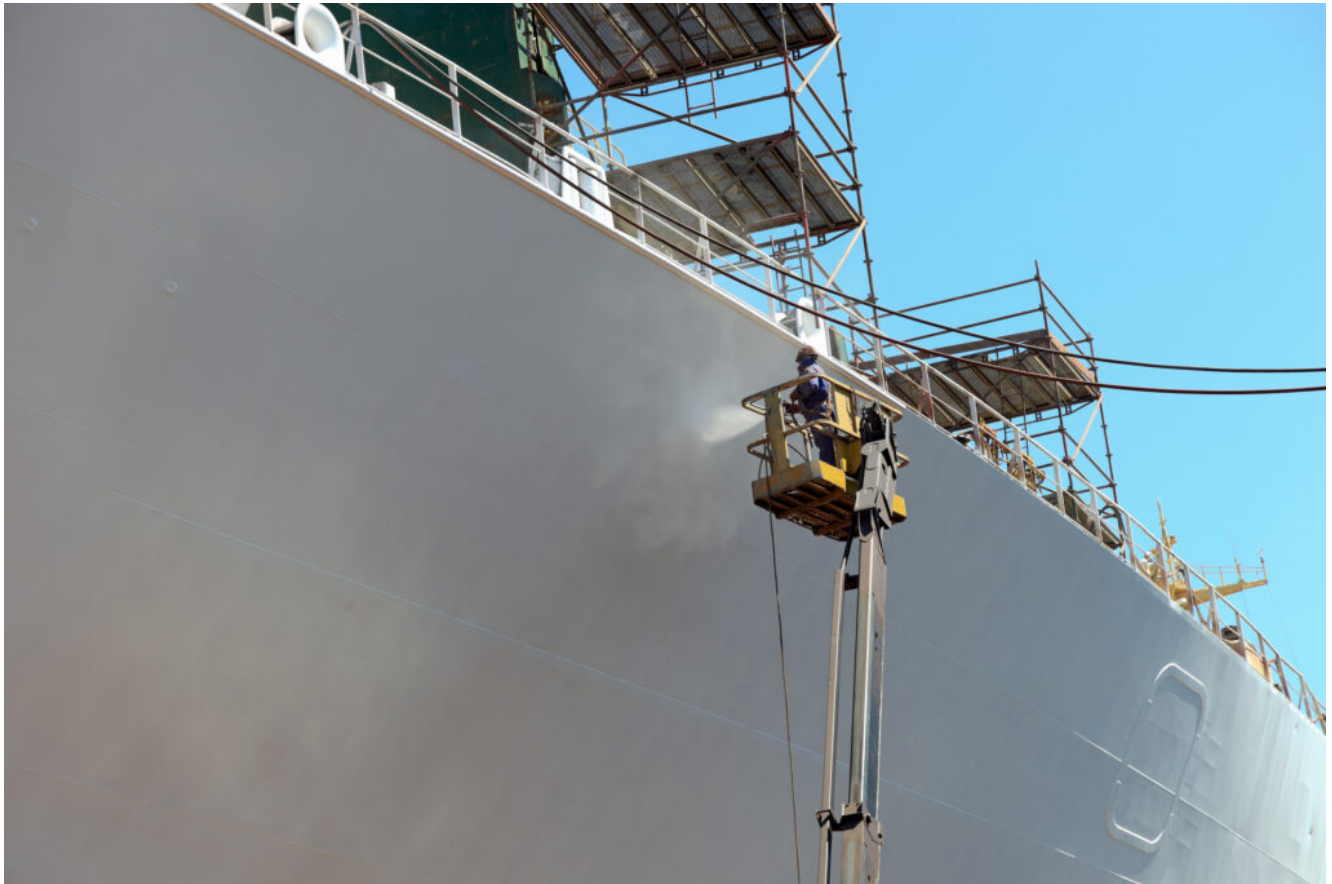


AMPP Sets the Standards for Maritime Corrosion Control



Worker painting ship hull using airbrush.

ARLINGTON, Va. – A little-publicized trade association exercises an out-sized role in the readiness of the U.S. fleet.

The Association for Materials Protection and Performance (AMPP) sets the standards for workforce development and corrosion control – tasks such as rust removal, painting, and other protective coatings, etc. – that are critical to preservation or ship performance and readiness. As the United States takes measures at a national level to increase shipbuilding and improve maintenance of its naval fleet, the company members of AMPP are working to provide the standards needed to sustain the readiness of the current and future fleet.

AMPP is a merger of the Society for Protective Coatings and the National Association of Corrosion Engineers, two organizations that date back to the 1940s and 1950s.

“Both associations had different demographics and bringing them together is what was really pushing the momentum for that merge that happened on 2020,” said Jennifer Merck, vice president for Maritime and Defense at AMPP, during an interview with *Seapower*. “I worked a lot with the painting contractors who do the ship maintenance and worked heavily with our education portfolio over the years.”

Merck said the AMPP works closely with Naval Sea Systems Command Code 05 (NAVSEA 05), which publishes the 00932 document that sets the standard for painting contractors who maintain Navy ships. The Navy requires painting contractors to be certified by AMPP, which has a quality procedure program, similar to an ISO 9001 “but specific to surface prep and coating applications. To even bid on Navy work, you need to be certified to do it,” she said.

Last year AMPP met with the National Security Council at the White House, which Merck said was a significant opportunity because it recognized corrosion prevention are important in re-building the American shipbuilding industrial base.

“What we were able to do at that meeting is show how training and certifications, technical standards can help address the needs for ship maintenance,” she said. “You need to have a skilled workforce to do this[maintenance]. Right now, we’re facing a little bit of a shortage. So, we’re trying to show how you can improve quality and longevity of military and commercial vessels is usually by introducing a standard into a specification and then making sure that the workforce is then capable of doing the different tasks involved that they are responsible for.”



Jennifer Merck, vice president for Maritime and Defense at AMPP. Photo credit: AMPP.

Merck sees opportunity to get standards written into the procurement process before the ship is built rather than corrosion control being an afterthought in the design process.

“Everything that we do at AMPP is consensus driven,” she said. “There are times when the Navy saying we might be having a need for a standard. We’re trying to be on the front end of the process if we see new technology enter the market – for example, laser ablation – we then start to develop standards around that technology, that how the technology can be used best.”

The AMPP member companies can be looked up on its website, as can individuals that have been certified as, for examples, a blaster, painter, coating inspector, and those who are QP qualified.

AMPP is headquartered in Houston, Texas, with a major office in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, with additional offices around

the world, Merck said, noting that other sectors of the organization cover energy, industry, civic infrastructure, and strategic geography. The membership includes about 50,000 companies worldwide. AMPP is a member of the American Society of Naval Engineers. AMPP also works closely with the International Maritime Organization and the Industrial Standards Organization.

USNS Kanawha Receives Presidential Unit Citation Award for Combat Logistics Force Support



Norfolk, Va. (May 16, 2026) –Family and friends gathered on the pier at Naval Station Norfolk on May 16, 2026, to welcome home the crew of the USNS Kanawha (T-AO 196). The fleet

replenishment oiler and its 92 civil service mariners returned after a 204-day deployment, which included 156 days actively at sea.

NORFOLK, Va. – In a historic milestone for U.S. Navy Military Sealift Command's Combat Logistics Force, fleet replenishment oiler USNS Kanawha (T-AO 196) was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation during an award ceremony at Naval Station Norfolk, July 17, 2026.

The rare honor recognizes the ship's extraordinary logistics support to the USS Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group during Operation Epic Fury.

The crew of dry cargo and ordnance vessel USNS William McLean (T-AKE 12) also provided critical logistics support to the strike group and was also awarded the PUC for their efforts. The crew will be formally recognized for their accomplishments in an upcoming ceremony.

"By serving as a vital lifeline in contested waters, the civil service mariners of Kanawha ensured the strike group remained fueled, armed, and ready for combat," said Adm. Karl Thomas, commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, who presided over the award ceremony.

"By earning the first of two Presidential Unit Citations in Military Sealift Command's 77-year history, these civilian mariners didn't just support the fleet; they made history. Their courage, resilience, and unwavering dedication demonstrate what we already know: our civilian mariners are frontline warriors."

Thomas went on to praise the crew's historic achievement, stating, "They have earned the deepest respect of the entire United States Navy."

Rear Adm. Benjamin Nicholson, commander, Military Sealift Command, echoed these sentiments, highlighting the extraordinary nature of Kanawha's contributions.

"This team represents the best of our Civil Service Mariner force. Their work, this brave performance, is the reason why MSC's Combat Logistics Force has maintained its more than 77-year reputation as the logistics line that sustains the fight at sea. They play a vital role in our Navy's ability to maintain its forward presence. This is a massively well-earned achievement, congratulations to USNS Kanawha and her crew for etching their name in our nation's history."

"Our success on this mission was a direct result of the relentless dedication of our crew and the seamless interoperability we built with the strike group," said Kanawha's former Chief Mate Anthony Canseco. "[This award] is a testament to the sacrifice and professionalism of every single Kanawha crew member."

In addition to the unit award, 20 individual accolades were presented to crew members for their standout bravery during the deployment, including three Navy Meritorious Civilian Service Medals: Chief Mate Anthony Canseco, Chief Engineer Abel Reyes, and Ship Master, Captain Brian Roney; 10 Civilian Service Commendation Medals: First Assistant Engineer Alexander Bacalso, Second Assistant Engineer Jose DeBarros, Junior Supply Officer Ashly Farmer, Ships Communication Officer Anthony Felton, Cargo Bosun James Fitzpatrick, Second Assistant Engineer Brian Franklin, Bosun Theo Niang, Operations Chief Nicholas Petrone, Supply Officer Cierra Reed, and Chief Radio Electronics Technician Malik Taylor; and seven Civilian Service Achievement Medals: Able Seaman Melanie Ausmer, Supply Utilityman Simone Cassells, Ordinary Seaman Jason Chambers, Supply Utilityman Kaylin Hayes, Electronic Technician Jayryan Imbuido, Engine Utility Ardrian Lincoln, and Ordinary Seaman Jose Yanez.

Individual crew members reflected on the significance of the award, the sacrifices made, and what the recognition means for the morale and legacy of MSC mariners.

“Receiving this recognition lets the Supply Department know that the hard work put into underway replenishments, in-port replenishments, fuel movements, and office duties does not go unnoticed,” said Cierra Reed, supply officer. “The supply department plays a major part in all operations and continues to perform great in the fleet. Being recognized shows just that, while also inspiring and motivating others.”

“When our deployment was unexpectedly extended in support of Operation Epic Fury, the sacrifice became very personal,” Canseco said. “Many mariners, including myself, voluntarily delayed our scheduled reliefs, knowing it meant more time away from our families. We did so because we understood the stakes. U.S. warships depended on us to keep them fueled, supplied, and ready to fight.”

**USNS Earl Warren, JMSDF JS
Mashū conduct CONSOL**



PHILIPPINE SEA – Military Sealift Command John Lewis-class underway replenishment oiler USNS Earl Warren (T-AO 207) conducted a consolidated cargo replenishment-at-sea with Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force replenishment ship JS Mashū (AOE 425) as part of exercise Valiant Shield 2026 in the Philippine Sea, June 27, 2026.

CONSOL capability is defined by specially outfitted MSC tankers able to conduct underway refueling operations, allowing fleet sustainment cargo to be unloaded without returning to port.

“It was great having a ship [and crew] alongside that we had gotten the chance to meet and build friendships with before execution,” said civil service mariner Capt. Brice B. Behringer, U.S. Merchant Marine, Master aboard Earl Warren. “Seeing them across the wire and providing logistics support to our fleet brings home both the value and importance of our allied relationships all over the world.”

The ability to CONSOL with a Japanese tanker increases overall logistics capabilities in the region by enabling MSC ships to maintain continuous fleet sustainment through interoperable replenishment by allies and partners.

MSC Far East supports the U.S. 7th Fleet by ensuring ships are manned, trained and equipped to deliver fuel, cargo and supplies to forces operating at sea and ashore throughout the Pacific region. U.S. 7th Fleet, the Navy's largest forward-deployed numbered fleet, routinely operates with allies and partners to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Saronic to Build Port Alpha Next-Generation Shipyard in Texas



AUSTIN, Texas – Saronic today announced it has selected

Brownsville, Texas, as the future home of Port Alpha, its next-generation shipyard designed to help restore American maritime strength and significantly expand the nation's shipbuilding capacity.

The announcement marks a major milestone in Saronic's mission to restore U.S. shipbuilding capacity at scale. First introduced as a vision for the future of maritime manufacturing, Port Alpha now moves from concept to reality through a planned investment of more than \$3 billion that aims to establish one of the most advanced shipyards in the world, built for software-defined shipbuilding and autonomous maritime systems.

The project is expected to generate more than \$160 billion in regional economic impact for Cameron County and \$264.5 billion for the state of Texas, while creating up to 10,000 direct jobs. This makes Port Alpha one of the largest economic development projects in modern Texas history. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2026, with Port Alpha expected to open for operations in 2028.

The timing is pivotal. In one of his first actions in office, President Trump issued an Executive Order on Restoring America's Maritime Dominance, followed by federal initiatives such as the SHIPS for America Act and the Maritime Action Plan that call for a generational rebuild of the American shipbuilding industry. These efforts recognize that economic security and national security are inseparable, and restoring U.S. shipbuilding capacity is essential to both. Port Alpha will expand domestic production capacity and strengthen the nation's ability to meet commercial and defense requirements while closing the widening shipbuilding gap with foreign adversaries.

"America's maritime future depends on our ability to build again," said Dino Mavrookas, co-founder and CEO of Saronic. "Port Alpha is our commitment to that mission. Built from the

ground up to deliver ships at a speed and scale not seen since World War II, this investment is about more than constructing a shipyard. It is about rebuilding the industrial capacity, workforce, and manufacturing advantage required to ensure American maritime leadership for decades to come. The state of Texas and city of Brownsville give us the foundation to turn that vision into reality.”

Following a year-long nationwide search evaluating sites across the East, West, and Gulf Coasts, Brownsville was selected after a rigorous review of workforce availability, infrastructure readiness, land scale, logistics and expansion potential. Initially situated on 835 acres at the Port of Brownsville, with the opportunity to expand to nearly 4,400 acres, Port Alpha will encompass a shipyard and manufacturing facility capable of producing vessels up to 850 feet. Future site expansion could support the production of vessels over 1,200 feet. The site provides hundreds of acres of waterfront access, deepwater channel connectivity, multimodal logistics infrastructure, and room for long-term expansion – everything required to anchor a next-generation shipbuilding hub.

Over the next decade, Port Alpha is expected to create up to 10,000 high-quality direct jobs spanning skilled trades such as welding and machining to advanced roles in robotics, software engineering, and naval architecture. The project aligns with national calls to rebuild the maritime workforce pipeline, creating new opportunities for skilled workers at the intersection of shipbuilding and advanced technology. Saronic will collaborate with the state of Texas, Cameron County, and local educational institutions – from regional technical colleges to leading State universities and institutions – to develop workforce training and apprenticeship programs designed to sustain long-term industrial growth and position South Texas as a center of excellence for advanced maritime manufacturing.

Port Alpha builds on Saronic’s expanding shipbuilding

footprint. In early 2025, the company acquired a shipyard in Franklin, Louisiana, where it is investing \$300 million to add 300,000 square feet of production capacity. That facility will continue producing Saronic's 180-foot Marauder autonomous vessel, which was designed and launched in less than one year. Together, these facilities represent a multi-billion-dollar private capital commitment to restoring American shipbuilding capacity, advancing autonomous maritime systems, and strengthening the nation's industrial resilience.

MASS 2026 is underway in St. John's, Newfoundland



The 13th annual Maritime & Arctic Security & Safety Conference (MASS), hosted by the Atlantic Canada Aerospace & Defense Association (ACADA), and sponsored by Saab Canada Inc., is currently underway this week in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador.

ACADA represents Atlantic Canada's aerospace and defense industry and promotes the region as a globally recognized hub of aerospace and defense excellence. (Atlantic Canada includes the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland & Labrador.)

With 600 participants, this year's MASS conference is the biggest ever, according to Victoria Belbin, ACADA president and CEO.

The conference, held at the St. John's Convention Centre, is examining the policies, technologies and operations to leverage Atlantic Canada's leadership in environmental management, economic leadership and workforce development.

In his keynote remarks, Newfoundland Labrador Premier Tony Wakeham told the delegates the province has the strategic geopolitical location as a gateway to the Arctic and Atlantic, a qualified workforce, and unique military and civil capabilities. "Newfoundland and Labrador," Wakeham said, "is 'built for defense.'"

"Newfoundland and Labrador has always turned challenges into opportunities," Wakeham said. "Today, those same strengths position us to play an even greater role in Canada's defense and security future. We have the capabilities. We have the people. And we are ready to do more."

Wakeham said Atlantic Canada's strength is not that every province does the same thing. "It is that each brings different strengths, and together those strengths reinforce one another. The result is something larger than any one

province could offer on its own,” he said. “We offer a regional defense and security ecosystem that Canada and its allies can rely on for Arctic and North Atlantic security and support.”

An overarching theme has been the importance of partnerships and the need for trust and sustained dialogue to achieve successful partnerships.

Presenters discussed the importance of meaningful partnerships with Inuit, First Nations and Northern communities, emphasizing economic participation, dual-use infrastructure, connectivity, and workforce development. To be successful, these partnerships rely upon trust and sustained dialogue.

From the naval standpoint, speakers emphasized the importance of robustness and maintainability in Arctic-capable warship designs, highlighting the challenges of technology in harsh conditions. Importance advanced satellite-based maritime surveillance, using AI and machine learning to detect and track ships and icebergs, and the importance of high-resolution ice data collection and sharing for safe navigation in the Arctic.

Technology is enabling new methods of maritime surveillance. Satellites, artificial intelligence and machine learning are helping to detect, identify and track ships and determine which tracks may constitute a threat; as well finding and tracking icebergs for safer navigation in and around ice in the Arctic and the north.

As an added bonus, MASS 2026 is held in conjunction with the Littoral OpTech Workshop, which brings together naval, defense and maritime security experts together to explore and identify technologies and concepts that will enable effective operations in the littoral.

Edward Lundquist is a retired U.S. Navy captain who writes on maritime, naval, defense and security issues.

Coast Guard transitions Expeditionary Cutter Squadron to enhance operational capabilities



GULF OF TADJOURA (May 13, 2021) A 34-foot Dauntless-class patrol boat assigned to Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron Eleven (MESRON-11) keeps watch over Charles Moulthrope, Coast

Guard Patrol Craft (WPC 1141) and Robert Goldman (WPC 1142), Coast Guard Sentinel-class cutters

(USCGC) during their at-sea refueling in the Gulf of Tadjoura on May 13, 2021.

Task Group 68.6, based at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti provides port and harbor

security, high-value asset protection, and maritime security operations in

coastal waterways of the Gulf of Tadjoura. The Task Group includes MSRON-11,

the security boat squadron and EOD Platoon 8-2-1, which sweeps the port for

explosives as needed. Both units are supported by Navy Expeditionary Combat

Command in Norfolk, Virginia.

Charles Moulthrope and Robert Goldman are traveling to their new forward-deployed homeport in

Bahrain to replace decommissioning island-class patrol boats as part of the U.S. Coast Guard's Patrol

Forces Southwest Asia (PATFORSWA).

As per the SECNAV Memo of 4 March 2021, the use of masks aboard the patrol boats is relaxed due to

the high-risk nature of operations, specifically in this photo the need for clear, audible and unrestricted

visualization of verbal communication required for safe and effective operations. (U.S. Navy photo by

Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Randi Brown)

WASHINGTON – The United States Coast Guard transitioned its Expeditionary Cutter Squadron (ECS), historically called Patrol Forces Southwest Asia (PATFORSWA), to operate in the Western Pacific conducting maritime security operations and cooperative maritime activities with allies and partner

nations in the region, in response to national security requirements.

The Expeditionary Cutter Squadron will be capable of performing missions as part of the U.S. Joint Force. The squadron is currently operating in the U.S. Pacific Command area of operations to protect the homeland and maritime approaches including Guam and the Pacific Islands.

For more than 20 years, the Coast Guard has provided forward-deployed capabilities to support U.S. Central Command and U.S. Naval Forces Central Command from Bahrain. The unit has successfully executed maritime security, maritime interdiction, and maritime domain awareness missions throughout the Middle East.

“Coast Guard forces have always adapted to meet urgent national needs,” said Adm. Kevin Lunday, Commandant of the Coast Guard. “The Expeditionary Cutter Squadron enhances the Coast Guard’s ability to deploy our forces in support of Combatant Commanders and national security objectives. Our expeditionary cutter forces provide Combatant Commands with uniquely capable maritime assets, leveraging the Coast Guard’s military and law enforcement authorities to advance U.S. national security objectives in the Western Pacific and Western Hemisphere.”

Expeditionary Cutter Squadron forces will integrate with U.S. Combatant Commands to conduct exercises and maritime cooperative activities that enhance interoperability, strengthen strategic partnerships and advance shared security objectives throughout the region. The transition of the Expeditionary Cutter Squadron reflects the Coast Guard’s intent to provide agile, capable, and responsive maritime forces. These forces will rapidly support national security objectives across a range of operational theaters while leveraging the Service’s unique authorities.

Coast Guard welcomes two cutters to new Virginia home port



The crew of the Reliance-class medium-endurance cutter USCGC Resolute (WMEC 620) arrives at its new homeport at Coast Guard Base Portsmouth, July 13, 2026. The Resolute is one of two 210-foot medium endurance cutters relocating from St. Petersburg, Florida, to Base Portsmouth as part of a strategic homeport shift bringing approximately 154 personnel and their families to the Hampton Roads area. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Kate Kilroy)

PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The Coast Guard welcomed the crews of the Coast Guard cutters Venturous (WMEC 625) and Resolute (WMEC 620) to their new home port at Coast Guard Base Portsmouth this week.

Both 210-foot Reliance-class medium endurance cutters relocated to Virginia after previously being homeported in St. Petersburg, Florida. The transition brings approximately 154 Coast Guard personnel and their families to the Hampton Roads area.

Venturous arrived at Base Portsmouth on Friday, July 10, followed by the Resolute on July 13.

Operating under Coast Guard Atlantic Area, both cutters are vital assets for the region. Their primary missions include search and rescue, law enforcement, protection of living marine resources, homeland security, and marine environmental protection. The crews routinely deploy throughout the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of America.

“My goal is to ensure we have the right assets for the right mission in the right place at the right time,” said Vice Adm. Jo-Ann Burdian, commander, Atlantic Area. “These moves support that goal. By locating more of our medium endurance cutters in a single location, we are improving our ability to support and maintain these vessels so they remain always ready to complete their missions.”

Resolute was built at the United States Coast Guard Yard in Maryland and commissioned in December 1966.

“We are proud to call Hampton Roads our new home,” said Cmdr. George MacDonnell, commanding officer of the Resolute. “Resolute has many native Virginians aboard, and throughout the transit from St. Petersburg to Portsmouth, the crew had the opportunity to share experiences bridging the geographic distance between southwest Florida and the Tidewater. During the transit, the departing crew members were able to train the new crew in two-boat small boat operations, and nighttime helicopter operations on the Atlantic seaboard. We look forward to integrating into the always-welcoming Hampton Roads community and continuing our culture of service, typified by

our ship's motto- "Fama Extendere Factis—Fame Through Good Deeds."

Venturous was built in Lorain, Ohio, and commissioned in August 1968.

"The crew and command of Coast Guard Cutter Venturous are proud to join the Hampton Roads community and the greater Tidewater region," said Cmdr. Catherine Middleton, commanding officer of Venturous. "We look forward to combining our experience and capabilities with the outstanding Coast Guard units already operating in this strategically vital area. Venturous is specially equipped to conduct law enforcement operations and protect the U.S. maritime border and its approaches from illegal activity. Guided by our enduring motto, "Nemo Supra"- "None Better", we look forward to working from our new mid-Atlantic home and serving the Tidewater community at the highest level."

Throughout their distinguished histories, both cutters have operated out of several home ports across the country before conducting their extensive service in St. Petersburg and now relocating to Virginia.

Kongsberg, Oceaneering Team Selected to Support DIU CAMP Program for XLUUV



Kongsberg and Oceaneering International Inc. today announced their selection by the U.S. Department of War's Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) to support the Combat Autonomous Maritime Platform (CAMP) program, focused on the development of an Extra-Large Uncrewed Undersea Vehicle for future U.S. Navy missions.

The CAMP program accelerates the transition of mature commercial and defense technologies into operational naval capabilities. This collaboration will focus on concept definition, system architecture, and design trade studies, emphasizing modularity, interoperability, and rapid integration.

Mission-ready

Being selected by DIU for the CAMP program underscores the confidence placed in our proven, mission-ready technology according to Rich Patterson, Vice President of Uncrewed Platforms. "Kongsberg is proud to co-lead this effort with Oceaneering, combining deep domain expertise to support the U.S. Navy's vision for scalable and adaptable uncrewed undersea platforms. Together, we are competing to deliver the

world's leading extra-large autonomous underwater vehicle, and I believe our partnership with Oceaneering is a key strength in achieving that goal," Patterson says.

"We are pleased to partner with Kongsberg on this important initiative," said Bill Merz, senior vice president of Aerospace and Defense Technologies for Oceaneering. Our experience delivering and sustaining subsea systems globally, combined with Kongsberg's advanced undersea technologies, has resulted in a highly capable, world-class team ready to work."

The design is expected to be delivered in the third quarter of this year.

Bollinger Shipyards Opens Advanced Workforce Training Center to Expand America's Maritime Industrial Base



GULFPORT, Miss. – Bollinger Shipyards today announced the opening of a new, 7,200-square-foot Workforce Training Center located at its Gulfport, Mississippi facility. Developed in partnership with the Submarine Industrial Base (SIB) Program Office and Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, the facility will expand hands-on skilled trades training to help meet growing national demand for shipbuilders supporting America’s defense and maritime readiness priorities.

“This Training Center is a testament to Bollinger’s commitment to investing in the next generation of skilled maritime workers,” said Ben Bordelon, president and CEO of Bollinger Shipyards. “By partnering with the Submarine Industrial Base Program Office and Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, we are creating a direct pipeline of qualified talent that will strengthen not just our operations in Gulfport, but the broader national shipbuilding workforce. We are proud to bring this resource to our Gulf Coast community.”

The Training Center opening comes as the U.S. maritime sector faces increasing pressure to expand shipbuilding capacity and

strengthen the skilled labor pipeline needed to support naval modernization efforts and long-term industrial base resilience. The training center will offer intensive bootcamp-style programs in marine electrical, electronics, and sheet metal mechanics, reinforcing the Gulf Coast region's role as a critical hub for American shipbuilding and defense manufacturing. Classes are scheduled to begin Fall 2026, providing students with industry-recognized, hands-on training that directly prepares them for careers in the maritime industry.

The Gulfport training center builds on Bollinger's growing and proven bootcamp program, launched in 2024. Since inception, Bollinger's fourteen-week Shipfitter, Pipefitter and Pipewelder apprenticeship bootcamps have embedded safety training into workforce development from day one, and the results speak for themselves. In less than 19 months, the program attracted more than 4,000 applicants from 22 states, demonstrating that national demand for quality maritime careers is real, growing, and accelerating.

Application volume has grown in every successive bootcamp cohort, rising approximately 700% from Bootcamp 1 to Bootcamp 6, with the most recent cohort drawing roughly 1,200 applicants alone, a 53% jump over the prior class. Graduation rates have climbed in parallel: from 61% in Bootcamp 1 to 80% in the most recent specialty cohort, with an overall 2025 graduation rate of 75%. Critically, approximately 70% of graduates have remained at Bollinger, validating the program's ability to convert training investment into long-term workforce retention.

Ingalls Shipbuilding Erects First Grand Blocks Built by Distributed Shipbuilding Partners on DDG 135



PASCAGOULA, Miss. – HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding division has reached a key milestone in its distributed shipbuilding initiative with the installation of the first grand blocks, made up of three units constructed by partner facilities, for Thad Cochran (DDG 135), a Flight III Arleigh Burke-class destroyer. Fabricated by Gulf Copper and Eastern Shipbuilding, the units arrived at Ingalls ahead of the ship's October 2025 keel authentication, demonstrating successful early-sequence production by qualified offsite partners and enabling increased throughput at Ingalls.

"This milestone reflects the strength of our partner network

and the efficiencies of distributed shipbuilding for our destroyer production line,” said Ingalls Shipbuilding President Brian Blanchette. “The DDG 135 pilot is proof that we can expand capacity across the program while allowing our skilled Ingalls shipbuilders to focus on final assembly, integration and testing.”

Since 2023, Ingalls has built an expanded network of qualified fabrication partners through a structured evaluation process that included technical capability assessments, workforce reviews, quality system verification and close collaboration with Portfolio Acquisition Executive Maritime’s Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion and Repair Gulf Coast (SSGC). All partners are fully integrated into HII’s quality and material-control systems, ensuring consistency with shipyard production standards.

Building on the success of Thad Cochran, outsource work is also underway for John F. Lehman (DDG 137) and Telesforo Trinidad (DDG 139) by five different partnering companies that support Ingalls-destroyer construction. To date, all of the off-site production contracts have been awarded for 32 structural and pre-outfitted units for DDG 137 and 37 units for DDG 139. Of those units, the first two for DDG 137 have already arrived at Ingalls Shipbuilding ahead of the previously announced start of fabrication ceremony that took place July 1, marking another advantage as outsourced units are phased into the Ingalls construction processes for destroyers.

“Early deliveries for DDG 137 units show the model is not only repeatable but scalable,” said Blanchette. “Pushing work outside yard increases capacity. We have more hands working on more units that enables more work to be done in parallel and can contribute to accelerating the build by the Ingalls team. I’m confident as more partners come online and produce larger, more outfitted units, over time we expect to gain additional schedule efficiency while expanding capacity across multiple

ship classes.”

There are 40 ships under construction at both HII shipyards and the shipyards will deliver five ships over the next 12 months, including an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer. To sustain this momentum, HII is counting on distributed shipbuilding to help increase the throughput to meet a generational demand. Combined, HII doubled its distributed shipbuilding last year, and has a goal of increasing it by an additional 30% this year.