Austal USA Launches 2nd Navy T-ATS, the Future USNS Solomon Atkinson



MOBILE, Ala. – Austal USA successfully launched the company's first ship of the year and second Navy Towing, Salvage, and Rescue Ship (T-ATS), future USNS Solomon Atkinson (T-ATS 12), on February 23. Named after a Native American who was a plankowner of the Navy SEAL teams and one of the service's most decorated Alaska Native sailors, Soloman Atkinson is one of three T-ATS under construction at Austal USA and the first of two ships launched at Austal USA's Mobile, Ala. ship manufacturing facility within less than a week.

"It's always exciting to see these giants we build roll out of the assembly bay," said Gene Miller, Austal USA's interim

president. “The completion of this milestone is the result of the hard work and dedication of our talented workforce and the strength of our maritime industrial partnerships key to success in this proven launch process. I am so proud of all they have accomplished.”

T-ATS will provide ocean-going towing, salvage and rescue capabilities to support fleet operations. T-ATS will be a multi-mission common hull platform capable of towing U.S. Navy ships and will have 6,000 square feet of deck space for embarked systems. The large, unobstructed deck allows for the embarkation of a variety of stand-alone and interchangeable systems. The T-ATS platform will combine the capabilities of the retiring Rescue and Salvage Ship (T-ARS 50) and Fleet Ocean Tug (T-ATF 166) platforms. T-ATS will be able to support current missions including towing, salvage, rescue, oil spill response, humanitarian assistance, and wide-area search and surveillance. The platform also enables future rapid capability initiatives such as supporting modular payloads with hotel services and appropriate interfaces.

With the ship over 75 percent complete at the time of launch, future USNS Solomon Atkinson will now prepare for her next major milestone, engine light off, as she gets ready for sea trials and delivery.