

U.S. 5th Fleet Gains First LCS, USS Sioux City, in Historic Deployment



Littoral combat ship USS Sioux City (LCS 11), arrives at Naval Support Activity Bahrain, June 25. *U.S. Army / Sgt. Terry Vongsouthi*

MANAMA, Bahrain – USS Sioux City (LCS 11) arrived at Bahrain for a scheduled port visit, June 25, marking the completion of a 10,000-mile journey while becoming the first littoral combat ship to operate in the Middle East, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs said June 25.

The ship and crew of 75 personnel departed Mayport, Florida, in April. While in the U.S. 5th Fleet region, Sioux City has provided maritime security presence enabling the free flow of commerce in key corridors of trade.

“We’re thrilled to have Sioux City’s crew here helping us understand how to integrate the LCS platform into our operations, and we’re exercising every one of the ship’s support capabilities,” said Capt. Robert Francis, commander of Task Force 55. Task Force 55 oversees U.S. surface forces operating in the Middle East.

After arriving in the Middle East in May, Sioux City operated in support of Combined Task Force (CTF) 153 and focused on maritime security and partner capacity building in the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandeb and Gulf of Aden. CTF 153 is one of four multinational task forces organized under Combined Maritime Forces, the largest international naval partnership with 34 nations. Led by the United States, Combined Maritime Forces is headquartered in Bahrain with U.S. 5th Fleet.

“I’m incredibly proud of our Sailors for executing every

mission we've been tasked with," said Cmdr. Scott Whitworth, commanding officer of USS Sioux City. "We are forging a new frontier for littoral combat ships."

Sioux City is deployed with an MH-60 Seahawk helicopter from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 22.

The U.S. 5th Fleet region includes 21 countries, the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea, parts of the Indian Ocean and three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, Bab al-Mandeb and Suez Canal.