

RUSSIA HALTS U.S. NAVY JET NEAR BORDER

The Russian Air Force scrambled an SU-27 fighter jet to intercept a U.S. Navy Orion aircraft over the Black Sea. The encounter occurred in November. The Russian Air Force determined that the Orion was flying from the U.S. Atlantic Fleet based in Cyprus.

The Orion, the Navy's sole land-based antisubmarine warfare aircraft, was reportedly flying at 6,500 feet when the Russian jet flew alongside.

The Itar-Tass news service said the U.S. pilot did not respond to radio calls from the Russian craft, but rather abruptly altered course, gained altitude at high speed, and sped away. The Russian Air Force press service said that last year SU-27s also were sent up to intercept U.S. U-2 reconnaissance airplanes on the section of the border between Russia and Georgia.

SUB TO BE NAMED AFTER NEW MEXICO

The U.S. Navy will designate a new submarine as the *USS NEW MEXICO*. The state's Congressional delegation says the designation will honor the state and New Mexicans who have served in the military. The delegation, which had asked for the designation in January 2003, says the Navy has agreed the name will go to the nation's next *Virginia*-class submarine. It will be only the second time the state has had a ship named for it. The *USS NEW MEXICO* was the flagship of the Pacific Fleet in the World War II era. Two nuclear attack submarines, the *USS ALBUQUERQUE* and the *USS SANTA FE*, are named for New Mexico cities.

NAVY DELAYS PRESIDENTIAL HELICOPTER DEAL

The Navy has put off until at least January a decision on the contract to replace the aging Marine One presidential helicopter fleet, giving both prospective contractors more time to lobby for the prized job. The competition has been clouded by a debate about U.S. jobs shifted abroad and "Buy America" issues.

FREE CREDIT REPORTS ONCE A YEAR

Although some will get them earlier, everyone with credit will be entitled to a free yearly report from the major credit

bureaus by September 2005. The Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act, signed into law in December 2003, gives every American the right to a free credit report every year from the three major credit bureaus: EQUIFAX, EXPERIAN, and TRANSUNION. Timetable for the new law regarding availability of free reports:

—Western states, 1 December 2004: AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY.

—Midwestern states, 1 March 2005: IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI.

—Southern states, 1 June 2005: AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, OK, SC, TN, TX.

—Eastern states, 1 September 2005: CT, DE, DC, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, NC, PA, RI, VT, VA, WV, plus Puerto Rico and U.S. Territories.

A special safeguard for the military is part of the Act. Members of the armed services will be able to place special alerts in their credit files while they are serving overseas to help minimize chances of becoming a victim of identity theft.

VP-9 AIDS MULTINATIONAL RESCUE AT SEA

Patrol Squadron (VP) 9, based at Marine Corps Base, HI, aided in a multinational rescue of eight United Arab Emirates fishermen whose dhow had sunk off the coast of Bahrain 27 Nov. 2004. One of the squadron's P-3C Orion aircraft received a distress call from Bahrain air traffic control that a fishing dhow with eight fishermen aboard had sunk approximately one hour previously, and air traffic control requested search and rescue assistance. The P-3C immediately responded to the call along with two Bahrain police helicopters and began a search for the fishermen. The crew of the P-3 coordinated the on- station search and rescue efforts between Bahrain traffic control, two Bahrain helicopters, and one Qatar helicopter. A Qatari helicopter picked up the remaining four fishermen. Eight lives were saved.

RESERVISTS CALLED UP TO SERVE AS CUSTOMS INSPECTORS

Nearly 450 Reservists were called up on or around 30 Nov. for duty as customs inspectors in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The

mobilized Reservists will serve as DoD customs inspectors at sea and in airports in Iraq and Kuwait, according to the Naval Expeditionary Logistics Support Force, based at Cheatham Annex in Williamsburg, VA.

The customs inspection mission, a new one for the Naval Reserve, involves inspecting military gear being returned to the United States for disease-bearing dirt and smuggled contraband. The Reservists will take over the job from Air Force personnel who performed the mission over the past year.

OFFICER RECRUITERS MISS GOAL

Naval Reserve recruiters exceeded their goal for enlisted accessions last fiscal year, but fell short of getting as many officers as they need. Only 1,852 officers signed up – 266, or 13 percent, fewer than the 2,118 goal. "Recruiters had the most difficulty convincing enough surface warfare officers, pilots, naval flight officers, and doctors to join," said CAPT Jimmie Jones, Commodore of Naval Reserve Recruiting in New Orleans. In all, seven officer communities fell below 75 percent of the recruiting goal, including special operations, pilot, aviation engineering duty officer, oceanography, Medical Corps, Dental Corps and Civil Engineer Corps.

SCHEDULE OF RELEASE FOR TAX STATEMENTS

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) has compiled a schedule of dates when service members, military retirees and annuitants, and defense civilian employees can access their tax statements through myPay and when they can anticipate to receive the hard-copy delivery by mail.

Tax statements will be available as follows:

	myPay Access	Mail Dates
Retired Annual Statement	12/04/04	12/17/04 - 12/29/04
Retired 1099R	12/13/04	12/17/04 - 12/29/04
Annuitant Annual Statements	12/13/04	12/28/04 - 12/29/04
Annuitant 1099R	12/14/04	12/27/04 - 12/29/04
Air Force, Army, & Naval Reserve W2s	12/27/04	01/04/05 - 01/05/05
Civilian W2s	01/06/05	01/10/05 - 01/14/05
Marine Corps Active & Reserve W2s	01/10/05	01/18/05
Air Force, Army, & Naval Active W2	01/14/05	01/18/05 - 01/24/05