

Rite-Solutions Awarded \$60 Million NUWC Division Newport IT Services Contract



MIDDLETOWN, R.I. (March 18, 2024) – Rite-Solutions was recently awarded a \$60.7 million, five-year contract to support NUWC’s Activity Chief Information Officer (ACIO)/Information Technology (IT) division, which is responsible for strategic planning, operations, maintenance, and compliance of the center’s IT systems and infrastructure.

The company will provide IT services in several areas including software engineering, system administration, cybersecurity, client support services/help desk, Navy Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI) support, IT governance and application portfolio management support, and more.

“Cybersecurity touches every one of these areas,” notes Rocky Reeves, Rite-Solutions Sr Vice President and Director of IT Services. Over one-half of the personnel supporting this contract must meet the Navy’s strict Cybersecurity Workforce requirements. “This was a major reason Rite-Solutions won the contract. Many of our employees have degrees in cybersecurity or computer science as well as security and operating system certifications.”

“We are honored that NUWC chose to renew the contract with

us,” says Rite-Solutions co-founder Joe Marino. “While we are rapidly expanding into new technologies that give the Navy an Information Advantage, IT services and security remain a critical component of what we offer.”

The company is the prime contractor on the project and will work with subcontractors including SAIC, McLaughlin Research Corporation, Mikel, and others.

Rite-Solutions will support NUWC headquarters in Newport, R.I. as well as NUWC locations in Connecticut, Virginia, Florida, and the Bahamas.

SECNAV Announces General, Flag Officer Nominations

March 18, 2024

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced today that the president has made the following nomination:

Marine Corps Lt. Gen. James F. Glynn for appointment to the grade of lieutenant general, with assignment as commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Pacific; and commanding general, Fleet Marine Forces Pacific. Glynn is currently serving as the deputy commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Quantico, Virginia.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Joseph B. Hornbuckle for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Hornbuckle is currently serving as commander, Fleet Readiness Centers, Naval Air Systems Command, Patuxent River, Maryland.

HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding Celebrates Apprentice Graduates



PASCAGOULA, Miss., March 16, 2024 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII's (NYSE: HII) Ingalls Shipbuilding division hosted their apprentice graduation today, celebrating 99 graduates during a ceremony at the shipyard. Each of these apprentice graduates have invested time in the classroom and shipyard to prepare them for a shipbuilding career with the company.

Kari Wilkinson, president of Ingalls Shipbuilding, addressed the graduates providing words of encouragement for these new first-class shipbuilders.

"Each of our graduates has a role to play and an important job to get done on behalf of millions of Americans," Wilkinson said. "Together they form an elite and special team to do the

work of the nation.”

Enrollment for the apprentice program is competitive, and students work full-time while learning a craft through classes and on-the-job training. The prestigious workforce development program has produced more than 4,000 graduates since its inception in 1952 and currently has 700 students enrolled in the program, the highest enrollment since prior to the pandemic.

Russel Sand Jr. received the 2023 Overall Apprentice of the Year Award, which recognizes the apprentice who has set a standard of excellence among their peers and has performed at the top of their class continuously.

Photos accompanying this release are available at: <https://hii.com/news/hii-ingalls-shipbuilding-celebrates-apprentice-school-graduates-2024/>.

Sand has been with the company for four years and is currently a transportation rigger. When asked where his motivation came from to complete the four-year program, Sand said, “My fellow rigging apprentices were some of the best motivators, we all encouraged each other as we went through classes and rotated through crafts.”

While in the apprentice program Sand learned about the various aspects of shipbuilding and gained a greater purpose for the work he does saying, “In a four-year span I have seen ships go from the keel to delivery, and it gives you a sense of accomplishment. Our purpose is to build some of the finest warships in the world, and I am proud of my decision to become an Ingalls shipbuilder.”

The apprentice program offers a comprehensive three- to four-year curriculum with 15 registered Department of Labor apprentice programs for students to pursue. Apprentices earn competitive wages and receive a comprehensive benefit package upon entering the program. This allows apprentices to receive

an education, build work ethic, gain experience and develop into world-class journeymen of their crafts.

For more information about Ingalls Shipbuilding's apprentice school visit

<https://hii.com/careers/ingalls-apprentice-school/>.

March 15-16 Red Sea Update

USCENTCOM

March 16, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – On March 16, between 7:50 a.m. and 8:15 a.m. (Sanaa time), Iranian-backed Houthis launched two unmanned Aerial vehicles (UAV) from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen toward the Red Sea. United States Central Command (CENTCOM) forces successfully engaged and destroyed one UAV and the other is presumed to have crashed into the Red Sea. There were no reports of damage or injuries from ships in the vicinity.

Between 9:00 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. (Sanaa time), CENTCOM destroyed five unmanned surface vessels and one UAV in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen in self-defense. It was determined these weapons presented an imminent threat to merchant vessels and U.S. Navy ships in the region. These actions are taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S. Navy and merchant vessels.

March 15, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – Between approximately 8:30 and 10:50 p.m. (Sanaa time) on March 15, Iranian-backed Houthi terrorists fired three anti-ship ballistic missiles from Houthi-controlled

areas of Yemen toward the Red Sea. There were no injuries or damage reported by U.S., coalition, or commercial ships.

Navy Narrows Fiscal 2025 Aircraft Procurement to Five Types



PHILIPPINE SEA (Jan. 29, 2024) An F-35C Lightning II from the “Warhawks” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 97 prepares to recover on the flight deck of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70). (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Isaiah B. Goessl)

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Department of the Navy is proposing to procure 75 aircraft with \$16.2 billion in the fiscal 2025 budget, but those 75 are divided among only five types.

The 2025 budget proposed funding 13 F-35B Lightning II strike fighters for the Marine Corps; 13 F-35C carrier-based variants for the Navy and Marine Corps; 19 CH-53K King Stallion heavy-lift helicopters for the Marine Corps, 27 T-54 multi-engine training aircraft for the Navy, and three MQ-25A Stingray unmanned aerial refueling aircraft for the Navy.

The budget is noteworthy in that the 2025 procurement funding of such types as the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet strike fighters, EA-18G Growler electronic attack aircraft, E-2D Advanced Hawkeye radar warning aircraft, MH-60R/S helicopters, MV-22B and CMV-22B Osprey transport aircraft, AH-1Z Viper and UH-1Y Venom helicopters, P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft, MQ-4C Triton and MQ-9A Reaper unmanned surveillance aircraft, and TH-73A Thrasher training helicopters – barring adjustment by the Congress – has been completed, although in some cases deliveries are ongoing. In some cases, the production lines will remain open for some time, building aircraft for foreign customers and which could resume production for the Navy and Marine Corps if needed.

The only new types on the five-year horizon are a replacement for the T-45 Goshawk training jet and a replacement for the E-6B Mercury strategic communications aircraft, planned to be a version of the C-130J Super Hercules.

Procurement of the KC-130J Super Hercules tanker/transport for the Marine Corps is being gapped for four years, with one planned for fiscal 2029. The fact that C-130Js are in production for other services and nations means that this gap does not have major implications for the Lockheed Martin production line.

The 2025 Future Years Defense Plan lists planned Department of

the Navy procurement for 2026 through 2029 as 58, 67, 77, and 90 aircraft, respectively.

Noteworthy is – as of this writing – that the fiscal 2024 defense budget still is mired in the Congress.

Austin Nominated for Deputy Commandant for CD&I

ARLINGTON, Va.—Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced March 14 that the president has made the following nomination:

Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Eric E. Austin for appointment to the grade of lieutenant general, with assignment as deputy commandant for Combat Development and Integration, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps; and commanding general, Marine Corps Combat Development Command. Austin is currently serving as the commanding general, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, Camp Foster, Okinawa, Japan.

ArmorWorks Enterprises Announces Acquisition of Fox Valley Metal-Tech

CHANDLER, AZ, March 14, 2024 – [ArmorWorks Enterprises](#), LLC (“ArmorWorks”), a portfolio company of Littlejohn Capital,

LLC, announced today the acquisition of Fox Valley Metal-Tech, Incorporated ("Fox Valley"), a provider of complex, precision metal fabrications for use on naval ships, submarines, combat vessels, and other critical defense applications.

Founded in 1989 and based in Green Bay, WI, Fox Valley specializes in complex metal fabrications primarily for the U.S. Department of Defense ("DoD"), as well as commercial industries. The company manufactures custom electrical enclosures and consoles, components and fabrications for military trailers, radar systems as well as watertight doors and hatches. Fox Valley actively supports leading defense industry companies, and its precision components and fabrications are incorporated on the latest naval platforms such as the Ford-class aircraft carrier and Columbia-class submarine, amongst others. The company has a state-of-the-art 185,000 square foot facility that enables it to meet the highest of quality standards. For more information, visit www.fvmt.com.

Kevin Dahlin, Chief Executive Officer of ArmorWorks, commented, "Fox Valley's components meet the Navy's stringent requirements, and combine unique fabrication, machining, precision welding, and painting/finishing capabilities to provide customers with a vertically-integrated manufacturing solution in compliance with the highest U.S. military standards. Fox Valley's fabrications are trusted on high priority naval programs amid a historical fleet expansion, and we look forward to supplementing our existing business with the addition of Fox Valley's superior products."

Angus Littlejohn III, President of Littlejohn Capital, said, "Fox Valley's focus on mission-critical Naval systems instantly propels ArmorWorks into a broader segment of the DoD. The acquisition also adds impressive manufacturing capabilities in the Midwest expanding the geographic reach of ArmorWorks. Fox Valley is a trusted partner to the defense industry, and we are proud to add this company as an integral

part of ArmorWorks as they continue to protect the military personnel who defend our country.”

Steve Corbeille, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Fox Valley, added, “Fox Valley has built its business and reputation over the past 25 years by developing products whose standards are designed to withstand the harshest conditions. Fox Valley will continue to thrive and better serve its customers as part of a larger organization within ArmorWorks.”

KAL Capital served as exclusive financial advisor to Fox Valley.

Navy to Christen Submarine Idaho

MARCH 15, 2024

The Navy will christen its newest Virginia-class attack submarine, the future USS Idaho (SSN 799), during a 10 a.m. EDT ceremony March 16, at General Dynamics Electric Boat, in Groton, Connecticut.

The Honorable Nickolas H. Guertin, Assistant Secretary of the Navy (ASN) for Research, Development, and Acquisition (RDA), will deliver the ceremony’s principal address. Senior representatives from the Navy, the shipbuilders, Congress, and the state of Idaho are also expected to speak.

In a twist on the time-honored Navy tradition of breaking a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow, the Submarine’s Sponsor, Ms. Teresa Stackley, will christen the boat with

water she has collected from several lakes in Idaho. Stackley is the daughter of a Navy Sailor and is the spouse of the Honorable Sean Stackley, a former Naval officer who served as ASN (RDA) from 2008 to 2017.

The submarine, which began construction in 2017, will be the 26th Virginia-class fast attack submarine and the fifth U.S. Navy ship to be christened with the name Idaho. The last ship named Idaho was battleship BB 42, commissioned in 1919.

Though landlocked, the state of Idaho prides itself in its rich Naval history and continuing contributions to the fleet. The Navy's Acoustic Research Detachment on Lake Pend Oreille, Idaho's largest and deepest body of water, is a state-of-the-art facility that supports research, development, testing, and evaluation of submarine acoustic stealth technology and propulsor design. Lake Pend Oreille is a critical body of water to the U.S. Submarine Force.

Virginia-class submarines are built to operate in the world's littoral and deep waters while conducting anti-submarine warfare; anti-surface ship warfare; strike warfare; special operations forces support; intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; irregular warfare; and mine warfare missions. This next-generation attack submarine provides the Navy with the capabilities required to maintain the nation's undersea superiority well into the 21st century.

March 14 Red Sea Update



RED SEA (March 05, 2024) An F/A-18E Super Hornet attached to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 131 and an F/A-18E Super Hornet attached to VFA-105 prepare for launch aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) in the Red Sea, March 5, 2024. The Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group is deployed to the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations to support maritime security and stability in the Middle East region. (Official U.S. Navy photo)
USCENTCOM, March 14, 2024

TAMPA, Fla. – Between 6:50 a.m. on March 14 and 12:40 a.m. on March 15 (Sanaa time), Iranian-backed Houthi terrorists fired two anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBMs) from Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen toward the Gulf of Aden and two additional ASBMs towards the Red Sea. There were no injuries or damage reported to U.S. or coalition ships.

Additionally, United States Central Command successfully engaged and destroyed nine anti-ship missiles and two unmanned aerial vehicles in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen. It was determined these weapons presented an imminent threat to

merchant vessels and U.S. Navy ships in the region. These actions are taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S. Navy and merchant vessels.

BATARG and 26th MEU(SOC) Returns Home From 8-month Deployment



CAMP LEJEUNE, NC, UNITED STATES

12.03.2024

Story by [Capt. Angelica White](#)

[26th Marine Expeditionary Unit \(Special Operations](#)

Capable) _ _

Marines and Sailors assigned to the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) will return home in several waves beginning Mar. 16, 2024 after successfully completing an extended eight-month deployment embarked aboard the amphibious warships of the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group (BATARG) in U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa/6th Fleet and U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/5th Fleet areas of operations.

The BATARG is comprised of the Wasp-class amphibious assault ship USS Bataan (LHD 5), the San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship USS Mesa Verde (LPD 19), and the Harpers Ferry class dock landing ship USS Carter Hall (LSD 50).

Upon leaving the east coast of North Carolina for deployment in July 2023, the Secretary of Defense directed the BATARG and 26th MEU(SOC) to support operations in the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) in response to attempts by Iran to threaten the free flow of commerce in the Arabian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz. The 26th MEU(SOC) took deliberate actions to task-organize an element aboard the USS Mesa Verde with the appropriate staff depth and operational capabilities to execute operations and activities in support of U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) theater security objectives, while the majority of the 26th MEU(SOC) Marine Air-Ground Task Force, embarked aboard USS Bataan and USS Carter Hall, was postured in USCENTCOM to deter Iranian malign activity and increase maritime security in the waters surrounding the Strait of Hormuz.

The 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit's deployment marked the first time the U.S. Marine Corps and II Marine Expeditionary Force were able to certify and employ a special operations capable Marine Expeditionary Unit in over two decades. This historical milestone demonstrated the Marine Corps' commitment to joint naval integration and partnering with forward-

deployed special operations forces in support of crisis response and Fleet campaigning priorities, reinforced throughout the 26th MEU(SOC)'s voyage with the BATARG.

Throughout the deployment, the 26th MEU(SOC) executed distributed operations spanning across the Tri-Geographic Combatant Command to include USEUCOM, USAFRICOM, and USCENTCOM, contributing to increased maritime security and regional stability, while also participating in activities with Allies and partners to enhance mil-to-mil relationships, showcase interoperability, and sustain high operational readiness.

In the High North, the Marines and Sailors of the 26th MEU(SOC), embarked aboard USS Mesa Verde participated in bilateral exercises with elements of the Norwegian Brigade North and Italian partners to exchange tactics, techniques, and procedures in the coastal regions and littorals.

While operating in the Baltics, the 26th MEU(SOC) participated in Exercise Northern Coasts, a German, multi-national naval exercises series in the Baltic region, aimed at delivering realistic, live training for a broad range of amphibious operations. The 26th MEU(SOC)'s participation in Exercise Northern Coasts marked the first time U.S. Marine Corps forces participated in this large-scale NATO-exercise.

Concurrently, in USCENTCOM, the Marines and Sailors of the 26th MEU(SOC), embarked aboard USS Bataan and USS Carter Hall participated in a series of bilateral exercises with the Kuwaiti Marine Corps, Bahrain Royal Marines, and the Bahrain Royal Air Force. Additionally, the BATARG and 26th MEU(SOC) supported Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Prosperity Guardian. Moreover, the 26th MEU(SOC) showcased an ability to integrate and partner with other forward-deployed Special Operations Forces within the littorals as a part of the MEU/SOF-I3 continuum and efforts to increase maritime security

and stability while deterring any potential malign actors.

When the terrorist attacks against Israel on 7 Oct. dynamically changed the security environment across the region, the 26th MEU(SOC) rapidly transitioned from participating in a readiness and sustainment training exercise in Kuwait to posturing to rapidly respond to emergent operational requirements and to safeguard U.S. national interests within the Red Sea.

The Marines and Sailors of the 26th MEU(SOC), embarked aboard the three ships of the aggregated BATARG in the Mediterranean Sea, remained postured in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea from Dec. 28 to Mar. 1 as the immediate response force with the operational capabilities needed to provide leaders across the Geographic Combatant Command with options in USEUCOM and USCENTCOM. The 26th MEU(SOC) also conducted several enhanced interoperability training sustainment exercises with NATO Allies and partners in the Mediterranean Sea.

Through rapid planning, coordination, and execution, the BATARG and 26th MEU(SOC) team successfully completed multinational training events with Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO (STRIKFORNATO), the United Kingdom, Türkiye, and NATO Maritime Group Two at the end of February prior to transiting towards the United States.

“History has proven the necessity of having forward-deployed Marines, embarked aboard amphibious ships. Over the past eight months, the Marines and Sailors of the 26th MEU(SOC) have showcased the value, utility, and unique all-domain operational capabilities you only find in a Marine Expeditionary Unit,” said Col. Dennis Sampson, Commanding Officer of the 26th MEU(SOC). “When coupled together, the ARG and the MEU(SOC) form a flexible naval expeditionary force capable of reassuring our Allies and partners of our commitment to maritime security and capable of dominating

within the littorals against any adversary in any clime or place.”

From the High North of Norway, to the Baltics, to the Mediterranean, Horn of Africa, to the Middle East, the BATARG and the 26th MEU(SOC) successfully completed over 15 bilateral activities with over 30 NATO Allied and partner countries in Plymouth, United Kingdom; Narvik and Setermoen, Norway; Riga, Latvia; Dublin, Ireland; Cartagena, Spain; Athens, Chania, Volos, and Lidochorro, Greece; Dubai and Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates; Manama, Bahrain; Saudi Arabia; Yemen; Kuwait; Lanarca, Cyprus. In addition to bilateral exercises, the BATARG and 26th MEU(SOC) engaged with multiple representatives from embassies, ministries of defense, and local government, military, and civilian officials to strengthen relationships with NATO Allies and partners through in-person key leader engagements and subject matter expert exchanges, including ship tours, ceremonies and receptions, and community service projects during each port visit.

“Throughout our time in the U.S. 5th and U.S. 6th Fleet regions, the Sailors and Marines of the BATARG and 26th MEU(SOC) showcased the unique capabilities that we bring as a response force to our Allies and partners,” said Capt. Martin Robertson, Amphibious Squadron 8 Commodore. “Our presence in the Eastern Mediterranean was exactly what our Nation needed: an integrated Navy and Marine Corps force ready to respond when called upon.”

The 26th MEU(SOC) serves as one of the United States’ premier crisis response forces capable of conducting amphibious operations, crisis response, and limited contingency operations, to include enabling the introduction of follow-on forces and designated special operations, in support of theater requirements of the Geographic Combatant Commander. The 26th MEU(SOC) serves as a premier stand-in force with the unique all-domain operational capabilities necessary to

compete and win within the littorals and within the weapons engagement zones of an adversary in any clime or place.

“I am very proud of the steadfast professionalism of every Marine and Sailor assigned to the 26th MEU(SOC) and the BATARG. They have made a difference and highlighted the relevance of the ARG and MEU to our national security interests across the Tri-COCOM region,” Sampson said. “More so, I am truly grateful for the steadfast support from our 26th MEU(SOC) families and friends. I know they are proud of their Marine or Sailor and I know they are ready for our homecoming in a couple of weeks.”

The BATARG and 26th MEU(SOC) presence in the U.S. 6th Fleet and U.S. 5th Fleet areas of operation supported strategic objectives and contributed to regional security and stability, reassuring the United States commitment to Allies and partners in the High North, Baltics, Mediterranean, and Middle East. Coupled with the BATARG, the 26th MEU(SOC) showcased the value, utility, and operational flexibility a forward-deployed ARG-MEU provides Geographic Combatant Commanders.

From responding to contingencies to enhancing bilateral relations with key Allies and partners, the constant theme of the 26th MEU(SOC) was being ‘Ready, Relevant, and Capable’ of aggregating other joint, coalition, or special operations forces and deploying with limited notice in support of crises, expeditionary operations on land or from the sea, or other emergent operational requirements.