

USCGC Myrtle Hazard Returns After Operation Blue Pacific Patrol to Combat Illegal Fishing



The USCGC Myrtle Hazard (WPC 1139) crew conducts bilateral maritime law enforcement boardings with members of the National Police in the Federated States of Micronesia's exclusive economic zone on Nov. 22, 2025. The crew returned

home Dec. 14, 2025, after completing a successful expeditionary patrol under Operation Blue Pacific, deepening partnerships with Pacific nations and bolstering maritime security in the region. *Photo credit: U.S. Coast Guard*
From U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia, Dec. 19 2025

SANTA RITA, Guam – The USCGC Myrtle Hazard (WPC 1139) crew returned home Sunday after completing a successful expeditionary patrol under Operation Blue Pacific, deepening partnerships with Pacific nations and bolstering maritime security in the region.

The Sentinel-class fast response cutter crew operated for over 500 hours, patrolling 5,380 nautical miles from Nov. 17 to Dec. 14, with 15 days dedicated to providing a persistent presence in the exclusive economic zones of the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Palau, as well as on the high seas.

Crew members worked closely with partners from FSM and Palau. They enacted the bilateral maritime law enforcement agreements with Pacific partners and embarked law enforcement officers from these nations' maritime police forces to conduct interoperable patrols. This hands-on cooperation enabled the joint teams to conduct six bilateral boardings and inspections of fishing vessels in the FSM EEZ. On the high seas, the cutter's crew inspected one vessel under the authority of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.

These efforts helped combat illegal fishing and other illicit maritime activities. They also enhanced maritime domain awareness, supported the safe flow of commerce, and promoted good maritime governance.

Myrtle Hazard's team stepped in to provide critical presence in Palau's waters during a five-day patrol. This coverage supported Palauan authorities while their Guardian-class patrol boat underwent scheduled maintenance. The patrol went beyond simple transit. It focused on building maritime

security, engaging directly with Pacific partners, and enforcing international maritime law through shared operations.

“The relationships we build with our Pacific partners are at the heart of this mission,” said Lt. Emma Saunders, commanding officer of Myrtle Hazard. “Executing bilateral maritime law enforcement operations with our partners allows us to work side by side with the common goals of deterring illicit maritime activities, protecting our oceans, and supporting the communities that rely on their natural resources.”

These actions advanced U.S. Coast Guard priorities, enabling border security, protecting lawful commerce and trade, and staying ready for contingencies. A persistent, low-visibility presence fosters trust and strengthens ties within the Pacific community through shared law-enforcement-led and community-engagement efforts.

To build goodwill, the crew organized five community events in Pohnpei and Kosrae, FSM. These included a volleyball game with locals, swimming lessons for children, and tours of the cutter.

“The community events in Pohnpei and Kosrae were some of our favorite parts of the patrol,” said Saunders. “We have some pretty good athletes on the crew, and sharing the court with the all-stars from the local village teams made for an unforgettable volleyball match full of laughs and friendly competition. The swimming lessons for local youth and cutter tours for veterans and their families were a hit all around. It’s moments like these that really help build lasting relationships.” Crew members further maintained readiness through training, earning new qualifications and currency, and completing 10 drills covering navigation, engineering, damage control, and medical response. During the patrol, Myrtle Hazard crossed the equator. The crew celebrated with traditional ceremonies, including a line-crossing event, a

Cutterman ceremony recognizing a member serving more than five years at sea, and a promotion to lieutenant junior grade.

About Operation Blue Pacific Operation Blue Pacific is the U.S. Coast Guard's strategic, multi-mission campaign to foster security, safety, sovereignty, and economic prosperity across Oceania and the Pacific Islands, working collaboratively with island nations to combat illegal fishing, narcotics, support search and rescue, and build strong mutual maritime governance through ship patrols, training, and shared operations, enhancing regional stability and the U.S.'s role as a trusted partner.

About USCGC Myrtle Hazard The Myrtle Hazard is the 39th 154-foot Sentinel-class FRC, named in honor of the first enlisted woman in the U.S. Coast Guard who served as an electrician and radio operator. It is one of three cutters currently based in Guam, a cornerstone for the U.S. Coast Guard's ongoing commitment to the U.S. and the people of Oceania.

Pentagon Announces General Officer Nominations

From the Department of Defense, Dec. 19, 2025

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth announced Dec. 19 the president has made the following nominations:

Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Francis L. Donovan for appointment to the grade of general, with assignment as commander, U.S. Southern Command, Doral, Florida. Donovan is currently serving as vice commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Marcus B. Annibale for appointment to the grade of lieutenant general, with assignment as deputy chief of staff for Capability Development, Supreme Allied Command Transformation, Norfolk, Virginia. Annibale is currently serving as commanding general, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, Okinawa, Japan.

Marine Corps Col. Seth E. Anderson for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Anderson is currently serving as assistant chief of staff, G-2, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing, Miramar, California.

Marine Corps Col. Robert B. Finneran for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Finneran is currently serving as chief of staff, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing, Havelock, North Carolina.

Marine Corps Col. Edmund B. Hipp has for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Hipp is currently serving as Director, Future Operations Division, J-35, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, Oahu, Hawaii.

Marine Corps Col. Andre M. Ingram for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Ingram is currently serving as chief of staff, Headquarters, Marine Corps Forces Command, Norfolk, Virginia.

Marine Corps Col. Lance J. Langfeldt for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Langfeldt is currently serving as chief of staff, J-3, U.S. Strategic Command, Omaha, Nebraska.

Marine Corps Col. Reginald J. McClam for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. McClam is currently serving as director, Ground Combat Element Division, Combat Development and Integration, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps.

Marine Corps Col. Thomas M. Siverts for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Siverts is currently serving as executive assistant to the Director, Joint Staff, Pentagon,

Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Col. Daniel J. Skuce for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Skuce is currently serving as military assistant, Office of the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Col. Joshua M. Smith for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Smith is currently serving as commanding officer, Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron 1, Yuma, Arizona.

Coast Guard Cutter Active Returns Following Counterdrug Patrol, \$41.3M Cocaine Seized



Thirty-three bales of contraband sit on the USCGC Active's (WMEC 618) flight deck from an interdiction of a suspected drug smuggling vessel while patrolling the Eastern Pacific Ocean, Nov. 25, 2025. Active's crew seized more than 3,300 pounds of cocaine and detained three suspected drug smugglers during the operation. *Photo credit: U.S. Coast Guard*

From U.S. Coast Guard Oceania District, Dec. 22, 2025

PORT ANGELES, Wash. – The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Active (WMEC 618) returned to its home port of Port Angeles Sunday, concluding a 60-day counternarcotics deployment to the Eastern Pacific Ocean in support of Operation Pacific Viper.

The Active's crew of 75 Coast Guard men and women patrolled 10,000 nautical miles and interdicted two suspected drug-smuggling vessels, seizing more than 6,000 pounds of cocaine with an estimated street value of \$41.3 million.

In a 72-hour period, the Active's crew interdicted two "go-fast" vessels, designed to evade detection, while patrolling international waters in the eastern Pacific Ocean.

On Nov. 25, with assistance from the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter James (WMSL 754), the Active's pursuit team traveled more than 60 nautical miles aboard a small boat to intercept a 30-foot go-fast vessel, seizing more than 3,300 pounds of cocaine and detaining three suspected smugglers. On Nov. 28, the Active's crew, working with U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba (WMEC 907), intercepted a 40-foot go-fast vessel, seizing more than 2,400 pounds of cocaine and detaining three suspected smugglers.

The seized narcotics were [offloaded in San Diego](#), and the suspects were turned over to federal law enforcement agents.

The Coast Guard is the lead federal agency for maritime law enforcement, including drug interdiction on the high seas.

These interdictions were part of Operation Pacific Viper, a Coast Guard surge operation targeting transnational criminal organizations and disrupting the flow of illegal narcotics into the United States. These operations are critical to protecting U.S. communities from the harmful effects of cocaine and synthetic drugs, such as fentanyl.

"I am incredibly proud of this crew," said Cmdr. Earl Potter, commanding officer of the Cutter Active. "Their determination, resilience, and professionalism enable us to complete these dynamic and dangerous missions at sea. The conditions are challenging, the hours are long, and the demands are high, but this team consistently maintains focus and executes with distinction. The crew's commitment to protecting our nation and keeping drugs off our streets defines the Active's legacy, and I know there is no finer crew than the one serving aboard Active."

The U.S. Coast Guard's narcotics interdiction efforts target transnational criminal organizations that are funded by drug trafficking. Deployments like the Active's disrupt supply networks in Central and South America. The Active's success

demonstrates the impact a single Coast Guard unit can have when working with interagency and foreign partners. Sustained resources for patrolling these smuggling transit zones are crucial to maritime security and effectively extend U.S. border security far beyond our coastlines.

The Active, nicknamed “Lil Tough Guy,” supports the Coast Guard’s law enforcement, living marine resource protection, and search and rescue missions. Commissioned in 1966, it is one of two medium endurance cutters homeported on the West Coast and is the oldest major cutter in the Pacific Area.

**Fincantieri Marinette Marine
Appoints Former SECNAV
Kenneth J. Braithwaite as
Chairman**



From Fincantieri Marinette Marine, Dec. 19, 2025

Fincantieri Marinette Marine (FMM) appointed former U.S. ambassador to Norway and the 77th secretary of the Navy, Kenneth J. Braithwaite, as chairman of their board of directors.

“It is a pleasure and a privilege to welcome Ambassador Braithwaite into the FMM Board of Director as Chairman,” said Fincantieri Marine Group CEO George Moutafis. “His unique experience and vantage point on our Navy’s and Nation’s needs will prove invaluable, and we are fortunate to have him.”

Braithwaite brings a distinguished career in defense and public service to the role, as well as deep Navy ties. He is a 1984 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and earned a master’s degree from the University of Pennsylvania. His active naval service included time as a naval aviator flying anti-submarine missions in the Pacific and Arctic, and later as a public affairs officer on USS America, where he participated in NATO and Mediterranean-Indian Ocean deployments. He left active duty in 1993 but continued serving in the Navy Reserve until retiring as a rear admiral. Highlights of his reserve service include deploying for Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, serving as the first commander of the Joint Public Affairs Support Element – Reserve, and deploying to Pakistan for disaster assistance after the 2005 earthquake.

Braithwaite’s private sector career began with an executive role at Atlantic Richfield (ARCO). He transitioned to public service as a senior advisor and state director for U.S. Senator Arlen Specter (R-Pennsylvania) in 1997. Subsequently, he held key leadership positions in the healthcare industry, including vice president roles at Ascension Health (St. Thomas Health Services) and serving as executive director of the Delaware Valley Healthcare Council. Before becoming ambassador to Norway, he was a Group Senior Vice President at Vizient Inc., a national hospital performance improvement company he helped create through a merger.

He was sworn in as the 77th secretary of the Navy on May 29, 2020, following his service as the 31st U.S. ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway, during President Trump’s first administration.

Braithwaite joins fellow FMM board members, former Wisconsin governor James Doyle and Vice Admiral (USN, retired) Ronald Boxall, as well as former secretary-level military acquisitions principals Steffanie Easter and James Geurts, all as outside directors.

White House, Navy Announce Trump-Class Battleships



An illustration of the first Trump-class battleship. *Image credit: U.S. Navy*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On Dec. 22, President Donald Trump and Secretary of the Navy John C. Phelan, alongside Secretary of War Pete Hegseth, announced their intent to construct a new class of American-designed battleships.

The future USS Defiant (BBG 1) is to be the first Trump-class

battleship and “will be an unambiguous statement of American commitment to maritime superiority with capability to distribute more firepower across the fleet than any other class of ship, for any Navy, in history,” according to a U.S. Navy announcement.

“The President has been clear – we must bring back our American maritime industrial might, and he has told me many times that as secretary of the Navy it is my job to equip our Sailors to win the fight at sea with the finest ships in our history,” Phelan said. “Now when a conflict arises, you’re going to ask us two questions: where is the carrier, and where is the battleship?”

These new battleships will stand as the centerpiece of the Navy’s Golden Fleet initiative and will be the first of its kind providing dominant firepower and a decisive advantage over adversaries by integrating the most advanced deep-strike weapons of today with the revolutionary systems of the years ahead, the Navy said.

“At triple the size of an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, its massive frame provides superior firepower, larger missile magazines, and the capability to launch Conventional Prompt Strike hypersonic missiles and the Surface Launch Cruise Missile-Nuclear,” the Navy statement said.

Trump-class ships will be capable of operating in a traditional Integrated Air and Missile Defense role with a Carrier Strike Group or commanding its own Surface Action Group for Surface and Anti-Submarine Warfare efforts in addition to delivering long range hypersonic strategic fires and quarterbacking the operations of an entire fleet as the central command control node.

“As we forge the future of our Navy’s fleet, we need a larger surface combatant and the Trump-class battleships meet that requirement,” said Admiral Daryl Caudle, 34th Chief of Naval

Operations. “We will ensure continuous improvement, intellectually honest assessments about the requirement to effectively deter and win in the 2030s and beyond, and disciplined execution resulting in a fleet unparalleled in lethality, adaptability and strength.”

The battleship will be acquired using a Navy-led, industry-collaborative design team approach to accelerate design and construction and supported by over 1,000 suppliers in nearly every state in America. The Navy will continue to build and employ DDG 51 as its fleet workhorse and develop FF(X) as a highly produceable combatant, growing the fleet rapidly through a more intentional high/low mix of capability and platforms, the Navy said.

The last battleship delivered to the U.S. Navy was USS Missouri (BB-63) in the summer of 1944.

Austal USA Starts Construction on Fourth New Navy Utility Landing Craft



Release From Austal USA

MOBILE, Ala. – Austal USA celebrated the start of construction on the company's fourth U.S. Navy Landing Craft Utility (LCU) at the company's Mobile, Ala. ship manufacturing facility on December 18, 2025. Austal USA was awarded a \$91.5 million contract in September 2023 that includes options for up to 12 LCU and associated support efforts; construction contracts have been awarded to Austal USA for five of the 12.

"Austal USA is proud of the progress being made on these important connectors for the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps," commented Harley Combs, vice president of surface ship programs. "Having four of these landing craft vessels under construction, including one that will be delivered in early 2026, is a testament to our commitment of on-time delivery, made possible by our dedicated, highly talented workforce."

LCU are carried aboard amphibious assault ships to an objective area and used across a range of military operations

to move vehicles, personnel and cargo between the ship and shore. These connectors provide a heavy-lift capability and can carry about the same payload capacity as several C-17 aircraft.

LCU 1710, the first of four LCU vessels under construction at Austal USA, is scheduled for delivery to the Navy in early 2026. The LCU program is one of three in serial production on Austal USA's steel assembly line. Construction is also ongoing for three Navy Towing, Salvage and Rescue Ships (T-ATS) and two of Coast Guard Heritage-class Offshore Patrol Cutters (OPC).

USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee Returns to San Diego



NAVAL BASE SAN DIEGO (Dec. 19, 2025) USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG 123), assigned to the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group, returns to its homeport of Naval Base San Diego following operations in the U.S. 3rd, 5th and 7th Fleets. (U.S. Navy photo by Gunner's Mate 2nd Class Timothy Weber.)

[Release From USS Higbee](#)

SAN DIEGO, CA – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Lenah Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG 123) returned to its homeport of San Diego following a nine-month mission to the U.S. 3rd, 5th and 7th Fleet areas of operations (A00), Dec. 19.

Higbee departed San Diego with the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group (NIMSG) on Mar. 26, 2024, with an air wing detachment from Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 49. As part of Nimitz Carrier Strike Group (NIMCSG), Higbee conducted various missions, including protecting sea lines of communication, supporting maritime stability, and interdiction operations while in the U.S. 5th and 7th Fleet A00.

"I could not be prouder of this crew and their performance on Higbee's Maiden mission," said Cmdr. Stephen Skahen Jr., commanding officer of Higbee. "As Integrated Air and Missile Defense Commander, this team rose to the challenge and set the standard. From new mission sets in new fleets, interoperability with foreign allies and partners, and representing the United States with distinguished guests; this crew answered the call with enthusiasm and precision. It's my honor to be their Captain. Get Wins!"

While in 7th Fleet, Higbee participated in multinational operations, to include the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA) in Malaysia and exercises to increase interoperability and promote a free and open Indo-Pacific.

In 5th Fleet, Higbee participated in freedom of navigation operations and worked alongside partners and allies to include the Pakistani, French, Japanese, and Indian Navies. Higbee was honored to host Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Caine, and Commander, U.S. Fifth Fleet, Vice Adm. Wikoff as distinguished guests to demonstrate Higbee and its crew's capabilities.

Higbee and the detachment from HSM-49, traveled over 75,000 nautical miles, flew over 1,100 hours, conducted 32 replenishments-at-sea, and accomplished 22 sea and anchor details.

Higbee was led by Commanding Officer, Cmdr. Stephen "Jack" Skahen Jr., Executive Officer Cmdr. Donald Northrup, and Command Master Chief Gilberto Silvabecerra.

In addition to Higbee, the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group consists of USS Nimitz, flagship of Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 11, embarked staff of CSG-11, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 9, embarked Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 17, and the Arleigh Burke-

class guided-missile destroyers Curtis Wilbur (DDG 54), Wayne E. Meyer (DDG 108), and USS Gridley (DDG 101).

Higbee, assigned to the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group, returns to its homeport of Naval Base San Diego following nine months operating in the U.S. 5th and 7th Fleet A00. An integral part of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. 3rd Fleet leads naval forces in the Indo-Pacific and provides the realistic, relevant training necessary to execute the U.S. Navy's role across the full spectrum of military operations. U.S. 3rd Fleet works together with allies and partners to advance freedom of navigation and overflight, the rule of law and other principles that underpin security for the Indo-Pacific region.

Navy Announces New Small Surface Combatant



From SECNAV Public Affairs, Dec. 19, 2025

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Navy announced today its plan to introduce a new class of smaller combatant ships, the FF(X), as a critical component of the Navy's fleet of the future. The FF(X) will be a smaller, more agile surface combatant designed to complement the fleet's larger, multi-mission warships and enhance operational flexibility around the globe.

"To deliver at speed and scale, I've directed the acquisition of a new frigate class based on HII's Legend-Class National Security Cutter design: a proven, American-built ship that has been protecting U.S. interests at home and abroad," said John C. Phelan, Secretary of the Navy. "President Trump and the Secretary of War have signed off on this as part of the Golden Fleet. Our goal is clear: launch the first hull in the water in 2028. To expand capacity and production across our maritime industrial base, we will acquire these ships using a lead yard, and competitive follow-on strategy for multi-yard construction. Shipyards will be measured against one outcome: delivering combat power to the Fleet as fast as possible."

The FF(X) is a highly adaptable vessel. While its primary mission will be surface warfare, its ability to carry modular payloads and command unmanned systems enables it to execute a broad spectrum of operations, making it ready for the challenges of the modern maritime environment. Small surface combatants have always been essential to the fleet, handling a wide range of missions where a large warship isn't required. The FF(X) will continue this vital role, and will take on more routine operations, enhancing the fleet's operational flexibility, adaptability, and mission readiness.

"Like the Medium Landing Ship, leveraging a complete design and production baseline approach will allow the Navy and shipbuilders to reduce costs, schedule and technical risk," said Adm. Daryl Caudle, 34th Chief of Naval Operations. "We know this Frigate design works, we know it operates with the

Fleet, and most importantly, we know how to build it now.”

FF(X) is engineered for rapid, cost-effective production, enabling this vital capability to the fleet faster. This is made possible by basing the new frigate on HII’s proven Legend-Class National Security Cutter. This approach leverages a mature design to deliver ships to our sailors without delay.

The introduction of the FF(X) symbolizes the Navy’s 250-year commitment to innovation and maritime dominance. From seabed to space, the Navy delivers power for peace – always ready to fight and win. This milestone marks the Navy’s enduring legacy and commitment to shaping the future of maritime power.

HII to Build Small Surface Combatants for US Navy

From HII

PASCAGOULA, Miss., Dec. 19, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII’s (NYSE: HII) Ingalls Shipbuilding division has been selected by the U.S. Navy to design and build the future small surface combatant (SSC) ship, leveraging the proven design of the Ingalls-built *Legend*-class national security cutter (NSC). With a proven track record of building complex ships, and having the available facility capacity, Ingalls shipbuilders will once again engage in construction activities alongside its destroyer and amphibious ship shipbuilding lines where the national security cutters were built, using the same sequence of build.

“We look forward to supporting the Navy on this critical program,” said Chris Kastner, HII president and CEO. “Speed matters, and the NSC ship design is stable and produceable and will lead to predictable schedules. I have great confidence in the Ingalls team to execute this program, and in our ongoing efforts with our partners to successfully expand the U.S. shipbuilding industrial base to meet the Navy’s needs.”

Currently, Ingalls is simultaneously building three classes of ships (DDG 51 Flight III, LHA, and LPD Flight II) and modernizing the *Zumwalt*-class of guided missile destroyers with technology upgrades including the incorporation of the conventional prompt strike weapons system. Ingalls supported the U.S. Coast Guard for nearly two decades by building and delivering 10 *Legend*-class national security cutters (NSCs). The final cutter was delivered in October 2023.

HII has invested over \$1 billion in the infrastructure, facility and toolsets at Ingalls Shipbuilding, positioning the shipyard to support next-generation systems and platforms. HII this year has distributed shipbuilding work to 23 outsourcing partners, and established partnerships with international manufacturers, to explore meaningful ways to expand capacity including evaluation of adding an additional shipyard in the U.S.

USS Hawaii Returns Home from Deployment



JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii (Dec 8, 2025) – Senior Chief Culinary Specialist Vince Morales, assigned to Virginia-class fast-attack submarine USS Hawaii (SSN 776), meets his family pierside as Hawaii returns to its homeport at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam following a scheduled deployment, Dec. 8, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Nicholas Russell)

By [Chief Petty Officer Omar Dominquez](#) of [Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet](#), Dec.11, 2025

JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii (Dec.8, 2025) – Virginia-class fast-attack submarine USS Hawaii (SSN 776) returned to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam following a scheduled deployment, Dec. 8, 2025. During the deployment, Hawaii and its crew performed a wide range of operations in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

“Every day, this crew dedicated themselves to mastering their craft in combat arms,” said Cmdr. Daniel Jones, a native of Clarkston, Michigan and commanding officer of Hawaii. “For 85

percent of my crew, this was their first deployment, and they worked tirelessly as part of the team onboard the War Canoe. I could not be prouder of this Hawaii team and all that we have accomplished.”

Hawaii’s crew demonstrated exceptional teamwork in maintaining combat readiness throughout their deployment. “Onboard the war canoe, everybody rows, and it truly takes a team to sail a submarine out into the ocean deep and bring it home safely,” said Jones. “We invest in the war fighting capacity of every Sailor, training every day in case we were called upon to fight.”

During the deployment, Hawaii had the opportunity to conduct a scheduled port visit to Japan. Hawaii Chief of the Boat Master Chief Sonar Technician Submarine Demyer York, a native of Houston, Texas, noted that the visit was the first time traveling to Japan for many Sailors assigned to Hawaii. “The crew was able to get some rest and see the country,” said York. “We represented our crew, ship, submarine force and nation with pride and honor.”

During the return to home port ceremony, family and friends welcomed the crew back to the Aloha State, celebrating the Sailors’ achievements and safe return.

Hawaii’s keel was laid down August 27, 2004, and the submarine was commissioned May 5, 2007. Hawaii is the first commissioned vessel of its name. Measuring 377 feet long and displacing more than 7,800 tons, Hawaii has a crew of approximately 140 Sailors.

Hawaii is assigned to Submarine Squadron 1, capable of supporting various missions, including anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface ship warfare, strike warfare, special operations forces support, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance.

For more news from Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific

Fleet, follow us on Facebook and Instagram at <http://www.facebook.com/SUBPAC>,
<https://www.instagram.com/comsubpac/> or
visit <https://www.csp.navy.mil/>

Northrop Grumman Successfully Tests Mk 72 Solid Rocket Motor for U.S. Navy



Northrop Grumman's iteration of the Mk 72 solid rocket motor completes a static fire test on December 4 in Elkton, Maryland. (Photo Credit: Northrop Grumman)

ELKTON, Md. – Dec. 18, 2025 – Northrop Grumman Corporation (NYSE: NOC) completed a successful static fire test of a prototype Mk 72 solid rocket motor (SRM) at its advanced

propulsion production facility in Elkton, Maryland. This achievement highlights the company's commitment to deliver proven solid rocket motors at scale today, investment in capacity to meet Department of War needs and innovate for tomorrow.

The Northrop Grumman Mk 72 focuses on meeting current performance requirements while improving manufacturability, lead time and cost efficiency. The company is pioneering processes and techniques to design and deliver new and second source rocket motors faster than ever, by leveraging low risk solutions and innovative qualification and production methodologies.

Northrop Grumman's Mk 72 solid rocket motor solution:

- Proved the alignment of our digital twin and performance modeling technologies to real, measured motor performance through captured data in this U.S. Navy-funded static test.
- Addressed manufacturability, producibility, and supply chain resiliency challenges being experienced by other SRM suppliers through tailored trade studies.
- Established multiple sources for critical components, achieving supply chain resilience to ensure deliveries even as demand increases.

Expert:

Gordon LoPresti, senior director of propulsion systems and controls at Northrop Grumman: "The successful Mk 72 static fire test is a testament to the proven solid rocket motor technologies Northrop Grumman has delivered for over seven decades. We rapidly developed this innovative Mk 72 solution

that is tailorable to the U.S. Navy's needs, is low-risk and can be produced at scale."

Details:

As a leading provider in the propulsion industry, Northrop Grumman has already made substantial investments and continues to invest in state-of-the-art facilities, increased capacity, and advanced technologies to deliver effective weapons systems and solid rocket motors at an affordable scale. To meet the growing demand from customers, we are enhancing our capabilities for producing missile components, including solid rocket motors. With a legacy of over seventy years and the successful delivery of more than 1.3 million solid rocket motors, Northrop Grumman has become a trusted supplier of various sizes of solid rocket motors and advanced propulsion solutions that are crucial for deterring threats, delivering payloads, and supporting exploration in space.

Over the last seven years, Northrop Grumman has invested more than \$1 billion in advanced manufacturing facilities across the U.S. to increase solid rocket motor and missile-component production. That includes tripling capacity for tactical SRMs at the company's West Virginia production facility and, over the next five years, doubling production capacity at its large solid rocket motor facilities in Utah.

Our advanced and digital manufacturing capabilities, especially those at our advanced propulsion facility, position us as a generator for highly-skilled technical talent, contributing significantly to Maryland-Delaware-Pennsylvania region. We remain dedicated to being an employer of choice that invests in local communities, driving economic growth and partnerships with local colleges.