

MARITIME NEWS – 23 NOVEMBER 2016

Update : USS Zumwalt Breaks Down in Panama Canal



USS Zumwalt passes under the Chesapeake Bay Bridge as the ship travels to its new home port of San Diego, California following commissioning in Baltimore, October 17, 2016. **U.S. Navy Photo**

The U.S. Navy's newest and most high-tech destroyer is stuck in Panama after suffering an engineering casualty during a transit of the Panama Canal. A U.S. Navy statement obtained by USNI News said the destroyer, **USS Zumwalt**, was on a southbound transit of the canal on Monday when it suffered the casualty and had to be towed to a berth. Zumwalt is now stopped for repairs at the former U.S. Naval Station Rodman, the report said.

The incident is the second engineering casualty involving the USS Zumwalt and comes just one month after the US Navy's newest Littoral Combat Ship suffered damage in the canal during a return visit to shipyard after multiple engine failures. The **USS Zumwalt** (DDG 1000) is en route to its homeport of San Diego following its commissioning in Baltimore in October. Third Fleet spokesman Cmdr. Ryan Perry issued a statement late Monday:

"Vice Adm. Nora Tyson, commander, US Third Fleet, has directed **USS Zumwalt** (DDG 1000) to remain at ex-Naval Station Rodman in Panama to address engineering issues that occurred while transiting the Panama Canal. The timeline for repairs is being determined now, in direct coordination with Naval Sea Systems and Naval Surface Forces. The schedule for the ship will remain flexible to enable testing and evaluation in order to ensure the ship's safe transit to her new homeport in San Diego." USNI News reported that the repairs could take up to ten days. Upon arrival in San Diego, the destroyer is scheduled to take part in a Post Delivery Availability and Mission Systems Activation and is expected to be integrated into the fleet in 2018 following test and evaluation. **Source : gCaptain**

A repeat but a few more details

Australian Navy submarines to get sonar upgrades



Photo: Australian Department of Defence

Australian Minister for Defence Industry Christopher Pyne announced that Thales Australia has been awarded a \$100 million contract to design a major sonar system upgrade for Collins class submarines. The minister added that Thales Australia will engage other Australian-based companies including Sonartech Atlas and L3 Oceania, as well as suppliers from the United Kingdom (UK) and France to design the Collins sonar system upgrade. "The sonar system upgrade will install improved sonar sensor arrays aboard each of the Collins submarines, as well as improved signal processing systems," Pyne said.

"Under the contract Australian industry will play a key role in delivering leading edge sonar capability for Australian submarines. The Australian industry component of the contract to be led by Thales Australia is worth in the order of \$50 million and will support around 50 Australian jobs in Sydney and Perth." In a separate announcement, the minister announced \$4.9 million of government funding for a project that will seek to develop techniques to counter radio frequency emitters, enabling the Royal Australian Navy to operate in hostile and threatening environments. Pyne added that BAE Systems Australia has received funding to assist RAN to develop and demonstrate an innovative technology under the project that is known as Cuttlefish. **Source : Naval Today**

It definitely appears that the Collins class are on the up.

Russian Tankers Defy EU Ban to Smuggle Jet Fuel to Syria – Sources



Publicly available ship-tracking data confirms that at least two Russian tankers, the **Yaz** and **Mukhalatka** (pictured here), made one trip each between September and October, stopping in Greece and Limassol in Cyprus. **Photo: MarineTraffic/Alexander Anushenkov**

Russian tankers have smuggled jet fuel to Syria through EU waters, bolstering military supplies to a war-torn country where Moscow is carrying out air strikes in support of the government, according to sources with knowledge of the matter. At least two Russian-flagged ships made deliveries – which contravene EU sanctions – via Cyprus, an intelligence source with a European Union government told Reuters. There was a sharp increase in shipments in October, said the source who spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter.

A separate shipping source familiar with the movements of the Russian-flagged vessels said the ships visited Cypriot and Greek ports before delivering fuel to Syria. The Russian defense and transport ministries did not respond to requests for comment. A spokeswoman for EU foreign affairs and security policy said the implementation of EU restrictions lay with member states. "We trust that competent authorities are complying with their obligation to ensure respect of the restrictive measures in place and to pursue any circumvention attempts," she added.

Greece's foreign ministry declined to comment. The Cypriot government said its authorities had not approved the docking of any Russian tankers carrying jet fuel bound for Syria. "We would welcome any information that may be provided to us on any activity that contravenes U.N. or EU restrictive measures," the Cypriot foreign ministry added. Syria's civil war, which began in 2011, has become a theater for competing global powers, with Russia and Iran supporting President Bashar al-Assad, and the United States, Gulf Arab and European powers backing rebels who want to depose him.

Russia changed the course of the conflict in favor of Assad's government last year when it intervened with air strikes. Moscow says it targets only Islamic State militants and other jihadist fighters. EU Council Regulation 1323/2014, introduced two years ago, bans any supply of jet fuel to Syria from the EU territories, whether or not the fuel originated in the European Union. Over one two-week period in October, Russian tankers delivered 20,000 metric

tonnes of jet fuel to Syria – worth around \$9 million at today's world prices – via the European Union, according to the EU government intelligence source.

"The jet fuel shipments from these vessels have played a vital role in maintaining Russian air strikes in the region," said the source. "This points to a sustained Russian build-up of resources needed to support their military operation and ambitions in Syria." Some of the shipped fuel also went to the Syrian military, helping to "keep Assad's air assets operational," the source added. The shipping source and a third person, an intelligence consultant specializing in the Mediterranean area, also said the fuel was likely intended for Russian and Syrian military use.

Publicly available ship-tracking data confirms that at least two Russian tankers, the **Yaz** and **Mukhalatka**, made one trip each between September and October, stopping in Greece and Limassol in Cyprus. In Greece, the **Yaz** stopped at Agioi Theodoroi port but it is unclear where the **Mukhalatka** stopped. From Cyprus, they sailed towards Syria and Lebanon. Their tracking transponders were switched off near the coasts of those countries, according to the data.

The EU intelligence source said the Mukhalatka went on to deliver jet fuel to Syria, while the other two sources said the Yaz almost certainly carried fuel to the country. All the people declined to be named due to the sensitivity of the matter. It was unclear where the fuel might have originated. Alexander Yaroshenko, general director of the owner of the **Yaz** and **Mukhalatka** ships, St Petersburg-based Transpetrochart, declined to comment when asked by Reuters about the shipments. Transpetrochart asked for written questions, which were supplied, but did not provide an immediate response.

Transpetrochart says on its website that it was founded in 2002 and specializes in shipping crude oil, fuel oil, diesel oil, gasoline and other oil products. It operates seven oil tankers. The intelligence consultant said the Yaz was investigated by Greek authorities for possible EU sanctions violations during its stay in the port of Agioi Theodoroi in September, but that it was allowed to leave bound for Turkey.

The Greek coastguard service said in September that it had investigated the Yaz for possible breaches of EU regulations regarding Syria and had pressed charges against the ship's captain. A spokesman did not give further details about the investigation when contacted by Reuters. One coastguard official said separately the captain was charged and released pending trial. The EU government intelligence source said Russia was also using ships flying the flags of other countries to carry jet fuel to Syria. Reuters was unable to corroborate that allegation with other sources, or with ship-tracking data. **Source : Thomson Reuters**

This is a no-brainer as the Russian Air Force has a base there and will obviously need fuel so why be surprised?

Norway contracts Kongsberg for Fridtjof Nansen-class frigate upgrades



Fridtjof Nansen-class frigate. **Photo : Norwegian DoD**

The Norwegian Defence Material Agency (NDMA) has contracted Kongsberg Defence Systems to upgrade the combat management systems of the Royal Norwegian Navy's Fridtjof Nansen-class frigates. Under the agreement, the defense company will also update the ships' active sonar systems. Kongsberg said the contract has a value of 313 MNOK (approx. US\$36.7 million) and is expected to be completed in the next four years. In the past, Kongsberg has supplied the frigates with anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare systems based on the company's combat management system architecture and integrated with the Aegis Combat System.

The company has also conducted update and maintenance activities regularly since the class was introduced. "Kongsberg is pleased to be part of the upgrade program extending the lifetime of the systems on board the Fridtjof Nansen class," Eirik Lie, acting president, Kongsberg Defence Systems, said. The Norwegian Navy currently operates

five multi-role Fridtjof Nansen-class frigates that were commissioned into the navy between 2006 and 2011. The frigates are named after the Norwegian explorer and Nobel Peace Prize laureate and built by Spanish shipbuilder Navantia. **Source : Naval Today**

Italy launches first Aster 30 missile from FREMM frigate Carlo Bergamini



FREMM **Carlo Bergamini**. Photo: Italian Navy

The lead ship of the Italian Navy's FREMM frigates recently accomplished a first for the Italian Navy by launching the Aster 30 missile at the Italian Quirra firing range on 22 November. By firing the missile, Fincantieri-built frigate **Carlo Bergamini** tested the SAAM ESD (surface anti air missile – extended self defense) system that is based on the Aster missile.

According to the Italian Navy, the testing phase of the missile defense system will conclude with another launch that will be integrated with the ship's combat system. The launch is scheduled for April 2017. SAAM-ESD is an air defense system consisting of multi-function radar and Sylver A50 vertical launchers that can accommodate up to 16 missiles including Aster 15 and 30; the scope of the Aster 30, which has a longer range than the Aster 15, enables extended defense of the area and can be protected.

The system is developed jointly by France and Italy by Eurosam, a joint venture established in June 1989 by three major European aerospace companies (Aerospatiale, Alenia and Thomson-CSF) known today as MBDA Missile Systems and Thales. The Aster 30, at 430 kilos, is 120 kilos heavier than the Aster 15 and has a longer range which, according to MBDA exceeds 100 km. **Source : Naval Today**

Royal Navy destroyer patrols Bab el-Mandeb strait



Photo: Royal Navy

Royal Navy's Type 45 destroyer **HMS Daring** has been tasked with the protection of merchant vessels and Royal Navy ships sailing through the Bab al-Mandeb strait. The Portsmouth-based warship has provided reassurance in the region, being equipped to tackle possible air and surface threats with her combination of surveillance radars and Sea Viper missiles. The air destroyer also escorted the Navy's joint expeditionary force task group including Devonport-based **HMS Bulwark**, flagship **HMS Ocean**, and the **MV Eddystone Point**.

Around 95 per cent of Britain's economic activity depends upon the sea and a vast amount of global trade passes through the region. **HMS Daring** is one of six destroyers, and continues the role her sister ship HMS Defender carried out earlier this year.

"An island nation needs a strong shipping industry and a strong shipping industry needs military support and protection," said Jonathan Roberts, of the UK Chamber of Shipping. **Daring** operates with the Royal Navy's newest type of helicopter – the Wildcat Mk2 – which extends the ship's capability beyond the horizon. The ship will also be operating as part of Combined Task Force 150 and will use its Royal Navy and Royal Marines boarding teams to conduct counter piracy, counter terrorist and counter smuggling operations.

Its main effort is to disrupt terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda and Al Shabab and deter piracy and other unlawful activities at sea in an area spanning from the Suez Canal, through the Red Sea, Indian Ocean and into the Gulf of Oman. "We're proud to be helping keep ships in the region safe but it only represents a fraction of what the Royal Navy does," said Commander **Philip Dennis**, the Commanding Officer of **HMS Daring**. **Source : Naval Today**

Testing and boosting the SAN minecounter-measures squadron's effectiveness

That the SA Navy's mine counter-measures (MCM) remains an effective and efficient component of the maritime arm of the SA National Defence Force (SANDF) was ably demonstrated during Exercise Phoenix in Mossel Bay recently. "Captain Theo Stokes, MCM squadron commander, and his personnel rose to the task given by Flag Officer Fleet Rear Admiral Bubele Mhlana to arrest the decline and stabilise the fleet," Chief Petty Officer Byron Lombard reports. This saw the MCM branch move lock, stock and an autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) to conduct the exercise. The main aim of Exercise Phoenix was to transfer skills and knowledge to operators. No less important was rebuilding overall MCM capabilities.

According to Stokes the exercise was designed primarily to collect data off Mossel Bay utilising technology transfer between the Simon's Town-based Institute for Maritime Technology (IMT) and the MCM squadron using IMT's Remus 100 AUV fitted with side-scanning sonar technology. The MCM squadron is positioning itself for the new technology which Project Motsu will deliver. Phoenix provided the opportunity to see and utilise the AUV's capabilities and incorporate it into the MCM toolbox. During the exercise information on the AUV's limitations as regards different weather conditions, topography and water depth was all gathered and will be put to future use.

Navy divers also formed part of Phoenix and are scheduled to be staffed aboard MCM vessels in future. Their task will centre on finding mine-like objects (MLOs). As far as the future of MCM operations in the Navy is concerned, Commander Werner Stassen sees IMT assisting with hardware and knowledge. This input will decrease over time and be handed to MCM operators who gain the needed knowledge and skills during exercises such as Phoenix. Stassen added that operators involved in Exercise Phoenix had made valuable suggestions on classifying objects and cleaning data. "All the data collected was presented to both Fleet Command and the Navy Office."



The skills transfer aspect of Phoenix saw leading seamen Gavin Gain and Sion Meyer, among others, learn how to process raw data from the Remus AUV as well as doing interpretation before turning the data into picture format. This post processing element is done using Sonarwiz and Sea Scan survey software. "They look for contacts on the raw data and mark them in categories such as objects of interest, MLOs and non-MLOs. It was a case of on-the-job training during the exercise which can be lost if these members are transferred to other units," Lombard said.

"IMT gives scientific support for the AUV used in Exercise Phoenix but once the Navy has its own AUV they will have a better understanding of its limitations and operating parameters. This will lead to the development of doctrine and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to boost maritime security," IMT domain leader Jorg Schid said. **Source : defenceWeb; Photo : CPO Byron Lombard**

'This ferry was a floating coffin' – Outrage after Harties boat fire

There has been a public outcry and calls for stricter safety measures on boat cruises following a fire that broke out at a ferry in Hartbeespoort Dam near Pretoria on Saturday afternoon. The fire aboard **Prime Time** led to deaths of four people - one from smoke inhalation, while three drowned trying to escape the blaze. According to reports, those who died were not wearing life jackets as they jumped into the water or tried to get on to boats that had come to rescue them. Twitter users expressed anger at what they believed was an apparent shortage of life jackets and improper security measures in place.

One user, Tammi Carter, said: "The ferry legally needs to have a life jacket for everyone on board... if they didn't have enough, the company could be in serious trouble! Especially because people died." Richard Glowacki highlighted the importance of security measures in light of the incident: "After this incident, I am sure many ferries/vessels will be checked out on a regular basis to make sure they fully licensed and have enough life jackets for every passenger." Roshan Lil-Ruthan said: "This was our observation when we went here earlier this year in May.

Too many operating with minimal safety measures. But this is prevalent everywhere in the world. God bless the families and friends and grant them peace in such a time as this." Mvn Mgovhela said: "Arrest the owner of this thing. They have to take responsibility for this; it seems they only focus on the money but safety was last thing, arrest them." Siliziwe Mazilazila opined that: "That means this ferry was a floating coffin for a long time.

No life jackets & emergency drills or plans in place. Ignorance & profits blinded them for too long." The owner of the boat, Nico Wessels, said 203 people were on board, including staff members. The North West premier's office said investigations into the tragedy now include the owners of the boat club and the event organiser. The exact cause of the fire is still not yet known. Police spokeswoman Pelonomi Makau said the police investigations are under way. "The number of fatalities still stands at four and we are still busy with our investigations," Makau said. **Source : timeslive**

A good example of 'hysteria before the facts' put forward by the media. There are two investigations being done – by the SAPS and SAMSA. Some facts that have not been noted are that the fire was aft and the vessel turned into the wind and the fire did not spread before being extinguished. No order was given to 'abandon ship' but other boats tried to take off passengers who were panicking. Too many boarded one boat which capsized and some were trapped under the hull and drowned. I am not saying there were enough life vests but there is a lot more to be considered before lynching the owner like vigilantes!

Comments from 'Marconi's'

1. The Pakistan Navy detected an Indian submarine in its territorial waters and chased it away, the naval service said in a press release issued on Friday. According to the statement, the Indian submarine was detected south of the Pakistani coast on Monday. The submarine tried to escape detection without success as it was continuously tracked and pushed "well clear of our waters", as the Pakistan Navy said.

India immediately denied any presence of its vessels near Pakistan's waters describing the Pakistan statement as "blatant lies". If a video circulated by a number of media houses, including Pakistan's English-language site Dawn, is believed to be accurate, detecting the submarine should not have posed a significant challenge as it was filmed [moving on the surface!](#)

2. The Kremlin is to deploy a missile cruiser and an anti-submarine ship to the eastern Mediterranean in the coming days, amid rising tension over a possible US-led military response to Syria's alleged chemical weapons use. "The well-known situation shaping up in the eastern Mediterranean called for certain corrections to the make-up of the naval forces," a Moscow military source told Russia's Interfax news agency. "A large anti-submarine ship of the Northern Fleet will join them [the existing naval forces] over the next few days. Later it will be joined by a rocket cruiser of the Black Sea Fleet."

The report of new Russian naval activity came days after the US announced its dispatch of four naval vessels toward the Syrian coast. The UK also began mustering military aircraft and transports at the Akrotiri airbase on Cyprus it was

earlier this week. On Thursday France dispatched the advanced frigate **Chevalier Paul** to the region from the Mediterranean port of Toulon.

Last month Russia reportedly shut down its naval station in the Syrian port city of Tartus and pulled its military and non-diplomatic civilian personnel out of Syria. The Russian Defense Ministry later denied the report, only to have an identical report surface on Wednesday. In a telephone conversation held Wednesday, Russia and Iran's presidents agreed that the Assad regime's alleged use of chemical weapons was unacceptable, but called for the West to reconsider plans to launch a military intervention in Syria.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Hasan Rouhani "consider the use of chemical weapons by anyone intolerable," the Kremlin said in a statement. Nevertheless, both Moscow and Tehran are major backers of Syrian President Bashar Assad, and have vociferously opposed Western intervention in the civil war that has raged there for over two years. Both countries supply the Assad regime with the bulk of its military hardware through regular airlifts. **Source : Sharkhunters Hot Mail**

READER COMMENT

1. Re: Readers Comment. *In 1963 we were told to call officers by their rank and not "sir!" We were told by certain instructors this was necessary because there is no word for "sir" in Afrikaans.*

2. With reference to the use of 'Sir' in the SAN. *I've often wondered whether that custom still existed when in the rest of the SADF (as was) it was booted out years before 1969 as a result of the Erasmus 'decolonisation' (I supposed it would be called today) of the Defence Force. 'Sir' was unheard of in the army in 1963 when I did my 'national service'. The reason was obvious: the Afrikaans equivalent, Meneer, would hardly have done when you called all and sundry that anyway. Though in the real 'posh' regiments (the Jocks, RLI etc) the title 'Mister' was certainly used for subalterns but then DHQ couldn't understand all the chain mail, spurs and other ceremonial stuff anyway so they just averted their eyes.*

3. *I see the **Zumwalt** has also run into problems with its power plant. The RN will be relieved to hear that!*

Nasty – I think the Russians and Chinese will be more relieved!

4. *Given the USN's technical problems and the RN's recent penchant for putting its ships on the putty, our Navy seems to be doing rather well, the prophets of doom notwithstanding.*

5. *What a pity that the NSRI replacement new SAR vessels could not be sourced from RSA shipyards. Another example of a lost opportunity to advance the ship building industry in South Africa.*

I am sure that they would prefer to buy locally but as a 'charity' they have to get best value for best equipment.

TAILPIECE (& lots of them)

ONE-MILLION brick Lego ship to sail into Big Christmas Event this week



THE WORLD'S largest Lego ship will dock in Immingham and Grimsby as well as the Christmas tree destined for Trafalgar Square. Port giant DFDS is marking 150 years in business and will welcome the world's most famous Christmas tree for the 70th time. It begins this Thursday at noon when a huge DFDS trailer will visit Grimsby's Riverhead square carrying the DFDS Lego ship made from one million bricks to mark the 150th anniversary. It is part of the Christmas lights switch-on celebrations supported by the Grimsby Telegraph. **Source : Grimsby Telegraph**

AGS