

# Trilateral Maritime Exercise Supports Allied Interoperability



By U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command / U.S. 4th Fleet Public Affairs

March 6, 2025

CARIBBEAN SEA – Showing the benefits of maritime presence in the Caribbean, three warships and one aircraft from three allies conducted a passing exercise (PASSEX) on Mar. 3 designed to increase interoperability and enhance capability.

The U.S. Navy Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Normandy (CG-60) and Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer USS Thomas Hudner (DDG-116) joined the United Kingdom (U.K.) Royal Navy River-class offshore patrol vessel HMS Medway (P223) and a NH90 Neptune helicopter assigned to the Royal Netherlands Navy Holland-class offshore patrol

vessel HNLMS Groningen (P843) for the PASSEX.

The trilateral maritime PASSEX is part of U.S. and allied collaboration in the Western Hemisphere. Adopted in 2023, allies and partners from the U.K., Canada, France, the Netherlands, and the United States committed to more frequently share information and work more closely together on aligned strategic interests, specifically in the U.S. Southern Command Area of Responsibility (AOR). The collaboration includes maritime operations and exercises at sea and Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) port visits designed to meet that commitment.

“One of the best ways to address today’s security challenges is with shared maritime presence in our region, operating at sea with our allies and partners,” said Rear Adm. Carlos Sardiello, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet, the operational commander of the trilateral maritime exercise. “We know that through operations and exercises like this one in coordination with committed allies, we strengthen U.S. and regional security.”

A PASSEX is an exercise conducted between two or more navies to ensure best practices for communication and cooperation and normally include communication and maneuvering drills. This trilateral maritime PASSEX also included an air defense event, a low-slow flyer event, and Sailor crossdecks among the four warships.

“We always look forward to any opportunity to operate alongside partners and allies like the Royal Navy and the Royal Netherlands Navy,” said Capt. Nathan Diaz, USS Normandy Commanding Officer. “Maritime exercises such as these provide a great opportunity for Normandy Sailors to improve their skills and work closely with their counterparts from partnered and allied naval forces.”

“We relish at sea exercises as they allow us to build our team as we operate with allies and partners,” said Cmdr. Cameron Ingram, USS Thomas Hudner Commanding Officer. “It was an honor to meet, operate and collaborate with the other commands’ leadership and teams, and a reassurance of our collaborative capabilities and resolve.”

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet serves as a trusted maritime partner for Caribbean, Central and South American maritime forces, promoting unity, security, and stability in the region.