F-35B Loss is the Fourth for the Marine Corps

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ARLINGTON, Va. – The pilot of a Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II strike fighter ejected safely near Charleston, South Carolina, on September 17, but search-and-recovery efforts for the aircraft are ongoing, a Marine Corps official said.

“The search-and-recovery efforts for the aircraft are ongoing, and we are thankful to the agencies assisting in this effort,” said Major Kevin Stephensen, a Marine Corps spokesperson in the Communication Directorate of Headquarters, Marine Corps, in a Sept. 18 update. “The mishap is currently under investigation. The Department of the Navy has a well-defined process for investigating aircraft mishaps. We are unable to provide additional details to preserve the integrity of the investigatory process.”

The pilot and aircraft were assigned to Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 501 (VMFAT-501) at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, South Carolina. The squadron is the East Coast fleet replacement squadron for the F-35B pilots and maintenance personnel.

The loss of the F-35B is the third for VMFAT-501. On Oct. 16, 2016, one of its F-35Bs caught fire and landed safely, but the aircraft was a write-off. On Sept. 2, 2018, the squadron lost an aircraft because of an engine failure.

On Sept. 29, 2020, an F-35B from another squadron collided with a KC-130J and crashed in southern California.

Another F-35B crashed on Dec. 15, 2022, at Naval Air Station-Joint Reservation Base Fort Worth, Texas, but the aircraft had not yet been delivered to the Marine Corps and was flown at the time by an Air Force pilot.

1st LAAD Battalion Reactivates in Hawaii

Photo By Lance Cpl. Clayton Baker | U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. Heath Phillips, commanding officer, 1st Low Altitude Air Defense (LAAD) Battalion, Marine Air Control Group 18, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, receives a gift during a reactivation and designation ceremony at Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, Aug. 31, 2023. Originally activated in July 1982 in Okinawa, Japan, the unit underwent two redesignations before folding its' colors in Sept. 2007. The reactivation of 1st LAAD Battalion demonstrates forward progression toward force modernization in the INDOPACIFIC region. The primary mission of 1st LAAD Battalion is to deliver close-in, low-altitude, surface-to-air weapon capabilities. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Clayton Baker)

Release from the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing

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MARINE CORPS BASE HAWAII, HI, UNITED STATES

08.31.2023

MCAS KANEOHE BAY, Hawaii – Today, Headquarters and Service

(H&S) Battery, 1st Low Altitude Air Defense (LAAD) Battalion, Marine Air Control Group 18, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, reinstated their unit colors during a reactivation and designation ceremony.

Originating as 1st Forward Area Air Defense (FAAD) Battery, initially established on July 1, 1982, in Okinawa, Japan, 1st LAAD Battalion previously underwent two redesignations. The first occurred in October 1986, when 1st FAAD battery was redesignated as the 1st LAAD Battalion. The second took place in May 1993, when the battalion's size was reduced, leading to its designation as 1st Stinger Battery. 1st Stinger Battery was officially deactivated in Okinawa on Sept. 28, 2007.

Today's reactivation of 1st LAAD Battalion at Marine Corps Base Hawaii demonstrates progress toward force modernization with a significant increase in III Marine Expeditionary Force (III MEF), joint, and combined force capabilities. Originally designed to counter fixed wing and rotary wing enemy aircraft, the LAAD community now employs mobile, scalable air defense capabilities to counter not only manned aviation threats but also unmanned. This reactivation provides III MEF organic ground-based air defense assets against enemy aircraft and unmanned aerial systems (UAS) which enables their employment within the Indo-Pacific region without depleting resources from I or II MEF.

The primary mission of 1st LAAD Battalion is to deliver close-in, low-altitude, surface-to-air weapon capabilities. When task-organized, the battalion also provides command and control forces for ground security in defense of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) commander's designated critical areas. "1st LAAD Battalion will provide a much-needed capability to III MEF in the defense of maneuver units, forward operating areas and command and control nodes. This capability will enable Marines to fight and win under contested airspace," said Lt. Col. Heath A. Phillips, the

commanding officer of 1st LAAD Battalion.

Marine Corps Base Hawaii will primarily serve as a strategic hub for 1st LAAD Battalion. “We are honored to homebase in Hawaii,” Phillips added, “We will grow here; we will train here; but make no mistake about it, our work is west.”

The battalion is taking a phased activation approach, slated to culminate in 2028, beginning with the H&S Battery today. H&S Battery will establish the foundation for onboarding future capabilities and subsequent battery activations. Alpha Battery is anticipated to activate in August 2024.

1st LAAD Battalion looks forward to employing emerging capabilities in the Indo-Pacific in support of service, joint, allied, and partner forces. For more information about 1st LAAD Battalion please contact 1st Marine Aircraft Wing Communication Strategy and Operations, https://www.1stmaw.marines.mil/Subordinate-Units/Marine-Aircraft-Group-24/

Marine Corps Looking at Stealthy Autonomous Vessels for Logistics

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ARLINGTON, Va.—The U.S. Marine Corps is exploring a concept to enhance its ability to supply its forces its forces inside a contested environment: low-profile vessels used by drug-running cartels.

The Corps, however, is looking at autonomous low-profile vessels (LPVs), said Lieutenant General Karsten Heckl, deputy commandant for Combat Development and Integration, speaking Sept. 6 at the Defense News Conference in Arlington, who advocated the use of autonomous unmanned systems wherever possible.

Drug runners have built and used manned LPVs frequently over the last two decade to carry loads of illegal drugs from Latin America to the United States. The LPVs, called semisubmersibles, are fabricated in secret locations and, with a small crew, carry their payload along the transit lanes,

trying to avoid visual and radar detection with their very low profiles.

"We just copy the drug lords down south running drugs," Heckl said. "They are hard to find, so now we figure, hey, it works, right?

The Marine Corps has recently focused on logistics in a contested environment as part of its Force Design 2030 to address the challenge of supplying its forces inside the enemy's weapons engagement zone – inside the first island chain off China, for example.

Heckl addressed the concept pairing it with uncrewed autonomy, noting the lower cost of unmanned systems without having to accommodate humans and the supplies and safety systems needed to sustain them.

The required scale of autonomous LPVs is so far undetermined, but Heckl pointed to the success of an unmanned expeditionary fast ship (T-EPF) in autonomous operations. Austal built the Miliary Sealift Command's 13th T-EPF, USNS Apalachicola – a fast catamaran logistics ship—with autonomous control systems to demonstrate the potential of autonomous operations of a ship of its size.

"T-EPF 13 went out and did 1,500 nautical miles completely autonomously," Heckl said. "They had human beings on board as back-ups, but what an amazing capability, a ship that can go 45 knots in Sea State 3 that can operate autonomously. Autonomous—from a logistics perspective—absolutely.

"I want autonomous everything, if we can get there," he said.

U.S. Navy, Marine Corps Establish New Maritime Fires Executive Agent

Release from the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations

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06 September 2023

WASHINGTON – Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Operations, Plans and Strategy Vice Adm. Gene Black, and Acting Marine Corps Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies and Operations Maj. Gen. Roger Turner jointly announced the designation of a new executive agent (EA) for maritime fires, May 16, 2023.

The new maritime fires EA will be a single entity to oversee maritime fires, and will improve the planning, coordination, execution and assessment of all-domain fires by the Navy and Marine Corps. In Department of Defense vernacular, “fires” are

defined as “the use of weapon systems or other actions to create specific lethal or nonlethal effects on a target.”

“This designation demonstrates a significant step forward in naval service integration, increasing maritime force readiness and lethality,” said Black. “This initiative will drive improvements and efficiencies to Navy and Marine Corps doctrine, organization, and training. It will enable us to deliver maritime fires with precision and timeliness in every domain, when required.”

Echoing Black, Turner added how a centralized EA facilitates U.S. Navy and Marine Corps integration.

“This is naval integration in action. Maritime fires integration is absolutely something we have to get right and this is a great step forward for our services,” said Turner. “This designation is going to enable us to better leverage the full force of the Navy and Marine Corps team.”

Commander, Pacific Fleet (PACFLT) has been selected to fill the role as EA. In that capacity, PACFLT is making a plan and identifying resources to support several lines of effort, including development of doctrine and policy, the maritime fires training continuum, and a campaign of learning through experimentation, war-games and exercises.

An executive agent (EA) is a designation for a role with substantial responsibility to execute a noteworthy task or the function is particularly sensitive or complex. EAs are tasked to provide defined levels of support for either operational or administrative missions.

DEPOT TACKLES SUPPLY CHAIN ISSUES WITH ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Release from U.S. Marine Corps Logistics Command

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MARINE CORPS LOGISTICS BASE ALBANY, GA – The Marine Corps Advanced Manufacturing Center of Excellence (AM COE) recently helped the Navy solve a supply chain issue for the USS Kentucky.

The Kentucky, an Ohio-class ballistic submarine (SSBN), needed a specifically designed cover for a ventilation system, and a long lead supply chain and the complex geometry of the part meant that a creative solution was needed.

In December, Naval Sea Systems Command's Trident Refit

Facility Bangor (TRFB), which is responsible for repairing, incrementally overhauling and modernizing the Pacific Fleet SSBNs during refits, contacted the Marine Depot Maintenance Command (MDMC). The AM COE, part of the Marine Corps Maintenace Command, leverages AM technology to increase depot production and bolster supply operations and expeditionary capabilities for the Fleet Marine Force.

When TRFB reached out to the MDMC's Advanced Manufacturing team for a solution, they answered the call. The Marine Corps AM COE reengineered the provided drawings to meet 3D printer specifications and MDMC's Production Plant in Barstow, California, 3D printed the aluminum using an EOS 400-1 Machine.

This is the first additively manufactured metallic component produced to solve a supply chain issue on Ohio-Class submarines.

"We appreciate the tremendous work of the Marine Corps Advanced Manufacturing Center," said CAPT Mike Eberlein, commanding officer, TRFB. "Having access to AM greatly increases our efficiency and this is just one of many examples of multiple commands working together to solve problems for the benefit of our warfighters."

The Marine Corps AM COE continually explores ways to expand partnerships and welcomes inquiries from organizations across the U.S. Marine Corps, Department of Defense, industry and academia.

USS Jack H. Lucas to Commission in Tampa, Florida

Release from Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Public Affairs

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Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Public Affairs

The future USS Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125) will join the active fleet on October 7, with a commissioning ceremony in Tampa, Florida. DDG 125 will be the Navy's first Flight III destroyer with notable technological upgrades. The Flight III upgrades are centered on the AN/SPY-6(V)1 Air and Missile Defense Radar and incorporates upgrades to the electrical power and cooling capacity.

Guided-missile destroyers provide multi-mission offensive and defensive capabilities. Destroyers can operate independently

or as part of carrier strike groups, surface action groups, and expeditionary strike groups. They are capable of conducting anti-air warfare (AAW), anti-submarine warfare (ASW), and anti-surface warfare (ASuW).

The ship's name was selected on Sept. 17, 2016 by then Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus to serve as a constant reminder to the immense impact actions taken by any one Sailor or Marine can truly have.

DDG 125 is named for Pfc. Jack Lucas, who served in the U.S. Marines during World War II, earning the Medal of Honor for his heroism at Iwo Jima, when he was just 17 years old. He is the youngest Marine, and the youngest serviceman in World War II, to be awarded the United States' highest military decoration for valor. In 1961, he returned to military service as a captain in the U.S. Army and trained younger troops headed for Vietnam. Lucas passed away on June 5, 2008 in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

Ruby Lucas, widow of the ship's namesake, and philanthropist Cathy Reynolds are the ship's sponsors.

This will be the first Naval warship to bear the name Jack H. Lucas.

Following commissioning, USS Jack H. Lucas will transit to its homeport of San Diego.

Experiences from the Vietnam, Iraq Conflicts Shape How

Naval Aviation Will Fight Next

SPARKS, Nevada (Aug. 24, 2023) Commander, Naval Air Forces Vice Adm. Kenneth Whitesell speaks at the Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE) Update to Industry Partners alongside Marine Corps Deputy Commandant for Aviation Lt. Gen. Michael Cederholm (behind left) and Commander, Naval Air Systems Command Vice Adm. Carl Chebi during Tailhook 2023.
Release from Naval Air Systems Command

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Sparks, Nev.—The Tailhook Association's 2023 symposium—Hook

’23—took place August 24- 26, 2023, ending with a banquet keynoted by the Commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM), Adm. John Aquilino, and Commander, Naval Air Forces (CNAF), Vice Adm. Kenneth Whitesell. The three-day event featured dialogue from across carrier aviation, providing opportunities for naval aviators to honor their past as well as to discuss the requirements for current readiness and the future force.

As senior leaders and senior naval aviators, Aquilino and Whitesell participated in multiple events throughout the three-day symposium, listening to the needs of the fleet and sharing with them high-level perspectives.

Aquilino emphasized that Naval Aviation members have to “be ready … We are doing everything, every day, to prevent conflict. That’s what we do.” He added that a war in the Pacific would be detrimental to every nation on earth. The United States doesn’t want that but would win if necessary. “The integrated joint force of the United States is not something you’re ready to take on today, tomorrow or any day,” Aquilino stated.

The camaraderie and unmatched abilities of Naval Aviation were common threads throughout Hook ’23. Whitesell stated, “It is up to us, every person in this room, to make the Navy and Naval Aviation an elite culture that America’s brightest, toughest and most innovative youth choose to join … it relies on us to maintain the mindset of duty, preparedness and sacrifice—a culture evidenced in past heroes, who have truly set the example.”

This year’s theme focused on Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), with two panels exploring how Naval Aviation has progressed in the two decades since that conflict began, the lessons learned from those who flew operations and how the experiences of that generation form the new generation of warfighters. One panel featured speakers who were junior officers during the conflict

while the other featured senior leaders from the conflict.

Naval Aviation played a pivotal role in OIF's success and in supporting joint and coalition forces on the ground. "There's a constant steady push for integration across the force from seabed to space," said Naval Air Warfare Development Center, Deputy Commanding Officer, Capt. Michael "Snap" Langbehn. Operating from aircraft carriers and amphibious assault ships, pilots and aircrew provided crucial air support, reconnaissance and strike capabilities that significantly contributed to the campaign's achievements.

For many of the people involved in OIF, the confidence in them to execute combat operations safely showcased the level of training and skill needed to be an immediate asset. "There was an amazing amount of trust that was put into us; we went from flight school to flying combat missions in a short amount of time," said the Commander of Carrier Air Wing One, Capt. Brad "Keds" Converse.

During the most emotionally powerful panel, four Vietnam Prisoners of War (POWs) shared stories and lessons from captivity. In a large ballroom filled to standing room only, attendees listened to the compelling narratives of Capt. Rod Knutson, Capt. Irv Williams, Mr. Dave Everett and Capt. Jack Ensch as they described how they endured as POWs in the infamous Hanoi Hilton and came back to live meaningful, productive lives of contribution.

"We didn't stop fighting when we were captured," Williams said. "We were proud to serve. We are proud of this country."

Another cornerstone of the symposium was the Aviation Flag Panel. In addition to Aqulino and Whitesell, panelists were: U.S. Marine Corps Deputy Commandant for Aviation Lt. Gen. Michael Cederholm; Commander, Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR), Vice Adm. Carl Chebi; Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic, Rear Adm. Douglas Verissimo; the Navy's N98, Rear

Adm. Michael Donnelly; Deputy Chief of Naval Personnel, Rear Adm. Michael Baze; and Chief of Naval Air Training, Rear Adm. Richard Brophy. They answered questions from the crowd and provided updates to a number of projects and initiatives.

Donnelly spoke about how carriers are a lynchpin in Naval Aviation. The ability to get the carriers in the new Ford-class delivered on-time is essential, and the Navy is working closely with industry to optimize the process.

Other topics touched included the Air Wing of the Future including the incorporation of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, an improved pipeline for new students training to be naval aviators and the continued press for improving quality of life/quality of service.

Chebi encouraged aviators to come to his command, NAVAIR, as part of the test community. They need the best and the brightest, he said, to test the future capabilities of Naval Aviation.

Other programming from the symposium included panels about resourcing, the Naval Safety Command, careers and industry as well as a winging ceremony in which several new aviators pinned on their wings of gold—a meaningful experience for everyone in the community. For additional information from Hook ‘23 and pictures from the winging, POW panel and more, visit then follow the NAE on LinkedIn at https://www.linkedin.com/company/naval-aviation-enterprise, on Facebook @NAEready and on X @NAE_Readiness.

MARINE ROTATIONAL FORCE – DARWIN MV-22B OSPREY TILTROTOR AIRCRAFT CRASH

Release from Marine Rotational Force – Darwin

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DARWIN, AUSTRALIA – Marine Rotational Force – Darwin can confirm a U.S. Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey crash on Melville Island, north of Darwin, Northern Territory, Australia while transporting troops during a routine training exercise. The incident took place at approximately 9:30 a.m. There were a total of 23 personnel on board. Three have been confirmed deceased while five others were transported to Royal Darwin Hospital in serious condition.

The Marines aboard the aircraft were flying in support of

Exercise Predators Run. Recovery efforts are ongoing. The cause of the incident is under investigation. Further details will be provided as the situation develops.

Marine Aviator Killed in F./A-18D Hornet Crash

EL CENTRO, Calif. (Sept. 28, 2020) Marines with Marine All Weather Attack Squadron 224 (VMFA 224), Marine Aircraft Group 31, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, prepare F/A-18s for flight operations aboard Naval Air Facility El Centro, Calif. on Sept. 28, 2020. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Nicholas Buss)
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ARLINGTON, Va. – A Marine Corps aviator was killed in the crash of his F/A-18D Hornet strike fighter on Aug. 24.

The two-seat Hornet, with only the pilot on board, crashed near Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, California, at 11:54 PST, according to a release from the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing. The name of the pilot will not be released until the next of kin has been notified. The mishap is under investigation.

The aircraft was assigned to Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA (AW)) 224, based at MCAS Beaufort, South Carolina. The squadron is one of only two VMFA(AW) squadrons remaining in the Marine Corps, the other being VMFA(AW)-533. The Marine Corps is in transition from the F/A-18 Hornet to the F-35B/C Lightning II strike fighter.

Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces Enable Distributed Maritime Operations During LSE 2023

ATLANTIC OCEAN (Aug. 12,2023) Navy Expeditionary Combat Command Sailors assigned to Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit (MDSU) 2 fast-rope onto the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Porter (DDG 78) for a simulated expeditionary battle damage assessment and repair during a general quarters drill, August 12, 2023. Porter is participating in U.S. Fleet Forces Command's Large Scale Exercise 2023, which provides a venue to test and refine current and new technologies and platforms to reinforce our current position as a supreme maritime force and provide feedback used to inform future innovation. (U.S. Navy photo by Interior Communications Electrician 3rd Class Hailey A. Servedio)
Release from U.S. Fleet Forces Command

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23 August 2023

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. – Sailors and Marines assigned to Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) refined their warfighting

concepts and tactics in live, virtual, and constructive training events throughout the month of August during Large Scale Exercise (LSE) 2023.

NECC's operations center provided command and control of NECC's forces throughout the exercise, working closely to support Fleet commanders in 2nd, 6th and 7th Fleets.

NECC forces operating in the continental U.S. demonstrated their ability to provide expeditionary re-arming, refueling, port damage repair, airfield damage repair, mine countermeasures and battle damage assessments ashore in Virginia, North Carolina and Florida and at sea in the U.S. 2nd Fleet operational area.

Expeditionary Re-Arming

The training events kicked off with Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group (NAVELSG) further refining their ability to reload a destroyer's missile tubes using a crane from an auxiliary ship, August 3. NAVELSG Sailors assigned to Navy Cargo Handling Battalion's expeditionary reload team assisted the crews of the Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Porter (DDG 78) and Military Sealift Command's (MSC) dry cargo ammunition ship USNS William McLean (T-AKE 12) in performing a MK 41 Vertical Launch System (VLS) re-arm using simulated ordnance, pier-side, at Naval Station Norfolk. The expeditionary ordnance reload teams also conducted re-arming efforts in Mayport, Florida, during the exercise.

"Expeditionary logistics allow the Navy to quickly return to maintaining maritime dominance," said Rear Adm. Brad Andros, commander, NECC. "Operating in support of Military Sealift Command during Large Scale Exercise 2023 provides our expeditionary reload teams the opportunity to train to different platforms so that they can continue to sustain capacity and increase the persistent combat power of naval

forces.”

Expeditionary Port Damage Repair

Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces leveraged an aging pier on Naval Station Norfolk August as a training site to not only practice their ability to conduct expeditionary port damage repair operations (ExPDRO) but also improve real-word infrastructure for future fleet use.

Prior to beginning the repair, Navy divers from Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit (MDSU) 2 conducted harbor clearance and a pier survey with remotely operated vehicles to ensure a safe working environment, and the Maritime Expeditionary Security Force conducted patrol boat operations, providing security of the entry and exit points for our forces.

Sailors conducting ExPDRO revive sea ports of debarkation through diving, salvage, expeditionary dredging and expedient construction operations to remove impediments to shipping, repair piers, quay walls and other waterfront infrastructure in contested environments to support maneuverability and resupply of forces. The 22nd Naval Construction Regiment oversaw the successful ExPDRO event, commanding and controlling Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 2, who provided underwater construction capabilities, and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11, who used a task-tailored waterfront construction company who specializes in maritime construction to provide topside construction capabilities. Improvements for the pier included constructing new reinforcements with trussing, restoring and painting cleats, wrapping piles, and underwater pier bracing.

“Repairing sea ports of debarkation is incredibly important for enabling distributed maritime operations,” said Andros. “Our forces were able to demonstrate their ability to repair piers quickly and effectively so that the Fleet can return to

the fight. This capability enables expeditionary logistics and resupply of expeditionary advanced base forces.”

Expeditionary Airfield Damage Repair and Expeditionary Refueling

Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces also conducted airfield damage repair efforts onboard Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro, North Carolina. To exercise integration with the amphibious surface fleet and U.S. Marine Corps, Seabees from NMCB 11 embarked the amphibious transport dock ship USS New York (LPD 21) with construction vehicles and supplies and conducted a beach landing onto Onslow Beach at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune with the support of landing craft, air cushions.

Once they landed, they refueled and convoyed to Seymour Johnson Air Force Base where they met Navy explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) technicians from EOD Mobile Unit (EODMU) 6 and began airfield damage repair efforts which included surveying the airfield, identifying explosive hazards, clearing the area of simulated ordnance and repairing craters and spalls to return the airfield back to full functionality.

Sailors from Navy Cargo Handling Battalion’s expeditionary refueling team also integrated with Marines from Marine Wing Support Squadron 272 to establish a forward arming and refueling point for fixed wing aircraft at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base that enabled sea-to-shore and shore-to-sea expeditionary logistics capabilities, a critical node in ensuring distributed maritime operations.

Expeditionary Mine Countermeasures and Battle Damage Repair

An expeditionary mine countermeasures company from EODMU 12 comprised of a command and control element, an unmanned systems platoon and an explosive ordnance disposal mine

countermeasures platoon, embarked aboard the amphibious dock landing ship USS Gunston Hall (LSD-44) to provide expeditionary mine countermeasures “q-route” clearance in the 2nd Fleet operational area. They used a combination of unmanned systems and EOD technicians to locate, identify and eliminate simulated explosive threats with underwater detonations so that the ship could safely operate in a simulated contested environment.

Sailors from MDSU 2 demonstrated their ability to rapidly deploy, conduct damage assessments, and “fight the ship” alongside Sailors from the USS Porter (DDG 78) during a simulated emergency response scenario on the ship. This capability, known as expeditionary battle damage assessment and repair, is designed to increase surface combatant resiliency and get the Navy’s ships back in the fight to continue their missions. The initial entry team from MDSU 2 conducted a fast rope insertion onto the Porter from a helicopter where they integrated into shipboard damage control and engineering efforts while also establishing communication back to their higher headquarters ashore. They then dispersed throughout the ship to check repair efforts, identify water intrusion points, and conduct clearance and explosive hazard mitigation.

Andros said he was incredibly proud of his Sailors and the warfighting concepts that were refined during LSE 2023 so that the Navy Expeditionary Combat Force can continue to support the Navy in fighting, winning, and deterring potential aggressors.

“Our Sailors are trained to operate globally and thrive in littoral environments to reinforce America’s maritime dominance,” said Andros. “The capabilities of the Navy Expeditionary Combat Force were on full display during Large Scale Exercise 2023, and I look forward to future iterations as we build upon our ability to rearm, refuel, resupply,

repair and revive naval forces to stay in the fight.”

Navy Expeditionary Combat Command mans, trains, equips, organizes, and sustains warfighting readiness for the Navy’s explosive ordnance disposal, construction, maritime expeditionary security, expeditionary logistics support, and expeditionary intelligence forces so that Navy and Joint Force commanders can apply our unique capabilities to their missions.

LSE 2023 demonstrates the Navy’s and Marine Corps’ ability to employ precise, lethal, and overwhelming force globally across six maritime component commands, seven numbered fleets, and 22 time zones. LSE 2023 merges real-world operations with virtually constructed scenarios to create a realistic training environment that allows Sailors and Marines to train how they will fight, regardless of geographic boundaries.

For more information about NECC and our units, visit our website: https://www.necc.usff.navy.mil/