



Another example of a mission ready ship because of a U.S. Navy Port Engineer

USS Stethem to Aid Support in Japanese-led F-35A Search and Recovery Operations



Story Number: NNS190425-10 Release Date: 4/25/2019 11:25:00 AM

From U.S. 7th Fleet Public Affairs

OKINAWA, Japan (NNS) -- A U.S. Navy salvage team embarked a contracted vessel and departed Okinawa, April 24, to assist Japanese-led search and recovery operations for a downed Japan Air Self Defense Force (JASDF) F-35A. DSCV Van Gogh is a multipurpose diving support and construction vessel equipped with U.S. Navy remotely operated vehicles and a U.S. Navy towed-pinger locator (TPL-25) system.

The F-35A aircraft went missing approximately 85 miles east of Misawa Air Base on April 9th. From April 9-17, U.S. Navy guided-missile destroyer, **USS Stethem (DDG 63)** and P-8A Poseidon aircraft joined JASDF forces, searching an area spanning approximately 5,000 square nautical miles.



The seamless cooperation between the U.S. military and the JASDF during this operation is yet another reflection of a strong alliance, forged over decades of mutual support and friendship.

U.S. 7th Fleet provides security alongside allies and partners throughout a free and open Indo-Pacific. As the U.S. Navy's largest forward-deployed fleet, 7th Fleet operates roughly 50-70 ships and submarines, and 140 aircraft with approximately 20,000 Sailors.

Webmaster's Note: **USS Stethem (DDG-63)** is an *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyer in the United States Navy. The ship was built in Pascagoula, Mississippi, starting on 11 May 1993. She was commissioned on 21 October 1995 and is based out of Yokosuka, Japan. *Stethem* is named for Steelworker 2nd Class Robert Stethem, who was a Navy sailor killed by terrorists onboard TWA Flight 847 in Beirut, Lebanon in 1985.



Robert Dean Stethem (November 17, 1961 – June 15, 1985) was a United States Navy Seabee diver who was murdered by Hezbollah terrorists during the hijacking of the commercial airliner he was aboard, TWA Flight 847. At the time of his death, his Navy rating was Steelworker Second Class (SW2).

He was posthumously promoted to Master Chief Constructionman (CUCM).

