

Navy Divers Reinforce Maritime Force Protection at Naval Support Activity Souda Bay, Greece



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SOU DA BAY, Greece – U.S. Navy Seabee Divers, assigned to Underwater Construction Team (UCT) 1, Construction Dive Detachment Bravo (CDD/B), completed inspections and maintenance on the port security barrier system and tested new methods for underwater concrete repairs on the Marathi NATO Pier Complex from Dec. 2025 to Jan. 2026.

The inspection revealed underwater damage that, if left

unaddressed, could reduce the effectiveness of a critical floating security barrier used to protect ships during maintenance and resupply, underscoring the need for regular inspections by specialized Navy divers to keep the system fully operational.

“For the pier repair project, we are basically adding reinforcement to holes and damage in the existing structural concrete,” said Construction Mechanic 2nd Class Zack Risinger, UCT 1, CDD/B project supervisor. “Working with the Hellenic Navy, we identified the priority repair site, and now, we’re going down and installing composite formwork with anchor bolts so that we can backfill the void with high-strength concrete.”

Naval Support Activity (NSA) Souda Bay’s port facility, also known as the NATO Marathi Pier Complex, is an active host nation military base under the operation of the Hellenic Navy. The NATO Marathi Pier Complex is one of the largest natural ports in the Mediterranean and provides berthing, refueling, ammunition handling, general supply handling, and minor maintenance and ship repair to NATO and U.S. 6th Fleet ships during normal and contingency operations. The NATO Marathi Pier Complex is the deepest port in the Mediterranean used by the U.S. Navy and can handle everything from aircraft carriers to submarines.

“The Seabee Divers come to Souda Bay every few years to provide a specialized service that we could not otherwise obtain” said Port Operations Regional Program Director Jim Walker, Commander, Navy Region Europe, Africa, Central. “The divers always get the job done on time; despite the very challenging weather conditions Souda Bay is known for in the winter.”

Seabee divers conducted the inspections using specialized tools, including chain gauges and a remotely operated vehicle to assess deeper anchor points, and completed underwater

concrete repairs using a high-strength fiber-reinforced polymer panel designed for rapid structural repairs. The repair system is currently being evaluated for future expeditionary port damage repair missions in remote and extreme environments.

“Completing these projects in Greece was not only a great opportunity to do challenging work that directly supports U.S. 6th Fleet, but also to work directly with the Hellenic Navy,” said Lt. Juliana Pereira, UTC 1, CDD/B officer-in-charge. “The opportunity to build stronger relationships with important Allies like Greece is the highlight of this deployment and something our entire team enjoyed.”

The Seabee Divers are deployed to U.S. 6th Fleet under Commander Task Force (CTF) 68 for a six-month deployment executing maritime infrastructure projects and security cooperation engagements with priority partners across the U.S. European Command region. As part of the U.S. 6th Fleet Maritime Infrastructure Assessment Program, UCT 1 completed an in-depth maritime infrastructure assessment of the NATO Marathi Pier Complex at Souda Bay in 2022.

UCT 1, CDD/B, currently deployed as Commander Task Unit 68.2.2 is a specially trained and equipped unit within Navy Expeditionary Combat Command that specializes in diving, light salvage, underwater construction, and military engineering operations in austere environments.

22nd Naval Construction Regiment, headquartered in Rota, Spain as Commander task Group 68.2 commands naval construction forces for Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces Europe-Africa/Task Force 68, supporting U.S., allied, and partner interests across the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations.

Commander Task Force 68 (CTF 68) is a component of the U.S. 6th Fleet and commands all Naval Expeditionary Combat Forces in the U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command areas of

responsibility. These expeditionary forces provide maritime engineering and combat support capabilities in remote, austere, and complex environments.