

U.S. Navy Recovers F/A-18E from Mediterranean Sea



An F/A-18E Super Hornet, attached to the “Blue Blasters” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 34, launches off the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), July 30. A Super Hornet that blew overboard earlier that month has been recovered. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Crayton Agnew*

NAPLES, Italy – On Aug. 3, the U.S. Navy successfully recovered the F/A-18E Super Hornet aircraft assigned to Carrier Air Wing 1, embarked aboard USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), that blew overboard due to unexpected heavy weather in the Mediterranean Sea July 8.

The aircraft was recovered from a depth of approximately 9,500 feet by a team from Task Force (CTF) 68, Naval Sea Systems Command’s Supervisor of Salvage and Diving, USS Harry S. Truman, Naval Strike Fighter Wing Atlantic, and U.S. 6th Fleet embarked on the multi-purpose construction vessel Everest.

“Inherent to Task Force 68 is our ability to adapt to any mission set – we can rapidly mobilize and deploy scalable command, control, and communications, in order to seamlessly integrate and provide forward command and control when and where needed,” said CTF 68 Commodore, Capt. Geoffrey Townsend.

The aircraft was recovered using a CURV-21 remotely operated vehicle to attach specialized rigging and lift lines to the aircraft. A lifting hook was attached to the rigging to raise the aircraft to the surface and hoist it aboard Everest.

“The rapid response of the combined team, including SUPSALV and Phoenix International personnel, allowed us to conduct safe recovery operations within 27 days of the incident,” said Lt. Cmdr. Miguel Lewis, U.S. 6th Fleet salvage officer. “Our task tailored team operated safely and efficiently to meet the timeline. The search and recovery took less than 24 hours, a true testament to the team’s dedication and capability.”

The recovery efforts demonstrate the U.S. Navy’s capabilities to conduct deep-water search and recovery operations worldwide. The aircraft was delivered to a nearby military installation where it will be transported to the United States.