

Exercise Sea Breeze 26-2 Opens with Focus on Interoperability as a Combat Capability



PORTLAND, U.K. – Exercise Sea Breeze 26-2 kicked off in Portland, United Kingdom, today. Naval forces from Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Georgia, Greece, Japan, Latvia, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Türkiye, NATO Maritime Allied Command (NATOMARCOM), Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and The United States are all participating.

The second iteration of Sea Breeze 26 is focused on mine countermeasures and is taking place July 13-24. Participating forces will conduct mine hunting operations utilizing Mine Countermeasure Vessels, explosive ordnance disposal teams, dive and salvage operations, unmanned underwater vehicles and unmanned surface vessels.

Sea Breeze 26-2 offers NATO Allies and partner nations the opportunity to enhance interoperability and warfighting capabilities within the Black Sea region. This includes staff planning, command and control, and tactical execution with a particular focus on integrating diverse systems and capabilities within a complex, multi-domain environment.

“Sea Breeze 26-2 reinforces the importance of interoperability,” said Vice Adm. J.T. Anderson, commander, U.S. 6th Fleet. “Every evolution we conduct together strengthens the readiness and lethality of our combined force, ensuring we are prepared to defend our shared interests and maintain security across one of the world’s most strategically important maritime regions. Strong Allies and partners are our greatest advantage.”

The participating naval forces will demonstrate their expertise in a range of maritime skills. This includes mine hunting operations, the safe disposal of explosive ordnance, precision diving and salvage techniques, and the effective deployment of unmanned underwater and surface vehicles. The exercise will culminate in a demonstration that combines these individual capabilities, further strengthening the cohesion and warfighting effectiveness of allied and partner forces.

At the Sea Breeze 26-2 Headquarters, a combined and multinational Staff will conduct integrated training with a focus on planning and targeting capabilities, command-and-control of Ally and partner forces, electronic warfare exploitation and countermeasures, and the integration of unmanned systems to increase and consolidate cross-domain awareness.

“Exercises like Sea Breeze provide an opportunity to integrate new technologies and multinational capabilities into realistic operational scenarios,” said Rear Adm. Kelly C. Ward, director, Strategic Effects for Commander U.S. Naval Forces Europe/Africa Commander, commander, Task Force-SIX SIX,

commander, Task Force-ONE SIX SIX. "As Allies and partners learn from one another and refine how we plan and fight together, we build a more agile, ready, and effective force capable of responding to evolving maritime threats."

This year, Exercise Sea Breeze 2026 occurred in two iterations, Sea Breeze 26-1 and 26-2. The first iteration, Sea Breeze 26-1, was hosted by Romania in the Babadag Training Area and the Danube Delta region 3-19 June, 2026.

Since 1997, Exercise Sea Breeze has brought together Black Sea nations, NATO Allies and partners together to train and operate with NATO members in the pursuit of building increased capabilities. Exercise Sea Breeze 2026 is an annual multinational maritime exercise, involving sea, land, and air components co-hosted by the United States and Ukraine to enhance interoperability and capability among participating forces.

Commander, U.S. Sixth Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allies, international partners, and other U.S. government departments and agencies to advance U.S. national interests, security, and stability in Europe and Africa.