August 7 U.S. Central Command Update

From U.S. Central Command

Aug. 7, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. - In the past 24 hours, U.S. Central Command forces successfully destroyed two Iranian-backed Houthi uncrewed aerial vehicles, one Houthi ground control station, and three Houthi anti-ship cruise missiles in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen.

These weapons presented a clear and imminent threat to U.S. and coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region. This reckless and dangerous behavior by Iranian-backed Houthis continues to threaten regional stability and security.

NAVCENT Commander: Difficult to Find Houthi Center of Gravity to Hold at Risk

An F/A-18E Super Hornet from Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 211 launches from the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) during flight operations in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations, July 31, 2024. (U.S. Navy photo)
By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. — The Houthi forces who have been attacking shipping in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden lack a center of gravity, making for deterrence by U.S and partner forces difficult, the commander of U.S. naval forces in the Middle East said in a webinar.

Since November, a few weeks after the October 7 attack on Israel by Hamas terrorists, the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet, with cooperation from the navies of several allies and partners, has been engaged in protecting commercial shipping through the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden from attacks by ballistic missiles, anti-ship cruise missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles, unmanned surface craft, and unmanned underwater vehicles launched by the Houthi rebels in Yemen.

"We have certainly degraded their capability," said Vice Admiral George Wikoff, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, commander, U.S. 5th Fleet, and commander, Maritime Forces, speaking in an August 7 webinar sponsored by the Center for Strategic and International Studies and the U.S. Naval Institute and funded by HII.

“However, have we stopped them? No,” Wickoff said, noting Houthi recent attacks on shipping, one of which damaged a commercial ship. “But our mission remains to disrupt their ability and try to preserve some semblance of maritime order while we give an opportunity for policy to be developed against the Houthis.

“The challenge of the deterrence is, obviously, you have to have a center of gravity to hold at risk, and one thing we don’t really know that much about—and we find this through history—is it is very difficult to find a centralized center of gravity that we can hold at risk over time and use that as a potential point of deterrence,” he said. “So, to apply a classic deterrence policy in this particular scenario is a bit challenging.”

Wickoff said the continuing naval operations in the BAM (Bab-el-Mandeb) Strait region will act as a “shock absorber.”

He noted an almost 50% drop in commercial shipping through the BAM region in the September through December time frame, with a large drop until the beginning of February.

“The reflected the maritime industry’s ability to re-calibrate and re-initiate their routes,” he said. “It’s a couple-months process to take transit patterns that go through the Red Sea and re-route them around the Cape of Good Hope, etc.”

Since the beginning of February there has been a stabilization, with approximately 1,000 ships going through the BAM per month, compared with approximately 2,000 ships per month prior to the Israel-Hamas war, Wickoff noted.

“Right now, the idea is to continue to maintain that decision space, try to preserve where we are right now … to allow other levers of government, other levers of the international community to pressurize the Houthis to stop what they’re doing in the maritime,” the admiral said.

August 5/ 6 U.S. Central Command Update

From U.S. Central Command

Aug. 6, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. - In the past 24 hours, U.S. Central Command forces successfully destroyed one Iranian-backed Houthi uncrewed aerial vehicle and two Iranian-backed Houthi anti-ship ballistic missiles launched from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen over the Red Sea.

These weapons presented a clear and imminent threat to U.S. and coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region. This reckless and dangerous behavior by Iranian-backed Houthis continues to threaten regional stability and security.

Aug. 5, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. - In the past 24 hours, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed three Iranian-backed Houthi uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) launched from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen over the Gulf of Aden.

Additionally, USCENTCOM forces successfully destroyed one Iranian-backed Houthi UAS in a Houthi-controlled area of Yemen.

Separately, USCENTCOM forces successfully destroyed one Houthi uncrewed surface vessel (USV), one Houthi uncrewed aerial vehicle (UAV) and one Houthi anti-ship ballistic missile (ASBM) in the Red Sea.

These weapons presented a clear and imminent threat to U.S.

and coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region. This reckless and dangerous behavior by Iranian-backed Houthis continues to threaten regional stability and security.

KBR Awarded Estimated $153M Contract Supporting Naval Test Wing Atlantic Aircrew Services

SEAPOWER
The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

From KBR, Aug. 5, 2024

KBR (NYSE: KBR) announced it has been awarded an estimated $153 million cost plus fixed fee recompete contract to support Naval Test Wings Atlantic and Pacific Aircrew Services over a five-year period. The work will be performed primarily at Naval Air Station (NAS) Patuxent River, Maryland, but also at NAS Pt. Mugu, California, and NAS China Lake, California.

Under the terms of the contract, KBR will provide aircrew services, engineering technical services, independent analysis and technical support to the Naval Test Wing air vehicles test mission. This unit includes seven developmental test squadrons, their platform coordination offices and local commands, including the United States Naval Test Pilot School. Services under the contract include application of knowledge and expertise in the fields of test and evaluation, air vehicle operation and ground operations.

“KBR builds upon our more than forty-five years of aircrew services and flight test support to the U.S. Navy,” said Byron Bright, President of Government Solutions U.S. “This strategic win solidifies KBR’s commitment to bring unmatched capability and expertise to naval aviation.”

Undersea Warfare Systems Market – Global Industry Size, Share, Trends, Opportunity, and Forecast, 2019-2029F

By Type (Weapon Systems, Communication and Surveillance Systems, Sensors and Computation Systems, Countermeasure Systems and Payload, Unmanned Underwater Vehicles), By Mode of Operation (Manned Operations, Autonomous Operations, Remotely Operations), By Application (Combat, C4ISR, Others), By Region, Competition, 2019-2029F

KBR operates one of the most extensive independent flight test organizations in the United States, both in scale and capabilities. The company has the unique ability to provide Test Pilot School graduates with developmental test experience to enhance aircrew services and flight test support within the Department of Defense.

Austal USA Launches Its Final LCS, the Future USS Pierre

From Austal USA, Aug. 5, 2024

MOBILE, Ala. – Austal USA has successfully launched future USS Pierre (LCS 38), the last ship of the Navy's Independence-variant Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) program. Following launch, Austal USA's test and activation team will spend the next several months preparing her for sea trials later this year.

This is the 23rd LCS launched at Austal USA using the modern, safe and efficient multi-step method of rolling the ship onto a moored deck barge and then transferring the ship from the barge to a floating dry dock. The dry dock is submerged enabling the ship to float for the first time and then removed from the dry dock and moored pier side to get ready for engine

light-off and trials.

“Meeting this ship milestone in such a safe and timely manner demonstrates how well our Austal USA launch team, transporter operators and tug pilots have learned to work together over the last 13 years, seamlessly executing this technical launch process,” stated Austal USA Vice President of New Construction, Dave Growden. “Our industry teams work methodically alongside our Navy partners to improve this innovative process with each launch evolution, guaranteeing the Navy a quality product delivered on time and on budget.”

Pierre, christened in May, is the Navy’s 19th and final Independence-variant LCS, and will be deployed to the Pacific fleet area of responsibility supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence. She is the second U.S. Navy ship launched at Austal USA this year.

CNO Reviews Quality of Service Initiatives at HII Newport News Shipbuilding

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Lisa Franchetti reviewed Quality of Service initiatives with Navy and shipyard leadership at HII Newport News Shipbuilding in Newport News, Virginia, July 31, 2024.

Last year, the Navy signed a Joint Memo "Setting a New Course for Navy Quality of Service," to ensure Sailors have the support and resources they require. During her second visit to Newport News, Franchetti received updates on the shipyard's major programs, infrastructure investments and QoS improvements.

"It's great to hear from our Sailors here in the Newport News Shipbuilding that our Quality of Service initiatives are making a difference," said Franchetti. "I appreciate the candid conversations and hard work to remove barriers that has occurred this past year as a result of the Cross Functional Team's efforts to work with our industry partners and other stakeholders to transform Fleet feedback into results."

Franchetti visited the triad of the USS Columbus (SSN 762) to get their perspective on QoS initiatives and improvements to safety and security outside of the shipyard. They also

discussed a new contract incentive that has enabled HII to construct two new buildings on the pier where Engineering Overhauls of Columbus and then USS Boise (SSN 764) will take place. One building will house berthing and a galley, and the other a work center to improve the quality of life of the service members on board these submarines.

While touring the facilities CNO was briefed on the design and planning underway for a new parking garage that will create more than 2,000 new spaces at NNS once it is complete in 2026, as well as the plans for the construction of a Carrier Refueling Overhaul Workcenter (CROW) facility, which will provide approximately 80,000 square feet of multi-use space for Sailors and HII-NNS shipyard workers. She also saw the 24/7 micro market, designed to provide Sailors with access to more quality food options.

The trip included a tour of Huntington Hall, where renovations are currently ongoing. The updates include refurnished furniture and improvements such as upgraded televisions, kitchen equipment, and an upgraded air conditioning system in the gym, which will soon be available for 24/7 access.

“These upgrades to our existing facilities are making Newport News a better place to work and live for our Sailors,” said Franchetti. “This is just the beginning of Quality of Service improvements, and I am committed to ensuring this work continues here – and then scales out to other Fleet concentration areas – for the next generation of Sailors.”

Vice Admiral Scott Gray serves as the chair of the QoS Cross Functional Team that reports directly to Admiral James Kilby, Vice Chief of Naval Operations, on the CFT’s efforts to establish standards and measures for QoS and bring them to life at Newport News Shipbuilding.

USS Florida Returns to Kings Bay Following 727-Day Deployment

From Petty Officer 1st Class Travis Alston, 1 August 2024

KINGS BAY, Ga. – Ohio-class guided-missile submarine USS Florida (SSGN 728) returned to Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia, following a 727- day deployment to 5th, 6th, and 7th fleet areas of operations, July 31.

Assigned to Commander, Submarine Group Ten, USS Florida departed in August 2022 and conducted five crew swaps, before returning to Kings Bay.

“We have demonstrated the versatility of SSGN platform to

operate anywhere at any time," said Capt. Peter French, blue crew commanding officer. "We operated in several different oceans. It's very uncommon for East Coast submarines to deploy to the west coast, but we managed to do an exceptional job completing the mission."

During their deployment, the crews conducted vital missions crucial to national security, enhancing operational capabilities and reinforcing deterrence effort, while traveling more than 60,000 nautical miles. The crews also had the opportunity to visit Greece, Guam, Diego Garcia and the United Kingdom, as part of routine port calls.

"Our Sailors are the true strength for our boat and the Navy," said Master Chief Electronics Technician Submarine, Navigation Christopher L. Martell, gold crew chief of the boat. "They consistently impress me with their unwavering dedication to the submarine force. We train and we fight as a family, and I'm excited to get the crews back home to the actual families and enjoy some much needed time off."

USS Florida entered Norfolk Naval Shipyard in July 2003 to undergo a refueling and conversion from an SSBN to an SSGN. The conversion was completed in April 2006 and is homeported in Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia.

On May 25, 2006 the boat had a return to service ceremony at Naval Station Mayport, Florida.

Submarine Group Ten is the nation's preeminent provider of sea-based strategic deterrence, Tomahawk Land Attack Missile strikes, and unique submarine-based special operations capabilities. The base is home to all east coast Ohio-class submarines.

For more news from Commander, Submarine Group 10, visit Commander, Submarine Group 10 (navy.mil) and

Chad Cary to Lead NOAA Corps and NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations

Rear Adm. Chad Cary will serve as the director of the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps and NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations. (Image Credit: NOAA)

By David Hall, NOAA Communications, August 2, 2024

The U.S. Senate confirmed on Thursday President Biden's nomination of NOAA Rear Adm. Chad Cary to lead the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps (NOAA Corps) and NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO).

"Supporting the nation's environmental and economic security is one of the Biden-Harris Administration's top priorities and the NOAA Corps, NOAA's fleet, and the dedicated professionals who operate these critical components of our infrastructure

are vital in fulfilling that mission," said U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo. "Rear Adm. Cary's leadership will ensure that we can continue to provide essential services to the public – from hurricane forecasts to nautical charts. I congratulate him on his confirmation to serve as the next director of OMAO and the NOAA Corps and thank him for his service to our nation."

In addition to leading the NOAA Corps – one of the nation's eight uniformed services – Cary will oversee NOAA's fleet of 15 research and survey ships and 10 specialized aircraft, including the agency's "hurricane hunters," all of which are operated by a combination of NOAA Corps officers and civilians.

"Rear Adm. Cary is a proven leader who has the skills, experience and dedication needed to advance NOAA's science, service and stewardship mission," said NOAA Administrator Rick Spinrad, Ph.D. "I am confident he will lead the NOAA Corps and NOAA fleet both capably and effectively as we work together to meet the challenges of a dynamic world."

Cary has served in many operational and management assignments with NOAA, most recently as deputy director of the NOAA Corps and OMAO's deputy director for operations. In that capacity, he oversaw the day-to-day operations of OMAO's marine, aviation and uncrewed systems operations, as well as OMAO's health and cyber services.

He has held command positions aboard NOAA ships Reuben Lasker and John N. Cobb. He has also served as the director of the NOAA Corps Commissioned Personnel Center and applied his at-sea and shoreside operational experience and expertise to support NOAA Fisheries, NOAA's National Weather Service and NOAA headquarters.

"I am grateful for this opportunity to continue serving the nation alongside our highly skilled and dedicated workforce,"

said Cary. “I would also like to thank my predecessor, Vice Adm. (select) Nancy Hann, for her vision, courageous leadership and service to the nation.”

Cary was born and raised in Alaska. He earned a bachelor’s degree in environmental science with an emphasis in marine sciences from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill before joining the NOAA Corps in 2001. He also holds a master’s degree in geography from Portland State University and a graduate certificate in legislative studies from Georgetown University.

Royal Australian Air Force Welcomes First Northrop Grumman MQ-4C Triton

The multi-intelligence MQ-4C Triton operates at higher altitude and has longer endurance than medium-altitude systems to provide commanders with unmatched persistent maritime surveillance. (Northrop Grumman)

Australia's Triton program remains on track with three additional aircraft currently in production

From Northrop Grumman, July 31, 2024

TINDAL, Australia – July 31, 2024 – Northrop Grumman Corporation (NYSE: NOC) joined the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) to welcome its first MQ-4C Triton uncrewed aircraft during a ceremony at RAAF Base Tindal, Northern Territory. The arrival of the high-altitude, long-endurance Triton enables Australia to deploy the most advanced maritime intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and targeting capability available today.

- The first MQ-4C Triton arrived at RAAF Base Tindal on June 16 following a three-segment flight from Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland.

- Northrop Grumman personnel worked closely with their RAAF counterparts to prepare for the aircraft's arrival and support basing activities.

- Australia's Triton program remains on track with three additional aircraft currently in production at Northrop Grumman's Palmdale, California, facility.

Experts:

Christine Zeitz, chief executive and general manager, Australia & New Zealand, Northrop Grumman: "As one of the most advanced intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and targeting systems in the world, and a product of a cooperative development program between Australia and the United States, Triton is a proven multi-mission, multi-domain national security asset vital to the Australian Defence Force during this critical time.

Capt. Josh Guerre, U.S. Navy Triton program manager: "The delivery of Australia's first MQ-4C represents a significant step in a collaboration between the U.S. and Australia to drive the future of multi domain intelligence collection. The U.S. Navy is thrilled to collaborate with Australia to deliver this game changing intelligence capability into the 7th Fleet area of responsibility."

Program Details:

Built for the U.S. Navy and the RAAF, the multi-intelligence MQ-4C Triton supports a wide range of missions, including maritime patrol, signals intelligence and search and rescue. These aircraft deliver unmatched persistent surveillance for the prediction of an adversary's behavior, enabling better planning and enhancing joint military responses. Key attributes include:

- Higher operating altitude and longer endurance than medium-altitude systems

- Ultra-long operational range of 7,400 nautical miles (8,515 miles)

- Simultaneous multi-intelligence sensor operations delivering an exponential increase in mission information

Northrop Grumman successfully completed the first flight of Australia’s MQ-4C Triton uncrewed aircraft at its Palmdale facility in November 2023. The remaining three Australian Tritons currently under contract are progressing as planned through their production schedules. Once fully fielded, Triton will be operated by the Number 9 Squadron from two locations to perform surveillance over the Indo-Pacific region: RAAF Base Edinburgh in South Australia, and RAAF Base Tindal in the Northern Territory.

Northrop Grumman is establishing a dynamic support environment for the progressive delivery of the Triton systems into Australia, including establishing ground stations at RAAF Base Edinburgh and facilitating aircraft integration into RAAF Base Tindal. The company is building a highly qualified Australian workforce across both locations, leveraging extensive knowledge and experience gained from supporting U.S. Navy Triton operations.

USS Preble to Forward Deploy to Japan

USS Preble (DDG 88) leaves Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Oahu, Hawaii on March 20, 2024 in preparation for U.S. Missile Defense Agency's Flight Test Aegis Weapon System-32 (FTM-32), held in cooperation with the U.S. Navy. (courtesy photo)
by Petty Officer 1st Class Brian Reynolds

01 August 2024

YOKOSUKA, KANAGAWA, JAPAN – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Preble (DDG 88) will move to Yokosuka, Japan, as part of a scheduled rotation of forces in the Pacific, the U.S. Navy announced today. This move will be a permanent change of station for the crew and family members.

Preble will replace USS Benfold (DDG 65), which will depart Yokosuka and move to Everett, Washington.

The forward presence of Preble supports the United States' commitment to the defense of Japan, enhances the national security of the United States and improves its ability to protect strategic interests. Preble will directly support the Defense Strategic Guidance to posture the most capable units forward in the Indo-Pacific Region.

The United States values Japan's contributions to the peace, security and stability of the Indo-Pacific and its long-term commitment and hospitality in hosting U.S. forces forward deployed there. These forces, along with their counterparts in the Japan Self-Defense Forces, make up the core capabilities needed by the alliance to meet our common strategic objectives.

The security environment in the Indo-Pacific requires that the U.S. Navy positions the most capable ships forward. This posture allows the most rapid response times for maritime and joint forces and brings our most capable ships with the greatest amount of striking power and operational capability to bear in the timeliest manner.

Maintaining a forward-deployed naval force capability with the most advanced ships supports the United States' commitment to the defense of Japan and the security and stability of the vital Indo-Pacific region.