

ScanEagle

supports rescue of freighter captain held by pirates

The U.S. Navy last month released photos of the 28-foot lifeboat in which U.S. freighter captain Richard Phillips was held hostage by four Somali pirates. The images were taken by a ScanEagle unmanned aircraft system (UAS), a joint effort of Boeing and its subsidiary, Insitu Inc., launched from the U.S. Navy destroyer USS *Bainbridge*.

News reports indicated that four raiders boarded the 17,000-ton (15,422-metric-ton) *Maersk Alabama* freighter on April 8. A struggle ensued, and the crew retook control of the vessel, capturing one of the pirates and a machine gun. The other three pirates took the captain hostage and fled in the freighter's lifeboat, retrieving their colleague in an aborted hostage exchange. U.S. Navy SEAL sharpshooters ended the incident April 12, killing three pirates. The fourth pirate is in custody. Phillips was returned to safety aboard the *Bainbridge*.

Boeing Global Services & Support Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Services team members operating the ScanEagle UAS aboard the *Bainbridge* detected the lifeboat in the Indian Ocean and used the system to track its activities, receiving electro-optical and infrared still and video feeds from ScanEagle's sensors.

Navy Vice Adm. Bill Gortney, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, commended those involved in the rescue: "This was an incredible team effort, and I am extremely proud of the tireless efforts of all the men and women who made this rescue possible," Gortney said in a U.S. Navy release.

This is the second incident in which video feeds from ScanEagle have assisted the U.S. Navy in their efforts to keep the sea lanes off Somalia clear of pirates. In February, an ISR Services team aboard the destroyer USS *Mahan* provided video used by the Navy to capture nine pirates.

"ISR Services has teams deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as on Navy ships in key locations around the world," said Phil Panagos, director, ISR Services. "These teams use ScanEagle to provide video to the customer."

The long-endurance, fully autonomous ScanEagle UAS carries inertially stabilized electro-optical and infrared cameras that allow the operator to track both stationary and moving targets. Capable of flying above 16,000 feet (4,877 meters) and loitering over the battlefield for more than 24 hours, the 4-foot-long



PHOTO: Nearly invisible and inaudible at its usual operating altitude of 1,500 feet (457 meters), the Boeing-Insitu ScanEagle unmanned aircraft system, shown here following a recovery aboard the destroyer USS *Oscar Austin*, operates from several different types of U.S. Navy vessels. A ScanEagle operated from the *Oscar Austin's* sister ship, USS *Bainbridge*, provided critical intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support during the tracking of Somali pirates and subsequent rescue of U.S. freighter captain Richard Phillips in April. U.S. NAVY

(1.2-meter) platform provides persistent low-altitude intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. Nearly invisible and inaudible at its usual operating altitude of 1,500 feet (457 meters), ScanEagle has protected lives and provided enhanced battlespace awareness in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2004.

ScanEagle is launched autonomously from a pneumatic SuperWedge catapult launcher and flies either preprogrammed or operator-initiated missions. The Insitu-patented SkyHook system is used to retrieve the UAS, capturing it by way of a rope suspended from a 50-foot-high (15-meter-high) mast. The system makes ScanEagle runway-independent and minimizes its impact on shipboard operations, similar to a vertical-takeoff-and-landing vehicle. ■



Air of **distinction**

Boeing delivered its 6,000th 737 last month. Norwegian Air Shuttle is operating the record-breaking airplane, on lease from International Lease Finance Corp. The delivery total includes first models (737-100s and -200s), classics (-300s, -400s and -500s) and Next-Generations (-600s, -700s, -800s and -900s). Unfilled orders for Next-Generation 737s exceed 2,200 airplanes valued at approximately \$163 billion at list prices.

JIM COLEY/BOEING



American Airlines welcomes **new Boeing 737-800s**

American Airlines welcomed two new Boeing 737-800 aircraft into its fleet last month. The new airplanes, which went into service April 14, are the first of 76 737-800s that will be added to American's current fleet of 77 737-800s, replacing aircraft in American's fleet of approximately 270 MD-80s.

Offering many cost and environmental benefits, the new airplanes also feature a configuration aimed at improving the passenger experience and operational efficiency. Upgrades include new overhead "big bins" that will significantly increase passenger cabin luggage storage capacity by allowing roll-on bags to be loaded wheels first.

"Boeing is pleased to be a part of this new chapter in American Airlines history," said Kevin Schemm, vice president, North America Sales, Commercial Airplanes. "We look forward to seeing these state-of-the-art airplanes in the skies."

BYRON TOTTY/AMERICAN AIRLINES



Lucky 7s

Boeing and longtime partner Air France celebrated milestones last month with the delivery of the 777th 777. The airplane, a 777-300ER (Extended Range), also is the first to wear the new Air France livery and company brand identity. Air France currently is one of the largest operators of these jets in the world, with 54 777s in its fleet.

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