Iraq, Kuwait and U.S. Conduct Joint Patrol in Arabian Gulf



U.S. Navy coastal patrol ship USS Sirocco (PC 6), U.S. Coast Guard fast response cutter USCGC Charles Moulthrope (WPC 1141), Kuwait naval force ship Maskan (P 3717) and Iraq navy fast attack craft P-310 sail together during a joint patrol exercise in the Arabian Gulf, Aug. 25. U.S. NAVY / MC1 Anita Chebahtah

MANAMA, Bahrain — Maritime forces from Iraq, Kuwait and the United States conducted a joint patrol on Aug. 25 in the Arabian Gulf, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command said Aug. 28. Ships from the Iraq navy, Kuwait naval force, Kuwait coast guard, U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard participated in maneuvering exercises and maritime security drills.

U.S. ships included patrol coastal ship USS Sirocco (PC 6) and fast response cutter USCGC Charles Moulthrope (WPC 1141). Sirocco and Charles Moulthrope are forward-deployed to Bahrain

where U.S. 5th Fleet is headquartered.

"Trilateral engagements like this demonstrate the shared commitment of partner nations to safeguarding the seas," said Capt. Robert Francis, commander of Task Force 55 whose staff oversees operations for U.S. 5th Fleet surface forces.

Cooperation among regional partners at sea helps ensure maritime security and stability in nearby waters, he added.

The U.S. 5th Fleet operating area includes 21 countries, the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea, parts of the Indian Ocean and three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, Bab al-Mandeb and Suez Canal.

7th Fleet Cruisers Transit Taiwan Strait



Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Chancellorsville (CG 62) transits the East China Sea during routine underway operations. Chancellorsville is forward-deployed to the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific. U.S. NAVY / Mass Communications Specialist 2nd Class Justin Stack

TAIWAN STRAIT – Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruisers USS Antietam (CG 54) and USS Chancellorsville (CG 62) conducted a routine Taiwan Strait transit Aug. 28 (local time) through waters where high seas freedoms of navigation and overflight apply in accordance with international law, U.S. 7th Fleet Public Affairs said in a release.

These ships transited through a corridor in the Strait that is beyond the territorial sea of any coastal state. The ship's transit through the Taiwan Strait demonstrates the United States' commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, the release said. The United States military flies, sails, and operates anywhere international law allows.

CNO: U.S. Navy Brings to Bear 'Global Maneuverability'



The Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Michael Gilday, second from right, visits Patrol Squadron Nine in Keflavik, Iceland, in June. U.S. NAVY / Lt. Joseph Reed WASHINGTON — The chief of naval operations said the U.S. Navy's forward presence and ability to move its forces, including its headquarter staffs, rapidly to an area where it is needed demonstrates its value to the maritime security of

"Do we have enough fleet headquarters to go around? One could argue that we don't," said CNO Adm. Michael Gilday, speaking on his Navigation Plan for the Navy Aug. 25 at The Heritage Foundation, responding to a question about the way the Navy's

the nation and the world.

numbered fleets are distributed around the world to respond to the actions of China and the need for the Navy to increase its operations in the Arctic. "One of the great things the Navy brings to bear – our headquarters included – is global maneuverability."

Gilday said his top regional focus is on the Pacific and the Atlantic, with the Indian Ocean "being a close third."

The admiral said "in terms of opportunities of the future, we absolutely have to look at the Arctic. As the ice cap continues to recede, think about trade routes in the next 25 years between Europe and Asia: fundamentally changing."

He pointed out NATO member Iceland is typically thought of in a trans-Atlantic fashion.

"Think about it in a trans-polar fashion," he said. "We need to think about that area much more deeply, particularly with both Finland and Sweden joining the alliance. I see opportunities in the high north that we need to continue to operate up there with allies and partners."

Gilday pointed that Iceland has graciously allowed Navy P-8 maritime patrol aircraft operate rotationally from Iceland, which hosted a maritime patrol aircraft presence during the Cold War.

Regarding adding another numbered fleet, Gilday said he "would prefer to focus any monies I have on capabilities and more ships rather than more headquarters. What our Navy has done, as an example, with the newly formed U.S. 2nd Fleet out of Norfolk, is we've used them in an expeditionary manner. Their light, agile headquarters that has actually operated out of Iceland. They've travelled from Norfolk to operate on our command-and-control ship [the USS Mount Whitney] in the Mediterranean and in the high north up by Norway. They [also] have gone down to North Carolina and operated with the Marine Corps."

George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group Enters the Mediterranean Sea



Ships from the George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group (GHWBCSG) transit the Atlantic Ocean following a straits transit training event. U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Samuel Wagner

STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR – The George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group, embarked aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), transited the Strait of Gibraltar and entered the Mediterranean Sea as part of a regularly scheduled deployment in the U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa area of operations on Aug. 25, the group's public affairs office said.

The strike group ships, squadrons and staff departed from the United States earlier this month, aggregating as a strike group in the Atlantic Ocean before beginning the transit through the Strait of Gibraltar.

"We are here to provide the flexibility and combat power that only a U.S. Navy carrier strike group can provide combatant commanders," said Rear Adm. Dennis Velez, commander, George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group, Carrier Strike Group 10. "The Sailors of the George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group are clear-eyed about our mission, ready to execute, and prepared to reassure our partners and allies while allowing our diplomats to negotiate from a position of strength, knowing the U.S. Navy is on station."

While in the NAVEUR-NAVAF area of operations, the strike group will work alongside allied and partner maritime forces, focusing on theater security cooperation efforts to further regional stability and demonstrate the strong maritime partnership between the U.S. and these allies and partners. This marks the first time that USS George H.W. Bush has operated in the region since its 2017 deployment, after which it entered an extensive maintenance period.

Prior to deployment, the carrier strike group completed its final certification exercise with the Italian Navy destroyer ITS Caio Duilio (D 554) as part of the team. Later in the same exercise, the strike group came under the leadership of Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO to flex command and control between U.S. and NATO chains of command, highlighting integration and interoperability between partners and allies.

Carrier strike groups are an inherently flexible naval force capable of deploying across combatant commands to meet emerging missions, deter and defend against potential adversaries, enhance security, reassure allies and partners, and guarantee the free flow of commerce in the region.

Ohio-Class Submarines Work with USAF and USMC During VERTREP



An MH-60R Seahawk helicopter, assigned to the "Wildcats" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 23, delivers supplies to the ballistic missile submarine USS Nevada (SSBN 733) during a vertical replenishment at sea. U.S. *NAVY* NAVAL BASE KITSAP, BANGOR, Wash. – Two Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines demonstrated their ability to replenish while operating at sea during a series of vertical replenishment exercises off the coast of California July through August 2022, said Submarine Group 9 public affairs.

During the exercise, the Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines USS Nevada (SSBN 733) and USS Henry M. Jackson (SSBN 730) operated jointly with U.S. Navy MH-60R Seahawk helicopters, U.S. Marine Corps MV-22 Ospreys, and U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster IIIs.

"Recently the Pacific SSBN submarine force exercised a vertical replenishment capability for at-sea SSBNs to prove our resiliency for worldwide operations and to replenish our ships with materials, food and operational gear," said Capt. Kelly L. Laing, director of maritime operations for Commander, Task Group 114.3. "This allows us to maintain an unpredictable forward presence and continued demonstration of the unmatched strength of our strategic forces."

The event showcased the submarines' ability to remain on mission and at sea while performing essential replenishment operations.

"Our fundamental mission is to deter a strategic attack, which is an existential threat to the United States and our allies." said Rear Adm. Mark Behning, commander of both Submarine Group 9 and Task Group 114.3. "Testing our readiness ensures we maintain a safe, secure and reliable strategic deterrent force."

The event was part of a U.S. Strategic Command exercise which highlights the interoperability of multiple U.S. military platforms in order to implement the strategic deterrence mission.

"Exercising these VERTREPs was a joint operation involving Marine and Air Force assets," Laing said. "This shows our commitment to joint operations worldwide and between combatant commanders. This is important so that we don't stovepipe ourselves under one community or brand. We are committed to operating together as a global force."

This event is the latest in a series of efforts by the United States submarine force to look at alternative operations that previously required a submarine to be pierside to accomplish. For example, in May, the Ohio-class ballistic-missile submarine USS Alabama (SSBN 731) conducted an at-sea crew exchange, swapping out the blue and gold crews. This demonstrated the submarine's ability to continuously operate and stay on mission for longer periods of time while sustaining quality of life for the crews and their families.

"What this shows to our allies and adversaries is that we have the ability to keep our boats at sea," Laing said. "This shows them that we are ready."

Navy Ready to Christen New Overlord USV 'Mariner'



The Navy's newest medium unmanned surface vessel, soon to be christened Mariner, on display at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis. *RICHARD R. BURGESS*

ANNAPOLIS, Md. – The U.S. Navy's newest Overlord medium unmanned surface vessel (MUSV) is moored at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, for its Aug. 23 christening ceremony after a period of tours by dignitaries, Navy officials, academy midshipmen and media reporters.

The MUSV, produced by prime contractor Leidos, with Gulf Craft of Franklin, Louisiana, as the builder, is to be christened "Mariner" by Stacy Small, wife of Capt. Pete Small, program manager for Unmanned Maritime Systems in the Program Executive Office, Unmanned and Small Combatants (PEO-USC).

The Mariner is the fourth Overlord MUSV to be acquired by the Navy, although the third vessel, Vanguard, is still under construction. The first two Overlord MUSVs, Ranger and Nomad, were built under the Strategic Capabilities Office's Ghost Fleet Overlord Program and transferred to the Navy early in 2022. They are assigned to Unmanned Surface Vessel Division One in San Diego, California and participated in the Rim-of-the-Pacific Exercise off Hawaii this summer.

The Mariner, delivered to the Navy in March, recently completed a period at Little Creek, Virginia, for installation of some government-furnished equipment, said Brian Fitzpatrick, principal assistant program manager. Eventually it will be transferred to USV Division One via a transit of the Panama Canal.

Rear Adm. Casey Moton, program executive officer, PEO-USC, said the Overlord program is leveraging both at-sea and landbased testing. The at-sea testing is used to evaluate the performance of the MUSV in a corrosive salt-water environment.

Casey pointed out that each of the four Overlord vessels is different, with a variety of different hull, mechanical, and engineering systems and mission systems. Each MUSV also is evaluated with different mission systems that are changed out.

The Mariner, halfway built when the Navy bought it, is based on a fast supply vessel designed to service offshore oil rigs. The vessels are already significantly automated.

The MUSV is equipped with satellite communications; three radars of different bands; a mast-mounted electro-optical sensor, an electro-optical/infrared system camera system on six sides of the ship; Link 16; and several radios.

The Mariner, for example, can carry two 20-foot containers and four 40-foot containers on its aft section. The containers can contain mission systems, spare parts, weapons and other systems.

The Mariner can accommodate a small crew — including two

merchant marine captains — as needed while the technology and concepts of operation for the MUSVs are evaluated. Fitzpatrick showed reporters the "red button" at the bridge control panel that allows a captain to take control of the ship if needed.

The Mariner is powered by five 2,000-horsepower diesel engines that drive five water jets. The ship also is equipped with bow thrusters. The ship was built with two generators but a third was installed by the Navy to provide power for the expected needs of the payloads, some of which may be deployed on the ship with their own power and cooling systems.

Redundancy is necessary on an unmanned ship more than a manned ship, and for each of its diesel engines the Mariner is equipped with three oil filters instead of one.

'Pushing Boundaries'

The admiral said the Overlord vessels are designed to deploy in open oceans but declined to say they would be deployed to the Western Pacific, noting that the Ranger and Nomad deployed to Hawaii for RIMPAC.

Fitzpatrick said the Overlord MUSVs will need to be able to be refueled at sea, currently conducted by an onboard crew.

"We have to work through that," he said.

Fitzpatrick said the program is collecting massive amounts of data -400 terabytes so far - and has started to process it.

Moton said the Overlord program will influence the discussion in Congress and the Navy on the value and operation of MUSVs and that the program will have an impact beyond the U.S. Navy into the international maritime market, including commercial operations.

The Vanguard will be longer than the Mariner – 205 feet vice 19 feet – with a wider beam and greater capacity for payloads. Fitzpatrick said the program is "purposely pushing boundaries"

Navy Taps BIW, Raytheon for Conventional Prompt Strike Work on Zumwalt DDGs



The Zumwalt-class guided-missile destroyer USS Michael Monsoor (DDG 1001) sails in formation during Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2022. U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Aleksandr Freutel

ARLINGTON, Va. — As the U.S. Navy moves to deploy Conventional Prompt Strike missile systems on its three Zumwalt-class (DDG 1000) guided-missile destroyers, the service recently awarded two contracts to further that goal. The Navy's Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion, and Repair, Bath, Maine, has awarded General Dynamics Bath Iron Works a \$20 million cost-plus-fixed-fee contract modification "for procurement of long-lead time material for the Large Missile Vertical Launch System [LMVLS] launch module fabrication on DDG 1000," an Aug. 18 Defense Department contract announcement said. Work is expected to be completed by June 2024.

Bath Iron Works is the prime contractor for the Zumwalt-class DDG. Raytheon is the contractor for the ship's Total Ship Computing Environment.

The Naval Sea Systems Command has awarded Raytheon an \$11.2 million firm-fixed-price contract modification for "Total Ship Computing Environment Lab hardware for modernization/technical refresh and Conventional Prompt Strike to support DDG 1000-class combat system activation, sustainment and modernization," according to an Aug. 19 Defense Department contract announcement. Work is expected to be completed by November 2023.

The Navy plans to field the Conventional Prompt Strike capability on the USS Zumwalt in 2025 as the first platform for the new weapon. The LMVLS is needed because the ship's existing Mk57 launchers for its Standard and Tomahawk missiles are too small to accommodate the CPS missile.

The Conventional Prompt Strike capability will be fielded later in the decade on the Block V version of the Virginiaclass attack submarine.

Lockheed Martin Delivers Integrated Multi-Mission Laser Weapon System to The Navy



HELIOS provides directed energy capability to the Navy fleet. LOCKHEED MARTIN

SAN DIEGO – Lockheed Martin has delivered to the U.S. Navy a 60+ kW-class high energy laser with integrated optical-dazzler and surveillance (HELIOS), the first tactical laser weapon system to be integrated into existing ships and provide directed energy capability to the fleet, the company said Aug. 18.

Integrated and scalable by design, the multi-mission HELIOS system will provide tactically relevant laser weapon system warfighting capability as a key element of a layered defense architecture.

"Lockheed Martin and the U.S. Navy share a common vision and enthusiasm for developing and providing disruptive laser weapon systems," said Rick Cordaro, vice president of Lockheed Martin Advanced Product Solutions. "HELIOS enhances the overall combat system effectiveness of the ship to deter future threats and provide additional protection for Sailors, and we understand we must provide scalable solutions customized to the Navy's priorities. HELIOS represents a solid foundation for incremental delivery of robust and powerful laser weapon system capabilities."

HELIOS provides an additional layer of protection for the fleet with its deep magazine, low-cost per kill, speed of light delivery and precision response, the company said.

CNO Visits Spain, UK, Meets with Sailors, Focuses on Partnerships



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday renders a salute as the Royal Navy's guest of honor at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Edinburgh, Scotland, Aug. 20. U.S. NAVY / Capt. Gregory Leland

EDINBURGH — Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday and his wife, Linda, visited Spain and the United Kingdom, Aug. 16-21 to meet with Sailors, government and military leaders, the CNO's public affairs office said Aug. 19.

The CNO spoke with U.S. Sailors, as well as service members assigned to allied and partner militaries in Rota, Spain, London and Faslane and Edinburgh, Scotland.

Gilday's visit to Rota coincided with the arrival of the guided-missile destroyer USS Bulkeley (DDG 84) to its new homeport, Naval Station Rota, Aug. 17. Bulkeley joins three other U.S. Navy destroyers that are part of Forward Deployed Naval Forces-Europe: USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51), USS Paul Ignatius (DDG 117) and USS Roosevelt (DDG 80).

Gilday participated in a flag-raising ceremony alongside Admiral of the Spanish Fleet, Adm. Eugenio Díaz del Río Jaudenes, where together they hoisted the Spanish flag aboard Bulkeley.

Speaking afterward to media, Gilday explained the significance of presence and the strength of the partnership between the U.S. and Spanish navies.

"Spain remains one of our closest partners particularly in the maritime," said Gilday. "The global economy floats on seawater ... the U.S. Navy's ability to have our destroyers forward-deployed in Spain is an exceptional opportunity for us to help keep sea lanes open, to work with closely with our allies and partners."

He later explained, "Our ships here in Rota are equipped with the most advanced capabilities and together with the Spanish navy we will continue to operate and sail strongly side by side to assure our NATO allies."

The Gildays also toured and spoke with Sailors assigned to Arleigh Burke.

"What you do every day is not insignificant. I am extremely proud of this ship and everything you are doing, the ship means nothing without the crew and this is an exceptionally talented and dedicated team of warfighters," Gilday said while speaking to the Sailors.

Gilday began his U.K. engagements in London, where he was the keynote speaker at the dedication ceremony of the USS Osprey (AM 56) bell at the United States Embassy. USS Osprey was a Raven-class minesweeper that supported the invasion of Normandy, Operation Overlord. The ship struck an enemy mine the night before the invasion of Normandy while clearing the channel for the invasion. Six members of the crew died, becoming among the first of D-Day casualties. Gilday also visited the London Tech Bridge, where he exchanged views on the importance of this innovation hub and the partnership and collaboration with the U.S.-U.K. military, industry, academia and small businesses.

"Collaborating, sharing information, being interoperable and truly interchangeable strengthens our ability to prevail in conflict and bolsters integrated deterrence against potential adversaries," said Gilday. "We must continue to pursue innovative solutions, experiment and put capabilities in the hands of warfighters quickly if we want to maintain warfighting advantages."

During a visit to HM Naval Base Clyde at Faslane, Scotland, a logistical base for warships and submarines operating in European waters, he observed Valiant Jetty which was built to support operations by the latest Astute-class Royal Navy attack submarines. Gilday spoke with U.S. Navy Sailors who are training with Royal Navy sailors, toured cutting-edge boats, and also congratulated newly qualified Royal Navy British submariners who received their qualifications and pins.

Gilday, the Royal Navy's guest of honor, attended the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, an annual series of artistic performances by 900 performers, including British armed forces, commonwealth and international military bands from across the globe.

The focus of Gilday's visit to the U.K. was to advance and further strengthen the maritime partnership and work toward becoming truly interchangeable. Throughout his visit, Gilday met with Royal Navy Adm. Sir Ben Key, First Sea Lord and chief of the Naval Staff of the United Kingdom.

Navy Orders Full Production for Boeing's HAAWC Air-Launched Torpedo Kits



In an artist's rendering, a High Altitude Anti-Submarine Warfare Weapon Capability, or HAAWC, deploys from a Boeing P-8A Poseidon multi-mission maritime patrol aircraft. *Boeing illustration* ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy has awarded Boeing a full-rate production contract for the High-Altitude Anti-Submarine Warfare Weapon Capability (HAAWC), a weapon which will allow the P-8A maritime patrol aircraft the ability to launch antisubmarine torpedoes from high altitudes.

The Naval Sea Systems Command awarded Boeing a 25.6 million "fixed-firm-price, cost-plus-fixed-fee and cost-only, fullrate production contract for the production of High-Altitude Anti-Submarine Warfare Weapon Capability Air Launch Accessory (ALA) equipment, related engineering and hardware repair services, and other direct cost support," the Defense Department said in an Aug. 19 contract announcement.

HAAWC is an all-weather add-on glide kit that enables the Mk54 torpedo to be launched near or below the cruising altitude of the P-8A Poseidon. The kit consists of a modular ALA that strapped to a Mk54 torpedo, enabling it with precision navigation to glide to a target area, where the ALA separates and drops the torpedo into the water.

"This is an important milestone because it brings HAAWC one step closer to becoming fully operational and deployed by the Navy," said Dewayne Donley, Boeing's HAAWC program manager, in a release. "Our solution transforms the Mk54 into a precision glide weapon in GPS-aided and GPS-denied environments. The HAAWC system provides flexibility by allowing the Navy to carry out anti-submarine operations throughout the full flight envelope of the P-8A."

"There are also provisions for Boeing to provide engineering such as design studies, testing, prototyping and/or analyses of production related issues," the Boeing release said. "Repair service provisions include hardware repair and maintenance services for government-owned HAAWC ALAs and associated hardware and equipment. A provision item order option also allows the Navy to procure spare hardware in support of the program." This contract includes options, which, if exercised, would bring the cumulative value of this contract to \$121,4 million. Work is expected to be completed by September 2024. If all options are exercised, work will continue through September 2030.