

U.S. Nuclear-Powered Submarine Visits Western Australia, First Since AUKUS Announcement



[Release from U.S. 7th Fleet](#)

04 August 2023

ROCKINGHAM, Western Australia (Aug. 4, 2023) – USS North Carolina (SSN 777) docked at HMAS Stirling, a naval base in Western Australia, today following participation in Talisman Sabre 2023.

This marks the first visit by a Virginia-class submarine to the country since the leaders' announcement of the Australia,

United Kingdom, and United States (AUKUS) Optimal Pathway.

Initially announced in September 2021, the AUKUS partnership is designed to bolster the security and defense capabilities of the three nations and promote security in the Indo-Pacific region.

“North Carolina’s presence in HMAS Stirling is an example of the United States’ full commitment to the AUKUS partnership starting with a promised increase in SSN port visits to Australia in 2023,” said Mr. Abe Denmark, Senior Advisor for AUKUS to the Secretary of Defense. “These port visits are an essential step for Australia to build the necessary operational capabilities and skills to steward and operate its own fleet of nuclear-powered attack submarines.”

The Optimal Pathway is a phased approach that represents an ambitious plan to provide Australia with a conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability at the earliest possible date while ensuring Australia’s capacity to safely operate, maintain and regulate this technology, and setting the highest standards for nuclear non-proliferation.

- Phase One includes increased SSN port visits aimed to expand Australia’s knowledge of SSNs ahead of establishing Submarine Rotational Force-West (SRF-W) as early as 2027. SRF-W will start a rotational presence of up to four Virginia-class submarines (US), and one United Kingdom Astute class submarine at HMAS Stirling.
- Phase Two begins in the early 2030s, pending approval from the U.S. Congress, with the United States selling Australia three Virginia class submarines, with the potential to sell up to two more if needed.
- Phase Three sees the combination of a base British submarine design and advanced United States technology to deliver SSN-AUKUS, the future attack submarine for both Australia and the United Kingdom. Australia plans

to deliver the first Australian-built SSN-AUKUS in the early 2040s.

“Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States share a long history of security cooperation around the world,” said Rear Adm. Chris Cavanaugh, Commander, Submarine Group (CSG) 7. “I am impressed every day by our ability to work together seamlessly during undersea warfare training and operations.”

CSG 7 directs forward-deployed, combat-capable forces across the full spectrum of undersea warfare throughout the Western Pacific, Indian Ocean, and Arabian Sea.

U.S. 7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy’s largest forward-deployed numbered fleet, and routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

GA-ASI	Mojave	STOL	UAS
Completes	First	Dirt	
Operation			



[Release from General Atomics](#)

Mojave Demonstrates Takeoff and Landing Versatility on Unimproved Surface

SAN DIEGO – 03 August 2023 – On August 1, 2023, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc. (GA-ASI) completed multiple successful takeoffs and landings with its Mojave Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) on a dirt strip near El Mirage, Calif.

The ability to take off and land on unimproved surfaces demonstrates Mojave's departure from traditional fixed-wing aircraft's dependance on prepared runways. This new capability provides greater versatility and allows the aircraft to operate in areas previously deemed unsuitable for UAS operations.

"Being able to execute missions in austere locations with runway independence opens the operational envelope for commanders across all services and geographic locations," said GA-ASI President David R. Alexander. "Mojave can do this while retaining significant advantages in endurance and persistence

over Vertical Takeoff and Landing (VTOL) and manned aircraft.”

The flight tests were the first-ever Short Takeoff and Landing (STOL) on a dirt surface for Mojave. Takeoffs were performed in as little as 586 feet; and short landings were completed in as little as 335 feet. The tests were primarily focused on gathering terrain feedback using Mojave, not achieving the shortest distances possible.

Tracing its lineage from the MQ-1C Gray Eagle and MQ-9 Reaper, Mojave is a technical demonstrator with STOL capability, making it a versatile expeditionary UAS. Adhering to Modular Open System Approach (MOSA) principles, Mojave leverages the modernized avionics, data links, sensor integration, and laptop ground control station of GA-ASI’s [Gray Eagle 25M](#) program. These features – along with Mojave’s enlarged wings with high-lift devices, combat-proven 450-HP turbine engine, and ruggedized landing gear – make it ideal for semi-improved surfaces with a small ground support footprint.

Mojave provides options for forward-basing operations without the need for typical airport runways or infrastructure, so it can be rapidly deployed from and recovered to non-traditional discrete locations. To extend operational reach, Mojave can fit into a C-130 and be rapidly assembled and employed. These innovations make Mojave the perfect UAS to perform Reconnaissance, Surveillance, and Target Acquisition (RSTA), attack, and contested logistics support missions.

Designed to be rapidly deployable and expeditionary, Mojave’s tailored features include a ruggedized airframe that enables operations in austere conditions and weatherization that enables flight in wider environmental windows. Robust wing storage means it can carry up to 16 Hellfire or equivalent missiles, assorted munitions, Launched Effects (LEs), or logistical resupply pods. Mojave can provide greater

operational flexibility while still being equipped with a multi-sensor suite that includes Electro-Optical/Infrared (EO/IR), Synthetic Aperture Radar/Ground Moving Target Indicator (SAR/GMTI), Electronic Intelligence (ELINT), and Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) to support land or maritime missions throughout Joint All-Domain Operations (JADO).

To see a video of the Mojave dirt operation, [click here](#).

Naming of the Marine Corps Wargaming and Analysis Center



Release from Marine Corps Combat Development Command

MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO, VA— The Marine Corps Wargaming and Analysis Center will be named after Gen. Robert B. Neller, 37th Commandant of the Marine Corps and will be called the “General Robert B. Neller Center for Wargaming and Analysis.” The short name will be the Neller Center.

The Neller Center is currently under construction with initial operating capability planned during 2025. It’s located in the National Capitol Region, on the Marine Corps University campus on Marine Corps Base Quantico. It encompasses 100,446 gross square feet and will be a one-of-a-kind facility, operated and maintained by the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory.

In 2017, then-Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. Robert Neller directed the establishment of a world-class facility for Marines to wargame repeatedly in a secure, centralized location and enhance the Marine Corps’ ability to make analytically informed decisions.

The Marine Corps, the other services, and departments will facilitate modernization at the Neller Center and seek to realize his vision to achieve service and joint objectives and future strategic demands.

The Center will provide next-generation technologies to facilitate wargaming and analysis across multiple levels of classification, with a host of coalition and joint partners, and will eventually allow for geography agnostic wargame participation across the globe.

The increased capability and capacity facilitated by the Neller Center will be integral to the combat development process within the Combat Development and Integration enterprise. These capabilities will help ensure the decisions required to equip and train our future warfighters are based

upon the most accurate, threat-informed, and timely recommendations.

Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf returns home after 120-day Bering Sea patrol



[Release from Coast Guard Pacific Area](#)

Aug. 3, 2023

ALAMEDA, Calif. — The Coast Guard Cutter Bertholf (WMSL 750) and crew returned to homeport, Thursday, to Coast Guard Island

after a 120-day Bering Sea patrol in support of United States national security, U.S. fishing fleet safety and prosperity, and the protection of U.S. living marine resources.

While patrolling the Bering Sea, Bertholf's crew members conducted 15 boardings of commercial fishing vessels, ensuring compliance with federal fisheries laws, and preserving the highly valuable U.S. living marine resources. These boardings also ensure that the U.S. fishing fleet have sufficient safety equipment to survive in the event of an at-sea emergency.

In a demonstration of the strong trusted partnership between Japan and the United States, Bertholf conducted major at-sea and shore side engagements with the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force (JMSDF) training ships Kashima and Hatakaze. During the at-sea engagement, Bertholf, Kashima and Hatakaze executed multiple formations, and during a farewell pass, the JMSDF personnel displayed a highly impressive drumline performance on their flight deck.

Afterward, the three ships moored up together in Dutch Harbor, Alaska, and continued to build relationships and shape partnerships. These engagements included reciprocal ship tours, a baseball game, a fun run up local mountain Ballyhoo, and a Dutch Harbor beach bonfire.

The next day, the Japanese and U.S. crews came together with the Unalaska community and officials from the Qawalangin Tribe during the 81st anniversary of the World War II Battle of Dutch Harbor ceremony to commemorate the lives lost, the community impacts, and to recognize the healing and partnership that has been built in the decades that followed. Rear Adm. Konno, JMSDF Training Squadron Commander, Rear Adm. Moore, commander of U.S. Coast Guard Seventeenth District, and Mayor Tutiakoff presided over the ceremony and exchanged official gifts.

Additionally, Bertholf crew guarded the boundary line between the U.S. and Russian Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), ensuring

that the fish in U.S. waters were protected from illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing from foreign nations.

Later in the patrol, Bertholf and crew anchored in Kotzebue Sound and engaged in several events with the community members of Kotzebue, Alaska, including a color run and a softball game. In addition, Bertholf's law enforcement operators engaged with local fishermen and fish processors to establish positive relationships and ensure awareness of boater safety regulations and salmon skiff exemptions in the region.

"Our accomplishments during this patrol would not have been possible without the amazing crew that we have aboard," said Capt. Billy Mees, Bertholf commanding officer. "The entirety of the crew and their families have my utmost respect for the sacrifices they make for their country."

The Bertholf returned home on the eve of the 15th anniversary of its commissioning date; August 4th, 2008, which also coincides with the Coast Guard's 233rd birthday. Since then, Bertholf has truly lived up to the storied past of her namesake, Commodore Ellsworth P. Bertholf, the first Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, and its motto, *Legends Begin Here*.

U.S., Canadian icebreakers conduct operation, rendezvous en route to Arctic Ocean



[Release from Coast Guard Pacific Area](#)

Aug. 3, 2023

BEAUFORT SEA – The Coast Guard Cutter Healy (WAGB 20) and crew conducted joint operations with the Canadian Coast Guard Ship Sir Wilfrid Laurier and crew, Friday, in the Beaufort Sea, while northbound on a month-long science mission in support of the Office of Naval Research (ONR).

Healy, the U.S. Coast Guard's largest polar icebreaker, and crew participated in a personnel exchange off the coast of Utqiagvik, Alaska, and Capt. Michele Schallip, commanding officer of Healy, hosted Rear Adm. Megan Dean, the Seventeenth Coast Guard District commander; Youssef Mani, the assistant commissioner of the Canadian Coast Guard, Arctic Region; Shane Sadoway, regional director of Navigational Programs and Operations Canadian Coast Guard, Arctic Region; and Capt. Timothy Williams, Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak commanding

officer.

The crew showcased the cutter's unique capabilities, including science laboratories, various conning stations, and extensive engineering spaces. The meeting of the two research-oriented icebreakers deepened their respective flag states' mutual commitment to Arctic stewardship, and fostered esprit de corps as the crews reflected on their shared experiences. Healy displayed its work with ONR's Arctic Mobile Observing System, which is the cutter's objective this month in the Beaufort Sea.

Additionally, the Healy and Sir Wilfrid Laurier held exercises including formation steaming, boat operations, and flying the latter's embarked helicopter.

Healy is on a five-month deployment in partnership with ONR and the National Science Foundation. Meeting with Sir Wilfrid Laurier is the latest iteration of international cooperation and strong partnerships among Arctic nations.

Commissioned in 1986, the 272-foot Sir Wilfrid Laurier is based out of Victoria, British Columbia. It executes scientific research in addition to buoy tending and ice escort missions. Famously, in 2014 Sir Wilfrid Laurier embarked on the Victoria Strait Expedition, where the wreck of HMS Erebus was rediscovered 166 years after its abandonment, sunken west of the Adelaide Peninsula in Nunavut.

The Coast Guard's Polar Security Cutter program will continue the legacy of the Healy and Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star, and several classes of cutters before them, as the next generation of vessels to ensure continued access to both polar regions and uphold sovereign rights, provide national security, and promote economic prosperity in the Arctic.

Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard & Intermediate Maintenance Facility Named Naval Supervising Authority and Lead Maintenance Activity for Submarine Rotational Force – West



[Release from Naval Sea Systems Command](#)

By NAVSEA Office of Corporate Communications and AUKUS Integration and Acquisition Program Office Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command Vice Adm. Bill Galinis named Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility (PHNSY & IMF) as the Naval Supervising Authority (NSA) and Lead Maintenance Activity (LMA) for Submarine Rotational Force – West (SRF-W) July 26. As the NSA/LMA, PHNSY & IMF will support the establishment of SRF-W, which is the first phase of the AUKUS Pillar One effort that is delivering conventionally armed nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSNs) to Australia. SRF-W will host up to four Virginia-class and one United Kingdom Astute-class attack submarines (SSNs) at HMAS Stirling on a rotational basis in Western Australia starting in 2027.

Initially announced in September 2021, the AUKUS trilateral agreement between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States is a strategic endeavor aimed at strengthening the security and defense capabilities of the three nations that also promotes stability and security in the Indo-Pacific region. Australia will acquire SSNs under Pillar One of AUKUS via a plan known as the “Optimal Pathway” announced by the heads of the three partner nations on March 13, 2023.

With the extended rotations lasting between three and five years, Virginia-class SSNs will require voyage repair and Intermediate-Level (I-Level) maintenance that generally lasts several weeks and does not require dry docking. As the NSA/LMA, PHNSY & IMF will support training Australian military and civilian personnel to execute the required work.

“There is no doubt that Pearl Harbor is the right shipyard to serve as the NSA/LMA for SRF-W,” said Galinis. “Having completed numerous maintenance availabilities, they know the Virginia-class. When you add in the exceptional skill of the Pearl Harbor workforce, it is the right decision.”

"It is an honor and a formidable responsibility to have PHNSY & IMF chosen to serve as the NSA/LMA for SRF-W," said the shipyard's commanding officer Capt. Richard A. Jones. "Significant effort will be required, but we understand our efforts will sharpen the tip of the Royal Australian Navy's spear and set their submarine force on the path to sovereign readiness to operate and maintain their own conventionally armed nuclear-powered attack submarines. PHNSY & IMF's mission is to keep the fleet fit to fight and we look forward to sharing our knowledge and dedication to a culture of excellence that returns submarines safely to the fleet on time, every time."

In the near future, Australian and United Kingdom personnel will travel to PHNSY & IMF to refine their understanding of the requirements associated with maintaining SSNs.

"Soon, Australian and UK nationals will be at our naval shipyard, embedded within our maintenance organization, learning skills that are unique to only six countries in the world," said Rear Adm. Scott Brown, Naval Sea Systems Command's Deputy Commander, Industrial Operations. "PHNSY & IMF will be charged with leading a trilateral effort to develop the capability to repair and maintain SSNs in Australia. We are committed to ensuring that Australia has all the local knowledge, training, and skills needed to maintain SSNs in accordance with our standards."

To ensure PHNSY & IMF can meet its future obligations, additional personnel will be hired to support the AUKUS effort. "We recognize we can't absorb this added workload with our current workforce," said Jones. "Working with NAVSEA, we will be looking to add people across numerous shops throughout the shipyard to support this effort so we don't overburden our systems or impact any planned maintenance availabilities."

"The AUKUS Integration and Acquisition Office is extremely happy to have PHNSY & IMF designated as the NSA/LMA for SRF-W

and we are honored to have them as part of the AUKUS `Ohana,'" said Captain Lincoln Reifsteck, the AUKUS Integration and Acquisition Program Manager. "The men and women of the Navy's Nō Ka 'Ōi (of the best) shipyard in the heart of the Pacific are critical to our overall success and I am looking forward to building a strong working relationship with them and our Australian shipmates."

The AUKUS partnership is a strategic endeavor that strengthens the three nations' national security and promotes peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. Australia will acquire conventionally armed SSNs for the Royal Australian Navy under AUKUS Pillar One via the Optimal Pathway announced by the heads of the three partner nations on March 13, 2023. The AUKUS Integration and Acquisition (I&A) Program Office is responsible for executing the trilateral partnership to deliver conventionally armed, nuclear-powered attack submarines to the Royal Australian Navy at the earliest possible date while setting the highest nuclear stewardship standards.

President Biden Signs Legislation to Mint 250th Anniversary Commemorative Coin to Honor the Marine Corps

Release from Marine Corps Heritage Foundation

Proceeds from coin sales will support the programs of the National Museum of the Marine Corps and the Marine Corps Heritage Center

Triangle, Va. – The Marine Corps Heritage Foundation (MCHF) is proud to announce the successful passage of the 250th Anniversary of the United States Marine Corps Commemorative Coin Act. The legislation, [signed by the President on July 26](#), instructs the U.S. Mint to issue over 1 million coins to commemorate 250 years of Marine Corps history, and raise funds to support future educational, historical, and cultural programs. The commemorative coin minting becomes part of the upcoming, national celebration of the Marine Corps' 250th anniversary in 2025.

“We are grateful to the President and Congress, especially Representatives Moulton, Bergman, Gallego, and Pence, and Senators Blumenthal, Sullivan, Rick Scott, Rounds, Young, Shaheen, Warner, Heinrich, and Duckworth for their leadership and rallying their colleagues for the passage and signing of this bill. It enables us to further support and expand programs that educate all Americans about the rich history of the Marine Corps,” said Major General James W. Lukeman, USMC (Ret), President and CEO of the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation. “Through the minting of these coins, all Americans will be able to honor Marines for their 250 years of unwavering dedication to duty, service and sacrifice for the United States.”

By purchasing these coins in 2025, Americans will honor the legacy of the Marine Corps and celebrate 250 years of the Marine Corps while also contributing to the preservation and dissemination of Marine Corps history for generations to come.

The signed legislation authorizes the Department of Treasury to mint 50,000 five-dollar coins, 400,000 one-dollar coins,

and 750,000 half-dollar coins.

Navy Approves Service Life Extension for Four Arleigh-Burke Class Destroyers



[Release from the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations](#)

03 August 2023

WASHINGTON (August 2, 2023) –The Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Surface Warfare Division (N96) recently approved the service life extension of four Arleigh Burke class guided-missile destroyers.

✖ USS Ramage (DDG 61), homeported in Norfolk, VA, and USS Benfold (DDG 65), based in Yokosuka, Japan, have been extended by five years to FY 2035 and FY 2036, respectively.

USS Mitscher (DDG 57), also homeported in Norfolk, and USS Milius (DDG 69), homeported out of Yokosuka, have been extended by four years to FY 2034 and FY 2035, respectively.

These extensions follow the March 2023 extension of USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51) by five years through FY 2031. The extension puts each destroyer beyond their estimated service life of 35 years.

“These service life extensions demonstrate the Navy’s commitment to ensuring the surface fleet has the right capability and capacity,” said Rear Adm. Fred Pyle, director of Surface Warfare (N96) “Adding 23-years of service life cumulatively over the last six months is a significant investment in surface warfare. These extensions align to Secretary of the Navy Del Toro’s commitment to Congress during the FY-24 posture hearings to analyze service life on a hull-by-hull basis and extend the correct ships in order to be good stewards of resources invested in the U.S. Navy by the American people.”

Each of these ships have received Aegis baseline nine upgrades through the DDG Modernization program. The program provided a comprehensive mid-life modernization to these destroyers, ensuring they have the right systems to remain capable and reliable to the end of their service life. Based on analysis by the Navy’s technical community, these extensions were feasible because each ship properly adhered to lifecycle maintenance plans and were well maintained in good material

condition by their crews.

“These DDGs bring the right capability and capacity to our operational commanders in an affordable manner maximizing the Navy’s targeted return on investment for these ships,” Pyle added. “Each of these extensions takes into account where these ships are in their lifecycle maintenance schedules. Extending Mitscher and Milius by an additional year to five years would require each ship to spend a year of that extension in a docking availability, which would not be a prudent use of resources entrusted to the Navy.”

The surface community will continue to evaluate the service life of each surface ship based on combat relevance, reliability data, and material condition. Currently, the Navy has 73 Arleigh Burke-class destroyers in service and is continuing to modernize the class with the latest technologies and capabilities.

For more information on the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, please visit:
<https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2169871/destroyers-ddg-51/>

Amentum Awarded \$818M
Contract to Modernize U.S.
Navy F-16 Adversary Fleet



[Release from Amentum](#)

CHANTILLY, Va., August 2, 2023 – Amentum was awarded an \$818 million contract for adversary aircraft sustainment and modernization of the U.S. Navy F-16 fleet. Amentum will manage all aspects of the Viper Maintenance Group Aircraft Maintenance and Contractor Logistics Support (CLS) contract by providing technical, sustainment and logistics solutions for the Navy F-16 aircraft based at Naval Air Station (NAS) Fallon, Nevada.

“Amentum has been an essential partner to the Navy at Fallon on F-16 Adversary flight operations for the Navy’s premier weapons schools like TOPGUN, as well as Navy Air Wing Training, and fleet support detachments across the U.S.,” said Dr. Karl Spinnenweber, President of the Critical Missions Group. “Navy F-16 Vipers play a vital role as the aggressor in fighter combat training, and our work securing Viper modernization is key to the Navy and Marine Corps fighter

squadron's combat readiness."

Under this contract, Amentum maintains F-16/A/B/C/D aircraft and provides full system maintenance and supply chain support to support continuous flight operations, along with many detachments executed simultaneously with home station operations. During the contract period, Amentum will support the Navy in growing their F-16 Adversary fleet across all sites.

"Our F-16 Adversary CLS work combined with our similar support of the Navy and Marine Corp's F-5 Adversary program positions Amentum as the premier partner to the Department of the Navy for their organic Adversary services across the fleet," said Joe Kelly, SVP of Sustainment, Analytics and Aviation Solutions. "Amentum is committed to the mission of the Navy's top weapons schools to sustain operational combat readiness and defeat peer competitors."

This single-award indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contract begins August 31, 2023, has a five-year base period and a three-year option period, and is contracted through Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) supporting the Naval Aviation Warfighting Development Center (NAWDC) and the Naval Air Forces Reserve, Tactical Support Wing (TSW).

**U.S. 4TH FLEET ANNOUNCES
CONTINUING PROMISE 2023**

DEPLOYMENT



CARTAGENA, Colombia (July 2, 2023) Colombian Navy Sailors observe as the expeditionary fast transport USNS Burlington (T-EFP 10) arrives at Colombian Base Naval Logistica ARC "Bolivar", Colombia in preparation for UNITAS LXIV, July 2, 2023.

[Release from U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. Fourth Fleet Public Affairs Office](#)

By U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. Fourth Fleet Public Affairs Office

02 August 2023

CARTAGENA, Colombia – The U.S. Navy expeditionary fast transport USNS Burlington (T-EFP 10) will deploy to the U.S. Southern Command area of operations over the next two months as part of U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet's

Continuing Promise 2023 mission.

Detailed planning has wrapped up for the Burlington to visit Panama, Colombia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Grenada. During these mission stops, Continuing Promise medical teams will focus on working alongside partner nation medical personnel to provide care in community clinics to increase medical readiness, strengthen partnerships, and enhance the combined capabilities of the U.S. Navy and partner nations to respond to public health disasters and humanitarian crises.

“The Continuing Promise mission reflects our enduring commitment to the region as we work collaboratively with our friends to ensure a secure, free, and prosperous hemisphere,” said Rear Adm. Jim Aiken, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet. “Continuing Promise 2023 allows us to work together with our friends in partner nations to improve lives.”

The Burlington will bring a medical engagement team to each mission stop to provide some direct patient care in community clinics and through host nation medical facilities. The team includes veterinarians who will work with animals in the host nation, biomedical technicians, Navy Seabees who will conduct small engineering projects, and the U.S. Fleet Forces Navy Band Detachment, which will entertain people through school visits and concerts.

Cmdr. Charles Castevens will serve as the Continuing Promise 2023 Mission Commander. “This is an ideal opportunity for us to make a difference in four partner nations,” said Castevens. “Continuing Promise 2023 will strengthen partnerships and positively impact the people we come into contact with,” he said.

Continuing Promise 2023 will also include training and subject matter expert exchanges on various medical and humanitarian

assistance/disaster relief topics, and leading seminars on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS).

WPS is a United Nations initiative that started with UNSCR 1325 signed in 2000. It was a public acknowledgment that women are more adversely impacted by conflict and crisis, and that including women in security planning will lead to a more peaceful world. The Department of Defense (DoD) signed the WPS Implementation Plan in 2020. It outlines defense objectives and goals that the DoD will strive to achieve in order to move the bar toward full WPS implementation. U.S. Southern Command and U.S. 4th Fleet are dedicated to WPS and the promotion of gendered perspectives.

Continuing Promise 2023 marks the 13th mission to the region since 2007 and the first involving USNS Burlington. The mission will also foster goodwill, strengthen existing partnerships with partner nations, and encourage the establishment of new partnerships among countries, non-government organizations, and international organizations.

The USNS Burlington is an Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF), a shallow draft, all aluminum, commercial-based catamaran capable of regional transport of personnel and cargo lift, providing combatant commanders high-speed sealift mobility with inherent cargo handling capability and agility to achieve positional advantage over operational distances. The Burlington will bring the personnel, equipment and supplies necessary to conduct the Continuing Promise mission.

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet supports U.S. Southern Command's joint and combined military operations by employing maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships in order to enhance regional security and promote peace, stability and prosperity in the Caribbean, Central and South American region. Learn more about

USNAVSOUTH/4th Fleet at <https://www.fourthfleet.navy.mil>,
<https://www.facebook.com/NAVS0US4THFLT> and @NAVS0US4THFLT.