

The Navy prepares for undersea warfare training



HOS Sweet Water, an offshore support vessel, transfers electro-mechanical-optical(EMO) cable across its deck off the shore of Naval Station Mayport, Florida on July 14, 2015 in support of the Undersea Warfare Training Range (USWTR) program. The USWTR team installed the first 11 kilometers of shallow water EMO cable that will eventually connect the shore-side USWTR system and Range Operations Center to the training range located 50 nautical miles off Naval Station Mayport.(Courtesy photo)

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The Navy installed ocean cables under the seafloor off the coast of Naval Station Mayport, Florida, to complete another major step in delivering the Undersea Warfare Training Range.

“Our team worked with multiple government and industry counterparts to install 6.8 miles of undersea trunk cable July 15–18,” said Bruce Macomber, Ocean Systems program manager for the Naval Aviation Training Systems Program Office (PMA-205). “Next year, we’ll splice into the cable and use a large ship to continue to bury it to the range which is approximately 50 nautical miles from shore.”

The Undersea Warfare Training Range (USWTR) program will be used to provide ships, submarines and aircraft the ability to track targets on the surface and subsurface for anti-submarine warfare (ASW) training. This training will increase the fleet’s proficiency and lethality in an environment that closely resembles the one in which they operate.

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A modified 240 foot offshore supply vessel (OSV) fed the cable into the ocean where divers, using a trencher, secured the cables into preexisting conduit installed in 2014, and buried it beneath the seafloor.

The East Coast USWTR will consist of up to 300 underwater acoustic devices, called nodes; more than 600 nautical miles of node cable; two junction boxes; shore-based display, processing, and control subsystems with three sea installation periods.

The installed cable will eventually connect to a shore-based location, called the Cable Termination Facility at Naval Station Mayport, then to the Range Operations Center at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida, where the performance of participants in shallow water ASW training exercises will be displayed and evaluated. It will support ASW training for the Navy and international partners, and is on pace to be ready for an initial operational capability by 2019.

“We’ve been working diligently for several years, from environmental approval to our second successful install to date, in order to bring undersea warfare training to the fleet,” said Lt. John Casilio, Ocean Systems integrated product team lead. “The completion of the latest cable installation highlights the hard, critical thinking and smart planning that allowed our team in the field to complete a highly complex install on schedule.”

PMA-205 provides warfighters with advanced training systems specific to a wide array of aircraft, affording U.S. Navy and Marine Corps aircrew and maintainers with the knowledge, skills and abilities that enable mission success.