

U.S. Navy to start recovery operations for downed Army Blackhawk

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MEDITERRANEAN SEA – The U.S. Navy contracted the multi-purpose support vessel, NG Worker, for search and recovery operations of an Army Blackhawk aircraft that crashed into the Mediterranean Sea, Nov. 10. The aircraft was conducting routine training when the crash occurred.

The NG Worker, equipped with the U.S. Navy Supervisor of Salvage and Diving team, is set to depart to the crash location from Augusta Bay, Sicily, in the coming days.

Once on station, salvage experts will deploy a shallow water intermediate search system (SWISS) and towed pinger locator (TPL) to search for the aircraft. The SWISS is a towed side-scan-sonar (SSS) and the TPL is used to locate emergency relocation pingers on downed military and commercial aircraft. The TPL will use passive sensors to “listen” for the aircraft pinger’s frequency.

Recovery of the aircraft will take place using the Deep Drone remote operated vehicle (ROV). Deep Drone is a 4,100 pound ROV designed to meet the Navy’s mid-water salvage requirements to a maximum depth of 8,000 feet. Every effort will be made to recover the aircraft and the fallen Soldiers.

NG Worker is a 288-foot offshore supply vessel that is outfitted with advanced, state-of-the-art underwater survey and positioning equipment.

Assigned to U.S. Army Special Operations Command the Blackhawk was carrying five special operations aviation Soldiers when it crashed. All Soldiers on board were killed.

The cause of the crash is under investigation. For information regarding the incident, contact the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Public Affairs office at 910-432-6005, or by email at PAO-USASOC@socom.mil.

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