CNO Visits Spain, UK, Meets with Sailors, Focuses on Partnerships

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday renders a salute as the Royal Navy's guest of honor at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Edinburgh, Scotland, Aug. 20. *U.S. NAVY / Capt. Gregory Leland*

EDINBURGH – Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday and his wife, Linda, visited Spain and the United Kingdom, Aug. 16-21 to meet with Sailors, government and military leaders, the CNO's public affairs office said Aug. 19.

The CNO spoke with U.S. Sailors, as well as service members assigned to allied and partner militaries in Rota, Spain, London and Faslane and Edinburgh, Scotland.

Gilday's visit to Rota coincided with the arrival of the guided-missile destroyer USS Bulkeley (DDG 84) to its new homeport, Naval Station Rota, Aug. 17. Bulkeley joins three other U.S. Navy destroyers that are part of Forward Deployed Naval Forces-Europe: USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51), USS Paul Ignatius (DDG 117) and USS Roosevelt (DDG 80).

Gilday participated in a flag-raising ceremony alongside Admiral of the Spanish Fleet, Adm. Eugenio Díaz del Río Jaudenes, where together they hoisted the Spanish flag aboard Bulkeley.

Speaking afterward to media, Gilday explained the significance of presence and the strength of the partnership between the U.S. and Spanish navies.

"Spain remains one of our closest partners particularly in the maritime," said Gilday. "The global economy floats on seawater … the U.S. Navy's ability to have our destroyers forward-deployed in Spain is an exceptional opportunity for us to help keep sea lanes open, to work with closely with our allies and partners."

He later explained, "Our ships here in Rota are equipped with the most advanced capabilities and together with the Spanish navy we will continue to operate and sail strongly side by side to assure our NATO allies."

The Gildays also toured and spoke with Sailors assigned to Arleigh Burke.

"What you do every day is not insignificant. I am extremely proud of this ship and everything you are doing, the ship means nothing without the crew and this is an exceptionally talented and dedicated team of warfighters," Gilday said while speaking to the Sailors.

Gilday began his U.K. engagements in London, where he was the keynote speaker at the dedication ceremony of the USS Osprey

(AM 56) bell at the United States Embassy. USS Osprey was a Raven-class minesweeper that supported the invasion of Normandy, Operation Overlord. The ship struck an enemy mine the night before the invasion of Normandy while clearing the channel for the invasion. Six members of the crew died, becoming among the first of D-Day casualties.

Gilday also visited the London Tech Bridge, where he exchanged views on the importance of this innovation hub and the partnership and collaboration with the U.S.-U.K. military, industry, academia and small businesses.

“Collaborating, sharing information, being interoperable and truly interchangeable strengthens our ability to prevail in conflict and bolsters integrated deterrence against potential adversaries,” said Gilday. “We must continue to pursue innovative solutions, experiment and put capabilities in the hands of warfighters quickly if we want to maintain warfighting advantages.”

During a visit to HM Naval Base Clyde at Faslane, Scotland, a logistical base for warships and submarines operating in European waters, he observed Valiant Jetty which was built to support operations by the latest Astute-class Royal Navy attack submarines. Gilday spoke with U.S. Navy Sailors who are training with Royal Navy sailors, toured cutting-edge boats, and also congratulated newly qualified Royal Navy British submariners who received their qualifications and pins.

Gilday, the Royal Navy’s guest of honor, attended the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, an annual series of artistic performances by 900 performers, including British armed forces, commonwealth and international military bands from across the globe.

The focus of Gilday’s visit to the U.K. was to advance and further strengthen the maritime partnership and work toward becoming truly interchangeable. Throughout his visit, Gilday

met with Royal Navy Adm. Sir Ben Key, First Sea Lord and chief of the Naval Staff of the United Kingdom.

‘OpTech’ Workshop Will Focus on Littoral Environment in Baltic Sea

HELSINKI – The Littoral OpTech Baltic Sea workshop coming up at the end of August in Helsinki may look like a logical dialogue to have with navies in the region in the shadow of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, but it’s not.

It comes as the two nations who are leading the event are preparing to joining the NATO alliance, but that is coincidental. In fact, this Littoral OpTech workshop was originally planned for two years ago and postponed twice because of the pandemic.

However, world events and the importance of littoral environments in areas such as the Black Sea and Baltic Sea, underscore the urgency of having this event now.

The Helsinki workshop will be held Aug. 30-31 at the Finnish Naval Academy and is one of a series of OpTechs held in different parts of the world in key littoral environments. The first was conducted in 2014 in Stockholm, with subsequent workshops conducted in important littoral areas of maritime operations including Japan, Columbia, Canada and Greece.

Other conferences and workshops have been held at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. The workshops are usually two-day events, with the first day

focused on the environment and operations and the second day examining new technologies. Participants also take part in a "war game" focused on a plausible maritime scenario in that part of the world.

Capt. Bo Wallander, a retired captain in the Royal Swedish Navy, has led the previous OpTechs, along with retired U.S. Navy Cmdr. Steve Benson.

Wallander, who is producing the Helsinki event, said the purpose is "to gather international defense leaders, scientists, researchers, analysts, and think-tank experts to explore the unique operational and technological challenges to security and defense in typical cul-de-sac littorals, like the Baltic Sea."

The nations on the Baltic Sea are close to each other. The air distance between Kaliningrad and Helsinki its 357 nautical miles, and to Stockholm it's just 288 nautical miles. It's 161 nautical miles from St. Petersburg to Helsinki, and 372 nautical miles to Stockholm. So, reaction times are short.

"The goals of the workshop are to share experiences how to develop systems and operate and in a littoral environment," Wallander said.

"Focusing on the Littorals fosters collaboration on common security and defense concerns with an all-domain approach to solutions," Benson said.

Navy Orders Full Production

for Boeing’s HAAWC Air-Launched Torpedo Kits

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

ARLINGTON, Va. — The Navy has awarded Boeing a full-rate production contract for the High-Altitude Anti-Submarine Warfare Weapon Capability (HAAWC), a weapon which will allow the P-8A maritime patrol aircraft the ability to launch anti-submarine torpedoes from high altitudes.

The Naval Sea Systems Command awarded Boeing a 25.6 million "fixed-firm-price, cost-plus-fixed-fee and cost-only, full-rate production contract for the production of High-Altitude Anti-Submarine Warfare Weapon Capability Air Launch Accessory (ALA) equipment, related engineering and hardware repair services, and other direct cost support," the Defense Department said in an Aug. 19 contract announcement.

HAAWC is an all-weather add-on glide kit that enables the Mk54 torpedo to be launched near or below the cruising altitude of the P-8A Poseidon. The kit consists of a modular ALA that strapped to a Mk54 torpedo, enabling it with precision navigation to glide to a target area, where the ALA separates and drops the torpedo into the water.

"This is an important milestone because it brings HAAWC one step closer to becoming fully operational and deployed by the Navy," said Dewayne Donley, Boeing's HAAWC program manager, in a release. "Our solution transforms the Mk54 into a precision glide weapon in GPS-aided and GPS-denied environments. The HAAWC system provides flexibility by allowing the Navy to carry out anti-submarine operations throughout the full flight envelope of the P-8A."

"There are also provisions for Boeing to provide engineering such as design studies, testing, prototyping and/or analyses of production related issues," the Boeing release said. "Repair service provisions include hardware repair and maintenance services for government-owned HAAWC ALAs and associated hardware and equipment. A provision item order option also allows the Navy to procure spare hardware in support of the program."

This contract includes options, which, if exercised, would bring the cumulative value of this contract to $121,4 million. Work is expected to be completed by September 2024. If all options are exercised, work will continue through September 2030.

Navy’s Light Amphibious Warship Will Be A ‘Great Enabler’ for Marine Littoral Regiments, General Says

The crew of U.S. Army logistics support vessel Lt. General

William B. Bunker (LSV-4), loaded equipment and supplies on LSV-4 in Guam in July 2021 for theater distribution operations in support of Defender Pacific 2021. Some call for the LSV to be used as a bridge to the Navy's planned light amphibious warship. *U.S. ARMY / Staff Sgt. Kevin Martin*

ARLINTON, Va. — The U.S. Navy's concept of the Light Amphibious Warship (LAW), more formally designated as a medium landing ship (LSM), is advancing within the Pentagon as the Navy and Marine Corps define some goals and the concept gels as a part of the Marine Corps' Force Design 2030 concept.

"The [LAW] AoA [Analysis of Alternatives] has been signed," said Marine Maj. Gen. Marcus Annibale, director of Expeditionary Warfare in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, speaking Aug. 18 at the Surface Navy Association' Waterfront 2022 West Coast symposium in San Diego. "We're working through some details on that. OSD CAPE [Office of the Secretary of Defense Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation] has given us some comebacks on it. We need to get it as close to right as we can."

The LAW, as a warship, is designed to help the Marine Corps operate within the engagement zone of China, deploying Marine littoral regiments (MLRs) as stand-in forces. The MLR, armed with anti-ship cruise missiles and an air-defense capability, among others, will be able to complicate China's ability to operate within the first island chain.

"We put our own A2AD [anti-access/area denial] capability in their back yard as the stand-in force," Annibale said.

"One important thing to maneuver the MLR and sustain the MR is a warship that can move over distance with speed and capacity to support the MLR," he said. "That is the LAW. We're working through the baseline for that."

The general said that Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday has signed off on an initial capacity of 18 LAWs.

“What that maps out to, we’re looking at about nine LAWs for each MLR,” he said. “We’re working the technical aspects of the ship. We’ve looked at different commercial capabilities. We’re experimenting in the Pacific with some contract surrogate shipping. … It’s going to be a great enabler for those MLRs.”

Annibale said the Navy conducted a classified survivability study on the LAW as part of the AoA.

“It’s a warship,” he said, “It’s not a commercial ship, even though we’re going to experiment with some commercial ships.”

Annibale said that the rank for a LAW commanding officer is under discussion, floating the option of an O-4 lieutenant commander as a skipper and the nine-LAW squadron under an O-5 commander.

U.S. Naval Special Warfare Establishes Assessment Command

Rear Adm. Hugh Howard III, commander, Naval Special Warfare Command, addresses the crowd at the establishment ceremony for Naval Special Warfare Assessment Command (NSWAC). NSWAC conducts outreach, assessment, selection, and development of future and current Naval Special Warfare operators. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Benjamin K. Kittleson*

SAN DIEGO – U.S. Naval Special Warfare Command established Naval Special Warfare Assessment Command (NSWAC) under the Naval Special Warfare Center during an Aug. 18 ceremony onboard Naval Amphibious Base Coronado, said Petty Officer 2nd Class Alex Perlman in an Aug. 19 release.

NSWAC substantively transforms the Navy's commando force in its ability to compete for talent capable of solving the hardest problems from the maritime domain. It proactively engages diversity in all forms and enrolls future candidates who possess the Force's standards and ethos. This new command

accelerates the ways the Force continuously assesses and selects for the character, cognitive and leadership attributes necessary for the highest complexity and risk maritime operations mission to expand national leverage and deterrence options- and win if deterrence fails.

During the ceremony, Cmdr. Aaron Brown, a Navy Special Warfare Officer, assumed command. Rear Adm. H.W. Howard, III, commander, U.S. Naval Special Warfare Command, was the presiding officer of the establishment ceremony.

“Across the spectrum of warfare, the United States and its allies face new challenges and threats. The complexity of the strategic and operating environments demand we evolve quickly and creatively,” said Howard. “We’re aggressively seeking an edge in human capital and technology to expand the margins between mission success and failure. The Assessment Command is at the forefront of our urgent initiatives to deliver the step changes in capability and professionalism across the Force. Modernizing approaches to recruitment, assessment, selection and training underpin our transformations to be ready for the uncertainties ahead.”

Attendees for the event included commander, Special Operations Command, Gen. Richard Clarke; Vice Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Bill Lescher; Chief of Naval Personnel, Vice Adm. Richard Cheeseman; Deputy Commander, Navy Education and Training Command, Rear Adm. Scott Ruston; Commander, Navy Recruiting Command, Rear Adm. Alexis Walker; and the incoming commander of U. S. Naval Special Warfare Command, Rear Adm. Keith Davids.

According to Howard, Naval Special Warfare initiated this effort in the Fall of 2020 to build the sustainable architecture for diversified outreach, more rigorous pre-assessments for character, cognitive and leadership attributes across the Assessment and Selection pathway and implement the

innovative initiatives that strengthen continuous assessment across the continuum of a Naval Special Warfare.

Howard also noted how the Assessment Command conducts outreach and enrollment opportunities across the United States to proactively engage under-represented demographics and geographic areas in the Force.

“The Assessment Command will identify, engage and enroll the next generation of candidates we need to solve the hardest problems from – on – and under the sea,” said Howard. In partnership with CNRC, the Assessment Command will lead candidate assessment programs that deepen our Force’s diversity and capabilities.”

According to Capt. Brian Dreschler, commanding officer, NSWCEN, over the past year as the team deliberately iterated to build this new command, the team conducted 60 outreach events partnered with local Navy Talent and Acquisition Groups (NTAGs). More than half of the outreach events were specifically focused on increasing Force diversity and inclusivity, with under-represented demographics.

“The Assessment Command is a mission imperative for the Force’s relevance, survivability and lethality to contribute in irregular ways to Integrated Deterrence options,” said Capt. Brian Dreschler, the commanding officer of NSWCEN. “Not only are we adapting the way we assess and select our potential candidates, but we are also evolving the assessment and selection of our leadership, officer and enlisted, at all levels of command. The Assessment Command is also charged with learning from the Joint Force, allies and partners, and from private sector innovations to reinforce our culture of continuous assessment – the candid assessments for feedback, self-improvement and optimal leadership and team formation decisions.”

One of NSWAC's assessment programs is Naval Special Warfare Leader Assessment Program (NLAP). Enhancing NSW's culture of continuous assessment, NLAP evaluates and selects NSW operators at every level. During NLAP, operators participate in purpose-filled events to select for officer and enlisted career milestones. Through feedback from peers, leaders, and subordinates, NLAP assesses an operator's leadership, character, physical and mental attributes. According to Brown, this program ensures NSW places the right leaders in the right assignments, while offering critical professional development to guide the force into the future.

"I'm humbled to assume command of this mission imperative," said Brown. "With this high-performing team of professionals, we will strengthen the precision of candidate identification, assessment, selection, enrollment, training and development."

NSWAC is headquartered at Naval Amphibious Base Coronado in Coronado, California with a detachment in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Alongside Basic Training Command and Advanced Training Command, NSWAC will be a subordinate command to NSWCEN.

"With the establishment of the Assessment Command, Howard said, we are in position to compete for talent and more rigorously assess, select, train and retain men and women who embody the courage, integrity, humility, creativity, team-ability, creativity and grit that expand competitive edge to remain the Nation's preeminent maritime special operations force."

NSWCEN provides initial assessment and selection and subsequent advanced training to the Sailors who make up the Navy's SEAL and Special Boat operational formations. The Naval Special Warfare mission is to provide maritime special operations forces to conduct full-spectrum operations, unilaterally or with partners, to support national objectives.

For more information on the NSW assessment, selection and training pathways, visit https://www.sealswcc.com/.

Construction of Navy's New Frigate to Begin This Month, Admiral Says

An artist's rendering of the Constellation-class guided missile frigate. *U.S. NAVY*

ARLINGTON, Va. — Construction of the U.S. Navy's next-generation guided-missile frigate (FFG) is to take begin later this month, a Navy admiral said.

"[Regarding] the FFG 62 Constellation class, we're going to start bending metal later this month," said Rear Adm. Fred

Pyle, director, Surface Warfare Division in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, speaking Aug. 18 at the Surface Navy Association's Waterfront 2022 West Coast symposium. "That's a success story. This frigate is going to bring DDG-like capability. We need to build small surface combatants in numbers [and] get this fighting frigate to sea. So, we're excited about the Constellation-class frigate."

Three Constellation-class FFGs—Constellation (FFG 62), Congress (FFG 63), and Chesapeake (FFG 64) currently are on order. In June, the Navy exercised a contract option to order to build FFG 64 from Wisconsin-based Fincantieri Marinette Marine, the ship's builder.

The Marinette Marine shipyard is currently working on the detailed design for the future USS Constellation.

The Navy has a requirement for 20 frigates. Marinette Marine is now under contract for the first three FFGs with options for seven more.

The Constellation class FFG is based largely on the Italian FREMM frigate, but with a longer hull and features modified to meet U.S. Navy standards on reliability, survivability, maintainability, habitability and lethality. The 496-foot-long steel ship will displace 7,300 tons and have a beam of 64.6 feet and a draft of 18 feet. It will be powered by a combination diesel electric and gas turbine propulsion system.

The FFG will feature a Mk41 Vertical Launching System, canister-launched Naval Strike Missiles, Mk110 57 mm gun, RAM Mk49 launcher, CAPTAS-4 variable-depth sonar, TB-37 Multi-Function Towed Array, SQQ-89(V)16 undersea combat system, SLQ-25E Nixie, SLQ-32(V)6 SEWIP Block 2, SPY-6(V)3 FFG Radar, Aegis Baseline 10 combat system, one MH-60R helicopter, one MQ-8C, and two 7-meter rigid-hull inflatable boats. Delivery of Constellation is anticipated for 2026.

Marine Corps to Gain Three More CH-53K Helicopter Flight Simulators

Marine Corps aviators in the CH-53K Containerized Flight Training Device (CFTD) experience a highly immersive virtual environment allowing flight crews to train on the full scope of Marine Corps heavy lift missions, including external lift operations. *U.S. MARINE CORPS*

ORLANDO, Fla. – The United States Marine Corps will gain additional training opportunities preparing them to operate the Sikorsky CH-53K heavy lift helicopter, Lockheed Martin said in an Aug. 16 release. The aircraft is the most modern and powerful helicopter in Department of Defense inventory capable of moving troops and equipment from ship to shore, and

to higher altitude terrain, more quickly and effectively than ever before.

Lockheed Martin will provide an additional Containerized Flight Training Device (CFTD) to the U.S. Navy with options for three more under the terms of a recent contract award. This follows up on the success of the first training device delivered in 2020 to Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) New River in Jacksonville, North Carolina.

“Marine pilots have smoothly transitioned from the training device to the actual CH-53K’s fly-by-wire cockpit and completed missions in the fleet environment – such as air-to-air refueling” said Flash Kinloch, Lockheed Martin, vice president of Training and Simulation Solutions. “Training in this highly immersive virtual environment permits flight crews to train the full scope of tasks that can be performed on the aircraft in a safe, cost effective and realistic manner.”

Flight crews will train on the full scope of Marine Corps heavy lift missions, including external lift operations, using the full-mission flight simulator that also replicates the various environmental conditions in which the aircraft is likely to fly. Through this new effort, Lockheed Martin is helping the Marine Corps expand proven and critical CH-53K Flight Training with training capability to more Marines.

The training devices include a full cockpit for the aircraft operated by a pilot and co-pilot, an instructor operating station as well as a brief/debrief room. The newest training devices will include upgrades that improve system performance, increase cost savings, and more closely align to the CH-53K aircraft for increased training realism.

The Marine Corps achieved Initial Operational Capability (IOC) for the CH-53K in April following a successful test period that resulted in over 3,000 mishap free hours flown in challenging environments and terrain.

The CH-53K CFTD provided the capability to train mission scenarios which were then completed during Initial Operational Test & Evaluation (IOT&E). They include:

- Day and night air-to-air refueling
- Air-to-air refueling with 27,000 lb. external load
- Sea trials with over 350 landings
- Operation in Degraded Visual Environments

Fairbanks Morse Defense Expands UXV Capabilities with DECK Marine Systems Collaboration

BELOIT, Wis. – Fairbanks Morse Defense (FMD), a portfolio company of Arcline Investment Management (Arcline), is expanding its capabilities to serve unmanned marine vehicles (UXV) through a licensing agreement with DECK Marine Systems (DECK), a developer of innovative systems to deploy and recover vessels and sensors, FMD said in an Aug. 16 release. Through the agreement, FMD and DECK will co-develop an intelligent launch and recovery system (LARS) for use with UXVs and FMD will have an exclusive license to sell and service DECK's LARS, instrument deployment units (IDUs) and winches for the U.S., Canada, Australia and U.K. government markets.

"As the Navy develops and tests more unmanned vehicle technologies, FMD remains committed to providing the capabilities and support necessary for expanding the reach and scope of our fleet," said Jay McFadyen, FMD's chief commercial

officer. “The expanded capabilities offered through our licensing agreement with DECK Marine Systems, combined with our existing products and services from our Welin Lambie business unit, strengthens our ability to help propel U.S. maritime defense into the future.”

Through this agreement, DECK will have access to FMD’s global network of highly trained field service technicians, along with a wide range of marine technologies, OEM products and turnkey services through the defense contractor’s six strategically located service centers. DECK will also leverage FMD’s customer-focused Regional Account Managers to expand its presence among marine defense customers.

“Precision and durability are essential for maritime military success, and we believe that makes DECK’s proven technology solutions an ideal fit to support the Navy’s UXV programs,” said Dmitri Jekimov, DECK Marine Systems CEO. “We look forward to working with FMD to expand our presence and capabilities to serve more military marine markets.”

For more than 100 years, FMD has provided products and services to the Navy. Today, the defense contractor powers more than 80% of the Navy’s ships with medium-speed applications. The defense contractor has rapidly expanded its array of best-in-class marine technologies, OEM parts and turnkey services for marine defense customers through expansion and the acquisitions of companies that include Federal Equipment Company (FEC), Hunt Valve, Maxim Watermakers, Research Tool & Die (RT&D), Ward Leonard and Welin Lambie. Most recently, the defense contractor was named an exclusive naval field service provider for The Ideal Electric Company.

AeroVironment Acquires Navigation Solutions Provider Planck Aerosystems

Planck Aerosystems' advanced flight autonomy and navigation solutions will be deployed and integrated with AeroVironment's existing portfolio of intelligent, multi-domain robotic systems, such as JUMP 20 medium unmanned aircraft systems. *AeroVironment Inc.*

ARLINGTON, Va. — AeroVironment Inc. has acquired Planck Aerosystems Inc., a leading provider of advanced unmanned aircraft navigation solutions, Aerovironment said in an Aug. 17 release. The acquisition will significantly accelerate AeroVironment's development of advanced autonomy capabilities.

Founded in 2014, Planck has worked closely with customers from the U.S. Department of Defense, security agencies, allied governments and offshore industrials to develop customer-centric unmanned aircraft solutions. Planck's products include embedded technologies and fully integrated unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and leverage their deep technical expertise in UAS guidance and navigation, autonomy and artificial intelligence.

Planck is a small technology company based in San Diego, California and will be acquired by AeroVironment's Petaluma-based medium unmanned aircraft systems (MUAS) business segment to focus on integrating its flight autonomy solutions, such as ACE (Autonomous Control Engine), into AeroVironment's offerings to enable safe, autonomous takeoff and landing from moving platforms on land or at sea in GPS-denied environments. Other solutions include AVEM, a fully integrated mobile tethered sensor platform designed for persistent autonomous operation from moving vehicles and vessels in any environment, and a suite of machine-learning object detection and tracking systems that are customized for specific end-user needs.

"Planck has a compelling product and technology roadmap with valuable capabilities that we plan to deploy and integrate with AeroVironment's existing portfolio of intelligent, multi-domain robotic systems," said Wahid Nawabi, AeroVironment chairman, president and chief executive officer. "The Planck team has developed advanced unmanned autonomy and navigation solutions for various defense and commercial customers and by working together, we believe we offer more compelling and differentiated solutions to our customers moving forward."

"This transaction accelerates AeroVironment's innovation in flight autonomy, increasing the effectiveness of our solutions in contested environments and reducing the cognitive load of operators, and adds a tethered SUAS to our portfolio of systems, creating exciting opportunities for upcoming programs of record," Nawabi added.

“AeroVironment’s heritage of creating innovative solutions to meet customer needs is an ideal fit for the Planck team,” said Josh Wells, Planck chief executive officer. “We couldn’t be more excited about joining forces with AeroVironment to deliver innovative, multi-domain unmanned systems to the next generation of U.S. and allied warfighters. AeroVironment’s reach, technical capabilities and portfolio of unmanned systems will enable the Planck team to scale our products to more customers, and to provide better solutions in less time.”

Canaccord Genuity served as the exclusive financial advisor to Planck Aerosystems, Inc. in connection with the transaction.

U.S. Navy’s Military Sealift Command Conducts Maintenance in India

The Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ship USNS Charles Drew (T-AKE 10) moors pier side in L&T Shipyard in Kattupalli, near Chennai, India, Aug. 7, 2022 for scheduled maintenance. As part of Military Sealift Command's Combat Logistics Force (CLF), Charles Drew enables U.S. Navy ships to remain at sea and combat ready for extended periods of time. *Joel Garcia*

CHENNAI, INDIA – Military Sealift Command's (MSC's) Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ship USNS Charles Drew (T-AKE 10) conducted maintenance at Larsen & Toubro Ltd, commonly known as L&T shipyard, in Kattupalli near Chennai, India, Aug. 7-17, MSC Far East Public Affairs Spokeswoman said in a release.

"India's initiative to offer logistics, repairs, and refits to the U.S. ships assumes special significance in furthering the strategic partnership between India and the United States, thereby promoting harmony in South Asia under the Indo-Pacific initiative," said Dr. Ajay Kumar, defense secretary of India.

Both Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and U.S. Secretary of

State Antony Blinken expressed their intent to conduct maintenance in India during the U.S.-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in April.

“This inaugural repair of a United States naval ship, the Charles Drew, conducted by the L&T Kattupalli shipyard, is a landmark development to be celebrated as a symbol of our strengthened U.S.-India partnership,” said Judith Ravin, U.S. Consul General in Chennai.

“Today marks another step forward in Indian and American maritime cooperation. Our shipping industries positively contribute to a free and open Indo-Pacific by partnering to deliver effective, efficient, and economical repair of military vessels We look forward to seeing the outcomes of this endeavor and where our partnership may go in the future,” said Defense Attaché at the U.S. Embassy at New Delhi Rear Adm. Michael Baker, when the ship first arrived in India.

Routine maintenance conducted aboard Charles Drew in India included repairs to safety and crew habitability systems and equipment.

“We appreciated the opportunity to complete this maintenance in India which will ensure we are ready for any tasking,” said Charles Drew’s Third Officer Anna Lewis, who serves as the ship’s navigator and operations officer.

Charles Drew is one of the many ships that are part of the U.S. Navy’s MSC’s Combat Logistics Force (CLF). CLF are the supply lines to U.S. Navy ships while at sea. These ships provide virtually everything Navy ships need including fuel, food, fleet ordnance, dry cargo, spare parts, mail, and other supplies.

CLF ships enable the Navy fleet to remain at sea and combat ready for extended periods of time. In addition to U.S. Navy

ships, CLF ships also resupply international partners and allies operating in the Indo-Pacific Region.

MSC Far East ensures approximately 50 ships in the Indo-Pacific Region are manned, trained, and equipped to deliver essential supplies, fuel, cargo, and equipment to warfighters, both at sea and on shore. Under Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, 7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy’s largest forward-deployed numbered fleet and routinely interacts and operates with 35 maritime nations in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific Region.