

Pentagon Report Cites Rapidly Modernizing Chinese Navy



A Chinese Type 052C destroyer, the Changchun, in Malaysia in 2017.

ARLINGTON, Virginia

– China’s first home-built aircraft carrier is likely to join the People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) fleet this year, a highlight of China’s effort to modernize its fleet with modern, farther-ranging platforms and weapons.

Construction

began on a second aircraft carrier in 2018, said a new report to Congress from the Defense Department, “Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China 2019.” This carrier, which should reach the PLAN fleet in 2022, is likely to be fitted with a catapult aircraft launch system, according to the report.

A coastal

defense navy during the Cold War, the PLAN is continuing a two-decade build-up with numerous blue-water platforms

“The PLAN is

rapidly replacing obsolescent, generally single-purpose platforms in favor of larger, multirole combatants featuring advanced anti-ship, anti-air and anti-submarine weapons and sensors,” the report said. “This

modernization

aligns with China's growing emphasis on the maritime domain and increasing demands on the PLAN to conduct operational tasks at expanding distances from the Chinese mainland using multimission, long-range, sustainable naval platforms possessing robust self-defense capabilities."

"Modernization

of China's submarine force remains a high priority for the PLAN," the report said. "The PLAN currently operates four nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBN), six nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSN) and 50 conventionally powered attack submarines (SS). The speed of growth of the submarine force has slowed and will likely grow to between 65 and 70 submarines by 2020."

The PLAN also

continues to modernize its surface warship fleet.

"The PLAN is rapidly replacing obsolescent, generally single-purpose platforms in favor of larger, multirole combatants featuring advanced anti-ship, anti-air and anti-submarine weapons and sensors."

A new Pentagon report to Congress on China's naval modernization

China has

built new guided-missile cruisers (CGs), guided-missile destroyers (DDGs) and guided-missile frigates (FFGs) that "will significantly upgrade the PLAN's air

defense, anti-ship, and anti-submarine capabilities. These assets will be critical as the PLAN expands operations into distant seas beyond the range of shore-based air defense systems” the report said.

China has built four Renhai-class CGs over the last two years and has several more under construction. The lead CG is scheduled to join the fleet in 2019. At least three Luyang-class DDGs joined the PLAN fleet in 2018, bringing the total to nine with at least four more under construction. A larger variant forthcoming, Luyang III, will be equipped with a vertical launcher system.

China also emphasizes small surface combatants, with 27 or more Jiangkai II FFGs and more than 40 Jiangdao-class corvettes, with more of both types under construction.

All new attack submarines and surface combatants are being armed with modern anti-ship missiles.

“The PLAN recognizes that long-range ASCMs require a robust, over-the-horizon targeting capability to realize their full potential,” the new Pentagon report said. “China is investing in reconnaissance, surveillance, command, control and communications systems at the strategic, operational and tactical levels to provide high-fidelity targeting information to surface and subsurface launch

platforms.”

China also is building a fleet of amphibious warfare ships, adding three to the current five Yuzhao-class amphibious transport dock ships.

China also is expanding the PLAN marine corps from two brigades and 10,000 marines to seven brigades and 30,000 marines by 2020. The Chinese marine corps also now has its own commander and a new central headquarters.

Sealift Command to Welcome New Navajo Class of Tugboats to Fleet



An artist rendering of the future USNS Navajo (T-TATS 6). U.S. Navy photo illustration.

NORFOLK, Virginia

– A new class of towing and salvage vessels will join the U.S. Navy’s Military

Sealift Command (MSC) in fiscal year 2021.

“The new

Navajo class replaces the Powhatan class T-ATF fleet tugs, which provide

towing, diving and standby submarine rescue services for the U.S. Navy, and the

Safeguard class T-ARS rescue and salvage vessels, whose

mission includes, salvage, diving, towing and heavy-lift operations,” said Tim Schauwecker, MSC towing and salvage project officer.

“MSC and the fleet commanders will benefit by having new, state-of-the-art and highly capable platforms that can perform a wide range of missions ranging from towing and salvage, diving operations and submarine rescue,” he said.

The primary mission of the fleet tug is towing and submarine rescue with the secondary mission of salvage. Rescue and salvage ships conduct salvage with a secondary mission of towing. The Navajo class will combine the capabilities of both classes into a single class for greater efficiency, Schauwecker said.

“This new ship class will ... eventually restore the towing and salvage fleet to an end strength of eight hulls.”

Tim Schauwecker, Sealift command’s towing and salvage project officer

“The major improvements include a significant bollard pull increase that will enable the ship to tow virtually any ship currently in the [Navy] inventory. The new ships include additional deck space to account for the requirements of the submarine rescue diving and recompression system, including transfer under pressure, a 40-ton heave compensating crane to assist with underwater

salvage operations such as lifting aircraft wreckage out of the water, dynamic positioning, which provides the ability to automatically maintain position and heading in the water by using its propellers and thrusters despite the environmental conditions, and berthing for an additional 42 personnel [other than crew] in two- to six-person staterooms. The ship will also have modern automation and engineering systems that include environmentally friendly main propulsion diesel engines," he said.

MSC search-and-rescue vessels have contributed to a variety of missions around the world, including recovery efforts for John F. Kennedy Jr.'s plane crash, the USS Guardian grounding, TWA flight 800, Hurricane Katrina and the SS El Faro sinking.

MSC took delivery of the Powhatan class of fleet ocean tugs between 1978 and 1981. These ships were designed and built based on commercial offshore towing vessels and were manned by civilian mariners. Salvor and Grasp were commissioned in 1985 and 1986 and were sailed as USS ships by U.S. Navy Sailors. The Navy decommissioned the Safeguard class of salvage ships in 2006 and 2007 and transferred them to MSC, where they were redesignated as T-ARS and manned by civilian mariners.

According

to the Congressional Budget Office's 2019 shipbuilding analysis, the procurement of the new Navajo class aligns with the Navy's plan to expand the fleet to 355 ships.

"This new ship class will bring a significant capability increase to the U.S. Navy and Military Sealift Command and eventually restore the towing and salvage fleet to an end strength of eight hulls," Schauwecker said.

Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer announced in March the new class of ships will be named Navajo, in honor of the major contributions the Navajo people have made to the armed forces.

The lead ship will start construction in May, with delivery of the first five ships in fiscal 2021 and 2022, followed by one ship per year through 2025.

Navy's Heliborne EW Pods Set for Delivery at Year's End

ARLINGTON, Va. – Lockheed Martin is set to deliver to the Navy the first Advanced Off-Board Electronic Warfare AOEW pods at the end of 2019, the company's program manager said.

The first set of pods is on track for delivery in December

2019 or January 2020, said Joe Ottovanio, director of electronic warfare solutions for Lockheed Martin, speaking to reporters May 1 in Arlington.

Ottoviano also said the program expects a Milestone C decision for Low-Rate Initial Production of the AOEW pod in December.

The AOEW is a pod designed to be carried aloft by and MH-60R or MH-60S helicopter and function as an extension of a warship's SLQ-32(V)6 electronic warfare system.

HII's Digital Shipbuilding Transformation Earns 2019 CIO 100 Award

NEWPORT

NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries' Newport News Shipbuilding division

has been named a recipient of a 2019 CIO 100 Award for adopting

business-aligned IT strategies during its integration of modern technologies

into shipbuilding. The ongoing initiative, known as Integrated Digital

Shipbuilding (iDS), is transforming the way ships are being designed and built.

The annual

awards program, sponsored by IDG's CIO magazine and the CIO Executive Council,

celebrates organizations that are using IT in innovative ways to deliver

business value, optimize business processes, enable growth or improve relationships with customers.

Newport

News is being recognized for its use of technology business management strategies to bolster IT cost transparency and build trust, which helped the company to embrace a digital-first mindset in adopting leading-edge technologies.

Since the company's digital transformation began two years ago, Newport News has introduced laser scanning, augmented reality, modeling and simulation, and additive manufacturing into processes to increase efficiency, safety and affordability. The digital shipbuilding efforts also include transitioning from traditional two-dimensional paper-based instructions – the company's primary method for conveying design data for more than a century – to digital formats. The company currently is developing digital work packages for the aircraft carrier Enterprise (CVN 80), which will be the first ship built completely paperless, and preparing to go digital with the new class of ballistic submarines, the Columbia class.

“Digital

shipbuilding is the largest transformative initiative, digital or otherwise, that Newport News has embarked upon since switching from

diesel to nuclear-powered aircraft carriers in the 1960s,” said Bharat Amin, Newport News’ vice president and chief information officer. “I feel proud of my team for helping to drive change and empowering shipbuilders with the tools to build today’s warships with tomorrow’s technology. It’s an exciting time to work in IT and at HII.”

The company will be recognized at the CIO 100 Symposium and Awards Ceremony on Aug. 21 in Colorado.

0-Level Reform: Lemoore Strike Fighter Squadrons Returning More Jets to Flight Line



F/A-18E Super Hornets from Strike Fighter Squadron 136 “Knighthawks” fly in formation during a photo exercise over the California coast. The Knighthawks are an operational U.S. Navy strike fighter squadron based at Naval Air Station Lemoore, California, and are attached to Carrier Air Wing One. U.S. Navy / Chief Mass Communication Specialist Shannon Renfro

LEMOORE, Calif. – Two Navy Super Hornet squadrons at Naval Air Station

(NAS) Lemoore, California, have reduced maintenance turnaround times and are boosting aircraft readiness as part of naval aviation's maintenance reform initiatives under the Naval Sustainment System (NSS).

The NSS initiative leverages best practices from commercial industry to help reform aspects of naval aviation's fleet readiness centers, organizational-level (O-level) maintenance, supply chain, engineering, and maintenance organizations and governance processes. Initially, the NSS is concentrating on getting the Navy F/A-18 Super Hornet fleet healthy before rolling out the approach to every Navy and Marine Corps aircraft.

Strike Fighter Squadrons (VFA) 22 and 122 were the first to implement O-level maintenance reforms following visits from commercial aviation consultants in December and January.

Reforms include assigning crew leads to manage the maintenance on each aircraft and reorganizing hangar spaces, parts cages and tools.

Squadrons Empower Petty Officers

The most significant change has been the delegation of ownership over each aircraft in for repairs from the squadrons' maintenance material control

officers, or MMCOs, to individual crew leads comprised mostly of first-class petty officers.

Traditionally, MMCOs must keep track of the status of each aircraft in for maintenance as well as the Sailors working on them, and that's in addition to deciding what maintenance actions are required for each jet and which aircraft are safe to release for flight. Assigning junior-level crew leads to each jet removes some of that burden from the MMCOs and has led to improved communication and increased accountability.

"The crew leads are not making the maintenance decisions; that's still done by the maintenance controllers, but what it allows for is it sheds those maintenance control chiefs of having to know every status of every jet, of every person, all day long," said Lt. Cmdr. Brandon Michaelis, O-level reform champion for Commander, Naval Air Forces (CNAF). "So they can focus on releasing safe aircraft by empowering those first-class petty officers, who can now own that process and know where the people are, know the status of the parts, and brief that up the line."

For the petty officers accustomed to doing their job a certain way, reform did not come easy. But the benefits have been evident, said Aviation

Electronics Technician

1st class Victor Perez, the leading petty officer for VFA-122's avionics shop and one of the squadron's selected crew leads.

"At first the changes didn't feel productive, because we didn't really understand it, but now that we've had some time with it, it's definitely helped improve our processes and communication," Perez said.

Used to focusing exclusively on avionics, Perez said serving as a crew lead has forced him to approach the maintenance of his assigned aircraft more holistically. The increased responsibility of bringing an entire jet back online ultimately leads to a greater sense of accomplishment, he said.

"You get kind of personal with an aircraft," he added. "Some aircraft are easy, and some are a struggle to get through. Rather than working on a jet for a couple hours to complete the one thing assigned to your shop and then moving on to the next jet, this way you take more ownership toward completing the whole thing."

In some cases, exceptional second-class petty officers have also been considered for crew lead, including Aviation Electrician's Mate 2nd Class Michaela Zadra, a member of VFA-22's quality assurance division. Having crew leads that can focus

on individual jets – and communicate with the various maintenance shops – relieves maintenance control from having to keep near-constant track of as many as a dozen aircraft at a time, Zadra said.

“Crew leads have cut down on empty communication, so now I, as a maintainer who is not stuck behind a maintenance control desk, can walk around to each shop and talk to them personally,” she said. “There’s a lot more communication one-on-one, instead of one-to-one-to-one and then to maintenance control. It’s definitely helped with communication and productivity with the jets.”

In tandem with the crew lead concept has been the utilization of a whiteboard alongside each aircraft that informs anyone passing by as to the jet’s status. Information on the boards includes the names of the crew chief and additional personnel assigned to the aircraft, what maintenance is needed, and the expected completion date.

“If you physically walk through one of our hangars today, you can tell which ones have been reformed and which ones haven’t,” said Vice Adm. DeWolfe H. Miller III, CNAF. “You know the exact status of that airplane, you know who’s working on that airplane and when they expect that airplane to be up. There’s going to be

a crew lead who has that ownership.”

In addition, the two squadrons have begun treating the spaces around each Super Hornet in their hangars as dedicated workspaces, with all necessary tools and parts kept beside the aircraft rather than back in one of the various maintenance shops.

“We’re now treating the airplane a little more, as an analogy, like a patient getting surgery,” Miller said. “I am the doctor as the maintainer, and I said, ‘scalpel,’ and my tool is right there. What we’re seeing with that sort of approach, having our tools next to the airplane, having our status board next to the airplane, everything is going to the point of action being around that airframe, and we’re seeing a really significant improvement in our mission capable rates.”

Both squadrons have also begun keeping larger parts in a centralized “parts cage” in the hangar, dramatically reducing the amount of time Sailors spend traversing the hangar in search of equipment rather than with their hands on an aircraft.

“It may be five minutes here or five minutes there, but over the course of a day across all those technicians, that’s a lot of time saved by having

those parts close to where the job is being done," Michaelis said.

The 84-Day Corrosion Inspection

Together, the changes have helped the squadrons achieve one of the first goals of 0-level reform – reducing the turnaround time for routine 84-day corrosion inspections down from 10-14 days to three days.

The 84-day inspection, so called because Super Hornets receive one every 84 days, is one of the most common checks conducted on the jet and is officially supposed to take three days.

"Our average is about 10 to 14 days," Miller said. "It's really important for us to put some discipline into achieving these checks on a predictable three-day pattern."

After meeting with consultants, VFA-22 was the first squadron to pilot reforms aimed at reducing the 84-day inspection time.

"They were able to do it in two-and-a-half shifts, and as we've been going through the process with other squadrons, we realize that yes, three days in itself is sufficient, once we weed out the inefficiencies," said Lt. Hasely Clarke, assistant maintenance officer for Strike Fighter Wing Pacific.

Clarke

said many of those inefficiencies arose from work centers waiting on one another to be finished with an aircraft before beginning their own tasks.

“There was a lot of waiting time in between,” he said.

Time

management, communication and multitasking between shops have all improved

following the O-level reform, Zadra said, noting shops were encouraged to

identify which of their tasks could be performed alongside another’s

simultaneously. For instance, Zadra said she can check the lights in the

cockpit from the side of the jet while someone from the avionics shop inspects

instrumentation inside the cockpit.

“It cuts

down a lot on worker hours, so we can minimize the time on the inspection,” she

said.

Initial Skepticism

A former

MMCO, Michaelis said he was skeptical of the O-level reforms when they were

initially proposed, but has come around after seeing how VFA-22 and VFA-122

have put the reforms into practice.

“It’s been

a tough pill to swallow, to see how inefficient even when I was in that

position, even though I thought we were on point every single

time," he said.

"To now look back and go, 'Wow, there were a lot of places where I could have improved.' So, that's what's made me a believer, is being able to look in hindsight and realize there's tons of this stuff that I wish I had when I was an MMC0."

Michaelis

said the plan is to take the reforms to VFA squadrons at NAS Oceana, Virginia, before rolling them out across the Super Hornet community and, ultimately, to other platforms.

"As we

migrate this and expand it across all type-model-series, I'm excited about what this is going to do for our future," Miller said.

Further

evidence of the reform's efficacy will come when squadrons can keep their Sailors on normal work schedules while preparing for deployments, Michaelis said.

"Before we go on detachments or on deployment, we often work Sailors 12 [hours] on, 12 off, sometimes seven days a week," he said. "The proof is when, on a Thursday, we can let our people out for a three-day weekend because our jets are up and ready to go, and we saw that recently in one of our transformed squadrons."

Schiebel Wins Norway's Tender for UAS Deployment in the Arctic



Schiebel's Camposter S-100 will start tests with the Norwegian Coast Guard in fall 2019. Schiebel

VIENNA,

Austria – Norway's Andøya Test Center selected Schiebel's market-leading Camcopter

S-100 vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) unmanned air system (UAS) for

extensive search-and-rescue trials as part of the Arctic 2030 project, the

company said in a May 2 release.

In a typical

configuration, the Camcopter S-100 operates six hours continuously and is able

to simultaneously carry multiple payloads, offering significant payload

flexibility to the user. Therefore, the S-100's missions deliver aerial views

that reach considerably farther than manned helicopters.

The S-100

also offers a number of key advantages for naval operations in the Arctic. As a

VTOL platform, the Camcopter does not require any additional start or recovery

equipment and its minimal footprint is perfect for offshore patrol vessels with

small deck sizes. The S-100 also distinguishes itself through its ability to

perform in the harshest weather conditions, flying at

temperatures down to -40°C. This has been proven in a series of intensive trials, such as the Canadian icebreaker operations. In this particular case, the Camcopter S-100 was deployed 60 nautical miles north of Fogo Island, offshore Canada, providing a wide-view image of the ice structure as well as identifying the boundaries between flat and rough ice.

The goal of the Andøy Municipality project is a demonstration of VTOL UAS use in the Arctic region in an effort to increase maritime safety. For this purpose, the Camcopter S-100 will be equipped with an electro-optical/infrared camera gimbal, an Overwatch Imaging PT-8 Oceanwatch payload, an automatic identification system receiver and a maritime broadband radio by Radionor. Such a combination of payloads is intended to strengthen emergency preparedness in the region and provide search and rescue mission support.

Tests are scheduled to commence in the fall of 2019 with the UAS being deployed from Norwegian Coast Guard vessels in Andfjorden, Northern Norway. More operations are planned in Spitsbergen in the spring of 2020.

“This is clearly an important milestone in the project,” said Gunnar Jan Olsen, general manager of the Andøya Test Center. “We have already gained some experience with the

Schiebel Camcopter S-100 UAS during an impressive demonstration in 2017. We believe that these current, more extensive S-100 trials will demonstrate that maritime safety in the Arctic can effectively be increased with the help of VTOL UAS.”

Coast Guard Commissions Newest FRC in San Diego



Adm. Charles Ray, the U.S. Coast Guard vice commandant, delivers his remarks during the commissioning ceremony for the Coast Guard Cutter Benjamin Bottoms at Coast Guard Sector San Diego, May 1. The Benjamin Bottoms will operate throughout the 11th Coast Guard District which includes all of California and international waters off of Mexico and Central America. U.S. Coast Guard / Petty Officer 1st Class Patrick Kelley

SAN DIEGO –

The Coast Guard commissioned the newest California-based 154-foot Fast Response

Cutter in San Diego, May 1, the Coast Guard 11th District said in a release of the same date.

The Benjamin

Bottoms is the fourth Sentinel-Class Fast Response Cutter (FRC) to be homeported at Base Los Angeles-Long Beach.

While these

ships will be based in San Pedro, they will operate throughout

the 11th Coast

Guard District, which includes all of California and international waters off of Mexico and Central America.

“Radioman

First Class Benjamin Bottoms is a Coast Guard hero,” said Adm. Charles

Ray, the Coast Guard vice commandant. “He was the embodiment of honor,

commitment and sacrifice – the motto of this new cutter.”

FRC’s are

154-foot multimission ships designed to conduct drug and migrant interdictions;

ports, waterways and coastal security operations; fisheries and environmental

protection patrols; national defense missions; and search and rescue.

To date, the

Coast Guard has accepted delivery of more than 30 FRCs. Each ship is designed

for a crew of 24, has a range of 2,500 miles and is equipped for patrols up to

five days. The FRCs are part of the Coast Guard’s overall fleet modernization

initiative.

FRCs feature

advanced command, control, communications, computers, intelligence,

surveillance and reconnaissance equipment as well as over-the-horizon response

boat deployment capability and improved habitability for the crew. The ships

can reach speeds of 28 knots and are equipped to coordinate operations with

partner agencies and long-range Coast Guard assets such as the Coast Guard's National Security Cutters.

FRCs are named in honor of Coast Guard enlisted leaders, trailblazers and heroes. The four California-based FRCs are:

Forrest Rednour (WPC-1129): Rednour aided in the rescue of 133 people during the sinking of the U.S.A.T. Dorchester, Feb. 3, 1943. He was awarded the Purple Heart and Navy and Marine Corps Medal for his actions. Rednour lost his life in the sinking of the Coast Guard Cutter Escanaba in June 1943.

Robert Ward (WPC-1130): Ward operated beach-landing boats during the Normandy invasion. He landed his craft on the Cotentin Peninsula and rescued two stranded boat crews in the face of a heavily fortified enemy assault.

Terrell Horne III (WPC-1131): Horne was murdered by suspected drug smugglers who intentionally rammed the boat he and fellow Coast Guardsmen were aboard during law enforcement operations near Santa Cruz Island off the Southern California coast in December 2012. Horne pushed one of his shipmates out of the way of the oncoming vessel attack and sustained fatal injuries.

Benjamin Bottoms (WPC-1132): Bottoms was part the Coast Guard aircrew that rescued an Army aircrew from a downed B-17 off

the east coast of Greenland in 1942. Bottoms and the pilot conducted the first landing of a cutter plane on an icecap and commenced a two-day rescue over a rugged arctic terrain that required multiple flights. During the second day of rescue operations, radio contact with Bottoms' plane was lost and he was declared missing in action.

HII Delivers Eighth National Security Cutter Midgett to U.S. Coast Guard



With the signing of ceremonial documents, custody of the National Security Cutter Midgett is officially transferred to the U.S. Coast Guard. Left to right: Cmdr. Brian Smicklas, Midgett's executive officer; Capt. Travis Carter, commanding officer, Project Resident Office Gulf Coast; and Derek Murphy, HII's NSC program manager, perform the ceremony. Derek Fountain/Huntington Ingalls Industries

PASCAGOULA, Mississippi – Huntington Ingalls Industries' Ingalls Shipbuilding division delivered the National Security Cutter Midgett (WMSL 757) to the U.S. Coast Guard on May 1, the company said in a release. Midgett is scheduled to sail away in June and will be commissioned later this year.

“We have a mission statement in the NSC program that says during the construction of each NSC we will provide the men and women of the

United States Coast Guard with the finest ship in their fleet,” said Derek Murphy, NSC program manager. “This excellence will be provided by our shipbuilders through working safely, attention to detail and ownership of work. Since the beginning of construction on NSC 8, we’ve seen an amazing transformation, made possible by the thousands of people who poured their heart and soul into this ship.”

“From a homeland security and defense perspective, this ship provides unmatched command and control.”

Cmdr. Brian Smicklas, Midgett’s executive officer, acting commanding officer

Ingalls has now delivered eight Legend-class NSCs and has one more under construction and two more under contract. Stone (WMSL 758) is scheduled for delivery in 2020. In December of 2018, Ingalls received two fixed-price incentive contracts with a combined value of \$931 million to build NSCs 10 and 11.

“From a homeland security and defense perspective, this ship provides unmatched command and control,” said Cmdr. Brian Smicklas, Midgett’s executive officer and acting commanding officer.

Midgett navigates the Gulf of Mexico during her builder’s trials on Jan. 22. Video by Derek Fountain/Huntington Ingalls Industries

“We’ve reached a number of accomplishments and milestones up to this point. However, there’s more work to do on the water. We have record drug flows in the eastern Pacific, and there are traditional Western Hemisphere missions that our Coast Guard brothers and sisters are conducting on the water every day. We also see a large increase in demand for the geographic

combatant commanders for this specific National Security Cutter capability, and we're excited to fill that and be a part of the national fleet."

NSC 8 is named to honor the hundreds of members of the Midgett family who have served in the U.S. Coast Guard and its predecessor services. At least 10 members of the family earned high honors from the Coast Guard for their heroic lifesaving deeds. Seven Midgett family members were awarded the Gold Lifesaving Medal, the Coast Guard's highest award for saving a life, and three were awarded the Silver Lifesaving Medal.

HII Wins LCS Planning Yard Contract Worth a Possible \$931.7 Million



HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding division in Pascagoula, Mississippi. Lance Davis/Huntington Ingalls
PASCAGOULA, Mississippi – Huntington Ingalls Industries' Ingalls

Shipbuilding division has been awarded a cost-plus-award-fee contract with a

potential total value of \$931.7 million for planning yard services in support

of in-service littoral combat ships (LCS), the company said in a May 1 release.

The contract, which includes options over a six-year period, also provides work

packages for HII's Technical Solutions division.

"Ingalls Shipbuilding will build on 35 years of planning

yard experience to join our Technical Solutions division in fully supporting this life-cycle work on the LCS program,” Ingalls Shipbuilding President Brian Cuccias said. “Our talented shipbuilding team has the resources and program management experience necessary to ensure the post-delivery work on the LCS program meets the requirements and missions of our U.S. Navy customers.”

“Our talented shipbuilding team has the resources and program management experience necessary to ensure the post-delivery work on the LCS program meets the requirements and missions of our U.S. Navy customers.”

Ingalls Shipbuilding President Brian Cuccias

The planning yard design services contract will provide the LCS program with post-delivery life-cycle support, which includes fleet modernization program planning, design engineering and modeling, logistics support, long-lead-time material support, and preventative and planned maintenance system item development and scheduling. Unique to this planning yard effort is the requirement to manage the scheduling of all planned, continuous and emergent maintenance and associated availabilities.

Most of the work will be accomplished in Pascagoula and Hampton, Virginia, by designers, engineers, logisticians, planners, program managers and a variety of

additional subject matter experts. Ingalls and Technical Solutions will also provide waterfront support in the LCS homeports.

ATAC Selected as Provider of Training for Navy's TACT Program

WASHINGTON – Textron Airborne Solutions, a business unit of Textron Inc., announced on May 1 that its Airborne Tactical Advantage Company subsidiary (ATAC) has been selected as a provider of contracted air services under the U.S. Navy's Terminal Attack Controller Trainer (TACT) program.

Training provided under the IDIQ contract will be led by ATAC and includes a team made up of Textron Aviation Defense and the Valkyrie Defense family of companies. They will deliver contracted live-air training to forward air controllers, joint terminal attack controllers (JTACs) and forward air controllers (Airborne) on ATAC's L-39 Albatros, Textron Aviation Defense's Beechcraft AT-6 Wolverine light attack and armed reconnaissance aircraft and Valkyrie's A-27 Tucanos.

"TACT is a marked increase in both the quality and quantity of JTAC training services demanded by the

U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. ATAC's world-class team is pleased to provide the most mission-representative JTAC training solutions available," said Russ Bartlett, CEO of Textron Airborne Solutions.

"Textron Aviation Defense is proud to be on this air services contract to equip the TACT community with the Beechcraft AT-6 Wolverine's cost-effective, high-performance close air support capability," said Brett Pierson, vice president of Light Attack Aircraft and Scorpion. "The Navy and Marine Corps flew the AT-6 during the U.S. Air Force Light Attack experiments and are well-acquainted with its unparalleled mission capability and optimized battlespace networking capability."

"Everyone at Valkyrie Defense's family of companies is excited to be working with ATAC in providing the best contracted close air support and JTAC training available. We look forward to fulfilling the needs of the U.S. warfighter for years to come with our fleet of aircraft," said Charlie Keebaugh, CEO of Valkyrie Aero.

ATAC has a fleet of more than 90 aircraft, having pioneered much of what are now contracted air services industry standards with 20 years of operating experience and 57,000 flight hours. For the past 15 years, ATAC has provided a wide range of contracted close air support capabilities to U.S. Department of Defense JTAC communities across

Europe, continental U.S., Hawaii and the western Pacific region. The only contractor that has operated supersonic fighter aircraft for the DoD, ATAC has helped train crews from the Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps and regularly operates out of as many as 25 different bases per year.

Textron Airborne Solutions focuses on live military air-to-air, air-to-ship and air-to-ground training and support services. Within Textron Airborne Solutions is Airborne Tactical Advantage Company (ATAC), a business that provides tactical flight training and adversary aggressor services for Navy, Marine and Air Force pilots.