Future USNS Apalachicola Christened at Austal USA

Austal USA christened Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF-13) USNS Apalachicola during a ceremony at its state-of-the-art ship manufacturing facility on Nov. 13. *AUSTAL USA*

MOBILE, Ala. – Austal USA christened Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF-13) USNS Apalachicola during a ceremony at its state-of-the-art ship manufacturing facility Nov. 13, the company said in a release. Austal has delivered twelve EPFs since December 2012. USNS Apalachicola is slated for delivery this summer.

Former Sen. Kelly Loeffler, ship sponsor of USNS Apalachicola, performed the ceremonial bottle break over the bow of the ship, the 13th EPF designed and constructed by Austal USA and the second U.S. Navy ship to be named after the Florida coast city. The first Navy ship named Apalachicola (YTB-767), A Natick-class large harbor tug, was also built in Mobile at

Mobile Ship Repair in 1963.

“Today we celebrate the christening of the 13th EPF with an Austal team of more than 3,000 employees,” said Austal USA President Rusty Murdaugh. “Apalachicola’s sister ships are successfully supporting naval commands on the U.S. East and West Coasts, along with forward deployments in the Middle East, Africa, Mediterranean, South America, and Asia regions. In the coming months, this highly complex, high-speed ship will join the others to support our great Navy.”

EPFs have performed humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, maritime security, surveillance, command and control, counter narcotics, and additional operations in almost every region of the world. A unique characteristic of EPF 13 is that Austal USA has been contracted to design, procure, implement, and demonstrate EPF 13 as an autonomous platform, allowing EPF 13 to operate autonomously while retaining the capability for manned operation, reducing cost and centralizing ship operations to the bridge.

Apalachicola is one of two Expeditionary Fast Transport ships Austal USA is currently building for the U.S. Navy, while the start of construction on the future USNS Point Loma (EPF 15) will commence at the end of this month. Five littoral combat ships (LCS) are also under various stages of construction at the Gulf Coast shipyard.

Coast Guard, Partners Rescue 17 Mariners in 2 Days

The Coast Guard rescued four people from a raft in the water Npvember 10, 2021, approximately 13 nautical miles west of Cape Ommaney, Alaska. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Alexandria Preston*

ALAMEDA, Calif. – Over the course of two days, Nov. 11-12, Coast Guard crews, partner agencies and volunteers responding to three maritime emergencies rescued a total of 17 boaters in dire straits off the Alaska, California and Micronesia coasts, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said Nov. 12.

All three cases highlight the importance of mariners properly equipping and training for survival at sea, as well as the value of government and industry partnerships.

Off the coast of Federated States of Micronesia, six people survived at sea and were found Thursday on a 24-foot skiff located 40 miles southeast of the Mortlock Islands after an eight-day search involving the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Navy, Federated States of Micronesia first responders, Caroline Islands first responders and local good Samaritans.

The crew of a good Samaritan vessel, Nord Rubicon, rescued seven fishermen in a life raft 350 miles off the coast of Monterey, California, Wednesday after their 85-foot commercial fishing boat caught fire and became engulfed in flames. Multiple emergency position indicating radio beacon and personal locator beacon alerts immediately notified U.S. Coast Guard crews the vessel was in peril. Coast Guard watchstanders used the Automated Mutual-Assistance Vessel Rescue System to request help from nearby ships. The Nord Rubicon crew, located just 80 miles away, diverted from their course, retrieved the fishermen and took them safely to shore. Video is available here.

Wednesday, Coast Guard aircrews in Alaska rescued four fishermen after they abandoned their 53-foot fishing boat sinking 13 miles west of Cape Ommaney, Alaska. The Coast Guard Sector Juneau command duty officer for the rescue, Nicholas Meyer, credits their survival to their proper use of an EPIRB, VHF radio, survival suits, life raft and training.

“The safeguarding of lives at sea, particularly along our coastal waters and in support of our closest international partners, continues to be our highest priority,” said Vice Adm. Michael F. McAllister, commander Coast Guard Pacific Area. “This week’s impressive rescues demonstrate our resolve to be Semper Paratus – always ready. Thanks to the valuable relationships we’ve built with partner agencies, the valuable contributions of good Samaritans, and the focus these mariners had on ensuring they were ready for emergencies at sea, 17 people are alive today who may not otherwise be. This was a fitting tribute on Veteran’s Day yesterday, knowing the Coast Guard veterans who came before us laid the foundation for the incredible work our men and women do today.”

Navy to Christen Submarine New Jersey

USS Virginia, the first of the Virginia-class of fast-attack submarines, in 2004. The Navy will christen the newest Virginia-class submarine, the future USS New Jersey (SSN 796) on Saturday, Nov. 13. *GENERAL DYNAMICS ELECTRIC BOAT / Wikipedia*

ARLINGTON, Va. — The Navy will christen one of its newest Virginia-class fast-attack submarines, the future USS New Jersey (SSN 796), during an 11 a.m. EST ceremony Saturday, Nov. 13, 2021, at Huntington Ingalls Industries in Newport News, Virginia, the Defense Department said Nov. 12.

The principal speaker will be retired Adm. Michael Mullen, the 17th chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the 28th chief

of naval operations. Frederick “Jay” Stefany, acting assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development and acquisition and Vice Adm. Johnny Wolfe Jr., director, Strategic Systems Programs, will also deliver remarks. The submarine’s sponsor, Susan DiMarco Johnson, will christen the ship by breaking a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow in a time-honored Navy tradition.

“Shipbuilding has always played a key role in shaping the future of our national security,” said Mullen. “The impressive community of men and women involved in the construction of the future USS New Jersey should be extremely proud as they continue a legacy of extraordinary USS New Jersey ships and the future of our maritime security.”

The future USS New Jersey (SSN 796) is the third Navy vessel named in recognition of the state and is the 5th Block IV Virginia-class submarine to be built. The first USS New Jersey (Battleship No. 16) commissioned in 1906 and then sailed as part of the around-the-world cruise of the Great White Fleet. It spent most of its career in the Atlantic and West Indies, decommissioning in 1920.

The second USS New Jersey (BB 62) was commissioned in early 1943 before sailing for the Pacific. It served as a fast carrier escort and shore bombardment platform in the war against Japan, earning nine battle stars through the end of World War II. Although decommissioned in the post-war drawdown, it returned to service three more times over the next 45 years: once for the Korean War, once for Vietnam and again for service in the 1980s at the end of the Cold War. New Jersey now serves as a museum ship in Camden, New Jersey.

Virginia-class submarines are built to operate in the world’s littoral and deep waters while conducting antisubmarine warfare, anti surface ship warfare, strike warfare, special operations forces support, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, irregular warfare and mine warfare missions.

Their inherent stealth, endurance, mobility and firepower directly enable these submarines to support five of the six maritime strategy core capabilities: sea control, power projection, forward presence, maritime security and deterrence. Virginia-class submarines are replacing Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarines as they retire.

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 13th 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."

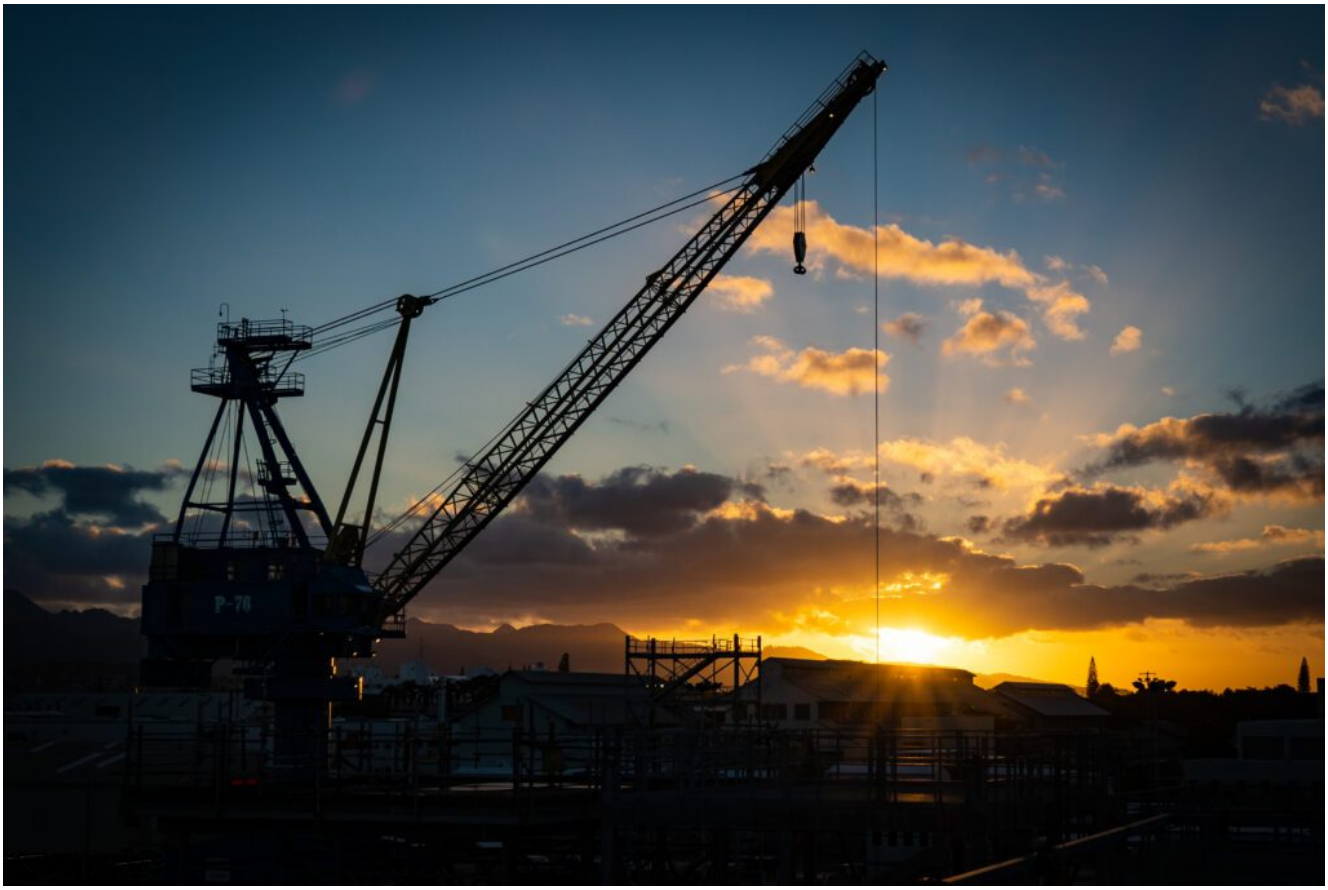
The future USNS Apalachicola is the 13th ship in its class and will be operated by the Navy's Military Sealift Command. The ship is named in honor of the city of Apalachicola and will be the second U.S. Navy ship to bear that name. The first Apalachicola (YTB 767) was a Natick-class large harbor tug 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.

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



Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard & IMF, (February 11, 2021) Sunrise over the Ko`olau 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/.

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.

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.

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.”

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.”

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.