Future Challenges, Opportunities Discussed at Naval Aviation 3-Star Summit

From Naval Air Systems Command, June 3, 2024

LEXINGTON PARK, Md. – The stars were out for over 200 attendees May 29 at the Naval Aviation 3-Star Summit in Lexington Park, Maryland. The evening's theme was "Advancing Naval Aviation Readiness for the High-End Fight."

The event marked the first-time leaders of the Naval Aviation Enterprise, including NAVAIR Commander, Vice Adm. Carl "Chebs" Chebi; Commander, Naval Air Forces Pacific and "Air Boss" Vice Adm. Daniel "Undra" Cheever; Director, Air Warfare Division (N98) Rear Adm. Michael "Buzz" Donnelly; and Marine Corps Deputy Commandant for Aviation Lt. Gen. Bradford "Gilla" Gering gathered for the event, hosted by The Patuxent Partnership, Association of Naval Aviation and Marine Corps Aviation Association.

The panel spent 90 minutes addressing a wide range of questions on topics including recruiting and retention, overcoming budget challenges, joint capability development, accelerating capability delivery, unmanned aviation, increased automation (artificial intelligence and machine learning), and Live Virtual Constructive Training.

Vice Adm. Chebi opened the discussion with an audience question about improvements to the requirements process to help the naval aviation community be a little more flexible.

“I think that is a very specific area we need to look at formally,” replied Adm. Donnelly, director of the Air Warfare Division (N98) at the Pentagon. “There is a recognized shortfall in the speed we need to move with innovation…to take advantage of what industry can do. The current process cannot keep up with the way we are doing things right now.”

Chebi said while it is a “long, laborious process, there’s a lot we can effectively apply within the construct of ‘big R’ requirements to get capability out there now. There are so many authorities and flexibilities we can leverage to increase warfighting capability and the availability of our platforms.”

Air Boss Vice Adm. Cheever then addressed retention and recruiting in naval aviation.

“There are gaps out there. [In the enlisted specialties] we don’t have a lot of young apprentices,” he said. “So they’re not training to become journeymen and supervisors, and the development is a little slower than we’d like right now. In the officer ranks, we’re mitigating department head shortages, as well as junior officer shortages, by assigning temporary duty in key billets. The flexibility and standard of excellence in naval aviation ensures even those who didn’t train with the team, can seamlessly join the team. I’m pulling pros from the bullpen that are really trained and really

good.”

From the Marine perspective, Lt. Gen. Gering said, “in aggregate, we’re making our recruiting mission. If you look at our retention goals, we’re making those as well.”

Chebi also asked the panel to discuss budget challenges for Naval and Marine Corps aviation.

“Balancing crisis response with modernization is one of the Commandant’s five priorities,” Gering said. “Crisis response is a must pay bill; we must look for trade space in modernization with a fixed top line.”

Chebi was then asked about new collaboration with the other services in future launch weapons solutions.

Donnelly noted an increased level of cooperation in that arena.

“Coming back into the Pentagon from my previous requirements job… I’m pleased at how close we are cooperating with the Air Force, particularly in weapons. We’ve got a partnership in [long-range and penetrating weapons] as well as air-to-air. With our partnered use of the F-35 Lightning II, the fit, form, and function vis-a-vis weapons carriage and delivery match both our needs.”

Donnelly also emphasized partnership with industry.

“I think our industry partners recognize how much the DoD and the services are investing. That partnership has been very helpful, and it’s also included Congress who has given us some legislative authorities for multi-year procurements.”

An audience member asked the panel the status of a replacement for the Navy and Marine T-45 Goshawk training aircraft.

“It’s not just the airframe replacement of the T-45. It’s a holistic, undergraduate training system,” said Donnelly.

“CNATRA is changing its syllabus based on the way people are learning today, adding virtual reality and simulation.” We recognize with the precision landing mode we expect in future fighters… landing on a carrier may not be the most difficult portion of the mission. We can reduce some of the workload we’re putting into carrier landings, freeing up time to focus on more complex tasks such as information processing and decision making. [It] gives us a holistic new way to look at what we will implement and probably some wider options to consider as a T-45 replacement.”

A question on automation prompted Chebi to advocate for more development of AI and ML.

“The smartest folks in the room are not sitting up here. So please provide us your inputs on ways to do this better. My ask of all of you is to show us what the possibilities are from automation, from AI, from ML, so that we can apply them to our programs.”

“I think where automation can really help us is aviation safety,” Gering said. “And I think the other thing we are struggling with is the tyranny of time-distance logistics in the big fight. I think we could use a lot of help there. We need predictive maintenance. It’s all about logistics, fuel and weapons in the high-end fight.

The group later discussed a brief they received via video teleconference with leadership from the deployed Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group.

“My takeaway is, it’s really impressive to see the capability employed today in the Red Sea. We provided that capability by working together toward an outcome that matters – delivering the capability the fleet needs, when they need it, so they can deter, fight, win and return home safely,” Chebi said.

“The operations conducted in the Red Sea validate decades of planning, development, and investment that we’ve gotten out of

the fleet," Donnelly said. "It validates our ability to react very quickly to recognize the gaps and get solutions back immediately to the fleet to give them the advantage we require."

Billed as a follow-up to the TPP-hosted Defense Summit in March, the 3-Star Summit served to enhance dialog with industry members and educate the public on the importance of naval aviation to national defense.

US Navy Launches Careers in Defense Industry

General Dynamics Electric Boat
By Team Submarine Public Affairs, June 4, 2024

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy Submarine Industrial Base (SIB) program along with local shipbuilding companies and suppliers, elected officials, and community leaders gathered to celebrate the future of the defense workforce during the inaugural National Signing Day event in Boston on May 30.

The National Signing Day concluded a series of five Talent Pipeline Program (TPP) events across key maritime hubs, honoring the latest group of talent joining the Defense Industrial Base (DIB).

The five regional TPPs in Philadelphia, Virginia, Pittsburgh, New York, and New England highlighted the SIB program's efforts over several years to develop robust talent pipelines within these regions. Across these signing days, more than 2,700 individuals were recognized for starting their careers with small and medium-sized suppliers that support the maritime industry.

"Serving as a part of the National Signing Day event has been a huge honor," said Meganne Atkins, executive director, AUKUS Integration and Acquisition Office, and guest speaker. "Witnessing the accelerated growth of this program, from my first event at a high school gymnasium in Pittsburgh to this grand stage now at the New England Aquarium in Boston has been a humbling, edifying, and inspirational experience," said Atkins.

During the event, each region's senior representative, or flag sponsor, introduced an employer to represent that specific pipeline. The National Signing Day showcased the scope and scale of the TPP.

The Signing Day events kicked off in Virginia on May 7, where the region's TPP celebrated its second year by recognizing 1,200 new hires. The event underscored the critical role these skilled tradespeople, including welders, pipefitters, and electricians, play in our national security.

“It doesn’t matter your position or title; you contribute to our national security. You are helping the United States of America exercise power projection and diplomacy,” emphasized Team Submarine’s Command Master Chief Jeff Hiscocks during the ceremony.

Mike Ross, an Assembly Operator at TE Connectivity and a U.S. Army veteran, the event’s new hire guest speaker, expressed his gratitude for the professional development opportunities at TE and the privilege of continuing to serve the military beyond uniformed service.

“Every day I am driven by a sense of purpose knowing that the parts we develop contribute to the defense of our country and its allies,” said Ross.

On May 14, the Pittsburgh pipeline recognized over 700 skilled tradespeople who joined or reached their one-year anniversary with employers supporting the Defense Industrial Base. In just its second year, the Pittsburgh pipeline has already doubled its impact, expanding from 30 to 72 participating companies and now reaching across Pennsylvania, Ohio, New Jersey, and Maryland. The event highlighted the growing collaboration across the region.

The inaugural Signing Day for the New York TPP was held on May 21. It celebrated partnerships with 36 employers and recognized 74 individuals who have found careers in defense manufacturing. This milestone reflects the program’s commitment to fostering new opportunities and supporting the region’s industry.

Philadelphia’s third Signing Day event on May 23 celebrated the program’s success in helping more than 650 individuals find careers within defense manufacturing.

The Navy’s Executive Director for Strategic Submarines, Mr. Matt Sermon, highlighted the importance of these roles, stating, “The Pennsylvania Talent Pipeline is a critical

workforce program that helps protect our Nation. The skills and hard work you bring are the cornerstones in building the next generation of submarines that will patrol our oceans and protect our shores."

Concluding the series of events, the New England TPP hosted its first Signing Day and celebrated its partnerships with 31 employers and recognized 394 individuals on May 30. Following the New England event, key members from the other four TPPs joined the New England leaders and employees for the National Signing Day event.

"I'm glad we have such a fantastic turnout for the first-ever New England Talent Pipeline Project Signing Day," said the pipeline's Flag sponsor Ms. Atkins said Meganne Atkins, executive director, AUKUS Integration and Acquisition Office. "To everyone who's walking across this stage today, I say this: embrace this moment. This is your time to shine, to show the world what you're made of! You're doing incredibly important work that directly impacts our national security. And together, we will continue to build a future that is safe, secure, and full of endless possibilities."

Adm. Daryl Caudle, commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, highlighted the occasion in a video message to the group.

"It brings me great pleasure to participate in the conclusion of one chapter of your lives and the beginning of what will be the next phase of an incredible part of your professional journey," Caudle said. "You are now an elite member of the foundation that supports our world-class Navy. Celebrate today's occasion because it is certainly an achievement worth enjoying."

As the U.S. Navy prepares to build one Columbia-class and two Virginia-class submarines per year by 2028, which will require hiring more than 140,000 skilled workers over the next decade, initiatives like the SIB's Talent Pipeline Programs are more

critical than ever.

Prior to these events, Rear Adm. Scott Pappano, Program Executive Officer for Strategic Submarines, noted the program's importance.

"These signing days highlight the many meaningful career paths to be found in submarine manufacturing and the good-paying jobs being created in communities across the country," emphasized Pappano. "These events represent merely the beginning as we work to grow and sustain the Submarine Industrial Base long-term."

The May signing days celebrated individual achievements and underscored the collaborative efforts of over 290 defense industry and 140 academic partners dedicated to supporting the Nation's defense. As the program continues to expand, adding new events and regions, the TPP stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and the enduring spirit of the skilled tradespeople who are the backbone of the U.S. Navy's submarine fleet strengthening national security and our communities one skilled tradesperson at a time.

In a world of evolving global security threats, the U.S. Navy's investment in workforce development through the SIB Program is crucial. These initiatives not only bolster the submarine force but also affirm the Navy's commitment to maintaining American maritime supremacy.

WASP ARG-24TH MEU (SOC) Begin Deployment

From U.S. Fleet Forces Command, 01 June 2024

ATLANTIC OCEAN – Sailors and Marines assigned to the Wasp (WSP) Amphibious Ready Group (ARG)-24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) Special Operations Capable (SOC) began deployment operations in the Atlantic, June 1.

The deployment is a scheduled rotation of forces that fosters maritime security and increased theater cooperation. The ARG provides a forward naval expeditionary presence with vast, specialized crisis response capabilities to support geographic combatant commander, numbered fleet commander, and joint special operations task force commander.

“The Wasp ARG is ready,” said Capt. Nakia Cooper, commodore of Amphibious Squadron 4. “I’m confident in the skill and

unwavering commitment of our team. Through robust training and real-world events, we have demonstrated professionalism and proficiency at every level. We are ready to support combatant commanders around the globe in any capacity deemed necessary."

WSP ARG certified to deploy following a composite training unit exercise, which concluded May 12. The ARG consists of three Hampton Roads-based ships: amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD 1), amphibious transport dock ship USS New York (LPD 21), and dock landing ship USS Oak Hill (LSD 51), totaling more than 4,500 Sailors and Marines across the force.

"The Marines and Sailors of the 24th MEU (SOC) demonstrated their tactical acumen throughout our pre-deployment training program, and we are ready to execute in any clime or place," said Col. Todd Mahar, commanding officer, 24th MEU (SOC). "We are excited to deploy with our Wasp ARG teammates and take our naval warfighting capabilities forward to support national security objectives."

Coupled with the WSP ARG, the 24th MEU (SOC) serves as a premier stand-in force with a full complement of all-domain capabilities to operate persistently within the littorals or weapons engagement zones of an adversary. The 24th MEU (SOC) serves as one of the Nation's primary crisis response forces capable of conducting amphibious operations, crisis response, and limited contingency operations, including enabling the introduction of follow-on forces and designated special operations, in support of theater requirements of the geographic combatant commander.

U.S. 2nd Fleet, reestablished in 2018 in response to the changing global security environment, develops and employs maritime forces ready to fight across multiple domains in the Atlantic and Arctic in order to ensure access, deter aggression and defend U.S., allied, and partner interests.

To learn more about WASP ARG and 24th MEU “Team of Teams,” visit their DVIDS feature page at https://www.dvidshub.net/feature/wasparg24thmeu.

You can find Amphibious Squadron 4, Wasp Amphibious Ready Group on Facebook and DVIDS.

You can find the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit on Facebook, Twitter (@the24MEU), Instagram (@24MEU), and DVIDS.

You can find USS Wasp on Facebook and Instagram (@usswas

June 2 Red Sea Update

From U.S. Central Command

June 3, 2024

TAMPA, Fla – In the past 24 hours, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces conducted a self-defense engagement over the southern Red Sea, destroying one Iranian-backed Houthi uncrewed aerial system (UAS).

It was determined the UAS presented an imminent threat to U.S., coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region. These actions are taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure.

June 1 Red Sea Update

June 1, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – Between 9 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. (Sanaa time) June 1, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces destroyed one

Iranian-backed Houthi uncrewed aerial system (UAS) in the southern Red Sea. USCENTCOM forces also observed two other UAS crash into the Red Sea. No injuries or damage was reported by U.S., coalition, or commercial ships.

Additionally, between 7 and 11:30 p.m., USCENTCOM forces successfully engaged two Houthi anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM) in the southern Red Sea. The ASBM were fired in the direction of USS Gravely and were destroyed in self-defense, with no damage or injuries reported by U.S., coalition, or commercial ships.

It was determined these UAS and ASBM presented an imminent threat to U.S., coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region. USCENTCOM's actions are taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S., coalition, and merchant vessels.

May 31 U.S. Central Command Update

May 31, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – At approximately 1:30 a.m. (Sanaa time) on May 31, Iranian-backed Houthis launched one uncrewed aerial system (UAS) from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen into the Red Sea. The UAS crashed into the Red Sea with no injuries or damage reported by U.S., coalition, or commercial ships.

Separately, between 2:53 a.m. and 10:59 p.m. (Sanaa time), U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed one UAS over the Gulf of Aden and three UAS over the Red Sea that were launched from Iranian-backed Houthi-controlled areas in Yemen.

At approximately 9:31 p.m. (Sanaa time), Iranian-backed Houthis launched two anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM) from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen into the Gulf of Aden. There were no injuries or damage reported by U.S., coalition, or commercial ships.

It was determined these systems presented an imminent threat to U.S., coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region. This action was taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S., coalition, and merchant vessels.

Navy Accepts Delivery of Ship to Shore Connector, LCAC 109

By Team Ships Public Affairs, May 31, 2024

NEW ORLEANS – The U.S. Navy took delivery of the latest Ship to Shore Connector (SSC), Landing Craft, Air Cushion (LCAC) 109 from Textron Systems, May 29. This new addition to the fleet signifies a substantial enhancement in the Navy's amphibious capabilities, providing a vital asset for rapid deployment and logistical support.

The delivery of LCAC 109 comes after completion of acceptance trials conducted by the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey, which tested the readiness and capability of the craft to effectively meet its requirements. LCAC 109 is the first delivery of 15 craft from the follow-on contract to the original Detail Design and Construction contract.

"This new craft will provide the Navy and Marine Corps team with unparalleled capability in amphibious warfare, ensuring we remain agile and responsive to emerging threats and global challenges," said Capt. Jason Grabelle, program manager for Amphibious Assault and Connectors Programs, Program Executive Office (PEO) Ships. "The introduction of LCAC 109 into our fleet marks a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance operational readiness."

LCACs are built with configurations, dimensions, and clearances similar to the legacy LCACs they replace – ensuring that this latest air cushion vehicle is fully compatible with existing, well deck-equipped amphibious ships, the Expeditionary Sea Base and the Expeditionary Transfer Dock. LCACs are capable of carrying a 60 to 75-ton payload. They primarily transport weapon systems, equipment, cargo, and assault element personnel through a wide range of conditions, including over-the-beach.

"The successful delivery of LCAC 109 is a testament to the strong partnership between the Navy and Textron Systems," said Captain Grabelle. "This advanced craft will significantly boost our operational capability, providing a critical link in our ability to project power and support joint operations across the globe." Textron Systems is currently in serial production on LCACs 110-122.

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 and craft, auxiliary ships, special mission ships,

sealift and support ships.

USS Shoup Changes Command from Commander to Captain

USS Shoup Changes Command from Commander to Captain
By Lt. Travis Weger, 23 May 2024

YOKOSUKA, Japan – Capt. Holman Agard relieved Cmdr. Dale Tourtelotte as commanding officer of the the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Shoup (DDG 86) May 23, during a change of command ceremony in Yokosuka, Japan.

The event is significant because it marks the commanding officer rank upgrade from commander to captain, which provides

the U.S. Navy additional flexibility in terms of the range of missions the ship can conduct.

“It is an honor to not only be selected for this position, but to represent the outstanding crew onboard USS Shoup,” said Agard. “The change from an O-5 command to an O-6 command is significant. It allows Shoup to serve as the home platform for a warfare commander within a carrier strike group.”
Agard thanked Tourtelotte for his leadership and guidance to the crew during his time as commanding officer.

“It’s been humbling and inspiring to work with this dedicated crew and prepare Shoup for this transition,” said Tourtelotte. “The men and women of Shoup have proven their mettle in an operational environment at-sea and continue to display professionalism and laser focus on mission accomplishment every day. I’m proud of what this team accomplished and know they will be in great hands under the leadership of Capt. Agard.”

In addition to the change from commander to captain, Shoup will add senior subject matter experts to its crew in support of the commanding officer and receive equipment upgrades during its ongoing in-port maintenance period in Yokosuka.

“This change demonstrates our continued commitment to the U.S.-Japanese alliance to promote peace and prosperity within the region,” said Agard. “As forward-deployed naval forces, we are ready to respond to any contingency, at any time. A free and open Indo-Pacific benefits all nations.”

Shoup was previously assigned to Commander, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15.

Shoup is forward-deployed to Japan operating as part of Commander, Task Force 70. CTF 70 has tactical control of carrier strike groups, cruisers, and destroyers that deploy or

transit through the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations.

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

BAE Systems to Develop Next-Generation Airborne Decoy Countermeasure

SEAPOWER
The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

From BAE Systems

NASHUA, N.H. – May 15, 2024 – BAE Systems has been selected by the U.S. Navy to develop Dual Band Decoy (DBD), one of the most advanced radio frequency (RF) countermeasures in the world. DBD is a cutting-edge RF self-protection jammer that shields fighter jets from enemy attacks.

Expanding the capabilities of BAE Systems' combat-proven AN/ALE-55 Fiber-Optic Towed Decoy, DBD consists of a towed unit connected by fiber-optic cable to electronic warfare equipment onboard the aircraft. The decoy delivers the latest jamming technology to disrupt enemy radars and lure missiles away from the aircraft. DBD can be launched by the pilot or automatically in response to threats, offering critical protection in highly contested airspace.

"With Dual Band Decoy, we are building on the ALE-55's years of mission success as a high-powered jamming system," said Don Davidson, director of the Advanced Compact Electronic Warfare Solutions product line at BAE Systems. "Dual Band Decoy delivers broad capability that can be installed on a variety of aircraft and is upgradeable to address future threats."

Dual Band Decoy incorporates the company's custom integrated circuits, enabling higher performance and more capability with reduced size, weight, and power. DBD is an integral part of BAE Systems' Intrepid Shield™ approach to creating a protective sphere around platforms in highly contested battlespaces using the full electromagnetic spectrum to detect, exploit, and counter advanced threats.

DBD will be initially fielded on the U.S. Navy's F/A-18E/F Super Hornet. Work on DBD will be performed at the company's state-of-the-art facilities in Nashua, N.H.

Winds Damage Navy TH-73 Training Helicopters at

Whiting Field

By Richard Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – A strong wind that swept through Naval Air Station Whiting Field caused damage more than three dozen new TH-73 Thrasher training helicopters earlier this month, according to a Navy spokesman.

The following statement was issued by the Commander, Naval Air Training Command (CNATRA):

“On May 13, at approximately 10:35 a.m. CST, a significant weather event involving high winds up to 71 knots (gusting) caused damage to 41 TH-73 Thrasher helicopters assigned to Training Air Wing (TAW) 5. No injury to personnel occurred during the incident and there has been no reported damage to any TH-57 Sea Ranger or T-6 Texan II aircraft positioned on the flight line. All aircraft were parked aboard Naval Air Station Whiting Field during the incident. The full extent of

the resources needed to restore the fleet has not yet been finalized, however, repairs are not expected to exceed a month. No operational impact to the CNATRA mission is expected due to the availability of CNATRA's fleet of TH-57 Sea Ranger helicopters that remain undamaged."

The TH-73A, built by Leonardo's AgustaWestland Philadelphia Corp., is a military version of the Leonardo TH-119. The TH-73A was procured by the Navy to replace the Bell TH-57 Sea Ranger with the role of training rotary-wing and tilt-rotor pilots for the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. The TH-73A was first delivered to TAW-5 in August 2021 and began training pilots in September 2022.

The Navy has ordered a total of 130 TH-73As. The Thrasher fleet is expected to complete replacement of the TH-57B/C during fiscal 2025 and serve through 2050, according to the Navy.

Kratos Defense Celebrates 200th Launch of BQM-177A in Support of U.S. Navy Exercises

May 28, 2024 at 8:00 AM EDT

SAN DIEGO – Kratos Defense & Security Solutions, Inc. , a technology company in the defense, national security and global markets and provider of high-performance, jet-powered unmanned aerial systems, announced that on Tuesday, April 2, the Kratos BQM-177A flew in support of the U.S. Navy's AIM-9X mission at Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake, California. This event marked the 200th launch of the BQM-177A by Pacific Target and Marine Operations (PTMO) and resulted in the successful completion of the exercise.

The BQM-177A is the U.S. Navy's next-generation Sub-Sonic Aerial Target (SSAT). While it provides formidable threat emulation for air-to-air engagements, the BQM-177A's aerodynamic design and unmatched performance capabilities make it the best choice for highly dynamic, high-subsonic, sea-skimming anti-ship cruise missile threat emulation.

Capable of speeds in excess of 0.95 Mach and a sea-skimming altitude as low as 6.6 feet, the BQM-177A has no equal when it comes to delivering realistic anti-ship missile threat emulation.

This highly versatile aerial target supports a variety of mission requirements by carrying a wide array of internal and external payloads, including proximity scoring, Identification Friend or Foe (IFF), passive and active RF augmentation, electronic countermeasures, infrared (IR) augmentation (plume

pods), chaff and flare dispensers, and towed targets.

Steve Fendley, President of Kratos Unmanned Systems Division, said about the program's bicentennial milestone, "Because of its high-performance capabilities and demonstrated reliability, the BQM-177A has proven to play a crucial role in the training of today's warfighters. With a global shift toward the use of drones in military applications, this platform is only becoming more relevant in the unmanned landscape of today's battlefield. The 200th launch is an indicator of just how valuable the 177 is to executing the Navy's objectives, and I am very proud of the role we have to play in preparing our nation's warfighting personnel to be ready for what's next."

Acknowledging this significant program milestone, Greg Crewse, Program Manager for the Navy's Aerial Targets Program Office (PMA-208), said, "The 200th launch of the BQM-177A is a significant achievement that reflects the dedication and skill of our collective team. We are committed to supporting our warfighters' need for next-generation target threat capability and are excited to continue improving aerial target systems to ensure that our Navy is ready for any challenge."

---

29 May Red Sea Update

From U.S. Central Command, May 29, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – At approximately 8:40 p.m. (Sanaa time) May 28, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed two missile launchers in an Iranian-backed Houthi-controlled area of Yemen.

Separately, at approximately 11:30 p.m. (Sanaa time) on May 28, Iranian-backed Houthis launched two anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM) from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen into the Red Sea. There were no injuries or damage reported by U.S., coalition, or commercial ships.

The following day, between 1:26 and 1:38 a.m. (Sanaa time) on May 29, USCENTCOM forces successfully destroyed two uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) over the Red Sea launched from an Iranian-backed Houthi controlled area of Yemen.

It was determined these missiles and systems presented an imminent threat to U.S., coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region. These actions are taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure.