



News Release

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Newest U.S. Submarine Rescue System Debuts to the World

By Team Submarine Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – This past week the U.S. Navy’s next generation submarine rescue system, the Submarine Rescue Diving and Recompression System (SRDRS), impressed the international community during a NATO submarine rescue exercise – Bold Monarch 08 (May 26 – June 6, 2008) – in the Baltic Sea off Norway’s southern coast.

Over the first five days of the 12-day exercise that was designed to train and demonstrate international submarine escape and rescue coordination, the SRDRS mated to and transferred personnel from three participating submarines, one each from Norway, the Netherlands, and Poland. Additionally, personnel from the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Russia, Pakistan, India, Norway, Italy, Israel, Sweden, Spain, Singapore, the Netherlands, France, and China spent time aboard the SRDRS. “Submarine rescue is an international effort and it is vitally important for other nations to understand the capabilities that the United States has to offer so that, should the worst happen, they will know that we can assist them in a timely manner,” said Rear Adm. Tom Eccles, the Deputy Commander, Undersea Warfare, Naval Sea Systems Command.

One of the world’s newest submarine rescue systems involved in the exercise, the SRDRS is designed to be rapidly transportable and installed aboard pre-screened Vessels of Opportunity (VOO). The Navy certified SRDRS for use in April, and SRDS is being formally evaluated by the U.S. Navy Test and Evaluation community in conjunction with Bold Monarch prior to its official delivery to the fleet. “Immediately following the SRDRS certification, we prepared and deployed USNS Apache from South Carolina, flew the SRDRS components to Norway on a commercial Antonov-124 aircraft, and re-constituted the system aboard Apache for Bold Monarch,” said Capt. Gary Dunlap, Program Manager for Advanced Undersea Systems and the officer in charge of SRDRS’ acquisition and certification. “Everything came together as planned,” Dunlap added.



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The SRDRS is a three-phased acquisition program that will provide one of the most responsive and capable systems in the world for the rescue and treatment of the crew from a disabled submarine. The first phase of the program delivered a submarine rescue intervention system – Atmospheric Dive Suit 2000 (ADS2000) - to the fleet in 2006. ADS2000 is a manned, one-atmosphere dive suit that is used to inspect bottomed submarines and clear away debris that could cover an escape hatch. The second phase of the program – the Rescue Capable System (RCS) – was introduced to the international community during Bold Monarch and will replace the Navy’s existing Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle. The SRDRS-RCS consists of Falcon, a tethered, remotely-operated submersible, that is launched and controlled from the VOO’s deck. Once mated to the disabled submarine, both Falcon and the submarine open their hatches to transfer up to 16 submariners who are then transported to the VOO.

The final phase of the SRDRS program, to be delivered in 2012, will provide a Transfer Under Pressure (TUP) capability. TUP will allow rescued submariners to remain under pressure during transfer from the disabled submarine to hyperbaric treatment chambers aboard the VOO. The SRDRS will be capable of providing hyperbaric treatment for up to 62 rescued personnel at a time, with repetitive use capabilities for 155 personnel in total. Current Navy systems lack the organic ability to decompress rescued personnel from a disabled submarine.

“With SRDRS, the United States will be able to rapidly respond to a submarine disaster, remove the crew from the bottomed submarine, and get them back to the surface safely. We are proud that the SRDRS and its crew performed so well in Bold Monarch 2008,” said Eccles.

For more information on Bold Monarch visit its website at: <http://www.boldmonarch08.info/>

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