

Joint Maritime Information Center Meets with Cruise Ship Industry Officials on Red Sea Security



Joint Maritime Information Center director, U.S. Navy Capt. Lee Stuart, briefs cruise line personnel on the maritime security situation in the Middle East region during a visit to a cruise ship visiting Bahrain, Feb. 10, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo)

From U.S. Fifth Fleet, Feb. 26, 2025

MANAMA, Bahrain – The director of the Joint Maritime Information Center (JMIC) met with representatives of the cruise ship industry in both Bahrain and Dubai in February to discuss JMIC operations and purpose and to reassure industry officials of JMIC partner nations' commitment to regional maritime security.

U.S. Navy Capt. Lee Stuart, JMIC director, along with

representatives of Combined Task Force (CTF) 153 of the Combined Maritime Forces, briefed ships' masters, senior officers and corporate security managers on the current Middle East region maritime security situation, specifically in the Red Sea. CTF 153 is responsible for maritime security in the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandeb, and Western Gulf of Aden.

"The Red Sea attacks highlighted the gap in understanding between commercial shipping and navies. JMIC aims to bridge that gap and increase cooperation to help keep mariners and passengers safe at sea," said Stuart.

Stuart also outlined JMIC's role, composition, operations and range of information products, including its incident-specific Information Notes and monthly reports with rolling statistical analysis.

"The cruise industry is highly competitive, rapidly growing, sets schedules years ahead and must keep passenger safety as paramount," he said.

Stuart also introduced JMIC's Bridge Emergency Reference Cards, which guide bridge crews on actions to take before, during and after an incident.

The deepening engagement comes as cruise operators and other commercial shipping operators cautiously evaluate the risk of returning to the Red Sea.

"The cruise industry has some difficult decisions to make in response to the region's complex and dynamic regional security situation," Stuart said. "JMIC has a vital role to play in giving them reliable information to help their decision-making."

The Joint Maritime Information Center, initially formed in February 2024 to engage commercial shipping stakeholders

regarding Houthi attacks in the Red Sea, recently became a permanent part of Combined Maritime Forces with a broader, region-wide mandate.

Similar cruise industry engagements are planned for the future. JMIC also welcomes engagement from shipping industry stakeholders via its LinkedIn page at: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/jmic>.

USS St. Louis Completes First Deployment to 4th Fleet



The Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS St. Louis (LCS 19) arrives at Naval Station Mayport, Florida, after a deployment to the Caribbean Sea and eastern Pacific Ocean. (MC1 Brandon J. Vinson)

From U.S. 4th Fleet, Feb. 25, 2025

NAVAL STATION MAYPORT, Fla. – USS St. Louis (LCS 19), a Freedom-variant Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), returned to Naval Station Mayport this week, concluding its first deployment to the U.S. 4th Fleet Area of Responsibility (AOR).

The eight-month deployment, which lasted from June 15, 2024 to February 24, 2025, marked a series of groundbreaking achievements that underscore the capabilities of the LCS platform and its growing contributions to naval operations.

While assigned to TASK FORCE 45/Destroyer Squadron 40, operating primarily in the Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific Ocean, St. Louis, embarked Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 50 Detachment 4, and U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDET) 105 and 407, disrupted and confiscated over \$100 million worth of illicit contraband in five different operations, significantly hampering the activities of transnational criminal organizations.

“From our first week in theater, the crew demonstrated its tactical acumen in locating and intercepting illicit traffickers. Most of these interdictions were conducted at night, requiring long days and late hours but the crew stayed immensely resilient. I am very proud of what the team accomplished,” said Cmdr. T.J. Orth, USS St. Louis’ Commanding Officer.

In August, St. Louis transited the Panama Canal and operated in the Pacific Ocean for the first time, making history as the first FRE-variant LCS to travel as far south as Valparaíso, Chile when she participated in the 65th iteration of UNITAS, the world’s longest-running multinational maritime exercise. Alongside naval forces from 44 countries, the ship showcased its capabilities in maritime interoperability, enhancing ties with partner nations and furthering regional stability.

After returning through the Panama Canal, St. Louis received new tasking to support U.S. Southern Command's Joint Task Force-Bravo as that command responded to the deteriorating security situation in Haiti. St. Louis served as a fueling station and Search and Rescue force for 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment (AVN REGT) UH-60 Blackhawks conducting evacuations out of Haiti. To prepare, St. Louis and 1-228th AVN REGT conducted more than 50 deck landings. This successful integration expanded the ship's operational versatility, paved the way for future joint missions, and underscored the potential for cross-branch collaboration in dynamic environments.

To wrap up USS St. Louis' first deployment, St. Louis Sailors showed their flexibility and capacity to rapidly deploy in support of Joint Task Force Operation Southern Guard onboard U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Sailors supported the expansion of the Maritime Operations Center (MOC) in preparing the MOC to receive up to 2,000 illegal aliens, erecting 50 tents and setting up several hundred cots in several days. Operation Southern Guard is highlighting effective interagency collaboration, as the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) oversees the operation.

"We saw a lot of 'firsts' on this ship's first deployment and it was amazing to see what this ship and crew was capable of. Looking back, this deployment demonstrated the growing potential for Freedom class LCS and the support they can provide not just in the Caribbean, but in the entire 4th Fleet AOR," said Cmdr. Lee Shewmake, USS St. Louis' executive officer. "There were many lessons learned that the crew took to heart and put in practice as deployment went on, and I believe that is what enabled our success over the past seven months."

"St. Louis demonstrated the great potential of the LCS Freedom class, not only in executing its assigned missions but also in

breaking new ground for the community. The professionalism and dedication of this crew have laid a strong foundation for the future of LCS operations,” said Master Chief Roderick Bolton, St. Louis’ Command Master Chief. “USS St. Louis returns home with its crew proud of their achievements and eager to share lessons learned from this historic deployment. As the U.S. Navy continues to evolve, St. Louis has proven itself a capable and innovative platform, ready to meet the challenges of tomorrow.”

USS St. Louis’ first deployment to 4th Fleet was a resounding success, marked by numerous milestones and contributions to naval strategy. The ship’s accomplishments highlight the flexibility and utility of the Littoral Combat Ship platform in tackling modern challenges.

Leonardo DRS Gets \$45M Navy Commitment to Bolster US Submarine Industrial Base

ARLINGTON, Va., Feb. 24, 2025 – Leonardo DRS, Inc. (NASDAQ: DRS) announced today that it has received a \$45 million U.S. Navy Submarine Industrial Base (SIB) investment commitment through contracts with HII’s Newport News Shipbuilding. The investment is expected to expand the capabilities of DRS’s new, 140,000 square-foot naval propulsion manufacturing facility currently under-construction in Goose Creek, South Carolina, and includes capital equipment and other infrastructure enhancements.

The \$45 million SIB investment will serve as a catalyst for a

40,000 square-foot expansion of the facility in support of capabilities critical to current and future U.S. Navy nuclear submarines and aircraft carriers. This investment builds on several Navy funded engineering contracts, including Newport News Shipbuilding, and from General Dynamics Electric Boat previously issued to Leonardo DRS. These contracts, combined with internal investments, will strengthen steam turbine system design, manufacture, integration, and test capabilities, including steam turbine generators.

“This significant investment is the result of extensive collaboration between Leonardo DRS, the U.S. Navy, and our shipbuilding customers. said Jon Miller, senior vice president and general manager of the Leonardo DRS Naval Power Systems business unit. “It signifies the depth of our combined resolve to address some of the most pressing challenges facing our nation’s submarine industrial base with respect to capacity needed to deliver critical capability on-time and on-budget for the warfighter.”

The Leonardo DRS purpose-built facility is expected to open in 2026 and will grow the company’s naval propulsion capability and streamline its support of the Columbia Class submarine program. The company is currently producing the Columbia Class electric propulsion system components, including the main propulsion motor, the main propulsion drives, and main propulsion controller, and other components in addition to similar systems for international allied navies. The facility will support electric drive for next-generation naval platforms and enables an expansion of DRS’s organic capability. It represents a significant expansion in the company’s ongoing collaboration with the U.S. Navy and enhances the nation’s submarine industrial base.

Truman returns to sea following repairs



By USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) Public Affairs, Feb. 24, 2025

MEDITERRANEAN SEA – The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) is underway conducting routine flight operations in the U.S. Sixth Fleet area of operations, Feb. 24, after departing Souda Bay, Greece, on Feb. 23, following completion of an emergent repair availability (ERAV).

“Our ship remains operationally ready to complete deployment with mission and purpose on full display by the entire crew,” said Capt. Chris Hill, commanding officer of Harry S. Truman. “We are out here launching and recovering aircraft, ready to ‘Give ‘em Hell’ with combat credible power.”

The U.S. Navy’s ability to rapidly repair its warships anywhere in the world is a testament to our lethality and the warfighting advantage of relationships with Allies and partners.

Led by Forward Deployed Regional Maintenance Center (FDRMC), Truman completed the five-day ERAV at Naval Support Activity (NSA) Souda Bay, Greece. In an all-hands effort, Sailors worked with FDRMC personnel, Norfolk Naval Shipyard, and local industry partner Theodoropoulos Group to assess damage, develop a repair plan, and restore weathertight integrity to the ship following the collision on Feb. 12.

“FDRMC is focused on keeping our forward-deployed naval forces mission-ready across 5th and 6th Fleets, maintaining critical combat readiness for the ships and their Sailors,” said Capt. Mollie Bily, FDRMC commanding officer. “The rapid repair effort on Truman was a testament to our expeditionary maintenance expertise and the exceptional collaboration with our Norfolk Naval Shipyard teammates and industry partners.”

Since deploying, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 1 has flown over 5,500 sorties, including two self-defense strikes into Houthi-controlled Yemen territory and a large force strike against ISIS-Somalia targets in Northeast Somalia in coordination with U.S. Africa Command. The Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group continues to provide maritime security and regional stability in support of its component commanders.

The carrier strike group includes the flagship USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75); Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 1, with eight embarked aviation squadrons; staffs from CSG-8, CVW-1, and Destroyer

Squadron (DESRON) 28; the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Gettysburg (CG 64); and three Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers, USS Stout (DDG 55), USS The Sullivans (DDG 68), and USS Jason Dunham (DDG 109).

HSTCSG's mission is to conduct prompt and sustained combat operations at sea and maintain a forward presence through sea control and power projection capabilities. For more information, visit DVIDS at <https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/CVN75>.

Navy CNO Franchetti Fired



Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Lisa Franchetti presents an award to a Sailor at Naval Support Activity (NSA) Crane, in Crane, Indiana, Feb. 10, 2025. Photo Credit: U.S. Navy | Senior Chief Petty Officer Elliott Fabrizio

Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth announced he was firing Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Lisa Franchetti on Friday, the same day as he relieved Air Force General Charles Q. Brown as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, according to the New York Times.

According to the Times and other reports, Hegseth said Franchetti and Air Force General James Slife, the service's vice chief of staff, also fired, had "distinguished careers," and "we thank them for their service and dedication to our country."

Franchetti was the 33rd chief of naval operations, the first woman to be CNO and the first woman to serve on the Joint Chiefs of Staff. She entered the Navy after earning a degree in journalism at Northwestern University and joining the Naval ROTC program there.

She later commanded the destroyer USS Ross, commanded U.S. Naval forces in Korea, served as commander of the U.S. 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean and director of strategy, plans and policy for the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Navy's Carrier Airwing Flies Further With Hercules' New Tanker Approval



A U.S. Navy Reserve KC-130T refuels an EA-18G Growler in the skies over Naval Air Station Patuxent River in Maryland during testing that enabled the service's fleet of Hercules aircraft to aerially refuel a significantly expanded number of aircraft in early 2025. The testing led by the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division significantly expands Hercules' mission, as well as the mission of the U.S. Navy Reserves which exclusively operates the aircraft. (U.S. Navy photo by Erik Hildebrandt)

From Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division, Feb. 24, 2025

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. -- The Navy Reserve's KC-130T Hercules fleet, upgraded with the NP200 propeller system, is cleared to aerially refuel a significantly wider range of aircraft across the carrier airwing following envelope expansion testing at the [Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division](#) (NAWCAD) which concluded in early 2025.

The test effort expands Hercules' mission – and that of the Navy's fleet reserve, which exclusively operates the aircraft – beyond its primary focus on logistics and cargo transport.

“Prior to this testing we only had a single aircraft cleared for refueling from the upgraded KC-130T,” said [NAWCAD's](#)

[developmental test wing](#) Commodore Capt. Elizabeth Somerville. “This advanced capability gives us flexibility in any future conflict.”

Naval aviation’s F-35B/C, F/A-18, EA-18. CH-53K, CH-47, H-60s and AV-8B were cleared for air-to-air refueling from KC-130T after testing by NAWCAD federal government engineers, testers, and military test pilots from [Air Test and Evaluation Squadron \(VX\) 20](#) along with industry partners who worked to make sure Hercules could safely refuel the aircraft with its upgraded NP2000 propeller system.

“If we look forward to any future fight, it’s going to take intense collaboration between all of the forces: Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Army, Coast Guard,” said Somerville. “Any resource that provides fuel airborne is going to be invaluable to all assets that are flying.”

The test effort significantly increases naval aviation’s operational reach and flexibility, as well as several international allies, following a request by U.S. Pacific Fleet.

The KC-130T Hercules is a multi-role, long-range, land-based tactical aircraft that provides logistical support to fleet operating forces.

Check out a video of the test effort here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=triR4w1lyR4>

NAWCAD employs more than 20,000 military, civilian and contract personnel. It operates test ranges, laboratories and aircraft in support of test, evaluation, research, development and sustainment of everything flown by the Navy and Marine Corps. Based in Patuxent River, Maryland, the command also has major sites in St. Inigoes, Maryland, Lakehurst, New Jersey, and Orlando, Fl

USS Stockdale Returns Home After Seven-Month Deployment To 5th Fleet And 7th Fleet



The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Stockdale (DDG 106) pulls into their homeport of Naval base San Diego, Feb. 21, 2022. (U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Kristine Joy Nool)
From MC1 Storm Henry, Feb. 22, 2025

NAVAL BASE SAN DIEGO – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Stockdale (DDG 106) returned to their homeport, Naval Base San Diego, after a seven-month deployment to U.S. 3rd, 5th Fleet and 7th Fleet areas of operations, Feb. 21.

NAVAL BASE SAN DIEGO – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Stockdale (DDG 106) returned to their homeport, Naval Base San Diego, after a seven-month deployment to U.S. 3rd, 5th Fleet and 7th Fleet areas of operations, Feb. 21.

Stockdale departed San Diego on an independent deployment to U.S. 5th Fleet to conduct operations in support of regional stability, July 24, 2024. They joined the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group (ABECSG) August to November 2024 and remained in 5th Fleet following the departure of the ABECSG.

“The crew of Stockdale displayed immeasurable courage and unwavering dedication while serving in some of the most complex naval combat operations since World War II,” said Cmdr. Lauren Johnson, commanding officer, Stockdale. “This has been a historical deployment, and the crew answered every challenge with strength and resilience. Driven by their determination, professionalism, and training, Team 007 demonstrated that we remain the most lethal destroyer in the Navy. I could not be more proud of every crew member and our families at home who supported us along the way.”

While in 5th Fleet, Stockdale successfully repelled multiple Iranian-backed Houthi attacks during transits of the Bab el-Mandeb strait and escort operations of U.S.-flagged vessels in the Gulf of Aden. During these engagements, Stockdale successfully engaged and defeated one-way attack uncrewed aerial systems (UAS), anti-ship ballistic missiles and anti-ship cruise missiles. Stockdale received no damage and no personnel were hurt. Stockdale and her crew were well prepared, trained, and supported, to defend the ship.

Stockdale deployed to the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility to bolster U.S. military force posture in the Middle East and deter regional escalation to promote security, stability and prosperity throughout the region. While in 5th Fleet, Stockdale worked alongside the Abraham

Lincoln Carrier Strike Group and CENTCOM joint forces to support global maritime security operations.

Stockdale held bilateral partnership meetings to reinforce regional stability and capability. Stockdale made a port call in Safaga, Egypt, where Johnson met with Egyptian Red Sea Naval Base leadership, and subsequently participated in an at-sea sailing exercise with Egyptian Navy corvette ENS Abu Qir (F941) to increase interoperability. In the Republic of Maldives, Stockdale hosted the Chief of Defense Force for the Maldives National Defense Force and other leadership during an onboard reception and dinner. Both events reinforced U.S. commitment to its international network of partners to further enhance free and open seas.

Throughout deployment, Stockdale, with an air wing detachment from Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 71, traveled over 44,000 nautical miles, conducted 12 replenishments-at-sea, 28 sea and anchor details, and HSM 71 conducted over 650 hours of rotary air wing hours and achieved an air-to-air kill of an Iranian-backed Houthi one-way attack UAS. Stockdale was recognized as Destroyer Squadron 21's recipient of the 2024 Battle Effectiveness Award, and the Sailors were awarded the Combat Action Ribbon for their actions in 5th Fleet.

Stockdale was led by their commanding officer, Cmdr. Lauren Johnson, executive officers Cmdr. Jacob Beckelhymer and Cmdr. Carissa Moore, and Command Master Chief Gomer Turiano.

As an integral part of U.S. Pacific Fleet, Commander, U.S. 3rd Fleet operates naval forces in the Indo-Pacific and provides the realistic and relevant training to ensure the readiness necessary to execute the U.S. Navy's timeless role across the full spectrum of military operations. U.S. 3rd Fleet works together with our allies and partners to advance freedom of navigation, the rule of law, and other principles that underpin security for the Indo-Pacific region.

General Atomics Awarded Contract from General Dynamics Electric Boat

From General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems, Feb. 24, 2025

SAN DIEGO – Feb. 24, 2025 – General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems (GA-EMS) announced today that it has been awarded a contract from General Dynamics Electric Boat to fabricate and deliver three shipsets of Virginia Payload Tubes (VPT) to be utilized on Block VI Virginia-class submarines. Each shipset includes two payload tubes. Under the terms of the contract, GA-EMS will complete delivery of the VPTs by the end of 2030.

“This contract follows a 2023 contract award for a single VPT shipset that qualified GA-EMS as a viable supplier with proven manufacturing capability to fabricate and deliver complex, safety-critical components for use on Navy submarines,” stated Scott Forney, president of GA-EMS. “We are excited to continue working with Electric Boat to apply our world-class fabrication and precision machining capabilities, experienced program management, and engineering and quality assurance expertise to help ensure the VPTs are available on time to support an aggressive Virginia-class build schedule.”

“As the submarine industrial base continues to expand amid supply chain and workforce retention challenges, we look forward to providing the critical capacity necessary to support multi-year procurement and sustainment programs such as this,” stated Rolf Ziesing, vice president of GA-EMS Maritime Programs. “Under multiple contract awards and over

several decades, we've been recognized for our expertise in developing and delivering components and systems for the Navy's surface warships, including the first of kind Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch and Advanced Arresting Gear systems for *Ford*-class carriers. We have undertaken continuous expansion of our manufacturing capabilities and footprint, while developing a highly skilled workforce at our Tupelo and Iuka, Mississippi manufacturing facilities. GA-EMS is well positioned to be a valued, stable resource for the development and production of complex components like the VPTs in support of the Navy's subsurface and surface shipbuilding enterprise."

U.S. Navy Celebrates Second Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony in Nutekpor, Ghana



U.S. Navy Seabees with Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1 and leadership from the U.S. Embassy in Accra, the Ghana Armed Forces, and South Tongu District Executive Leadership held a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Nutekpor District Assembly Basic School in Nutekpor, Ghana. 22nd Naval Construction Regiment commands naval construction forces for Navy Expeditionary Force 68 across the 6th Fleet area of operations to defend U.S., allied, and partner interests. (U.S. Navy)

By MCC Justin Stumberg, U.S. 6th Fleet, Feb. 20, 2025

NUTEKPOR, Ghana – Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 1, in collaboration with U.S. Naval Forces Africa, and the U.S. Embassy, Accra hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony, Jan. 22, 2025, to commemorate the construction of a new classroom facility at the Galtose district assembly school in Nutekpor, South Tongu Region, Ghana.

This project was constructed by both U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine

engineers, and highlights the U.S. commitment to fostering stability by supporting local communities through its security cooperation and humanitarian and civic assistance efforts.

Building upon the success of the first schoolhouse completed in the South Tongu Region, Ghana in 2023, this new facility represents a significant milestone in building a durable relationship in this rural, but important, maritime region along the lower Volta river while enhancing educational opportunities for rural youth. The construction of these two facilities by NMCB 1, deployed under 22nd Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), and the U.S. Marine Corps' Eighth Engineer Support Battalion (8th ESB) provided real-world training that cannot be simulated in homeport. The new classrooms significantly reduce the student-to-teacher ratio and create a much safer, modern learning environment for the children of this underserved region.

"While the Seabees are leaving Ghana today, it is important to note that this is not a final goodbye," said Lt. j.g. Joseph G. Beasley, Officer in Charge of Detachment Ghana. "We leave with the knowledge that our work here has strengthened the bond between the United States and Ghana. There are intentions for future engineering projects in Ghana, and when the time comes, we look forward to returning and continuing our partnership. The relationships we have built here, with the people of Ghana and the Ghana Navy, will remain a source of pride and inspiration for us."

Beasley emphasized that the Seabees' mission goes beyond building physical structures.

"Through projects like these, we aim not only to enhance infrastructure but also to build bridges of friendship and understanding between our nations," added Beasley. "These schools are a testament to what we can achieve when we work together towards a shared goal."

These projects were part of a broader U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) rotational team of engineers deployed to Ghana from 2022 to 2025 to assist with the Ghana Navy's development of a new special boat squadron on the Ghana Navy Training Command (NAVTRAC) base. In addition to building new facilities and making numerous enhancements on the NAVTRAC base, the team of U.S. Naval engineers helped bolster the local community through the AFRICOM humanitarian civic action (HCA) program. The HCA program allows for conducting operations that supports the mutual security interests of the U.S and host nation, while increasing the operational readiness skills of the service members who participate in the activities.

"The U.S. Navy is extremely proud to have contributed here in the South Tongu region, even if only in very small ways," said Capt. Christopher Kim, Force Engineer, U.S. Naval Forces Africa. "The time our engineers have spent here in Ghana has provided us with a truly incredible return on investment"

Kim said that this project has forged veterans of the operational environment by enhancing construction skills, improving interoperability between Seabees and Marines, testing the logistics network in the Gulf of Guinea, and working through challenging environmental conditions.

"The real benefit of our time here in Ghana is the honest and meaningful relationships our Sailors and Marines have built, shoulder to shoulder, with the proud people of Ghana," said Kim. "This has been priceless, and we cannot thank you enough for the time here in your wonderful country."

The ceremony was attended by local dignitaries, educators, and community members, who expressed their gratitude for the enduring impact of these projects. Among those in attendance was Mr. Rolf Olson, guest of honor and Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Accra, Ghana.

“This handover is a symbol of our relationship that goes back many years,” said Olson. “We take immense pride in this long standing partnership with Ghana and this donation symbolizes our joint efforts to ensure Ghana’s Navy and Ghana’s citizens have the necessary resources to continue to grow and prosper.”

Olson spoke in front of the new three-unit classroom facility and emphasized the U.S. commitment to partnership.

“As a country and as a diplomatic mission, the U.S. is committed to being a reliable partner that shows up when necessary,” said Olson. “The U.S. is Ghana’s largest development partner and has been supporting Ghanaian education for more than 50 years. Therefore, it is a tremendous honor to hand over this educational facility to the Nutekpor community, a gesture which symbolizes our shared commitment to building a stronger foundation for the future of our youth.”

The schools are scheduled to be fully operational for students in February 2025.

NMCB 1 and 8th ESB’s efforts in Nutekpor are a testament to the Navy’s enduring commitment to fostering positive relationships and delivering meaningful change across the globe.

22nd NCR commands naval construction forces for Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces Europe-Africa/Task Force 68 across the 6th Fleet area of operations to defend U.S., Allied, and partner interests.

CTF 68 is a part of the U.S. 6th Fleet and commands all Naval Expeditionary Combat Forces in U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command areas of responsibility. Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces bridge the gap from sea to shore and provides

expeditionary capabilities in remote, complex and austere environments.

USS Thomas Hudner Deploys to Fourth Fleet



NAVAL STATION MAYPORT, Fla. (February 18, 2025) Arleigh-Burke class guided missile destroyer USS Thomas Hudner (DDG 116) gets underway from Naval Station Mayport, Fla., beginning its transit to relieve USS St. Louis (LCS 19) as the ready ship in the U.S. Southern Command area of operations February 18, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by MCC John R. Fischer)

From U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Feb. 19, 2025

NORFOLK, VIRGINIA – The Arleigh-Burke class guided missile destroyer USS Thomas Hudner (DDG 116) departs Naval Station

Mayport, Florida to the U.S. 4th Fleet area of operations, Feb. 18.

Thomas Hudner will deploy to the U.S. Southern Command Area of Responsibility (USSOUTHCOM AOR) to support bilateral and multinational maritime operations with partners in the region and conduct Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) port visits.

“The crew of the USS Thomas Hudner is proud to answer the call for presence in USSOUTHCOM AOR,” said Cmdr. Cameron Ingram, USS Thomas Hudner Commanding Officer. “Our Team is ready to ensure maritime freedom of action in the Caribbean, protect our interests throughout the region and strengthen maritime partnerships.”

Thomas Hudner returned to Mayport, Florida after an eight-month deployment to the U.S. Naval Forces Europe – Africa area of operations, Jan. 4, 2024. Thomas Hudner was assigned to the Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group (CSG). During the deployment, Thomas Hudner served as an air defense unit for the strike group off the coast of Israel, and worked closely with Allies and Partners on a variety of missions. Additionally, Thomas Hudner led a Surface Action Group comprised of Allied and Partner nations in the English Channel, designed to flex advanced Surface Warfare and Subsurface Warfare tactics.

U.S. 4th Fleet employs maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations in order to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships that foster regional security in the USSOUTHCOM AOR.

USSOUTHCOM AOR encompasses 31 countries and 16 dependencies and areas of special sovereignty, including the land mass of Latin America south of Mexico, waters adjacent to Central and South America, and the Caribbean Sea. The region represents about one-sixth of the landmass of the world assigned to

regional unified commands.

U.S. Fleet Forces Command is responsible for manning, training, equipping, and providing combat-ready forces forward to numbered fleets and combatant commanders around the globe.