

CNO Cites History, Recalls Founding Fathers in Reinforcing Message of a 'Decisive' Navy



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John M. Richardson during his keynote address at the Sea Services Luncheon at Sea-Air-Space 2019 on May 6. Lisa Nipp

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – George Washington spoke May 6 at the Navy League's Sea-Air-Space exposition – by way of Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John M. Richardson, who used a famous quote by the Founding Father from 1781 to remind the audience of the necessity today – more than ever – of a “decisive” U.S. Navy.

Washington's quote is, “Without a decisive naval force we can do nothing definitive, and with it, everything honorable and glorious.”

“The Navy was there at the very beginning. We're in the nation's DNA,” the 31st CNO told the audience, delivering a bit of a history lesson during a keynote that also touched on Thomas Jefferson's belief that a potent Navy was essential to protect trade, commerce and the American economy.

“America depends on the seas,” Richardson said.

“The Navy was there at the very beginning. We're in the nation's DNA.”

CNO Adm. John M. Richardson

Much of the nation's economy, he reminded the audience, runs through the Far East now. He talks often these days about the resurgent "Great Power Competition" – and the CNO wasted no time doing so again at Sea-Air-Space, reminding the audience of China's naval expansion and mentioning such events as recent Chinese missile exercises in the Mediterranean and Baltic Sea.

"That's where your Navy is going to be," Richardson said, adding that a third of world trade runs through the South China Sea. "That's why the United States Navy is there."

He also mentioned Fleet Adm. Chester W. Nimitz, who believed the Navy's role is to deter conflict but still ensure prosperity.



The Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz Award for 2019 went May 6 to James Herdt (second from left), CEO of Herdt Consulting and a retired Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy. Helping to present the award were (from left) Navy League National President Alan Kaplan, Adm. Richardson, Herdt and Navy League Executive Director Mike Stevens. Lisa Nipp

Richardson took part in ceremonies before his keynote address to laud recipients of two Navy League awards – including one that is named after Nimitz and honors an industry leader who has made a major contribution to the nation's maritime strength.

The Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz Award for 2019 went to James Herdt, CEO of Herdt Consulting and a retired Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy. "I know my name is on this award," Herdt said, but in thanking Navy League he accepted it on behalf of the people of his consulting firm.



The Albert A. Michelson Award went to Dr. Bruce G. Danly, director of research at the Naval Research Laboratory. Lisa Nipp

The second honor of the day, the Albert A. Michelson Award, went to Dr. Bruce G. Danly, director of research at the Naval Research Laboratory

(NRL). He credited the men of women of NRL, "who ensure that our forces have the best technology, unmatched by none."

Navy League National President Alan Kaplan and Navy League Executive Director Mike Stevens, also a retired Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, the 13th, helped present the Nimitz and Michelson awards. Richardson also spoke about the Navy's recruiting and retention in a recovering economy and added that the sea service has met its recruiting goals for more than 12 years in a row. "What is it that attracts people" to the Navy? the CNO asked. "Honorable and glorious, no better organization to join than the Navy to espouse those two ideals."

AeroVironment, Kratos Partner on UAS Launched From Mother-Ship Drone



AeroVironment's Switchblade UAS (shown here) would be able to tube-launch from a Kratos mothership. AeroVironment Inc.

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – Longtime unmanned aircraft provider AeroVironment and Kratos Defense and Security Systems announced on March 7 that they have formed a new partnership to jointly develop and

demonstrate unmanned aircraft systems that could launch from another UAS to tackle near-peer denied environments – an increasingly important domain in light of the “Great Power Competition” era, defined by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John M. Richardson.

This collaboration aims at demonstrating the ability to launch, communicate with and control a small, tube-launched loitering aircraft that jettisons from a larger, runway-independent UAS. The goal of the is to coordinate the effects of smaller AeroVironment systems and relay information back to the mother UAS, developed by Kratos.

The systems-of-systems would communicate back their findings to a ground-control station or be able to act upon the information they gather to modify their mission tasks. Kratos has demonstrated the mothership, its Mako Tactical UAS, which it developed and demonstrated in 2015, and AeroVironment has made its tube-launched Switchblade since 2012.

“Together, we are developing and will demonstrate the integration of tube-launched UAS and tactical missile systems into long-range, high-speed and low-cost unmanned systems for their transport and delivery into near-peer, denied environments,” said Trace Stevenson, vice president and deputy general manager of AeroVironment’s UAS business.

“With sufficient onboard autonomy, sensors, payloads and an integrated system design, we aim to demonstrate the deployment

of large quantities of smart systems that overwhelm and disable enemy systems, while bending the cost curve to make it financially prohibitive for unfriendly nations to challenge our armed forces.”

Coast Guard Outlines Process for Filling Mission Gaps

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – The Coast Guard has a four-step process for setting and making requirements on missions to prevent and mitigate mission gaps.

“We look at a problem and find the best way to solve it,” Capt. Michael MacMillan, chief of the office of requirements and analysis, said during a floor presentation here at Navy League’s Sea-Air-Space 2019.

The service accomplishes this by publishing four different types of documents. The first is a capability and analysis report. The second, which marks the beginning stages of the acquisition process, is drawing up a mission needs statement. From there the service will put together a concept of operations document, the primary purpose of which is coming up with ideas for filling in capability. The final document produced is the operational requirements document, which outlines specific requirements, such as how fast a

ship needs to go or how long an aircraft needs to stay airborne.

“We don’t get to make our own missions, but we make requirements on the ones we have,” MacMillan said.

The Department of Homeland Security agency has 13 core missions, with a bulk of those coming from search-and-rescue missions and drug interdiction.

The captain said that its important industry representatives understand the process to help themselves and the Coast Guard.

Rescue Swimmer Program Starts After Tragedy at Sea

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – The Coast Guard rescue swimmer program was born after a deadly ship sinking in 1983 off the coast of Virginia that claimed the lives of 31 people.

During a stormy February night, the 605-foot SS Marine Electric, a bulk carrying ship, capsized about 30 miles off the coast of Chincoteague, Virginia.

The service sent a helicopter to assist in the rescue mission. At that time the Coast Guard did not have any rescue swimmers, and when they would respond to a distress call, they’d lower the

basket and the person in the water would have to swim toward it to then be raised up inside the helicopter.

“Unfortunately, it didn’t always work the best,” Aviation Survival Technician Chief Petty Officer Eric Biehn said during a floor presentation.

The service spent two hours trying to rescue the 34 people in the water after the ship capsized, but with the weather conditions, and freezing water, was unable to lift anyone up. The Navy came, as they had rescues swimmers at the time, and was able to save three lives with their rescue swimmer.

The following year, the Coast Guard put funding in start a rescue swimmer program in the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 1984.

“That maritime disaster was enough to wake up Congress and the United States,” Biehn said.

By 1985, the first team of rescue swimmers was deployed to a base in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, and by 1991 the program was fully deployed in 23 bases.

Unmanned Systems Cited as Key by Future of Aviation Panelists



The Navy has previously teamed the MQ-8 Fire Scout UAS and MH-60s helicopters in a squadron. Northrop Grumman.

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md.

– Future naval aviation will benefit from the fifth-generation F-35s,

manned-unmanned teaming and the possibility of greatly enhanced rotary wing

aircraft being developed under the Future Vertical Lift (FVL) program, a panel

of Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard officials said.

The naval

services also are focusing on improving the readiness of their existing

aircraft, and some types of aircraft are coming close to meeting the 80% readiness

goal set by former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, the officials told a forum on

the future of naval aviation at the Navy League's annual Sea-Air-Space

exposition May 6.

Lt. Gen. Steven

Rudder, deputy Marine Corps commandant for aviation, said the Corps' legacy

FA-18 Hornets hit the 80% readiness mark last week and were maintaining

availabilities in the high 70% rate. And the Corps' new F-35Bs were operating

in the 70% range during their recent deployments in the

western Pacific, Rudder said.

Angie

Knappenberger, deputy director for naval warfare, said the Navy conducted a study to determine what would be needed to improve readiness and found that “we wouldn’t get there unless we changed our processes.” They have had to improve their support infrastructure, which had suffered from the years of reduced funding under sequestration and on the spare parts supply system, she said.

Looking to the future, Rudder, Knappenberger and Vice Adm. Daniel Abel, the Coast Guard deputy commandant for operations and a veteran helicopter pilot, all cited unmanned systems they were looking to add.

“Autonomy is really hard, but there are some things you can do,” and they are seeing a lot of focus on manned-unmanned teaming, Knappenberger said. She cited the Navy’s teaming of the MQ-8 Fire Scout UAS and MH-60s helicopters in a squadron and will do the same thing with the MQ-4C Triton long-range UAS and the P-8A patrol aircraft.

Rudder said the Marines were narrowing their focus on requirements for their primary unmanned aircraft program, the Marine Air-Ground Task Force Unmanned Expeditionary

system, commonly called MUX, which is to be a large Group 5 rotary-wing UAS that can operate from amphibious ships. After initially looking at a wide range of capabilities, including strike, the Marines currently are leaning toward an early warning platform that could provide over-the-horizon surveillance and network communications for the expeditionary task forces.

Rudder said the Marines also are closely monitoring the Army-led FVL program, which is intended to produce a rotary-wing manned aircraft with much higher speed and range than current helicopters. Although the two prototypes being produced for the FVL program are a composite helicopter and a tilt-rotor, Rudder said the Marines' preference is a tilt-rotor because they know their tilt-rotor MV-22 Ospreys are fast and they want something that can keep up with them.

Abel said the Coast Guard has been testing contractor-operated Scan Eagle UAS on their national security cutters and are looking at other unmanned systems.

Newport News to Utilize Unique Schedule on JFK, New

Cost-Saving Contract on Two More Carriers



The final piece of the underwater hull of the future aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy is lowered into place last year at Huntington Ingalls Industries' Newport News Shipbuilding. Matt Hildreth/HII

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – The combination of a two-ship purchase and investments in new technologies and facilities at the Newport News shipyard will enable the U.S. Navy to obtain future aircraft carriers with increased survivability and lethality at much lower cost, the carrier program manager said on May 6.

The future Gerald

R. Ford class of nuclear-powered carriers will provide the increased

capabilities needed in the era of "Great Power Competition" – and the two-ship

contract will save an estimated \$4 billion, program manager Capt. Philip Malone

told a Naval Sea Systems Command briefing at the Navy League's annual

Sea-Air-Space exposition here.

Malone is

responsible for the next three of the Ford-class ships, CVN-79, the future John

F. Kennedy, which is under construction, and CVNs 80 and 81, which will be

produced under the dual-ship contract signed in January.

In addition to

the \$4 billion estimated savings from that contract, Malone said those two

ships will benefit from the use of an integrated digital

shipbuilding system

Newport News is adopting and shipyard improvements that will allow major reductions in the man hours required.

CVNs 80 and 81

also will be built with greater survivability and lethality from an advanced radar, greater electrical power generation, integration of the fifth-generation F-35C Lightning II joint strike fighters and increased aircraft sortie rate over the legacy Nimitz class carriers, he said.

Malone said the

Navy will acquire the Kennedy under a unique two-phase delivery, with the first phase providing a carrier that can test its aircraft launch and recovery systems and basic ship functions followed by a second phase that will install the advanced air surveillance radar and other combat systems. The unusual delivery process was necessary to have Kennedy operational in time to replace the Nimitz, which will hit its 50-year service life later this decade, he explained.

Malone cited

Newport News' investments in the digital or 3D computerized shipbuilding process and in new facilities that will enable more ship components to be produced out of the weather. Those improvements were made with monetary incentives from the Navy and will sharply reduce the hours required to build

the ships, he said.

Navy Unmanned Maritime Systems Office Expects Major Developments in Next Couple Years



The Orca extra-large UUV recently completed its design stage. Lockheed Martin

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – The Navy’s Unmanned Maritime Systems program office is juggling the development of a lot of unmanned surface and underwater vehicles right now, and they expect numerous big developments for several programs in the next year or two.

Capt. Pete Small, Unmanned Maritime Systems program manager, told attendees at the Navy League’s Sea-Air-Space symposium May 6 that a new draft request for proposals was recently released for a medium unmanned surface vehicle (USV), and the Navy was “aggressively” moving forward with that program.

The Navy is also accelerating a large USV program, and an analysis of alternatives for that effort will wrap up by the end of this year, Small added. The program hopes for a fiscal 2020 start for that platform, and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson personally wants to see the project bear fruit “ASAP,” the captain said.

On the unmanned underwater vehicles (UUV) side of the house, the extra-large UUV Orca recently finished the design phase.

It will feature a modular payload and the Navy hopes to take delivery at the end of calendar year 2020, with buys continuing through 2022, Small said.

The Snakehead large-displacement UUV is expected to complete its critical design review this quarter, and the Navy hopes to have it in the water by fiscal 2021.

And the Razorback, slated for the fiscal 2020 timeframe, would be hosted on a submarine and the Navy is developing a torpedo tube-launched version. The Navy recently issued a request for information on that project and received some responses from industry.

Saudi LCS Construction to Begin by End of 2019



The Saudi version of the LCS will be modeled off of the Freedom-class littoral combat ships, like the USS Sioux City (LCS 11) and USS Milwaukee (LCS 5) shown here. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Marianne Guemo

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – Construction on a version of the Littoral Combat Ship for the government of Saudi Arabia is on track to start by the end of this calendar year, according to a Navy official.

Ghadeer Halim, deputy program manager for International Small Combatants (PMS 525), said after a presentation from her program office at Navy League's Sea-Air-Space symposium May 6 that the current plan calls for the construction of four LCSs for the Saudi government with the option for four more for a possible total of eight ships.

Lockheed Martin was awarded a \$282 million contract for design and materials for the construction of the four Multi-Mission Surface Combatant ships back in November.

The ships will differ from the U.S. Navy LCS in that the module will be permanent and fixed rather than replaceable with a different module.

The United States and Saudi Arabia came to an agreement on an \$11.2 billion deal back in 2015 that included a modified version of the LCS.

The ship would be based on Lockheed's Freedom-class LCS, one of two different LCS types. (Austal USA builds the Independence-class.)

Indo-Pacific Policy More Complex Than Only China and Russia



Panelists discuss the complexities of a region dominated by two near-peer superpowers but also full of friendly nations.
Seapower / Victoria Bottlick

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – As the nation grapples with striking a balance between competing with great power challenges and preparing for the possibility of conflict, the Indo-Pacific region poses perhaps the most significant challenge, Dr. Mara Karlin believes.

Karlin, director of strategic studies at the Johns Hopkins School of International Studies, made

that observation as she introduced a panel of four military and civilian government experts, each of whom plays a key role in formulating related policies in the region.

It stands to reason that each panelist recognized the increasing threats posed by China and Russia. Still, they noted that the matrix is considerably more complicated.

Eyes cannot be focused on the two large superpowers at the expense of other friendly nations in the region. Also, while China and Russia loom as potential adversaries, it is imperative that the U.S. and its partners work as closely together with them on areas of common interest.

Representing the Coast Guard and Marine Corps, Vice Adm. Linda Fagan and Gayle Von Eckartsburg discussed how each respective service shares a forward-deployed mission that makes their presence essential in the Pacific. Both Fagan and Von Eckartsburg emphasized that neither service is a "garrison force."

"The Coast Guard has never been more relevant," said Fagan, the service's Pacific Area commander. "The demand for the signal we bring into the region has never been higher."

Besides watching Chinese and Russian activities and fostering goodwill among allies, Fagan

placed equal importance in “modeling legitimate behavior,” so that “China can see what a responsible Coast Guard looks like.”

If the Chinese can learn from the U.S. Coast Guard how to conduct, for example, more effective search-and-rescue operations, so be it.

Von Eckartsburg, director of the Marine Corps Pacific Division office of Plans, Policy and Operations, described a “persistent forward force.” Of the roughly 40,000 Marines now deployed around the world, the vast majority is west of the International Dateline, she said.

“We’re in a constant state of motion, leveraging presence to maintain readiness at the same time,” Von Eckartsburg said.

Joel Szabat the Assistant Secretary of Transportation for Aviation and International Affairs, discussed the three most important “pillars” of stability in the region – economy, governance and security.

“We need to remember that this is not about containing or encircling any one country,” Szabat said. “We want to help people, regardless of who our competitors are.”

Security commitments with U.S. allies would assure the free flow of commerce, Szabat said. The nation faces significant related challenges in this arena, he

believes. U.S.

sealift is old and needs to be recapitalized, he said. The size of the U.S.

merchant fleet, which handles much of the military's sealift capability, is

good enough for small-to-medium operations.

"We don't have

enough mariners, or U.S.-flagged merchant marine," Szabat said.

Walter Douglas,

who heads the State Department Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, cited

an Asian Development Bank statistic that states the region needs an estimated

\$1.7 trillion in investment to sustain healthy economic growth.

"There's nowhere

near that amount of money available in one state," Szabat said.

The emphasis,

then, would be to have "money centers" and corporations step in with

"transparent" investments. The government and private sectors would ensure that

such funding would not be subject to the troubles endemic to secret

deals.

"That money gets

spent in the wrong places," Szabat said. "We can't have that.

We need open

governance. We have to see [to it] that investment laws are transparent."

Equally

imperative, Douglas said, is working to ensure that investments are evenly distributed. While putting money into traditional stable partners like Japan, Australia and Singapore would remain important, more could be done to help open emerging economies. He said that Vietnam, for example, badly wants help developing its infrastructure – from anywhere but China.

SAS Panelists Express Full Support for Space Force; Warn of Personnel, Logistical Challenges of Standing Up New Military Branch



Sea services leaders at Sea-Air-Space – (from left) Navy Rear Adms. David Hahn and Christian Becker, Marine Brig. Gen. Lorna Mahlock and Coast Guard Capt. Greg Rothrock – showed support for the U.S. Space Force, but warned standing up a new military branch is a significant personnel and logistical challenge – and won't happen overnight. Lisa Nipp
NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – Sea services leaders expressed unwavering support during a May 6 panel discussion for the nation's future ventures in space – no matter whether the effort is split among the nation's existing military branches or a new United States Space Force is created.

The panelists at Navy League's Sea-Air-Space 2019 reiterated

the need to increase the nation's space initiatives as rival nations such as China, Russia, India and Japan build their push toward the stars.



The panelists debate the U.S. Space Force. Lisa Nipp "Space is no longer an uncontested environment," said Rear Adm. Christian Becker, commander, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command.

As other countries stake their spots in space, the U.S. needs to hold its "ground," like when the maritime forces were first formed, Becker explained.

"Space is very much akin to the maritime," Becker said. "We first went to sea to trade, and then we went to sea when we realized other people could stop our trade. ... Made sure we can maintain freedom at sea."

Don't expect the U.S. Space Force to appear overnight, however. Services like the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard are still evaluating the personnel needed to staff an agency dedicated to the Final Frontier.

"Space is no longer an uncontested environment."

Rear Adm. Christian Becker, commander, Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command

"We are assessing as part of the [Navy Department] how we can meet the mission needs of the Space Force," Becker said. "We're not there yet at our level of understanding, but that's what we have to pursue."

Finding and retaining the talent necessary to develop a fully operational Space Force is a significant challenge, said Brig. Gen. Lorna Mahlock, the Marine Corps' chief information officer.

"It's exciting to think about space ... but we have to make sure we develop the skill [to maintain a Space Force] and do it right," Mahlock said.

However, she emphasized that, no matter the obstacles, the Marine Corps "embraces building the Space Force" and will offer its full support.