Boeing F/A-18 Super Hornet Successfully Completes Operational Demonstrations in India

Boeing’s F/A-18 Super Hornet successfully completed operational demonstration tests at Indian Naval Station Hansa in Goa, India. *INDIAN NAVY*

GOA, India — Boeing’s F/A-18 Super Hornet successfully completed operational demonstration tests at Indian Naval Station Hansa in Goa, India, reinforcing the Super Hornet’s ability to effectively and safety operate off Indian Navy carriers, the company said July 20.

Two U.S. Navy F/A-18E Super Hornets completed multiple ski-

jumps, roll-in and fly-in arrestments, as well as performance flights, in a variety of weights in the air-to-air, air-to-ground, and air-to-surface configurations, meeting the Indian navy test requirements.

“The Boeing team was privileged to showcase the F/A-18 Super Hornet’s compatibility with Indian carriers in Goa,” said Alain Garcia, vice president, India business development for Boeing Defense, Space & Security and Boeing Global Services. “As the most advanced frontline multi-role naval fighter, the F/A-18 Super Hornet is one of the world’s most proven and affordable multi-role fighters and continues to evolve with the development of the next-generation Block III capability which will be game-changing for India.”

“With the Super Hornet Block III, the Indian navy would not only get the most advanced platform but would also benefit from tactics, upgrades and knowledge related to the naval aviation ecosystem that the U.S. Navy offers,” he added.

The tests followed eight ski-jumps in various weights and configurations during previous tests held at Naval Air Station Patuxent River in Maryland in late 2020 that demonstrated the Super Hornet’s ability to operate from a short-takeoff-but-arrested-recovery aircraft carrier.

MQ-9 Makes Debut at RIMPAC SINKEX 2022

A U.S. Air Force MQ-9A Reaper lands at Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii during the Rim of the Pacific 2022. *U.S. AIR FORCE / Airman 1st Class Ariel O'Shea*

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii – The first use of a U.S. Air Force MQ-9A Reaper, a remotely piloted aircraft, occurred during a Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2022 sinking exercise, July 12, the Air Force said July 20.

Participating in the SINKEX provided an opportunity for units from Australia, Canada, Malaysia and the United States to test weapons and systems in a simulated environment, working against opposing forces and eventually culminating in the explosion of a decommissioned naval vessel and marked a significant development in maritime warfighting capability.

The presence of the MQ-9A's at the world's largest international maritime exercise provides an opportunity for combined and joint-force collaboration.

"They need us and we need them," said U.S. Air National Guard Capt. Phillip West, the RIMPAC MQ-9 maritime force integration

lead. “That’s where RIMPAC comes into play.”

He said the Air Force and the Navy speak different languages, each using their own distinct jargon. Working together on exercises like RIMPAC and the SINKEX promotes smooth communication between the branches. This ensures sharpened combat readiness, increased strategic impact, and strengthened deterrence efforts by providing tactical proficiency to MQ-9A aircrews.

With the MQ-9 flying over the ocean as opposed to routine training in remote land locations, the main objective for the SINKEX was the gathering of practical data about operating in a maritime environment as opposed to a desert environment.

“The data that we have in a simulator feeds off of real-world engagements like SINKEX,” West said. “With what’s called the new Smart Sensor, they’re trying to build a database of what ships look like. They need us to actually do it so that they can build a database, and then they can fit it into a simulator so we can practice it and have more efficient training.”

This year is historic not only because of the MQ-9A but because it marks a return to a full-scale exercise not seen since before the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2020 iteration of RIMPAC was reduced in scale to be conducted with less face-to-face contact. The return to a full-scale exercise demonstrates capable, adaptive partners working together to increase the interoperability, resiliency, and agility needed by the joint and combined force.

Raytheon Missiles & Defense Delivers First SPY-6 Radar Arrays to Aircraft Carrier

When three SPY-6(V)3 radar arrays (left) are combined, they provide 360 degree coverage for aircraft carriers, like the future USS John F. Kennedy. *RAYTHEON MISSILES & DEFENSE*

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Raytheon Missiles & Defense has delivered SPY-6 radar arrays to the future USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 79), the first aircraft carrier to receive the advanced radar, the company announced July 18.

This delivery is the first of three for the aircraft carrier. Together, the three fixed-face radar arrays will form a SPY-6(V)3, also known as the Enterprise Air Surveillance Radar, which provides 360-degree coverage for the ship. In addition to the proven multi-mission capabilities across the SPY-6 family, SPY-6(V)3 has unique features that meet the needs of an aircraft carrier, including weather mapping and air traffic control functionality.

“This is the first aircraft carrier that will be equipped with SPY-6 radars, the leading naval radar system in the world,” said Kim Ernzen, president of Naval Power at Raytheon Missiles & Defense. “With the recent contract, SPY-6 will provide premier detection and coverage for more than 40 ships in the U.S. Navy throughout the next decade.”

The SPY-6 family of radars provides integrated air and missile defense for seven classes of ships. Its radar modular assemblies, known as RMAs, allow SPY-6 to be scalable and modular to support production for the U.S. and partner nations across all variants.

Missile Exercise Sends Frigate to the Bottom

Rim of the Pacific 2022 military forces from Australia, Canada, Malaysia and the United States fired upon and sunk the

decommissioned ex-USS Rodney M. Davis (FFG 60), July 12, during a sinking exercise to gain proficiency in tactics, targeting and live firing against a surface target at sea. *U.S. NAVY*

HAWAII — Units from Australia, Canada, Malaysia and the United States took part in a live-fire missile exercise that resulted in the sinking of a former U.S. Navy guided missile frigate at sea on July 12.

The ships and aircraft, which were participating in the Rim of the Pacific 2022 (RIMPAC) exercise, sank the decommissioned ex-USS Rodney M. Davis (FFG 60) July 12, in waters 15,000 feet deep, 50 nautical miles north of Kauai.

According to a statement from the RIMPAC Combined Information Bureau, "Live-fire events provide realistic training that refine partner nations' abilities to plan, communicate and conduct complex maritime operations such as precision and long-range strike capabilities."

The objective of the sinking exercise, or SINKEX, is to "gain proficiency in tactics, targeting and live firing against a surface target at sea," the statement said.

"This exercise provided a great opportunity for the extremely talented Sailors, soldiers and aviators who comprise the RIMPAC 2022 team to hone their skills in a live-fire setting," said Royal Canadian Navy Rear Adm. Christopher Robinson, deputy commander of the RIMPAC Combined Task Force. "There is nothing that really replaces the training value of opportunities such as this, which enable us to test our weapons and their associated combat systems with as much realism as possible. These live-fire exercises are vital for maintaining our proficiencies, building our interoperability, and increasing our readiness for future operations."

Royal Canadian Navy frigate HMCS Winnipeg (FFH 338) fired two Harpoon missiles as part of the SINKEX. A U.S. Navy P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft deployed an AGM-84D Harpoon

missile, and an F/A-18F Super Hornet from Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) launched an GBU-16 laser guided bomb for the event.

The 1,850-ton, 321-foot Royal Malaysian Navy corvette KD Lekir fired an Exocet MM40 missile during the SINKEX. Lekir is the first Royal Malaysian Navy ship to launch a missile and hit a target outside of Malaysian waters. The ship had also recently fired an Exocet during the Taming Sari exercise north of the Strait of Malacca in May.

“The SINKEX was a professionally enriching experience for the crew of KD Lekir,” said Adm. Mohd Reza Mohd Sany, chief of the Royal Malaysian Navy. “These events provide an excellent platform toward enhancing interoperability amongst the participating navies. The involvement is an experience that will elevate the professionalism of the KD Lekir crew,” said Mohd Reza. “The biggest international maritime exercise is an opportunity for a joint exercise involving various countries while strengthening cooperation among the participants,”

“The coordinated firing of anti-ship munitions is a complex activity. This SINKEX demonstrates the interchangeability of the capable and adaptive RIMPAC partners,” said Royal Australian Navy Commodore Paul O’Grady, commander of the RIMPAC maritime forces component. “In doing so, significant measures were taken to protect the maritime training environment.”

The ex-Rodney M. Davis was a 4,100-ton, 453-foot Oliver Hazard Perry-class guided missile frigate that served in the U.S. Navy from 1987 to 2015. Preparing decommissioned ships for sinking follows a rigorous process to ensure there are no hazardous materials, fuels or lubricants still onboard. The target ships must be sunk in water at least 6,000 feet deep and at least 50 nautical miles from land.

RIMPAC Fire

At least one mishap was reported during RIMPAC. A Peruvian navy corvette, BAP Guise (CC 28), suffered a fire outbreak July 18. A statement from the Peruvian navy said the fire was "mitigated and controlled by the crew with support of foreign units."

The ship was not identified in the initial statements from the RIMPAC Command Information Bureau, but the Guise was identified in subsequent statement from the Peruvian navy.

According to a statement from the CIB, the RIMPAC watch floor received the report of a fire and potential injuries aboard a Combined Task Force ship around 8:00 a.m., Sunday morning Hawaii time. "Two critically stable patients were evacuated from the ship by a helicopter from French Navy frigate FS Prairial (F731) to USCGC Midgett (WMSL 757), and have since been transferred ashore by U.S. Navy helicopter from USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72)," the statement said.

"Two crew members suffered burns as a result of it and were evacuated by helicopter for their respective care at a specialized hospital in Honolulu, the details having been communicated to their relatives," the Peruvian Navy statement said. "It should be noted that the rest of the naval personnel are unharmed."

RIMPAC is the world's largest international maritime exercise, with 26 nations, 38 ships, four submarines, more than 170 aircraft, more than 30 unmanned systems and 25,000 personnel participating this year in and around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California. The biennial exercise will conclude Aug. 4. RIMPAC 2022 is the 28th exercise in the series that began in 1971.

U.S. Affirms Support for Philippines Over Disputed Islands

Philippine Navy frigate BRP Antonio Luna (FF 151) arrives at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam to participate in the Rim of the Pacific 2022. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Demitrius J. Williams*

MANILA, Philippines – Demonstrators gathered outside the Chinese embassy in Manila on July 12 to mark the sixth anniversary of 2016 international court arbitration ruling that invalidated Beijing's vast territorial claims in the South China Sea. The Philippines say China continues to harass its vessels and personnel near the disputed islands and in the country's exclusive economic zone.

In a statement issued by the U.S. Embassy in Manila on July 12, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken called on the

Peoples Republic of China to comply with the decision by an arbitration tribunal after the Philippine government complained in 2013 about China's increasingly assertive claims and aggressive actions around its islands in the South China Sea.

China has unilaterally claimed that virtually all islands in the South China Sea belongs to it.

Blinken said the Arbitral Tribunal, which was constituted at The Hague under the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention, delivered a unanimous decision, which is final and binding on the Philippines and the PRC. "In its ruling, the Tribunal firmly rejected the PRC's expansive South China Sea maritime claims as having no basis in international law. The Tribunal also stated that the PRC has no lawful claim to the areas determined by the Arbitral Tribunal to be part of the Philippines' exclusive economic zone and continental shelf. We also reaffirm that an armed attack on Philippine armed forces, public vessels, or aircraft in the South China Sea would invoke U.S. mutual defense commitments under Article IV of the 1951 U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty."

In a May address at George Washington University, Blinken said China is advancing unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea and undermining peace and security, freedom of navigation, and commerce.

Philippine Foreign Secretary Enrique Manalo said Tuesday called the 2016 arbitration ruling an "indisputable" decision.

"These findings are no longer within the reach of denial and rebuttal and are conclusive as they are indisputable," said Manalo. "The award is final."

Despite rhetoric by the previous president of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte, where he said the Philippines would move away from U.S. influence and establisher closer ties with China, he later had a change of heart when his

overtures failed to deliver results.

The new Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who assumed office on June 30, and his government are expected to seek closer ties with the U.S. And today, the U.S.-Philippines partnership remains strong.

In August of last year, Adm. John C. Aquilino, commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, traveled to the Philippines to mark the 70th anniversary of the U.S.-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty and reaffirm the U.S. commitment to the alliance with the Philippines.

“Both of our nations have made it clear that we are committed to the alliance, and that we remain prepared to fight alongside and defend each other using all of our capabilities to preserve peace and stability in the region — just as we have before,” Aquilino said.

On May 23 of this year, Aquilino and the chief of staff of the armed forces of the Philippines, Gen. Andres Centino, signed the Maritime Security (Bantay Dagat) Framework at USINDOPACOM headquarters on Camp Smith, Hawaii. According to a statement from INDOPACOM, “Bantay Dagat” is a Tagalog term that means “Guardian of the Sea,” illustrating U.S. and Philippine resolve to improve regional maritime domain awareness and confront maritime challenges together. The framework is designed to enable a holistic, intergovernmental approach to maritime security through the interoperability of U.S. and Philippine maritime forces and option to include interagency organizations, and is a testament to the strength of the U.S.–Philippines alliance.”

The Philippine navy’s 2,600-ton, 351-foot guided-missile frigate BRP Antonio Luna (FF-151) is currently participating in the 2022 Rim of the Pacific exercises off Hawaii.

General Atomics EMALS, AAG Systems on CVN 78 Reach 10,000 ‘Cats and Traps’ Milestone

Sailors and their families and friends observe the USS Gerald R. Ford’s (CVN 78) 10,000th recovery from the flight deck, June 25. Friends and family members were invited aboard Ford to experience a day in the life of a Sailor at sea first-hand. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communications Specialist 2nd Class Jackson Adkins*

SAN DIEGO – General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems announced July 12 that 10,000 catapult launches and arrested landings using the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System and Advanced Arresting Gear have been successfully and safely completed

aboard USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78).

The first-in-class aircraft carrier completed planned incremental availability in March 2022 and is now preparing for its upcoming deployment.

“Over the past two years, EMALS and AAG have been rigorously exercised utilizing aircraft in the current air wing. The systems continue to perform successfully in operational, carrier qualification, and training environments and under all weather conditions,” said Scott Forney, president of GA-EMS. “EMALS and AAG offer robust capabilities that are proving transformative, providing greater availability, efficiency and flexibility to safely launch the air wing of today while standing ready to support new aircraft as they join the air wing of the future. We are extremely proud of our team and the ship’s crew as they continue to meet each new milestone and steadily work toward bringing ‘Warship 78’ to the fleet.”

Under multiple contracts with the Navy, General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems is now supporting CVN 78 sustainment requirements and delivering EMALS and AAG for the next two Ford-*class* carriers currently under construction, John F. Kennedy (CVN 79) and Enterprise (CVN 80). GA-EMS is also working with the Navy to determine EMALS and AAG contract and schedule requirements for the fourth Ford-class aircraft carrier, Doris Miller (CVN 81).

Fairbanks Morse Defense Launches Training and Service

Center Campus

Fairbanks Morse Defense has invested $13 million to create a campus that expands service and hands-on training opportunities for technicians and customers. *FAIRBANKS MORSE DEFENSE*

BELOIT, Wis. – Fairbanks Morse Defense is launching a 45,000-square-foot training and service center campus in Chesapeake, Virginia.

The defense contractor will move its existing service center from Norfolk, Virginia, to the Chesapeake campus to add a state-of-the-art training facility and further expand advanced service support for its customers. The move represents a $13 million investment in the community.

“We are excited to have Fairbanks Morse Defense as the newest member of our business community,” said Rick West, mayor of Chesapeake. “The Hampton Roads region has a long and storied history in the defense industry and having Fairbanks Morse Defense locate its new state-of-the-art facility in the city of Chesapeake underscores the city’s commitment to our military and its partners. We look forward to working with Fairbanks Morse Defense as it continues to grow in

Chesapeake.”

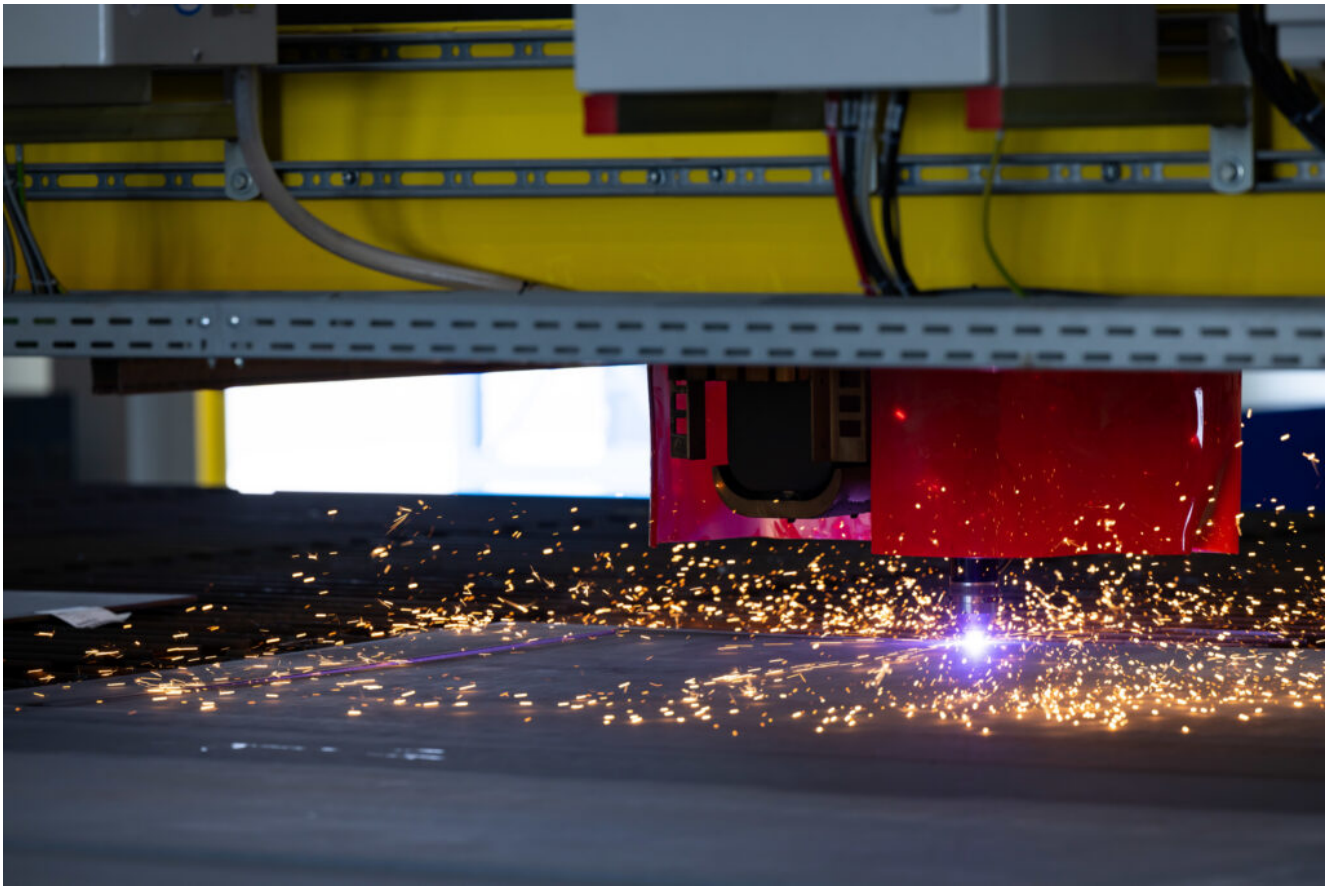
The company’s new training and service center campus, located at 733 Curtis Saunders Court, is near Norfolk, Virginia, the largest U.S. Navy and Military Sealift Command fleet concentration in the United States. The U.S. Coast Guard also has a strong presence in the area.

“Training is the forefront of good maintenance practices, and Fairbanks Morse Defense’s training center is incorporating our cutting-edge mixed reality training technology to provide the most comprehensive, interactive marine equipment training solution available,” said FMD President of Services Jamie McMullin. “This location will strengthen FMD’s position as the preferred service solutions and training provider for our core customers while enhancing our rigorous factory-certified training programs for our large network of field service technicians.”

The site also provides room for growth, allowing FMD and its expanded family of brands to use additional space as the company integrates new turnkey products, service solutions, and training programs into the training and service center offerings.

Upon completion in 2023, the site will create approximately 50 new jobs.

Start of Construction Marked for T-ATS 11



The start of construction of the T-ATS 11 on the new steel line at Austal USA in Mobile, Alabama. *AUSTAL USA*

WASHINGTON – Construction began on the Navy's newest towing, salvage and rescue ship, T-ATS 11, at Austal USA's Mobile, Alabama shipyard on July 11, Team Ships Public Affairs said July 12.

The Navajo-class (T-ATS) provides ocean-going tug, salvage, and rescue capabilities to support fleet operations. T-ATS replaces and fulfills the capabilities that were previously provided by the Fleet Ocean Tug (T-ATF 166) and Rescue and Salvage Ships (T-ARS 50) class ships.

"It's always a great Navy day when we start construction of a new ship to be used to do the nation's bidding," said Rear Adm. Tom Anderson, program executive officer, Ships. "It's an exceptional Navy day when the start of construction also marks the expansion of the shipbuilding industrial base, as it does today, as Austal puts its new facility to work building its very first steel ship, a Navajo-class Towing, Salvage and Rescue Ship, T-ATS 11."

Navajo-class ships will be Multi-Mission Common Hull Platforms based on commercial offshore Anchor Handling Tug Supply (AHTS) vessels. T-ATS supports current missions including towing, salvage, rescue, oil spill response, humanitarian assistance and wide area search and surveillance. They also enable future rapid capability initiatives, supporting modular payloads with hotel services and appropriate interfaces.

T-ATS 11 marks the first steel ship in Austal's ship construction program. Austal is also contracted to build T-ATS 12, with options for additional ships.

HII Hits Milestone on Aircraft Carrier John F. Kennedy

Machinist Mate Second Class Allington Scotland, left, and New New Shipbuilding Construction Supervisor Keith Wright inspect the 1,000th compartment space turned over to the crew of John F. Kennedy (CVN 79). *HII*

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – HII, America's only builder of nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, announced July 11 that its Newport News Shipbuilding division reached a significant milestone in the compartment and systems construction of aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy (CVN 79).

Newport News recently turned over to the ship's crew the 1,000th compartment of the 2,615 total spaces. The milestone reflects the shipyard's steady progress toward delivery of the ship to the Navy. Newport News has also installed more than 9.8 million feet of cable, or more than 1,800 miles, of the approximately 10.5 million feet of cable on John F. Kennedy.

The most recently completed spaces include electrical and engineering. This allows sailors assigned to the pre-commissioning unit to increase training on the ship while final outfitting and testing progresses.

“Our shipbuilders are highly skilled, determined and working incredibly hard to bring Kennedy to life,” said Lucas Hicks, vice president, New Construction Aircraft Carrier Programs CVN 78 and CVN 79. “This is about equipping our Sailors with the most advanced aircraft carrier ever built for the U.S. Navy. We are proud to execute for the customer, and finalize the remaining equipment, systems and compartments that will bring us closer to delivering the ship to the Navy.”

John F. Kennedy, the second ship in the Ford class, is scheduled to be delivered to the Navy in 2024. Two other Ford-class aircraft carriers are currently under construction at Newport News, Enterprise (CVN 80) and Doris Miller (CVN 81).

The Ford-class aircraft carriers are the first to be designed 100% digitally. Although the ships were designed in a digital environment, paper drawings are still used during the construction process. John F. Kennedy represents a transition to a new digital construction process, with shipbuilders beginning to use visual work instructions on laptops and tablets rather than paper drawings. Enterprise will be the first carrier totally built using the digital tools.

Ford-class enhancements incorporated into the design include flight deck changes, improved weapons handling systems and a redesigned island, all resulting in increased aircraft sortie generation rates. The Ford class also features new nuclear power plants, increased electrical power-generation capacity, allowance for future technologies, and reduced workload for Sailors, translating to a smaller crew size and reduced operating costs for the Navy. Construction processes on Ford–class carriers are enabled by workforce learning that took place on USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) and those lessons are being applied throughout the Ford class, HII said.

Royal Navy, Assisted by US Navy's 5th Fleet, Seizes Smuggled Iranian Missiles

HMS Montrose seized Iranian weapons from speedboats earlier this year, including surface-to-air missiles and engines for land-attack cruise missiles. *ROYAL NAVY*

LONDON – In early 2022, while on routine maritime security operations, Royal Navy ship HMS Montrose seized Iranian weapons from speedboats being operated by smugglers in international waters south of Iran, the U.K Ministry of Defence said July 7. The weapons seized included surface-to-air-missiles and engines for land attack cruise missiles, in contravention of UN Security Council resolution 2216

(2015).

This is the first time a British naval warship has interdicted a vessel carrying such sophisticated weapons from Iran.

The seizures, which occurred on Jan. 28 and Feb. 25, took place in the early hours of the morning. HMS Montrose's Wildcat helicopter was scanning for vessels smuggling illicit goods. The helicopter crew spotted small vessels moving at speed away from the Iranian coast.

During the February interdiction, U.S. Navy Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Gridley supported efforts by deploying a Seahawk helicopter to provide critical overwatch during the operation. On both occasions, the Wildcat helicopter pursued the vessels and reported back to HMS Montrose that they could see suspicious cargo on deck.

A team of Royal Marines approached the vessels on two rigid-hulled inflatable boats before securing and searching the vessel. Dozens of packages containing advanced weaponry were discovered, confiscated and brought back to HMS Montrose.

"The U.K. is committed to upholding international law, from standing up to aggression in Europe to interdicting illegal shipments of weaponry that perpetuates instability in the Middle East," said Minister for the Armed Forces James Heappey. "The U.K. will continue to work in support of an enduring peace in Yemen and is committed to international maritime security so that commercial shipping can transit safely without threat of disruption."

The seized packages were returned to the U.K. for technical analysis, which revealed the shipment contained multiple rocket engines for the Iranian-produced 351 land-attack cruise missile and a batch of 358 surface-to-air missiles.

The 351 is a cruise missile with a range of 1,000 kilometers, regularly used by the Houthis to strike targets in the Kingdom

of Saudi Arabia and was also the type of weapon used to attack Abu Dhabi on Jan. 17, which killed three civilians.

On June 24, the Ministry of Defence hosted a panel of experts established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2140 (2014), which concerns the conflict in Yemen. The panel inspected the seized weapons and received a technical brief by the U.K.'s defense intelligence analysts.

"These interdictions demonstrate the professionalism and commitment of the Royal Navy to promoting stability in this region," said Cmdr. Claire Thompson, commanding Officer of HMS Montrose. "I am extremely proud of my crew – the Royal Navy Sailors, aircrew and Royal Marines involved in these endeavors and the significant positive impact they are having in maintaining the international rules-based order at sea."

The U.K. retains a permanent presence in the Middle East, with HMS Montrose having been deployed to the region since early 2019, actively supporting multinational maritime security operations and protecting the interests of the United Kingdom and its allies. The ship operates under the control and direction of the UK Maritime Component Command, based in Bahrain.