

# Navy to Christen Future USNS Apalachicola



USNS Spearhead, the lead ship in the Spearhead class of expeditionary fast transport ships. *AUSTAL / Phil Beaufort*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy will christen its 13<sup>th</sup> Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport, the future USNS Apalachicola (T-EPF 13), during a 10:00 a.m. CT ceremony Saturday, Nov. 13 in Mobile, Alabama, the Defense Department said Nov. 12.

Brenda Ash, mayor of Apalachicola, Florida, will deliver the principal ceremonial address. Remarks will also be provided by Vice Adm. Darse Crandall, judge advocate general of the Navy; Bilyana Anderson, deputy assistant secretary of the Navy for Ships; Steven Cade, executive director, Military Sealift Command; Rusty Murdaugh, president of Austal USA; and Stan Kordana, vice president of Surface Systems, General Dynamics Mission Systems. Former Georgia Sen. Kelly Loeffler,

the ship's sponsor, will christen the ship by breaking a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow in a time-honored Navy tradition.

"This ship honors the city of Apalachicola, Florida, a city that represents America's fighting spirit and dedication to duty," said Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro. "Apalachicola, like the other ships in the EPF class, will provide our warfighters the necessary high-speed sealift mobility and agility to accomplish any mission. I am thankful for this ship and its crew who will serve our nation for decades to come."

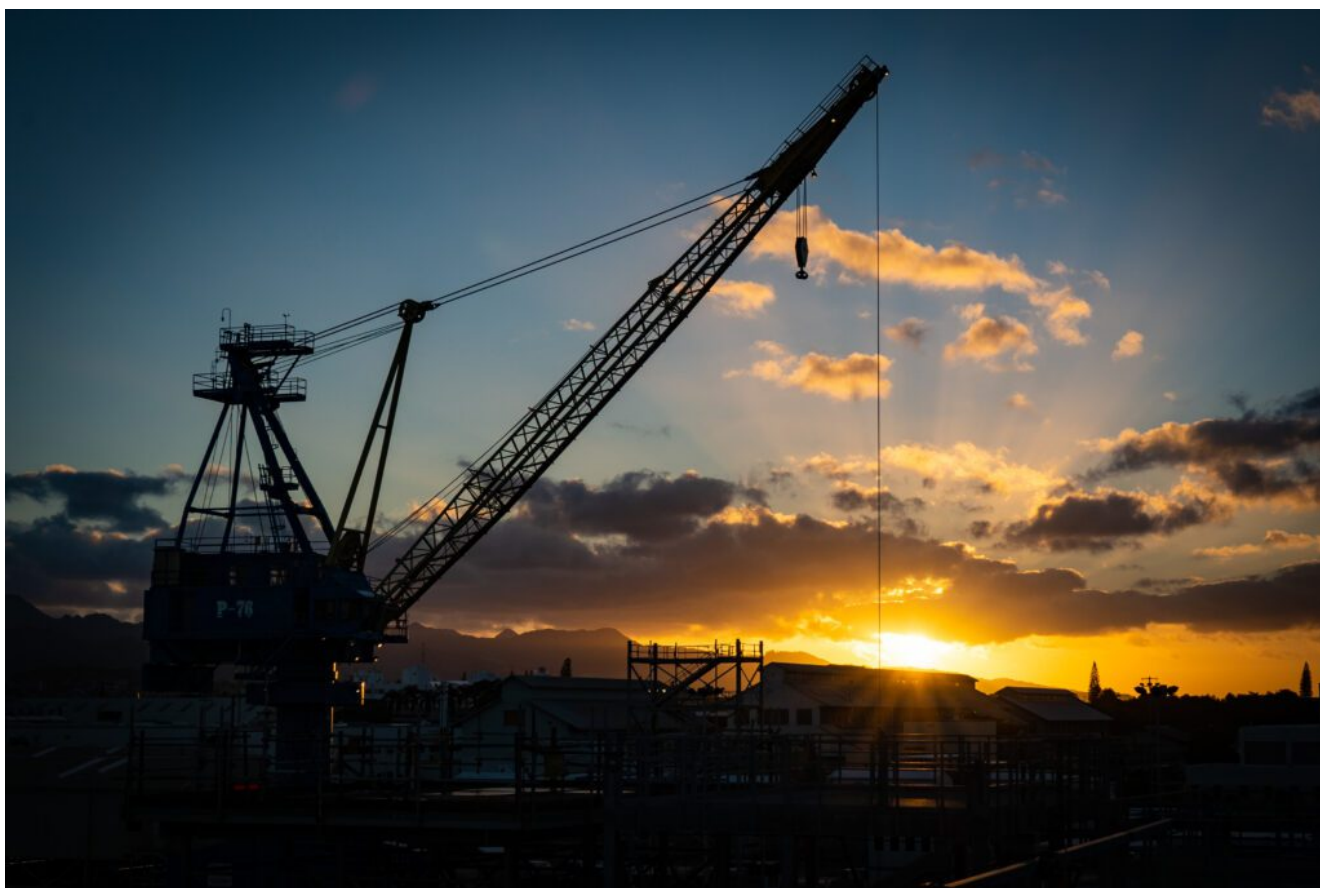
The future USNS Apalachicola is the 13<sup>th</sup> ship in its class and will be operated by the Navy's Military Sealift Command. The ship is named in honor of the city of Apalachicola and will be the second U.S. Navy ship to bear that name. The first Apalachicola (YTB 767) was a Natick-class large harbor tug launched in 1963. The tugboat spent the majority of its service in the Puget Sound-area providing harbor services to various ships. Apalachicola was stricken from the Navy List in 2002.

EPF class ships are designed to transport 600 short tons of military cargo 1,200 nautical miles at an average speed of 35 knots. The ship can operate in shallow-draft ports and waterways, interfacing with roll-on/roll-off discharge facilities and on/off-loading the Abrams main battle tank (M1A2).

The EPF includes a flight deck for helicopter operations and an off-load ramp that will allow vehicles to drive off the ship quickly. EPF's shallow draft (less than 15 feet) further enhances littoral operations and port access. This makes the EPF an extremely flexible asset for support of a wide range of operations, including maneuver and sustainment, relief operations in small or damaged ports, flexible logistics support, or as the key enabler for rapid transport.

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# Navy Contracts 5 Companies to Compete for Future Possible Shipyard Modernization Projects



Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard & IMF, (February 11, 2021) Sunrise over the Koʻolau Mountains with a portal crane P-76 in the foreground at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility. *U.S. NAVY / Public Affairs Specialist Dave Amodo*

WASHINGTON – Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command awarded contracts to five companies to facilitate the award of future task orders for potential military construction projects at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and

Intermediate Maintenance Facility (PHNSY & IMF) in Hawaii and Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (PSNS) & IMF in Washington, the command said in a release.

The five companies may compete for future task orders for pre-construction planning, preparation, and constructability reviews associated with construction of waterfront facilities such as warehouses, dry docks, piers, and other site improvements, as well as dredging and incidental design, environmental, and other services related to the Navy's Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program (SIOP).

"These contracts will help the Navy begin design and renovation work at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Puget Sound Naval Shipyard once we've completed all the regulatory processes, including agency and government-to-government consultations and public engagement," said Rear Adm. John Korka, NAVFAC's commander, and the Navy's chief of civil engineers. "It involves industry partners in our planning efforts, a lesson we learned from our SIOP efforts to date. This will facilitate healthy competition and, ultimately, help us deliver the best solution we can for our Navy and our Nation."

The contracts are for up to eight years or a combined cumulative value of \$8 billion, whichever comes first. While the contracts are primarily for SIOP-related work at PHNSY and PSNS, task orders may also be issued for work at other sites in NAVFAC's areas of responsibility.

"The Navy depends on our shipyards returning combat-ready ships and submarines to the fleet," said Korka. "SIOP guides the Navy's investment plan to achieve that. It's a once-in-a-century effort that the NAVFAC team is proud to be part of."

SIOP is a joint effort between NAVFAC, Naval Sea Systems Command and Commander, Navy Installations Command to

recapitalize and modernize the infrastructure at the Navy's four public shipyards, including repairing and modernizing dry docks, recapitalizing and reconfiguring shipyard facilities, and modernizing the shipyards' industrial plant equipment.

The awardees for this contract are Reston, Virginia-based Bechtel National; Honolulu, Hawaii-based Dragados/Hawaiian Dredging/Orion JV; Burlingame, California-based ECC Infrastructure; Vancouver, Washington-based SIOP MACC, AJV; and Sylmar, California-based TPC-NAN joint venture.

For more information about the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program, visit <https://www.navsea.navy.mil/Home/Shipyards/SIOP/>.

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## **Cutter Spencer Returns to Portsmouth After Patrolling the Eastern U.S. Coast**





Gunner's mates aboard Coast Guard Cutter Spencer shoot messenger lines to a disabled fishing vessel 100 miles off the coast of New York to bring the vessel in tow. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Chief Petty Officer Katharine Ingham*

PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Spencer returned home to Portsmouth after a 33-day patrol Nov. 10, the Coast Guard 5th District said in a release.

During the patrol, the crew conducted operations south of Key West, Florida, in support of efforts to deter illegal immigration and conduct safety of life at sea operations. Shifting gears halfway through the patrol, Spencer's crew exercised their multi-mission capability in the Northeast to enforce federal commercial fishing regulations in an effort to deter over-fishing and illegal fishing. The crew also assisted in multiple search and rescue cases off the coast of New England, towing one vessel over 100 miles to safety.

Spencer also completed a routine aviation evaluation that enables the cutter to perform landings and conduct operations with a variety of military aircraft. The training exercise

occurred in Miami, supported by an MH-60T Jayhawk helicopter crew from Coast Guard Air Station Clearwater, Florida.

“Overall, this was a short patrol but we accomplished a lot for the Coast Guard and for our unit,” said Cmdr. Corey Kerns, commanding officer of the Spencer. “This deployment included an excursion south of the Keys to support the fleet of Fast Response Cutters. Our mission then shifted to domestic fisheries, enforcing regulations that promote the longevity of this multi-billion-dollar industry that our nation depends on. In between, we were able to support three search and rescue operations, conduct a lot of training, and get home before Thanksgiving.”

The Spencer is a 270-foot medium-endurance cutter with a 100-person crew.

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## **ESG Delivers Sea Falcon UAS to the German Navy**



The German corvette F263 Oldenburg operating with a Skeldar V-200 UAS. *UMS SKELDAR*

FURSTENFELDBRUCK, Germany – ESG Elektroniksystem- und Logistik-GmbH has been named the main contractor for three Sea Falcon unmanned aircraft systems for the German navy's K130 corvettes under a contract from the German federal armed forces.

One system consists of two Skeldar V-200 unmanned aerial vehicles, a ground control station integrated on the corvette from which the aircraft is controlled, and equipment with tools and spare parts. The corvettes' capabilities for imaging reconnaissance will be significantly expanded, as, objects can be detected and identified with the Sea Falcon far beyond the onboard sensor system.

The Sea Falcon is based on the Skeldar V-200 from the Swedish manufacturer UMS Skeldar AB and can operate for up to five hours, with a maximum take-off weight of 235 kilograms, a



maximum speed of 75 knots and a payload of up to 40 kilograms. It can take off and land automatically on the deck of the corvette in up to 20 knots of wind speed and sea state 3. An integrated sensor transmits real-time optical and infrared images to the ground control station.

The UAS are part of the Reconnaissance and Identification in the Maritime Operational Area project, or AImEG, a four-year effort.

The pilot phase will see UAS certification to meet requirements, the delivery of one system, including integration on a corvette, and initial training of armed forces personnel.

Two more systems will be delivered in the series production phase, one of which will also be integrated into a corvette with the other used for land-based training. In addition, three armament sets will be delivered for the future pre-fitting of further corvettes to accommodate a UAS.

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## **Elbit to Provide Advanced Electronic Warfare Capabilities for UK Royal Navy**

LONDON – Elbit Systems UK has been awarded a roughly £73 million (\$98 million) contract from Babcock International Group to provide electronic warfare (EW) capabilities to the Royal Navy, as part of the U.K. Ministry of Defence's Maritime Electronic Warfare Program, the company said in a release.

Elbit Systems UK's role in the project, known as Maritime Electronic Warfare System Integrated Capability Increment 1, will be to provide end-to-end delivery of this EW capability, including in-service support over the course of 13 years.

Under the program, Elbit Systems UK will design, manufacture and deliver maritime EW suites comprised of fully digital full-spectrum radar electronic support measures and EW command and control systems. These latest generation technologies will enhance the situational awareness and anti-ship missile defense of front-line platforms and improve their capability to exploit the electromagnetic environment.

Elbit Systems UK's Electronic Warfare capabilities have been deployed by Five Eyes nations since 2016, referring to an intelligence alliance of the U.S., U.K., Australia, Canada and New Zealand. The Royal Navy will use the latest generation of this technology, developed after years of ground-breaking advancements and innovation in this domain.

"It is clearly the case that both conventional and asymmetric threats are increasingly present in the maritime operating environment and the pace of change in technology means our adversaries will continue to exploit it," said Martin Fausset, CEO of Elbit Systems UK. "As such, it is operationally vital that the Royal Navy has the latest capabilities that can evolve in line with and, ahead of, existing technologies. Elbit Systems UK is proud to be working with the Royal Navy as we prepare to confront and overcome the threats of today and tomorrow by providing world-leading solutions."

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# Military Sealift Command Selects GE Power Conversion for Ships



Dry cargo and ammunition ship USNS Cesar Chavez (T-AKE 14) prepares to go alongside the amphibious assault ship USS Essex (LHD 2) during a replenishment-at-sea in November. Military Sealift Command has awarded GE Power Conversion a contract to maintain the electric and hybrid power and propulsion systems on its vessels, including T-AKE ships. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class John McGovern*

BOSTON – The U.S. Navy Military Sealift Command (MSC) has awarded GE Power Conversion an indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contract to maintain the electric and hybrid electric power and propulsion systems aboard its vessels, the company said Nov. 10. The five-year contract potentially could be worth \$125 million.

The contract covers maintenance, modernization and upgrades,

training, repairs, parts, remote technical support and program management on 35 vessels, with more ships to be added as they are built and turned over to MSC after commissioning. The vessels operate throughout the world, and GE's support is expected around the clock, 365 days per year.

The contract also includes planned maintenance industrial assist for shipyard maintenance, industrial control system cybersecurity services support and hardware and software configuration management.

As the original equipment manufacturer, GE Power Conversion received a three-year maintenance contract from MSC in 2012 covering just a few ships. Later, the contract was renewed, and more ships added, with GE earning excellent reviews for both contracts in the contractors past performance rating system.

"We have demonstrated in the past that we are a responsive and knowledgeable service provider, long after equipment delivery," said Mike Kircher, MSC fleet manager for GE Power Conversion. "This long-term contract is the result of customer confidence earned over years of demonstrated value for the range of service support we can provide."

One benefit of the GE contract is the modernization upgrades it supports. "This contract covers the most technologically advanced electric and hybrid power and propulsion systems in the MSC fleet; these systems allow a level of vessel control and agility that is without parallel, increasing ship handling confidence and safety," Kircher said. "Looking ahead, the advantage our equipment gives to future ship classes is significant."

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# Austal USA to Lease San Diego Facility to Repair Navy Ships

SAN DIEGO – Austal USA received approval from the San Diego Port of Commissioners to assume the lease of Marine Group Boat Works in the Port of San Diego. Austal USA and Marine Group Boat Works are entering a 45-day exclusive period to close the agreement, the company said in a Nov. 9 release.

Austal USA will use the 15-acre site to focus on ship repair for U.S. Navy, Military Sealift Command, and U.S. Coast Guard ships. The site, immediately adjacent to U.S. Naval Base San Diego, will include a newly built dry dock designed specifically to handle small surface combatants and other small to medium size ships. Marine Group Boat Works will focus on their yacht repair business in their Chula Vista shipyard.

“This investment marks a major milestone in Austal’s focus on growing our services business and anchors our commitment to servicing Navy, Military Sealift and Coast Guard ships in the Indo-Pacific Command region. This facility expands our commitment to our customers to ensure they are receiving the Austal USA brand quality throughout the lifecycle of the ships we deliver,” Austal USA President Rusty Murdaugh said. “As the industry leader for on-schedule and on-budget delivery to the U.S. Navy, Austal USA has made continuous improvement a cornerstone of our culture and operations.”

Austal USA will establish a full-service ship repair capability providing maintenance and modernization for small surface combatants, autonomous vehicles, and other vessels. The site will include a dry dock optimized to execute availabilities on littoral combat ships and other small surface combatants. Services include technical and material support, topside work, and dry-docking availabilities.



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# Retired Adm. James ‘Jamie’ Foggo Hired as Dean of Think Tank Focused on Maritime Thought Leadership



Adm. Mike Gilday, U.S. Navy chief of naval operations, speaks with retired Adm. James G. Foggo during the Combined Joint Operations from the Sea Center of Excellence (COE) Future Maritime Warfare Symposium 2021 in April. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Joshua M. Tolbert*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy League of the United States – a nonprofit civilian, educational and advocacy organization that supports America’s sea services: the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and U.S.-flag Merchant Marine – announced today it has launched a new think tank, the Center for Maritime Strategy, with retired Adm. James “Jamie” Foggo as its dean. This organization will conduct and support policy research and advocacy efforts across a broad spectrum of issues that impact

the United States' position as a maritime nation.

"Policy development and advocacy are the main reasons for the Navy League's existence, and we are stepping up our activity in these areas to meet the requirements of 21st century maritime power," said Navy League National President David Reilly.

The development of the Center for Maritime Strategy was led by a steering committee drawn from Navy League leadership. The committee was chaired by former Chief of Naval Operations and current Navy League National Vice President Adm. John Richardson. Other members of the committee included retired U.S. Fleet Forces commander Adm. John Harvey, former Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy and current Navy League CEO Mike Stevens, Frank Russo of Forctis Advisory, and Fulton Homes CEO Doug Fulton. This committee will remain in place to provide general oversight and advice to the center's dean.

"The Navy League's Center for Maritime Strategy will be the go-to place for maritime strategic thought, policy recommendations and informed advocacy," Richardson said. "The new organization will include a vibrant media operation to amplify it's work. I'm excited about this initiative to boost the Navy League's citizen voice and help strengthen the United States as a maritime nation."

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## **Hypersonics Pose 'Huge Physics Challenge' for Weapon**

# Design



The U.S. Navy, in collaboration with the U.S. Army, conducts a static fire test of the first stage of the newly developed 34.5" common hypersonic missile that will be fielded by both services. *U.S. NAVY / NORTHROP GRUMMAN*

ARLINGTON, Va. – Arming hypersonic weapons with the advanced fuzing needed to give the weapon the desired effects is one of the more significant challenges facing the armaments industry, an industry official said.

Hypersonic fuzing “is a huge physics challenge,” said Charlie Zisette, executive director of the National Armaments Consortium, a trade association of manufacturers of explosives, propellants, materials, fuzing, and other technologies related to armaments.

“Here we’re trying to push the state of the art with fuzing now having to go on the front end of hypersonic weapons, which is a new problem statement for us in terms of

the environment that the fuze has to function in ... including hard-target penetration," Zisette told *Seapower*. "We now can miniaturize things that we weren't able to do before. Size and volume are critically important because we've got to be able to miniaturize and yet still take very significant accelerations that are as high as 10,000 Gs.

"The ability to both miniaturize and harden our electronics will open up an opportunity to do some things that will help the hypersonics, that will help some of these long-range weapon systems that we're trying to develop to support the warfighter," he said.

Zisette said "one of the advantages we have today in trying to solve that is we've really improved our modeling and simulation capabilities. That's an important aspect in solving some of these very difficult fuzing problems at high rates of speed and rates of closure, in particular for things like hypersonic fuzing for ground-launched missiles.

"An advantage we have today is people who have entered into our armaments ecosystem that are coming from what I would call a nontraditional defense contractor world who are very capable in computational analysis and modeling and simulation and bringing that to our arena within the armaments sector," he said. "That has been very beneficial. So, we can do a lot of work before we actually have to get to the bench and start prototyping hardware where we can do a fair amount of advanced design through modelling and simulation."

The National Armaments Consortium membership includes 950 companies and universities.

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# Coast Guard, Partners Complete Cooperative Pacific Surveillance Operation



The Coast Guard Cutter William Hart participates in the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency's Operation Kurukuru off American Samoa, Oct. 29, 2021. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

HONOLULU – The Coast Guard and its partners successfully completed the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency's (FFA) Operation Kurukuru in the Pacific, Nov. 5, the Coast Guard 14th District said Nov. 9.

Operation Kurukuru is an annual coordinated maritime surveillance operation with the goal of combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing. This year the crews of the Coast Guard Cutter William Hart, Coast Guard Cutter



Myrtle Hazard and an Air Station Barbers Point HC-130 Hercules participated in the joint endeavor.

“The operation included 15 Guardian Class and Pacific Patrol Boats from Pacific nations operating alongside five Australian Navy, French Navy and United States Coast Guard vessels,” said Allan Rahari, the FFA Director Fisheries Operations. “Seven aircraft from the FFA, quadrilateral and regional partners provided air surveillance, as well as satellite surveillance and use of other emerging technologies.”

This year’s Operation Kurukuru was conducted over the course of 12 days, involving 15 Pacific FFA member nations and Pacific Quadrilateral Defense Coordinating Group (Australia, France, New Zealand, and U.S.) partners while covering over 8,9 million square miles.

During the operation, 300 vessels were remotely sensed by satellites or sighted by ships and aircraft while 78 vessels were boarded either at sea or in port. Of those 300 sightings, the Coast Guard contributed 63.

While the operation was ongoing, the Air Station Barbers Point Hercules aircrew also diverted to Starbuck Island in Kiribati to assist with an ongoing missing persons case.

Kurukuru is a Japanese term meaning round and round relating to the highly migratory nature of targeted species such as tuna which annually travel throughout the Pacific providing an important renewable resource for Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICT).

IUU undermines PICT efforts to conserve and manage fish stocks, presenting a dire threat to protecting these vital resources for generations to come.

“Combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing really

is a team effort out here in the Pacific,” said Lt. j.g. Tyler Peterson, an operations planner at the Coast Guard 14th District. “Because of fish migratory habits, they frequently travel between different countries’ exclusive economic zones, so no one country can protect the fish stocks on their own. This is why joint efforts like Operation Kurukuru are so important. We are able to work with our partners towards our mutual goal of preserving this vital resource.”

Along with participating in large scale operations like Operation Kurukuru, the Coast Guard also works individually with nations to counter IUU through the use of bilateral law enforcement agreements.

Bilateral law enforcement agreements allow partner PICTs to embark their law enforcement officers aboard Coast Guard vessels to enforce laws within their exclusive economic zone. The Coast Guard maintains 11 bilateral ship rider agreements throughout the Pacific, combating not only IUU but also promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific.