

Decker, Jenkins Among Those Honored at SecNav Luncheon Awards Ceremony



Jo Decker of BAE Systems won the Nimitz award for industry leadership. *LISA NIPP*

The Secretary of the Navy Luncheon on Tuesday, April 5 was capped by an awards ceremony, where the Navy League of the United States and Secretary Carlos Del Toro doled out the year's top honors.

The Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz Award, which honors a leader of industry who has made a major contribution to our nation's maritime strength or enhanced our national security, went to Jo Decker, vice president of business winning and strategy at BAE Systems, for her decades-long career "in driving solutions to critical technology challenges in the national security and public safety environment."



Saildrone CEO Richard Jenkins won the Michelson award for civilian innovation. *LISA NIPP*

The Albert A. Michelson Award, which honors a civilian scientist, technical innovator or technical organization for scientific or technical achievement, was given to Richard Jenkins, founder and CEO of Saildrone. Last year, the company sent its flagship autonomous platform into the eye of Hurricane Sam, a Category 4 that stayed off the East Coast in the Atlantic Ocean. The company took scientific measurements and HD video “that could transform our understanding of hurricane forecasting,” according to the award citation.

The award ceremony, which also included the Navy and Marine Corps’ group and individual Safety Awards, closed with the Secretary of the Navy’s Distinguished Public Service Award, which went to Navy League Past National President William A. Stevenson III for his efforts to reshape the organization’s board of directors and overseeing the implementation of active-duty membership during his tenure.

Safety Awards

Adm. Vern Clark Award Winners

Helicopter Training Squadron 28, Naval Air Station Whiting
Field, Milton, Florida

AWF1 Carlos M. Gomez, San Diego

Gen. James L. Jones Safety Award Winners

1st Radio Battalion, 1 Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp
Pendleton, California

Benjamin M. Lebidine, Camp Pendleton, California

**Saunes Recognized With
National President's Medal**



Navy League CEO Mike Stevens (left) and National President and Chairman Dave Reilly (right), present Saunes with the National President's Medal. *LISA NIPP*

On Monday, April 4, the Navy League of the United States honored retired Rear Adm. Lars Saunes, professor and distinguished international fellow and former Chief of Royal Norwegian Navy, with its National President's Medal. The nonprofit bestows this award to foreign dignitaries who "exemplify the highest ideals of the Navy League through their significant contributions to world peace, national security and outstanding service to their country and fellow citizens."

In addition to his accomplishments to tackle Arctic challenges as Norway's chief naval officer, Saunes was awarded for providing his expertise to the Navy League, serving as a moderator at Sea-Air-Space 2021 and also for the relationship he has forged with the Navy League's Center for Maritime Strategy think tank.

Sea Service Panel Gets Serious in Talk on Budget, Climate Change



U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard panelists participate in the Sea Service Update panel June 20 at the Navy League National Convention. David Livingston

NORFOLK, Va. – The U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard panelists that participated in the Sea Service Update panel June 20 at the Navy

League National Convention prepared remarks focused on a multitude of recent

document releases such as the National Defense Strategy, the National Military

Strategy and the Coast Guard Arctic Strategic Outlook.

Remarks also focused on readiness; the importance of remaining forward-deployed; and many other probable talking points, but it was

a host of questions fielded by longtime local defense reporter Mike Gooding

that elicited perhaps the most interesting insights into how the services are preparing for the future.

Gooding touched on the government shutdown early this year, which saw the unprecedented scenario of the Coast Guard working without pay. He

also asked panelists their thoughts on the Budget Control Act of 2011 that many

expected would be short-lived but instead has brought with it

sequestration

threats for nearly a decade. Gooding wondered how the services were preparing

to weather the upcoming storm of another likely continuing resolution in

September – a process where the services would remain funded at their current

levels regardless of shifting program needs.

A budget's a budget. Congress appropriates money and ... you have a problem trying to push dollars around. I've had to cancel exercises this year because we don't have the funds to complete the schedule.

Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Mark Brilakis, commander of Forces Command

Coast Guard Adm. Scott Buschman, the Atlantic Area commander, conveyed how many organizations, including the Navy League, stepped up to

ensure the Coast Guard had extra support during the shutdown, but panelists

made clear how untenable that situation would be in the future.

"I hope that doesn't happen again because it was a very stressful time for our women and men," Buschman said, a sentiment echoed by Navy

Vice Adm. Bruce Lindsey, deputy commander of U.S. Fleet Forces Command. "We

should never, ever do that again," Lindsey added.

As for dealing with continuing resolutions, Lindsey said he wanted

to see more flexibility.

U.S. Fleet Forces manages a \$12 billion annual budget. "It would be really nice if [Fleet Forces Commander] Adm. Grady

had the authority to move less than 5% of the total operating budget without having to approach Congress," he said. That would amount to \$480 million – a substantial amount to make a difference. Grady "needs that authority," Lindsey said.

Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Mark Brilakis, commander of Forces Command, said stability in resources is critical to managing programs in the pipeline.

"A budget's a budget. Congress appropriates money and ... you have a problem trying to push dollars around. I've had to cancel exercises this year because we don't have the funds to complete the schedule," Brilakis said.

He predicted there would be a continuing resolution this fall based on his years of experience.

"The sequester was a bad law, and everyone thought it'd get fixed," Brilakis said.

Gooding also brought up a recent Government Accountability Office report that came out this week, identifying that 46 of 79 Defense Department installations are at risk to a rise in sea levels.

Brilakis said there's a reason so much DoD land is under threat – the Pentagon bought marginal land on purpose because it was inexpensive. When Hurricane Florence hit Camp Lejeune, North Carolina last summer, it dumped 36 inches of rain, and many buildings there still have tarps on them and no air conditioning.

"We're not going to replace buildings where we had them

before,” he said.

Brilakis also said that Parris Island, South Carolina, is “no longer tenable” – despite the generations that have trained there. “We have to start making historic decisions.”

Buschman’s forces are on the front lines of climate issues, with two historic hurricane seasons in recent memory. He said the Coast Guard must make tough decisions recapitalizing ships and instead use that money to repair critical infrastructure issues after storms. When the Coast Guard is rebuilding, the service is factoring in resilience so when the next big one hits, infrastructure can take the punch.

Lindsey concurred with the infrastructure challenges climate change could bring, stating he didn’t want the United States to have to face scenarios like the recent [widespread power outages in South America](#), which could affect banking and other critical services.

“A lot of people think this is an issue with global warming. It’s a critical infrastructure issue,” he said.

Robots are Real, but AI’s

Full Promise is Still on the Horizon



The “Human-Machine Teaming and AI” panel May 8 at Sea-Air-Space 2019. Chuck Fazio

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – Artificial intelligence in all its forms, from machine learning algorithms to unmanned systems, is a sure thing for the sea services and its partners, but there is still much to determine in terms of the technological and operational challenges it presents for warfighting.

In a panel discussion on May 8 at Sea-Air-Space, U.S. Coast Guard Rear Adm. David Dermanelian, assistant commandant for C4IT and commander of Coast Guard Cyber Command, framed the conversation as a relevant, real-world issue for the sea services.

“This is not the art of the future. It’s happening today,” Dermanelian said.

U.S. Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Christian Wortman, vice chief of naval research, said the Corps has an expansive approach to AI and is seeking to embed it into everything the service does, including machine learning to make war more efficient and help make more informed decisions. But he stressed that users “can’t look at this in isolation,” and the Marines also need enhanced network capabilities and to use the cloud so algorithms can take advantage of the data that is harvested.



"AI" panelist Steven Escaravage, senior vice president for the Strategic Innovation Group at Booz Allen Hamilton. Chuck Fazio U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Casey Morton, who was on day three of his job as program executive officer of Unmanned and Small Combatants, said his service is "firmly" moving in the direction of adding more unmanned elements to its assets, from unmanned surface vehicles to unmanned underwater vehicles and beyond.

"They are going to be a part of our team," Morton said. "It's not a matter of if; it's a matter of when and how fast and how can we get there."

Right now, he believes the Navy is not yet at human-machine teaming but is working toward that future where Sailors and machines work closely together. He cautioned that there are still a lot of unanswered questions about AI, like what infrastructure it will need, where it will be based in the fleet, how it will be supported, if it will be forward-deployed and other policy issues.

"We are at the early stages of this still," Morton said. "There are a lot of questions here that are still unanswered."

"This is not the art of the future. It's happening today."

U.S. Coast Guard Rear Adm. David Dermanelian

The U.S. Maritime Administration's Christopher Walher, who focuses on the education programs of MARAD's six state maritime academies, sees AI as a pedagogical challenge, since sometimes subject matter

experts are too advanced to be excellent teachers, often skipping over critical points that, to them, appear obvious.

He prefers a “crawl, walk, run” approach to the training pipeline, where MARAD leverages a training process so AI can manage what it excels at and humans can focus on their strengths, much like the current relationship between smartphones and users.

Key for MARAD going forward will be working with other organizations, including a meeting the agency has next month with AI experts so they can share information, versus starting from ground zero on research and development.

“As we talk about crawl, walk, run in the Maritime Administration, we are the little ship that could,” he said. “We don’t have a lot of money for R&D.”

Steven Escaravage, senior vice president for the Strategic Innovation Group at Booz Allen Hamilton, briefly went over his company’s 60 current programs that involve machine learning and robotics, including areas like sensor data processing, electronic warfare, predictive maintenance and optimized planning.

Escaravage said the field of AI in the last six to 12 months has focused on taking what has been written about and researched in the lab and tried to operationalize those concepts so they can be used in real-world environments. He said while AI has suffered from being overhyped, there are

some rich capabilities for it today.

“Although today’s capabilities are probably over-extended and somewhat brittle, what’s going to happen in a matter of months is going to be real capability that changes pretty much everything we do.”

Sea Service Spouses Take Center Stage at Second Annual Maritime Gala



Former Chief of Naval Operations, retired Adm. Jonathan Greenert, thanks Navy League National President Alan Kaplan for his services. CHUCK FAZIO PHOTOGRAPHY

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – In its second annual Maritime Gala the night of May 7, the Navy League honored awardees from the highest levels of the sea services, but also dedicated the night to the often unsung work of [sea service spouses](#).

The night’s keynote speaker, retired Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert, pointed out that numerous military support organizations were founded by spouses, like Operation Gratitude and the Semper Parvum fund, and he urged audience members to remember these organizations’ important work in their annual giving.



The gala’s keynote speaker, retired Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert. CHUCK FAZIO PHOTOGRAPHY

“Our sea services and our families would be hard-pressed to

function without sea service spouses ... and they do it time after time," Greenert said.

He focused his speech on the importance of retaining the public's trust in the institution of homeland security and the military. Greenert noted that many other pillars of American life are losing ground in Americans' confidence, like the government or clergy, but the military is earning its spot as an exception to that rule.

"The American public needs and deserves an institution that we trust."



Naval Services FamilyLine chair Leanna McCollum (center) accepts the Navy League's first-ever Sea Service Spouse Organization Award, pictured here with Dana Richardson (right). CHUCK FAZIO PHOTOGRAPHY

He also acknowledged the service of Navy League National President Alan Kaplan, who is in the last few months of his term leading the organization in support of the sea services.

"The national president of the Navy League, the title, is really the ultimate volunteer position," Greenert said. "It's a gift to those of us in the sea services."

The show featured an awards program, bestowing the Adm. Arleigh Burke Leadership Award to Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John M. Richardson, where he was given the award by his wife, Dana Richardson, who gave the award to her "high school sweetheart and best friend."



Navy League's Alan Kaplan (left) and Dr. Vivian Greentree of

First Data (center) present the Theodore Roosevelt Award to Bruce Mosler of Cushman & Wakefield. CHUCK FAZIO PHOTOGRAPHY
Richardson played an important role in another organization awarded the evening of May 7. The Navy League gave its first-ever Sea Service Spouse Organization Award to Naval Services FamilyLine, where Dana Richardson serves as an ambassador.

The award, which was given by Ellyn Dunford, a long-time advocate for military spouses and wife of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Marine Corps Gen. Joseph Dunford, was accepted by FamilyLine chair Leanna McCollum, who acknowledged her organization's long history of volunteers that have kept it strong.



The CNO and his spouse during the second-annual Maritime Gala. CHUCK FAZIO PHOTOGRAPHY
"It wouldn't be possible to be here tonight without the support of the countless number of volunteers both now and since 1965," McCollum said.

In a surprise announcement, Navy League Executive Director Mike Stevens, retired Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, gave Naval Services FamilyLine a check for \$10,000.



Navy League Executive Director Mike Stevens (left) presents a check for \$10,000 to Naval Services FamilyLine chair Leanna McCollum (second from right), alongside CNO Adm. John Richardson (second from left) and his wife Dana Richardson (right). CHUCK FAZIO PHOTOGRAPHY
Head of corporate citizenship for First Data, Dr. Vivian Greentree, also a military spouse, gave out the night's second award, the Theodore Roosevelt Award, to Bruce Mosler, chairman of global brokerage at Cushman & Wakefield. He is an advocate for the veteran and military spouse community, focusing his

efforts on the 100,000 Jobs Coalition, now the Veteran Jobs Mission.

The night included performances by the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon and closed with a trio of country music stars, including Chuck Wicks, the Navy League's first goodwill ambassador; Mark Wills; and Lonestar's Richie McDonald.

Cybersecurity Sits at the Crux of Government, Industry, Commerce for Sea Services



The moderator of the May 7 panel discussion on cybersecurity at Sea-Air-Space, Navy Vice Adm. Matthew Kohler. Cyber defense is a top concern of all the sea services, panelists said. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Richard Rodgers

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – Citing recent high-profile comments by Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John M. Richardson and Marine Corps

Commandant Gen. Robert B. Neller on cybersecurity's importance, panelists at a

May 7 event at Sea-Air-Space agreed that it is a top issue for their services,

regardless of external perceptions.

Coast Guard Rear Adm. David Dermanelian, assistant commandant for C4IT and commander of Coast Guard Cyber Command, said his branch

is known for its drug interdictions and waterway management missions, but often

perception does not equate that work with cybersecurity.

"All those missions are directly linked to the cyber domain," he said. "And I would posit that even within the Coast Guard, we're in contact with bad actors, or the enemy, every day. The Coast Guard's role is to defend our maritime transportation, our cyber domain."

Detailing how maritime commerce coming through U.S. waterways is valued at \$5.4 trillion and supports 31 million Americans, Dermanelian quantified the importance of cybersecurity for fellow panelist, Maritime Administration Director of the Office of Maritime Security Cameron Naron.

Naron said it's critical MARAD has cyber systems, as well as resilient measures, in place should anything under their purview be compromised. With MARAD sitting at the crux of defense, homeland security and commerce, his office is focusing on working with all its stakeholders to maintain security.

"Our role is really to make sure that industry's needs, industry's equities, are represented in federal policy formulations," Naron said.

Naron said commercial network monitoring and vulnerability remediation options are out there today, and there are also great government solutions, and those resources need to be in the hands of industry, not only because it's good for business, but because it's good for

national security. MARAD also must ensure the security of the Ready Reserve Fleet, and Naron stressed that cyber concerns also extend to areas such as precision navigation and GPS vulnerability.

Gregg Kendrick, Marine Corps Forces Cyberspace Command executive director, addressed his service's complex network of cybersecurity operations and how that information is critical to the Marines' return to its roots.

"Just like the Coast Guard, we have a little of a unique mission as well. ... The commandant and the chief of naval operations are exceedingly ... bringing us out of the ground force and bringing us back to our naval heritage," Kendrick said. That makes the fidelity of the information the Marines and Navy share when they go from sea and ashore critical so the services can make that gap as seamless as possible, he said.

Kendrick also addressed how the Marines are staffing up their cybersecurity teams, when industry hiring is so competitive. He said 40% of the Corps' cyber mission force is civilian, stating that Neller wanted to use best business practices from people that work for companies like Google or other software developers to ensure the Marines had cutting-edge tactics.

The moderator, Navy Vice Adm. Matthew Kohler, deputy chief of naval operations for information warfare and director of naval intelligence, summed up the vastness of the challenge of

keeping up with cybersecurity needs, and how it's directly tied to the larger challenges the sea services face. "Technology is running at us at an unprecedented rate. ... It's not just the pace of the technology, it's the race for how quickly we can adopt that technology ... to how we fight and [it] gives us the 'Great Power Competition' that we find ourselves in today," he said.

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.”

Navy League Awards Meritorious Citation to Dr. J. Phillip London

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – Navy League headquarters presented Dr. J. Phillip “Jack” London, executive chairman and chairman of the board of CACI International with its Meritorious Citation, the highest honor the Navy League bestows upon an individual or an organization.

“Dr. London has shown phenomenal leadership and character throughout his military service and his successful career,” said Navy League National President Alan Kaplan at the Nov. 3 presentation during an award dinner at the annual board of directors meeting. “He has left an indelible mark on the Navy League of the United States through the guidance and support he has bestowed upon me and the national presidents that have come before me.”

London has been a staunch supporter of the Navy League throughout his career. His long relationship with the Navy League has included ship commissioning ceremonies, numerous Navy anniversary celebrations including the War of 1812 Bicentennial, Sea-Air-Space expositions, service on Navy League national committees, and as a supporter and adviser to Navy League national presidents – the highest-ranking position in the organization.

“Receiving the highest award and recognition bestowed by on an individual by the Navy League is an honor I will always cherish,” London said to an audience of Navy League members, special guests and military service members at the Crowne Plaza Old Town. “Being recognized in this company is an honor onto itself.”

“Jack has lived a life of true character, a life that has

impacted generations of Sailors and Marines and anyone who thinks that service to our country is important,” said Adm. William Moran, keynote speaker for the night’s event.

Moran thanked the Navy League members in attendance for the impact the organization has on service members.

“It’s your impact, members of this group of patriots, that inspire the rest of us who are serving and those still to come,” he said. “It’s why it’s so important the Navy League thrives for years to come.”

Moran highlighted London’s 1959 graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy. London then served active duty in the U.S. Navy from 1959 to 1971. From 1961 to 1965, he served as a Navy carrier anti-submarine warfare helicopter pilot, positioned against the Soviet submarine nuclear missile threat. He saw duty in 1962 during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

While in the Naval Reserve from 1971 to 1983, Capt. London served as an aeronautical engineering duty officer and was commanding officer of the Naval Air Systems Command Reserve engineering unit.

London has previously received the Navy League Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz Award in 2007 and the New York City Navy League’s council’s Leadership Technology Award in 2016.

Unmanned Systems Earning Their Spot in Sea Services’

Toolboxes

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – Unmanned and autonomous systems aren't new to the armed forces, but in many ways the tools are still evolving and, along with that, the sea services are evolving alongside them to determine their proper place in their toolboxes.

Rear Adm. David Hahn, chief of naval research and director of innovation, technology requirements, and test and evaluation, likened the sea services' unmanned needs to deciding which 14 clubs you need to win the Masters.

"Today, as we look at the tools provided, most of those legacy tools require a lot of human interaction. Do we think that the unmanned tool set that we can provide our Navy and Marine Corps is ready to go in the bag? Do we think that we're going to get an expert result ... by completing the job? Not just a better drive, not just a better putt, but completing it all across that kill chain."

Hahn said there has been "tremendous success" with platforms, like larger unmanned underwater vehicles, but often they increase the need for manpower. His No. 1 ask for an unmanned system today would be an unmanned vessel that can sea at sea for 70 days without intervention that operates in concert with other maritime vessels.

As these systems progress, they are going to grow in their autonomous capabilities, said Rear Adm. Mark W. Darrah, program executive officer for Unmanned Aviation and Strike Weapon for the Navy, migrating into stochastic behaviors through machine learning that will enable them to do their own mission planning.

"We have to set the parameters for what it will base its decisions on," he said. "There's a lot of work that needs to be done there."

Currently, there is a healthy appetite in the Navy for what unmanned and autonomous systems offer.

"I will tell you, when I arrived we had an \$850 million contract for ISR [intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance] services in theater. In three years, we were at ceiling," he said.

And, at the same token, very sophisticated unmanned systems that are flanked by poor legacy systems would be akin to driving a Lamborghini at 25 mph, he said, so the Navy must focus on improving the entire kill chain, not just the platform.

Brig. Gen. Christian Wortman, vice chief of naval research, commander, Marine Corps Warfighting Lab, Office of Naval Research, said he's focused on Commandant Gen. Robert Neller's orders to be "faster, more effective, more responsive."

Instead of homing in on a certain vehicle or vessel, he said his needs today center on defending networks, and any autonomous system that enhances the Marine Corps' sense of environment that it's operating in.

Though the Coast Guard has had a lot of success with the unmanned systems it has deployed, Rear Adm. Michael Ryan, assistant commandant for capability, said it is still working to leverage all they have to offer.

"The Coast Guard is probably late to the table in some regards. ... We are working diligently to close those gaps. These are a force multiplier," he said.

Though the service now has the funding to integrate more unmanned assets into its portfolio, Ryan said the Coast Guard has to be careful on how it applies its funds, capabilities and labor to maximize mission effectiveness.

"Our mission set, our area of operations are ripe for

leveraging this type of capability and technology,” he said.

Congressmen: 355 Ships Still Important, Naval Safety Prime for Oversight

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. — At a breakfast session hosted at the Sea-Air-Space Exposition April 11, Reps. Rob Wittman, R-Va., and Joe Courtney, D-Conn., co-chairs of the House seapower and projection forces subcommittee, focused on boosting the Navy’s sea power, now enabled by the most recent National Defense Appropriations Act and omnibus bill.

After some reports of the Navy’s 355-ship plan being a soft target for the service to reach, the congressmen discussed the importance of having a number as a measure to guide awareness on the Navy’s needs.

As the Navy ramps up, it must carefully balance what assets get built and in what amount, said the congressmen, noting that submarines are often a stand-alone investment with fewer other appropriations needs, versus an aircraft carrier, which requires investments across the board.

Wittman said enabling sea power comes down to aligning the authorization process with the appropriation process and creating certainty.

“There has to be certainty within the requirement and design realm for ships and I believe we are there,” he said. That means no continuing resolutions and appropriations bills that are completed on time. Through 2019, Wittman forecasted few

issues with this, but once sequestration rears up again in 2020-2021, Congress may have a challenge in enabling stability again.

“We have to have a visualization for people outside the realm of the Navy, outside the realm of the Department of Defense to say, ‘What does this Navy even look like?’” said Wittman, explaining the value of having a specific number for the future fleet. “Without a number, there is nowhere to go.”

Wittman and Courtney also discussed potential congressional recommendations for the Navy after two deadly collisions in the Pacific area of operation in 2017.

“There is no way how we can possibly explain to families how this happened. It was totally preventable,” said Courtney, who acknowledged the Navy has already implemented some of the recommendations from a comprehensive review after the USS John S. McCain and USS Fitzgerald incidents.

“Our subcommittee will take definitive action. ... The oversight of Congress is how it works the best,” said Wittman.