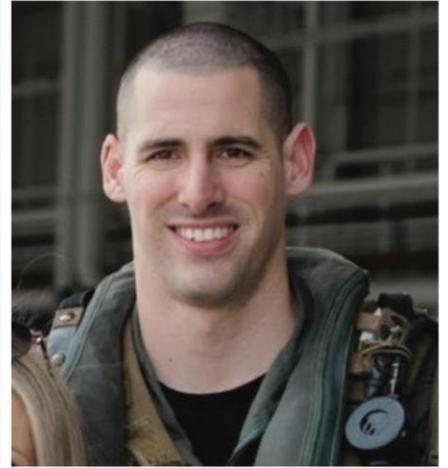


Navy Identifies 5 Sailors Presumed Dead After Helicopter Crash



Sailors who are presumed dead after an Aug. 31, 2021 MH-60S Knighthawk crash off the coast of California. USNI News Photo Illustration

Five sailors missing after a helicopter went into the sea after crashing on the deck of an aircraft carrier on Monday are now presumed dead. U.S. 3rd Fleet identified the sailors on Sunday.

The MH-60S was on the deck of USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN-72) when an unspecified mishap caused the helicopter to fall into the Pacific about 60 miles off the coast of San Diego, Calif., on Aug. 31 at 4:30 p.m. local time.

The sailors, assigned to the “Eightballers” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 8, are:



Lt. Bradley Foster

Lt. Bradley A. Foster, 29, a pilot from Oakhurst, Calif. Foster commissioned in 2015 and reported to HSC-8 on Jan. 16, 2019.



Lt. Paul R. Fridley

Lt. Paul R. Fridley, 28, a pilot from Annandale, Va. He was commissioned in 2011 and joined the squadron in 2018.



Naval Air Crewman (Helicopter) 2nd Class James P. Buriak, wife Megan and son Caulder.

Naval Air Crewman (Helicopter) 2nd Class James P. Buriak, 31, from Salem, Va. Buriak enlisted in 2017 and joined the squadron in 2018.



Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Sarah F. Burns

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Sarah F. Burns, 31, from Severna Park, Md. Burns enlisted in the Navy in 2010 and joined the squadron in 2020.



Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Bailey J. Tucker

Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Bailey J. Tucker, 21, from St. Louis, Mo. Tucker enlisted in 2019 and joined the squadron in June.

One sailor aboard the helicopter was recovered from the sea and five other sailors were injured on *Lincoln*.

“Five additional sailors aboard *Abraham Lincoln* suffered injuries in the incident and are in stable condition. Two of the five *Abraham Lincoln* sailors were transported ashore for treatment, while three of the five *Abraham Lincoln* sailors had minimal injuries and remain aboard the ship,” according to a Wednesday afternoon update on the search.

Efforts are now shifting from search and rescue efforts to recovery of the missing aircraft.

“The transition from search and rescue efforts to recovery operations comes after more than 72 hours of coordinated rescue efforts encompassing 34 search and rescue flights, over 170 hours of flight time, with five search helicopters and constant surface vessel search,” reads a Saturday statement from 3rd Fleet.

“Units involved in the effort included assets from Coast Guard District 11, USS *Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72), USS *Cincinnati* (LCS-20), and helicopter squadrons from the U.S. Pacific Fleet Helicopter Sea Combat Wing and Helicopter Maritime Strike Wing.”

“We are deeply saddened by the loss of five sailors and those injured following the MH-60S helicopter tragedy off the coast of Southern California. We stand alongside their families, loved ones, and shipmates who grieve,” Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday said in a statement.

An investigation into the incident has begun.

Abraham Lincoln completed a record-breaking deployment last year and has started the basic phase of the deployment cycle after completing a six-month repair period in April.



An MH-60S Knighthawk, assigned to the 'Eightballers' of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 8, takes off from the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN-71) on May 20, 2021. US Navy Photo

The following is the complete Sept. 4, 2021 statement from U.S. 3rd Fleet.

Navy Shifts to Recovery of 5 Sailors in Helicopter Crash

SAN DIEGO—The U.S. Navy has declared the five missing crewmembers of an MH-60S helicopter crash deceased. U.S. 3rd Fleet has shifted from search and rescue efforts to recovery operations, Sept. 4.

Assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 8, the helicopter was conducting routine flight operations from USS Abraham Lincoln when it crashed into the sea approximately 60 nautical miles off the coast of San Diego at 4:30 p.m. (PST), Aug. 31.

As a matter of respect for the families and in accordance with Navy policy, the identities of the Sailors will be withheld until 24 hours after their next of kin have been notified. The transition from search and rescue efforts to recovery operations comes after more than 72 hours of coordinated rescue efforts encompassing 34 search and rescue flights, over 170 hours of flight time, with 5 search helicopters and constant surface vessel search.

Units involved in the effort included assets from Coast Guard District 11, USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), USS Cincinnati (LCS 20), and helicopter squadrons from the U.S. Pacific Fleet Helicopter Sea Combat Wing and Helicopter Maritime Strike Wing.

An investigation into the incident is underway.

By: [Sam LaGrone](#)

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