Navy Declares Initial Operational Capability for Boeing's HAAWC

In an artists rendering, a High Altitude Anti-Submarine Warfare Weapon Capability or HAAWC deploys from a Boeing P-8A Poseidon multi-mission maritime patrol aircraft. *BOEING*

ST. CHARLES, Mo. – Boeing's High Altitude Anti-Submarine Warfare Weapon Capability, or HAAWC, has satisfied all requirements for initial operational capability status from

the U.S. Navy, the company said in a Nov. 22 release.

The all-weather HAAWC enables the Boeing P-8A Poseidon to deploy Mk54 torpedoes from near or below its cruising altitude.

“The initial operational capability milestone marks the readiness of HAAWC for fleet introduction for the Navy and its international partners,” said Dewayne Donley, Boeing’s HAAWC program manager. “We’re excited to deliver greater flexibility and capability by way of higher-altitude launches from longer distances than previously possible.”

The milestone follows the award of a full-rate production contract for the system to Boeing in August, squadron training, and the receipt of low-rate initial production units.

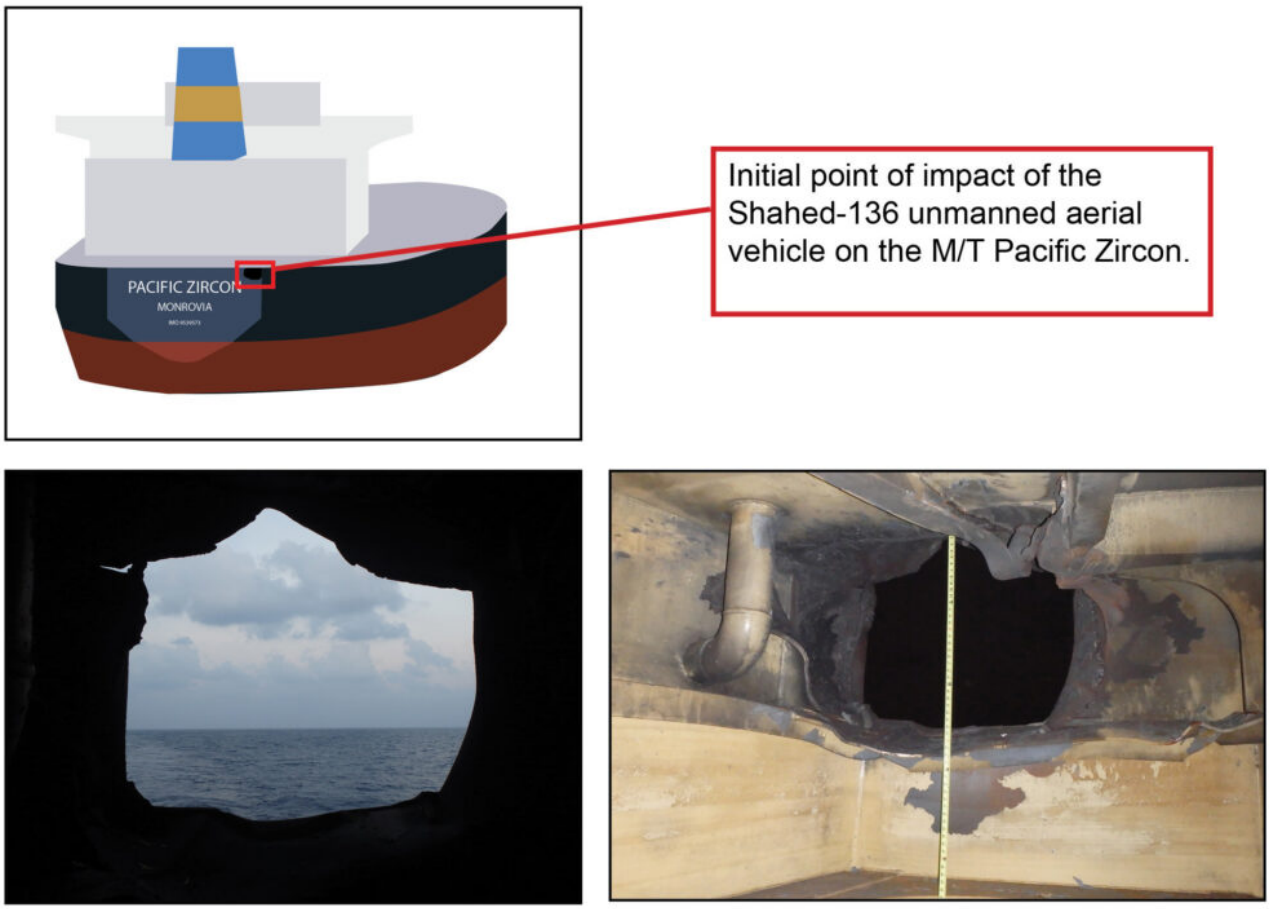
HAAWC consists of a modular Air Launch Accessory, or ALA, kit that attaches to a Mk54 torpedo, transforming it into a precision-guided glide weapon.

“It’s a major achievement for our team in reaching our goal of establishing a new high ground in anti-submarine warfare,” said Bob Ciesla, vice president of Boeing Weapons. “We look forward to continuing to work alongside the Navy toward the full deployment and operational capability of the system.”

Additional fielding of HAAWC units are scheduled through 2024, with the potential for production to continue into 2030 under the current contract.

The long-range anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance P-8A aircraft has amassed more than 450,000 mishap-free flight-hours to date in support of broad-area, maritime and littoral operations, and performs humanitarian and search and rescue missions around the globe.

U.S. Navy Analysis Confirms Iranian Link to Drone Attack



Graphic illustration and images captured by a U.S. Navy explosive ordnance disposal team aboard M/T Pacific Zircon, Nov. 16, showing the location where an Iranian-made unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) penetrated M/T Pacific Zircon's outer hull during an attack Nov. 15. *U.S. NAVY*

MANAMA, Bahrain – A U.S. Navy lab in Bahrain has confirmed Iran's connection to a Nov. 15 aerial drone attack on a Liberian-flagged commercial tanker transiting international waters in the Middle East, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs said in a Nov. 22 release.

Two U.S. Navy explosive ordnance technicians boarded M/T

Pacific Zircon, Nov. 16, to assess the damage and collect unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) debris fragments for forensic analysis. During a two-hour survey and evidence collection process, the technicians also obtained explosive residue samples for lab testing.

U.S. 5th Fleet transported the gathered evidence to a lab at its Bahrain headquarters where technicians confirmed Iran's connection to the attack. The aerial drone that hit the commercial tanker was identified as a Shahed-136 UAV, fitting a historical pattern of Iran's increasing use of a lethal capability directly or through its proxies across the Middle East. Iran has supplied aerial drone technology to the Houthis in Yemen used in attacks against Saud Arabia and the United Arab Emirates earlier this year.

Additionally, the Shahed-136 platform is the same aerial drone Iran has supplied to Russia for use against Ukraine.

On Nov. 15, the explosive-laden aerial drone attacked Pacific Zircon at approximately 7:30 p.m. in the Northern Arabian Sea, tearing a 30-inch-wide hole into the back of the ship while subsequently penetrating and damaging internal compartments. The UAV's explosive impact also damaged a shipboard boiler, potable water tank and life raft.

"The Iranian attack on a commercial tanker transiting international waters was deliberate, flagrant and dangerous, endangering the lives of the ship's crew and destabilizing maritime security in the Middle East," said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces. Cooper also serves as the multinational task force commander for the International Maritime Security Construct, a 10-member naval coalition whose forces provide maritime security near the Strait of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandeb.

Upon learning of the attack, the British Royal Navy dispatched

frigate HMS Lancaster (F229) to the scene. U.S. 5th Fleet also directed guided-missile destroyer USS The Sullivans (DDG 68), patrol coastal ship USS Chinook (PC 9) and a P-8 Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft to assist and assess the situation.

Navy Requests Concepts for Attritable Mother Ship for Unmanned Systems

The large unmanned surface vessel Nomad transits the Pacific Ocean to participate in Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2022. The Navy's concept for a an attritable unmanned mother ship (AUMS) for delivering large numbers of unmanned systems could resemble a smaller version of a Project Overlord ship.

U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Tyler R. Fraser

ARLINGTO, Va. – The U.S. Navy has issued a Request for Information for concepts for an attritable unmanned mother ship to "cost-effectively deliver large numbers of UxVs (unmanned systems) to forward locations in a contested environment," the published notice of the request said.

The Attritable UxV Mother Ship (AUMS) Program stressed in the Oct. 31 announcement that the ship should cost as minimal as possible so that loss of such a ship would be acceptable.

The program office also said the AUMS concept "should explore modular open system approaches to have the ability to quickly insert the latest technology into a midlife upgrade."

The RFI listed the following operational parameters for the AUMS:

- Open-ocean transit distance of 1,500 nautical miles (may vary from 1,000 to 2,000 depending on cost)
- Top speed from 12 to 20 knots
- Survivability in Sea State 5; full mission capability in Sea State 4
- Five days of operation without onboard human intervention
- Support of a 20-foot container (either towed or onboard, with capability to push it over the side); upon drop off, the container will be self-sustaining
- Be unmanned, capable of navigating via waypoints with GPS
- Have Over-the-Horizon and Line of Site Communications.
- Feature capability for resistance to boarding and tampering
- Self-scuttling capability upon remote order
- System will only traverse in the open ocean, will never operate less than three nautical miles from any shoreline untended.

- Minimum service of the vessel would be five years, with longer service life desired if obtainable for a small cost increase

Government furnished equipment initially would include the command, control, communications, computers and intelligence (C4I) suite and a modularized 20-foot ISO container with UxVs.

The Navy is aiming to award a design and construction by mid-2026, with delivery of the first AUMS withing 24 months of contract award.

The RFI was issued by the Unmanned Maritime Systems Program Office of the Program Executive Office (PEO) Unmanned and Small Combatants (USC). Responses must be received by Dec. 15.

HII Authenticates Keel of Virginia-Class Attack Submarine Arkansas

From left, NNS President Jennifer Boykin looks on as members of the Little Rock Nine, Ernest Green, Thelma Mothershed Wair assisted by PCU Arkansas commanding officer Cmdr. Adam Kahnke, Elizabeth Eckford, Gloria Ray Karlmark and Carlotta Walls Lanier, etch their initials onto steel plates during the keel authentication ceremony for Virginia-class submarine Arkansas (SSN 800) on Nov. 19, 2022. *HII / Ashley Cowan*

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – HII's Newport News Shipbuilding (NNS) division hosted a keel authentication ceremony Nov. 19 for Virginia-class submarine Arkansas (SSN 800), the company said in a release.

The ship's sponsors are the six women of the historic group known as the Little Rock Nine, the first African American students to attend all-white Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas during desegregation. NNS honored all nine members, including the three men, during Saturday's ceremony.

The Little Rock Nine made history in 1957 with their response to the Supreme Court ruling in Brown v. Board of Education, declaring racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional. Faced with shouting mobs, threats of violence and hostile state leaders who blocked their way, the teenagers were escorted into the school by federal troops at

the direction of President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

“Their courageous spirit will forever inspire Arkansas and her crew. This group forever changed our nation’s history and their submarine will help ensure their legacy continues,” NNS President Jennifer Boykin said. “The bravery and resilience of the Little Rock Nine sparked a fire of change and demonstrated the strength of blending different perspectives and backgrounds. We harness this strength in the shipyard every day. Our diversity allows us to extend beyond our own limits, to reach new heights and build each boat even better than the one before it. Arkansas will be proof of this power.”

During the ceremony, NNS welders etched a historic six sets of initials of the Little Rock Nine onto metal plates, signifying the keel of SSN 800 as being “truly and fairly laid.” The metal plates will remain affixed to the submarine throughout its life.

“(Former Navy) Secretary Ray Mabus asked us to be supporters of the ship and its crew. I signed on to be a foster grandmother,” said Elizabeth Eckford, a member of the Little Rock Nine, who spoke on behalf of the group during the ceremony. “President Eisenhower sent 1,000 paratroopers to Little Rock to disperse a mob, bring order and they made it possible for us to enter Central High School. From that point, I’ve had very high regard for specially trained forces.”

Arkansas is the 27th Virginia-class fast attack submarine being built under the teaming agreement with General Dynamics Electric Boat.

“With advances in sound silencing, acoustic sensors and weapons delivery systems, Arkansas will traverse the world’s oceans and seas as an apex predator. Representing our asymmetric advantage in the undersea domain, the Arkansas will have no equal,” said Vice Adm. William Houston, commander, Naval Submarine Forces.

“It is an incredible honor for the crew to begin to establish the relationship with our namesake state of Arkansas as well as with the ship’s sponsors,” said Cmdr. Adam Kahnke, commanding officer of the pre-commissioning unit. “The story of the Little Rock Nine demonstrates the power of perseverance in the face of adversity. I find the relationship with the ship’s sponsors very appropriate due to the fact that perseverance is an essential attribute to success in the art of submarine warfare.”

NNS is one of only two shipyards capable of designing and building nuclear-powered submarines. The advanced capabilities of Virginia-class submarines increase firepower, maneuverability and stealth.

This milestone on Arkansas comes following the delivery of USS Montana (SSN 794), the launch of New Jersey (SSN 796) and continued progress on Massachusetts (SSN 798) at NNS earlier in 2022, as the shipyard continues to invest in its workforce and facilities to make steady progress on delivering these important assets to the Navy.

Interagency Delegation Visits Unmanned & AI Task Force in Bahrain

Capt. Michael Brasseur, commander of Task Force 59, briefs Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Dr. Colin Kahl at a display of unmanned surface vessels in Manama, Bahrain, Nov. 18. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Mark Thomas Mahmod*

MANAMA, Bahrain – Senior U.S. government officials from the Department of Defense and Department of State visited U.S. 5th Fleet headquarters in Bahrain, Nov. 18, to learn about the ongoing integration of unmanned systems and artificial intelligence across the fleet, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs said in a release.

Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Dr. Colin Kahl visited with Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Barbara A. Leaf and Dana Stroul, the deputy assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East, as well as other U.S. officials.

U.S. 5th Fleet's unmanned systems and artificial intelligence task force, Task Force 59, displayed unmanned surface vessels on the pier after a tour of the Robotics Operations Center.

“The pace of technological change offers tremendous opportunities for upgrading how the U.S. military contributes to security and stability in the Middle East, and how we advance cooperation with partners,” said Dr. Kahl. “Task Force 59 is doing incredible work innovating and leading coalitions that ensure freedom of navigation in some of the world’s most critical waterways.”

In addition, the group toured RFA Cardigan Bay (L3009), a British Royal Navy vessel stationed in Bahrain in support of the United Kingdom’s regional naval headquarters. Royal Navy headquarters in the Middle East are co-located with U.S. 5th Fleet’s, reflecting strong collaboration among longstanding maritime partners.

The interagency delegation also visited U.S. 5th Fleet’s headquarters for discussions on regional maritime operations with Vice Adm. Brad Cooper and his staff. Cooper commands U.S. 5th Fleet as well as two major multinational maritime partnerships, which include the Combined Maritime Forces and International Maritime Security Construct.

The U.S. 5th Fleet operating area includes 21 countries, the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea, parts of the Indian Ocean and three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, Bab al-Mandeb and Suez Canal.

Coast Guard Offloads More

than $101 Million in Illegal Narcotics

A crewmember from Coast Guard Cutter Northland offloads illegal narcotics in Port Everglades, Florida, Nov. 11, 2022. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

MIAMI – The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Northland (WMEC 904) offloaded approximately 5,363 pounds of cocaine worth an estimated $101 million in Port Everglades, Nov. 18, along with 11 suspected smugglers who were apprehended to face prosecution in federal court by the Department of Justice, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

The drugs were interdicted, during five separate cases, in the international waters of the Caribbean Sea by crews from:

- Royal Netherlands Navy Ship HNLMS Holland (P840), embarked USCG Law Enforcement Detachment 408 and a USCG Helicopter Interdiction Squadron helicopter

- U.S. Navy ships USS Milwaukee (LCS 5) and USS Wichita (LCS 13), and embarked USCG Law Enforcement Detachments 104 and 107
- USCGC Valiant (WMEC 621)
- USCGC Venturous (WMEC 625) and embarked USCG Helicopter Interdiction Squadron helicopter

“We are proud of the drug seizures the crews of our sister ships recently completed. We are honored to share a role in helping remove narcotics from U.S. streets and delivering justice to those attempting to bring illicit substances to U.S. shores,” said Cmdr. Andrew Dennelly, commanding officer of Northland. “We are always ready to protect those on the sea, protect America from threats delivered by the sea, and protect the sea itself.”

Northland’s 57-day patrol of the Windward Passage, Old Bahama Channel and South Florida Straits primarily focused on deterring dangerous and irregular maritime migration.

Initially, a suspect vessel is detected and monitored by allied, military or law enforcement personnel coordinated by Joint Interagency Task Force-South based in Key West. Once an interdiction becomes imminent, the law enforcement phase of the operation begins, and control of the operation shifts to the U.S. Coast Guard during throughout this phase. Interdictions in the Caribbean Sea are performed by members of the U.S. Coast Guard under the authority and control of the Coast Guard’s Seventh District, headquartered in Miami.

Northland is a 270-foot Famous-class medium-endurance cutter. The cutters primary missions include law enforcement, search and rescue, drug interdiction, fisheries enforcement, migrant interdiction, homeland security and defense operations and international training. Northland patrols the offshore waters from Maine to Florida, the Gulf of Mexico, the Eastern Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea.

USCGC Valiant Returns Home after 35-day Caribbean Sea Patrol

The Coast Guard Cutter Valiant crew recovers their cutter boat Sept. 2018, while underway in the Carribean Sea. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Valiant (WMEC 621) returned to their homeport at Naval Station Mayport Nov. 7, 2022, following a 35-day Caribbean Sea patrol, the Coast Guard Atlantic Area said in a Nov. 7 release.

While underway in the Coast Guard Seventh District's area of operations and in support of Joint Interagency Task Force – South, Valiant conducted counterdrug and migrant interdiction

operations.

Within the first week of patrol, Valiant's crew boarded a vessel suspected of carrying illegal narcotics and seized just under 900 pounds of cocaine worth approximately $8 million.

Valiant's crew also patrolled off the coast of Haiti as a deterrent to dangerous and irregular maritime migration events occurring because of continued instability in the country.

Prior to patrol, Valiant completed a 7-month dry-dock period in Tampa where the 55-year-old cutter completed extensive maintenance and preservation work.

"The past eight months have certainly been very busy for Valiant's crew, and we are glad to finally be back in Jacksonville," said Cmdr. Jacob McMillan, commanding officer of Valiant. "The crew's remarkable ability to quickly transition from maintenance to operations has been impressive. I'm very proud of the crew and I'm honored to be serving at sea with them."

Valiant is a multi-mission, 210-foot medium-endurance cutter. Its primary missions include search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, marine environmental protection, homeland security and national defense operations.

Five Allied Carrier Strike Groups Patrol Waters in NATO's Area of Operations

The Italian navy flagship, aircraft carrier ITS Cavour (CVH 550), arrives at Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, March 26, 2021. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Mitchell Banks*

MONS, Belgium – Five Allied aircraft carriers will be operating in the Atlantic Ocean and the North and Mediterranean Seas in November, as part of their regularly scheduled activities, SHAPE Public Affairs said in a Nov. 17 release.

This occurrence presents an opportunity for Allied nations to coordinate credible combat power throughout the Euro-Atlantic Area and showcases NATO cohesion and interoperability.

Participating forces comprise the Carrier Strike Groups (CSG) formed in support of the French Navy Charles De Gaulle, the Italian Navy ITS Cavour, the United Kingdom Royal Navy Queen Elizabeth and the United States Navy's George H.W. Bush and Gerald R. Ford.

Although each nation's forces are operating in support of

their own mission objectives, the advanced cooperation shows unity towards the collective defence of the Alliance. Ships and assets from various allies and partners are included in the groups, and the activity is coordinated with the Standing NATO Maritime Groups 1 and 2.

“NATO routinely demonstrates its cohesion, coordinating with multiple international maritime assets at once,” said Commander, NATO Allied Maritime Command Vice Adm. Keith Blount. “This opportunity demonstrates our ironclad commitment to the stability and security of the Euro-Atlantic Area and the strength of our collective capability.”

“Five carriers within our operating area presents a further opportunity to consolidate our approach to air defense, cross-domain cooperation and maritime-land integration,” he said.

There is a continuous presence of Allied aircraft carriers around the NATO area of operations, and it is common for multiple CSGs to be deployed simultaneously. The multi-carrier deployment is an opportunity to test the cooperation and practice NATO’s Deter and Defend concept as it leverages a deliberate rhythm of military activity across all geographic areas of the Alliance, as well as across all operational domains and functional areas.

Allied maritime forces and NATO Maritime Groups regularly patrol the waters around Europe to assure Allies of the maritime commitment to collective defense.

Navy Accepts Delivery of

Ship-to-Shore Connector, Landing Craft, Air Cushion 106

The U.S. Navy accepted delivery of the next generation landing craft, Ship to Shore Connector (SSC), Landing Craft, Air Cushion (LCAC) 106 on Nov. 17. *U.S. NAVY*

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy accepted delivery of the next generation landing craft, Ship to Shore Connector (SSC), Landing Craft, Air Cushion (LCAC) 106 on Nov. 17, Team Ships Public Affairs said in a release.

LCAC 106's delivery follows the completion of Acceptance Trials with the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey to test the readiness and capability of the craft and to validate requirements.

"We are excited to deliver this next generation craft to the

Navy and Marine Corps team," said Capt. Jason Grabelle, program manager, Amphibious Assault and Connectors Programs, Program Executive Office (PEO) Ships. "LCACs are providing our Navy and partners with the speed and agility essential to our missions."

LCACs are built with similar configurations, dimensions and clearances to the legacy LCAC, ensuring the compatibility of this next-generation air cushion vehicle with existing well deck-equipped amphibious ships.

The LCAC program is in serial production, with an additional 11 craft currently being built at Textron Systems.

Coast Guard Polar Icebreaker Departs Seattle; Bound for Antarctica

The Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star and crew departs Seattle to begin Operation Deep Freeze, Nov. 16, 2022. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Michael Clark*

SEATTLE – The Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star (WAGB 10) and crew departed Seattle Nov. 16 and is in transit to Antarctica in support of Operation Deep Freeze, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in a Nov. 17 release.

Operation Deep Freeze is an annual joint military mission to resupply the United States Antarctic stations in support of the National Science Foundation, the lead agency for the United States Antarctic Program. This marks the 26th year for the Polar Star to render support.

Each year, the Polar Star crew breaks a navigable channel through ice, sometimes as much as 21-feet thick, to allow fuel and supply ships to reach McMurdo Station, which is the largest Antarctic station and the logistics hub of the U.S. Antarctic Program.

“This is a unique and important mission that the Coast Guard

undertakes each year," said Capt. Keith Ropella, commanding officer of the Polar Star. "It takes a special crew to make the 20,000 nautical mile round trip through some of the most remote locations and arduous conditions on the planet to get the job done, and perhaps more significantly, to prepare this 46-year-old cutter for the challenge. I am overwhelmed and immensely proud of the tireless work this crew and our shore side support partners have done since returning from the last Operation Deep Freeze back in April to get us ready to go, and I am incredibly excited to make this once in a lifetime journey with them."

The U.S. Coast Guard is recapitalizing its polar icebreaker fleet to ensure continued access to the Polar regions, project U.S. sovereignty and protect the country's economic, environmental and national security interests.

"As the Nation's most active and visible maritime presence in the high latitudes, the Coast Guard maintains a vital leadership role in Antarctica and deeply values its relationship as a trusted partner to the National Science Foundation and U.S. Antarctic Program," said Vice Adm. Andrew J. Tiongson, commander Coast Guard Pacific Area. "Polar Star's continued support of Operation Deep Freeze exemplifies the Coast Guard's unique blend of operational capability, regulatory authority and strategic leadership in the polar regions. It is an honor to ensure uninhibited access to the region, and join together with our international allies and Department of Defense sister services to support essential scientific research and the preservation of a safe, secure and cooperative environment on the Antarctic continent."

Through Operation Deep Freeze, the U.S. Coast Guard provides direct logistical support to the National Science Foundation and maintains a regional presence that preserves Antarctica as a scientific refuge.