

U.S. Forces, Allies Conduct Joint Strikes in Yemen



USCENTCOM

Feb. 24, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – On Feb. 24, at approximately 11:45 p.m. (Sanaa Yemen time), U.S. Central Command forces alongside UK Armed Forces, and with support from Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, and New Zealand, conducted strikes against 18 Houthi targets in Iranian-backed Houthi terrorist-controlled areas of Yemen. These strikes from this multilateral coalition targeted areas used by the Houthis to attack international merchant vessels and naval ships in the region. Illegal Houthi attacks have disrupted humanitarian aid bound for Yemen, harmed Middle Eastern economies, and caused environmental damage.

The targets included Houthi underground weapons storage

facilities, missile storage facilities, one-way attack unmanned aerial systems, air defense systems, radars, and a helicopter. These strikes are intended to degrade Houthi capability and disrupt their continued reckless and unlawful attacks on international commercial and U.S. and U.K. vessels in the Red Sea, Bab AI-Mandeb Strait, and the Gulf of Aden.

The goal of this multi-national effort is to defend ourselves, our partners, and allies in the region and restore freedom of navigation by destroying Houthi capabilities used to threaten U.S. and partner forces in the Red Sea and surrounding waterways. These strikes are separate and distinct from the multinational freedom of navigation actions performed under Operation Prosperity Guardian.

Feb. 25 Red Sea Update

USCENTCOM

Feb. 25, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. — On Feb. 24 at 11:45 p.m. (Sanaa time), the Iranian-backed Houthis launched one anti-ship ballistic missile likely targeting the M/V Torm Thor, a U.S.-flagged, owned, and operated chemical/oil product tanker in the Gulf of Aden. The missile impacted the water causing no damage or injuries.

Earlier in the evening, at about 9 p.m. (Sanaa time), U.S. Central Command forces shot down two one-way attack unmanned aerial vehicles over the southern Red Sea in self-defense. A third UAV crashed from an assessed in-flight failure.

CENTCOM forces identified the UAVs and determined they presented an imminent threat to merchant vessels and to the U.S. Navy ships in the region. These actions are taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S. Navy and merchant vessels.

CNO Visits Philadelphia for Submarine and Shipbuilding Updates

23 February 2024

PHILADELPHIA (Feb. 23, 2024) – Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti visited Naval Foundry and Propeller Center (NFPC), the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) Compatibility Test Facility (CTF), and the Philly Shipyard, Feb. 22.

Franchetti's visit provided her the opportunity to receive updates on submarine production, to discuss innovative practices in the shipbuilding industry, and to engage with members of Congress as they work together to ensure the U.S. Navy remains the world's preeminent fighting force.

"Thank you for your continued leadership in working to strengthen our organic industrial capacity and building the partnership we need to reach the submarine production cadence the Navy requires," Franchetti said. "It's not just service in a uniform, its service to our nation – and strengthening our organic industrial base is one of the Navy's top priorities to ensure we maintain our warfighting advantage."

CNO heard from NFPC's Director Nate Bird how their 100 percent civilian workforce has the ability to test and design simultaneously, running hundreds of simulations on equipment to optimize submarine efficiency, and ensure on-time delivery of key components. Bird explained that NFPC is on track to deliver four key components of the Columbia-class submarine on time.

CNO then saw first-hand why the unique machining capabilities of the Navy's only foundry and propulsor manufacturing facility make it a national asset – flexible to support the Navy's needs, while observing the pouring of the aft outer structure of the future Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine USS Wisconsin (SSBN 827).

"Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines are the nation's future sea based strategic deterrent and will provide the most survivable leg of the nation's strategic triad," Franchetti told NCFP personnel during her tour. "The work you're doing is important not just to our Navy but to our nation, and our national defense. Thank you for being part of the team."

While touring the Philly Shipyard with representatives from the Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD), TOTE Services, and Philly Shipyard leadership, Franchetti learned about MARAD's Vessel Construction Manager (VCM) program and how they are using the VCM model to build their newest National Security Multi-Mission Vessels – on time and on budget.

The three organizations explained how the innovation of the VCM model is the combination of three things: providing the shipyard a very mature design, contracting with a firm-fixed price model, and the use of a small government oversight team.

"It's great to see how you've put this partnership together," said Franchetti. "Your philosophy, core values and teamwork are great for our nation. You are creating opportunities to procure ships in different ways. Increasing U.S. ability to affordably build ships is critical to our national security."

Following the shipyard tour, Adm. Bill Houston, Director Naval Reactors, hosted CNO for a tour of the NAVSEA CTF. Franchetti saw how NAVSEA engineers test, operate, and maintain the first-of-its-kind Columbia-class integrated power system

(electric drive) and propulsion plant electric distribution system. This innovative, state-of-the-art facility allows the Navy to conduct pre-delivery testing, troubleshooting, and training, ensuring we produce reliable capabilities that are essential to maintaining our sea-based strategic deterrence.

“The CTF serves as the Navy’s premiere test facility for the new Columbia class electric drive propulsion system,” said Houston. “This facility has been invaluable in proving out this transformative technology for the Columbia class. Future testing of components here before installation is a game-changing approach to shipbuilding and will ensure these parts are ready to support the Navy’s priority procurement effort to replace the most survivable leg of the Nation’s strategic deterrent.”

This was Franchetti’s first visit to Philadelphia as Chief of Naval Operations and part of a series of visits to see the Navy’s manufacturing and testing capabilities. CNO conducted the visit alongside Rep. Mary Gay Scanlon (D-PA) and Rep. Donald Norcross (D-NJ), as well as Professional Staff Members from the offices of Rep. Chris Deluzio (D-PA) and Rep. Joe Courtney (D-CT).

SECNAV Del Toro Travels to the Indo-Pacific to Further Maritime Cooperation, Explore Opportunities to Enhance

Naval Capabilities



24 February 2024

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro travels to the Indo-Pacific to meet with allies and partners to further maritime cooperation, explore opportunities to collaborate with the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Japan on commercial and Naval shipbuilding, and engage with Sailors, Marines, and Department of the Navy (DON) civilians forward deployed to the region.

He will also travel to Palau for a series of strategic engagements on the expanding relationship with that critically important Compact of Free Association (COFA) state.

Secretary Del Toro will meet with government officials in ROK and Japan to reaffirm the DON's long-standing partnership and iron clad commitment to each. He will engage with key shipbuilding industry executives in the ROK and Japan and will

tour the world's most technologically advanced and productive shipyards to observe the power of integrated commercial and naval shipbuilding and its potential for reviving America's maritime industrial shipbuilding capabilities and capacity.

"We're extremely thankful to both the ROK and Japan for being the great allies that they are," said Secretary Del Toro. "We have a responsibility to have these conversations now to see how we can advance our interoperability and leverage the capabilities and capacities of our collective domestic industrial capabilities in peacetime or if necessary, during conflict."

The visit to three states critical to the protection of the maritime commons is part of Secretary Del Toro's Maritime Statecraft efforts to revive the maritime power of the nation's shipbuilding and maintenance. It comes on the heels of a visit to New York City, Feb. 22, where he announced the [creation of the Maritime Economic Deterrence Executive Council \(MEDEC\)](#), which is focused on mitigating adversarial foreign investment risks, innovation and technology.

The trip aligns with the Pentagon's recently released National Defense Industrial Strategy, which calls for venture capital and new ideas to revive the U.S. industrial base.

Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group Returns from Western Pacific Deployment



26 February 2024

By Seaman Nathan Jordan

SAN DIEGO - Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70), flagship of Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 1, returned to its homeport of Naval Air Station North Island, Feb. 23, following a four-month deployment to the Western Pacific.

Carl Vinson is joined by two other CSG-1 ships, the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Princeton (CG 59) and Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Sterett (DDG 104), which returned to their homeport of Naval Base San Diego.

“This Carrier Strike Group and our Sailors’ deployment accomplishments demonstrate our unwavering contribution to the Navy’s global engagement strategy,” said Rear Adm. Carlos Sardiello, CSG-1 commander. “During the past four months, we routinely flew and sailed anywhere international law allows to assure Americans, allies and partners of our commitment to bolstering regional security and stability in the Indo-Pacific. With the unwavering support of our families and

friends, we were proud to sail and fly forward as a symbol and the promise of America's advantage at sea."

The strike group departed for the scheduled deployment from San Diego Oct. 12, 2023, to sail and maneuver across the U.S. 3rd and 7th Fleet areas of operations. While in 7th Fleet, CSG-1 participated in and supported numerous bilateral and multinational maritime exercises in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

The strike group conducted routine port visits to the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Philippines and Hawaii. Individual ships in CSG-1 visited Australia, Japan, Guam, Saipan, and Palau.

"These port visits demonstrated U.S. commitment to the Indo-Pacific region and further enhanced relationships with the leaders and local populations," said Sardiello.

In total, the strike group supported U.S. relations with eight allied and partner nations through two Multi-Large Deck Events, Annual Exercise 2023, several bilateral, tri-lateral and multi-lateral maritime exercises in the Philippine Sea and South China Sea. CSG-1 worked alongside Australia, Canada, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines, Republic of Korea and Singapore to reaffirm their commitment to regional stability and security in the Indo-Pacific.

Furthermore, CSG-1 integrated and operated seamlessly with the U.S. Joint Force conducting maritime exercises with Naval Special Warfare operators, unmanned surface vessels, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force and two multi-carrier operations with the Theodore Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan CSGs.

In 133 days underway, the ship's crew conducted 10 underway replenishments, logged more than 13,000 flight hours and over 6,000 sorties, sailed more than 36,000 nautical miles, and

safely received over 12 million gallons of fuel with zero mishaps. The Vinson crew conducted 9,540 launch and recovery evolutions, 7,835 aircraft moves, 651 aircraft elevator moves, issued nearly 12 million gallons of fuel to aircraft, and transferred nearly 5,000 pallets of cargo and mail.

"I couldn't be more proud of our Sailors. They executed with precision and discipline while strengthening our relationships with allies and partners. They were superb naval ambassadors in foreign ports," said Capt. Matthew Thomas, Carl Vinson's commanding officer. "These highly trained Sailors showed they are reliable, resilient, and ready to support and defend the American way of life every day."

Notable key leader engagements and visits aboard Carl Vinson included Republic of Korea Minister of Defense, defense chiefs from Indonesia and Malaysia, Commander of Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, U.S. Ambassadors to Singapore and Indonesia, senior officers from the Armed Forces of the Philippines, U.S. Chief of Naval Operations and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, among others.

The Carl Vinson strike group deployed with flagship USS Carl Vinson and embarked CSG-1 staff, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 2, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 1 staff and the Ticonderoga class guided-missile cruiser USS Princeton (CG 59). DESRON-1 ships included Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Hopper (DDG 70), USS Kidd (DDG 100), USS Sterett (DDG 104), and USS William P. Lawrence (DDG 110).

The squadrons of CVW-2 embarked aboard Carl Vinson included the F-35C Lightning II squadron, "Warhawks" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 97; the F/A-18 E/F Super Hornet squadrons, "Bounty Hunters" of VFA-2, "Stingers" of VFA-113, "Golden Dragons" of VFA-192; the "Gauntlets" of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 136, the "Black Eagles" of Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 113, the "Blue Hawks" of Helicopter Maritime

Strike Squadron (HSM) 78, the “Black Knights” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 4 and the “Titans” of Fleet Logistics Multi-mission Squadron (VRM) 30.

Vinson’s embarked air wing, deployed for the first time with the Navy’s newest Block III Super Hornets adding 4th generation plus capability to the largest joint strike fighter air wing in the Navy.

“As the U.S. Navy’s most advanced air wing, comprised of 4th and 5th generation strike fighters, advanced electronic attack, technologically-leading command and control, and versatile rotary wing capability, we deliver unprecedented lethality and survivability to CSG-1 ensuring that the strike force can operate and win in contested battlespace both now and well into the future,” said Capt. Timothy Myers, CVW-2 commander.

The Carl Vinson CSG is a multiplatform team of ships and aircraft, capable of carrying out a wide variety of missions around the globe from combat missions to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief response.

SECNAV Del Toro Announces Effort to Deter Adversarial Foreign Investment Risks, Protect Innovation and

Technology



22 February 2024

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced the formation of the Department of the Navy (DON) Maritime Economic Deterrence Executive Council (MEDEC) during a panel discussion hosted by the Aspen Institute and powered by the Bloomberg Foundation, Feb. 22.

MEDEC, co-chaired by our Principal Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition (RD&A), Vice Admiral Francis Morley, and Chief of Staff Chris Diaz, will focus on mitigating adversarial foreign investment risks, innovation and technology protection, supply chain integrity initiatives, and coordination and protection of research efforts.

MEDEC is DON's acknowledgement of these risks and represents a

commitment to identify and address them early, for the safety of our personnel, as well as the security of our allies and partners, depends on us getting this right.

“MEDEC’s work is more than just preserving military advantages for our Sailors, Marines, and civilians. It is an effort to better support the business and investment communities that we rely on to design, test, and build the technologies and capabilities we adopt and field. The risks posed by adversarial capital investments and intellectual property theft affect all of us – from investors and industry leaders to our present-day Sailors, Marines, and civilians who support the DON,” said Secretary Del Toro.

MEDEC, empowered to act by authorities already granted to the DON, is a component of Secretary Del Toro’s whole-of-government national Maritime Statecraft approach, which calls for building up industries that are vital to our nation’s efforts to re-build and sustain our comprehensive maritime power.

“It is imperative to bring together representatives from within the defense industrial ecosystem in a unified, focused council to address Maritime Economic Deterrence within our department, allowing the DON to better synchronize our efforts and be leaders in the larger Department of Defense (DoD) Economic Deterrence initiative,” said Secretary Del Toro.

As the DON broadens its engagements with investment and business communities that are responsible for driving advances in critical technologies, MEDEC’s work becomes more important to ensure that the companies with which engage are properly shielded from adversarial influence.

SECNAV Del Toro Names Ship in Honor of Force Master Chief Petty Officer of the Seabees James D. Fairbanks



21 February 2024

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced that the future Navajo-class Towing, Salvage, and Rescue (T-ATS) ship will be named in honor of [James D. Fairbanks](#), member of the Chippewa Tribe and the 13th Force Master Chief Petty Officer of the Seabees.

Secretary Del Toro made the announcement during a ship naming ceremony at the National Museum of the American Indian, Feb. 21.

The naming selection of the future USNS James. D. Fairbanks

(T-ATS 13) follows the tradition of naming towing, salvage and rescue ships after prominent Native Americans or Native American tribes.

“The names of thousands of indigenous heroes who have served with distinction in our military – and especially our Navy and Marine Corps – echo and inspire us still,” said Secretary Del Toro. “This Navajo-class ship bearing the name James D. Fairbanks will carry his legacy of service forward and symbolize his dedication to the Seabees and our Nation.”

Minnesota Governor Tim Walz and Chairman of the White Earth Indian Reservation Michael Fairbanks joined Secretary Del Toro for the ceremony honoring James D. Fairbanks, who was born and raised on the White Earth Indian Reservation in Northern Minnesota. Both spoke about the honor and meaning behind the naming of the Navy’s newest T-ATS.

“What the Navy knows, and what White Earth [Nation] knows, is that stories matter. That history matters. That traditions matter. Honoring warriors like FORCM Fairbanks matters,” said Governor Walz.

“Force Master Chief James Fairbanks was in our language an Ogiichidaa, a Warrior for our People – the Anishinaabeg, and the citizens of the United States. He served with distinction and valor with great honor,” said Michael Fairbanks, Chairman of the White Earth Indian Reservation. “A Warrior in Native American culture holds a great deal of respect by tribal members. James Fairbanks was a true Warrior that represented the White Earth Nation and the U.S. Navy with honor. He unknowingly became a great role model for not only White Earth youth, but for all Native youth. Due to his exemplary leadership, he has earned the right to have a ship named in his honor.”

Born Jan. 9, 1952, James D. Fairbanks served in both the U. S. Navy and Marine Corps. He enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1970

and served as an ordnanceman with 2nd Battalion, 11th Marines, until he was honorably discharged in 1972. He then worked as a civilian welder until 1977 before enlisting in the Navy. Fairbanks served with an amphibious construction battalion (ACB) until his honorable discharge in 1979. In 1986, he resumed Naval service as a Seabee. While deployed to Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom, Fairbanks received the Bronze Star for meritorious leadership under proximate enemy fire and threat of enemy attack. From 2005 to 2008, Fairbanks served as the 13th Force Master Chief for the Seabees, the highest-ranking enlisted Seabee and first Native American to hold this position.

Along with the ship's name, Secretary Del Toro also announced the sponsors for the future USNS James D. Fairbanks as Paulette Fairbanks Molin, the late Fairbanks' sister, and Mrs. Susan Sharpe, the spouse of the 19th Force Master Chief Petty Officer of the Seabees. They, in their role as sponsors, will represent a lifelong relationship with the ship and crew.

"The USNS James D. Fairbanks is the namesake of a great leader, one who worked selflessly and tirelessly to serve our great country throughout his extraordinary career," said Fairbanks Molin. "He was a builder, but not just any builder, he was a Seabee."

Navajo-class ships will provide ocean-going tug, salvage, and rescue capabilities to support Fleet operations. The current capabilities are provided by Powhatan-class T-ATF Fleet Tugs and Safeguard-class T-ARS Rescue and Salvage vessels, which began reaching the end of their expected service lives in 2020. Navajo-class ships will be capable of towing U.S. Navy ships and will have 6,000 square feet of deck space for embarked systems.

HII Begins Topside EMALS Testing on John F. Kennedy (CVN 79) at Newport News Shipbuilding



John F. Kennedy CVN 79 Dead Load Testing

NEWPORT NEWS, Va., Feb. 21, 2024 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII (NYSE: HII) announced today that its Newport News Shipbuilding division (NNS) recently began topside testing of the electromagnetic aircraft launch system (EMALS) on aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy (CVN 79).

EMALS, first integrated into USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), replaces the existing steam catapults currently in use on the U.S. Navy's Nimitz-class aircraft carriers.

Following successful “no-load” testing on catapults one and

two, known as the 'bow cats,' the NNS team, alongside the John F. Kennedy crew, has now started "dead-load" testing. In this phase, large, wheeled, car-like structures of graduated weights up to 80,000 pounds to simulate the weight of actual aircraft are launched off the carrier's bow into the James River. They are then retrieved and relaunched until the conclusion of the test program to ensure the catapults are ready for their primary intended purpose: to launch all carrier-based fixed wing aircraft flown by the U.S. Navy.

The first dead loads used in this testing have special significance. Family members of shipbuilders signed them with messages of congratulations and gratitude during the shipyard's Family Day held in October.

Photos and video accompanying this release is available at: <https://hii.com/news/hii-newport-news-shipbuilding-carrier-cvn-79-dead-load-testing/>.

"As we make sustained progress in the construction, testing and turnover of John F. Kennedy, reaching the dead load testing phase is a visual demonstration of how far we've come," said Lucas Hicks, vice president, John F. Kennedy (CVN 79) new construction aircraft carrier program. "It is evident from the thousands of written messages that our shipbuilders and their families appreciate and understand the significance of our work. We are proud of the incredible teamwork that has brought us to this point, and remain committed to delivering this mighty aircraft carrier to the fleet so the crew can carry out the important mission ahead."

"The first dead-load launch off the flight deck is a historic moment for PCU John F. Kennedy, and a testament to the power of great teamwork between our JFK crew, HII team, and NAVAIR engineers," said CAPT Colin Day, commanding officer, PCU John F. Kennedy (CVN 79). "I'm particularly proud of our Air Department and the hard-working Aviation Boatswain Mates who worked tirelessly alongside the engineering and testing teams

to get us to this critical moment.”

Traveling more than 300 feet down the catapult track at more than 150 miles per hour, EMALS provides expanded operational capability at reduced costs, higher launch-energy capacity, and more accurate end-speed control, with a smooth acceleration at both high and low speeds. The launch profiles have been optimized to reduce stress on the aircraft, in contrast to the sudden acceleration of steam catapults.

Kennedy is the second Gerald R. Ford-class aircraft carrier under construction at NNS, which is the nation’s sole designer, builder and refueler of nuclear-powered aircraft carriers. In addition to Kennedy, two other Ford-class carriers are under construction at NNS: Enterprise (CVN 80) and Doris Miller (CVN 81).

Cubic Awarded Contract from NAVAIR for KnightLink Systems

SAN DIEGO, February 20, 2024 (NewsWire.com) – [Cubic Defense](#) has secured an Indefinite-Delivery/Indefinite-Quantity (IDIQ) contract to maintain, upgrade and support deployment of the Full Motion Video (FMV) System, known as KnightLink, for the Naval Air Systems Command’s (NAVAIR) MH-60 Sierra (MH-60S) helicopter fleet.

“The KnightLink system for the MH-60S is a testament to the continued success of our low-rate production program and how the system enables mission capability at the highest level, thanks to robust hardware advancements that provide improved FMV acquisition and dissemination,” said Russ Marsh, Vice President and General Manager of Secure Communications, [Cubic](#)

[Defense](#). “Our mission is to support and empower the warfighter with state-of-the-art tools to maintain vital communications.”

The KnightLink software provides a wide range of capabilities and video support including operational, vendor, flight test, laboratory aid and maintenance. The KnightLink hardware includes the KnightLink Weapons Replaceable Assemblies (WRAs) and applicable cabling, as well as the procurement of additional hardware, interim sparing and Peculiar Ground Support Equipment (PGSE) to support fleet introduction.

The contract will provide several categories of deliveries, including software enhancements, hardware reinforcement and general maintenance. The sustainment of the FMV system and overall product improvement will lead to enhanced operations and fleet operability. KnightLink systems are already being developed and delivered from Cubic’s Huntsville, Alabama, site.

USS Delbert D. Black Returns To Homeport Following A Surge Deployment



[By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jimmy Ivy](#)

20 February 2024

NAVAL STATION MAYPORT, Fla. – USS Delbert D. Black (DDG 119) returned to its homeport of Naval Station Mayport, February 18, 2024, following a near 3-month surge deployment.

The ship deployed Dec. 1 to the U.S. Naval Forces Europe area of operations as part of deterrence efforts in the region following the outbreak of conflict in Israel.

Deploying with Mayport sister ship USS The Sullivans (DDG 68), Delbert D. Black demonstrated the operational practicality of relieving carrier strike group warships while on station. Upon entering the Mediterranean Sea, Delbert D. Black and The Sullivans relieved USS McFaul (DDG 74) and USS Thomas Hudner (DDG 116) and joined the Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group. Drawing on crew proficiency and lessons from a Pre-Deployment Emergent Integrated Training event, Delbert D. Black was immediately capable of performing escort, screening, and

warfare commander functions expected of Carrier Strike Group units.

“The seamless integration of Delbert D. Black into ongoing operations established proof of concept for sustained and continuous combat operations at sea, which enhancing the surface Navy’s ability to fight and win,” said Cmdr. Adam Stein, commanding officer of Delbert D. Black.

Following the departure of Gerald R. Ford, Delbert D. Black continued presence operations in the Mediterranean Sea, enabling options and flexibility to operational commanders in theatre. Delbert D. Black went on to integrate operations with elements of Standing NATO Maritime Group Two, conduct joint training evolutions with the Italian Navy, and provide ballistic missile defense to the European continent.

“For many Delbert D. Black Trailblazers, departing for a surge deployment can be jarring, but I quickly learned how resilient the Sailors of this command were,” said Master Chief Keona Johnson, Command Master Chief (CMC) of Delbert D. Black. “We were ready for anything on this deployment, but still maintained high morale while answering our nations call. This crew was able to maximize qualifications and become stronger warfighters. I am a proud CMC because of this team and look forward to sailing safe again with all of my Sailors!”

During the 79 days underway, the ship’s crew conducted seven underway replenishments, logged more than 180 flight hours, sailed more than 21,000 nautical miles, and safely transferred 1.2 million gallons of fuel with zero mishaps. The crew operated at sea for a continuous period of 46 days through the holidays. Delbert D. Black’s Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) team hosted multiple events to help the crew keep their spirits up while away from their families.

“With the surge deployment, the crew spent the holidays at sea, but that did not stop the holiday spirit,” said Ens.

Rachel Anthony, Delbert D. Black's MWR Fun Boss. "While underway the crew enjoyed 20 MWR events, which included redecorating the main deck in holiday decorations, a lip sync battle and some delicious grilled cheese made by the command triad."

USS Delbert D. Black commenced their trans-Atlantic voyage the beginning of February to return to Mayport, coming home to a warm reception by friends and family on the pier.

"I was fortunate to return home from deployment on my birthday this year and was greeted by my family," said Damage Controlman 1st Class Tyler Pascale. "Seeing the birthday signs and welcome home signs along with my nephews smiles makes it all worth it."

Delbert D. Black is an Arleigh Burke-Class destroyer named for the first Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON), the Navy's most senior enlisted rank. MCPON Black is known as a trailblazer for his initiatives that improved quality of life for the Navy's junior ranks, and established the importance and value of having an empowered enlisted force in the Navy.

USS John L. Canley Commissioning Recognizes Legacy of Vietnam Veterans and Medal of Honor Recipient



NAVAL BASE CORONADO (Feb. 17, 2024) – The crew of the expeditionary sea base USS John L. Canley (ESB 6) mans the ship during its commissioning ceremony on Naval Base Coronado Feb. 17, 2024. The ship is named for Medal of Honor recipient John Lee Canley, a retired Marine Corps Sergeant Major and Vietnam war veteran. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Claire M. DuBois)

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

CORONADO, CALIFORNIA (Feb. 17, 2024) – Expeditionary Sea Base (ESB) USS John L. Canley (ESB 6) commissioned at Naval Air Station North Island in Coronado, California, Feb. 17.

The first of its name, ESB 6 honors United States Marine Corps Sgt. Maj. John L. Canley, Ret., who was awarded the Medal of Honor 50 years after his actions during the Battle of Hue City. Canley served as Company Gunnery Sergeant, Company A, First Battalion, First Marines, First Marine Division (Alpha/1/1) in the Republic of Vietnam from Jan. 31 to Feb. 6, 1968. Sgt. Maj. Canley passed away in Bend, Oregon on May 11,

2022.

During the ceremony guest speaker, Honorable Carlos Del Toro, Secretary of the Navy reflected on the importance of what matters to the future. "As the world's problems grow increasingly more complex and stability more uncertain, we need to tap into America's most precious resource—its people—to solve the issues of the future. Because better technology and more ships will go to waste without the courageous Americans who will answer the call to service to their country."

In office when Canley received the Medal of Honor, General Joseph P. Dunford, Jr., 19th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and 36th Commandant of the Marine Corps began by honoring Medal of Honor recipients Colonel Robert J. Modrzejewski, USMC (Ret.) and Colonel Jay R. Vargas, USMC (Ret.), seated in the front row.

"In our initial engagement, I was struck by Sgt. Maj. Canley's sincerity, and his humility. In time, I gained an appreciation for his commitment to service, and his character as well," Dunford recalled. "In addition to being understated, Sgt. Maj. Canley was uncomfortable in being singled out for his actions in Vietnam. He was also offended by the lack of recognition Vietnam veterans received when they returned home."

"In addition to recognizing Sgt. Maj. Canley's heroism, I'd like to recognize the broader legacy of John Canley and his fellow Vietnam veterans," said the former Commandant. "Our Vietnam veterans have left us a very proud and rich legacy."

Sergeant Major Carlos Ruiz, Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, focused on the totality of Canley's service, in and out of uniform, and what it means. "Sgt. Maj. Canley earned this honor over seven days, but he had 15 years of building Marines. Of making warriors. Getting them ready for the fight.

On the back end of the seven days, he spent another decade, plus, continuing to serve in uniform."

Ruiz relayed how Canley influenced Marines today. While those seven days helped to name the ship, it's the 30 years that brought this group together. "He showed us how to show courage. How to do the right thing. He would walk with such calmness to pull his Marines out of danger. Those who were wounded; to get them out."

"There's this generation that keeps building on each other," he continued. "They do some of the very similar things that John Canley did. And that's care for each other. Not that long ago, you saw Marines being exactly like John Canley taught them to do. Standing on a wall looking through a sea of people, trying to find anyone else that they could save."

Ship's sponsor Ms. Patricia A. Sargent and Sgt. Maj. Canley's daughter said, "To be able to give the order to bring this ship to life, I need to give you some information in regards to my father. My father understood that greatness is not achieved by the individual; it is achieved by the courageous acts of the many. The Marines of Alpha Company 1/1 are an example of that in what they achieved in the Battle of Hue City. In that battle, my father earned their Medal of Honor, which now resides on the USS John L. Canley."

"This ship will achieve greatness, but it will only do that by the courageous actions of the many," said Sargent. "It is in honor of my father, my family, members of the 1/1, and the great people of the United States that I give the command: Officers and Crew of the USS John L. Canley, man our ship and bring her to life!"

Capt. Thomas Mays, the commanding officer, thanked Alpha/1/1, Sgt. Maj. Canley's unit at Hue City, for keeping the gunny's legacy alive, and working to see that he received the

recognition this nation owed him. He also thanked Sargent and maid of honor, granddaughter, Viktoria Sargent for the esteem and care they have given the Sailors before having a “personal conversation” with the crews – gold, blue, and civilian mariners.

“Our vessel’s footprint upon the seas is not the extent of her reach, nor the measure of her impact upon this world,” he said. “The length, breadth, and endurance of that impact rests solely with you and I, with how we back one another, with how we handle our charge to care for this vessel, and with how we approach our sacred duty to defend these United States.

“Her spirit lived upon this earth for 83 years before her first plank was laid, imbued with honor, courage, and selfless sacrifice by her namesake. But the lifeblood that pumps through her veins, that makes her move, that faces down the threats our nation is confronted by, that lifeblood is you.”

Four of USS John L. Canley’s crewmembers later reenlisted aboard the new warship.

Mr. David Carver, President of General Dynamics NASSCO reminded everyone of ESB 6’s “remarkable capabilities that will allow our servicemen and women to carry out a wide variety of missions, including mine counter measures, counter piracy operations, maritime security operations, humanitarian aid, disaster relief missions, special operations, and Marine Corps crisis response.

“The ship is designed to support nearly every rotary wing aircraft in the DoD inventory,” he continued, “as well as allied aircraft, all while serving off the fleet’s third largest flight deck. Canley has substantial residual space, weight, and power to accommodate a wide range of current and future, manned and unmanned, surface, aerial, and undersea systems across multiple warfighting functions. This is a

massive, capable, flexible warship that gives fleet commanders decision space they need throughout their operating theaters.”

The mission of CNSP is to man, train, and equip the Surface Force to provide fleet commanders with credible naval power to control the sea and project power ashore.