Coast Guard Receives Upgraded HC-144B Aircraft in Corpus Christi, Texas

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – The Coast Guard received an upgraded HC-144 medium-range surveillance aircraft at Sector/Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas, Wednesday, the Coast Guard 8th District said in a Feb. 20 release.

The bravo upgrade expands the HC-144's extensive sensor capability, aiding the Coast Guard in its maritime patrol, drug and migrant interdiction, disaster response, and search and rescue missions.

The Coast Guard upgraded the HC-144 aircraft to improve mission effectiveness and situational awareness, as each newly modified aircraft features an updated cockpit control and display unit, navigation and equipment monitoring systems.

The Coast Guard is also integrating the Navy's Minotaur mission system architecture across its fixed-wing aircraft fleet. With the sophisticated command and control system, the aircraft incorporates surveillance and reconnaissance equipment to allow aircrews to gather and process surveillance information that can be transmitted to other platforms and units during flight.

"We are excited to usher in this new command and control suite to support the United States and our complex mission set," said Capt. Edward Gaynor, Sector/Air Station Corpus Christi commanding officer. "Coast Guard Sector/Air Station Corpus Christi looks forward in working with our newly upgraded HC-144 fleet to better support our partners in South Texas."

GE to Supply LM2500 Gas Turbine Auxiliary Equipment for Indian Navy's P17A Frigates

BENGALURU, India – GE Marine will provide gas turbine auxiliary equipment for the LM2500 engines that will power the Indian Navy's new P17A frigates, the company said in a Feb. 20 release. This contract is with India-based Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) and Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers Ltd. (GRSE), GE reported today at the Aero India trade exhibition.

Under the contract, GE will provide gas turbine auxiliary equipment for seven ships to support the 14 LM2500 engines previously supplied under a separate contract. Auxiliary equipment and services will include: gas turbine controller, intakes and uptakes, firefighting equipment, water wash, start skid, fuel forwarding and field service support to shipyards. Electric starters for the gas turbines also will be included in the auxiliary equipment contract; these starters weigh 6,500 pounds less and offer a greater than 70 percent volume reduction over hydraulic starters.

Each P17A frigate will be powered by two GE LM2500 marine gas turbines and two diesel engines in a combined diesel or gas turbine configuration. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) Industrial and Marine Gas Turbine division, Bangalore, India, is assembling the LM2500 gas turbines in-country under license from GE.

"GE is proud to provide the auxiliary equipment for the Indian

Navy's P17A frigates. As one of the world's leading manufacturers of marine propulsion products, GE can deliver a reliable, fully integrated gas turbine solution that is customized to suit and support the requirements of the Indian Navy," said Vishal Wanchoo, president and CEO, GE South Asia. "GE will also handle the design work for the P17A's gas turbine auxiliary system and gas turbine fuel supply system and will provide training to the shipyards and Indian Navy for these systems."

GE's in-country partner HAL has already delivered 11 LM2500 gas turbines to the Indian Navy, including those that power three P17 frigates: Shivalik, Satpura and Sahyadri launched in April 2003, June 2004 and May 2005, respectively. Separately, four GE LM2500 gas turbines will power India's first indigenously built P71 aircraft carrier that was launched in August 2013.

USS Tulsa Commissioned as Navy's Newest Surface Combatant

SAN FRANCISCO – The littoral combat ship USS Tulsa (LCS 16) was commissioned as the Navy's newest surface combatant in a ceremony in San Francisco Feb. 16.

The Independence-variant LCS is the Navy's second ship to be named for the city of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

"She truly is an amazing ship and an amazing addition to the fleet, but as impressive as she is, she would be nothing without the Sailors you see lining her deck this morning,"

said Cmdr. Drew Borovies, Tulsa's commanding officer. "And as much as they have already accomplished, they know their true greatness lies ahead as Tulsa enters the fleet and stands ready to answer her nation's call. They are the finest Sailors our Navy has to offer. They are tough, able and ready to take our nation's newest warship to sea."

Indeed, in little more than three years, the ship has progressed from its keel laying in Mobile, Alabama, to its commissioning. Kathy Taylor, ship's sponsor and former Tulsa mayor, was present for both events and many in between.

"I have gotten to know the crew of this exceptional USS Tulsa, and I know they will fight when they must,' said Taylor. "I know they will protect this country at all costs, because they know everything they fight for and they protect keeps the promises made to all Americans."

Current Tulsa Mayor G.T. Bynum emphasized the bond between the people of Tulsa and the Sailors who serve aboard the Navy's newest ship.

"Wherever you are in the world, whatever day it might be or whatever hour in that day, we hope you know that there are hundreds of thousands of your fellow Tulsans who are thinking of you, and who are honored to be associated with you and are so proud of you," said Bynum.

The crew visited the city little more than a year ago to learn more about it and its people. Oklahoma Sen. James Lankford recounted some of the characteristics of the city and its people beginning at the city's founding as the destination of a forced migration of Native American people, through booming growth and cultural turmoil and into a city renowned for its diversity and beauty.

"When you arrive at any port of our nation or any port around the globe, you will bear all of our names and all of our history," said Lankford. "You are capable of operating in all

environments. Your mission is to protect our seas and deter aggression, but when deterrence fails, we also know you are fully capable of restoring the peace. Your actions, your words, your faith, your discipline and your power will reveal to a curious world just who we are as Americans. You are our ambassadors for freedom and you bear the name Tulsa and the United States of America."

Tulsa will join the fleet at a time of expansion of capability as well as increased demand on the Navy forces.

Assistant Secretary of the Navy James Geurtz noted Tulsa is the fifth ship the Navy has commissioned in the past 50 days and one of 13 ships slated to be commissioned this year – up from eight a year ago – as part of broader efforts to ensure the nation's maritime freedom.

"Having the right mix of ships with the right number of ships, to include Tulsa, makes us ready to execute prompt and sustained combat operations at sea to fight and win against any adversary," said Adm. John C. Aquilino, commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet. "Let there be no doubt, that is what Tulsa is ready to do."

After the ceremony, the ship will transit to San Diego to join Littoral Combat Ship Squadron 1 and eight other littoral combat ships currently homeported at Naval Base San Diego.

Tulsa is the 15th littoral combat ship and the eighth of the Independence variant.

Coast Guard Cuts Ribbon on New Command Center in Maine

BOSTON – Coast Guard Sector Northern New England officially opened a new 24-hour command center Feb. 20 in South Portland, Maine, the Coast Guard 1st District said in a release of the same date.

Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, Atlantic Area Commander Vice Adm. Scott Buschman, and First District Commander Rear Adm. Andrew Tiongson were all on hand for the ribbon cutting ceremony. The command center is the hub for all Coast Guard operations across Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and parts of New York.

Located at Coast Guard Base South Portland, the command center's exterior remained the same, but the interior is completely new. At approximately 1,100 square feet, the space is able to receive alerts of distress any time day or night. The updates to the command center cost nearly $400,000 and were part of a larger $2.3 million upgrade to the base. The command center updates included new furniture, electronics, central air conditioning, a generator, and improved Rescue 21 reliability to continue assisting mariners across the area.

Acting as central command and control for operations across four states, the command center, along with its staff and equipment, are essential to Coast Guard missions such as search and rescue, marine environmental protection and port and waterway security.

Navy Requests Information for Unmanned Maritime Autonomy Architecture

Navy Requests Information for Unmanned Maritime Autonomy Architecture

By RICHARD R BURGESS, Senior Editor

WASHINGTON – The Navy has issued a Request for Information (RFI) from industry concerning unmanned autonomous maritime systems standardization to lead to more commonality in systems architecture.

The RFI, released on Feb. 15 by the Program Executive Office-Unmanned Maritime Systems and Small Combatants, is for Unmanned Maritime Autonomy Architecture (UMAA) for operation of unmanned undersea vehicles (UUVs) and unmanned surface vehicles (USVs).

"The intent of UMAA is to provide overarching standards that various UUVs and USVs can be built to in order to avoid creating multiple conflicting systems in the future," an official said.

The RFI, posted on the FedBizOps website, invites government organizations and industry "to participate in the development of the Unmanned Maritime Autonomy Architecture (UMAA). The UMAA is being established to enable autonomy commonality and reduce acquisition costs across both surface and undersea unmanned vehicles."

The RFI said that in 2018 "the Unmanned Maritime Program Office (PMS 406) chartered a cross-organizational team to develop the Unmanned Maritime Autonomy Architecture with the goal of standardizing autonomy interfaces across its growing

portfolio of unmanned vehicles. Earlier this year, the team published the UMAA Architecture Design Description providing the initial framework for both service and interface definition. Additional design guidance will be provided through a series of Interface Control Documents (ICDs) in the areas below.

• Situational Awareness,

• Sensor and Effector Management,

• Processing Management,

• Communications Management,

• Vehicle Maneuver Management,

• Vehicle Engineering Management,

• Vehicle Computing Management,

• Support Operations”

An initial industry day will be held on March 4.

General Dynamics Land Systems Receives Contract to Support Reset of U.S. Marine Corps Light Armored Vehicle Fleet

STERLING HEIGHTS, Mich. – General Dynamics Land Systems-Canada has been awarded a 37.2 million contract to deliver 60 hardware kits for the U.S. Marine Corps’ Light Armored Vehicle

(LAV) Reset Program.

The hardware kit addresses key obsolescence and readiness issues and consists of a modern powerpack, driveline system, driver's instrument panel and a new turret slip ring. The fully integrated kits will be procured by General Dynamics and delivered to the Marine Corps for installation at Marine Corps Production Plants.

The contract was signed through the Canadian Commercial Corp., a Crown corporation of the government of Canada, under the Defense Production Sharing Agreement (DPSA) between Canada and the United States.

U.S., Canada Conduct Fisheries Enforcement With Partner Nations in South Pacific

HONOLULU — The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Mellon (WHEC 717) continues their patrol of the South Pacific with partners from several nations in January and into February, the Coast Guard 14th District said in a Feb. 15 release.

"The U.S. is advancing a vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific that excludes no nation. We are redoubling our commitment to establish alliances and partnerships while expanding and deepening relationships with new partners that share respect for sovereignty, fair and reciprocal trade, and the rule of law," said Capt. Robert Hendrickson, chief of response for Coast Guard 14th District. "We rely on partners,

allies and like-minded nations to achieve our missions."

Following their first leg, the crew embarked ship riders from Fiji and Tuvalu to enforce fisheries laws in each partner nations' respective exclusive economic zones (EEZs). The Mellon's boarding teams and the fisheries officers conducted a professional exchange and law enforcement training, sharing tactics and best practices. This effort was coordinated with significant support from Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO).

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing deprives the international economy of billions of dollars and undermines the livelihoods of legitimate fishers from all nations, according to the release. It impacts food security, affecting millions of people, including many vulnerable coastal communities. It is estimated that IUU fishing accounts for about 30 percent of all fishing activity worldwide, representing up to 26 million tons of fish caught annually, valued at between $10 to $23 billion.

"Coast Guard 14th District personnel began partnering with Canada's DFO in July when two DFO officers joined U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Sequoia (WLB 215) for a 23-day patrol on high seas west of Guam," said Hendrickson. "Sequoia's deployment was incredibly successful, resulting in 15 suspected violations of Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission's conservation and management measures while completing 11 foreign vessel inspections. The important trip helped to cement the Coast Guard and DFO's growing partnership for enforcement in Oceania."

Two DFO officers joined Mellon's crew for the transit from Hawaii to Fiji after attending the Coast Guard's Pacific Regional Fisheries Training Center course for Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) enforcement. They conducted high seas boardings along the way. Canada's Air Force committed a CP-140 Aurora fixed-wing aircraft to provide

maritime domain awareness for Mellon

over two weeks, as well as delivering fishery enforcement operations for several regional Pacific Island countries. The DFO deployed two of their officers with the Aurora, and the Coast Guard sent a specialized fisheries training officer from the Regional Training Center to assist the aircrew with specific fisheries details and information for the crew. Working with Canada's Department of National Defence and the U.S. Coast Guard, they patrolled around Fiji and the island nations of Kiribati, Tokelau, Vanuatu and Tuvalu. IUU fishing is of particular concern in this area, as several small island developing states have some of the most vulnerable waters for IUU fishing and need support from other nations.

Throughout the patrol, fishery officers were part of seven reconnaissance flights by the Aurora, to provide a visible surveillance presence and to help enforce WCPFC conservation measures. The Aurora detected and documented 101 fishing vessels during the mission, providing critical data to the U.S. Coast Guard patrol and the Forum Fisheries Agency, which coordinates enforcement among the island nations. The Canadian aircraft also patrolled the Phoenix Islands Protected Area, an UNESCO World Heritage Site where fishing is banned. The Aurora was able to ensure the area was clear of fishing activity during its patrol.

"The U.S. Coast Guard and the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans have a long history of working together to ensure the viability of fish stocks off North America. Working with experts from Canada and regional leaders like Fiji is vital to ensuring food security and the rule of law in Oceania. Working together we are helping to ensure a more secure, free and open Indo-Pacific," said Hendrickson.

Fishery officers aboard the cutter Mellon patrolled over 1,786 square miles (2,875 square kilometers) within the WCPFC convention area. They were also part of the enforcement team

that boarded two boats: one fishing vessel and one fuel supply ship known as a bunkering vessel. The U.S. Coast Guard is investigating two potential violations of trans-shipment rules and vessel identification requirements aboard the vessels inspected during the mission.

These recent patrols were part of Canada's international commitment to support fisheries on the high seas and tackle IUU fishing, which is a significant contributor to declining fish stocks and marine habitat destruction around the world.

"Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing threatens food security, impacts the sustainability of fisheries, and causes irreparable damage to marine and freshwater ecosystems across the globe. Partnerships, like this one with Canada's Department of National Defence and the United States Coast Guard, are the key to tackling IUU fishing that threatens many vulnerable coastal communities. We will continue to work with other countries and assist small island developing states in combating IUU fishing to increase security and protect the health of fish stocks around the world," said the Honorable Jonathan Wilkinson, minister of fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard.

U.S. Government Approves Release of Boeing EA-18G Growler to Finland

ARLINGTON, Va. — Boeing and the U.S. Navy have received U.S. Department of Defense approval to offer the EA-18G Growler to Finland, the company said in a Feb. 18 release. Previously only Australia had been authorized to purchase the airborne

electronic attack (AEA) aircraft.

Boeing and the Navy have offered the Growler and F/A-18 Super Hornet in a response to query issued by the Finnish Ministry of Defense as part of their HX fighter program procurement.

“All strike fighter aircraft rely on Growler escort to increase survivability during high-threat missions,” said Dan Gillian, Boeing vice president, F/A-18 and EA-18G programs. “The combination of the Super Hornet Block III and Growler would provide Finland with superior technological capability particularly suited to Finland’s HX mission requirements.”

An F/A-18 variant, the Growler is the world’s most advanced AEA platform and the only one in production today. It’s capable of disrupting, deceiving or denying a broad range of military electronic systems including radar and communication systems.

In addition to the U.S. Navy, the Growler is flown by the Royal Australian Air Force.

Ultra Electronics to be Underwater Warfare Lead for the Canadian Surface Combatant

DARTMOUTH, Nova Scotia – Ultra Electronics Maritime Systems has signed a significant sub-contract with Lockheed Martin Canada as part of Canada’s Combat Ship Team, selected as the winning bid for the Canadian Surface Combatant (CSC) program

by Irving Shipbuilding, Ultra said in a Feb. 19 release. Irving Shipbuilding is the Canadian Surface Combatant prime contractor and will build all 15 ships at Halifax Shipyard.

Ultra, as the ani-submarine warfare (ASW) lead, will provide a low-frequency active and passive towed sonar system paired with its next-generation hull-mounted sonar, and will lead the integration of these world-leading sensors with sonobuoys and other capabilities for wide-area underwater battlespace surveillance to meet Canada's future strategic needs.

"Ultra is proud to be a member of Canada's successful CSC Home Team," said Bernard Mills, president of Ultra Electronics Maritime Systems. "As the underwater warfare lead, we are using our considerable depth of ASW experience and capability to ensure Canada's new ships will provide an enduring operational advantage to the Royal Canadian Navy. This work will also generate high-tech jobs in Nova Scotia for sonar design and manufacturing, add to our existing significant export capability, and maintain Canada's position in the top tier of advanced ASW nations in the world."

The Canadian Surface Combatant project is the largest and most complex procurement ever undertaken by the Government of Canada. It will deliver lasting economic benefits to Canadian industry through billions of dollars of value proposition commitments in innovation across Canada's priority areas.

The winning Lockheed Martin Canada bid, based around BAE's Type 26 Global Combat Ship, was put forward by a team comprised of six companies with a strong Canadian-focused supply chain; BAE Systems, CAE, Lockheed Martin Canada, L3 Technologies, MDA, and Ultra Electronics. Bringing together a pan-Canadian team, the six companies have a uniquely skilled Canadian workforce and supply chain that employs 9,000 Canadians in 40 facilities from coast to coast and engages more than 4,000 small and medium sized enterprises.

The Type 26 is a globally-deployable, multi-role warship that meets current and future demands of the Royal Canadian Navy. It has been specifically designed for high-end ASW and will be capable of performing a wide range of missions around the globe.

SAFE Boats International and Al Blagha Industrial Company Sign Formal Teaming Agreement

ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates – Attendees of the Naval Defense Exposition (NAVDEX) witnessed the executive leadership of SAFE Boats International LLC (SBI) and Al Blagha Industrial Company entering into a formal teaming agreement for long term service, support and production of SAFE Boats products, including the Mk VI Patrol Boat, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, SAFE Boats said in a Feb. 19 release.

This agreement formalized a partnership to ensure SAFE Boats vessels in the region receive the support and maintenance required for maximum mission effectiveness. Additionally, the agreement laid the foundation for potential future production of SAFE Boats in Al Blagha's facilities in Saudi Arabia.

"This critical partnership is the cornerstone of our strategy in the region and we are honored to partner with Al Blagha Industrial," said Richard Schwarz, SBI chief executive officer. "SAFE Boats and Al Blagha formed this partnership based on shared values and a common vision for bringing an aluminum boat building capability to the region. This agreement creates a foundation for the success of both companies and embodies the core tenets of Vision 2030."

“Our partnership with SAFE Boats International, a leading international boat builder, is an important step forward for Vision 2030’s goal of economic diversification and defense self-reliance, for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,” said Eng. Fares Al Blawi, Al Blagha chief executive officer.