HII Redelivers USS Montana from Post-Shakedown Availability at Newport News Shipbuilding

NEWPORT NEWS, Va., Nov. 13, 2024 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII's (NYSE: HII) Newport News Shipbuilding division has completed post-shakedown availability (PSA) work on *Virginia*-class fast attack submarine USS *Montana* (SSN 794). The submarine was redelivered to the U.S. Navy on Nov. 12.

"Redelivering USS *Montana* back to the fleet reflects the tremendous teamwork and accomplishment by our shipbuilders and the crew," said Jason Ward, NNS vice president of *Virginia*-class submarine construction. "This successful PSA demonstrates our commitment to building the finest submarines for the Navy and ensuring they are ready to carry out the mission defending our nation around the world."

The PSA, a maintenance period that typically follows delivery

of new ships, included combat systems and electronics upgrades, as well as general maintenance on the submarine.

Photos accompanying this release are available at: https://hii.com/newsroom/

USS *Montana* is the 21st *Virginia*-class submarine, and the 10th delivered by NNS. The Navy commissioned it on June 25, 2022, at Naval Station Norfolk.

Navy Makes Significant Investment in Munitions Capability, Awards Kongsberg Defence Multi-Year Over the Horizon – Weapons System Contract

By Program Executive Office Integrated Warfare Systems Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – The Navy has awarded a $960.8 million firm-fixed-price multiyear contract to Kongsberg Defence and Aerospace (KDA) for the Over the Horizon – Weapons System (OTH-WS) Naval Strike Missile (NSM) requirement, Nov. 12.

The OTH NSM provides the U.S. and its allies with long range anti-surface offensive strike capability as well as increased coastline defense, deterrence, and interoperability.

“This multi-year procurement contract delivers on the Department of the Navy’s commitment to build capability and capacity in the near-term by making our platforms more lethal,” said Nickolas H. Guertin, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition (ASN (RD&A)). “By making the right targeted investments, we ensure we deliver a balance of warfighter-ready capabilities at the right time, scale, and cost.”

Through use of a multiyear contract the Navy will achieve program savings of $206 million. The award helps provide

stability of the munitions industrial base while enabling delivery of munitions critical to sustaining the Navy's maritime dominance.

"This Over the Horizon – Weapons System contract will help ensure our Navy is ready to preserve the peace, respond in crisis, and win decisively in conflict if called," said Rear Adm. Tom Dickinson, Program Executive Officer, Integrated Warfare Systems. "It supports ongoing efforts to put more munitions on more platforms in more places to prevail on a globalized battlefield."

KDA recently announced plans to build a new production facility in the U.S. Located near key Navy facilities, the site in James City County, Virginia will provide additional production capacity, sustainment and in-country tech refresh capabilities for the Naval Strike Missile (NSM).

Centcom Conducts Strikes in Yemen, Syria

PACIFIC OCEAN (June 7, 2024) An F-35C Lightning II, assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron (VMFA) 314, launches from the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72). (U.S. Navy photo by MCSN Mario Castro Gamez)
Nov. 12, 2024 | By C. Todd Lopez, DoD Public Affairs

Since Friday, U.S. Central Command has conducted strikes against Iranian-backed Houthi targets in Yemen and against targets in Syria as part of the defeat-ISIS mission there.

On Saturday and Sunday, Centcom forces executed airstrikes against multiple Houthi weapons storage facilities within Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen, said Pentagon Press Secretary Air Force Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder during a briefing today.

“These facilities housed a variety of advanced conventional weapons used by the Iran-backed Houthis to target U.S. and international military and civilian vessels navigating international waters in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden,” Ryder said.

Both Air Force and Navy assets, including F-35C fighter aircraft, were involved in the strikes, which were in response to Houthi attacks on commercial, U.S. and coalition vessels in the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandab Strait and Gulf of Aden.

“As you’ve heard us say before, we will continue to make clear to the Houthis that there will be consequences for their illegal and reckless attacks,” Ryder said.

Yesterday, Ryder said, Centcom also conducted strikes against nine targets in two locations associated with Iranian groups in Syria. The strikes, he said, were in response to two attacks on U.S. personnel in Syria that happened Nov. 10 at Mission Support Site Green Village in northeast Syria.

One of those attacks involved a UAV, while the second attack involved an indirect fire incident with two rockets. There were no U.S. injuries involved with either attack.

Ryder said the U.S. strikes will degrade the ability of Iranian-backed groups to plan and launch future attacks on U.S and coalition forces who are in the region to conduct the defeat-ISIS operations.

Centcom commander Army Gen. Michael Erik Kurilla said the U.S. will do what’s needed to defend its personnel in the Centcom area of responsibility.

“Our message is clear. Attacks against U.S. and coalition partners in the region will not be tolerated,” said Kurilla. “We will continue to take every step necessary to protect our personnel and coalition partners and respond to reckless attacks.”

United States, Canada, and Finland Sign MOU to Build Arctic and Polar Icebreakers

New trilateral arrangement formalizes collaboration on the production of Arctic and polar icebreakers

From the Department of Homeland Security, Nov. 13, 2024

WASHINGTON – Officials representing the Governments of the United States, Canada, and Finland today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to begin working together to develop world-class Arctic and polar icebreakers through the exchange of knowledge, information, and resources in each of our countries. Today's landmark MOU builds off the launch of the Icebreaker Collaboration Effort (ICE) Pact by Prime Minister Trudeau, President Stubb, and President Biden on the margins of the NATO Washington Summit in July.

In signing the ICE Pact MOU, we have embarked on a transformative partnership that strengthens our ability to uphold international rules and maintain security in the Arctic and Antarctic regions. By jointly developing and producing world-class Arctic and polar icebreakers, we are laying the foundation for a resilient and competitive shipbuilding industry, capable of meeting both national and global demand for these critical assets. This arrangement underscores our collective commitment to peace, stability, and prosperity in the Arctic and polar regions, and is a testament to the strength of allied cooperation in addressing strategic challenges.

Each of our nations recognizes the need to enhance our Arctic and polar icebreaking capabilities to assert our collective presence in the Arctic and Antarctic regions. Building these specialized vessels at a faster pace, on a larger scale, and

at competitive costs is a shared priority as we uphold safety and security in these strategically important areas.

The ICE Pact includes four components: 1) enhanced information exchange between the United States, Canada, and Finland; 2) workforce development collaboration; 3) engagement with allies and partners, and; 4) research and development. Given the high costs of shipbuilding, long-term orders are essential for shipyard success in each of our countries. The collective investment in our domestic shipyards has the potential to scale production and reduce the cost of Arctic and polar icebreakers for our own use and for our allies and partners.

By leveraging our collective expertise and resources, the MOU will facilitate knowledge, information, and resource sharing with shipyards, with the potential to create high-quality manufacturing jobs in the maritime infrastructure industry. ICE Pact will help provide the stability necessary to support the production of Arctic and polar icebreakers and strengthen our shipbuilding industries.

General Officer Announcements

From the U.S. Department of Defense, Nov. 13, 2024

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

Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Robert C. Fulford for appointment to the grade of lieutenant general, with assignment as deputy commander, U.S. European Command. Fulford is currently serving

as commanding general, 1st Marine Division, Camp Pendleton, California.

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Adam L. Chalkley for appointment to the grade of major general. Chalkley is currently serving as inspector general of the Marine Corps, Arlington, Virginia.

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Joseph R. Clearfield for appointment to the grade of major general. Clearfield is currently serving as senior military assistant to the deputy secretary of defense, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Mark H. Clingan for appointment to the grade of major general. Clingan is currently serving as commanding general, Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command and Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, California.

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Mark A. Cunningham for appointment to the grade of major general. Cunningham is currently serving as commanding general, Force Headquarters Group, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Kyle B. Ellison for appointment to the grade of major general. Ellison is currently serving as deputy director for Current and Integrated Operations, J-3, Joint Staff, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Walker M. Field for appointment to the grade of major general. Field is currently serving as deputy director for Operations, National Joint Operations Intelligence Center, Operations Team Three, J-3, Joint Staff, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Anthony M. Henderson for appointment to the grade of major general. Henderson is currently serving as commanding general, Training Command, Quantico, Virginia.

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Valerie A. Jackson for appointment to

the grade of major general. Jackson is currently serving as commanding general, 4th Marine Logistics Group, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Matthew T. Mowery for appointment to the grade of major general. Mowery is currently serving as deputy director, Requirements and Capability Development, J-8, Joint Staff, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Andrew M. Niebel for appointment to the grade of major general. Niebel is currently serving as commanding general, 1st Marine Logistics Group, Camp Pendleton, California.

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Farrell J. Sullivan for appointment to the grade of major general. Sullivan is currently serving as director, Capabilities Development Directorate, Department of Combat Development and Integration, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Quantico, Virginia.

Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Jason G. Woodworth for appointment to the grade of major general. Woodworth is currently serving as commander, Marine Corps Installations Command; and assistant deputy commandant for Installations and Logistics, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Col. Joseph A. Katz for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Katz is currently serving as chief of staff, Marine Forces Reserve, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Marine Corps Col. David K. Winnacker for appointment to the grade of brigadier general. Winnacker is currently serving as assistant chief of staff, G-7, Force Headquarters Group, Marine Forces Reserve, New Orleans, Louisiana.

First Royal Australian Navy Officer Graduates Engineering Duty Officer Basic Course under AUKUS Pillar 1

By NAVSEA Office of Corporate Communications and AUKUS I&A Public Affairs, Nov. 12,2024

PORT HUENEME, Calif. – A Royal Australian Navy Officer graduated for the first time from the U.S. Navy Engineering Duty Officer (EDO) School, during a ceremony at Naval Base Ventura County in Port Hueneme, Calif. on 7 Nov.

Royal Australian Navy (RAN) CMDR Stephen completed five weeks of training in support of the Australia, United Kingdom, United States (AUKUS) enhanced trilateral security partnership's Optimal Pathway that will establish a sovereign conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability within the RAN.

Engineering duty officers are an integral part of acquiring and maintaining the U.S. Navy's surface and sub-surface fleets. The Basic Course, which Stephen graduated from, provides the foundational knowledge through instruction on research and development, design, acquisition, construction, maintenance, and modernization of ships and systems. For Stephen, it was an experience unique to the U.S. Navy's training pipeline.

"The Basic Course introduces officers into the EDO community and provides the training needed to understand the principles associated with how the United States Navy designs, builds, maintains, and modernizes our warships," said Capt. Neil Sexton, EDO schoolhouse commanding officer. "I believe this course of study on acquisition and maintenance principles will

aid Stephen in being one of Australia's leading engineers for the sustainment of its future submarine fleet."

"The Royal Australian Navy does not have an EDO school," said Stephen, who is currently assigned to Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility as AUKUS' first Submarine Rotational Force – West liaison officer. "The knowledge I gained here will definitely enhance my Navy career moving forward and directly support Australia's SSN force."

A subordinate command under the Naval Education and Training Command (NETC), the school manages the continuum of training and, professional development opportunities, for the United State Navy's EDO community. The Schoolhouse is as a focal point for these officer's professional development, enabling EDOs to apply practical knowledge and experience to integrate science, technology and design into affordable ships and systems.

"As a career submarine operator, I know that our ships don't sail without the direct support of the EDO community," shared Rear Adm. Lincoln Reifsteck, AUKUS Integration & Acquisition Director. "Stephen's training at the Schoolhouse benefits the program and, ultimately, contributes to Australia's ability to maintain, operate, and support SSNs."

"I'm exceptionally proud of the EDO School's ability to support AUKUS and demonstrate its capabilities with one of our country's closest allies," said Vice Adm. James Downey, commander, Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) and the Navy's senior EDO. "Within NAVSEA, we are dedicated to delivering on our country's AUKUS commitments, to include training their civilian submarine maintainers at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, creating opportunities to include our allies across the broad submarine design and maintenance portfolios."

There are more than 50 Australian civilians training at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility

and 65 uniformed Royal Australian Navy officers and enlisted personnel within the U.S. Navy's Naval Nuclear Propulsion and submarine training pipelines.

The AUKUS Optimal Pathway consists of three interrelated phases that are in concurrent execution. Phase 1 involves establishing Submarine Rotational Force – West which will have up to four U.S. Virginia-class SSNs and one UK Astute-class SSN rotationally deploying out of HMAS *Stirling* in Western Australia. The U.S. submarines will be maintained primarily by Australian personnel trained at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility as a way to build Australia's sovereign ability to maintain SSNs. In Phase 2, the U.S. sells Virginia-class SSNs to Australia as its first conventionally armed SSNs. Phase 3 is the design, construction, and delivery of SSN AUKUS based on the UK's design that incorporates advanced technologies from the three partner nations. SSN AUKUS will serve as the sovereign, enduring SSN capability for both the Royal Navy and Royal Australian Navy.

AUKUS Pillar 1 will deliver a conventionally armed SSN capability to the RAN by the early 2030s. The Department of the Navy's AUKUS I&A Program Office is the U.S. lead responsible for executing the trilateral partnership for Australia to acquire conventionally armed, nuclear-powered attack submarines at the earliest possible date while maintaining the highest nuclear stewardship standards and setting the highest standards for nuclear non-proliferation.

NETC is the U.S. Navy's Force Development pillar and the service's largest shore command with a mission to recruit, train, and deliver those who serve our Nation, taking them from street-to-fleet by transforming civilians into highly skilled, operational, and combat ready warfighters.

A Living Legacy, USS John Basilone is Commissioned

Amy Looney Heffernan and Ryan Manion give the command to “man our ship and bring her to life” during the commissioning ceremony for USS John Basilone (DDG 122) in New York City. (MC2 Colby A. Mothershead)

By Lt. j.g. Julian Jacobs, Nov. 12, 2024

NEW YORK – On Saturday morning, nestled between the USS Intrepid, New York’s Hell’s Kitchen, and the cruise terminal, the Navy’s newest Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, USS John Basilone, was brought to life.

Commissioning ceremonies, as described by Carlos Del Toro, Secretary of the Navy, are a time-honored tradition dating

back to 1775. Now, 249 years later, the USS John Basilone became the 74th ship of her class and the second ship to bear the namesake of John Basilone.

Throughout the week leading up to commissioning, the crew of the USS John Basilone spent time learning about the life and legacy of Gunnery Sgt. John Basilone, the only Enlisted Marine to earn the Medal of Honor and the Navy Cross during World War II.

While John Basilone and his beloved wife Lenah Mae (Riggi) Basilone didn't have children, GySgt Basilone's niece, Diane Hawkins, has taken up the mantle of representing her uncle's memory and his heroism. While exploring the history behind her uncle's actions, a Marine Corps representative sent Hawkins a bottle of black sand, a vial taken from Iwo Jima, the beach where her uncle gave the ultimate sacrifice. That bottle included a recommendation to retrace her uncle's footsteps. In her remarks, Hawkins recounted traveling to Guadalcanal, where Basilone and his regiment defeated a much larger Japanese force, to the Philippines, where he earned the nickname "Manilla John," to Australia, where he received the Medal of Honor, and to Iwo Jima where he perished "with his boys." Through her journey, Hawkins learned more about the man behind the myth and gained a deeper appreciation for his legacy. Most importantly, she recounted John's love for his wife, Lenah Riggi, and how Basilone outranked Riggi: "It was Lenah who was in charge." Hawkins closed her remarks by thanking the crew of DDG 122, saying that those who comprise John Basilone's legacy are delighted to have this magnificent ship become part of his legacy "to the service to this nation."

Unique to this Navy event was the presence of Marines from John Basilone's historic 1st Battalion, 7th Regiment, and the references and speeches related to USMC culture throughout the event.

Continuing on themes of sacrifice, the ship's sponsors Ryan Manion and Amy Looney Heffernen, both from Gold Star families, spoke to the grief that comes with loss and the responsibility to uphold the memory of the fallen. Heffernen notes that she believes her late husband, Navy Seal Brandon Looney, was "cut from the same cloth as John Basilone" making her presence and participation in the life of the USS John Basilone all the more meaningful and humbling. Standing before the crew, Manion, sister of fallen Marine Travis Manion, noted the towering shadow over the crew of the Basilone, the shadow of a man who made the ultimate sacrifice and built a profound "legacy of service" in his wake. Heffernen recounted moving her way through grief with a quote, "No one is dead until the ripples they cause in the world fade away." It is evident from the passion, dedication to service, and commitment to excellence shown by the DDG 122 crew that John Basilone won't fade for generations to come.

In his principal address, Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro spoke about the role of the sponsors of a ship. According to naval tradition, a ship's sponsor "guides her and her crew" through her time in service, offering his gratitude that Manion and Heffernen will forever be the connection between "this ship, her crew, and the nation." He talked about his connection to New York, having grown up just blocks from where the ship sits today, the same pier where the USS Bunkley (DDG 84) commissioned under his command. Paying tribute to Basilone, Secretary Del Toro took a moment to spotlight Marine Sgt Dakota Meyer, a Medal of Honor recipient for his heroism in Iraq, resulting in a standing ovation to the Marine.

Del Toro recognizes the "rapidly evolving" global security environment for DDGs like the John Basilone. He remarked that today's world differs from the American Revolution, World War II, or even his active duty tenure twenty-three years ago. Today, ships of the same class as the John Basilone are over the horizon, defending America and her allies from the threat

of “Iranian-aligned Houthi attacks” in the Red Sea. Making it clear that there is “nothing ordinary” about what is being asked of America’s Sailors and Marines since the October 7, 2023 attacks in Israel, Del Toro reminded the crew of the USS John Basilone and event participants that “Service is not an obligation, it is a privilege, a chance to be part of something greater than ourselves and uphold the values that define us as a nation.”

Referencing a history of sacrifice, the perils of the future, and the hope for the present, the crew of the former USS Basilone (DDE 824) passed the torch as John Basilone’s living legacy as sponsors Ryan Manion and Amy Looney gave the order to “man our ship and bring her to life.”

Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers are the backbone of the U.S. Navy’s surface fleet. These highly capable, multi-mission ships conduct a variety of operations, from peacetime presence to national security, providing a wide range of warfighting capabilities in multi-threat air, surface, and subsurface. Flight IIA DDGs host dual helicopter hangers, allowing for expanded anti-submarine, anti-surface, and anti-air warfare capabilities through integrated operations with helicopter squadrons.

The mission of CNSP is to man, train, and equip the Surface Force to provide fleet commanders with credible naval power to control the sea and project power ashore.

For more news from Naval Surface Forces, visit DVIDS – Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/COMNAVSURFPAC or Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, https://www.surfpac.navy.mil/.

For additional information about the ship, visit USS John Basilone (DDG 122),

https://ussbasilone.org/uss-john-basilone-ddg-122/.

Macomb College, Navy Partner to Fast-Track Maritime Manufacturing Training

WARREN, Mich. – Rear Adm. Pete Small, Naval Sea Systems Command deputy commander for naval systems engineering, delivers the keynote address during today's launch of the Michigan Maritime Manufacturing (M3) Initiative's Accelerated Training Industry Partnership at Macomb Community College's Michigan Technical Education Center (M-TEC). This event highlights the partnership between the U.S. Navy and Macomb Community College and marks a significant step in the larger M3 Initiative first announced in July. (U.S. Navy photo)

By Naval Sea Systems Command Office of Corporate Communications, Nov. 8, 2024

WARREN, Mich. – In a significant step forward for maritime manufacturing in Michigan, the U.S. Navy and Macomb Community College launched the Michigan Maritime Manufacturing (M3) Initiative's Accelerated Training Industry Partnership today at the college's Michigan Technical Education Center (M-TEC). This event, which marks a step in the larger M3 Initiative first announced in July, will begin training the next generation of maritime manufacturing workers to support the Navy's strategic needs

The partnership is critical in addressing the nation's Maritime Industrial Base (MIB) workforce needs through accelerated training programs in maritime welding and CNC machining. The first 16-week cohort, beginning classes on November 12, includes 24 students split evenly between welding and CNC machining programs, including two veterans among the inaugural class.

These programs are designed to meet the urgent demand for skilled labor in the MIB, a critical component of national security. The program is open to anyone interested in starting a career in maritime manufacturing. To launch a career in the maritime skilled trades, interested students can apply at Macomb's website.

"This partnership exemplifies our commitment to rebuilding America's maritime manufacturing workforce," said Rear Adm. Pete Small, Naval Sea Systems Command deputy commander for naval systems engineering, during today's event. "By leveraging Michigan's manufacturing expertise and Macomb's proven training capabilities, we're creating a direct pipeline of talent tailored for the demands of our Navy and nation."

The event showcased the college's new maritime skilled trades

training facilities and initiated an intentional connection between defense industry partners and Macomb in order to establish a long-term talent pipeline of well-trained graduates for those employers.

“Macomb is uniquely positioned to support the Navy’s mission, known for preparing area residents for jobs that sustain metro Detroit’s legacy of a technical workforce powerhouse in state-of-the-art advanced manufacturing training facilities,” said Patrick Rouse, director of Workforce & Continuing Education for Engineering and Advanced Technology at Macomb Community College. “We’ve designed these accelerated programs to meet specific industry demands while maintaining the high standards required for defense manufacturing. This partnership accelerates the development of a skilled workforce that is essential for both local industry growth and national defense.”

The partnership builds on momentum from the broader M3 Initiative, announced in July by Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro. The initiative represents an investment exceeding $50 million in Michigan’s maritime manufacturing future and aims to meet the Navy’s demand for thousands of new workers across Michigan and the Great Lakes region.

“This program represents a transformative opportunity for our students and our region’s manufacturing sector,” said James O. Sawyer IV, President of Macomb Community College, addressing the gathered industry representatives. “By partnering with the Navy and local industry, we’re creating accelerated pathways to rewarding careers while supporting critical national security needs.”

The 600-hour accelerated training programs, fully funded for students, will run Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., emphasizing hands-on learning. Graduates will earn certificates and be prepared for industry-recognized certifications from organizations, including the American

Welding Society and the National Institute for Metalworking Skills.

The program specifically targets Michigan's robust manufacturing supply chain, which includes more than 400 businesses supporting naval nuclear programs, with 175 located in the Greater Detroit area.

Small emphasized the immediate impact this program will have on the submarine industrial base. "The graduates from this program will be exactly what our suppliers need – skilled professionals ready to contribute from day one," he said. "This accelerated training model allows us to maintain the highest standards while meeting our urgent workforce needs. When these students complete their training in March, they'll be ready to support any of our MIB suppliers."

During today's event, industry partners toured the training facilities and learned about opportunities to connect with and hire program graduates, supporting both workforce development and the nation's maritime industrial base.

NIWC Atlantic Team Develops Next-Generation Mobile ATC Towers

Medium mobile Air Traffic Control (ATC) towers are being developed by members of Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Atlantic's ATC Special Programs team. The smaller, trailer-sized, mobile towers are designed for rapid deployment during emergencies due to inclement weather, equipment failure or other disruptions. Despite its smaller size compared to traditional towers, these new mobile assets can provide the ATC systems necessary to keep an airfield up and operational.
By Kris Patterson, NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs Office, Nov. 6, 2024

CHARLESTON, S.C. – Members of Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Atlantic's Air Traffic Control (ATC) Engineering Division are engaged in developing a new generation of mobile ATC towers designed for rapid deployment.

The team's medium mobile ATC tower – a smaller, trailer-sized facility – can be quickly deployed to any airfield that requires emergency ATC support due to weather, equipment failure or other disruptions.

"This tower is a visual facility that can be pulled onto an airfield, ensuring operations continue seamlessly even if the main facility is compromised," said Jim Spivey, an electrical engineer with NIWC Atlantic's ATC Special Programs team. "In

other words, it’s a mobile asset that can provide the air traffic control systems necessary to keep an airfield up and operational.

Despite its smaller size compared to a traditional tower, it continues to offer air traffic controllers the capabilities they need to manage air traffic safely.

The new medium mobile tower is small enough to fit on a C-17 Globemaster III military aircraft, which allows for swift transport, and once delivered, the system can be up and operational within days, providing a crucial backup during emergencies.

The medium is particularly designed for smaller airfields such as executive airports and adjunct airfields like those on the West Coast used for firefighting efforts, highlighting their role in disaster response.

The idea for the medium mobile tower was born out of the partnership between the ATC Special Programs team and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).

The FAA created the Mobile Asset Sustainment Program (MASP), whose mission is to provide support, restore and maintain any ATC facility in the United States.

When the MASP team found out the NIWC Atlantic ATC Special Programs team was working on mobile ATC systems and towers for the Air Force, they asked the team for help.

“These mobile assets were created specifically to go out and support a brick-and-mortar air traffic control tower that has been damaged or is getting a refurb,” said Clayton Fronk, lead for the ATC Special Programs team.

Now that the country is in hurricane season, the need for easily transportable mobile towers can be particularly critical.

“Currently, we are still integrating the electronics in the medium mobile towers, but three large mobile towers were previously delivered to the FAA. They’ve been staged and positioned at FAA Mobile Asset Deployment Centers (MADCs) around the country, so that if a hurricane or tornado or other natural disaster takes out an airfield’s tower, the FAA is quickly able to respond and get a mobile tower moved to that location for backup,” Fronk said.

By enhancing this critical asset, the ATC Special Program team is able to support a broader spectrum of ATC needs worldwide. The military shares many airfields with the FAA and having these mobile assets available means that disruptions in air traffic control, whether civilian or military, can be mitigated, maintaining safety and operational continuity.

“A lot of the military sites in CONUS [stateside] are using our shared assets with civilian sectors,” Fronk said. “They do a lot of testing, evaluation and training at sites and locations, and the military uses shared civilian airspace, so if a tower was damaged or destroyed and the FAA moved this in, it would directly affect the military aircraft in the air at those locations.”

One of NIWC Atlantic’s larger mobile ATC towers was recently deployed to Homestead Air Reserve Base, Homestead, Florida, where it was used to manage air traffic while permanent facilities were under reconstruction.

In 2020, the ATC Special Programs team built and installed transportable ATC facilities to address an existing flight safety risk at an air base in Southwest Asia. This installation occurred during the heart of the pandemic and was completed primarily by NIWC Atlantic civilian personnel.

NIWC Atlantic’s involvement with mobile ATC towers traces back to the early 2000s when the command, then known as Space and

Naval Warfare Systems Center (SPAWARSYSCEN),provided mobile ATC systems for the Navy. The command expanded its services to provide ATC systems for the Marine Corps and Air Force during combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As the ATC Special Programs team's work evolved and the FAA learned that the team was providing mobile and transportable assets for the Air Force, the team's expertise in this area became particularly relevant for the FAA, who sought to modernize its aging mobile tower fleet, Fronk said.

"The FAA's mobile fleet is decades old, and the systems we're building and integrating are kind of a next-generation, new capability system to replace the old antiquated towers that they have," Fronk said.

Delivered by the ATC Special Programs team, these new capabilities demonstrate the importance of the team's contributions to national safety and operational readiness. Fronk and Spivey both noted the feeling of immense pride they share for their team.

"We have outstanding young engineers at NIWC Atlantic, such as Beka Deason and Mike Thompson, integrating the electronics in the medium mobile towers," Spivey said. "They understand the importance of the work and you always know they're going to step up."

"We've got a great team that's very dedicated and very humble about the work that they do," said Fronk, echoing Spivey's sentiment. "They're a group that is going to do whatever it takes to help others out. I have a great working relationship with the team, and I'm proud every day that the team does everything they do, both for the civilian sector as well as for the warfighter."

To learn more about the mobile ATC towers, you can hear Spivey and Fronk's interview on Episode 22 of NIWC Atlantic's podcast

“Technically Speaking” at Technically Speaking Podcast – NIWC Atlantic (navy.mil).

About NIWC Atlantic

As a part of Naval Information Warfare Systems Command, formerly known as SPAWAR, NIWC Atlantic provides systems engineering and acquisition to deliver information warfare capabilities to the naval, joint and national warfighter through the acquisition, development, integration, production, test, deployment, and sustainment of interoperable command, control, communications, computer, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, cyber and information technology capabilities.

Statement from CNO on Discovery of the Location of the Wreck of Destroyer USS Edsall (DD-219)

SEAPOWER
The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

11 November 2024

Chief of Naval Operations / Admiral

Lisa Franchetti

On behalf of the United States Navy, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Royal Australian Navy for locating the final resting place of the destroyer USS Edsall (DD 219), lost in a valiant battle against the Imperial Japanese Navy in the early days of World War II. The commanding officer of Edsall lived up to the U.S. Navy tenet, “Don’t give up the ship,” even when faced with overwhelming odds. The wreck of this ship is a hallowed site, serving as a marker for the 185 U.S. Navy personnel and 31 U.S. Army Air Force pilots aboard at the time, almost all of whom were lost when Edsall succumbed to her battle damage. This find gives us the opportunity for today’s generation of Sailors and Navy civilians to be inspired by their valor and sacrifice.

The U.S. Navy would also like to take this opportunity to salute the valor of the crew of the Australian sloop HMAS Yarra, lost two days after the Edsall, under similar circumstances in a heroic battle against overwhelming odds.

Finding the Edsall further cements the strong alliance that has existed between the United States and Australia since World War II, the relationship between the Royal Australian Navy and the U.S. Navy, further reinforced by the current Australia, United Kingdom, United States (AUKUS) trilateral security partnership. A key component of AUKUS is the development of the most cutting-edge underwater technologies of the type that enabled the discovery of Edsall in the vastness of the Indian Ocean, something not possible just a few years ago. These advanced technologies, enabled by interoperability between long-standing Indo-Pacific Allies and partners, ensure our collective capability to preserve the peace, respond in crisis, and win decisively in war, if called.