

Gerald R. Ford to Deploy at Last, With Slightly Reduced Air Wing



Sailors assigned to the first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) and the “Tridents” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 9 conduct an ammunition onload, Sept. 25, 2022. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class William Spears*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The lead ship U.S. Navy’s newest class of nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, USS Gerald Ford (CVN 78), will depart Norfolk, Virginia, next week on its first major deployment. The carrier is scheduled to deploy next year in support of regional combatant commanders.

The Ford is making what the Navy calls a “service-retained” deployment, meaning it is operating by the authority of the chief of naval operations under command and control of the

U.S. 2nd Fleet, rather than under the command and control of a regional combatant commander under the Global Force Management Concept.

Vice Adm. Daniel Dwyer, commander of the U.S. 2nd Fleet, said Carrier Strike Group 12 (CSG 12), of which the Ford is a part, will range throughout the Atlantic Ocean operating with navies of allied and partner nations.

Dwyer, speaking to reporters Sept. 26, said the deployment would provide the Ford CSG commander "a chance to test the carrier's air operability prior to embarking on its first Global Force Management deployment next year. This historic service-retained deployment is an opportunity for the U.S. Navy to come together with other members of the NATO Alliance to exercise and train together within the Atlantic and its littorals while testing out advanced technologies on the first new class of U.S. aircraft carrier in more than 40 years."

CSG-12 and Destroyer Squadron Two staffs will be embarked in the Ford, as will Carrier Air Wing Eight. Deploying with the group will be Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Normandy (CG 60); the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Ramage (DDG 61), USS McFaul (DDG 74), and USS Thomas Hudner (DDG 116); the Legend-class national security cutter USCGC Hamilton (WMSL 753); the Henry J. Kaiser-class fleet replenishment oiler USNS Joshua Humphries (T-AO 188), and the Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo and ammunition ship USNS Robert E. Peary (T-AKE 5).

Units from eight allied and partner nations that will operate with the CSG and include ships from Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Spain and Sweden. The CSG includes 17 ships and one submarine.

While deployed, the Ford CSG will conduct group steaming, air-defense exercises, maritime domain awareness, long-range maritime strike, distributed maritime operations,

antisubmarine warfare exercises and naval integration, Dwyer said.

“Innovation and interoperability are the key focal points of this deployment,” Dwyer said. “And we will work together with allies and partner nations to strengthen our collective defense of the Atlantic by maturing our integration for future maritime operations.”

All eight squadrons of Carrier Air Wing Eight will be onboard for the deployment but some will not be at full strength in terms of numbers of aircraft.

“It won’t be the full complement, but it will be nearly the entire air wing,” Dwyer said. “And that is not because of any lack of capacity aboard Ford, but only where the air wing is in the Global Force Management process. We’re still sizing the numbers, but it will be a fairly full air wing, but not the complete air wing.”

New Technology

The Ford, commissioned in 2017, is deploying with 43 new technologies, including the Electro-Magnetic Aircraft Launch System, and the Advanced Arresting Gear.

The Ford’s commanding officer, Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, said in a Sept. 29 interview that all systems have been tested and are ready to go, and some will go through further operational testing.

Lanzilotta, a native on Long Island, New York, is an E-2 Hawkeye naval flight officer. He said the Ford has “incredible network connectivity.”

Several Ford crew members were made available for interviews on Sept. 29 pierside in Norfolk.

Chief Machinist’s Mate (select) Kera Archambeault, who accrued two previous deployments on the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier

USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70), said the Ford has better amenities for the crew, “like all spaces having better air conditioning, the food is really good, the galleys are really open to bring everyone together.”

“We’re very by the book here,” said Boatswain’s Mate Second Class Patrick Schlosser, for whom this will be his first deployment, asked about the ease of maintenance on a new ship. “There are a lot of new systems – this is the biggest, the baddest, the newest ship in the fleet – there are a lot of learning curves that we have to get across. We are able to conduct and do what we need to do regularly with a relative amount of ease and we’re pretty efficient at it. ... This crew is ready for anything that comes at us. Everybody would overcome any obstacle that they deal with as far as maintenance goes and any equipment that we deal with.”

U.S. Navy Warship Seizes \$10 Million in Drugs in Gulf of Oman



An interdiction team from guided-missile destroyer USS Delbert D. Black (DDG 119) approaches a fishing vessel in the Gulf of Oman, Sept. 28, as an MH-60R Sea Hawk attached to Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron 48 provides aerial support. *U.S. NAVY / MC3 Jeremy R. Boan*

MANAMA, Bahrain – A U.S. Navy guided-missile destroyer seized 7,200 kilograms of hashish worth an estimated \$10 million from a fishing vessel transiting international waters in the Gulf of Oman, Sept. 28, NAVCENT Public Affairs said Sept. 29.

USS Delbert D. Black (DDG 119) was operating in support of U.S. 5th Fleet, headquartered in Manama, Bahrain. The ship began patrolling waters across the Middle East in August.

“This seizure is a testament to the professionalism and determination of the ‘Trailblazer’ team,” said Cmdr. Mark Gallagher, commanding officer of Delbert D. Black. “I’m proud of our commitment to regional security and countering illicit activity on the high seas across the Middle East region.”

Delbert D. Black’s seizure occurred one day after USCGC

Charles Moulthrope (WPC 1141) seized 2,410 kilograms of heroin worth \$85 million from another fishing vessel transiting the Gulf of Oman Sept. 27. The U.S. Coast Guard ship was operating under Combined Maritime Forces, the world's largest multinational naval partnership.

Forces from CMF's 34 member-nations have conducted 13 successful drug interdictions in 2022, resulting in seizures of heroin, methamphetamine, amphetamine pills and hashish worth a combined value of nearly \$300 million.

Delbert D. Black is an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer named for the first Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy. The ship is deployed as part of the USS George H. W. Bush Carrier Strike Group and has a crew of more than 300 Sailors in addition to an embarked aviation detachment from Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron 48.

CNO, Commander of the Romanian Naval Forces Discuss Maritime, Regional Security



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday meets with Commander of the Romanian Naval Forces Rear Adm. Mihai Panait at the Pentagon for an office call Sept. 29. *U.S. NAVY / Chief Mass Communication Specialist Amanda Gray*

WASHINGTON – Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday met with Commander of the Romanian Naval Forces Rear Adm. Mihai Panait at the Pentagon for an office call on Sept. 29, the CNO's public affairs office said in a release.

The leaders discussed regional stability and maritime security, allied cooperation efforts, as well as modernization and deterrence.

“My discussions with Rear Adm. Panait were very productive and focused on future operations,” said Gilday. “The U.S. and Romania have a shared commitment to promoting safety and stability in the Black Sea, and the Romanian Naval Forces are an active contributor to maritime security operations there, as well as an important partner throughout the region. The U.S. Navy will continue to operate alongside our Romanian allies.”

The U.S. Navy and Romanian Naval Forces regularly operate together. Most recently, both navies participated in the Bulgarian exercise Breeze alongside Allies and partners Albania, Belgium, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

Romania hosts U.S. Aegis Ashore Missile Defense System Romania, located aboard Naval Support Facility Deveselu in Deveselu, Romania. USAAMDSRO is under the operational control of the U.S. Navy's 6th Fleet based in Naples, Italy, and is part of the European Phased Adapted Approach, which protects European NATO Allies and U.S. deployed forces in the region. This land-based missile defense facility is designed to detect, track, engage, and destroy ballistic missiles in flight outside the atmosphere. Its technology is nearly identical to and works in coordination with the systems used on the four forward-deployed Aegis destroyers stationed in Rota, Spain.

Panait attended the U.S.-led 2021 International Seapower Symposium in Newport, Rhode Island, and will see Gilday again in Venice, Italy, next month for the Trans-Regional Seapower Symposium. This was their first official meeting.

Littoral Combat Ship Training Facility Atlantic Established



NAVAL STATION MAYPORT, Fla. – Marking a significant milestone event for the waterfront community, the Littoral Combat Ship Training Facility Atlantic was established during a ceremony onboard Naval Station Mayport, Sept. 23.

The training facility, formerly managed and operated by

Surface Combat Systems Training Command Detachment Southeast, became a separate command under the SCSTC domain.

Before Littoral Combat Ship Training Facility Atlantic was officially established, Cmdr. Carl Brobst was relieved by Lt. Cmdr. Aloysius Elzie as SCSTC Det Southeast's officer in charge during a change of charge. From July 2019, when Brobst assumed duties as OIC, to September 2022, Brobst and his team helped shape the next generation of surface warfighters. The det's annual throughput more than quadrupled and they delivered over 18,840 combat-ready Sailors to the Fleet. Brobst will retire later this year after 30 years of naval service.

Immediately following the change of charge, Cmdr. Dan Reiher assumed command of Littoral Combat Ship Training Facility Atlantic. Reiher is already well-known in the LCS community. He served aboard USS Sioux City (LCS 11) as executive officer and commanding officer Gold Crew. Most recently, he was the commanding officer of USS Wichita (LCS 13).

"I am truly humbled to become the first commanding officer of LTF LANT and honored to join and lead an outstanding team of professionals in training future LCS warfighters," he said.

The establishment of Littoral Combat Ship Training Facility Atlantic is part of Surface Combat Systems Training Command's large internal realignment effort that begun in 2021 with the changing of its name, formerly the Center for Surface Combat Systems. The name change and realignment define the command's critical mission of training surface warfighters. SCSTC, with its surface community partners and force development counterparts, provides system and platform specific combat systems training to a growing surface Navy. Littoral Combat Ship Training Facility Atlantic, with the responsibility of training all LCS Freedom-class ships and their crews, supports the increased demand for LCS training at the waterfront.

Capt. George A. Kessler, Jr., commodore of SCSTC, presided over the ceremony and delivered remarks as the keynote speaker.

“Being here in Mayport, you can see and feel the impact of today’s event for not only SCSTC, but also the waterfront,” Kessler said. “LTF LANT is part of the domain’s overall realignment effort but the significance of LTF LANT is about the mission. A mission that is growing in importance each day. Strategic competition at sea is not an amorphous concept but an everyday reality and it demands that our Sailors have the tactical competence and proficiency needed to execute the mission across the spectrum of operations in today’s challenging environment. Our warfighters must be ready to fight and LTF LANT provides the high-end tactical training needed to ensure warfighting readiness, which leads to security for our country and our allies and maintains the freedom of the seas we so richly enjoy.”

The LTF LANT is located onboard Naval Station Mayport, Fla. The first Freedom variant LCS arrived at Naval Station Mayport in 2016 and the number of LCSs have grown.

LTF LANT facilitates the training concepts of Train-to-Qualify and Train-to-Certify for the LCS 1 USS Freedom ship variant. It provides an integrated command and control environment to support training in both navigation and combat systems mission areas. LTF LANT is comprised of three components which can be used independently or in concert with the others to provide more complex training scenarios. Each section of the trainer replicates the basic layout and design of the LCS command and control, bridge, and propulsion control systems. Using mockups of these areas, which includes video screens reproducing scenes from a ship’s bridge windows, the SCSTC team produces realistic training scenarios.

NAVCENT: Saudi Arabia Expands Maritime Partnership with International Coalition



Royal Saudi Navy ship HMS Al Jubail. *U.S. NAVY*
MANAMA, Bahrain – Saudi Arabia’s western naval fleet began operating for the first time with the International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) in the Red Sea, Sept. 27, signaling an expanded partnership between the multination coalition and Royal Saudi Naval Forces, NAVCENT Public Affairs said in a Sept. 28 release.

The Royal Saudi Navy Western Fleet, concentrated in the Red Sea, is now contributing to IMSC missions near the Bab al-Mandeb Strait as HMS Al Jubail (828) conducts patrols in support. Its Eastern Fleet has been operating with IMSC since 2019, when Saudi Arabia joined the nine-member coalition.

“As the Western Fleet joins with IMSC, we are able to bring reassurance to our maritime industry partners as they transit the Bab al-Mandeb Strait into the Red Sea,” said United Kingdom Royal Navy Commodore Ben Aldous, commander of IMSC and Coalition Task Force (CTF) Sentinel, the operational arm of the maritime partnership.

IMSC was formed in July 2019 in response to increased threats to freedom of navigation for merchant mariners transiting international waters in the Middle East. CTF Sentinel was established four months later to deter state-sponsored malign activity and reassure the merchant shipping industry in the Strait of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandeb.

Approximately 17,000 merchant ships transit through Bab al-Mandeb into the Red Sea annually.

“The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia’s Western Fleet goes a long way to enhancing maritime security in this well transited region.”

The multinational coalition is headquartered in Bahrain with U.S. 5th Fleet and includes Albania, Bahrain, Estonia, Lithuania, Romania, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States.

Gonzalez Returns To Norfolk from 9-Month Deployment



The Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Gonzalez (DDG 66) returns to Naval Station Norfolk after a regularly scheduled deployment in the U.S. 5th Fleet and U.S. 6th Fleet areas of operations, Sept. 28. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication 2nd Class Nathan T. Beard*

NORFOLK, Va. – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Gonzalez (DDG 66) returned to its homeport of Naval Station Norfolk, Sept. 28, 2022, USS Harry S. Truman Public Affairs said in a release.

Gonzalez deployed Jan. 23 as part of a surge deployment of five destroyers under commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet, that included the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Donald Cook (DDG 75), USS Mitscher (DDG 57), USS The Sullivans (DDG 68) and USS Forrest Sherman (DDG 98) before Gonzalez joined the Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group (HSTCSG) in the Mediterranean Sea as a part of Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 28.

The ship was dynamically employed by U.S. 5th and 6th Fleets, traveling throughout the regions participating in a multitude

of bi-lateral and multi-lateral training opportunities ensuring maritime security and stability.

“We left on this deployment to bolster relationships with key allies and partners as well as defend international interests in the U.S. 5th and 6th Fleets,” said Cmdr. Timothy Battles, Gonzalez’s commanding officer. “I am proud of the men and women of this ship and all that they have accomplished since we left home and know they can feel a strong sense of pride for a job well done.”

The crew’s outstanding efforts complemented the ship’s diversity of mission sets and substantial capabilities. “The Sailors aboard USS Gonzalez lead the way in demonstrating resolve and dedication to support the mission and each other,” said Cmdr. Kate Stegner, Gonzalez’s executive officer. “As an independent deployer, our team met each mission with continued success. I am humbled to be a part of this great crew.”

While operating in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations, Gonzalez conducted multiple escort transits through the Babel-Mandeb Strait and conducted counter smuggling operations in support of Combined Task Force (CTF) 150 in the Gulf of Oman. Gonzalez also conducted security patrols in support of the recently established CTF 153 to ensure international maritime security and capacity building efforts in the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandeb Strait and Gulf of Aden.

During their operations in U.S. 6th Fleet, Gonzalez demonstrated cohesion and capability by sailing and operating with Forward Deployed Naval Forces-Europe ships, as well as those of Standing NATO Maritime Group (SNMG) 2 and the HSTCSG.

In the Mediterranean, Gonzalez helped pave the way for the NATO-led exercise Neptune Shield 22, conducting dual and tri-carrier operations with the Italian and French navies. The multinational exercise demonstrated NATO’s ability to

integrate the high-end maritime warfare capabilities of allied aircraft carrier strike groups, amphibious ready groups and marine expeditionary units to support the defense of the alliance. Training exercises and vigilance activities throughout the deployment provided the opportunity to enhance relationships with European Allies and partners.

As the ship finally pulled into homeport, Command Master Chief Lance Connolly, Gonzalez's senior enlisted leader, reflected on the sacrifices made by those onboard and those waiting at the pier.

"They conducted themselves admirably the past months despite the many challenges presented throughout our deployment," said Command Master Chief Connolly. "I could not have been more pleased with the resiliency and warrior spirit of our crew."

The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), commanded by Capt. Gavin Duff, serves as the flagship of the HSTCSG; additional elements include the nine squadrons of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 1, commanded by Capt. Patrick Hourigan; the staff and guided-missile destroyers of Destroyer Squadron 28, commanded by Capt. Blair Guy, which have included: USS Bainbridge (DDG 96), USS Cole (DDG 67), USS Gravely (DDG 107), USS Forrest Sherman (DDG 98) and USS Jason Dunham (DDG 109).

U.S. Navy Expands Maintenance Provider Base in Africa



The Lewis B. Puller-class expeditionary sea base USS Hershel "Woody" Williams (ESB 4) sails in the Gulf of Aden, July 26. Hershel "Woody" Williams is rotationally deployed to the U.S. Naval Forces Africa area of operations, employed by U.S. 6th Fleet, to defend U.S., allied and partner interests. *U.S. AIR FORCE / Staff Sgt. Dylan Murakami*

WALVIS BAY, Namibia – Lewis B. Puller-class expeditionary sea base ship USS Hershel "Woody" Williams (ESB 4) and Forward Deployed Regional Maintenance Center (FDRMC) ship repair experts hosted a ship check event attended by commercial maintenance providers during a recent port visit to Walvis Bay, Namibia, Sept. 5, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa Public Affairs said Sept. 27.

Ship checks provide opportunities to meet regional maintenance providers in person and allow representatives to visit the ship ahead of potentially bidding on a maintenance contract. During the first-ever ship check for Hershel "Woody" Williams in Namibia, FDRMC representatives led the attendees around the vessel to identify areas and equipment in need of maintenance

ahead of an upcoming voyage repair availability.

Following the ship check event, Naval Supply Systems Command Fleet Logistics Center Sigonella (NAVSUP FLCSI) contracting officers and FDRMC ship repair experts and U.S. Transportation Command's Military Sealift Command hosted a virtual industry engagement. This event educated maintenance provider representatives about the U.S. government contract solicitation process, contracting regulations and how to submit competitive solicitations to the government to perform any of the ship's needed maintenance.

"The U.S. Navy cannot operate effectively and execute its mission overseas without the labor and expertise of commercial ship repair vendors," said Capt. Paul Haslam, NAVSUP FLCSI chief of contracts. "Ship checks and virtual industry engagement events like those we conducted aboard HWW serve to strengthen relations with key partners like Namibia and, in general, help pave the way for future maintenance and logistics capability overseas. These events also broaden mutual understanding and improve cooperation between NAVSUP and our mission partners."

Having the maintenance provider tour the ship at the same time as the ship check exposed them to needed work aboard Hershel "Woody" Williams. Similarly, during the virtual industry engagement, they had the opportunity to learn about the U.S. government contract solicitation process, contracting regulations and how to submit competitive solicitations to the government to perform any of the ship's needed maintenance.

"Building relationships with regional maintenance providers is critical to ensure U.S. Navy ships receive quality and on-time maintenance during future availabilities," said Marie Hahn, NAVSUP FLCSI Ship Repair Division director. "We haven't done work in Namibia yet; so it was expected that commercial vendors in attendance benefited from the virtual industry engagement."

Hershel “Woody” Williams is the first U.S. Navy vessel to be assigned to the U.S. Africa Command area of responsibility whose presence is to promote maritime security through a persistent presence in African waters in close cooperation with African partners.

FRC Seizes \$85 Million in Heroin in NAVCENT Region



A U.S. Coast Guard interdiction team seizes bags of illegal narcotics from a fishing vessel interdicted by fast response cutter USCGC Charles Moulthrop (WPC 1141) in the Gulf of Oman, Sept. 27. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

MANAMA, Bahrain – A U.S. Coast Guard fast response cutter seized an estimated \$85 million worth of heroin from a fishing vessel while patrolling the Gulf of Oman, Sept. 27, representing the largest illegal drug interdiction in the Middle East by international naval forces this year, Naval Forces U.S. Central Command Public Affairs said in a release.

While operating in support of Combined Task Force 150, USCGC Charles Moulthrope (WPC 1141) seized 2,410 kilograms of heroin as the fishing vessel transited international waters. CTF 150 is one of four task forces under the Combined Maritime Forces, the world's largest multinational naval partnership.

The Royal Saudi Navy assumed command of CTF 150 in July during a ceremony in Manama, Bahrain, where the task force is headquartered.

“This sizable seizure demonstrates a profound commitment among our international partners to disrupting and deterring destabilizing activity in the region,” said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet and CMF. “I am proud of the flawless efforts by CMF, the Saudi-led CTF 150 team and the Charles Moulthrope crew.”

Charles Moulthrope began operating in the Middle East in May 2021. Its crew of nearly 30 Coast Guardsmen includes the ship's 24 plank owners who were the original crewmembers when the ship commissioned in January 2021.

CMF consists of 34 member-nations whose forces operate in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Northern Arabian Sea, Gulf of Oman, Arabian Gulf and Indian Ocean.

Crowley Awarded Maritime Prepositioning Force Contract by MSC

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Crowley has been awarded a contract for the operation and maintenance of six government-owned Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) vessels of the U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command, the company said Sept. 26.

Crowley Government Solutions will carry out the contract, providing crewing and sustained support to enable rapid deployment of equipment and supplies as needed to aid U.S. military operations in remote regions around the world. Between deployments, the company will ensure extensive maintenance to enhance the vessel's mission readiness.

"Crowley is proud to continue serving the U.S. military's logistics needs through the successful operation and maintenance of Maritime Prepositioning Force vessels," said Shiju Zacharia, senior vice president and general manager of Crowley Government Solutions. "We are honored that the U.S. government continues to see Crowley as a high performing, reliable source and strategic partner throughout its operations and supply chain and allowing us to demonstrate our commitment to our military across the globe."

The term of the contract is one year with four option years. The contract carries a maximum value of \$343.3 million.

Coast Guard Decommissions Bahrain-based Patrol Boat Baranof



U.S. Coast Guardsmen conduct a decommissioning ceremony for USCGC Baranof (WPB 1318) in Manama, Bahrain, Sept. 26. Baranof decommissioned after 34 years of service. *U.S. ARMY / Spc. Noah Martin*

MANAMA, Bahrain – The USCGC Baranof (WPB 1318) was decommissioned during a ceremony aboard Naval Support Activity Bahrain, Sept. 26., the Coast Guard Atlantic Area said in a release,

Vice Adm. Kevin Lunday, commander of U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, presided over the ceremony.

“USCGC Baranof’s exemplary service to our nation is a testament to both the Island-class platform and the crews that have manned Baranof over the past 34 years,” said Lunday. “Whether it was conducting law enforcement and search and

rescue in the Caribbean, or deploying to the present-day homeport of Bahrain to support U.S. Central Command, those that have manned Baranof have continually met the needs of America.”

Baranof was commissioned into service on May 20, 1988 at Coast Guard Base Miami Beach in Miami. The 18th of 49 Island-class patrol boats, Baranof received orders to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2002. Shortly after their arrival in Bahrain, Baranof’s crew was underway conducting maritime interdiction operations in the North Arabian Gulf.

Baranof was replaced by the USCGC Clarence Sutphin Jr. (WPC 1147), which arrived at NSA Bahrain on Aug. 23, 2022. As part of the Coast Guard’s fast response cutter program, the service is acquiring 65 Sentinel-class fast response cutters, with six of those assigned to U.S. Coast Guard Patrol Forces Southwest Asia (PATFORSWA).

PATFORSWA, the Coast Guard’s largest unit outside of the United States, oversees the cutters in Bahrain. The ships are forward deployed to U.S. 5th Fleet to help ensure maritime security and stability across the Middle East. The 154-foot-long vessels feature advanced communications systems, and improved surveillance and reconnaissance equipment.

PATFORSWA, which is operationally attached to 5th Fleet’s Commander Task Force 55, is composed of six FRCs, shoreside mission support personnel and a maritime engagement team. The unit plays a crucial role in maritime security, maritime infrastructure protection, and regional theater security cooperation. The unit also supports other U.S. Coast Guard deployable specialized forces operating throughout the Middle Eastern region.