

"Newseyletter" Decatur Chapter No. 4, USCS

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US responds to Iranian threat to block the Strait of Hormuz by sending mine-clearing drones, according to 'LA Times.'



The US Navy has deployed small underwater drones capable of destroying sea mines to the Persian Gulf. The Los Angeles Times reported on Thursday. According to the report, deployment of the German-made device known as SeaFox is part of an American military build up aimed at stopping Iran from closing the strategic Strait of Hormuz.



The Navy's SeaFox mine seeking drone
The first drones began arriving in recent weeks as the latest round of negotiations with Iran over its nuclear development program appeared to have stalled. On Saturday, a US navy ship that had been slated for decommissioning was sent instead to the Gulf to help mine-clearing operations, the US Fifth Fleet based in Bahrain said, in the latest move in a gradual US build-up as tensions with Iran smoulder. The ship was the *USS Ponce* (AFSB(I)-15). Four US minesweepers arrived in the Gulf last month to bolster the Fifth

Fleet and ensure the safety of shipping routes in a waterway through which 40 percent of the world's seaborne oil exports flow. Tensions have simmered in the Gulf with big-power diplomacy to ease the nuclear dispute at an impasse and Israel renewing veiled threats to attack Iranian atomic sites from the air if sanctions and negotiations fail to curb Iran's nuclear advances.



USS Ponce AFSB(I)-15 after conversion
A string of hawkish Iranian statements - including a renewed threat to close the Strait and destroy US bases in the region "within minutes" of an attack - over the past week helped thrust benchmark Brent crude oil prices above \$100 for the first time since June. Iran has repeatedly warned of reprisals for any Israeli or US-led strike on its nuclear installations, whose activities it says are purely peaceful but the West suspects are geared to developing the means to produce nuclear arms.

Navy gets go-ahead for plan to dispose of Enterprise reactor compartments

Knap San Posted September 11, 2012 at 3:08 pm.

BREMERTON — The Navy announced Tuesday that disposing of the aircraft carrier *USS Enterprise's* nuclear reactor compartments by the same method it uses for submarines will create no significant impact. Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility has removed 123 de-fueled reactor compartments, primarily from submarines. The *USS Enterprise* CVN-65, commissioned in 1961, is the first nuclear-propelled aircraft carrier. It is powered by eight small reactors (newer carriers have two larger ones).



USS Enterprise departs Norfolk on her final deployment March 11, 2012. The little white spot to her rear is an 87-foot USCG patrol boat.

The *USS Enterprise* is in the Arabian Sea, on its 25th and final deployment. It is scheduled to be removed from service during a ceremony Dec. 1 in Norfolk, Va. It is expected to enter dry dock at Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia in 2013, where it will be deactivated and have its spent fuel removed. The Navy then will tow it to PSNS.

Reactor compartment disposal would begin in 2018 or 2019 and take six to eight years, according to an environmental assessment. The compartments will be barged up the Columbia River to a designated Navy trench at the Hanford nuclear waste dump. The rest of the ship will be recycled here.

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Proposed pictorial postmarks

