and enhancing capabilities for mission sets across the range of military operations.

“Mobility is an identified challenge in the Western Pacific, specifically in the First Island Chain, that is crucial for the United States to promote regional stability and strengthen alliances with partner nations while in Great Power Competition,” said Lt. Col. Jonathan Bryant, commanding officer of HMM-462. “Over the past seven months, the Marines and Sailors of HMM-462 met this challenge head-on by continuously demonstrating the Marine Corps’ ability to conduct long range assault support and heavy lift operations for III MEF as the Stand-In-Force in INDOPACOM.”

Marines and assets from 3rd MAW, the largest wing in the Marine Corps, are constantly forward-deployed in support of operations and training around the globe. Ready to fight tonight and win, 3rd MAW is poised to respond when called upon.

Navy's Second Ford CVN to Join the U.S. Pacific Fleet



MEDITERRANEAN SEA (Oct. 11, 2023) The world's largest aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) refuels from the underway replenishment oiler USNS Laramie (T-AO 203) in the eastern Mediterranean Sea, Oct. 11, 2023. The second Ford-class CVN, the future USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 79), will become a unit of the U.S. Pacific Fleet. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jacob Mattingly)

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy's second Gerald R. Ford-class aircraft carrier, the future USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 79), will become a unit of the U.S. Pacific Fleet when it makes its first deployment.

Captain Brian Metcalf, the Navy's program manager for the Ford-class aircraft carriers, speaking Nov. 28 in a panel of the American Society of Naval Engineers' Technology Systems

and Ships seminar, said the Kennedy would be delivered to the Navy in 2025. After commissioning and training work ups, the carrier would make a deployment to the Indo-Pacific region and arrive at its new homeport on the U.S. West Coast, he said.

Metcalfe said the Kennedy is 90% complete at HII's Newport News shipyard.

He said that his program office plans to complete much of the Kennedy's Post-Shakedown Availability (PSA) work – that on the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) was completed during its own PSA and added a year of delay to delivery to the fleet – would be completed on the Kennedy during its construction before commissioning and would enable the Kennedy to enter its basic training phase on time.

The lead ship, Gerald R. Ford, is deployed to the eastern Mediterranean Sea and has had its deployment extended twice because of the Israel-Hamas War. Metcalfe said the Ford's systems, including the Electro-Magnetic Aircraft Launch System and the ship's once-controversial weapon elevators were performing well.

He said that maintenance and modernization work on the Ford planned for early 2024 would have to wait, given the Ford's deployment extensions.

The next two Ford-class CVNs—Enterprise (CVN 80) and Doris Miller (CVN 81)—did not start as a two-ship procurement but since have been combined as a program to achieve cost reductions. Metcalfe said that his program office is working within the current Future Years Defense Plan to ensure that procurement of CVN 82 and CVN 83 is a two-ship procurement.

U.S., Partner Nation Task Force Respond to Commercial Vessel Distress Call



[Release from the U.S. Department of Defense](#)

Nov. 27, 2023 | By C. Todd Lopez

This weekend, the USS Mason and partner nation naval vessels responded to a distress call from the commercial shipping vessel M/V Central Park, which had been boarded by five armed individuals while in transit in the Gulf of Aden near Yemen, said the Pentagon press secretary.

“[The Central Park] was boarded by these five individuals. They attempted to access the crew cabin,” Air Force Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder said this morning during a meeting with the Pentagon

press corps. "The crew, essentially, [was] able to lock themselves into a safe haven. These individuals attempted to access and take control of the ship."

The crew of the Central Park issued the distress call on the evening of Nov. 26. The distress call was responded to by the USS Mason, allied ships and associated aircraft which are part of Combined Task Force 151. That task force conducts counter-piracy missions.

After the arrival of the USS Mason and partners with CTF 151, task force personnel demanded the release of the Central Park, Ryder said. The five armed individuals then disembarked the vessel and fled in a small boat.

"After the five individuals fled, the Mason sent out a visit, board, search and seizure team on the water that stopped the small boat. They detained the individuals, and then ... the VBSS team boarded the Central Park and cleared the vessel," Ryder said, adding that the Central Park crew was found to be safe following the incident.

While the identity of the five armed attackers was not yet confirmed at the time of the morning news briefing, Ryder said initial indications are that the individuals are Somali. All five are currently being held aboard the USS Mason.

Hours later, early in the morning of Nov. 27, Yemen time, two ballistic missiles were fired toward the general location of the Mason and the Central Park.

"Initial indications were that two ballistic missiles were fired from Houthi-controlled areas in Yemen, toward the general location of the Mason and the Central Park," Ryder said. "The missiles landed in the Gulf of Aden, approximately 10 nautical miles from the ships. It is not clear at this time what they were targeting."

Ryder said that neither the USS Mason nor the Central Park

were damaged by the missiles and that the Central Park is now back under power and on its way.

Navy Defuels P-8A Poseidon in Kaneohe Bay



[Release from Commander, 3rd Fleet Public Affairs](#)

28 November 2023

KANEOHE BAY, Hawaii –The Navy on Sunday completed a key first step in recovering its P-8A from the bay by removing much of the fuel from the jet aircraft, the on-scene commander told reporters today.

"Yesterday, the team executed a slow and methodical defueling process," said Rear Adm. Kevin P. Lenox, who is also commander of Carrier Strike Group 3. "This was done to minimize the risk of environmental harm in the follow-on salvage process. We estimated that the aircraft had just over 2,000 gallons of fuel on board and the team extracted all the fuel that would come out. The process was completed successfully without any fuel being released into the bay."

To prepare for that process, Navy divers went to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam to familiarize themselves with the P-8A Poseidon and practice connecting and disconnecting the fuel lines. The divers also conducted a hydrographic survey to better assess the coral and marine environment around the aircraft.

"This team has been singularly focused on developing a salvage plan for this aircraft that prioritizes the safety of personnel and the environment here in Kaneohe Bay," said Lenox. "We tested the fuel today to make sure what came out didn't have any water in it, and it was basically perfect fuel. We could actually put that in another plane and it would be good to go."

Col. Jeremy Beaven, commanding officer, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, and Cmdr. Mark Anderson, commanding officer, Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit 1, also addressed the media.

"Within minutes [of the mishap] our Waterfront Operations team was postured and responding to ensure there were no deleterious effects on the environment," said Beaven. "As the subsequent days have gone, our posture from the initial stages has just improved daily and that's been in coordination with some of our state agencies helping us to get to what right looks like."

"The on-scene commander also noted an Aviation Mishap Board is on site, and an administrative investigation led by a senior

naval officer in the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Force from outside the chain of command of the aircraft crew in question, has been designated and began review of investigation materials.

“The Navy is committed to learning from this investigation, regardless of the cause,” said Lenox. “These lessons be valuable in preventing such incidents going forward and making us better.”

The P-8A crew, assigned to Whidbey Island, Washington-based Patrol Squadron (VP) 4 “Skinny Dragons,” was on a detachment in support of maritime homeland defense. There were nine crewmembers on board – three pilots and six crewmembers (two officer and four enlisted). All crewmembers safely evacuated the aircraft and no injuries were reported. A P-8A and crew assigned to VP-40 “Fighting Marlins” arrived in Hawaii Nov. 22, to assume homeland defense coverage.

More information will be released as it becomes available.

The U.S. Navy fact file on the P-8A Poseidon can be found at the following link:
<https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2166300/p-8a-poseidonmultimission-maritime-aircraft-mma/>

SAFE Boats and Vita Power Enter into an MOU to Build

Zero-Emission Patrol Boat Options



[Release from SAFE Boats](#)

Bremerton, Wash. – SAFE Boats International (SBI) is collaborating with Vita Power to bring electrification to the patrol boat market. The first objective of this partnership was to develop a 100% electric patrol boat that is a first-class solution and is both reliable and practical. Together, they have adapted one of SAFE Boats’ most proven hull designs – the 23’ Center Console – to be propelled by Vita Power’s V300 electric motor and battery package. Dubbed the “223e”, this concept provides a zero-emission solution for operators who are working long hours at lower speeds.

Performance calculations with the 300HP electric motor predicts the 223e will maintain an operational battery life of 10 hours at 5 knots, one hour at cruise speed, and capable of

a 34 knot sprint speed. Utilizing the Aqua superPower charger – from Vita’s sister company – the boat can recharge in one hour or less. Compared to an outboard-powered engine, the 223e is expected to save thousands in annual fuel and maintenance costs.

The 223e offers the work boat and patrol boat market a zero-emission option when long, high-speed runs are not required. SAFE Boats CEO, Richard Schwarz, remarks: “the SAFE/Vita collaboration is to develop electric boats that can be used for specific applications such as lake patrols and for harbormasters who are spending most of their time at low speeds in sensitive environments. As state regulations clamp down on emissions requirements, boat and engine manufactures are being pushed to develop innovative solutions to maintain compliance.” Schwarz adds that “this SBI/Vita solution suits those ever-tightening requirements.”

Vita Power is at the forefront of marine electric propulsion. Clive Johnson, CEO of Vita, states that “the 223e is the perfect size boat to offer first responders with the range and performance Vita has to offer in a durable workboat.” Johnson adds, “The Vita propulsion system is designed to offer a complete electrification solution for a broad range of marine applications from commercial vessels to superyacht tenders, and we are excited to be working with SAFE Boats to bring our technology to first responders and harbormasters here in the US. With local and state government bodies offering increasing support for businesses wanting to decarbonize their operations, the US and organizations like SAFE Boats are paving the way to a clean marine future.”

IKE STRIKE GROUP TRANSITS THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ

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

27 November 2023

ARABIAN GULF – The Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group (IKECSG) completed a scheduled transit through the Strait of Hormuz into the Arabian Gulf, Nov. 26.

“Our passage through this important strait and continued presence in the area plays a critical role in maintaining the freedom of navigation that is key to regional security and stability,” said Rear Adm. Marc Miguez, commander, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 2, IKECSG. “I am incredibly proud of the sustained professionalism of each IKECSG Sailor, especially in evolutions like a strait transit, where detailed planning, precision navigation and the proficiency of our warfighting teams are on full display.”

The Strait of Hormuz is one of the busiest shipping lanes, with one-fifth of the world’s energy supply transiting through the strait annually. This waterway is critical to ensuring and safeguarding the stability of global commerce.

More than 500 ships sail through the Strait of Hormuz in a typical week, a steady flow of maritime traffic crucial to the vitality of the nations in the Middle East region.

The aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) (IKE) passed through the strait with the guided-missile cruiser USS Philippine Sea (CG 58), guided missile destroyers USS Gravely (DDG 107) and USS Stethem (DDG 63), and French Navy destroyer

FS Languedoc (D 653) along with air support from a French Navy E-2C Hawkeye and French Air Force Rafale strike aircrafts.

“The Mighty IKE brings unmatched capabilities wherever it goes,” said Capt. Christopher Hill, commanding officer of IKE, flagship of IKECSG. “We place ourselves where our nation’s leaders need us to be and on time, in order to meet the full range of maritime security requirements of the mission at hand.”

The IKECSG’s transit through the Strait of Hormuz marks the first aircraft carrier to operate in the Arabian Gulf since the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group in September 2020. IKECSG presence in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations, where it has operated since Nov. 4, demonstrates the U.S. and its partners’ commitment to the free flow of commerce, regional security and freedom of navigation.

The Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group is deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet in support of naval operations to ensure maritime stability and security in the Middle East Region. Along with IKE, deployed strike group assets include staffs, ships and aircraft of CSG 2, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 22, USS Philippine Sea (CG 58) and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 3.

IKECSG units departed their homeports of Norfolk, Virginia, and Mayport, Florida, on Oct. 13 and 14 for a scheduled deployment.

U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. 5th Fleet’s area of operations encompasses about 2.5 million square miles of water area and includes the Arabian Gulf, Red Sea, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea and parts of the Indian Ocean. This expanse, comprising 21 nations, includes three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal and the Strait of Bab al Mandeb.