

# Virginia SSN New Jersey Construction Advances with Pressure Hull Complete



The Virginia-class submarine New Jersey (SSN 796) reached pressure hull complete in February 2021. The construction milestone signifies that all of the submarine's hull sections have been joined to form a single, watertight unit. The boat is currently 72% complete. *HII / Matt Hildreth*

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries' Newport News Shipbuilding division has achieved a milestone in the construction of the submarine New Jersey (SSN 796), the company said in a March 9 release.

The company reached pressure hull complete on Feb. 10, meaning that all of its hull sections were joined to form a single, watertight unit. This is the latest major milestone before the submarine is christened and floated off.

“Achieving this milestone is especially significant as it continues to prove our teams can safely perform at a high level in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Jason Ward, vice president of Virginia-class submarine construction. “The successful execution of this event demonstrates our culture of trust, accountability and strict adherence to standards, which is paramount in our building warships for our Navy customer.”

New Jersey is the 23rd Virginia-class fast attack submarine. Construction began in March 2016 and is about 72% complete. The boat is scheduled for delivery to the Navy in 2022.

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## **Cobham Wins NAVAIR Contract for T-45 Fleet-Wide Oxygen Concentrator**



Cmdr. Eric Reeves (blue aircraft) relinquishes command of the "Sabrehawks" of Training Squadron (VT) 86 to Cmdr. George Zintak during an aerial change of command ceremony above Pensacola, Florida, Feb. 4. VT-86 conducts undergraduate strike naval flight officer training for the Navy, Marine Corps, and select international military partners. *U.S. Navy photo by Capt. Scott Janik*

DAVENPORT, Iowa – Cobham Mission Systems has been awarded a new contract from the U.S. Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) for production and delivery of two lots of GGU-25 oxygen concentrators, the company announced in a March 9 release. This program includes delivery of a fleet-wide oxygen concentrator legacy system upgrade for U.S. Navy T-45 Goshawk jet trainers. Cobham Mission Systems' enhanced smart concentrators will deliver optimal oxygen for pilots while also monitoring and recording necessary operational data.

"We are honored to have the Navy's ongoing confidence in our products and to be given this opportunity to continue serving

the T-45 fleet,” said Jason Apelquist, senior vice president for business development and strategy, Cobham Mission Systems. “We have advanced our oxygen concentrator technologies and design standards significantly in the last decade to further support the warfighter and ensure critical operational data is monitored in real time. We’re excited to be delivering our GGU-25 to this fleet. It is an upgraded version of GGU-7, our legacy product on the T-45. This will ensure that Navy pilots in training are provided an environment for adequate breathing under all conditions.”

GGU-25 is designed to be a smart concentrator that delivers the required amount of oxygen to the pilot and also records key operational parameters in real time. This data is extremely useful in troubleshooting any possible incidence of unexplained physiological episode during flight.

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## **Naval Technology Processes Misaligned, Research Admiral Says**



Jonathan Kwolek, Ph.D. (left), a U.S. Naval Research Laboratory research physicist, shows an atom interferometer to Chief of Naval Research Rear Adm. Lorin Selby (right) in 2020 at NRL facilities in Washington, D.C. *U.S. Navy / Jonathan Steffen*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The admiral in charge of naval technology research said he is looking hard at the processes of technology development to see how they can be refined to speed development.

“We are not structurally aligned to move that tech as fast as we need it moving,” said Rear Adm. Lorin Selby, chief of naval research (CNR), speaking March 8 in a webinar of the National Defense Industrial Association’s Pacific Operations Science and Technology Conference. “We’re going to develop the tech, and I’m convinced that more of this probably will happen on the industry side than the government. It will be a partnership but it’s primarily going to be driven by the dollar, the profit of these things coming down the pike. I get concerned about the structural alignment of our processes – that I think are misaligned, with the pace we’re trying to get

at.”

Selby said improvements can come through the budget and executive and legislative action, but “It’s in the way we insert tech in the acquisition pipeline from different places” that he is focused on.

“Looking back over the last 20 years or so, we have tried to put in place ‘HOV lanes’ around the traffic, things like DIU [Defense Innovation Unit] are things primarily intended to go around the congestion,” he said. “The problem is they invariably have to start in the congestion or they totally merge back into it just because they have to; that’s the way it works. There are some structural issues there that we need to go after.

“Let’s face it: we’re still operating like it’s 1985 or something,” Selby said. “It worked great in 1985. For the most part, for big high-ticket things, it still works pretty well today – aircraft carriers, submarines, fighter-bombers. Could you make some tweaks? Yeah, you could. Fundamentally, when you talk about high-tech payloads, the software, the things that are really going to be the game changers – that’s where we’ve really got to look hard at the structure and figure out ways to make some alterations.”

Selby, said “there are some things that could be done within the existing lifelines, changing the way some of the A to B to C works. It has become so complex that it’s hard for any one program manager to figure out to manage all of this. There are so many relationships. We need to go back to a simpler, more linear approach. We’d actually go faster.”

The CNR, a submarine officer who has been a program manager, chief engineer for the Naval Sea Systems Command and head of a warfare center, said his experience give him a perspective of the whole life cycle of technological systems.

“I’ve seen the entire flash of an idea all the way to the

disposal of the thing at the end of its life," he said.

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# Bill Introduced to Boost Coast Guard Icebreaking Mission, Great Lakes Icebreaking Capacity



The Coast Guard Cutter Mackinaw, a 240-foot heavy icebreaker, breaks ice near Marine City, Michigan, along the St. Clair River, 2015. *U.S. Coast Guard / Daniel R. Michelson*

Recognizing the importance of maritime commerce on the Great Lakes, three U.S. senators are calling for legislation to help the Coast Guard keep the shipping lanes open during the

winter.

“Inadequate icebreaking capacity in the Great Lakes is costing us thousands of American jobs and millions in business revenue. We must boost our icebreaking capacity in the Great Lakes to keep our maritime commerce moving,” said Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisconsin), who along with Sens. Todd Young (R-Indiana) and Gary Peters (D-Michigan) are reintroducing the Great Lakes Winter Commerce Act.

The bill would update the U.S. Coast Guard’s (USCG) Great Lakes icebreaking mission and increase the icebreaking capacity of the Great Lakes fleet to support “reasonable demands of commerce.”

According to a statement from Baldwin’s office, “the Coast Guard currently interprets the ‘reasonable demands of commerce’ as meaning that an ice-covered waterway is open until a second vessel is stuck in the ice for more than 24 hours as a result of another vessel’s inability to move. They only report to Congress ice restrictions in four connecting channels for the entire Great Lakes.”

The bill defines “reasonable demands of commerce” as the “safe movement of commercial vessels transiting ice-covered waterways in the Great Lakes, regardless of type of cargo, at a speed consistent with the design capability of Coast Guard icebreakers operating in the Great Lakes.”

A study commissioned by the Lake Carriers’ Association found that during the 2018-2019 ice-season, businesses that depend upon the Great Lakes maritime industry lost over \$1 billion in revenues because of delays caused by inadequate icebreaking.

“This historic bill will codify into law a long time Coast Guard mission that protects national and economic security,” said Jim Weakley, president of the Lake Carriers’ Association.

The legislation authorizes \$350 million for the construction

of a new Great Lakes icebreaker.

The Coast Guard currently has one heavy icebreaker based at Cheboygan, Michigan, as well as six icebreaking tugs. The Great Lakes icebreaker USCGC Mackinaw (WLBB 30) can break ice up to 32 inches thick at continuous speeds of 3 knots. Commissioned in 2006, the 240-foot heavy icebreaker is the largest Coast Guard vessel on the Great Lakes. There are also Bay-class 140-foot icebreaking tugs that can break ice up to 22 inches thick, based at Cleveland, Detroit, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, and St. Ignace in Michigan.

“Icebreaking in the Great Lakes is critical not just for Michigan’s economy, but for our entire country. As we have seen this winter, the economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic has made the importance of icebreaking more vital than ever to our small business community,” Peters said.

Icebreaking capacity in the Great Lakes supports more than 90 million tons of cargo annually.

“Our legislation will support icebreaking missions to expand capacity to ship goods, create jobs, and strengthen the economy in Indiana and other Great Lake states,” Young said.

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**Navy Awards Logistics Support  
Contract for Advanced**

# Helicopter Training Program



TH-73A Advanced Helicopter Training System. *U.S. Naval Air Systems Command*

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The U.S. Navy awarded Vertex Aerospace LLC (Vertex) a contract for \$71.4 million on March 2 for the base year for the Contractor Logistics and Maintenance Support (CLS) in support of the Advanced Helicopter Training System (AHTS) program, with six options for a total contract value of more than \$471 million, the Naval Air Systems Command said in a March 8 release.

“The new Leonardo TH-73A helicopters are the cornerstone of AHTS, which is the planned replacement to address the capability and capacity gaps of the current aging TH-57 Sea Ranger helicopter training platform,” said Capt. Holly Shoger, Naval Undergraduate Flight Training Systems (PMA-273) program manager. “This contract ensures the Navy can successfully maintain the TH-57 helicopters until the TH-73A is operational in the fleet. Vertex will ensure the Navy has capacity to train several hundred aviation students per year at Naval Air Station (NAS) Whiting Field in Milton, Florida.”

The award comes following the Oct. 22, 2020 award to Vertex Aerospace, LLC., when a post-award protest was submitted to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) on Oct. 27, 2020.

While reviewing information to respond to the protest, the government identified a matter which necessitated corrective action. The government notified the GAO of its intent to take corrective action and the GAO subsequently dismissed the protest as academic on Nov. 13, 2020. The government took corrective action by issuing an amendment and allowing offerors to submit revised proposals. Following its evaluation of the proposals, the government awarded the contract to Vertex Aerospace LLC on March 2.

The task order contract for CLS was awarded on a best-value tradeoff basis with a base and six options. CLS availability is scheduled to begin in calendar year 2021 and continue through calendar year 2027.

The procurement of this CLS includes logistics, maintenance and supply for both the TH-73A and the TH-57. The resultant task order award will provide services and materials necessary to provide aircraft maintenance and logistics aircraft support for both the TH-73A and the TH-57 platforms, to include the repair of airframe and aircraft subsystems, including engines; maintenance/repair and logistics support of support equipment, as required; and maintaining records and reporting for aircraft and associated systems.

Using a combination of best industry and Navy practices, AHTS will ensure Chief of Naval Air Training efficiently produces rotary wing aviators who are prepared for advanced rotary wing and intermediate tilt-rotor training and who will meet the challenges faced in the fleet through 2050.

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# Navy Accepts Delivery of Future USS Daniel Inouye



The future USS Daniel Inouye (DDG 118) departs General Dynamics Bath Iron Works shipyard on Feb. 3 for acceptance trials. *SUPSHIP Bath*

BATH, Maine – The Navy accepted delivery of the guided-missile destroyer Daniel Inouye (DDG 118) from shipbuilder General Dynamics Bath Iron Works, March 8, Team ships Public Affairs said in a release.

Delivery of DDG 118 represents the official transfer of the ship from the shipbuilder to the Navy. Prior to delivery, the ship successfully conducted a series of at-sea and pier-side trials to demonstrate its material and operational readiness.

The future USS Daniel Inouye is named in honor of Daniel

Inouye, who served as a United States Senator for Hawaii from 1963 until his death in 2012. He received the Medal of Honor June 21, 2000 for his extraordinary heroism in action while serving with the 442nd Infantry Regimental Combat Team in Italy during World War II.

“This highly capable platform will deliver the necessary combat power and proven capacity as the ship joins the world’s greatest Navy.” said Capt. Seth Miller, DDG 51 class program manager, Program Executive Office (PEO) Ships. “DDG 118 will continue to honor the legacy of its namesake and ‘Go For Broke’ for decades to come as it supports our country.”

DDG 118 is a Flight IIA destroyer equipped with Aegis Baseline 9, which provides improved Integrated Air and Missile Defense capabilities, increased computing power, and radar upgrades that improve detection range and reaction time against modern air warfare and Ballistic Missile Defense threats.

BIW is also in production on the future Arleigh Burke-class destroyers Carl M. Levin (DDG 120), John Basilone (DDG 122), Harvey C. Barnum (DDG 124), Patrick Gallagher (DDG 127), and Flight III ships, Louis H. Wilson, Jr. (DDG 126), and William Charette (DDG 130), as well as the future Zumwalt-class destroyer, Lyndon B. Johnson (DDG 1002).

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## **Cutter Vigilant Returns Home after 52-day Caribbean**

# Counter-Drug Patrol



The Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant crew interdicts a 70-foot fishing vessel suspected of drug smuggling during a 52-day counter-drug patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. The Vigilant is a 210-foot medium endurance cutter homeported in Cape Canaveral. *U.S. Coast Guard*

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. – The Coast Guard Cutter Vigilant and crew returned to Cape Canaveral March 5 following a 52-day counter-drug patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a March 9 release.

During their patrol in the Pacific, Vigilant's crew worked with several U.S. and partner nation assets, including Panama's National Aeronaval Service (SENAN), Costa Rica's drug enforcement agency, a U.S. Navy warship, and three Coast Guard cutters. Vigilant's crew participated in a two-day multi-domain enhanced counternarcotic subject matter exchange with SENAN, demonstrating and practicing procedures for stopping drug smuggling vessels and medical evacuations. This promoted regional stability, economic prosperity, and security through

collaborative engagement.

The Vigilant's crew interdicted a 70-foot fishing vessel suspected of drug smuggling. The cutter's crew discovered 1,900 pounds of cocaine hidden in the vessel's fuel tanks with an estimated wholesale value of \$26 million.

During the course of the patrol, over 45 suspected narco-traffickers crossed Vigilant's deck from 13 different interdictions executed by various Coast Guard cutters and Navy ships.

"Our crew did an exceptional job providing care and security for so many detainees, especially with the additional challenges created by COVID," said Cmdr. Fred S. Bertsch, commanding officer of Vigilant.

The fight against drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea requires unity of effort in all phases from detection, monitoring and interdictions, to criminal prosecutions for these interdictions by United States Attorney's Offices from the Middle District of Florida and the Southern District of Florida and the Southern District of California. The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean is conducted under the authority of the 11th Coast Guard District, headquartered in Alameda. The interdictions, including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Vigilant is a 210-foot medium-endurance cutter homeported in Cape Canaveral. The cutter primary mission include search and rescue, illegal drug interdictions, alien migrant interdictions ensuring safety of life at sea and enforcing international and domestic maritime laws.

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# BMT to Conduct Industry Studies for Navy T-ARC(X) Cable Ship Program



The cable laying and repair ship USNS Zeus (T-ARC-7) operated by the Military Sealift Command. *Military Sealift Command / Wikipedia*

ARLINGTON, Va. – BMT has been awarded a prime contract to conduct industry studies for the U.S. Navy's T-ARC(X) cable ship replacement program, the company said in a March 8 release.

The contract consists of capability and cost trade studies in key areas, investigation of options to maximize affordability and producibility, and development of a concept design. BMT's partners on this project include Fincantieri Marine Group (FMG), ABB Marine & Ports, and Noise Control Engineering.

The industry studies are a key step in the Navy's

recapitalization of its undersea cable installation and repair capability, as the only operational ship, USNS Zeus (T-ARC 7), is nearly 40 years old and needs to be replaced. Additional missions include acoustic, hydrographic, and bathymetric survey; towing projectors; and deploying and recovering unmanned underwater vehicles and other packages through its moonpool.

BMT will develop a T-ARC(X) design that integrates its team's portfolio of operating cable ship designs with a newly tested hull form. BMT's approach will apply the successful methodology employed on similar industry studies performed recently. The team also integrates producibility considerations in its approach through its shipbuilding partner, FMG.

"We're excited to continue our vessel design support to the U.S. Navy. This award demonstrates the strength of BMT as a trusted design partner of choice, the diversity of our vessel portfolio, and our global naval architecture capabilities," said Rick Cox, vice president in BMT's U.S. defense business.

The award is the latest in a series of similar U.S. government industry studies contracts awarded to BMT, including the Navy's T-AGOS(X) and U.S. Coast Guard's Offshore Patrol Cutter programs. BMT continues to position itself as the leading independent ship design agent in the U.S., capable of working with shipyards of all sizes to deliver projects ranging from small commercial tasks to complex U.S. government shipbuilding programs.

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# Coast Guard Repatriates 58 migrants to the Dominican Republic



The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Tezanos small boat is on scene with one of two illegal voyages that were interdicted by the cutter, during separate cases, in the Mona Passage waters March 6, 2021. The 58 migrants from both interdictions were repatriated at-sea to a Dominican Republic Navy vessel near the Dominican Republic March 7, 2021. *U.S. Coast Guard*

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard repatriated 58 migrants to the Dominican Republic March 8, following the interdiction of two illegal voyages in Mona Passage waters between the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a March 8 release.

The interdicted migrants claimed to be Dominican Republic nationals.

The interdictions are the result of ongoing efforts by Caribbean Border Interagency Group (CBIG) partner agencies to combat illegal migrant smuggling.

“These illegal voyages are the most deadly means of conveyance,” said Cmdr. Beau Powers, Sector San Juan chief of response. “They are dangerous and mostly involve makeshift, grossly overloaded and unseaworthy vessels. These vessels continuously flood and have the potential to capsize at any given time. To those considering taking part in an illegal voyage, do not take to the sea! You are putting your life at risk as well as the life of everyone else.”

The aircrew of a Customs and Border Protection marine patrol aircraft detected the first illegal voyage Saturday morning. The CBP aircrew spotted a grossly overloaded 30-foot makeshift vessel 49 nautical miles west of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico. Coast Guard watchstanders launched an MH-65 Dolphin helicopter from Air Station Borinquen and diverted the Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Tezanos to interdict the suspect vessel. Shortly thereafter, the cutter Joseph Tezanos arrived on scene and stopped the migrant vessel with the assistance of the cutter’s small boat. The crew of the cutter Joseph Tezanos safely embarked 34 migrants, 32 men and two women.

The second interdiction occurred Saturday afternoon, after the crew of a U.S. Customs and Border Protection marine patrol aircraft detected a suspect illegal voyage, in waters northeast of Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. Coast Guard watchstanders at Sector San Juan diverted the cutter Joseph Tezanos to interdict the suspect vessel. Once on scene, the cutter Joseph Tezanos interdicted a 25-foot grossly overloaded makeshift boat and safely embarked the 24 migrants, 20 men and four women, who were aboard.

In both cases, the crew of the cutter Joseph Tezanos had to provide lifejackets/personal flotation devices to the migrants. Once they were safely aboard the cutter, the

migrants also received food, water and basic medical attention.

The cutter Joseph Tezanos later rendezvoused with and transferred the migrants to a Dominican Republic Navy vessel in waters just off the Dominican Republic completing their repatriation.

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## **SECDEF                      Nominates                      Next INDOPACOM,                      PACFLEET Commanders**



Adm. John Aquilino, commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, speaks with Sailors assigned to Nimitz-class nuclear aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) in early February 2021. He has been

nominated as commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. *U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Mason Congleton*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced March 5 that the president has made the following nominations:

Navy Adm. John C. Aquilino for appointment to the grade of admiral, and assignment as commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Aquilino is currently serving as commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

Navy Vice Adm. Samuel J. Paparo Jr. for appointment to the grade of admiral, and assignment as commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Paparo is currently serving as commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Central Command; commander, Fifth Fleet; and commander, Combined Maritime Forces, Manama, Bahrain.

If confirmed by the Senate, Aquilino, a naval aviator, would succeed Adm. Philip Davidson, a surface warfare officer. Paparo also is a naval aviator.

Below are excerpts from the official biographies of both nominees:

Adm. John Aquilino is a native to Huntington, New York. He graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1984, earning a Bachelor of Science in Physics. He subsequently entered flight training and earned his wings in August 1986.

Operationally, he has served in numerous fighter squadrons flying the F-14 A/B Tomcat and the F-18 C/E/F Hornet. His fleet assignments include the Ghost Riders of Fighter Squadron (VF) 142 and the Black Aces of VF-41. He commanded the World Famous Red Rippers of VF-11, Carrier Air Wing 2 and Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 2. He has made several extended deployments in support of Operation Deny Flight, Deliberate Force, Southern Watch, Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi

Freedom.

Ashore, Aquilino's assignments include duties as an adversary instructor pilot flying the A-4, F-5 and F-16N aircraft for the Challengers of VF-43; operations officer of Strike Weapons and Tactics School, Atlantic; flag aide to the vice chief of naval operations; special assistant for Weapons Systems and Advanced Development in the Office of the Legislative Affairs for the Secretary of Defense; director of Air Wing Readiness and Training, for Commander, Naval Air Forces, Atlantic Fleet; and executive assistant to the commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

His flag assignments include director of Strategy and Policy (J5), U.S. Joint Forces Command; deputy director, Joint Force Coordinator (J31), the Joint Staff; commander, CSG-2, director of Maritime Operations, U.S. Pacific Fleet (N04); deputy chief of naval operations for Operations, Plans and Strategy (N3/N5) and most recently, as commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet, Combined Maritime Forces.

Aquilino graduated from the Navy Fighter Weapons School (TOPGUN), the Joint Forces Staff College and completed Harvard Kennedy School's Executive Education Program in National and International Security.

Aquilino assumed duties as commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, May 17, 2018. He is the 36th commander since the fleet's Pearl Harbor headquarters was established in February 1941.

Vice Adm. Sam Paparo, a native of Morton, Pennsylvania graduated from Villanova University and was commissioned in 1987. He is the son of a former enlisted Marine and the grandson of a World War 2 enlisted Sailor. He has earned a Master of Arts in International Studies from Old Dominion University and a Master of Science in Systems Analysis from the Naval Postgraduate School. He is also a graduate of the Air Command and Staff College, the Air War College, the Naval

War College and the Joint and Combined Warfighting School. A U.S. Naval Aviator, he is a TOPGUN graduate and has flown over 6,000 hours in the F-14, F-15 and F/A-18 and 1,100 carrier landings.

Operational command tours at sea include Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 195 in the Forward Deployed Naval Forces, Yokosuka, Japan, deploying in Kitty Hawk Strike Group; Commander, Carrier Air Wing 7, embarked in Dwight D. Eisenhower Strike Group and Commander, Carrier Strike Group Ten. On the ground, he commanded Provincial Reconstruction Team, Nuristan Province, Afghanistan with the 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division and the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Other operational assignments at sea include Fighter Squadron (VF) 14, flying the F-14 Tomcat with USS John F. Kennedy and USS Dwight D. Eisenhower Strike Groups and VFA-15, flying the F/A-18 Hornet with USS Theodore Roosevelt and USS Enterprise Strike Groups. He served also on exchange duty with the U.S. Air Force flying the F-15C Eagle with the 71st Fighter Squadron, deploying multiple times to Saudi Arabia and Keflavik, Iceland. In joint operational service, he was Battle Director at the Combined Air and Space Operations Center, Al Udeid, Qatar.

His shore assignments include the staff of Commander, Naval Air Forces, as F/A-18 training, readiness and requirements officer. He served as commanding officer of VFA-106. He was Programming Division (OPNAV N80), Strategy and Resource and Requirements Review Board branch head. Executive staff tours include service as executive assistant to Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, and executive assistant to the 31st Chief of Naval Operations.

Paparo's most recent assignment was Director of Operations, J3, U.S. Central Command from April 2018 to July 2020. He assumed command of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. 5th Fleet/Combined Maritime Forces on August 19, 2020.