U.S. Coast Guard Announces $212M in Base Charleston improvements

From U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, May 11, 2026

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Coast Guard today awarded two contracts that will deliver critical new operational and support facilities at Base Charleston in North Charleston, South Carolina. These projects support the Coast Guard's

transformation initiatives and will deliver critical new operational and support facilities to the expanding base.

One contract, awarded to The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company of Greenbelt, Maryland and executed by the U.S. Coast Guard Facilities Design and Construction Center in Norfolk, Virginia, is for the full recapitalization of Base Charleston's Pier Mike. This $116.7 million, fixed-price, design-build project includes demolition of the existing pier and replacing it with a state-of-the-art structure designed to homeport four Offshore Patrol Cutters (OPCs) and one visiting cutter. Each berth will also be capable of mooring National Security Cutters, providing significant strategic flexibility for the fleet. Contract completion is expected in 2030.

The second contract has been awarded to Brasfield & Gorrie, LLC of Birmingham, Alabama for the design and construction of a new 30,000-square-foot combined medical and dental facility, a new entry control point/visitor's center and various supporting utilities at Base Charleston. This $95.5 million project is a major step forward in increasing personnel readiness through improved access to medical and dental care, ensuring crews receive necessary support to sustain mission readiness. Contract completion is expected by July 2029.

Both contracts were awarded under the Department of Homeland Security's National Multiple Award Construction Contract III and were made possible by the Coast Guard's historic $25 billion investment included in the Working Families' Tax Cut Act.

"I am excited for the incredible potential these projects have to improve the welfare of our Servicemembers and their families, to homeport our future fleet of Offshore Patrol Cutters and to operationalize the generous investments being made in our Service by the American people," said Vice Admiral Jo-Ann Burdian, commander of Coast Guard Atlantic Area. "Our people are our greatest asset, and everything we do on their

behalf, to ensure they are ready, trained and well-supported will enable us to act with clarity, cohesion, and purpose to deliver the outcomes our Nation expects.”

The Pier Mike project follows Whiting-Turner’s successful demolition and ongoing reconstruction of the nearby Pier November. This adjacent project is progressing on time and on budget.

Flight III Destroyer Ted Stevens (DDG 128) Sails Away from HII’s Ingalls Shipbuilding

From HII

PASCAGOULA, Miss., May 08, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) — The Flight III *Arleigh Burke*-class guided missile destroyer *Ted Stevens* (DDG 128) departed HII's (NYSE: HII) Ingalls Shipbuilding division today enroute to its homeport in Norfolk, Virginia ahead of its future commissioning in Whittier, Alaska.

"The sail-away of *Ted Stevens* reflects the strong momentum of our Flight III destroyer deliveries and the team's work to deliver the most capable and combat ready ships to the fleet," said Chris Brown, Ingalls Shipbuilding DDG 51 program manager. "Seeing DDG 128 depart Ingalls is a proud moment for us all, and we are honored to support the Navy with a ship that will strengthen U.S. maritime security for decades to come."

DDG 128 is the second Flight III *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyer built and delivered by Ingalls. The ship represents the next generation of surface combatants, featuring the Flight III AN/SPY-6(V)1 radar system and the Aegis Baseline 10 combat system designed to counter evolving threats well into the 21st century.

Ingalls Shipbuilding currently has five additional Flight III destroyers under construction, with seven more in early pre-planning and material procurement phases. To increase throughput and meet growing demand from the Navy, Ingalls is executing a distributed shipbuilding initiative, partnering with shipyards and fabricators beyond the company's traditional labor market to improve schedule performance across all programs.

In 2026, HII plans to outsource more than 2.5 million hours of shipbuilding work, while expanding its structural assembly network of assembly partner companies, enabling more work to be completed outside the shipyard before final assembly.

To date, Ingalls has delivered 36 *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyers, including the first Flight III, USS *Jack H. Lucas* (DDG 125), and *Ted Stevens* (DDG 128). Flight III destroyers currently under construction include *Jeremiah Denton* (DDG 129), *George M. Neal* (DDG 131), *Sam Nunn* (DDG 133), *Thad Cochran* (DDG 135), and *John F. Lehman* (DDG 137). Ships in pre-planning include *Telesforo Trinidad* (DDG 139), *Ernest E. Evans* (DDG 141), *Charles French* (DDG 142), *Richard J. Danzig* (DDG 143), *Intrepid* (DDG 145), *Robert Kerrey* (DDG 146), and *Ray Mabus* (DDG 147).

U.S. Marine Corps Strengthens Arctic Readiness with Campaign – Alaska

From Communications Directorate, Headquarters Marine Corps, May 9, 2026

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The United States Marine Corps has launched "Campaign – Alaska," a strategic initiative to enhance its operational capabilities in the Arctic. This campaign combines two key efforts: the Marine Rotational Force – Alaska (MRF – Alaska) and the establishment of a Supporting Arms Liaison Team – Alaska (SALT – Alaska). These initiatives will address the Arctic's growing strategic importance in an era of global competition and ensure the Marine Corps is prepared for the extreme conditions of the High North.

The 2026 National Defense Strategy prioritizes key terrain in the Western Hemisphere from the Arctic to South America as vital for homeland defense and strategic competition.

The Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. Eric Smith, stated that “the Arctic is a region of growing strategic importance. The Marine Corps must be prepared to operate and win in its extreme conditions. MRF – Alaska and SALT – Alaska are critical to ensuring our Marines are forward postured, trained and equipped to project power globally, reaffirming our commitment as the Nation’s expeditionary force in readiness.”

MRF – Alaska, under the direction of Marine Forces Northern Command (MARFORNORTH), will conduct persistent, multi-domain expeditionary training and experimentation in Alaska. By participating in Joint exercises like Arctic Edge and Red Flag, MRF – Alaska will provide a training venue to prepare the Fleet Marine Force for operating in arctic conditions. This will not only bolster homeland defense but also improve interoperability with Joint and allied forces, deter adversaries, and promote regional stability.

“In this era of strategic competition, Alaska is critical to homeland defense and a vital theater for global power projection in the Arctic,” said Lt. Gen. Bobbi Shea, Commanding General, Marine Forces Northern Command. “The Marine Corps Campaign – Alaska is a deliberate and necessary step to ensure we provide the Joint Force with a combat-credible force to support the National Defense Strategy.”

Complementing the rotational force, Marine Corps Forces Reserve (MARFORRES) is establishing SALT – Alaska, a permanent detachment of the 6th Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO) at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER). This builds on MARFORRES’ long-standing presence in Alaska, dating back to 1985. The SALT – Alaska detachment will be instrumental in expanding training and operational activities and will facilitate coordination with Joint Forces, allies and local communities. By fiscal year 2027, SALT – Alaska will provide a persistent Marine Corps presence in Alaska, ensuring continuity in Arctic operations and positioning the force for

rapid expansion when needed.

Campaign – Alaska is a deliberate, forward-thinking strategy to meet the challenges and opportunities of the Arctic. By combining persistent rotational training with a permanent liaison capability, the Marine Corps is creating a robust Arctic presence. This will enable the Corps to project power, defend the homeland, and deter adversaries in one of the world's most demanding environments.

Lt. Gen. Shea stated, "Alaska will only grow in strategic importance. The Marine Corps is committed to ensuring we are prepared to operate in the High North."

Philippines, US Conclude Balikatan 2026

From left, Philippine Army Maj. Gen. Francisco F. Lorenzo, Philippines Exercise Director, U.S. Navy Adm. Samuel J. Paparo Jr., commander of United States Indo-Pacific Command, and Philippine Navy honor guardsman, furl the Exercise Balikatan 2026 flag during the closing ceremony at Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Philippines, May 8, 2026. Balikatan is a longstanding annual exercise between the Armed Forces of the Philippines and U.S. military that represents the strength of our alliance, improves our capable combined force, and demonstrates our commitment to regional peace and prosperity. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Raina Dale)

CAMP AGUINALDO, Quezon City, Philippines – The Armed Forces of the Philippines hosted the closing ceremony of Exercise Balikatan 2026, May 8, marking the successful completion of the largest annual military exercise between the Philippines and the United States.

The ceremony was a celebration of a successful exercise and a reminder of the shared values that underpin it. This 41st iteration of the exercise proved to be the most expansive Balikatan to date. Five ally and partner nations joined the Philippines and United States – Australia, Japan, Canada,

France, and New Zealand – bolstering the shared knowledge, capabilities, and momentum of the exercise from start to finish.

“Balikatan 2026 marked a strategic evolution from a bilateral exercise to a full-scale, multinational mission rehearsal for the defense of the Philippines,” said U.S. Navy Adm. Samuel J. Paparo, commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. “That growth reflects the security environment. It reflects the sovereign choices of free nations.”

The 19-day exercise highlighted the combat credibility, crisis readiness, and spirit of cooperation forged over decades of U.S.-Philippines bilateral training and reinforced by a growing coalition of like-minded partners and allies.

Combat credibility starts with detailed planning and strategic logistics. Long before the opening ceremony, service members dedicated months to the tactical plans, life support considerations, and safety precautions, paving the way for operations to begin. In March, AFP and U.S. forces, alongside civilian entities, conducted a Maritime Prepositioning Force offload to prepare equipment and sustainment for the exercise, strategically moving items from Mindanao through Subic Bay and onto training areas.

With combat power in position, the combined and joint force conducted complex all-domain live-fire events, enhancing air and missile defense, counter-landing, and maritime security and strike capabilities. These events integrated advanced capabilities into realistic scenarios across the archipelago, demonstrating how combat power becomes credible when applied by a capable, multinational force.

Combat credibility was also on display at sea – the Philippines, United States, Australia, Japan, and Canada conducted a Multilateral Maritime Event off the western coast of Luzon, featuring training in live-fire gunnery, anti-

submarine warfare, and replenishment at sea as well as deck landing qualifications.

“Balikatan was never simply about conducting activities,” said Philippine Army Gen. Romeo S. Brawner Jr., chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. “It was about strengthening the ability to respond together in real, complex conditions. And that matters because in today’s security environment, readiness cannot be improvised.”

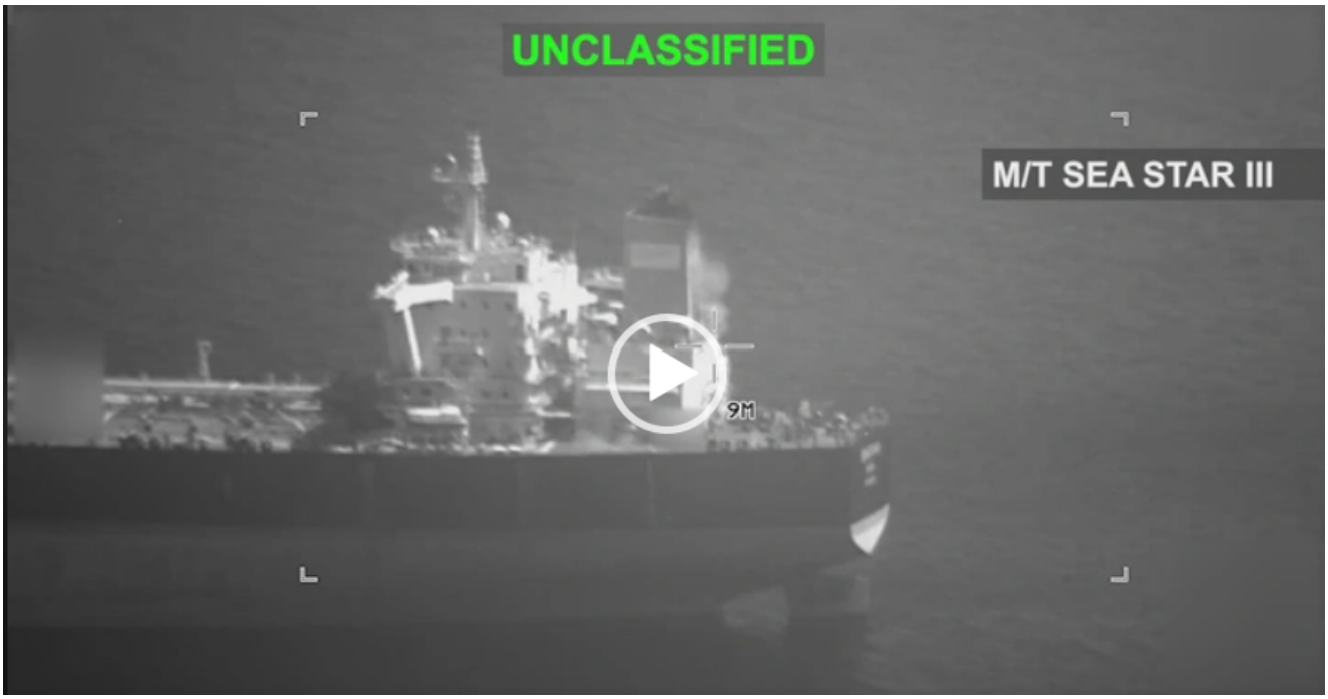
Crisis readiness was built as partner forces conducted advanced aeromedical, combat search-and-rescue, and mass casualty training. And readiness was called upon the first day of the exercise when AFP and U.S. forces responded to a vehicular accident, extracting multiple injured civilians from a ravine while aviation units coordinated rapid helicopter medical evacuations. Their coordinated response highlights that this year’s events are a product of decades of military cooperation.

Throughout the exercise, the spirit of cooperation extended directly into local communities. At five sites across the archipelago — from Mindanao to Palawan to Northern Luzon — service members worked alongside local leaders, barangay rural health workers and community partners to support medical and dental exams, health education, classroom technology, infrastructure projects and community engagements tailored to local priorities; lasting impacts of health engagements and engineering projects will provide value to the lives of more than 60,000 Filipinos.

The exercise’s success in enhancing combat credibility, crisis readiness, and the spirit of cooperation represents a shared commitment to regional peace and stability that is the foundation of the 1951 U.S.-Philippine Mutual Defense Treaty, stronger than ever 75 years after signing.

“These anniversaries remind us that our alliance is not merely a matter of treaty obligations. It is a living partnership, designed and strengthened across generations, and grounded in shared values, mutual respect, and common purpose,” said Y. Robert Ewing, chargé d’affaires, a.i., at the U.S. Embassy in the Philippines. “Exercise Balikatan serves as a powerful testament to our alliance in action. It demonstrates our collective commitment to prepare together, alongside other like-minded nations, to deter common threats and uphold a free and open Indo-Pacific.”

U.S. Disables 2 More Vessels Violating Blockade in Gulf of Oman



From U.S. Central Command, May 8, 2026

TAMPA, Fla. – U.S. forces disabled M/T Sea Star III and M/T

Sevda, May 8, prior to both vessels entering an Iranian port on the Gulf of Oman in violation of the ongoing U.S. blockade.

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) enforced blockade measures against two Iranian-flagged unladen oil tankers attempting to pull into an Iranian port on the Gulf of Oman. A U.S. Navy F/A-18 Super Hornet from USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) disabled both tankers after firing precision munitions into their smokestacks, preventing the non-compliant ships from entering Iran.

U.S. forces also disabled Iranian-flagged M/T Hasna, May 6, as it attempted to sail to an Iranian port in the Gulf of Oman. An F/A-18 Super Hornet from USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) disabled the unladen oil tanker's rudder by firing several rounds from a 20mm cannon gun.

All three vessels are no longer transiting to Iran.

"U.S. forces in the Middle East remain committed to full enforcement of the blockade of vessels entering or leaving Iran," said Adm. Brad Cooper, CENTCOM commander. "Our highly trained men and women in uniform are doing incredible work."

Multiple commercial vessels have been disabled and more than 50 have been redirected by CENTCOM forces to ensure compliance.

USS Daniel Inouye Returns to Fleet Early After Successful

Maintenance

The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Daniel Inouye (DDG 118) returns to Pearl Harbor on April 23, 2026. Hawaii Regional Maintenance Center completed a complex maintenance period of the Inouye eight days ahead of schedule, providing a significant boost to fleet readiness. PHNSY & IMF's mission is to keep the Navy's fleet "Fit to Fight" by repairing, maintaining, and modernizing the Navy's fast-attack submarines and surface ships. Strategically located in the heart of the Pacific, it is the most comprehensive fleet repair and maintenance facility between the U.S. West Coast and the Far East. (U.S. Navy photo by Mike Wilson)
From Michael Wilson, Hawaii Regional Maintenance Center, May 8, 2026

Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Daniel Inouye (DDG 118) rejoined the Pacific Fleet in April after completing a complex maintenance period eight days ahead of schedule.

The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Daniel

Inouye (DDG 118) returns to Pearl Harbor on April 23, 2026. Hawaii Regional Maintenance Center completed a complex maintenance period of the Inouye eight days ahead of schedule, providing a significant boost to fleet readiness. PHNSY & IMF's mission is to keep the Navy's fleet "Fit to Fight" by repairing, maintaining, and modernizing the Navy's fast-attack submarines and surface ships. Strategically located in the heart of the Pacific, it is the most comprehensive fleet repair and maintenance facility between the U.S. West Coast and the Far East. (U.S. Navy photo by Mike Wilson)

Leaders from the U.S. Pacific Fleet and Hawaii Regional Maintenance Center (HRMC) recognized the joint government-industry team for the achievement in a ceremony at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, March 19, 2026. The project's success was hailed as an example of exceptional teamwork and professionalism.

"This maintenance period for USS Daniel Inouye set the highest standards across the Pearl Harbor waterfront," said Capt. Brian Ryglowski, HRMC deputy commander.

He praised the ship's crew for their "culture, mindset, and positive attitude," which allowed them to seamlessly integrate with nearly 20 different maintenance activities.

"The ship definitely went 'for broke'," Ryglowski added, referencing the ship's motto. "This was an unprecedented performance that gave back significant operational time."

Effective and efficient maintenance keeps the U.S. Navy lethal and ready to defend the nation and maximizes the lifespan of its vessels. Navy regional maintenance centers conduct repairs and alterations that cannot be done by the ship's crew.

Daniel Inouye's Commanding Officer. U.S. Navy Cmdr. Ryan Kelly, attributed the success to his team's culture.

"Our Project Team culture was founded on three main

principles: team cohesion, a solution-driven mindset and deliberate communication," Kelly said. "No matter the barrier or challenge we faced, there was a level of commitment to each other that ensured our success. I am convinced that our people made the difference."

Daniel Inouye is named for the late U.S. Senator from Hawaii, a Medal of Honor recipient who served in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team in Europe during World War II. The ship honors this legacy by adopting the unit's historic motto, "Go for Broke."

This maintenance was managed by HRMC and executed by the lead maintenance contractor, Pacific Shipyards International.

HRMC, in conjunction with Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility, keeps the Navy's fleet "Fit to Fight" by repairing, maintaining, and modernizing surface ships and fast-attack submarines. Strategically located in the heart of the Pacific, it is the most comprehensive fleet repair and maintenance facility between the U.S. West Coast and the Far East.

NPS Online Student Advances Fleet Analysis of Autonomous Systems

From Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Andrew Langholf, May 6, 2026

MONTEREY, Calif. – Advanced analyses completed by a Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) distance learning student is helping inform the U.S. Navy's future employment of autonomous systems, demonstrating how NPS Online students, and the school's unique certificate programs, offer the same impact on fleet needs as their counterparts on campus in Monterey.

U.S. Navy Lt. Marissa Amodeo, assigned to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations Assessment Division, OPNAV N81, completed the systems analysis certificate program this past March. Through the coursework required for one of her classes in the program, titled Combat Systems Simulation, Amodeo developed a model and supporting analysis to inform autonomous systems concepts of operations, or CONOPS.

The work was well received by senior leadership, including OPNAV N81 director U.S. Navy Rear Adm. Douglas Sasse, with the

potential to help inform future Navy acquisitions of unmanned systems. More specifically, Amodeo's work focused on how the Navy can move from buying new technology, to fielding that technology as an advanced warfighting capability as effectively and efficiently as possible.

"My project tackled a key operational issue – making sure Navy investments in emerging technology, like small, unmanned surface vehicles, translate into usable warfighting capability," Amodeo said. "We are fielding robotic technologies quickly, but we still do not fully understand the deployment of bottlenecks. Identifying and quantifying those constraints is essential to mission success."

As an analyst, Amodeo's job is to support the OPNAV N81 mission to provide detailed, evidence-based analyses that inform decisions on resources, acquisitions, and readiness.

"At OPNAV N81, our mission is timely, data-driven analysis that informs resource decisions," she said. "My goal was to provide an analytical foundation that helps shape planning for these platforms and supports their integration into the fleet."

Stew Sharp, a senior member of the OPNAV N81 campaign analysis team, said Amodeo's work demonstrates how technical education strengthens U.S. Navy warfighting.

"Lt. Amodeo's work is a powerful testament to how technical education can be a direct force multiplier for our mission," Sharp said. "By applying advanced systems analysis, she transformed a complex operational challenge into a clear, data-driven model, revealing the critical bottlenecks we must address to successfully integrate unmanned systems."

"Her initiative provides the analytical foundation to guide future investment, ensuring our advanced technology delivers a decisive edge in real-world naval operations," Sharp continued.

NPS distance learning programs give military professionals access to advanced graduate education in the NPS Department of Operations Research that they can apply directly to operational challenges at their commands. In the systems analysis certificate program, students develop analytical skills that support complex operational questions, including force design, decision support, and emerging warfighting concepts.

“The NPS program gave me the toolkit to do this,” Amodeo said. “The combat systems and simulation course helped me build a discrete event queuing model, and the broader curriculum strengthened my systems thinking so I could turn a complex process into actionable insight.”

As the Department of the Navy works to understand how autonomous systems can be integrated into future operations, the connection between education and application becomes increasingly important. For officers serving in operational and assessment roles, graduate-level analysis helps commands evaluate concepts earlier, make more informed decisions faster, and directly align emerging capabilities with fleet needs.

“The biggest takeaway is that deploying autonomous systems at scale is a systems problem, not a linear one,” Amodeo said. “Processes that work for one or two units can break at scale when bottlenecks appear.”

“My analysis showed that when demand hits many assets at once, small constraints can delay deployment, even under optimistic assumptions,” she added. “Logistics and maintenance capacity can determine readiness, so the Navy has to invest in the process, not just the platform.”

Dr. Dashi Singham, research associate professor in NPS’ Department of Operations Research, taught the course leading to Amodeo’s analysis. She said distance learning students are

uniquely positioned to bring current operational problems into the classroom and use simulation tools to understand and inform decisions before they are made.

“Many distance learning students work in operational environments where real systems can be modeled using discrete event simulation,” Singham said. “That allows them to test potential policy changes in a simulated environment and provide immediate, data-driven recommendations across a variety of fleet settings.”

Amodeo said her full-time job as an OPNAV N81 analyst is a heavy lift, but the addition of an NPS class to her already busy schedule is anything but a distraction. In fact, the skills learned through the four-course certificate sequence immediately strengthened the work she was doing, Amodeo says, and ultimately advanced to the quality of the analyses she delivered to the fleet.

“These programs are not a distraction from the job. They are a force multiplier,” Amodeo said. “They help you ask better questions, challenge assumptions with data, and deliver more impactful results for the fleet and warfighter.”

NPS, located in Monterey, California, provides warfighting-focused graduate education, including classified studies and interdisciplinary research, to advance the operational effectiveness, technological leadership, and warfighting advantage of the naval service. Established in 1909, NPS offers master’s, doctoral, and distance learning certificate programs to Department of War military and civilian students, along with international partners, to develop warfighters and leaders who can think critically, solve complex operational problems, and deliver mission-ready solutions through advanced education and research.

BlackSea Technologies Awarded $256 Million Navy Contract

Designed to replace and significantly improve upon the legacy Offshore Petroleum Distribution System, SPDS will supply bulk fuel to land forces from the sea in expeditionary and contested environments. Photo from BlackSea Technologies

From BlackSea Technologies

BALTIMORE, Md., May 5th, 2026, BlackSea Technologies announced today that it was awarded a five-year, $256 million contract to build and support the Seabased Petroleum Distribution System (SPDS) program. Under the contract, BlackSea will construct up to five SPDS units and support equipment from May 2026 through March 2031. Primary production will be centered in Baltimore with additional work supported by partners along the Gulf Coast.

Managed by Navy PMO 314, Logistics Over the Shore, SPDS is a critical expeditionary fuel distribution capability designed to move bulk fuel from sea to shore in locations where traditional infrastructure does not exist. As demonstrated in Navy testing, the system supports the full mission profile of offshore deployment, fuel transfer, and distribution, giving joint and allied forces a more flexible and resilient means of sustaining operations ashore.

The Navy has described the system as a next generation solution that provides a more survivable bulk fuel storage solution and helps meet emerging operational requirements in contested and infrastructure limited environments.

“This award positions BlackSea Technologies to deliver a capability that directly supports expeditionary readiness and operational endurance in contested environments” said Charles Engstrom, BlackSea’s SPDS Program Manager. “SPDS answers a real logistics challenge for the joint force, getting fuel where it is needed, when fixed infrastructure is unavailable or at risk. We are proud to support Navy PMO 314 on a program that strengthens the nation’s ability to project and sustain power from the sea.”

BlackSea’s work under the contract will draw on the company’s maritime engineering, production, and integration expertise, while leveraging a trusted industrial base in Baltimore and partners along the Gulf Coast. Together, that team will help deliver a system that enhances flexibility, resilience, and readiness for future operations.

U.S. Forces Disable Vessel in Gulf of Oman Attempting to Violate Blockade

From U.S. Central Command, May 6, 2026

TAMPA, Fla. – U.S. forces operating in the Gulf of Oman enforced blockade measures by disabling an Iranian-flagged unladen oil tanker attempting to sail toward an Iranian port at 9 a.m. ET, May 6.

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) forces observed M/T Hasna as it transited international waters enroute to an Iranian port on the Gulf of Oman. American forces issued multiple warnings and informed the Iranian-flagged vessel it was in violation of the U.S. blockade.

After Hasna's crew failed to comply with repeated warnings, U.S. forces disabled the tanker's rudder by firing several rounds from the 20mm cannon gun of a U.S. Navy F/A-18 Super Hornet launched from USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72). Hasna is no longer transiting to Iran.

The U.S. blockade against ships attempting to enter or depart Iranian ports remains in full effect. CENTCOM forces continue to act deliberately and professionally to ensure compliance.

Coast Guard Creates Special

Missions Command to Counter Maritime Threats at Home, Abroad

From U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters, May 6, 2026

WASHINGTON – The Coast Guard is standing up the Special Missions Command to oversee its deployable specialized forces. The command will enhance the operational effectiveness of the Coast Guard in responding to a wide range of national emergencies and events as the demand for deployable specialized forces capabilities increase.

The Coast Guard selected the existing Coast Guard C5I Service Center facility in Kearneysville, West Virginia, as the future site of the Coast Guard's Special Missions Command (SMC). The SMC will be commissioned on or around October 1, 2026, fully integrating the Service's Deployable Special Forces under a single operational commander to provide oversight and advocacy, improve readiness, mission effectiveness, and interoperability to meet Service, Department, and joint military requirements.

"The creation of the Special Missions Command is a vital evolution for our service," said Adm. Kevin Lunday, Commandant of the Coast Guard. "We are forging our most elite operators into a single, razor-sharp instrument of national power. The Special Missions Command is not an administrative change; it is an investment ensuring these elite teams are the best trained, equipped, and organized force possible, ready to protect the Homeland and support the Joint Force."

The Special Missions will include the following units:

- Maritime Security Response Teams serve as the Coast

Guard’s first responders to maritime terrorism and other high-risk threats. They are equipped to conduct the nation’s most critical maritime security and defense operations at home or abroad, with both partner law enforcement agencies and joint services.

- Tactical Law Enforcement Teams provide law enforcement expertise across the full spectrum of maritime response situations with specific focus on counter-trafficking and criminal networks attempting to exploit maritime transit zones.

- Maritime Safety and Security Teams are rapidly deployable boat teams that provide port, waterway, and coastal security capability to safeguard the public, protect the marine transportation system, and respond to maritime crime, sabotage, and terrorist activity.

- Port Security Units provide shoreside and waterborne security including point defense of strategic shipping, designated critical infrastructure, and high value assets in joint and combined expeditionary warfare environments.

- Regional Dive Lockers provide dedicated undersea capabilities for a variety of missions. These missions include ensuring the security of ports and waterways, maintaining aids to navigation, and conducting ship maintenance and repair, often in extreme environments like the remote polar regions.

National Strike Force provides highly trained technical experts and specialized equipment to Coast Guard and other

federal agencies to prepare for and respond to the most complex crises and natural disasters, including oil, hazardous substances, and chemical, biological, radiation and nuclear incidents. The force, comprised of three strike teams, an incident management assist team, and the public information assist team supports federal on-scene coordinators and incident commanders, and is poised for immediate response across the nation and globally.

“The geo-political landscape is evolving and the demand for Coast Guard Deployable Specialized Forces is at an all-time high,” said Capt. Robert Berry, Special Missions Command pre-commissioning team lead. “These forces are instrumental to the Coast Guard’s readiness and its role as a global leader in maritime contingency response. The Service has always turned to its specialized forces to respond to national threats and disasters, and establishing this command is the natural next step to enabling our forces to lead the way at the tip of the spear.”

Additional units, capabilities and functions may be incorporated into the Special Missions Command in the future. Currently, the administrative and operational control of specialized forces units is shared between the Coast Guard’s two Area commanders. The Coast Guard is evolving to become a stronger, more capable and responsive fighting force in responding to threats presented by emerging technologies, intensified border security activities, large-scale contingencies and national special security events.