Honeywell Launches Compact Navigation System for Uncrewed Aerial Systems

Kestrel navigation system delivers high-accuracy positioning for small platforms operating in GPS-jammed and spoofed environments

From Honeywell

PHOENIX, June 17, 2026 – Honeywell (NASDAQ: HON) today announced the launch of Kestrel, a compact navigation solution designed to help uncrewed aerial systems (UAS) operate reliably in contested environments where GPS signals may be degraded, jammed or spoofed.

Built to support the growing demand for smaller, more affordable and highly efficient platforms, Kestrel combines Honeywell Aerospace's HG3900 MEMS Inertial Measurement Unit with an M-code receiver and a multi-GNSS receiver. The platform is intended to meet the specific needs of Group 2 and 3 collaborative combat aircraft (CCAs) and loitering munitions platforms. It is also suitable for crewed aircraft where size, weight, power and cost are important considerations.

"Kestrel reflects the evolving needs of today's uncrewed operations, where operators are looking for resilient navigation technology that is smaller, lighter and more cost-effective," said Matt Picchetti, vice president and general manager of Navigation & Sensors at Honeywell Aerospace. "This system helps operators maintain mission objectives in environments where legacy GPS systems are lagging behind."

Kestrel is an Embedded GNSS/INS (EGI) system for global defense and commercial operators in need of advanced inertial navigation technology with secure positioning capabilities in a smaller footprint. The system is 40 percent smaller and lighter than similar navigation products available today, while still delivering up to an 80 percent improvement in navigation accuracy for uncrewed platforms. It also reduces costs by as much as 50 percent, helping operators efficiently scale deployment across high-volume drone operations. Kestrel's resiliency reduces UAS attrition by 60 percent, while more than doubling the capacity for mission distances.

The ability to operate without assured GNSS access is a distinct advantage for any military aircraft operating in contested or GNSS-denied environments because it provides continuous, self-contained position, velocity and attitude estimates independent of external signals.

Kestrel is designed to support a broad range of defense and commercial applications and will be available in

configurations that support international and non-ITAR deployments.

Honeywell pioneered EGI technology and has produced more than 60,000 units since the mid-1990s to meet customers' most challenging navigation, pointing, stabilization and flight-control applications. To learn more, visit: New Kestrel Small EGI Navigation for Tactical Drones

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HII Expands European Unmanned Operations with New Facility in Portchester, UK

Release From HII

PORTCHESTER, United Kingdom, Jan. 12, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) — HII (NYSE: HII), the world's leading manufacturer of

autonomous surface and underwater unmanned vehicles, has doubled the size of its unmanned facility in Portchester, U.K.

The enlarged facility significantly enhances and strengthens the company's presence in the United Kingdom and increases capacity and support for the U.K. Royal Navy and European partners that operate the REMUS line of unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs).

In addition to supporting regional unmanned customers, the Portchester facility will serve as a European hub for HII's Mission Technologies division, enabling collaborative customer support for U.S. combatant commands and allied missions. The site will provide operational, technical, and logistics support to deploy, sustain, and integrate electronic warfare and C5ISR systems, fleet modernization efforts, artificial intelligence capabilities, and live, virtual, and constructive training.

The facility also prepares the region for the deployment and sustainment of HII's ROMULUS family of unmanned surface vessels (USVs), a modular AI-enabled line powered by HII's Odyssey Autonomous Control System and scheduled for availability in 2026.

HII's unmanned platforms are known for modular design, long endurance and reliable field performance. They support defense, commercial and research missions that include mine countermeasures, hydrographic survey, intelligence collection and environmental monitoring.

The expanded Portchester facility will operate as a strengthened regional hub for HII's unmanned systems. Staffed by U.K. employees, it will drive new jobs and support supplier engagement, maintenance, training and long-term sustainment for operators across the U.K. and Europe. The site will also work in close coordination with HII's global engineering,

production, training and mission support teams to keep programs aligned and effective.

Duane Fotheringham, president of Mission Technologies' Unmanned Systems business group, said, "This new HII Portchester facility reinforces HII's long term presence in the United Kingdom and provides a strong foundation for future cooperation. It ensures that U.K. and European operators, suppliers, and partners of ROMULUS USVs and REMUS UUVs receive regional access to world class support, training and sustainment."

REMUS UUV Family of Systems

REMUS unmanned underwater vehicles are the world's leading UUV. They use an open-architecture design that supports the rapid integration of new payloads, mission-specific configurations, and future upgrades that ensure operators keep pace with evolving challenges and requirements while managing costs. REMUS systems are in service with more than 30 countries, including 14 NATO members, and are known for dependable operation, advanced sensor performance, and a strong record in mine hunting, reconnaissance and underwater survey missions.

In September, Babcock International Group and HII signed a memorandum of understanding to integrate HII's REMUS vehicles with Babcock's submarine Weapon Handling and Launch Systems. The goal is autonomous launch and recovery of UUVs through submarine torpedo tubes, strengthening undersea advantage for allied navies. The partnership builds on the U.S. Navy's first successful forward-deployed torpedo-tube launch and recovery of a UUV using a REMUS. Babcock's Weapon Handling and Launch Systems are in service with submarine fleets in the U.K., Canada, Australia, Spain and South Korea.

The Royal Navy has a long partnership with REMUS. Since 2001, the Ministry of Defence has acquired REMUS 100, REMUS 300 and

REMUS 600 vehicles for mine countermeasure operations. In 2024, HII announced the sale of three REMUS 100s and five REMUS 300s to the Royal Navy. This order reflects confidence in the upgrade potential and build quality of HII systems and builds on more than two decades of cooperation. The first two REMUS 100s delivered in 2001 remain in active service today.

The REMUS Mine Hunting Capability (MHC) provides high resolution seabed imaging and precise navigation, giving naval teams a fast and reliable tool to counter underwater threats.

The REMUS line includes several variants, each designed for specific mission sets and operating depths. The numbering reflects operational depth and generation.

- **REMUS 130:** Compact and optimized for shallow-water operations and rapid deployment.

- **REMUS 300**: Offers increased range and payload capacity in a lightweight form. Serves as the baseline for the U.S. Navy’s Lionfish program.

- **REMUS 620**: Features modular upgrades, modernized electronics, battery life up to 110 hours, and a range of 275 nautical miles. Recently supported submarine launch and recovery operations for the U.S. Navy Submarine Force.

- **REMUS 6000**: Operates at depths up to 6,000 meters and is used for deep-sea recovery and complex scientific work.

All REMUS models share a common architecture, allowing operators to scale capability while maintaining system familiarity. More than 90% of REMUS units delivered over the

past 23 years remain in service. This highlights the platform’s durability and lifecycle value, two critical factors in defense acquisition.

REMUS Track Record

- **Defense**: Used by 14 NATO navies for mine warfare, ISR, and seabed mapping.

- **Search and Recovery**: Played key roles in the search for Air France Flight 447, post-tsunami response in Japan, and the discovery of USS *Indianapolis* (CA 35).

- **Science and Environment**: Supports environmental monitoring, marine archaeology, and oceanographic research. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is deploying REMUS 620 systems to map seafloor habitats affected by the Deepwater Horizon spill.

HII ROMULUS USV Family of Systems

HII’s ROMULUS family is a modular, AI-enabled line of USVs powered by the Odyssey Autonomous Control System. The flagship, ROMULUS 190, is currently under construction with sea trials planned for 2026.

ROMULUS is built on a commercial-standard hull for rapid, repeatable production. It delivers speeds over 25 knots and a range of 2,500 nautical miles. Large versions of the ROMULUS are capable of carrying four 40-foot ISO containers. ROMULUS is purpose built for global mission deployment and extended autonomous operations.

Powered by the Odyssey ACS, ROMULUS delivers open-ocean autonomy, multi-agent swarming, and modular adaptability. It

supports missions that include ISR, counter-unmanned air systems, mine countermeasures, strike, and launch and recovery of UUVs and UAVs.

HII Hosts Secretary of War Pete Hegseth at Newport News Shipbuilding

Release From HII

NEWPORT NEWS, Va., Jan. 05, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) — HII (NYSE: HII) hosted Secretary of War Pete Hegseth at its Newport News Shipbuilding division today. The visit is part of Hegseth’s “Arsenal of Freedom” industry tour.

During his visit to the shipyard, Hegseth met with HII and shipyard leadership and spent significant time interacting

directly with shipbuilders and sailors.

“Our warfighters cannot win without you,” Hegseth told shipbuilders. “We are in this fight together, shoulder to shoulder.”

“There is an unbreakable line tying the wrench in your hand to the safety and survival of a 22-year-old American sailor patrolling the depths of the Pacific. The quality of your work, your unwavering commitment to excellence, your speed, your patriotism itself. You give our warrior the decisive edge.”

“I want to thank Secretary Hegseth for his visit today, and for reinforcing to shipbuilders directly the critical importance of the work they do for the Navy and the nation,” HII CEO and President Chris Kastner said. “Speed matters. Over the past year, in partnership with our government customers, we’ve taken steps to measurably increase our hiring, grow our retention, and most importantly, improve proficiency levels within our workforce. These actions are yielding a meaningful increase in shipbuilding throughput. With more than 40 ships at Ingalls and NNS in active construction or modernization, our focus in 2026 is on building on this momentum. Every improvement in our operations, every efficiency we unlock, every day we reduce from a schedule translates directly into capability the Navy can deploy to the front line of deterrence and defense, to protect American interests.”

Hegseth saw firsthand how NNS is leveraging technology and state-of-the-art facilities to execute serial-module-production for both Columbia– and Virginia-class submarines and toured these submarines in various stages of construction, from early construction to final assembly and test. He also toured construction progress and met with sailors on aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy (CVN 79), undergoing final outfitting and testing at NNS. The ship will be the world’s most lethal

aircraft carrier upon delivery to the U.S. Navy.

To increase shipbuilding throughput and meet the increased demand for ships, HII recently embarked on a distributed shipbuilding initiative to improve schedule adherence by partnering with 23 shipyards and fabricators beyond the company's traditional labor market. HII also forged partnerships with international manufacturers to explore meaningful ways to expand capacity including evaluation of adding an additional shipyard in the U.S. At NNS in 2025, shipbuilders also modified shifts to support a 56-hour standard work week in order to finish the year strong.

At 44,000 employees, HII is the largest industrial employer in Virginia and Mississippi. It is also the largest producer of unmanned underwater vehicles for the U.S. Navy, and the world.

L3Harris Technologies Announced as Latest Tenant at ProvPort

Release From ProvPort

Providence, R.I. – ProvPort announced its newest tenant today, L3Harris Technologies, a national security and defense company.

L3Harris will utilize ProvPort to support their operations, including the loading and offloading of subsea telecommunications cable where it can be spooled and stored. As part of their lease, L3Harris will be constructing a

50,000-square-foot warehouse, an investment in port infrastructure totaling $6 million.

The Waterson Terminal Services, LLC team, which operates as the terminal manager at ProvPort and oversees all stevedoring operations, will leverage their extensive offshore wind-cable-handling experience to support L3Harris.

"PROVPORT INC and the Waterson Terminal Services team bring the specialized expertise we need in undersea cable handling and spooling. Combined with Rhode Island's strategic location, it was a clear, smart investment for us," said Trey Mathews, Interim General Manager, Acoustic Systems, L3Harris.

"Rhode Island has long been a hub of marine-related defense industries and having L3Harris here in Rhode Island is a great fit for ProvPort and our vision of attracting tenants that align with the modern maritime economy. We are more than pleased that L3Harris is our newest tenant and that they will be making a significant investment in ProvPort's infrastructure," said Chris Waterson, president and CEO, Waterson Terminal Services.

Atlantic Council Launches Task Force to Bolster US Maritime Industrial Base

Task Force brings together leaders across government, industry, labor, and academia to advance a bold vision for US

naval shipbuilding and maintenance

Release From the Atlantic Council

WASHINGTON, D.C. – December 16, 2025 – The Atlantic Council's Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security and its Forward Defense program announced today the launch of the Revitalizing US Shipbuilding Task Force in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (JHU/APL).

Galvanized by momentum in the shipbuilding sector, the Task Force will develop actionable recommendations to strengthen US shipbuilding. It will develop novel approaches to design, construction, and sustainment, while balancing those innovative steps with proven measures to address persistent gaps across the sector.

"The United States has a highly capable Navy, but to remain competitive, it needs to modernize its shipbuilding industry," said Christine Fox, former acting deputy secretary of defense and a co-chair of the Task Force. "It is vital that the United States regains its ability to rapidly repair and produce ships today, while simultaneously preparing to take advantage of modern technology. Only with the adoption of new technology and processes will it be able to produce new, more capable ships, rapidly and affordably."

The Revitalizing US Shipbuilding Task Force is co-chaired by Fox; Mark Esper, the 27th secretary of defense; and Kenneth Braithwaite, the 77th secretary of the Navy. It will explore, among other aspects, how the United States can:

Integrate advanced manufacturing capabilities in shipbuilding and maintenance;

Develop workforce incentives to energize the maritime industrial base; and

Evaluate the role that ally-headquartered shipbuilding firms can play in increasing US shipbuilding capacity.

Over the next twelve months, this high-level Task Force will convene a bipartisan group of senior leaders to generate practical steps that ensure the maritime industrial base can restore US naval primacy and ensure the nation can effectively compete with China in the Indo-Pacific through sustained maritime presence and power projection.

The Task Force's world-class leaders will include former government officials, private-sector executives, academics, and experts in manufacturing, acquisition, and naval operations. They will convene for the first time on Tuesday, December 16.

Task Force Members

- Doug Beck, former director of the Defense Innovation Unit
- Meredith Berger, formerly performed the duties of US under secretary of the Navy; former assistant secretary of the Navy for energy, installations, and environment
- Admiral James Foggo, US Navy (retired), former commander, United States Naval Forces Europe-Africa and Allied Joint Force Command Naples
- Admiral Lisa Franchetti, US Navy (retired), 33rd chief of naval operations
- Vice Admiral William Galinis, US Navy (retired), former

commander, Naval Sea Systems Command

- Nickolas Guertin, former assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development, and acquisition
- Ellen Lord, former under secretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment
- Erik Raven, former under secretary of the Navy
- Admiral John Richardson, US Navy (retired), 31st chief of naval operations
- Russell Rumbaugh, former assistant secretary of the Navy for financial management and comptroller
- Christopher Watkins, chief mission engineering and integration officer, Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory

Industry Task Force Members:

- George Moutafis, chief executive officer, Fincantieri Marine Group (foundational partner)
- Rear Admiral Tom Anderson, US Navy (retired), president of US shipbuilding, Hanwha Defense USA

- Nicholas Galanos, vice president, navy and maritime industrial base, C3 AI

- Hank Holland, chairman and chief executive officer, Amaero

- John Lehman, vice president of strategy, corporate development and government relations, Abyss Defense

- Rob Lehman, co-founder and chief commercial officer, Saronic Technologies

- Vice Admiral Thomas Moore, US Navy (retired), senior vice president, government relations, HII

- Danny Poisson, federal aerospace and defense chief technology officer, PTC

- Dennis Pyatt, president and chief executive officer, Element US Space & Defense

- Robert Smith, executive vice president, marine systems, General Dynamics

- Vince Stammetti, executive vice president and chief operating officer, BlueForge Alliance

- Jordan Webb, president and general manager, Colonna’s Shipyard

- Brooke Weddle, senior partner, McKinsey & Company

- Austal USA representative

The Task Force is directed by Stephen Rodriguez and is managed by Mark Massa, Theresa Luetkefend, and Gabrielle Ellicott.

The lead authors will be Michael Presley and Steven Wills. This work will build on the success of the Atlantic Council's previous Commission on Software Defined Warfare, Commission on Defense Innovation Adoption, and Hypersonic Capabilities Task Force, and work in collaboration with the recently launched ReForge Commission.

More information is available on the Task Force's website. To follow its progress and receive updates, subscribe to Forward Defense. For press inquiries, please contact: press@atlanticcouncil.org.

SEA Deliver KraitArray ASW Sensing Technology for Liquid Robotics Wave Glider

Release From SEA

SEA has been awarded a multi-million-pound contract to supply its advanced KraitArray undersea sensing technology to **Liquid**

Robotics, a Boeing Company, for integration into the company's Wave Glider uncrewed surface vehicle (USV). The agreement will see SEA provide 22 KraitArrays to support uncrewed autonomous maritime surveillance and undersea detection capabilities.

Building on more than a decade of collaboration between SEA and Liquid Robotics, the project marks an important milestone in the global scaling of anti-submarine warfare (ASW), intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) and maritime domain awareness (MDA) payloads for uncrewed platforms, with both companies able to innovate with agility and deliver at scale.

Richard Flitton, Managing Director of SEA said, *"As global navies respond to rapidly expanding subsurface and autonomous threats, platforms like the Wave Glider equipped with KraitArray technology will offer a proven, highly scalable solution for persistent littoral surveillance. Our longstanding partnership with Liquid Robotics has been fundamental in shaping a capability that is ready to meet operational demands now and into the future."*

Renowned for its exceptionally low size, weight, and power (SWaP) and drag characteristics, the KraitArray delivers high-end passive acoustic detection performance in a compact, modular form, purpose-built for uncrewed platforms such as the Wave Glider. KraitArray technology has been continuously developed and refined over 15 years, with the latest variant released four years ago to meet the specific demands of long-endurance autonomous systems. The continuous investment in product innovation, facilities and manufacturing capacity keeps KraitArray technology at the forefront to meet growing market demand.

Paulie McCartan, Head of Undersea Products at SEA said "KraitArray was engineered from the outset to unlock the full potential of agile and uncrewed platforms. This latest contract signals growing global adoption of this

technology and reflects confidence in SEA's ability to deliver a lightweight, high-performance sonar solutions that are cost-effective, flexible, and operationally reliable."

Jimmy Board, Head of Business Development at Liquid Robotics said, "Our partnership with SEA is central to enhancing Wave Glider capabilities. KraitArray's high-performance passive detection allows us to expand autonomous ASW and ISR operations, delivering scalable and reliable undersea sensing solutions for the next generation of uncrewed maritime missions."

With more than 50 systems already deployed across the UK, Europe, the Americas, Asia and Australia, KraitArray has rapidly established itself as the preferred choice for uncrewed towed array autonomous undersea sensing and ASW operations across the globe.

Insitu Upgrades Integrator VTOL Launch and Recovery System

FLARES VTOL kit paired with Integrator UAS at Insitu headquarters in Bingen, Washington.

BINGEN, Wash., December 17, 2025 – Insitu, A Boeing Company, in collaboration with Hood Tech, releases the latest capability upgrades for the revolutionary Flying Launch and Recovery System (FLARES) for long-endurance Integrator UAS. These updates further enhance the resilience of the system to withstand the demands of the harshest environments on long deployments, with greater communications capability, solidifying Insitu's place as the leader in US uncrewed aerial systems.

"Our updated, resilient VTOL kit for multi-mission Integrator is a game-changer for customers that need truly expeditionary capability in challenging electronic and climatic environments," said Diane Rose, Insitu CEO. "This enhanced resilience paired with battle-proven Integrator's long endurance and multi-intelligence payload capacity enables our customers to fly expanded mission sets with confidence anytime, anywhere, even in the most contested

environments.”

This latest FLARES update introduces a suite of relevant resilience and performance enhancements that elevate the system’s operational effectiveness, safety and reliability in even the most demanding environments, making it ideal for diverse maritime and land-based missions. The updates include:

- **Improved Environmental Resilience**: Engineered to withstand challenging climatic and operational conditions, including heavy seas, high winds, adverse weather, and complex terrain.

- **Encrypted GPS Options and Jam-Resistant Datalinks**: Enhanced security and communication reliability, ensuring mission success even in contested and denied environments.

- **Updated Navigation Solutions for GNSS-Contested Operations**: Optimized flight performance when operating in electronically contested environments, ensuring mission-critical autonomy.

- **Improved Supportability**: Rapidly replaceable components such as propellers reduce downtime and simplify in-field maintenance. With redundancies built into its inherently robust design, FLARES remains easy to operate and remarkably durable.

- **Increased Launch Weights**: Enables enhanced payload flexibility while maintaining endurance and range.

“Throughout qualification testing together with Insitu, we find ourselves continuing to fly FLARES in more wind, more precipitation and more deck motion than our competitors,” said Hood Tech Mechanical’s Lead Engineer, Cory Roeseler, “We have the test range to ourselves in adverse weather, and we’re pleased to see opportunities arise as customers gravitate towards our safe, robust and very capable system”.

FLARES enables operators to launch and recover Integrator in confined areas as small as a 10×10 meter footprint without sacrificing endurance (up to 27.5 hours), range (up to 2,000 nmi, point-to-point), or payload capacity (up to 50 lbs across 10 bays).

Integrator is also equipped with multiple SATCOM BLOS control options, including support for Proliferated Low Earth Orbit (PLEO) SATCOM, allowing for remote-split operations and missions conducted at unprecedented distances with ease.

FLARES is available for current and future Integrator customers with no aircraft modifications required. Setup remains quick and easy, enabling rapid packing, deployment, and transport down range in challenging environments.

When paired with Insitu’s modular Common Ground Control System and INEXA Control, FLARES delivers a truly expeditionary VTOL Group 3 UAS capability, enabling operations in contested electronic environments and harsh climates around the world.

Integrator VTOL continues to be optimized for both maritime and land applications, delivering dependable performance in extreme conditions. This system provides versatile solutions to meet multi-domain intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) needs for government and commercial operators worldwide.

With the release of these FLARES upgrades, Insitu and Hood

Tech build on their combined mission to provide cutting-edge unmanned systems that meet the multi-intelligence, multi-domain, long-endurance demands of modern operations.

Grumman Reveals ‘Project Talon’ Autonomous Wingman

Northrop Grumman has unveiled ‘Project Talon’: the Autonomous Wingman. (Photo Credit: Northrop Grumman)

MOJAVE, Calif. – Dec. 4, 2025 – Northrop Grumman (NYSE: NOC) unveiled Project Talon, an autonomous aircraft built to fly alongside crewed fighters. As the latest addition to the company’s elite autonomous portfolio, Project Talon represents a paradigm shift in air dominance as an adaptive, collaborative teammate for combat missions.

- Project Talon combines greater mission versatility with the most advanced modular manufacturing techniques. This disruptive approach shortens timelines, emphasizing speed and simplicity.

- Project Talon advances collaboration between crewed and uncrewed aircraft, acting as a force multiplier to enhance lethality, adaptability and mission effectiveness.

- Project Talon expands previous boundaries of

collaborative aircraft technology to give U.S. and international customers the ability to project power in dynamic threat environments.

Northrop Grumman has more than 500,000 autonomous flight test hours across seven decades of experience in autonomy. Along with the release of Beacon earlier this year, Northrop Grumman continues to demonstrate it is advancing autonomy with speed and decisive action.

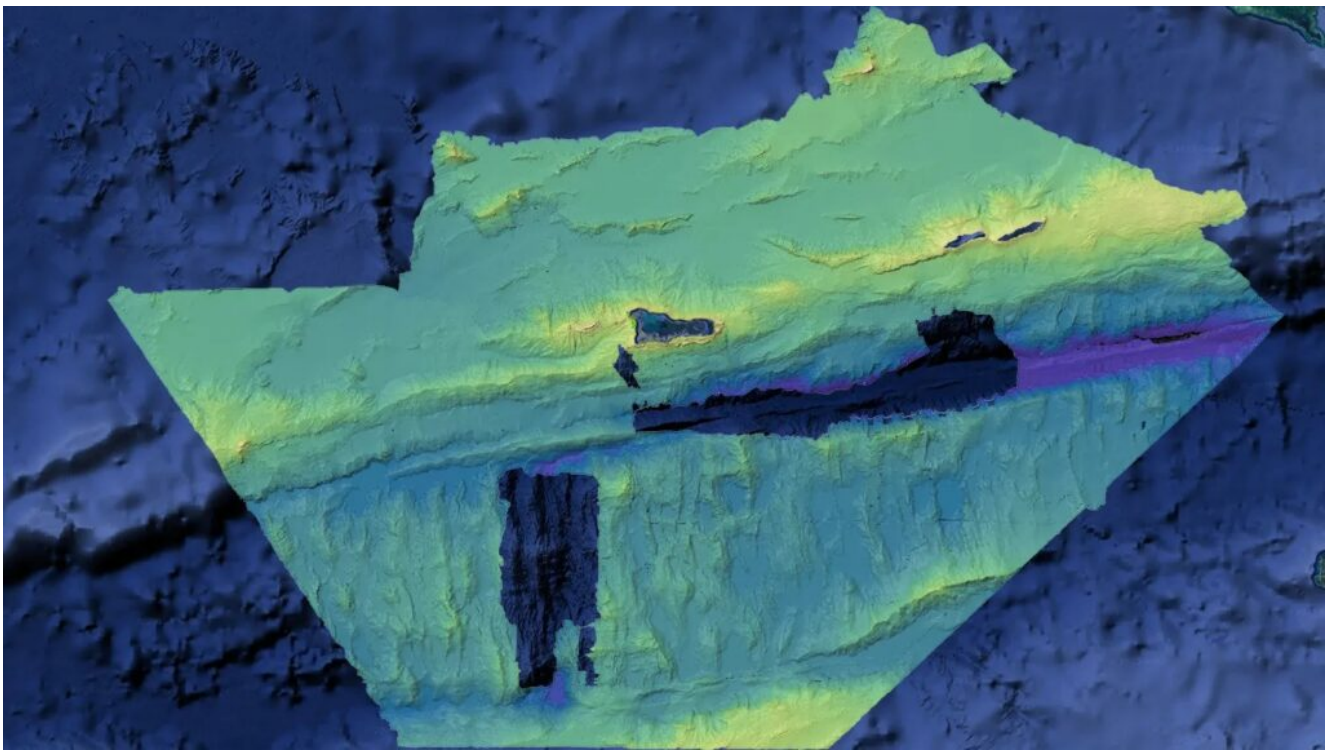
Details on Project Talon:

- Project Talon was designed, built and on track to fly in under 24 months.

- The Northrop Grumman autonomous testbed ecosystem, Beacon, accelerated Project Talon, testing its avionics software in real-world environments.

- Project Talon builds on Northrop Grumman's seven decades of advanced, battle-tested autonomous systems across every domain.

Saildrone Completes Pioneering Mapping Mission of Cayman Islands' EEZ



The Cayman Islands is the first country in the world to have its exclusive economic zone mapped using autonomous systems, unlocking opportunities to expand its Blue Economy.

Saildrone, the global leader in autonomous deep water mapping solutions, has completed its mission to map the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Cayman Islands, using a Saildrone Surveyor uncrewed surface vehicle (USV). Over the course of approximately 300 mission days, Saildrone surveyed approximately 90,000 square kilometers of seabed, in depths ranging from 20 meters to 7,000 meters, executing over 900 sound-velocity profile casts to ensure accurate bathymetric data. One of the priorities of the mission was to survey four fishing banks—60 Mile Bank, Lawfords Bank, Pickle Bank, and 12 Mile Bank—which serve as crucial hotspots of biodiversity supporting fisheries, tourism, and recreation, and are an indicator of the health of the Cayman Islands' marine ecosystem.

The mission was philanthropically funded by the London & Amsterdam Trust Company Limited, a Cayman-based organization that wants to leave a lasting legacy to the Cayman Islands.

Prior to the Saildrone survey, the Cayman Islands had limited

data available of its EEZ; the extent to which the Cayman EEZ had been surveyed with modern multibeam sonar technology was only 20,000 sq km of seafloor concentrated around the deep water of the Cayman Trench.

For small island nations such as the Cayman Islands, ocean mapping unlocks critical opportunities in the Blue Economy: A high-resolution bathymetric map of a country’s EEZ is a prerequisite for exploring and managing natural resources in waters extending up to 200 nautical miles from its shores.

With the newly acquired seabed data, the Cayman Government will be better positioned to support:

- enhanced maritime safety, navigation, and charting
- sustainable fisheries
- offshore energy planning
- responsible seabed mining and marine mineral exploration
- conservation of vulnerable marine ecosystems and habitat management.

All raw bathymetric, backscatter, and ocean-profile data will now be handed over to the UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO), which will process data under its role as the Primary Charting Authority for the Cayman Islands, before the final data sets are formally delivered to the Cayman Government. The UKHO intends to update its nautical chart portfolio of the Cayman Islands by incorporating the collected data. Additionally, a low-resolution dataset will also be provided

to Seabed 2030 to support its goal of mapping the entire global seabed by 2030.

During the mission, Saildrone faced numerous operational challenges, including unprecedented sargassum blooms and severe weather threats, which exacerbated the operational difficulties of delivering high-resolution seabed mapping in the open ocean. However, these challenges also presented important opportunities to develop new techniques and tools for overcoming them. Saildrone responded with new approaches to clearing the sound velocity profiler (SVP) and enhanced remote diagnostics to detect biofouling early. Operating safely and consistently during severe weather helped validate the Surveyor's proven capability to remain on survey up to sea state seven.

"This mission is a testament to the power of Saildrone vehicles in delivering ocean mapping at a scale and resolution that was previously prohibitively expensive for small island nations. Delivering mission-critical operations in sargassum-filled, hurricane-exposed waters demonstrates the resilience of Saildrone's unmanned mapping services and the prospects it holds for nations worldwide," said Saildrone VP Ocean Mapping, Brian Connon.

Following the success of this mission, Saildrone is looking forward to opportunities to map the EEZs of additional Caribbean nations.

U.S. Launches One-Way-Attack

Drone Force in the Middle East

U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (Nov. 23, 2025) Low-cost Unmanned Combat Attack System (LUCAS) drones are positioned on the tarmac at a base in the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) operating area, Nov. 23. The LUCAS platforms are part of a one-way attack drone squadron CENTCOM recently deployed to the Middle East to strengthen regional security and deterrence. (Courtesy Photo)
Release From U.S. Central Command

TAMPA, Fla. – On Dec. 3, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) announced a new task force for the U.S. military's first one-way-attack drone squadron based in the Middle East.

CENTCOM launched Task Force Scorpion Strike (TFSS) four months after Secretary of War Pete Hegseth directed acceleration of the acquisition and fielding of affordable drone technology. TFSS is designed to quickly deliver low cost and effective

drone capabilities into the hands of warfighters.

The new task force has already formed a squadron of Low-cost Unmanned Combat Attack System (LUCAS) drones currently based in the Middle East.

LUCAS drones deployed by CENTCOM have an extensive range and are designed to operate autonomously. They can be launched with different mechanisms to include catapults, rocket-assisted takeoff, and mobile ground and vehicle systems.

“This new task force sets the conditions for using innovation as a deterrent,” said Adm. Brad Cooper, CENTCOM commander. “Equipping our skilled warfighters faster with cutting-edge drone capabilities showcases U.S. military innovation and strength, which deters bad actors.”

In September, CENTCOM launched the Rapid Employment Joint Task Force (REJTF) led by its chief technology officer to fast-track processes for outfitting deployed forces with emerging capabilities.

The joint task force is coordinating innovation efforts among Service components in three focus areas: capability, software, and tech diplomacy.

TFSS’s efforts to build the one-way-attack drone squadron are led by personnel from Special Operations Command Central and align with REJTF’s capability focus area.