

VSR700 tested at sea in full operational configuration



[Release from Airbus](#)

Marignane, 15 May 2023 – Airbus Helicopters and the French Armament General Directorate (DGA) tested the unmanned aerial system (UAS) VSR700 for the first time in an operational configuration from a ship at sea. At the beginning of May, the VSR700 performed 80 fully autonomous take-offs and landings from a civil vessel equipped with a helicopter deck, cruising off the coast of Brittany in the west of France.

“This flight test campaign was an important step for the VSR700 programme as it allowed us to validate the excellent performance of the drone in operational conditions, which were representative of its future missions,” said Nicolas Delmas,

Head of VSR700 programme at Airbus Helicopters. “The VSR700 prototype opened its flight envelope in winds above 40 knots, accumulated eight hours of testing in 14 flights, and made successful landings in several different sea states,” he added.

In 2022, the autonomous take-off and landing capabilities of the VSR700 were tested from the same vessel using an optionally piloted vehicle (OPV) based on a modified Guimbal Cabri G2 equipped with the autonomous take-off and landing (ATOL) system developed for the VSR700. This time the test campaign took place with the SDAM demonstrator and fully validated the capabilities of the system as part of the SDAM (Système de Drone Aérien pour la Marine) study that was awarded to Airbus Helicopters and Naval Group in 2017.

Autonomous take-off and landing capabilities are a key asset of the VSR700 and are made possible with the use of the Airbus DeckFinder system. This enables autonomous launch and recovery of unmanned air vehicles (UAVs) with an accuracy of 10-20cm during challenging operations in harsh environmental conditions, independently of GNSS/GPS and regardless of degraded visual conditions.

This new test campaign follows two series of trials that were conducted with the DGA in late 2022 and early 2023 from the Levant Island test center located in the south of France. During these trials, the SDAM prototype demonstrated its ability to operate in a maritime environment. The handling qualities of the aircraft were tested as well as the capabilities of the sensors (a maritime surveillance radar, an electro optical sensor, and an AIS receiver) alongside the mission system developed by Naval Group.

The next development steps will see the second VSR700 prototype perform its maiden flight ahead of flight testing onboard a French Navy FREMM during the second semester of this

year.

AUSTAL USA DELIVERS THE FUTURE USS AUGUSTA (LCS 34) TO THE U.S. NAVY



[Release from Austal USA](#)

Mobile, Ala. – Austal USA delivered the future USS Augusta (LCS 34) to the U.S. Navy May 12. LCS 34 is the 17th Independence-variant Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) delivered by the company and the second U.S. Navy vessel to be named Augusta in honor of Maine’s state capital.

Delivery documents were signed on board the ship and followed the successful completion of acceptance trials during which the ship's major systems and equipment were tested to demonstrate mission readiness. The ship's pre-commissioning unit will now prepare the ship for fleet introduction.

"The delivery of the future USS Augusta is the result of a successful joint effort between Austal USA shipbuilders, our Navy teammates and suppliers from across the nation to produce a warship that will serve our country for years to come," remarked Rusty Murdaugh, president of Austal USA. "I am proud to maintain our commitment to the warfighter and our nation's defense."

LCS ships are designed to support forward presence, maritime security, sea control and deterrence missions. Several Austal USA built Independence-variant LCS have recently deployed to the western Pacific. The USS Mobile (LCS 26) got under way in March with an embarked USCG law enforcement team on the first deployment of the new Oceania Maritime Security Initiative with the objective of reducing illegal fishing, combating transnational crime, and enhancing regional security in the islands of the Western Pacific.

Austal USA is constructing the Navy's final two Independence-variant LCS including the recently christened future USS Kingsville (LCS 36) and the future USS Pierre (LCS 38).

USCGC Campbell returns home following 59-day multi-

mission patrol in the Florida Straits and Windward Passage

[Release from Coast Guard Atlantic Area](#)

May 13, 2023

USCGC Campbell returns home following 59-day multi-mission patrol in the Florida Straits and Windward Passage

NEWPORT, R.I. – The crew of the USCGC Campbell (WMEC 909) returned to their home port in Newport, Saturday, following a 59-day patrol to the South Florida Straits and Windward Passage.

Campbell deployed in support of Homeland Security Task Force – Southeast and Operation Vigilant Sentry in the Seventh Coast Guard District's area of responsibility. While underway, Campbell's crew conducted maritime safety and security missions while working to detect, deter and intercept unsafe and illegal maritime migration ventures bound for the United States.

Over the course of the patrol, Campbell's crew processed, cared for and repatriated 634 migrants. Notably, Campbell worked with USCGC Bernard C. Webber (WPC 1101) to rescue 219 people from an overloaded, 50-foot sailing vessel.

Working with the Haitian Coast Guard, Campbell embarked one member as a ship rider for patrols along the coast of Haiti. Additionally, the cutter supported Department of Defense and U.S. embassy outreach efforts, providing officials with the opportunity to observe on-scene conditions in local Haitian communities.

Campbell is a 270-foot, Famous-class medium endurance cutter.

The cutter's primary missions are counter-narcotics operations, migrant interdiction, living marine resources protection, and search and rescue in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit [GoCoastGuard.com](https://www.go CoastGuard.com) to learn about active duty, reserve, officer, and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found [here](#).

USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee Commissions in Conch Republic Honoring Navy Nurses



Photo By [Petty Officer 2nd Class Nicholas Huynh](#) | 230513-N-

IW125-1382 KEY WEST, Fla. KEY WEST (May 13, 2023) – The crew of the Navy’s newest Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG 123) brings the ship to life during its commissioning ceremony in Key West, Florida. DDG 123 is the second U.S. Navy warship to honor Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee. Higbee was the first living woman to receive the Navy Cross for her leadership of the Navy Nurse Corps during World War I. Naval Air Station Key West is the state-of-the-art facility for combat fighter aircraft of all military services, provides world-class pierside support to U.S. and foreign naval vessels, and is the premier training center for surface and subsurface military operations. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Nicholas V. Huynh/Released) [see less](#) | [View Image Page](#)
[Release from Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs](#)

KEY WEST, FL – The U.S. Navy commissioned its newest Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG 123), May 13 in Key West, Florida.

Guest speaker Rear Adm. Cynthia Kuehner, Commander, Naval Medical Forces Support Command and Director of the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps wished the Corps happy 115th birthday and reflected on its being one of the “greatest enhancements to the fighting strength of our Navy over the past 247 years of its rich history” and celebrating the legacy of Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee.

“I and the nearly 4,000 active and reserve professionals represent will forever feel connected to this moment in history and words cannot fully express our gratitude for our presence and representation,” said Kuehner. “In honoring her selfless service we ensure that the permanence of her spirit is breathed into every space and crevice of this magnificent vessel as she comes to life.”

“The story of Lenah Higbee is the story of past, present and

future Navy nurses and the undeniable, inseparable role of the Navy nurse in defense of our nation," she continued.

"Our Navy, and in particular, our surface fleet, sends a strong signal that we remain committed to our values. Values that we share with our allies and partners around the world," said Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro. "We will continue to put forth every effort to ensure freedom, stability, security, of sea lanes around the world. Today with the commissioning of the USS Higbee we add one more highly visible extremely capable warship to our Fleet."

"It is fitting we commission this ship this week, which is National Nurses week, and particularly this day, the 13th of May. On this day our Navy Nurse Corps was established creating the institution that is the lifeblood of Navy Medicine," said Admiral Mike Gilday, Chief of Naval Operations. "Somebody once said, save a life and you're a hero. Save a hundred lives, you're a nurse."

Guest speakers for the event also included the Honorable Donald Norcross, U.S. Representative, New Jersey's 1st District and member of the House Armed Services Committee; the Honorable Teri Johnston, mayor of Key West; and Ms. Kari Wilkinson, president of Huntington Ingalls Industries-Ingalls Shipbuilding division.

The ship's sponsors are Ms. Louisa O. Dixon, former Commissioner of Public Safety for the State of Mississippi under former Governor Ray Mabus; Ms. Virginia Thompson Munford, former Chair of Mississippi Bar Committees; and Ms. Rolanda Pickett Wilson, former Special Advisor for Education and Intergovernmental Relations under former Governor Ray Mabus.

During the ceremony, USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee's commanding officer Cmdr. Douglas Brayton, reported the ship ready to

Capt. Courtney M. Minetree, commodore, Destroyer Squadron 21, and all three sponsors gave the traditional order to “Man our ship and bring her to life!”

“If there’s anything I want us all to take away from the commissioning of this ship is that we all have the ability to make a difference and make an impact. Whether you are the first group of 20 female nurses in the Navy, a new Sailor to the service, or someone just wanting to see what a ship commissioning is,” said Brayton. “We all have the ability and choice to make a difference.”

The future USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee, honors Navy Nurse Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee. Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee was the first woman to receive the Navy Cross while still living. Higbee joined the Navy in October 1908 as part of “The Sacred Twenty,” the first group of women forming the Navy Nurse Corps. She became the second superintendent of the Navy Nurse Corps in January 1911, holding the position for 11 years. Higbee served in the Navy for 14 years, leading the Nurse Corps through World War I and the 1918 influenza pandemic.

Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee’s example is part of the Navy’s heritage – 247 years of standing the watch to protect the homeland, preserve freedom of the seas, and defend our way of life.

A Canadian by birth, Higbee completed her formal nursing training at the New York Postgraduate Hospital in 1899 and that same year married retired U.S. Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel John Henley Higbee. Higbee worked in private practice following her marriage. Higbee’s husband passed in April 1908 and she advanced her nursing career by completing a postgraduate course at Fordham Hospital in New York City.

On May 13, 1908, Congress passed legislation allowing for the establishment of Navy Nurse Corps – the equivalent of the Army

Nurse Corps established in 1901. The Navy required members of its Nurse Corps to be unmarried and between the age of 22 and 44. The 36-year-old and widowed Higbee joined 19 other females to make up this first group of female Navy Nurses known as the "Sacred Twenty."

Higbee became Chief Nurse at Norfolk Naval Hospital in 1909 and the second Superintendent of the Corps in 1911. Higbee led the Nurse Corps through not only World War I, but the Spanish Influenza epidemic. Higbee was one of four Navy Nurses to be awarded the Navy Cross in 1920, however, the other three were victims of the flu and honored posthumously. Higbee retired from the Navy in 1922.

Arleigh Burke-class destroyers are the backbone of the U.S. Navy's surface fleet. These highly capable, multi-mission ships conduct a variety of operations, from peacetime presence to national security providing a wide range of warfighting capabilities in multi-threat air, surface and subsurface.

UK Frigate Patrolling for CTF 150 Seizes \$6 Million Drug Shipment



230312-N-NH267-1539 GULF OF OMAN (March 12, 2023) Royal Navy frigate HMS Lancaster (FFG 229), sails in the Gulf of Oman, March 12, 2023, during International Maritime Exercise/Cutlass Express 2023. IMX/CE 2023 is the largest multinational training event in the Middle East, involving 7,000 personnel from more than 50 nations and international organizations committed to preserving the rules-based international order and strengthening regional maritime security cooperation. **(Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Elliot Schaudt)**

[Release from Combined Maritime Forces Public Affairs | May 15, 2023](#)

MANAMA, Bahrain – A frigate from the United Kingdom Royal Navy seized \$6 million worth of hashish from a fishing vessel transiting the Arabian Sea, May 8.

HMS Lancaster (F 229) was operating in support of Combined Task Force (CTF) 150 when it discovered 3,000 kilograms of hashish on the smuggling vessel. The seizure occurred the same

day the U.S. Coast Guard confiscated large quantities of methamphetamines and heroin from another fishing vessel while patrolling the Gulf of Oman under CTF 150.

“I am exceptionally proud of my team for their efforts,” said Cmdr. Tom Johnson, Lancaster’s commanding officer. “This success is shared with our international partners in CTF 150 who provided essential support to the operation.”

Currently led by the United Kingdom, CTF 150 is one of four task forces that form Combined Maritime Forces, the largest multinational naval partnership in the world. Efforts by CTF 150 in the Middle East this year have resulted in drug seizures worth a combined estimated U.S. street value of more than \$250 million.

CTF 150 conducts maritime security and counter-terrorism operations in the Gulf of Oman and Indian Ocean to disrupt criminal and terrorist organizations and their related illicit activities, including the movement of personnel, weapons, narcotics and charcoal. These efforts help ensure legitimate commercial shipping transits the region free from non-state threats.

Combined Maritime Forces includes 38 nations and is headquartered in Bahrain with U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and U.S. 5th Fleet.

<https://www.cusnc.navy.mil/Media/News/Display/Article/3395014/uk-frigate-patrolling-for-ctf-150-seizes-6-million-drug-shipment/>

SECNAV Names Navy's First-in-Class Expeditionary Medical Ship after National Naval Medical Center Bethesda

[Release from the Secretary of the Navy](#)

Secretary of the Navy (SECNAV) Carlos Del Toro announced USNS Bethesda (EMS 1) as the name for the lead ship in the new Expeditionary Medical Ship (EMS(X)) class of ships during his mental health awareness month video. EMS(X) will now be referred to as the Bethesda Class Expeditionary Medical Ship.

The naming is to honor and immortalize the history and community of healthcare professionals that make up Naval Support Activity Bethesda, who have saved and rehabilitated the lives of service members, veterans, civilians, their families, and even Presidents of the United States.

“For most in the armed services, the name ‘Bethesda’ is connected to the world-class medical center for healing that has served a countless number of service members since 1942,” Del Toro said. “The real strength of our Navy and Marine Corps are our people, and if they are willing to sacrifice all for service, they deserve the best medical care available. This ship will honor the medical staff, who compassionately dedicate their time and expertise to take care of our service members. Bearing the name Bethesda will continue the legacy of life saving and medical innovation.”

Former Assistant Secretary of the Navy (1913-1920) President Franklin Delano Roosevelt envisioned a Navy Medical Center and

in 1937 Congress appropriated funds for construction of a new Naval Medical Center, with ground breaking on the site June 29, 1939, bringing to life what became the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) and National Institutes of Health to Bethesda. Today, Naval Support Activity Bethesda is home to tenant commands such as Naval Medical Leader and Professional Development Command, Naval Medical Research Center, Navy Medical Support Command, Navy Medicine Readiness and Training Command, and the Navy Dosimetry Center. In 2011, due to the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure decision, Bethesda National Naval Medical Center and Walter Reed Army Medical Center consolidated into the current Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, located on the grounds of the former National Military Medical Center, Bethesda.

Secretary Del Toro has also invited the 63rd Governor of Maryland Wes Moore's spouse, Dawn Moore to be the ship's sponsor. Mrs. Moore has ties to the military as a former military spouse and is also an advocate for Marylanders living with a disability.

"This first-in-class ship will be state-of-the-art and the Navy's first medical ship in 35 years," said Del Toro. "This ship, designed with more expeditious and direct access to diagnostic, specialty and hospital care, will allow for increased capabilities and health care. Just as the hospital at NSA Bethesda has served as a beacon of hope to those who entered its doorways, USNS Bethesda (EMS 1) will serve as a beacon to those in need around the world."

The Bethesda-class expeditionary medical ships are designed as a dedicated medical ship that optimizes hospital-level medical care in support of distributed maritime operations (DMO). The EMS will feature a shallow draft enabling greater reach and allowing direct access to shallow austere ports, while also providing a flight deck that accommodates military helicopters. This design provides a full range of medical capabilities including triage/critical care, three operating

rooms, medical laboratory, radiological capability, blood bank, dental, mental health, OB/GYN and primary care, rapid stabilization and follow-on evacuation of multiple casualties and combat search and rescue including recovery at sea. The primary mission of the EMS as a high-speed forward deployed medical ship is to provide rapid responsive sea-based and near-shore hospital level critical care, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, non-combatant evacuation operations and special operations. The EMS is designed to respond and provide care at a more rapid pace than their predecessors, USNS Mercy and USNS Comfort, sailing at speeds of at least 30 knots with a range of 5,500 nautical miles at 24 knots.

Welin Lambie Awarded P0 by U.S. Navy to Supply Ford Class Carrier Davits



Release from Fairbanks Morse Defense

BELoit, Wis. – May 9, 2023 – [Fairbanks Morse Defense](#) (FMD), a portfolio company of Arcline Investment Management (Arcline), has been awarded a purchase order by Newport News Shipbuilding to supply four davits through Welin Lambie for the Ford Class aircraft carriers CVN 80 and CVN 81 (two davits per vessel). The award follows the supply of davits for CVN 78, which just entered service, and CVN 79, which is currently under construction.

“This contract reinforces FMD’s position as a critical supplier to its core naval defense customers,” said Jay McFadyen, FMD’s Chief Commercial Officer. “With the introduction of Welin Lambie to the Fairbanks Morse Defense family, we have significantly increased our local service presence and capability to support U.S. Navy davits, ensuring operational availability and providing assurance to our sailors that they can safely carry out their duty to protect the freedom of the seas.”

Welin Lambie was acquired by Fairbanks Morse Defense in 2021. The company designs and manufactures Safety of Life At-Sea (SOLAS) davits used specifically for the safe launch and recovery of all types of water craft from ships or shore-based installations.

Davits are life critical equipment that keep the more than 5,000 sailors on the Ford Class carriers safe during their deployment. They require the high quality and through life support to ensure the equipment is always ready to be put into action. Underdeck davits allow Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIBs) to be launched in all sea states (up to Sea State 5) to support security and safety operations at sea.

Having traditionally been a naval engine supplier, Fairbanks Morse Defense has expanded into a single-source product and

service solutions provider for the entire vessel. Over the last 18 months, the defense contractor has been acquiring a number of companies, including Welin Lambie, and currently offers a large array of best-in-class marine technologies, OEM parts and turnkey services for the entire vessel to ensure Navy and Coast Guard fleets are always mission ready.

Navy to Commission Guided-Missile Destroyer Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee



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

The Navy will commission its newest Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer, USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG 123),

during a 10:00 a.m. EDT ceremony on Saturday, May 13, in Key West, Florida.

Rear Admiral Cynthia Kuehner, Commander, Naval Medical Forces Support Command and Director of the U.S. Navy Nurse Corps, will deliver the commissioning ceremony's principal address. Remarks will also be provided by the Honorable Donald Norcross, U.S. Representative, New Jersey's 1st District and member of the House Armed Services Committee; the Honorable Carlos Del Toro, Secretary of the Navy; Admiral Mike Gilday, Chief of Naval Operations; the Honorable Teri Johnston, mayor of Key West; and Ms. Kari Wilkinson, president of Huntington Ingalls Industries-Ingalls Shipbuilding division. The ship's sponsors, Ms. Louisa Dixon, Ms. Virginia Munford, and Ms. R. Pickett Wilson, will also be in attendance.

The ship's namesake, Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee, served as the second Superintendent of the Navy Nurse Corps in 1911, and was also the first woman recipient of the Navy Cross. When she entered naval service in 1908, she was one of the first 20 women, known as the "Sacred Twenty," to join the newly established Navy Nurse Corps and contributed her nursing skills to the Navy during the First World War. This is the second ship named after Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee. The first ship, USS Higbee (DD 806), was the first combat warship named after a female member of the U.S. Navy.

"Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee was ahead of her time, from being one of the first members of the Navy Nurse Corps, to being its second Superintendent, to being the first woman to earn the Navy Cross," said Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro. "I am confident that the crew who will sail USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee will continue to honor and embody her trailblazing legacy."

The ship will be the 72nd Arleigh Burke-class destroyer to be commissioned, with 17 additional ships currently under contract for the DDG 51 program. The ship is configured as a

Flight IIA destroyer, which enables power projection and delivers quick reaction time, high firepower, and increased electronic countermeasures capability for anti-air warfare. The future USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee will be 509.5 feet long and 59 feet wide, with a displacement of 9,496 tons. It will be homeported in San Diego.

Media may direct queries to the Navy Office of Information at (703) 697-5342. More information on guided-missile destroyer programs can be found at: <https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2169871/destroyers-ddg/>

The ceremony will be live streamed at: <https://www.dvidshub.net/webcast/31425>. The link becomes active approximately ten minutes prior to the event (9:50 a.m. EDT).

Additional information about the namesake of the future USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG 123) can be found at: <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/people/namesakes/lenah-higbee.html>

HII'S INGALLS SHIPBUILDING HOSTS SHIPBUILDER ACADEMY "SIGNING DAY" FOR HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS



[Release from HII](#)

PASCAGOULA, Miss., May 12, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII’s (NYSE: HII) Ingalls Shipbuilding division hosted a signing day ceremony Thursday for the 2023 graduates of its Shipbuilder Academy program. Successfully completing the Academy’s one-year specialized career technical education program, 23 high school seniors were offered full-time positions at Ingalls Shipbuilding where they will begin their careers after as shipbuilders.

“Today we celebrate the students who have committed to a technical career at Ingalls Shipbuilding and will build upon our 85-year legacy of building the most mission-ready ships for our country,” Ingalls Shipbuilding Vice President of Operations Donny Dorsey said. “Their decision to pursue hands-on training and technical skills while in high school is a testament to their innovative spirit and we applaud their dedication to learning the critical skills needed to have a rewarding career in their chosen trade.”

During the ceremony, among parents and special guests, the

high school seniors were honored much like high school athletes announcing an intended college. Each student received and signed a contingent offer of employment highlighting their new position at the shipyard. Upon their high school graduation, these students will join the Ingalls workforce as shipbuilders.

Photos accompanying this release are available at: <https://hii.com/news/hii-ingalls-shipbuilding-hosts-shipbuilder-academy-signing-day-2023/>

The Ingalls Shipbuilder Academy established in 2016 with a mission to provide enrolled students with a strong foundation in the maritime industry and to fill shipbuilding positions at Ingalls. The Jackson County program, now entering its eighth year, expanded to Harrison County in 2019 and is entering into its fifth year. Shipbuilder Academy enrolls students from 13 different high schools along the Gulf Coast including: Biloxi, Gulfport, West Harrison, Long Beach, Pass Christian, Pascagoula, Gautier, Moss Point, East Central, Vancleave, St. Martin, Ocean Springs and Alma Bryant. So far 355 students have successfully completed the program and obtained National Center for Construction Education and Research certifications.

Employing more than 11,000 people, Ingalls Shipbuilding is the largest manufacturing employer in Mississippi and a major contributor to the economic growth of Alabama. For 85 years, Ingalls Shipbuilding has designed, built and maintained amphibious ships, destroyers, and cutters for the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Coast Guard. Our shipbuilders are honored to build tomorrow's fleet today.

For more information about a career at Ingalls Shipbuilding, visit hii.com/careers.

U.S. to Increase International Coordination, Presence in Strait of Hormuz



Photo By [Petty Officer 2nd Class Elliot Schaudt](#) | 230509-N-NH267-1023 ARABIAN GULF (May 9, 2023) Ensign Gordon Kitchener looks out from the bridge of the guided-missile destroyer USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60), May 9, 2023 in the Arabian Gulf. Paul Hamilton is deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations to help ensure maritime security and stability in the Middle East region. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Elliot Schaudt) [see less](#) | [View Image Page](#)
[Release from NAVCENT Public Affairs](#)

MANAMA, BAHRAIN

[U.S. Naval Forces Central Command / U.S. 5th Fleet](#)

U.S. 5th Fleet is working with regional allies and partners to increase the rotation of ships and aircraft patrolling in and around the Strait of Hormuz following Iran's recent unlawful merchant vessel seizures.

The increased force presence supports multinational efforts to deter threats to commercial shipping and reassure regional mariners. In addition to heightened patrols, U.S. 5th Fleet is bolstering international maritime security collaboration among the International Maritime Security Construct and European Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz.

"Iran's unwarranted, irresponsible and unlawful seizure and harassment of merchant vessels must stop," said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces. "U.S. 5th Fleet and our partners are committed to protecting navigational rights in these critical waters."

Iran has harassed, attacked or interfered with the navigational rights of 15 internationally flagged merchant vessels over the past two years. This pattern of destabilizing behavior is contrary to international law and disruptive to regional security.