Cooper: U.S. Navy, Partners Put the Squeeze on Iranian Arms Shipments

Seized weapons displayed on the flight deck of a U.S. Navy ship in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations, Feb. 1. *U.S. NAVY*

ARLINGTON, Va. — The maritime forces of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and their allied and partner navies have enjoyed considerable success in recent months in intercepting Iranian arms shipments to Houthi rebels in Yemen, the Navy's regional commander said.

"In fact, in just the last two months alone, five major interdictions at sea have resulted in U.S. and partner maritime forces seizing more than 5,000 weapons, 1.6 million rounds of ammunition, 7,000 proximity fuses for rockets, over 2,000 kilograms of propellant that are used for rocket-propelled grenades, or RPGs, and $60 million worth of illegal drugs," said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander, U.S. Fifth Fleet and commander, Naval Forces, U.S. Central Command, speaking Feb. 13 during an off-camera, on-the-record briefing transcript of United States-Gulf Cooperation Council Working Group Meetings in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

“And these numbers are part of an overall two-year trend. In 202 – or rather, since 2021 we’ve seized over a billion – with a B – dollars in illicit drugs and nearly 15,000 illegal arms,” Cooper said. “The weapons were unlawfully headed to Yemen, as I think is well-documented.”

Also speaking at the council was Dana Stroul, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of Defense for the Middle East.

“Let me start out by saying we have seen no change in Iranian willingness or activities to transfer weapons to the Houthis, despite their work with increasing military cooperation with Russia for the war in Ukraine, number one,” Stroul said. “And number two, there has been a decrease in Houthi attacks against Saudi Arabia because of the truce that has been in place. Now, the actual truce has expired, and at this point in time, all sides are not resuming hostilities, though the truce has not been formally extended.”

Cooper also leads two major maritime coalitions, the 38-member Combined Maritime Force, which he describes as “the largest maritime partnership in the world,” and the 11-member International Maritime Security Construct.

“Everything we’ve accomplished both in recent months and over the last two years is the direct result of great work our maritime forces are doing, really, in two key areas, strengthening partnerships and accelerating innovation,” he said.

USCGC Confidence’s crew

returns home following 40-day Florida Straits patrol

GONAIVES, Haiti – Crewmembers from Coast Guard Cutter Confidence, home-ported in Port Canaveral, Fla., launch a small boat with Coast Guard District Seven Transport System recovery assist team to surgery the port Nov. 7, 2010 after Hurricane Tomas hit the island of Haiti. The confidence became a staging platform for the MTSRAT and helped survey the channels for possible obstruction to navigation. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Sabrina Elgammal*

Release from U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area

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CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. – The crew of the USCGC Confidence (WMEC 619) returned to their home port in Cape Canaveral Friday following a 40-day patrol in the Florida Straits.

Confidence deployed in support of Homeland Security Task Force

– Southeast and Operation Vigilant Sentry to conduct counter drug and maritime safety and security missions in the Coast Guard's Seventh District area of operations. While underway, Confidence's crew worked with additional Coast Guard cutters and air assets to detect, deter and intercept unsafe and illegal migrant ventures bound for the United States.

During the patrol, Confidence's crew interdicted and cared for 496 migrants. Notably, Confidence worked with numerous Coast Guard air assets to rescue a group of 17 Cuban nationals stranded on islands within Cay Sal Bank, Bahamas.

Confidence's patrol efforts highlight the Coast Guard's critical missions of maintaining maritime safety and preventing the potential for loss of life by deterring migrants from taking to the sea in dangerously overcrowded vessels while attempting to enter the United States through non-legal channels.

"During this patrol, Confidence responded to record high migration in the Florida Straits," said Cmdr. Thomas Martin, commanding officer of Confidence. "I am proud of the work the crew did to prevent the loss of life at sea and safeguard our borders."

Confidence is a 210-foot, Reliance-class medium endurance cutter with a crew of 82. The cutter's primary missions include counter drug operations, migrant interdiction, enforcement of federal fishery laws and search and rescue in support of Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit GoCoastGuard.com to learn about active duty and reserve, officer and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found here.

Future USS Richard M. McCool Jr. Successfully Installs EASR Antenna

Release from Nava Sea Systems Command

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NEWS | Feb. 9, 2023

Future USS Richard M. McCool Jr. Successfully Installs EASR Antenna

By Team Ships Public Affairs

The Enterprise Air Surveillance Radar (EASR) antenna landed on the future USS Richard M. McCool Jr. (LPD 29), Jan.16, 2023.

This marks the completion of EASR system deliveries for what will be the first LPD 17 Class ship and the first U.S. Navy install and activation of the SPY-6(V)2, rotating variant, S-

Band radar.

“The progress made is a testament to the collaboration across multiple organizations in bringing this next-generation radar to the LPD program. The Navy and our industry partners look forward to systems activation and testing as LPD 29 continues on the path to sea trials later this year,” said Capt. Cedric J. McNeal, Amphibious Warfare Program Manager, Program Executive Office (PEO Ships).

SPY-6(V)2 provides the U.S. Navy with a common hardware variant for carrier and amphibious ships. In addition to providing hardware and software commonality, the radar will also contribute to increased engagement and overall ship self-defense.

As with all incremental technology enhancements, the Navy is applying an increased focus to ensure that the system is provided on schedule, integrated into the ship/combat system and activated. Ultimately, EASR will be made ready as an integral sensor in an integrated Ship Self-Defense System to support the ship’s employment.

As one of the Defense Department’s largest acquisition organizations, PEO Ships is responsible for executing the development and procurement of all destroyers, amphibious ships, special mission and support ships, boats and craft.

HII Breaks Ground on New Submarine Facility at Newport

News Shipbuilding

Release from HII

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HII Breaks Ground on New Submarine Facility at Newport News Shipbuilding

NEWPORT NEWS, Va., Feb. 09, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) — Global all-domain defense partner HII (NYSE: HII) recently broke ground on a new project that will support nuclear submarine construction at its Newport News Shipbuilding division.

The Multi-Class Submarine Production Facility is one of three new facilities, enabling NNS to further support the construction and delivery of *Columbia*– and *Virginia*-class submarines.

“The Navy has made it clear how important both the *Columbia*- and *Virginia*-class submarine programs are to our nation’s defense,” said Brandi Smith, NNS vice president of *Columbia*-class submarine construction. “The Multi-Class Submarine Production Facility is an intentional investment to accelerate

our efforts to deliver the highest quality submarines our Navy needs."

Wednesday's groundbreaking marked the first phase of construction. Work on two additional facilities is expected to begin later this year. The Multi-Class Submarine Production Facility is designed to be adaptable, allowing NNS to support both *Columbia*- and *Virginia*-class construction.

The Multi-Class Submarine Production Facility is funded jointly by the Navy and HII, and is part of $1.9 billion in capital investments HII is making at NNS between 2016 and 2025. NNS is one of only two shipyards capable of designing and building nuclear-powered submarines for the U.S. Navy.

The Navy has identified the *Columbia*-class as its top acquisition priority. Twelve *Columbia*-class boats will replace the fleet of *Ohio*-class nuclear ballistic submarines and take over the role of the nation's sea-based strategic deterrent; these submarines will provide the most survivable leg of the nation's strategic triad.

NNS is a major contractor and shipbuilding partner in the *Columbia*-class program, designing, constructing and delivering six module sections per submarine under contract to General Dynamics Electric Boat.

Under a separate teaming agreement with Electric Boat, NNS is also building *Virginia*-class submarines for the Navy. The advanced capabilities of *Virginia*-class submarines increase firepower, maneuverability and stealth.

In November, NNS celebrated the keel authentication for *Arkansas* (SSN 800), the 27th *Virginia*-class fast attack submarine, as the shipyard continues to invest in its workforce and facilities to make steady progress on delivering these important assets to the Navy.

BAE delivers 1,000th F-35 Lightning II fuselage to Lockheed Martin in major milestone for the world’s largest defense programme

Release from BAE Systems

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BAE delivers 1,000th F-35 Lightning II fuselage to Lockheed Martin in major milestone for the world’s largest defense programme

7 Feb 2023

BAE Systems has delivered the 1,000th rear fuselage to Lockheed Martin for the F-35, the world's most advanced and capable fifth generation fighter.

More than 1,500 employees at the Company's facilities in Samlesbury, Lancashire, produce the rear fuselage for every F-35 in the global fleet. The first fuselage was delivered to Lockheed Martin in 2005.

Speech marks at an event today celebrating the 1000th delivery, Cliff Robson, Group Managing Director, BAE Systems Air, said:
"This is a significant moment for everyone involved in the programme and a testament to the highly-skilled workforce we have in the North West of England.

"Our role on the F-35 programme is another example of how we make a substantial contribution to the local and national UK economy and help to deliver capability which is critical for national security."

Speech marks Bridget Lauderdale, Lockheed Martin Vice President and General Manager of the F-35 programme, said:

"The F-35 programme powers economic growth and prosperity for the UK injecting approximately £41billion* into the UK economy and supporting more than 20,000 jobs in the UK supply chain, many of those based in the North West.

"With more than 500 companies in our UK supply chain, we're proud of the role that our partnership with BAE Systems has in delivering the world's most advanced aircraft for the UK and 17 other allied nations."

F-35 aircraft inside hangar BAE Systems has been involved in the F-35 programme since its inception and plays key roles across the development, manufacture and sustainment of the

aircraft, which is operated by the Royal Air Force, Royal Navy and air forces across the world.

The F-35s global programme of record amounts to more than 3,000 F-35s amongst the programme's 17 customers. Work on the programme will continue at BAE Systems' advanced manufacturing hub at Samlesbury for many years to come.

Speech marks Susan Addison, Senior Vice President for US Programmes at BAE Systems Air, said:

"This is an important milestone for our business and demonstrates both the expertise of our people and their commitment to delivering for the F-35 programme.

"The roles we play today are underpinned by a world-class manufacturing pedigree and industrial know-how in the UK, which has been developed through decades of cutting edge experience in combat air programmes. We are proud of what we do for our customers and the air forces who help keep us safe."

Shipbuilding Industry Workforce, Not Capacity, Is Limiting Shipbuilding and Repair for Navy

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ARLINGTON, Va. – The nation's shipyards have the facilities capacity to handle increased shipbuilding for the U.S. Navy but are limited by skilled workforce shortages, a shipbuilding executive told Congress, also noting the importance of stability in the demand signal from the Navy.

"The single biggest issue facing the [shipbuilding] industry is people, and that's going to be the case going forward, and we've got to be more creative in our workforce development," said Matthew Paxton, president of the Shipbuilders Council of America, testifying Feb. 8 before the House Armed Services Committee.

In reply to a question from Rep. Bob Wittman, R-Virginia regarding the Navy saying that the shipbuilders cannot deliver three Arleigh Burke destroyers funded last year, Paxton said the shipbuilding industry, "has under-utilized assets, and assets not utilized at all. There is capacity in the shipyard industrial base across new shipbuilding and ship repair. Whatever the demand signal is from Congress, we're going to meet it … because we're going to sequence our yards to be more

productive and we're going to train up the workforce and we're going to deliver those assets."

"I think private industry fundamentally disagrees [that] we don't have the assets," he said.

Paxton thanked the committee for its support for federal investments in the shipbuilding industrial base. He also noted that the private shipbuilding industry "every day of the week is investing in their workforce. They have training facilities, apprenticeship programs, they team with local community colleges, so investments like this from the federal level get bang for the buck for what the private industry is doing as well. While we care deeply about the submarine industrial base, the fact is that some of these monies are going to go across other shipbuilding programs is absolutely critical. It's also critical for our supply chain."

"Shipyards and shipyard repair facilities are highly capital-intensive enterprises, … and a lot of our shipyards employ thousands of employees," Paxton said. "We get a new shipbuilding plan every year. It sends a confusing message industry. To the extent that we can have stable budgets and a stable demand signal, industry will respond accordingly. They have in the past."

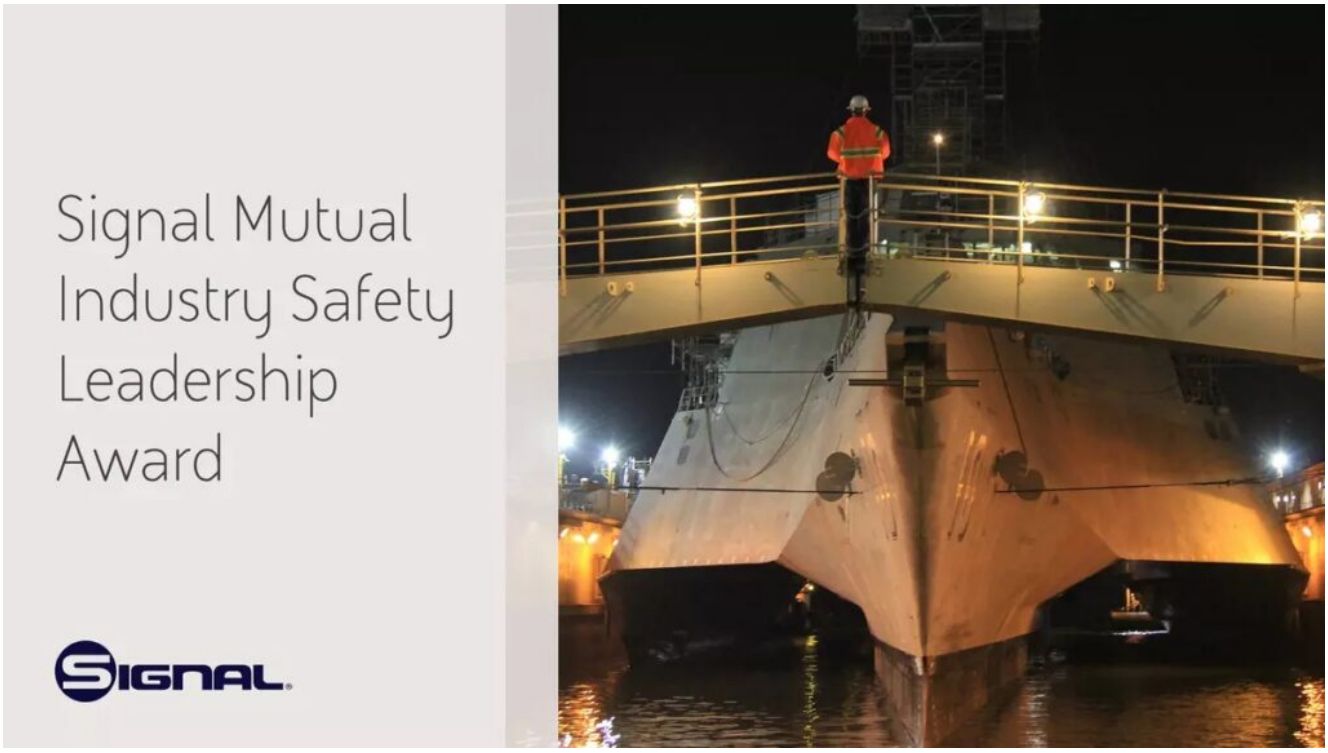
Paxton added that, "Acquisition strategies like incremental funding, advance procurement, block-buy contracting are huge for shipyards because that gives them long-lead-time materials that they need to sequence ships, to have that [material] come in, whereas some of the material that they are buying [that used to take] only 18 months to get now [takes] two to three years to get."

He said the stability of a 10-year horizon "allows shipyards to make critical investments in [their] facilities and in [their] workforce."

Paxton also noted that the shipbuilding industry "has

benefited when we split various ship sizes across shipyards. There is goodness in trying to get series construction going, keep hot production lines going, and keep the workforce learning.”

BAE Systems’ U.S. shipyards recognized for safety leadership by Signal Mutual



Release from BAE Systems

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NORFOLK, Va. – Feb. 7, 2023 – For the second year in a row, BAE Systems, Inc.’s Ship Repair business has been recognized by Signal Mutual as a top company for safety. The prestigious Signal Mutual Industry Safety Leadership award was presented

to BAE Systems, one of only five companies to receive it, during the industry group's annual conference in Salt Lake City this week.

In presenting the award, Signal Mutual noted that, in 2022, BAE Systems had a noteworthy safety culture because of the leadership's clear visibility and engagement of with employees. Signal Mutual also noted that BAE Systems' focus on safety in its shipyards resulted in a low frequency rate of claims compared to industry standards, no excessive loss cases, and no fatalities for more than two years.

"Shipyards can be hazardous. However, our leaders' commitment to empowering all employees to declare a 'Stop Work' when they see something out of order is critical to ensuring that our teammates complete their work and return home safely every day," said Paul Smith, vice president and general manager of BAE Systems Ship Repair. "This award instills pride within us as industry leaders, and it inspires us to continue protecting each other and setting high standards for those who work alongside us."

BAE Systems employs nearly 3,000 people across three shipyards in California, Florida, and Virginia who work alongside thousands of U.S. Navy personnel, commercial vessel owners, subcontractors and vendors who are also based at the sites.

"Everyone in the team is empowered and trusted to be a safety, health, and environmental leader," said Noushin Sprossel, Safety, Health and Environment (SHE) director for BAE Systems Ship Repair. "Our tremendous progress towards achieving SHE excellence and recognition for our performance reflects our commitment to make the safety and health of our workforce a priority."

Signal Mutual is an organization that provides workers' compensation services to about 300 high-performing organizations in the maritime industry, including nearly 100

shipyard companies.

US Navy partners with Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force to deliver JPALS equipment

An F-35C from Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 147 lands on the flight deck of USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) during flight deck and carrier air traffic control center certification. JPALS initial operational capability was declared following the successful installation, integration and flight certification of the first JPALS production unit aboard USS Carl Vinson in December 2020. JPALS is currently being deployed on all U.S. Navy aircraft carriers and amphibious assault ships. Japan

joins the United Kingdom and Italy as foreign military sales customers to procure JPALS.
U.S. Navy photo
Release from the Naval Air Systems Command

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Published:

Feb 7, 2023

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, Patuxent River, Md.

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The U.S. Navy, in partnership with Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) representatives, awarded an $8.6 million foreign military sale in December 2022 to Raytheon Intelligence & Space for the procurement and delivery of a Joint Precision Approach and Landing System (JPALS) unit.

The Naval Air Traffic Management Systems Program Office (PMA-213) worked closely with the vendor and the international customer to leverage existing contract options to bring this cutting-edge technology to the JMSDF.

“The urgency with which this contract was completed is a testament to our commitment to closely collaborate with our JMSDF partners, which is critical to the 2022 National Defense Strategy call to bolster robust deterrence in the INDO-PACOM [Indo-Pacific Command].” said Cmdr. Charles Steele, PMA-213 JPALS deputy program manager (DPM).

JPALS, which is a software-based, high-integrity differential GPS navigation and precision landing system, ensures enhanced safety and increased operational capability to equipped aircraft. JPALS enables aircraft to approach and land on ships at sea while operating in all-weather conditions and is integrated on the F-35.

PMA-213 International Programs DPM, Casey Edinger said, “JPALS is a critical enabler of enhanced F-35B Joint Strike Fighter landing capabilities for coalition partners. Japan’s acquisition of JPALS significantly enhances and furthers their modernization goals, operational readiness, force projection, and PACOM [Pacific Command] interoperability operations. In addition, the execution of this Japanese foreign military sale (FMS) case and the subsequent award to Raytheon demonstrates U.S. Navy and Raytheon’s dedication to supporting Japan’s commitment to joint coalition force operations and interoperability.”

JPALS is currently being deployed on all U.S. Navy aircraft carriers and amphibious assault ships. Japan joins the United Kingdom and Italy to procure JPALS, which is currently deployed on the U.K. Royal Navy’s HMS Queen Elizabeth, and the Italian Navy’s ITS Cavour. JPALS is scheduled to be deployed on the JMSDF’s JS Izumo in 2024.

JPALS has been supporting F-35B deployments on U.S. Navy LH-class amphibious assault ships since 2016 and F-35C deployments on U.S. Navy aircraft carriers since 2021.

“Leveraging existing production capabilities and historical cost/technical data optimized the use of diminishing supply sources, prevented significant price increases, and avoided any deployment schedule impacts,” said John Britt, PMA-213 procuring contracting officer.

U.S. Army and Air Force takes

over USS Tripoli’s Flight Deck

Release from Commander, Naval Surface Forces

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By Petty Officer 2nd Class Maci Sternod

02 February 2023

SAN DIEGO, CA, UNITED STATES –

Amphibious assault carrier USS Tripoli (LHA 7) worked with the United States Army’s 16th Combat Aviation Brigade based out of Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, and the United States Air Force’s 66th Rescue Squadron, based out of Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas, to land both UH-60M Black Hawk, HH-60 Pave Hawk and AH-64 Apache helicopters on Tripoli’s flight deck, Jan. 22-26.

“Tripoli helped the Army pilots by giving them the hours of practice landing on a ship so that they could complete their deck landing qualification,” said U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Keith Hibbert, Tripoli’s air operations officer.

As a result of these joint operations, Tripoli was able to cross train with the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force.

“It was extremely rewarding being able to work with the Air Force and Army during this evolution because it’s not something you get to do every day,” said Lt. Jon Kokot, Tripoli’s mini boss.

The qualification tested not only the pilots, but Tripoli’s flight deck crew as well.
Air Force, Army, and Navy pilots use different terminology and procedures, presenting a unique challenge for Tripoli’s crew. The U.S. Army’s aircraft also require a different procedure to secure them to the flight deck.

“The Apache helicopter has different tie down points for the chains that we’ve never seen before,” said Kokot. “We had to have one of their guys come out and show us how to tie the helicopter down.”

The experience gave Tripoli’s crew a chance to prepare for similar evolutions in the future and expand the ship’s capabilities. The landing qualifications demonstrated that Tripoli has the ability to conduct flight operations with other military branches.

Tripoli is underway conducting routine operations in U.S. 3rd Fleet.

Navy and Industry Partners Complete Production Mk 18 Unmanned Underwater Vehicle Systems

Release from Naval Sea Systems Command

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NEWS | Feb. 3, 2023

Navy and Industry Partners Complete Production Mk 18 Unmanned Underwater Vehicle Systems

By PEO Unmanned and Small Combatants Public Affairs

Washington – The Navy announced today a significant milestone in the delivery of unmanned undersea warfighting capability to the fleet. Production of the MK 18 Mod 2 Unmanned Underwater Vehicle (UUV) program of record has completed.

Managed by the Expeditionary Missions program office under the Program Executive Office for Unmanned and Small Combatants (PEO USC), the MK 18 Mod 2 UUV program began production in 2012 through competitively awarded contracts with Hydroid, Inc. in Pocasset, Massachusetts (now owned by Huntington Ingalls Industries (HII)). Since the initial production lot, more than 90 MK 18 Mod 2 UUV vehicles have been provided to the fleet.

“The Department’s long-standing partnership with HII and their subcontractors demonstrates how mature technologies coupled with innovative acquisition approaches can speed the delivery of critical mission-enabling capabilities to our warfighting forces,” said Capt. Jon Haase, program manager of the Expeditionary Missions program office (PMS 408).

The MK 18 Mod 2 UUVs form a critical component in the Navy’s suite of Expeditionary Mine Countermeasures (ExMCM) Company’s mission capabilities. ExMCM forces provide a rapid, world-wide mine countermeasure response capability that supports Joint Force maneuver in various maritime mission areas. In July 2022, the Navy awarded the Medium Unmanned Undersea Vehicle (MUUV) contract to Leidos to design, test, and manufacture the next generation ExMCM MUUV, known as Viperfish. Viperfish will improve upon the current MK18 Mod 2 UUVs by providing increased ExMCM capabilities.