



US AIR FORCE F-15C RECOVERED

For Immediate Release – August 22, 2002

Washington, DC -- Phoenix International, Inc., (Phoenix) announced the successful completion of a mission to locate and recover a US Air Force F-15C from 335 ft. in the Gulf of Mexico. The aircraft crashed without warning south of Panama City, FL.



In early May, Phoenix personnel met with Air Force staff to analyze aircraft loss data and develop an effective search plan. The initial search operation was conducted aboard USS OSPREY (MHC-51) using their SQQ-32 mine hunting sonar. All targets of interest were logged and mapped, and on May 11 passed to the minesweeper USS CHAMPION (MCM-4) who was assigned to collect the visual data needed to develop a recovery plan. On May 23, the Phoenix recovery team and the Navy's DEEP DRONE Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) were mobilized aboard M/V ASHLEY CANDIES, A 202 ft. DP1 vessel owned by Otto Candies LLC of Des Allemands, LA. The main fuselage and the cockpit section were recovered May 29. Since several high priority items were still missing, Phoenix personnel performed an additional high resolution search in the area from June 1-3 using SWISS, the Navy's Shallow Water Intermediate Search System. Additional targets were passed to the Phoenix DEEP DRONE recovery team, who identified and retrieved the remaining high priority items by June 6. All debris was offloaded in Panama City, FL and turned over to Air Force crash investigators.

The US Navy, through the Naval Sea Systems Command's Office of the Supervisor of Salvage and Diving (SUPSALV) developed and maintains a national capability to search, locate, and recover objects of interest lost in water depths to 20,000 feet. In addition to meeting the Navy's search and recovery needs, SUPSALV offers its assistance in support of accident investigations by the Army, Coast Guard, Air Force, NASA, FAA, and NTSB, as well as to foreign governments and agencies requesting its expertise.

Phoenix provides high quality manned and unmanned marine services to an international customer base from its facilities in Landover, MD and Morgan City, LA. Phoenix is the SUPSALV prime contractor responsible for maintaining, modifying, upgrading, and operating Navy owned sonar, ROV, and heavy lift equipment used to conduct worldwide underwater search and recovery operations.

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