

Beat: Politics

Large U.S. helicopter crashes in the Gulf of Aden, all survive

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USPA News - A large U.S. Marine Corps helicopter crashed in the Gulf of Aden off Djibouti on Monday while attempting to land on board a U.S. Navy ship, but all 25 service members were rescued without serious injuries, military officials said. The cause was not immediately known.

The accident happened at about 5 p.m. Eastern Africa Time (1400 GMT) when the Sikorsky CH-53E Super Stallion aircraft crashed at sea as it attempted to land aboard the U.S. Navy ship USS Mesa Verde. A total of 25 people, including 17 Marines and 8 Navy Sailors, were on board the aircraft, which is the largest and heaviest helicopter in the U.S. armed forces. "All 25 persons aboard the helicopter were safely recovered and are aboard USS Mesa Verde. Personnel who sustained minor injuries in the crash were treated aboard USS Mesa Verde," U.S. Naval Forces Central Command said in a statement. It did not specify the exact number of injured. The aircraft was transferring the group of service members back to the USS Mesa Verde after they completed training exercises in nearby Djibouti. The aircraft was assigned to the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) and is part of the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group which is conducting maritime security operations in the region. The cause of Monday's accident was not immediately known, but hostile activity was ruled out by officials. Both the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps will investigate the cause of the crash. In September 2013, two American service members were killed and three others were rescued when a U.S. Navy helicopter crashed in the Red Sea while carrying out routine flight operations near the guided-missile destroyer USS William P. Lawrence. The vessel was part of the USS Nimitz Carrier Strike Group which, at the time, was deployed to the region as the U.S. considered taking military action against Syria.

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