Coast Guard Crew Offloads $335.8M Worth of Cocaine in San Diego

Crewmembers of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Munro (WMSL 755) work on the flight deck of the cutter during the contraband offload in San Diego, Nov. 19, 2024 (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Richard Uranga)
From U.S. Coast Guard District Eleven, Nov. 19, 2024

SAN DIEGO – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Munro (WMSL 755) offloaded more than 29,000 pounds of cocaine, with an estimated value of $335.8 million, Tuesday in San Diego.

The offload is a result of eleven separate suspected drug smuggling vessel interdictions or events off the coasts of Mexico and Central and South America in September and October.

“I would put this crew on any mission, anywhere, at any time,” said Capt. James O’Mara, commanding officer, Coast Guard Cutter Munro. “They executed everything asked of them with

incredible teamwork and persistence, and we are proud of the results. Hats off to all our international and interagency partners – we absolutely cannot do this mission without them. For our families and loved ones back home: your support keeps us going out there. It takes everyone's head in the game to make these interdictions happen, and we are grateful you have our backs on the home front as we patrol the high seas and do our part to prevent dangerous narcotics from hitting cities around the globe."

Multiple U.S. agencies, including the Departments of Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security, collaborate in the effort to combat transnational organized crime. The Coast Guard, Navy, Customs and Border Protection, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with allied and international partner agencies, all play a role in counter-narcotic operations. The fight against drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean requires unity of effort in all phases, from detection and monitoring to interdictions and criminal prosecutions.

"Our partnerships and our collective abilities are vital to the security and prosperity of the hemisphere," said Rear Adm. Joseph Buzzella, commander, Coast Guard District Eleven. "The Eastern Pacific is a challenging environment – both operationally and logistically. The transit zone is a vast area of ocean to cover, far from home. Despite the challenges, the success of the Munro's crew highlights the importance of what we do on the high seas."

The fight against drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean requires unity of effort in all phases, from detection, monitoring and interdictions to criminal prosecutions by international partners and U.S. Attorneys' Offices in districts across the nation. The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean is conducted under the authority of Coast Guard District Eleven, headquartered in Alameda, California. The interdictions,

including the actual boardings, are led and conducted by members of the U.S. Coast Guard.

These interdictions relate to Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) designated investigations. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF program can be found at **https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF**.

The Munro is the sixth Legend Class National Security Cutter, and is homeported in Alameda, California. The ship/s crew can operate in the most demanding open ocean environments, including the hazardous fisheries of the North Pacific Ocean and the vast approaches of the Southern Pacific Ocean, where significant narcotics trafficking occurs.

Crewmembers of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Munro (WMSL 755) work on the flight deck of the cutter during the contraband offload in San Diego, Nov. 19, 2024. The Munro crew members interdicted the narcotics in the Eastern Pacific during counter-narcotic patrols, seizing 29,000 pounds of cocaine worth an estimated wholesale value of $335.8 million. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Richard Uranga)

Textron Systems Awarded UAS Contracts For Three Additional U.S. Navy Littoral

Combat Ships

From Textron Systems, Nov. 18, 2024

HUNT Valley, Md., November 18, 2024 – Textron Systems Corporation, a Textron Inc. (NYSE:TXT) company, announced today that it has been awarded a task order valued at up to $47 million by the U.S. Navy's Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) to provide COCO UAS services to three Independence-class Littoral Combat Ships (LCS) deploying to 5th Fleet. This award follows a 2023 contract to provide UAS support to LCSs, bringing the total number of U.S. Navy ships supported by the Aerosonde UAS to 10.

Textron Systems will deploy its **Aerosonde UAS** and skilled personnel to provide mission overwatch and extended range intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) services with enhanced mission payloads as seen aboard the Expeditionary Sea Base (ESB) 4 and ESB 5, as well as two DDG-class ships and three LCSs. In December 2023, the Aerosonde UAS took its inaugural operational flight from its first LCS, the LCS 28 USS Savannah.

"Textron Systems has delivered COCO services with our Aerosonde UAS for over a decade, demonstrating the flexibility and value a model like this brings to the services," said

David Phillips, Senior Vice President Air, Land and Sea Systems. “Because we are managing the full life cycle of the system, including technology integration, human factors, spares and repairs, employing the Aerosonde UAS enables the Navy customer to focus solely on their mission. We extend the customer’s capabilities across the mission packages of each ship reliably and quickly.”

The Aerosonde UAS offers multi-mission capability built upon a family of systems which have amassed over 700,000 flight hours over more than 10 years. The system is equipped for multiple payload configurations with both vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) and fixed-wing options.

Navy Leader Highlights Shipyards’ Vital Role in Fleet Readiness During Pacific Northwest Visit

From SECNAV Public Affairs, Nov. 18, 2024

ARLINGTON, Va. – Acting Under Secretary of the Navy Tom Mancinelli visited Puget Sound Naval Shipyard & Intermediate Maintenance Facility (PSNS & IMF) in Bremerton, Washington, Nov. 18, where he engaged with shipyard leadership, employees, and Sailors, emphasizing the critical role the Navy’s public shipyards have in maintaining maritime readiness.

Mancinelli’s visit focused on the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program (SIOP), a long-term effort to modernize the Navy’s four public shipyards, and also included a tour of

the USS Jimmy Carter (SSN 23), a Seawolf-class submarine currently undergoing maintenance.

During his visit, Mancinelli met with Capt. JD Crinklaw, PSNS & IMF commander, and other senior leaders to discuss shipyard operations, infrastructure updates, and challenges. They also discussed programmatic improvements, technical innovations, and Quality of Service initiatives. As the Navy's largest public shipyard, and the only shipyard capable of servicing Nimitz-class carriers on the West Coast, PSNS & IMF is essential to help ensure fleet readiness.

"We must continue to build, maintain, and modernize ships, submarines and aircraft to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow," said Mancinelli. "What you do here matters deeply to the Navy and to our nation's security. Your work is vital to defending our country and our way of life."

Mancinelli toured Dry Docks 3, 5, and 6, where he observed seismic upgrades and discussed planned improvements under SIOP.

"The Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Plan is a once-in-a-century investment that reflects the Department of Navy's commitment to ensuring our fleet remains ready for future challenges," said Mancinelli. "These upgrades are critical to the overall strength of the Navy and are critical to our effort to keep our fleet ready."

SIOP is an investment plan at the Navy's four public shipyards to meet nuclear fleet maintenance requirements and improve Navy maintenance capabilities by expanding shipyard capacity, optimizing shipyard configuration, creating resilient infrastructure, and modernizing industrial plant equipment. SIOP upgrades enable shipyard to improve efficiency and reduce the amount of time vessels spend in a maintenance period.

The Acting Under Secretary also visited the USS Jimmy Carter, the last and most advanced of the Seawolf-class attack

submarines. The submarine features a unique 100-foot hull extension, known as the multi-mission platform, which enables it to carry advanced technology and enhanced warfighting capabilities.

On board, Mancinelli met with the submarine’s leadership and crew, toured the vessel, and dined with Sailors while learning more about the submarine’s capabilities.

“It is always inspiring to meet the extraordinary Sailors who bring our platforms to life,” said Mancinelli. “The crew of the Jimmy Carter exemplifies the innovation, dedication, and selflessness that define our Navy. I have no doubt they will continue to do great things for our nation.”

Throughout his visit, Mancinelli reinforced maritime statecraft and Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro’s priorities: strengthening maritime dominance, building a culture of warfighting excellence, and enhancing strategic partnerships.

“Our shipyard workers here at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard directly support the strength and readiness of the fleet,” said Mancinelli. “Your dedication and hard work ensure that our nation maintains the strongest Navy in the world. Thank you for your contributions to the security of our nation.”

The visit marked Mancielli’s first trip to the Pacific Northwest, underscoring the Navy’s focus on maintaining a ready and modern fleet capable of meeting global and strategic challenges.

Coast Guard Cutter Seneca Returns Home After 61-Day Patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean

The Coast Guard Cutter Seneca (WMEC-906) crew underway on the Eastern Pacific Ocean, Sept. 22, 2018. The cutter Seneca is the sixth of thirteen 270′ Famous Class medium endurance cutters in the United States Coast Guard fleet. (Coast Guard Photo)

U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, Nov. 19, 2024

PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Seneca (WMEC 906) returned to their home port of Portsmouth, Oct. 30, following a 61-day counter-drug patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

During the deployment, Seneca’s crew conducted law enforcement

operations on the high seas to disrupt illegal narcotics smuggling.

Patrolling in support of Joint Interagency Task Force – South's (JIATF-S) counter-drug mission, Seneca worked to counter illicit maritime activities, strengthen partner nation ties and facilitate the safety of life at sea. While deployed in the Coast Guard Eleventh District area of operations, Seneca's crew worked alongside an embarked aviation unit from the Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron and law enforcement detachment (LEDET) personnel from the Tactical Law Enforcement Team – South (TACLET-S).

While at sea, Seneca's crew provided assistance during a Costa Rican forces interdiction of a vessel carrying illegal drugs. The joint interdiction prevented approximately 3,376 pounds of marijuana, worth an estimated street-value of over $3.2 million, from illicit distribution.

This interdiction displayed how U.S. Coast Guard units work effectively with partner nations to combat illicit transnational activities. While on patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, Seneca also operated alongside Coast Guard Cutters Munro (WMSL 755), Hamilton (WMSL 753), Vigorous (WMEC 627) and U.S. Navy Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS St. Louis (LCS 19).

"Our deployment is representative of the combined efforts of U.S. and allied military units from a coalition of partners working together to deny drug trafficking organizations access to maritime smuggling routes," said Cmdr. Lee Jones, commanding officer of Seneca. "The U.S. Coast Guard's ability to forge strong and lasting international partnerships that further the national interest is what makes our service such a unique instrument of national security. I am proud of the hard work, resiliency, and dedication to duty exhibited by the crew of Seneca."

Detecting and interdicting illicit drug traffickers on the high seas involves significant interagency and international coordination. JIATF-S based in Key West, Florida conducts the detection and monitoring of aerial and maritime transit of illegal drugs. Support from TACLET-S, which is based in Miami, improves mission capability.

Seneca is a 270-foot, Famous-class medium endurance cutter. Commissioned in 1987, the cutter has called Portsmouth home for the past four years. The cutter's primary missions are counter-drug and migrant interdiction operations, enforcement of laws and treaties, and search and rescue in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit **GoCoastGuard.com** to learn about active duty, reserve, officer and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found **here**.

Marine Squadron Circles Globe, Aiding International Mission in Africa

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, Calif. – Marines with Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron (VMGR) 352 circumnavigated the globe aboard a KC-130J Super Hercules. The flight began and ended at the squadron's home base of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, California, and involved 11 strategic stops across Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and the Indo-Pacific regions.

The primary mission of the VMGR-352 "Raiders" was to deliver equipment and Marines to 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing squadrons deployed to Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, in support of Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa. The 10 pilots and crewmembers that participated enhanced their proficiency and earned critical qualifications through long-distance flights, honing their skills in navigation and logistical operations over extended ranges and varied conditions.

"Our global flight showcased the capability of the KC-130J to extend the operational reach of Third MAW," said Lt. Col. Mark

Bock, commanding officer of VMGR-352. “More importantly, the operation demonstrated the readiness and skill of the Marines who fix and fly our aircraft.”

Headquartered at Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti, CJTF-HOA is the only enduring U.S. military presence in Africa, tasked to promote regional stability, build partner nation military capacity, and protect U.S. and partner interests. A detachment from VMGR-352 has been deployed to Camp Lemonnier since May 2024 providing air-to-air refueling, combat assault transport, and air drop capability to CJTF-HOA and other partners in the region.

“CJTF-HOA is made up of various units throughout the joint force,” said U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Nathan Fluker, KC-130J Detachment OIC at Camp Lemonnier. “The capabilities Third MAW brings are unique and play a vital role in crisis response as well as supporting partner nations.”

The mission spotlighted the versatility of the Marine Corps’ KC-130J Super Hercules. With a range exceeding 3,500 nautical miles and a 57,500-pound fuel offload capacity using wing and external tanks, “hercs” excel in long-distance logistics and refueling of both fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft, on the ground and in the air. The KC-130J’s ability to carry up to 92 troops while also serving as a flying gas station and cargo bay made it ideal for delivering Marines and equipment to Camp Lemonnier. Its multi-role nature, capable of tactical transport, air delivery, and air-to-air refueling, underscores its value in supporting diverse missions across the globe.

“The flight in support of deployed units enabled mission success by delivering required bulky supply parts that would have taken weeks to ship by other means,” Fluker said.

The flight path to Djibouti comprised stops in the Indo-Pacific region, among them Wake Island, Guam, Singapore, and

Diego Garcia. The return to Miramar included stops in Qatar, Greece, England, and Maine.

These stops were not only logistically necessary, ensuring refueling and resupply needed to traverse vast distances, but also strategically impactful, showcasing the Marine Corps' ability to operate seamlessly across different continents and strengthen relationships with partner nations.

"Disparate stops require us to comply with different national rules and regulations and build relationships," Bock said. "This experience and those relationships make our squadron better prepared to operate globally."

VMGR-352's successful global flight underscores the vital role of Marine Corps aviation in supporting U.S. operations across multiple theaters. As both a deliberate mission and a training opportunity, the Raiders increased their proficiency and global deployment readiness.

"Marines are ready to win in any clime or place, and the Raiders of VMGR-352 are no exception," Bock said. "It's an honor to be leading this team."

Marine Corps General Officer Announcements

From the U.S. Department of Defense, Nov. 19, 2024

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced today that the president has made the following nominations:

Marine Corps Col. Timothy S. Brady Jr. for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Brady is currently serving as assistant chief of staff, G-3, Marine Forces Pacific, Camp H. M. Smith, Hawaii.

Marine Corps Col. Dustin J. Byrum for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Byrum is currently serving as executive assistant to the deputy commandant, Aviation, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Col. Henry Dolberry Jr. for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Dolberry is currently serving as chief of staff, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, Okinawa, Japan.

Marine Corps Col. Lauren S. Edwards for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Edwards is currently serving as senior military advisor, Office of the Secretary of the Navy, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Col. Christopher M. Haar for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Haar is currently serving as executive assistant to the deputy commandant, Installations and Logistics Department, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Col. Sean P. Hoewing for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Hoewing is currently serving as director, Air Combat Element, Capabilities Development Directorate, Combat Development and Integration, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Quantico, Virginia.

Marine Corps Col. Ryan M. Hoyle for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Hoyle is currently serving as assistant chief of staff, G-3, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, California.

Marine Corps Col. David C. Hyman for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Hyman is currently serving as branch head, Manpower Management Officer Assignments, Manpower and

Reserve Affairs, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Quantico, Virginia.

Marine Corps Col. Robert T. Meade for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Meade is currently serving as military assistant to the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Col. Joel F. Schmidt for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Schmidt is currently serving as executive assistant to the deputy commandant, Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Quantico, Virginia.

Marine Corps Col. Jeremy S. Winters for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Winters is currently serving as assistant chief of staff, Joint Force Headquarters, U.S. Cyber Command, Fort Meade, Maryland.

HII Moves Enterprise (CVN 80) for First Time, Enabling Construction of Two Aircraft Carriers at Once

From HII, Nov. 19, 2024

NEWPORT NEWS, Va., Nov. 19, 2024 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) — HII (NYSE: HII) announced today that its Newport News Shipbuilding division has successfully transferred the mid-body hull section of *Gerald R. Ford*-class aircraft carrier *Enterprise* (CVN 80), allowing the shipyard to begin the concurrent assembly of two *Gerald R. Ford*-class aircraft carriers in the same dry dock.

The evolution began Thursday, Oct. 31 with the controlled process of slowly filling the dry dock with more than 100 million gallons of water, marking the first time CVN 80 has been floated. It was then transferred to the west end of the dry dock, where construction on the ship will continue.

Early next year, the shipyard expects to commence assembling *Doris Miller* (CVN 81) in the east end of the dry dock, marking a historic first that two *Gerald R. Ford*-class aircraft carriers will be under construction in the dry dock at the same time. The dual construction of *Enterprise* (CVN 80) and *Doris Miller* (CVN 81) is enabled by the successful implementation of the CVN 80/81 two-ship contract modification

awarded in 2019 and modifications made to the dry dock by NNS with investment by HII and the U.S. Navy.

Photos and a video accompany this release are available at: https://hii.com/news/hii-moves-enterprise-cvn-80-for-first-time-enabling-construction-of-two-aircraft-carriers-at-once/.

"It is only fitting for this *Enterprise*, CVN 80, to be part of a historic first at NNS, considering the previous *Enterprise*, CVN 65, was the world's first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, proudly built here at the shipyard," said Les Smith, NNS vice president *Enterprise* (CVN 80), *Doris Miller* (CVN 81) and future aircraft carrier programs. "Thousands of dedicated shipbuilders are working with urgency on these aircraft carriers that we know will play a vital role in the Navy's fleet."

NNS is the only shipyard capable of designing, building and refueling nuclear-powered aircraft carriers for the Navy. *Enterprise* is the first aircraft carrier designed digitally and built digitally using visual work instructions on laptops and tablets rather than paper drawings.

U.S. Marine Squadron Conducts First Combat Strikes Using F-35Cs Against Houthi Targets in Yemen

U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (Nov. 11, 2024) An F-35C Lightning II, attached to Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314, prepares to launch from the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72). (This photo has been altered for security purposes by blurring out names on aircraft) (Official U.S. Navy Photo)
By Carrier Strike Group 3 Public Affairs | November 18, 2024

U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY – U.S. Marine Corps F-35C Lightning II aircraft, assigned to Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314, conducted the first F-35C combat air strikes for the platform, Nov. 9-10.

VMFA 314, assigned to Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 9 aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), conducted multiple strikes on Houthi weapons storage facilities within Houthi-controlled territories in Yemen. The facilities housed conventional weapons, including anti-ship missiles. The Iranian-backed Houthis used these weapons to target U.S. and international military and civilian vessels navigating international waters in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

“The F-35C demonstrated its warfighting advantage by

transiting contested airspace and striking targets in the heart of Houthi territory over multiple days," said U.S. Marine Lt. Col. Jeffrey "Wiki" Davis, commanding officer of VMFA 314. "My Marines are honored to be first to fight with the F-35C."

The F-35C is a fifth-generation, long-range stealth fighter jet used by the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force, and is a multi-role aircraft able to perform a variety of missions, including air-to-air combat, air-to-ground strikes, reconnaissance and electronic warfare.

"The offensive and defensive capabilities of the F-35C absolutely enhance our air wing's striking arm," said U.S. Navy Capt. Gerald "Dutch" Tritz, commander, CVW 9. "The now battle-tested Air Wing of the Future has proven itself a game changer across all carrier air wing missions."

Other variants of the aircraft include the F-35A and the F-35B. The F-35B first saw combat in 2018 when units assigned to the Essex Amphibious Ready Group conducted airstrikes against the Taliban in Afghanistan and ISIS in Syria. Air Force F-35A's first combat mission was completed the year after against ISIS targets in Iraq.

The "Black Knights" of VMFA 314, based out of Miramar, Calif., transitioned from the F-18 to the F-35C in 2020, making them the first fleet squadron in both the Navy and Marine Corps to operate the 5th Generation fighter aircraft. VMFA 314 was also the first operational Marine squadron to fly the F-4 Phantom and F-18 Hornet.

VMFA 314, part of 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, is the only deployed F-35C squadron in the Marine Corps.

Coast Guard Establishes New JROTC Program at Veterans Memorial High School in Corpus Christi

From U.S. Coast Guard Public Affairs Detachment Corpus Christi, Texas

Nov. 15, 2024

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – The Coast Guard established a new Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps Program at Veterans Memorial High School in Corpus Christi, Nov. 14.

Veterans Memorial High School's Coast Guard JROTC unit is the 13th in the nation and has over 50 cadets enrolled in the inaugural semester.

“We’re excited to be at Veterans Memorial High School today. They’re off to an excellent start with Commander Gully and Chief O’Leary,” said Cmdr. Clay Cromer, Coast Guard JROTC program manager. “We’re thrilled with the cadets’ leadership, enthusiasm, and the initiative they’re bringing to the table early on.”

Coast Guard JROTC instructors are hired and employed by the school district and certified by the service. Instructors must be Coast Guard retired, selected reserve, or qualified veterans with at least eight years of service. Veterans Memorial High School’s Coast Guard JROTC instructors are Cmdr. Matthew Gully (USCG, Ret.) and Chief Petty Officer Mike O’leary (USCG, Ret.).

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2023 mandated the Coast Guard to establish and maintain JROTC programs in each of the nine Coast Guard districts by Dec. 31, 2025. The Coast Guard is establishing four new JROTC units this fall, bringing the total to 14 JROTC units, with program-wide enrollment of over 1200 cadets. These new units are at the following host schools:

- Barnstable High School – Barnstable, MA
- Innovation High School – Orlando, FL
- Veterans Memorial High School – Corpus Christi, TX
- Kalani High School – Honolulu, HI

Coast Guard JROTC is not a recruiting program. Cadets incur no military service obligation by participation in JROTC, but

they may be eligible for advanced enlistment opportunities with 2 or more years of participation in the program. The program helps equip cadets with the skills necessary to be more prepared for tomorrow's challenges, no matter what path they take.

To learn more about the Coast Guard JROTC program, visit their website: **U.S. Coast Guard Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (CGJROTC)**.

Norfolk Naval Shipyard Delivers USS George H.W. Bush to Fleet on Time After PIA

The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN

77), transits to Naval Station Norfolk after on-time completion of an 11-month maintenance period at Norfolk Naval Shipyard and sea trials, Nov. 16, 2024. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Samuel Wagner)
By NAVSEA Office of Corporate Communications, Nov. 18, 2024

NORFOLK, Virginia – USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) successfully completed sea trials off the coast of Virginia this weekend, marking the successful on-time conclusion of its ten-month Planned Incremental Availability (PIA) at Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY). The nation's tenth Nimitz-class nuclear-powered aircraft carrier entered its PIA in January 2024.

In returning George H.W. Bush to the fleet on schedule, NNSY applied a series of innovative strategies and engineering solutions to modernize the ship's safety, communications, and combat systems—scheduling a significant volume of advance work at nearby Naval Station Norfolk (NAVSTA Norfolk) prior to the carrier's arrival at NNSY.

Key trades workers and shop mechanics worked alongside engineering and material support personnel at NAVSTA Norfolk, augmented by NNSY's off-yard carrier team. More than 550 personnel supported the project at the peak of the maintenance availability. NNSY also employed experienced zone managers, who conducted the PIA for USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69), completed in December 2022, to improve overall learning and performance.

As part of the modernization and maintenance work for George H.W. Bush, crews installed combination ovens in the ship's galley; modular refrigeration equipment to improve system reliability; and upgrades to the Consolidated Afloat Networks and Enterprise Services system—a program the Navy has implemented across the Fleet to enhance shipboard computing systems and to consolidate multiple legacy networks.

The modernization effort also involved installing the Network Tactical Common Data Link (NTCDL) system, which enables the

ship to simultaneously transmit and receive real-time intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance data from multiple sources. NTCDL also facilitates the exchange of command and control information over multiple data links, enhancing situational awareness and operational advantage.

NNSY's success in delivering George H.W. Bush on time demonstrates how the nation's public shipyards are looking beyond traditional workflows to meet the Chief of Naval Operations' objective of putting more ready players—combat-ready platforms—on the field.

"The Bush team and crew supported this availability with capability and commitment," said Capt. Jip Mosman, NNSY Commanding Officer. "Their teamwork and dedication to returning this critical asset to the fleet will serve as the model for future maintenance and modernization programs in America's shipyards."

Getting advanced systems and capabilities into the hands of warfighters at speed and scale requires people at every level of the shipbuilding and maintenance enterprise to think, act, and operate differently. NNSY's culture of collaborative planning among its highly skilled workforce enabled the shipyard to marshal the material and alternative resources necessary to deliver the aircraft carrier's complex work packages on schedule.

NNSY's on-time completion of the George H.W. Bush PIA adds to a recent list of successes at the shipyard, including the undocking of USS Toledo (SSN 769) undergoing Engineered Overhaul (EOH) and USS Montpelier (SSN 765) docking for its EOH.

For more information on NNSY and the other U.S. Naval Shipyards—Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility, and Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance

Facility—please visit https://www.navsea.navy.mil/Home/Shipyards/.