First East-Coast-Assigned Navy CMV-22B OSPREY Arrives in Norfolk

By Commander, Naval Air Force Public Affairs, April 5, 2024

NORFOLK, Va. – The first East Coast-assigned Navy tiltrotor vertical/short takeoff and landing (V/STOL) CMV-22B Osprey aircraft, assigned to Fleet Logistics Multi-Mission Squadron (VRM) 40, arrived to Naval Station Norfolk on April 5.

“Naval Aviation is ecstatic to welcome the first CMV-22B Osprey to Norfolk,” said Rear Adm. Doug Verissimo, commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic (CNAL). “This first aircraft’s arrival symbolizes an evolution and change in Naval Aviation as we look toward the future. The event represents the hard work and stamina of our aviators, aircrewmen, maintainers and sustainment personnel in the VRM community.”

The CMV-22B will provide the fleet's medium-lift and long-range aerial logistics capability, eventually replacing the C-2A Greyhounds of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 40 over the next several years. The squadron's relocation to Naval Station Norfolk is part of their permanent duty station change from Naval Air Station (NAS) North Island in preparation to provide fleet logistic aviation assets to the Atlantic Fleet beginning in 2025.

The VRM-40 "Mighty Bison" were established aside their existing sister squadron, VRM-30, and the training squadron, VRM-50, aboard NAS North Island in March 2022.

All squadron personnel have been officially stationed in Norfolk since Feb. 1, 2024. The remaining VRM-40 aircraft will begin to arrive to Hampton Roads in the summer of 2024.

VRM-40's leadership consists of Cmdr. Matthew Boyce, commanding officer; Cmdr. Mason Fox, executive officer, and Command Master Chief Bradley Wissinger.

"We are proud to join the Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic team and eager to lean forward into our next phase of stand-up," Boyce said.

Fox discussed the importance of standing up a new squadron on the East Coast.

"We're excited to be in our permanent home at Naval Station Norfolk and focused on continuing to build the squadron to execute our mission – delivering high priority people and parts to carrier strike groups at sea," Fox said. "The Osprey is an extremely capable aircraft and will be critically important to the way the Navy fights for many years to come."

In addition to VRM-40, a type wing detachment was established onboard Naval Station Norfolk earlier in 2023 to provide local representation of Commander, Fleet Logistics Multi-Mission Wing (CVRMW), based at NAS North Island.

CVRMW’s mission is to provide Pacific and Atlantic Fleet VRM squadrons the ability to sustain lethality for carrier strike groups of the future through the timely, persistent air logistics missions our nation demands any place in the world. The CMV-22B is the Navy’s long-range/medium-lift element of the intra-theater aerial logistics capability responsible for transporting personnel, mail and priority cargo from shore logistics sites to ships at sea.

Naval Air Force Atlantic is responsible for sven nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, 55 aircraft squadrons, 1,200 aircraft and 52,000 officers, enlisted and civilian personnel with priorities focused on warfighting, people, and readiness by providing combat ready, sustainable naval air forces with the right personnel, properly trained and equipped, with a focus on readiness, operational excellence, interoperability, safety, and efficient resourcing.

USS Leyte Gulf Takes Down Semi-Submersible Vessel

ATLANTIC OCEAN (March 22, 2024) – The Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruiser USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55), embarked U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) and Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 50 work together to intercept a self-propelled semi-submersible drug smuggling vessel (SPSS), in the Atlantic Ocean, March 22, 2024 (U.S. Coast Guard Courtesy Photo)

By USNAVSOUTH/4TH FLEET PUBLIC AFFAIRS, April 8, 2024

ATLANTIC OCEAN – The Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruiser USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55), with an embarked U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET), has made multiple drug interdictions in the U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) area of operations (AOR).

In March, while on patrol in the Atlantic Ocean, the crew detected a self-propelled semi-submersible drug smuggling vessel (SPSS). With assistance from Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 50, the crew acquired the location of the SPSS

and LEDET members launched a rigid-hull inflatable boat (RHIB) to intercept the vessel. The LEDET detained the individuals aboard the SPSS and seized approximately 2,370 kilograms of cocaine. Then the crew conducted a sinking exercise (SINKEX) on the SPSS.

“Spotting this vessel was like finding a needle in the haystack,” said Lt. Commander Travis Lee, Leyte Gulf’s senior aviator. “I’ve been doing this for seven years and not once been able to find and acquire such an asset until now.”

Taking down the SPSS was only the latest success for USS Leyte Gulf on this deployment.

In February, while on patrol in the Caribbean Sea, the ship intercepted three different vessels using coordinated air and surface operations involving both U.S. and partner nation forces.

During the interdictions, the LEDET boarded and took positive control of each vessel. On Feb. 6, the ship recovered 520 kilograms of cocaine worth an estimated $12.8 million. On Feb. 15, they recovered 600 kilograms of cocaine worth an estimated $15.25 million. Then on Feb. 28, the crew recovered another 600 kilograms of cocaine worth an estimated $15 million.

“Our Leyte Gulf team was ready when called upon to execute all three interdictions,” said Commanding Officer Capt. Nathan Diaz. “The successful seizure of more than $42 million in illicit drugs is a testament to the interoperability of our partner nations, the Coast Guard and the Leyte Gulf team.”

“It was an exciting day to be the Officer of the Deck running the bridge for one of our interdiction operations,” said Lt. j.g. Jayden Hodgson, an officer of the deck and public affairs officer aboard the ship. “Leyte Gulf prevented the illicit importation of drugs that day and we are only getting

started."

USS Leyte Gulf is currently deployed in the USSOUTHCOM AOR to support bilateral and multinational maritime operations with partners in the region, conduct Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) port visits, and to support JIATF-South in countering illicit-drug trafficking.

LEDETs are deployable specialized forces of the U.S. Coast Guard that enforce U.S. laws and treaties in the maritime domain.

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet supports U.S. Southern Command's joint and combined military operations by employing maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships in order to enhance regional security and promote peace, stability and prosperity in the Caribbean, Central and South American region.

Learn more about USNAVSOUTH/4th Fleet at https://www.fourthfleet.navy.mil, https://www.facebook.com/NAVSOUS4THFLT and @NAVSOUS4THFLT.

April 6 Red Sea Update

U.S. Central Command, April 7, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – Between approximately 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. (Sanaa time) on April 6, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed one mobile surface-to air missile system in Houthi controlled territory of Yemen. CENTCOM forces also shot down one unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) over the Red

Sea.

Additionally, at approximately 6:00 p.m. (Sanaa time), a Coalition vessel detected and successfully engaged and destroyed one inbound anti-ship missile.

There were no injuries or damage reported by U.S., coalition, or commercial ships. It was determined that these systems presented a threat to U.S. and coalition forces and merchant vessels in the region. CENTCOM is dedicated to protecting the freedom of navigation and making international waters safer and more secure for Coalition and merchant vessels.

COMPACFLT Holds Change of Command Ceremony in Pearl Harbor

Adm. Stephen Koehler addresses the audience after becoming the commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet during the COMPACFLT change of command ceremony onboard Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, April 4. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jeremy R. Boan)

From Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs, Apr 4. 2024

Adm. Stephen Koehler assumed command of the U.S. Pacific Fleet (PACFLT) during a change of command ceremony on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, April 4. He relieved Adm. Samuel Paparo, who took over as commander of PACFLT in May 2021.

Adm. John Aquilino, commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, opened the ceremony by thanking Adm. Lisa Franchetti, chief of naval operations, for sending her best leaders to U.S. Pacific Fleet.

“You are looking at the world’s greatest warfighters sitting behind me,” said Aquilino. “In the world’s most concerning theater, against our world’s most dangerous adversaries, what

has been chosen to run this theater are our best warfighters. That is not by accident."

Adm. Lisa Franchetti, chief of naval operations, presided over the ceremony. She welcomed Koehler and praised Paparo for his leadership during his time as the PACFLT commander.

"Sam, you understood that the most powerful tool we have – our true strategic advantage – comes from our strong relationships with our allies and partners," said Franchetti. "And that our shared values and common interest bind us together, and put more ready players on the field – every single day. Sam, I cannot be more proud of the work that you've done as the Pacific Fleet commander, and I'm excited about what is yet to come as you head up the hill (to Camp Smith), and become the 27th commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command next month."

Franchetti welcomed Koehler saying: "You know how to build strong teams to get after our vital mission here in the Indo-Pacific at this critical time in our nation's history. There is no one more ready to lead this Fleet. I am absolutely confident that you are the right person at the right time to lead our Sailors in the Indo-Pacific. And I look forward to seeing all that this Fleet will accomplish on your watch."

While under Paparo's command, PACFLT qualified as a joint task force, established Task Force 504, a task force focused on combat sustainment; Fleet Information Warfare Command Pacific; expanded opportunities for deployed ship repair in India; and completed numerous joint and combined multi-lateral operations across the region with allies and partners.

"These accomplishments and many more have demonstrated our capability and our will to our would-be adversaries. These accomplishments have deterred conflict and preserved the peace," said Paparo.

He took a moment to address the Sailors, chief petty officers, civilians and officers across the Fleet, both at sea and ashore.

“The best part of my job has been watching this team in action,” Paparo said. “I appreciate all that you have done over the last three years. And as I utter these words, your efforts continue. Every day you continue building a more effective fighting force. I am honored to remain your teammate as I take up my next duty, and I am proud to turn over command to Adm. Stephen “Web” Koehler.”

Koehler comes to the historic Pearl Harbor headquarters from Washington, D.C., where he served as director for Strategy, Plans and Policy, J5, Joint Staff.

“I could not be more excited and honored to assume command of the finest fleet in the world, whose capabilities are second to none,” said Koehler. “The U.S. Pacific Fleet answers our nation’s call to compete with unity of purpose, without hesitation, and with a powerful and resolute force.”

Koehler is the 38th commander since the Fleet’s Pearl Harbor headquarters was established in February 1941. He commissioned through the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) at University of Colorado at Boulder in 1986, and was designated a naval aviator in March 1989. He has flown over 3,900 hours in the F-14 Tomcat and F-18 E/F/G Super Hornet with 600 carrier landings.

“Success during competition will require a bias for action, constant drive for excellence, continued vigilance, and the ability to rapidly transition to seizing the initiative and holding it,” said Koehler. “Success will require teamwork with precise execution and mastery of the basics, and then stretching ourselves operationally and tactically as a team of

teams. Success will require cooperation across the supporting elements of the Navy, collaboration across numbered fleets, joint integration, and teamwork with allies and partners.”

U.S. Pacific Fleet is the world’s largest fleet command with an area of operations that encompasses 100 million square miles, nearly half the Earth’s surface, from Antarctica to the Arctic Circle and from the West Coast of the United States into the Indian Ocean. The U.S. Pacific Fleet consists of approximately 200 ships and submarines, nearly 1,200 aircraft, and more than 130,000 Sailors and civilians.

HII Completes Dry Dock Work for Aircraft Carrier USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) Refueling and Complex Overhaul

NEWPORT NEWS, Va., April 08, 2024 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) — HII's (NYSE: HII) Newport News Shipbuilding division has completed the dry dock portion of the refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH) of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74).

Following the recent flooding of more than 100 million gallons of water into the dry dock, USS John C. Stennis was successfully moved to an outfitting berth at the shipyard, where the remainder of the RCOH work and testing will be completed.

"Witnessing Stennis leave the dry dock and return to the water is a testament to the hard work of our shipbuilders, the crew and our government partners," said Rob Check, NNS vice president of in-service aircraft carrier programs. "We remain laser focused on the work ahead during this RCOH period and look forward to preparing this mighty aircraft carrier for the next half of its operational life."

Photos accompanying this release are available at: https://hii.com/news/hii-aircraft-carrier-uss-john-c-stennis-cvn-74-refueling-and-complex-overhaul-drydock/.

During the dry dock phase of the RCOH, USS John C. Stennis received significant upgrades and began an extensive overhaul process, both inside and outside the ship. In addition to defueling and refueling its power plant, NNS shipbuilders preserved tanks and replaced thousands of valves, pumps and piping components. On the outside, they performed major structural updates to the island, mast and antenna tower; upgraded all aircraft launch and recovery equipment; painted the ship's hull, including sea chests and freeboard; restored the propeller shafts; and installed refurbished propellers and rudders.

During the next phase of RCOH, shipbuilders will complete the overhaul and installation of the ship's major components and test its electronics, combat and propulsion systems. This period will also focus on improving the ship's living areas, including crew living spaces, galleys and mess decks.

"Our focus remains steadfast to get our ship back into the fight and to foster the professional and personal development of our sailors," said Capt. J. Patrick Thompson III, the ship's commanding officer. "We look forward to continue working with our industry partners to complete remaining production and test work and redeliver Stennis back to the fleet."

USS John C. Stennis is the seventh Nimitz-class aircraft to undergo its RCOH – the mid-life refueling overhaul and maintenance availability that produces a recapitalized carrier capable of supporting current and future Navy requirements. Once the RCOH is complete, USS John C. Stennis will be equipped to operate in the fleet for the second half of her 50-year expected service life.

Naval Supply Systems Command introduces Naval Sustainment System- Supply 2.0

The guided-missile destroyer USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51) transits through the Mediterranean Sea in 2023. NSS-Supply is helping meet fleet readiness goals using an agile framework driven by data analytics. CREDIT: U.S. Navy | Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Omar Rubi

By Kirk Engler and Melissa Olson

Naval Sustainment System-Supply (NSS-Supply) 2.0 is focused on delivering fleet outcomes and supply's contribution to fleet readiness, whereas NSS-Supply's original focus was to capture supply chain value.

Navy fleet readiness goals fall into three categories: Subsurface, Surface, and Aviation, allowing NAVSUP to focus on supply's contribution to meeting fleet readiness goals.

How? NSS-Supply uses the “Agile” framework driven by data analytics. NSS-Supply is currently analyzing data to see what supplies are keeping the Surface Warfare community from reaching their North Star readiness target of 75 mission capable ships. A good example is the targeting of on-board sparing for systems that have outdated spares modeling. Getting the right mix of spares on board increases readiness and improves endurance.

Simply stated, NSS-Supply 2.0 moves away from a monetized-value calculation to a readiness calculation directly linked to fleet readiness goals.

NSS-Supply is built on the CNO’s priorities of warfighting, warfighters, and the foundation that supports them. The essential element is the Agile approach which quickly assesses problem areas and rapidly deploys innovation into the E2E supply chain using the Get Real, Get Better mindset to deep-dive supply chain issues that accelerate the Navy’s warfighting advantage.

Initiatives are built from the Chief of Naval Operations, Navigation Plan Implementation Framework (NIF) priorities and objectives. Additionally, Performance-to-Plan (P2P) is inculcated in the NSS-Supply culture to drive baseline Get Real readiness performance and NSS-Supply is the Get Better engine that allows accountable commanders to implement world-class readiness solutions across the Navy’s E2E supply chain.

NSS-Supply has undertaken 33 initiatives since 2021. The following examples provide a few highlights:

- Achieved average RTAT reduction of 40% in aviation and 30% in maritime repairs.
- Established first Regional Maintenance Center reoccurring repair agreements to repair 104 parts for wholesale stocking.

- Increased nuclear submarine capabilities through improved spares pool health and enhanced policies to increase critical submarine parts inventories.
- Engaged key suppliers to improve contract performance, expanded contract strategies, and improved inventory performance.
- Built and implemented E2E Naval Shipyard Supply Chain Management tool to significantly improve submarine material support.

NSS-Supply continues to tackle supply chain initiatives directly supporting the warfighter as a multi-year journey to transform the end-to-end supply chain and provide the sustainment outcome the fleet needs that responds to the VCNO directive that designated the Commander, Naval Supply Systems Command as the Navy's E2E Navy Supply Chain Integrator.

CDR Kirk Engler is director of Naval Sustainment System – Supply, Naval Supply Systems Command and Melissa Olson is deputy director.

L3Harris Moves Ahead with Disruptive Capabilities

L3Harris successfully launched a recovered a Iver4 UUV from a submarine. Photo Credit: L3Harris

L3Harris (Booth 1037) hopes to use its expertise in autonomy software, uncrewed surface vessels and uncrewed underwater systems to help the Navy counter the looming threat of China and get more systems into service.

The company has a lot of interest in what Jon Rambeau, president of L3Harris' Integrated Mission Systems segment, called "disruptive capabilities," which includes moving airborne ISR capabilities from military aircraft to business jets and focusing on passive sensing and targeting for autonomous surface and subsurface vehicles.

"In the maritime domain … [we do] a lot of work around autonomous surface and subsurface vessels, and also a focus on passive sensing and targeting for the surface to allow the manned fleet to operate without having to light up their radars so often," Rambeau told Seapower in an interview. "We think that's a capability that can be deployed very rapidly, it's very mature and it's also very low cost."

The company also recently successfully deployed and recovered an uncrewed underwater vessel from a submarine's torpedo tube,

using one of its Iver4 vehicles.

“We were the first company to be able to demonstrate the capability to retrieve a UUV through a submarine torpedo tube while it was underway,” Rambeau said. “A pretty big accomplishment. Others had tried and failed and we were able to be successful on our first try, which was pretty impressive and not only that, but twice in one day, so pretty neat. That team just won our corporation’s top technology innovation award this year across the entire company.”

Replicator

The U.S. Department of Defense last year announced the Replicator program, a still largely undefined effort to launch thousands of attritable, autonomous aerial and surface systems to help counter China’s growing fleet.

“That’s something we’re very interested in being a part of,” Rambeau said. “I think some of those decisions are still being made about who and how we’ll participate, but we know there’s an initiative, obviously, to drive the large-scale deployment of unmanned systems, and we think the work we do is right in the heart of that. We’ve deployed hundreds of small, undersea vessels, we’ve deployed hundreds of small surface vessels over a number of years, some in the commercial side, some in the military side of our business, and that’s where a lot of our concentration has been, small and medium vessels for subsurface and surface operations, and a lot of work particularly around the autonomy capability.”

L3Harris has an in-house autonomy development team, a capability Rambeau said is very mature, and had two autonomous ships deployed under an urgent operational needs statement with Task Force 59 out of Bahrain, which has been demonstrating uncrewed surface vessel capabilities. The submarine-launched UUV effort also stemmed from an urgent needs requirement.

“One of the areas that we continue to focus on is that we know the customer pull is there for these, I would say disruptive capabilities, we have the technology well matured,” Rambeau said. “I think the question is, how do we quickly get from proof of concept to prototyping to production as fast as possible? Initiatives like Replicator are designed to try to move that along, and we’re hopeful that there will be opportunities for us to be part of that.”

Passive Sensing

Some of the passive sensing and targeting capabilities the company has developed for uncrewed systems can also be deployed on manned vessels, and L3Harris is planning to do some prototyping work with the Navy on that later this year.

“We’re still working through the details of how and where and when that will take place,” Rambeau said, “but we are looking to prove out the ability to sense and target an adversary without having to use a radar onboard a ship at all. That is our hope.”

Rambeau said he is seeing growing interest from the military in manned-unmanned teaming, a concept that has been around for years but which could gain new potency under a Replicator-type effort.

“I won’t speak for the Navy, but from my point of view I think that being able to link a small group of unmanned surface vessels with the manned fleet and allow those to be companions to get out ahead a little bit, do some reconnaissance, feed information back, there certainly are a lot of opportunities to employ the vessels in that way,” he said.

“… With the ability now to launch and recover an unmanned vessel from a submarine, that really gives an opportunity to extend the reach of the submarine fleet and also to provide greater survivability, because they may not have to go into harm’s way as deeply to gather data if they have an appendage

that can be set free and then recovered back with some information. Minehunting, that sort of thing."

U.S. 4th Fleet Announces Southern Seas 2024 Deployment

ATLANTIC OCEAN (Feb. 26, 2024) The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Porter (DDG 78) conducts a replenishment-at-sea with the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) while underway in the Atlantic Ocean, Feb. 26, 2024. (USN photo by MC2 Nicholas A. Russell)
From U.S. 4th Fleet, 5 April 2024

MAYPORT, Fla. - The U.S. Navy aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) will deploy to the U.S. Southern Command area of operations over the next few months as part of U.S.

Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet's Southern Seas 2024 deployment.

George Washington, Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, USS Porter (DDG 78), and Henry J. Kaiser-class replenishment oiler USNS John Lenthall (T-AO-189) are scheduled to conduct passing exercises and operations at sea with partner nation maritime forces as the ships circumnavigate the continent of South America. Southern Seas 2024 will feature subject matter expert exchanges and provide the opportunity for distinguished visitors from partner nations to see aircraft carrier operations up close. Engagements are planned with Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay, with port visits planned for Brazil, Chile, and Peru.

"Southern Seas 2024 will provide the opportunity to improve interoperability and increase proficiency with partner nation maritime forces," said Rear Adm. Jim Aiken, Commander U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet. "Deployments like Southern Seas strengthen maritime partnerships and build trust with our partners in the region."

"We look forward to building readiness and advancing training as we engage with our friends and partners in South America," said Rear Adm. Robert Westendorff, Commander, Carrier Strike Group 10. "We also look forward to visiting several spectacular locations in South America, as U.S. Navy Sailors don't often get to see this part of the world."

New for Southern Seas 2024, an embarked international staff of approximately two dozen officers from 11 partner nations will serve aboard USS George Washington. This international staff will receive instruction from U.S. Naval War College professors and will work alongside embarked Destroyer Squadron 40 personnel to conduct detailed operational planning in support of operations at sea. Countries planning to participate in this embarked international staff include

Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, the Netherlands, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom, and the United States.

Southern Seas 2024 marks the 10th mission to the region since 2007 and the third time involving USS George Washington. The aircraft carrier also conducted Southern Seas 2008 and Southern Seas 2015. Like the previous deployments, Southern Seas 2024 will foster goodwill, strengthen maritime partnerships, counter threats, and build our team.

Aircraft carrier USS George Washington is one of the centerpieces of America's Naval forces – the most adaptable and survivable airfields in the world. On any given day, Sailors aboard an aircraft carrier and its air wing come to the fight trained and equipped across a full range of missions. They are ready to control the sea, conduct strikes, and maneuver across the electromagnetic spectrum and cyberspace. No other naval force fields a commensurate range and depth of combat capabilities.

April 4 Red Sea Update

U.S. Central Command, April 4, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – At approximately 2:20 p.m. (Sanaa time) on April 4, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) forces successfully engaged and destroyed one anti-ship missile (ASM) in a Houthi controlled territory of Yemen. There were no injuries or damage reported by U.S., coalition, or commercial ships.

It was determined that the missile presented a threat to U.S. and coalition forces and merchant vessels in the region. CENTCOM is dedicated to protecting the freedom of navigation

and making international waters safer and more secure for Coalition and merchant vessels.

Metal Shark Set to Debut Autonomous, Amphibious, Semi-Submersible “Prowler” Military Interceptor and “Frenzy” Micro-USV

JEANERETTE, La. – *April 4th, 2024:* Louisiana-based boat builder Metal Shark has announced the debut of “Prowler,” a versatile military craft combining multiple unique technologies to meet the current and near future warfighting requirements of the US military and its allies. The company is also debuting “Frenzy,” a high-performance, low-cost,

amphibious micro-USV with a payload carrying capacity of up to 14 lbs.

Merging autonomous, amphibious, and semi-submersible capabilities with the performance and seakeeping characteristics of a slender deep-vee monohull surface craft, Prowler has been designed to address operational challenges identified by the United States Navy and Marine Corps, two key Metal Shark clients.

“Prowler represents the sum total of everything we’ve learned while building 400-plus autonomous and remote operated vessels for our military customers over the past decade,” said Metal Shark CEO Chris Allard. “Every aspect of Prowler’s intended operation draws from proven technology. Prowler delivers massive increases in lethality and versatility, merging multiple capabilities into a compact, flexible, lower-cost platform ready for volume production.”

Fully amphibious and capable of autonomous or remote operation on land or at sea, Prowler offers drastically simplified launch and recovery compared to traditional vessels. Prowler is capable of self-launch and self-recovery at boat ramps, without a prime mover or trailer, or from the well deck of an amphibious ship, with no need for cumbersome cradles or dollies. Prowler’s low-speed crawl enables autonomous or remote operation on land, allowing vessels to be staged and maneuvered with minimal effort.

Prowler operates on land via a proprietary electric-drive system developed by Metal Shark, which uses low-pressure, high-traction tires mated to dedicated motors for propulsion and steering. Hydraulic rams raise and lower front and rear wheels for operation on land or at sea. Rear wheels are equipped with OTR-certified tires and marine brakes, and Prowler features DOT-compliant lighting. This allows Prowler to be transported over the road behind a conventional prime mover with no trailer, greatly simplifying logistics for

operators.

Propelled by a 300-horsepower Volvo Penta D6 Aquamatic inboard diesel engine and stern drive, the 30-foot, welded-aluminum Prowler operates as a typical surface vessel while underway, with a deep-vee planing hull delivering a 35-knot sprint speed and 500 nautical mile range.

Designed for extended loitering in a semi-submerged state, Prowler's large integrated ballast tanks flood when the vessel is static. In loitering mode, Prowler's decks are near the waterline, with only the vessel's arch-style communications mast visible above the water. Semi-submersion reduces Prowler's operational profile while also improving stability for sensors, surveillance and weapons systems.

Prowler's mast carries an array of communications equipment and a situational awareness ensemble for autonomous or remote operation, and can be equipped with port and starboard launch tubes for the deployment of loitering smart drones or other weapons. The mast also serves as the air intake for Prowler's diesel engine. A lithium-ion battery or optional generator power pack supports station keeping, surveillance, guidance, and communications systems during extended loitering periods of up to a week.

The lift from Prowler's planing hull design allows the vessel to quickly climb to the surface from its submerged state to resume normal operation once the surveillance mission concludes.

Prowler is equipped with a computer networked system able to support a multitude of UMAA-compliant command and control, autonomy, targeting, and AI software packages. Prowler's system architecture provides the forward flexibility to accommodate third party software and/or hardware upgrades to support collaborative intercept capability or other technologies as they may be required.

Prowler’s computer system, along with propulsion, mechanical, and electrical systems are contained within a single removable module to allow for expedited onsite servicing, repair, upgrade, or replacement with no need to transport the vessel.

Prowler can simultaneously carry multiple payloads, with 1,000 lbs. of total payload carrying capacity. In addition to the aforementioned smart loitering drones, Prowler can carry up to twelve “Frenzy” amphibious micro USVs, which are carried on deck and self-launched on their own wheels via Prowler’s stern ramp. Designed and built by Metal Shark, the Frenzy features electric waterjet propulsion, carries a payload of up to 14 lbs., and, like Prowler, can loiter in a semi-submerged state.

“I’ve been toying with the notion of this little gizmo ever since we began designing the Long Range Unmanned Surface Vessel (LRUSV) for the Marine Corps,” said Mr. Allard, speaking of the Frenzy micro USV. “There’s a huge need for attritable USVs in a compact form factor, and very few sources. Frenzy will serve this demand, and putting Frenzy onboard Prowler makes perfect sense. Pairing an over-the-horizon capable USV with micro-USVs delivers a one-two punch capability, keeping the key asset safe while allowing the attritable drones to do their job, all while being watched from the sky.”

Prowler and Frenzy will make their public debut April 8th through 10th at Sea-Air-Space 2024 in National Harbor, Maryland, before returning to Metal Shark’s Louisiana facilities for further testing and development.

“We challenged the men and women of Metal Shark to dream big and to think outside the box to bring Prowler and Frenzy to life in an accelerated timeframe, and I am blown away by their talent, energy, and dedication to this project,” said Mr. Allard. “I look forward to showing off the ingenuity and hard work of our people next week at Sea-Air-Space.”