Press Release

Navy to conduct emergent repairs to Cyclone-class coastal patrol ships

By NAVSEA Office of Corporate Communications

WASHINGTON – Inspections of Cyclone-class patrol coastal (PC) vessels homeported in Bahrain and Norfolk, Va., have revealed significant structural damage.

As a result of the damage found during these inspections, the Navy has decided to cease operations of the vessels in the Persian Gulf until they can be permanently repaired and restored to designed capability over the next couple of months.

All five ships in the 5th Fleet area of operations (PCs 5, 6, 9, 10, 11) have been inspected. All vessels have experienced frame buckling and damage to the hull. Corrosion is also evident.

Detailed inspections of the PCs based in Norfolk (PCs 2, 3, 4, 7, 12) are currently ongoing and are expected to be completed soon. A plan to expeditiously complete any necessary repairs on those vessels will be developed based on the results of the completed inspections. Those vessels remaining in operation during the inspections will be used to maintain crew proficiency and will be subject to sea state and speed restrictions until repairs are completed.

The Navy is also coordinating with the U.S. Coast Guard to begin inspections this week on the three vessels (PCs 8, 13, 14) currently on loan from the Navy. The Navy is also working with the government of the Republic of the Philippines to share technical data and enable inspection of the vessel transferred to that country in 2004.

The PCs have lightweight structure designed for high performance and a service life of 15 years. With the exception of PC 14 they are all at or beyond their service life. The condition of the hull structure is the cumulative result of a full service life of operation including the effects of corrosion and severe operating conditions. It is not generally possible to identify one event or single root cause of the damage.

The primary mission of these ships is coastal patrol, interdiction, and surveillance; an important aspect of littoral operations outlined in the Navy's strategy. The Cyclone-class PCs are particularly suited for maritime security missions and have been employed jointly with the U.S. Coast Guard to help protect our nation's coastline, ports and waterways from terrorist attack. The ships are also forward deployed to the Gulf region in support of 5th Fleet operations.