

Saronic USV rescues two U.S. Army pilots downed by Iran

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Saronic USV Rescues Two U.S. Army Pilots Downed by Iran

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Aaron-Matthew Lariosa

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[![Saronic USV](https://www.navalnews.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/Saronic-Corsair-USV.jpg)](https://www.navalnews.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/Saronic-Corsair-USV.jpg) Corsair

The Corsair USV is capable of operating at ranges over 1,000 nautical miles and can support 1,000-pound payloads. Saronic picture.

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A U.S. Navy drone task force picked up two downed pilots using a Saronic Corsair unmanned surface vessel (USV) yesterday in Middle Eastern waters during a first of its kind rescue mission.

[As first reported by the *Wall Street Journal*](https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/apache-helicopter-crash-coast-oman-4de26c6d), two Army pilots patrolling regional waters near Oman were rescued after their AH-64 attack helicopter went down. [A social media post from U.S. President Trump](https://x.com/WhiteHouse/status/2064388175473115336?s=20) stated that Iranian forces downed the drone and pledged American retaliation.

The U.S. Navy's Task Force 59 used its recently procured Saronic drone boats to pick up the pilots, marking the first known use of USVs to conduct a search and rescue mission. A Central Command (CENTCOM) release stated that rescue took two hours and that the pilots were in stable condition.

According to Saronic, its [Corsair USV](https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2025/12/saronic-wins-contract-for-corsair-autonomous-surface-vessel-production/) is capable of operating at ranges over 1,000 nautical miles and can support 1,000-pound payloads. The drone is one of many used by Task Force 59, a dedicated unmanned formation that integrates new maritime and aerial drone systems from the U.S. and its regional partners. Adm. Brad Cooper, the current commander of CENTCOM, [previously highlighted the achievements of the drone force during his time as chief of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command.](https://www.navalnews.com/event-news/sna-2023/2023/01/us-navy-highlights-tf-59-contributions-to-fleets-unmanned-vision/)

The applications of USVs in roles such as search and rescue or more combat-related duties have been seen within CENTCOM's area of responsibility since the beginning of the U.S.-Iran War in March. American commanders highlighted the maritime domain awareness picture provided by these sea drones in operations against Iran.

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Aaron-Matthew Lariosa

Aaron-Matthew is a freelance defense journalist covering the South China Sea, U.S. military efforts in the Indo-Pacific and Armed Forces of the Philippines modernization.

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