

2024 Hybrid Fleet Campaign Event Tests Technology for Future Operations



Key West, FL (September 23, 2024) Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Atlantic participated in U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet's annual Hybrid Fleet Campaign (HFC) event in Key West Harbor from Sept. 19 to 26. During the experiment that involved two dozen unmanned air/surface/underwater vehicles, NIWC Atlantic assessed how emerging communications capabilities integrated with unmanned systems both ashore and aboard the expeditionary fast transport USNS Burlington (T-EPF-10). (U.S. Navy photo by Joe Bullinger)

By U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet Public Affairs

Sept. 27, 2024

KEY WEST, Fla. – U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet demonstrated unmanned air, surface and undersea

capabilities from the expeditionary fast transport ship USNS Burlington during the command's annual Hybrid Fleet Campaign Event in Key West from Sept. 19-26, 2024.

The event focused on evaluating attritable unmanned kill chains, assuring command and control, and leveraging non-traditional small business innovations. It served as both a proving ground for emerging technologies and an opportunity for partner nations and industry leaders to witness capabilities that could support the hybrid fleet.

"We are excited about again collaborating with the Office of Naval Research, other Navy commands, and our academic and industry partners to conduct multiple experiments in the Key West Operating Area," said Dr. Chris Heagney, Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) Fleet/Force Advisor, U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet. "We consider our Fleet as the test bed for experimentation and innovation, and the Fleet experiments we will conduct will hopefully lead to future victories on the battlefield."

U.S. 4th Fleet is operationalizing robotic autonomous systems with many partners including Navy Small Business Innovation Research Experimentation Cell and Naval Information Warfare Center Atlantic in support of Chief of Naval Operations objectives outlined in Project 33 of the 2024 Navigation Plan.

Experiments were conducted using unmanned aircraft systems, unmanned aerial vehicles and unmanned underwater vehicles to focus on Maritime Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Targeting, Assured Command and Control, and Small Business Innovative Research. A key tenant of operationalizing these systems is to push technologies to their limits, embrace risk, and ensure lessons learned.

"These experiments are not about reaching 100% of our objectives," said Cmdr. David Edwards, U.S. Naval Forces

Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet N9 Technology and Innovation Director. "The goal of the campaign is to push these technologies to their limits and learn from the exercises no matter the outcome."

The campaign aimed to combine manned and unmanned systems to allow U.S. 4th Fleet to deploy and integrate unmanned systems and AI tools to bolster maritime domain awareness, counter narcotics and counter illegal unreported and unregulated fishing efforts throughout the area of operations while learning how other fleets across the world could use robotic systems to support their objectives.

In addition to demonstrating unmanned capabilities for partner nations in attendance like Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, STEM subject matter experts from various Department of the Navy laboratories participated in the Scientists-to-Sea program during the event as observers aboard USNS Burlington in the Atlantic Ocean.

While weather did impact the end of the event, crews demonstrated remarkable flexibility in adapting to schedule changes. Their efforts allowed for all predetermined objectives to be met, despite the challenges.

"Overall, it was a great event that wouldn't have been possible without support from the 37 participating DoD commands, our 31 industry partners, 4 universities, and our NAS Key West hosts," said Cmdr. Jason Queen, U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet N9 Technology and Innovation Deputy Director. "We had 4 vessels, including Burlington, showcasing cutting-edge technologies that will inform and help shape the Hybrid Fleet of the future. This collaborative effort truly exemplifies the power of partnership in advancing naval capabilities."

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet provides the

Navy a permissive theater to operate unmanned systems, develop tactics, techniques, and procedures against near-peer competitors, refine manned-unmanned command and control infrastructure, and inform the Navy's hybrid fleet of the 2030's.

Navy Accepts Delivery of Ship to Shore Connector, LCAC 110



The U.S. Navy accepted the delivery of the latest Ship to Shore Connector (SSC), LCAC 110, from Textron Systems on Sept. 6. (Textron)

By Team Ships Public Affairs, Sept. 6, 2024

New Orleans, Louisiana – The U.S. Navy accepted the delivery of the latest Ship to Shore Connector (SSC), LCAC 110, from

Textron Systems on Sept. 6. This new addition to the fleet signifies a substantial enhancement in the Navy's amphibious capabilities, providing a vital asset for rapid deployment and logistical support.

The delivery of LCAC 110 comes after completion of Acceptance Trials conducted by the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey, which tested the readiness and capability of the craft to effectively meet its requirements.

"This new craft will provide the Navy and Marine Corps team with unparalleled capability in amphibious warfare, ensuring we remain agile and responsive to emerging threats and global challenges," said Capt. Jason Grabelle, program manager for Amphibious Assault and Connectors Programs, Program Executive Office (PEO) Ships. "The introduction of LCAC 110 into our fleet marks a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance operational readiness."

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

Textron Systems is currently in serial production on LCACs 111-123.

PEO Ships, one of the Department of Defense's largest acquisition organizations, is responsible for executing the development and procurement of all destroyers, amphibious ships and craft, auxiliary ships, special mission ships, sealift ships and support ships.

U.S. Navy Accepts Delivery of Future USS Beloit (LCS 29)



The future USS Beloit transits Lake Michigan during Acceptance Trials, August 21, 2024. Beloit is the first Navy warship named in honor of the city of Beloit, Wisconsin.

By Program Executive Office Unmanned and Small Combatants (PEO USC) Public Affairs, Oct. 1, 2024

MARINETTE – The U.S. Navy accepted delivery of the future USS Beloit (LCS 29) from Lockheed Martin at the Fincantieri Marinette Marine shipyard in Marinette, Wisconsin, Sept. 30. Beloit is the 15th Freedom-variant Littoral Combat Ship and the 29th in the LCS class. She is also the first Navy warship named in honor of the city of Beloit, Wisconsin.

“Beloit is another shining example of what it means to finish

strong,” said Capt. Matthew Lehmann, program manager of the Littoral Combat Ship program office. “Our industry partners stood up to the challenge to deliver this ship on an aggressive schedule. Beloit’s delivery is helping the Navy to put more players on the field.”

The LCS class consists of fast, optimally manned, mission-tailored small surface combatants capable of operating in both near-shore and open-ocean environments to address 21st-century coastal threats.

Beloit successfully completed her Acceptance Trials in August 2024, marking the final milestone before delivery to the Navy. During these trials, the Navy conducted comprehensive testing of LCS 29’s systems across multiple functional areas essential to performance at sea – including combat systems, main propulsion, auxiliaries and electrical systems. These successful trials paved the way for delivery, and the Navy will continue post-delivery certifications and qualifications to ready her for Fleet operations. After commissioning, scheduled for later this year, Beloit will be homeported in Mayport, Florida.

LCS 29 is equipped with the Freedom-class combining gear correction, which will enable unrestricted operations. This correction addresses a class-wide issue that was identified as the Fleet deployed Freedom-variant LCS in greater numbers.

Following Beloit, the future USS Cleveland (LCS 31) – the final Freedom-variant LCS – is in the final stages of construction at Fincantieri Marinette Marine, with delivery scheduled in 2025.

The LCS class consists of two variants, Freedom and Independence, designed and built by two separate industry teams. The trimaran-hulled Independence-variant team is led by Austal USA (for the even-numbered ships). The monohull Freedom variant is built by a team led by Lockheed Martin (for the

odd-numbered ships).

The Navy's Littoral Combat Ship program is a part of the Program Executive Office, Unmanned and Small Combatants portfolio, which designs, develops, builds, and delivers the Navy's unmanned maritime systems, mine warfare systems, special warfare systems, expeditionary warfare systems, and small surface combatants.

Sept. 30 U.S. Central Command Update

From U.S. Central Command

Sept. 30, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. - In the past 24 hours, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed six Iranian-backed Houthi uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAVs) in a Houthi-controlled area of Yemen.

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

Navy Exceeded FY24 Recruiting Goals

From the Navy Office of Information, Oct. 1, 2024

MILLINGTON, Tenn. (October 1, 2024) – The U.S. Navy exceeded its Fiscal Year 2024 recruiting goals, contracting 40,978 new recruits by the end of the fiscal year and marking its most significant recruiting achievement in 20 years.

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro visited Millington, Tennessee, today to meet with Navy Recruiting Command leadership, recruiters, and support personnel. During the visit, he expressed his gratitude for their hard work and dedication.

“I know you work incredibly hard as recruiters, and this can be an exhausting set of orders, but that is why we only select the best Sailors for recruiting duty,” said Secretary Del Toro. “You truly make a difference in assuring the future of our Navy. The Sailors you recruited this year will form the backbone of our Fleet for several decades.”

For FY24, the Navy not only met its contracting goals without lowering targeted objectives, it also exceeded retention goals. Once again, this fiscal year the Marine Corps exceeded its recruitment goals for both officers and enlisted.

While the Navy achieved its FY2024 recruiting goals, some recruits are slated to attend boot camp in FY2025, which is when the schoolhouse can accommodate them.

The Navy’s recruiting success is attributed to several factors including data-driven decision-making, enhanced focus on annual goals, reduced timeframe for processing medical waivers, removing red tape, and expanding opportunities.

Over the past year, the Navy identified and closed gaps in the recruiting process. For example, the CNO established a culture of “Every Sailor a Recruiter” and advanced our recruiting enterprise by appointing a senior, two-star admiral to lead our recruiting stations and centers. Furthermore, recruiter goals were adjusted from monthly to annual to promote steady-state performance.

The Navy also stood up a Recruiting Operations Center to monitor recruiting efforts in real time, increase production and remove variance among 26 Talent Acquisition Groups. The new center streamlined processes to expedite newly contracted recruits to boot camp.

The Navy increased the number of specialties that new Sailors are eligible for, including the new robotics rating, and implemented the Future Sailor Prep Course to provide more opportunities for aspiring Sailors.

“The Navy is focused on thoughtfully increasing recruiting numbers while maintaining historically high retention rates,” said Secretary Del Toro. “We are doing this by improving the efficiency of our recruiting enterprise and expanding the pool of applicants who can join our team.”

The Navy’s recruiting success in FY2024 is a testament to the dedication of its recruiters and the appeal of service in the Navy. The Navy offers a wide range of opportunities for young men and women to serve their country, gain valuable skills, and build a rewarding career.

The U.S. Navy is the largest, most capable, and most technologically advanced naval force in the world. The Navy’s mission is to maintain, train, and equip combat-ready naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression, and maintaining freedom of the seas.

Cruiser USS Antietam is Decommissioned



The crew departs the ship for the last time during the decommissioning ceremony of Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Antietam (CG 54).

Story By LaDonna Singleton, Commander, Naval Surface Forces Public Affairs, Sept. 27, 2024

HONOLULU (September 27, 2024) – Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Antietam (CG 54) was recognized for its more than 37 years of naval service during a decommissioning ceremony at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, on September 27.

During the ceremony guest speaker Rear Adm. Christopher Moe

(USN, Ret.) spoke about Antietam's history and accomplishments, wishing this final crew fair winds and following seas as they bid farewell to their ship.

Moe served as Antietam's commanding officer from 1997 to 1999. "I was there June 6, 1987, when USS Antietam was commissioned in Baltimore, Maryland. The ceremony was a magnificent start to 37 years of service that will end today after thousands of young men and women crossed her quarterdeck, anxious to serve this great nation," he stated. "This is a remarkable ship and of equal importance is a crew who can only do what they do because they have the love and support of the families at home."

CG 54's last Commanding Officer, Cmdr. Victor J. Garza reflected on the service of his crew and those who came before him. "The soul of Antietam is in her Sailors. We bring the heartless steel and iron to life. Today, we lay her to rest. We keep the soul, and until the Navy commissions a fourth USS Antietam, I will be the captain of her soul. We will always be Antietam."

During his speech, Garza recognized the 23 former Antietam commanding officers who attended the ceremony. He also congratulated the two newly pinned chief petty officers, Chief Fire Controlman Daniel Delgado and Chief Fire Controlman Robin Phillips. Delgado and Phillips were promoted in the ship's final Chiefs pinning ceremony earlier the same day. Garza also conducted the final ship's promotion earlier in the day for now Lt. Cmdr. Steve Millet, a former crew member, on the bow. Antietam maintained a crew of 40 officers and 300 enlisted Sailors throughout its service.

CG 54 was named for the site of the 1862 Battle of Antietam, Maryland, between Confederate forces under Gen. Robert E. Lee and Union forces under Maj. Gen. George McClellan, during the American Civil War.

Taking place on September 17, 1862, the Battle of Antietam remains the bloodiest day in American history, with a tally of 22,727 dead, wounded, or missing on both sides. Although the Union Army suffered heavier casualties than the Confederates, the battle was a major turning point in the Union's favor.

The first USS Antietam was a screw sloop of war and construction began in 1864 at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. Due to the end of the Civil War, the ship was not completed as initially planned. Instead, it remained partially built until 1869, when it was decided to finish it as an equipment storeship. This Antietam served as a storeship and marine barracks at League Island, Pennsylvania, from 1876 to 1888.

The second USS Antietam was an Essex-class aircraft carrier commissioned towards the end of World War II. Launched on August 20, 1944, and commissioned on January 28, 1945, this vessel missed the war but played significant roles in the Korean War, and in Cold War operations. Notably, it was the first aircraft carrier to be fitted with an angled flight deck, enhancing its operational capabilities.

The decommissioning of Antietam supports department-wide business process reform initiatives to free up time, resources, and manpower in support of increased lethality.

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.

RTX Receives U.S. Navy Contract for ESSM Block 2 Missiles



Multi-mission weapon system will provide increased flexibility and capability for U.S. and allied navies

From RTX

TUCSON, Ariz. (September 30, 2024) – Raytheon, an RTX (NYSE: RTX) business, has received a \$525 million contract from the U.S. Navy to produce ESSM Block 2 missiles and spares for the U.S. and allied nations.

ESSM Block 2 is a short to medium-range, ship-launched, dual-mode, guided missile that has increased maneuverability and improved performance over its Block 1 predecessor.

“The role of self-ship and local area defense has become increasingly important, and ESSM Block 2 delivers critical capability in this mission,” said Barbara Borgonovi, president

of Naval Power at Raytheon. “By partnering with the U.S. Navy and allied navies, we’re ensuring this versatile system is ready to support our fleets around the world.”

The newest ESSM variant reduces dependence on shipboard illumination and is integrated on a wide variety of combat systems and launchers, delivering improved performance in stressing marine environments, and has significant digital processing margin to keep pace with evolving threats through software improvements.

Leveraging learning from other active seeker systems – such as AMRAAM and Standard Missile 6 – RTX is using common hardware and factory processes across multiple missile platforms to enable cost savings and increased production capacity. Additionally, the consortium continues to invest in test infrastructure and material to keep capacity ahead of demand and accelerate deliveries.

ESSM is managed by the NATO SEASPARROW Consortium composed of 12 nations: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Türkiye, and the United States. The consortium is NATO’s largest and most successful cooperative weapons project and represents over 50 years of international military-industrial cooperation.

NOAA Awards Contract for Next-Generation Hurricane Hunter Aircraft



Artist's rendering of a NOAA C-130J Hercules hurricane hunter.
Credit: NOAA

By Jonathan Shannon, NOAA, September 27, 2024

Today, NOAA announced that it has awarded a contract to Lockheed Martin Aeronautics, based in Georgia, for two specialized C-130J Hercules aircraft to become the next generation of NOAA hurricane hunter aircraft. The four-engine aircraft is a proven platform for hurricane reconnaissance. The planes will be modified to serve as flying laboratories in support of NOAA's hurricane and environmental research.

"NOAA is continuing to make critical investments to help protect lives and property," said NOAA Administrator Rick Spinrad, Ph.D. "These new aircraft will be filled with state-of-the-art technology developed by NOAA and our partners, greatly enhancing our ability to gather critical data on hurricanes, atmospheric rivers and our changing climate."

Funded in part by the [2023 Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act](#), the fully-instrumented aircraft are expected to join NOAA's fleet in 2030. They will replace the long-serving WP-3D Orions, which have operated since the mid-1970s.

The contract covers acquisition of two C-130J Hercules aircraft and the NOAA-specific design efforts, with options for additional aircraft. With demand for specialized weather data continuing to grow from the research and emergency response communities, modernizing NOAA's aircraft fleet is critical to delivering on these future operational and science demands.

When aircraft data are available, hurricane track and intensity forecasts are improved by more than 15-20% in track accuracy and 10-15% in intensity forecasts. Longer lead-time for tropical cyclone forecasts are imperative as coastal populations and infrastructure continue to grow and evacuation decision times increase.

"Adding these highly capable C-130J aircraft to our fleet ensures NOAA can continue to provide the public, decision-makers and researchers with accurate, timely and life-saving information about extreme weather events," said Rear Adm. Chad Cary, director of the [NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps](#) and [NOAA Marine and Aviation Operations](#). "NOAA is using our more than 50 years of experience gathering data on hurricanes and other atmospheric phenomena to enhance the capabilities of these specialized new aircraft."

The new C-130Js are cargo-type aircraft, which will allow NOAA to accommodate larger science payloads. They will be equipped with a variety of updated instrumentation developed from experience with NOAA's current WP-3D Orion aircraft and from across the U.S. government.

Both new aircraft will be customized with the same Multi-Mode Radar as the P-3s, as well as new automated dropsonde launchers, high speed internet connectivity, vertically scanning doppler radar and instrument ports for a variety of research instruments for surface winds, waves and oceanographic sensing. The C-130Js will also be able to launch and control uncrewed aircraft systems that expand the reach of the aircraft into new and under-measured areas of the storm

environment.

These new aircraft will continue the legacy of the P-3s by supporting hurricane forecasting and research, tornado research, atmospheric rivers research and forecasting, satellite calibration and validation, fire weather and atmospheric chemistry and pollution tracking. The aircraft will also carry expanded mission capabilities that include long endurance coastal mapping, gravity measurements and transport capabilities to support worldwide deployments.

The C-130Js will be based at the NOAA Aircraft Operations Center in Lakeland, Florida, along with NOAA's other specialized environmental data-gathering [aircraft](#). The fleet is operated, managed and maintained by a combination of NOAA Corps officers and civilian personnel.

Sonobuoy Testing on Heavy Lift Helicopters Expands Capabilities



Hand-launched deployments of sonobuoys from a CH-53E Super Stallion showcases the aircraft's flexibility and various payloads the heavy lift helicopter can take on. (U.S. Navy)
From Naval Air Systems Command, Sep 27, 2024

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – Recent successful testing of hand-launched deployments of sonobuoys from a CH-53E Super Stallion have expanded the capabilities of the aircraft, providing increased flexibility for the U.S. Navy to support Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) in the joint environment. Similar testing will soon do the same for the CH-53K King Stallion.

The successful deployments of sonobuoys from a heavy lift helicopter showcases the aircraft's flexibility and the changing payloads the aircraft will take on as the CH-53K replaces the CH-53E in the fleet.

“The H-53 is purpose-built to carry heavy loads, but that’s not the limit of our operational relevance,” said Col. Kate Fleeger, Program Manager, Heavy Lift Helicopters Program Office (PMA-261). “This test is just one example of the untapped capabilities of the H-53. Future payloads and the evolution of the H-53 in the battlespace are limited only by

our imagination.”

PMA-261, Air Test and Evaluation Squadron Two One (HX-21) and Air Anti-Submarine Warfare Systems Program Office (PMA-264) at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland, conducted the sonobuoy tests, which were overseen by Adam Chesser, H-53 Lead Test Engineer, and performed over the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Virginia.

“We evaluated the procedures and separation characteristics to ensure the sonobuoys would not strike the aircraft when launched,” said Chesser. “Clearing the heavy lift aircraft for sonobuoy deployment creates another level of redundancy for the Navy and provides more resources and flexibility to complete the mission.”

The successful tests were also accomplished with a significant savings in time and money, according to Joe Pham, Assistant Program Manager for Test and Evaluation at PMA-261.

“By exploring and using an alternative test range option to alleviate scheduling and funding constraints, we were able to execute the test on time and save cost to the program,” he said.

PMA-261 manages the cradle-to-grave procurement, development, support, fielding, and disposal of the entire family of H-53 heavy lift helicopters.

PMA-264 plays a critical role in developing, acquiring and sustaining airborne ASW systems and sensor requirements for the Fleet, the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft program office, the H-60 Helicopter program office, the Persistent Maritime and the Unmanned Aerial Systems program office, and the Navy and Marine Corps Multi-Mission Tactical Unmanned Air Systems program office.

Navy Unveils ‘Strike Group’ Recruitment Technology



Lieutenant Commander Tiffany Pearson at the Strike Group mixed-reality system, on display at the Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C. *Brett Davis*

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy displayed one of its latest high-tech recruitment tools, the Strike Group, in Washington, D.C. last week at the Navy Memorial.

The modular, mobile system showcases different aspects of Navy life in an aircraft carrier strike group, giving potential Sailors an idea of careers they could pursue on or under the water.

“What we have here is our interchangeable, cutting-edge, multi-unit mobile experience,” said Lieutenant Commander

Tiffany Pearson, who was doing community outreach. "It's called the Strike Group. Obviously it alludes to our carrier strike group in the Navy, and the goal here was to engage our target demographic, 17 to 24 years old, so Generation Z. Generation Z is huge on gaming, as you can see we have different patches at each different station, so game badges are a way to incentivize people to keep going."

In Washington, the modules were arrayed around the U.S. Navy Memorial Plaza, just down Pennsylvania Avenue from the Capitol.

The Strike Group includes these modules:

- All Hands, where players test their skills on the deck of a virtual aircraft carrier in a first-person reality game
- Support, where participants survey an interactive map of the world showing Navy ships conducting humanitarian missions
- Fly, where players operate a full-motion flight simulator
- Dive, where participants take on the role of a Navy diver as part of an Underwater Construction Team
- Achieve, which participants learn about hundreds of potential jobs in the Navy and get an AI-generated image of themselves in their recommended role
- Seek, which showcases the "silent service" and allows players to learn about life on a submarine taking part in an Ice Exercise near the North Pole
- Train, where a Navy Seal trainer guides participants through a series of challenges to test their physical strength, mental fortitude and willpower.

At each station, participants would collect a badge showing their achievement.

“The overall motivation behind that is, unfortunately a lot of people do not have interaction with military members today, either active duty or reservist,” Pearson said. “So, our goal is, with this, to bring it around the country to high schools and colleges, universities, so individuals can get a hands-on experience ... to see what it’s like to fly a plane maybe, or to be a diver if that interests them, or even see what humanitarian missions we’ve done. ... We even have a trailer that shows them who they could be in the Navy.”

The Navy has previously used similar demonstrations, but the systems were both larger and less flexible. One was the Nimitz, which showcased life on an aircraft carrier, and another was the Burke, highlighting the Navy’s destroyers.

For the latest system, “we call it a strike group because it just doesn’t limit it to one platform ... here, it’s a strike group, all-hands efforts,” Pearson said.

The weather for the system’s public debut was not the best, rainy and overcast, but Pearson said a number of potential recruits loved interacting with the technology, so “it has been a bit of a challenge, but it’s been great.”