U.S. Navy Selects Leidos for Undersea Warfare Systems Contract

The ocean surveillance ship USNS Able (T-AGOS 20) prepares to moor at Fleet Activities Yokosuka in 2014. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Brian G. Reynolds*

RESTON, Va. – Leidos has been awarded a prime contract by the U.S. Navy's Naval Information Warfare Systems Command to support the service's undersea warfare systems, the company said March 17.

This single-award, Seaport Next Generation task order has a total estimated value of $84 million. It includes a one-year base period, as well as four one-year options. Work will be performed in Virginia and Japan.

“Ensuring our Sailors have the most advanced capabilities to defeat advancing threats is a top priority for our company,” said Will Johnson, Leidos senior vice president, Logistics and Mission Support. “We look forward to continuing our longstanding support of the Program Executive Office – Undersea Warfare Systems as they work to keep the seas open and free.”

Through this contract, Leidos will provide operations and maintenance crews aboard USNS Tactical Auxiliary General Ocean Surveillance (T-AGOS) platforms and contract vessels. Additionally, the company will provide a cadre of field support team engineers to provide engineering, logistics and technical support to the Surveillance Towed Array Sensor System fleet and IUSS (Integrated Undersea Surveillance System) Operations Support Center.

U.S., Japan Navy Chiefs Conduct Call, Discuss Defense Cooperation

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday speaks with Japan Chief of Staff Adm. Hiroshi Yamamura during a video teleconference in 2021. The leaders met virtually again on March 17, 2022. *U.S. NAVY / Chief Mass Communication Specialist Nick Brown*

WASHINGTON – Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday met virtually with Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Chief of Staff Adm. Hiroshi Yamamura on March 17, the CNO's Public Affairs office said in a release.

During the video conference, the two addressed common challenges and discussed strategies to keep the seas open and free.

"Today's maritime challenges emphasize the importance of interoperability with our partner nations," said Gilday. "The alliance between Japan and the United States is the cornerstone of peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific. Together, we will continue to work to keep the maritime commons open and free."

According to Gilday, meetings like this reaffirm the special relationship between the two navies and allow for continued collaboration and cooperation.

“The JMSDF and U.S navies agreed to further strengthen relationships to realize a free and open Indo-Pacific, and recognized the unique strength of navies to continue defense cooperation in a contactless manner even during a pandemic,” said Yamamura.

Gilday expressed condolences for the recent earthquake off the coast of Fukushima. He told Yamamura that the U.S. Navy stands with the people of Japan, as the U.S. Navy did following the earthquake in 2011.

The JMSDF and U.S. navies operate together regularly in the Indo-Pacific region and around the globe. Most recently, U.S. and JMSDF navies conducted anti-submarine warfare torpedo training in Tokyo Bay.

Gilday and Yamamura have met numerous times during their tenures.

U.S. Navy Concludes ICEX 2022

Nick Savage, assigned to Naval Undersea Warfare Center Newport, surfaces from beneath the Arctic ice after successfully retrieving a test torpedo during Ice Exercise 2022. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Cameron Stoner*

U.S. NAVY ICE CAMP QUEENFISH – The U.S. Navy is concluding its Ice Exercise 2022 this week, wrapping up nearly three weeks of research and training on, above and below Arctic Ocean ice, said Lt. Seth Koenig, commander, Submarine Force Atlantic Public Affairs, in a March 17 release.

In addition to Ice Camp Queenfish, a temporary encampment built on a sheet of ice 160 nautical miles offshore, the exercise involved two operational Navy fast attack submarines and a support team stationed in Prudhoe Bay, Alaska.

“The Navy maintains a presence on, under and above Arctic waters, and it’s important that we continue to train in this challenging environment to not only stay ready to operate here, but also gain efficiency and look for new ways to

innovate," said Rear Adm. Richard Seif, commander of the Navy's Undersea Warfighting Development Center in Groton, Connecticut, and ranking officer at ICEX 2022.

"The Arctic is an unforgiving, rapidly changing region. Several chokepoints near or above the Arctic Circle – such as the Bering Strait, Bear Gap between the Norwegian and Barents seas, and the Greenland-Iceland-United Kingdom Gap – are seeing increases in commercial maritime activity," he continued. "By training in this extreme cold-weather environment, we're best prepared to rapidly respond to any crises in these regions and ensure common domains in the far north remain free and open."

Joining the U.S. armed forces for ICEX 2022 were personnel from the Canadian air force and navy, and the United Kingdom Royal Navy.

During ICEX, participating fast attack submarines under the Arctic sea ice fired exercise torpedoes, which Navy divers then recovered from the frigid water. The exercise also provided an opportunity for Navy specialists and civilian scientists to conduct research from the floating ice camp, collecting data on the Arctic conditions and how equipment responds to the extreme temperatures.

ICEX allows the Navy to assess its operational readiness in the Arctic, increase experience in the region, advance understanding of the Arctic environment, and continue to develop relationships with other services, allies and partner organizations.

ICEX 2022 is taking place in the Arctic region at the same time as U.S. Northern Command's Arctic Edge, a biennial exercise designed to provide realistic and effective training for participants using the premier training locations available throughout Alaska, ensuring the ability to rapidly

deploy and operate in the Arctic. Arctic Edge takes place over the course of three weeks and will have approximately 1,000 participants, including U.S. and Canadian service members, U.S. Coast Guardsmen, and government employees from the U.S. Department of Defense and Canada's Department of National Defence.

Bollinger Submits Final Proposal to Build Coast Guard Offshore Patrol Cutter

Coast Guard Cutter Myrtle Hazard (WPC 1139), built by Bollinger Shipyards, steams through Apra Harbor before arriving at its new homeport in Santa Rita, Guam, in 2020. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class MacAdam*

Kane Weissman

LOCKPORT, La. – Bollinger Shipyards submitted on March 18 its final proposal to the United States Coast Guard to build Stage 2 of the Heritage-class Offshore Patrol Cutter program. If chosen, Bollinger would construct and deliver a total of 11 vessels to the U.S. Coast Guard over the next decade, helping to sustain the Bollinger workforce through 2031.

The proposal submitted by Bollinger states the construction will occur at its facilities in Houma, Louisiana, a shipyard strategically placed within a 100-year hurricane risk reduction system with direct access to the Gulf of Mexico and without drafts or time-zone differences.

In a new study conducted by the Economics & Policy Research Group at Louisiana State University on the economic impact should Bollinger be chosen to build up to 11 ships for the OPC Program, LSU found the project would create more than 2,700 direct and indirect jobs and generate $7.3 billion in economic output for Louisiana.

“The numbers tell a compelling story – the Offshore Patrol Cutter program would be a major game changer for the state of Louisiana and Bollinger is the right shipyard at the right time to build this platform for the U.S. Coast Guard,” said Ben Bordelon, Bollinger president and CEO. “For over 75 years, Bollinger has been proud to be a major job creator and economic contributor in south Louisiana. To be awarded the contract for OPC would allow us to continue that legacy. It is my hope that we’re able to continue our long partnership supporting the brave men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard.”

Bollinger has been actively involved in the U.S. Coast Guard’s OPC acquisition process, including execution of the Stage 1 Preliminary and Contract Design, where the company was included in the final three shipyards, as well as execution of the OPC Stage 2 industry study. In June 2021, Bollinger submitted its initial proposal to build Stage 2 of the OPC

program.

Bollinger has delivered Sentinel Class Fast Response Cutter hulls 1139 through 1148 a total of 180 days ahead of the contract schedule, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 global pandemic and sustaining significant damage from a direct hit by Hurricane Ida, a powerful Category 4 storm.

HII Celebrates Centennial of U.S. Navy Aircraft Carriers

USS Ranger (CV-4), the first aircraft carrier built by Newport News Shipbuilding, shown off the coast of Oahu, Territory of

Hawaii, April 1938. *U.S. NAVY*
NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – HII, America's only builder of nuclear-powered aircraft carriers., will recognize the 100-year legacy of aircraft carriers this week and celebrate the next century of U.S Navy aircraft carriers.

Brought into service 100 years ago on March 20, 1922, was USS Langley (CV 1), the U.S. Navy's first aircraft carrier. The ship wasn't constructed at HII's Newport News Shipbuilding division, however it began a century of thoughtful innovation, enabling nuclear-powered aircraft carriers today that provide the U.S. Navy a preeminent power projection platform and have served the nations interest in times of war and peace.

Newport News Shipbuilding' aircraft carrier legends began with USS Ranger (CV 4) in 1934. Since Ranger*'s* delivery, the shipyard has delivered 31 aircraft carriers, including all 10 ships of the Nimitz class and the first of the Ford class that delivered in 2017.

"We are proud that all U.S. Navy aircraft carriers currently serving our nation and protecting our freedoms began their journey at Newport News Shipbuilding," said Jennifer Boykin, president of Newport News Shipbuilding. "The secret to the shipyard's success is its shipbuilding team. While the art and science of building ships has evolved over the last century, two things have remained constant: the pioneering and patriotic spirit of NNS' shipbuilders and the network of shipbuilding suppliers that spans all 50 states, and our strong partnership with the Navy."

Today's Ford-class aircraft carriers, the air wing, and weapons system evolve together as the latest technologies are developed for future missions and to counter emerging threats. Ford-class carriers are twice as long and weigh eight times as much as their 1922 counterpart, yet they are twice as fast and carry nearly three times as many aircraft. The nation's newest most advanced aircraft carrier, USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78),

will be in service until at least 2070. All U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carriers operating in the Navy fleet today were built at Newport News Shipbuilding. USS Enterprise (CVN 65) was first in 1961, then served the nation more than 50 years, having operated safely on nuclear power before being decommissioned in 2017.

Three other Ford-class aircraft carriers are currently under construction at Newport News Shipbuilding. They include John F. Kennedy (CVN 79), Enterprise (CVN 80) and Doris Miller (CVN 81). In addition, Newport News Shipbuilding is conducting mid-life refueling complex overhauls on two Nimitz-class aircraft carriers: USS George Washington (CVN 73) and USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74). These overhauls will extend the service life for each platform by another 25 years, ensuring the Navy is positioned to deploy a fleet of aircraft carriers ready to support national security requirements.

Elements of Kearsarge ARG and 22nd MEU Deploy

The Wasp-class amphibious assault ship USS Kearsarge (LHD 3) departs Naval Station Norfolk, March 16. Kearsarge Amphibious Readiness Group with embarked 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit deployed from Naval Station Norfolk and Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for a regularly scheduled deployment. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Anderson W. Branch*

NORFOLK, Va. – Elements of the Kearsarge Amphibious Ready Group with embarked 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit departed Naval Station Norfolk and Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, for a regularly scheduled deployment on March 16, U.S. 2nd Fleet Public Affairs said in a release.

The deployment is part of a regular rotation of forces that foster maritime security and increased theater cooperation by providing a forward naval presence with vast, specialized crisis response capabilities.

“After months of rigorous training, the Kearsarge ARG and 22nd MEU are ready to exercise our mission sets across a range of military operations,” said Capt. David Guluzian, commander of Amphibious Squadron 6. “The ARG-MEU team is a fully integrated, multi-mission fighting force ready to respond and decisively engage any situation or challenge during this

deployment.”

The ARG consists of the Wasp-class amphibious assault ship and ARG flagship USS Kearsarge (LHD 3), amphibious transport dock ship USS Arlington (LPD 24) and dock landing ship USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44). Gunston Hall is scheduled to depart Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek later in the month.

Embarked commands with the Kearsarge ARG include commander, Amphibious Squadron 6, Fleet Surgical Team (FST) 2, Tactical Air Control Squadron (TACRON) 22, Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 28, Assault Craft Unit (ACU) 2, Assault Craft Unit (ACU) 4, Naval Beach Group (NBG) 2 and Beach Master Unit (BMU) 2.

The 22nd MEU, commanded by Col. Paul Merida, will serve as a sea-based, expeditionary crisis response force capable of conducting amphibious missions across the full range of military operations. The 22nd MEU includes the command element; the aviation combat element, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron, 263 (Reinforced); the ground combat element, Battalion Landing Team 2/6 (Reinforced); and the logistics combat element, Combat Logistics Battalion 26.

“During the course of a comprehensive six month training program, the Kearsarge Amphibious Ready Group and the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit have built a closely integrated and well trained naval expeditionary force,” said Merida. “We stand ready for any mission or challenge that comes our way.”

This deployment follows months of intense training and preparations during various maritime integration exercises. The Kearsarge ARG-MEU team most recently concluded a composite training unit exercise, a series of exercises designed to fully integrate roughly 4,000 Sailors and Marines into one cohesive contingency force while testing the units’ abilities to carry out sustained operations from the sea. During

COMPTUEX, the ARG-MEU operated under NATO command and control, which was a first for an ARG-MEU and is typically only practiced among carrier strike groups. Additionally, this exercise marked the first time a U.S. Coast Guard cutter participated in an ARG-MEU exercise by providing valuable interoperability experience between naval and USCG forces.

The Kearsarge ARG-MEU team is manned, trained, and equipped to fulfill amphibious requirements in support of maritime security and stability. Amphibious ready groups and larger amphibious task forces provide military commanders a wide range of flexible capabilities including maritime security operations, expeditionary power projection, strike operations, forward naval presence, crisis response, sea control, deterrence, counter-terrorism, information operations, security cooperation and counter-proliferation, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

DoD Announces Release of JADC2 Implementation Plan

Deputy Secretary of Defense Dr. Kathleen Hicks and Lt. Gen. Dennis A. Crall participate in a virtual joint all domain command and control cross function team meeting at the Pentagon on Jan. 18. *DOD / photo U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Brittany A. Chase*

ARLINGTON, Va. — Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen Hicks signed the Department of Defense Joint All-Domain Command and Control Implementation Plan on March 15, 2022, the department said in a release.

JADC2 is a warfighting necessity to keep pace with the volume and complexity of data in modern warfare and to defeat adversaries decisively. JADC2 enables the Joint Force to sense, make sense, and act on information across the battle-space quickly using automation, artificial intelligence, predictive analytics and machine learning to deliver informed solutions via a resilient and robust network environment.

“We must maintain continued focus and momentum on these initiatives and programs which enhance Department capabilities to face current and future threats,” said Hicks. “Command and control in an increasingly information-focused warfighting

environment have never been more critical. JADC2 will enable the DoD to act at the speed of relevance to improve U.S. national security. JADC2 is delivering capabilities beginning now, and it will continue to be funded in the coming years."

The DSD chartered JADC2 Cross-Functional Team will oversee the execution of the JADC2 strategy, initially announced in June 2021, and the implementation plan. While the JADC2 strategy provides a vision and an approach for identifying, organizing, and delivering improved Joint Force C2 capabilities, the implementation plan outlines how the department will accomplish this. An unclassified summary of the JADC2 strategy is available here.

"This step represents irreversible momentum toward implementing the JADC2 Strategy and concepts the department announced earlier this year," said Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. "This is about dramatically increasing the speed of information sharing and decision making in a contested environment to ensure we can quickly bring to bear all our capabilities to address specific threats."

JADC2 is the Department's way ahead. The JADC2 implementation plan, while classified, can be described as the document which details the plans of actions, milestones and resourcing requirements. It identifies the organizations responsible for delivering JADC2 capabilities. The plan drives the Department's investment in accelerating the decision cycle, closing operational gaps, and improving the resiliency of C2 systems. It will better integrate conventional and nuclear C2 processes and procedures and enhance interoperability and information-sharing with mission partners.

Boeing Begins Build on New Zealand's First P-8A Aircraft

A Boeing P-8A flies over the Great Barrier Reef near Queensland, Australia. *BOEING*

WICHITA, Kan. – Boeing P-8A team members and Spirit AeroSystems employees have laid the keel beam for New Zealand's first P-8A, Boeing said March 17.

This process, also called 'keeling,' was done at the Spirit AeroSystems facility where all Boeing 737 fuselages, nacelles and pylons are designed and built. Laying the keel is an important production milestone during the build of any ship or aircraft and represents the cornerstone of this latest P-8.

Rosemary Banks, New Zealand's ambassador to the United States, who was on hand to witness the keeling said, "Today's keeling ceremony is the beginning of a new era for New Zealand's maritime patrol and response capability. Our four P-8A Poseidons will better equip our defence forces to extend their reach into the Pacific and beyond, working with our partners and friends."

An aircraft keel runs the length of the fuselage belly. Due to the innovative in-line approach to the build of commercial derivative aircraft pioneered on the P-8A, the keel beam on a P-8 is different from the typical 737 keel beam. The P-8 keel includes unique aspects of the P-8 configuration, such as the integration of an internal weapons bay.

"The excitement of seeing this come together was contagious," said Brian Stuart, P-8 program manager for New Zealand. "Not only are we kicking off the journey to the first New Zealand P-8A delivery, but we are strengthening our relationships with suppliers like Spirit as well as our U.S. Navy and Royal New Zealand Air Force customers."

The panel and other fuselage components will be completed on Spirit's existing 737 production line. Spirit will ship the P-8A fuselage to a Boeing Commercial Airplanes facility in Renton, Washington, for final assembly. After that, Boeing Defense, Space & Security employees will install mission systems and complete testing prior to delivery to New Zealand later this year.

In total, four Boeing P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft will eventually replace New Zealand's current fleet of six aging P-3K2 Orion aircraft providing advanced capabilities to maintain situational awareness in neighboring waters on and below the surface of the ocean.

Marine Corps and Navy Aviation Fly Together for Manned-Unmanned Teaming

An AH-1Z Viper (top) with Marine Operational and Test Evaluation Squadron 1 (VMX-1), and an MQ-8C Fire Scout unmanned helicopter assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 23 (HSC-23), conduct Strike Coordination and Reconnaissance Training near El Centro, California, March 10. *U.S. MARINE CORPS / Lance Cpl. Jade Venegas*

Washington, D.C. – Marines from Marine Operational Test and Evaluation Squadron One (VMX-1) and Sailors from Helicopter

Sea Combat Squadron 23 (HSC-23) teamed to conduct tactics development in integrating manned and unmanned rotary-wing aircraft at Naval Air Facility El Centro, California, on March 10, Headquarters Marine Corps said March 15.

During the exercise, VMX-1's UH-1Y Venom and AH-1Z Viper helicopters conducted attacks while Marines and Sailors operating in the ground control station assisted with the target detection and strike coordination utilizing a MQ-8C Fire Scout.

"This opportunity promotes greater familiarization and concept development of the manned-unmanned teaming that builds confidence and efficiency throughout the Blue-Green Team," said VMX-1 Commanding Officer Col. Byron Sullivan. "Our partnership plays an integral part of the commandant and [Chief of Naval Operation]'s vision to embrace the future of warfare and turn it into our advantage on the battlefield."

The services continue to develop manned-unmanned tactics to better align with the 2018 National Defense Strategy and the Commandant's Planning Guidance. As the exercise in El Centro progressed, the Navy-Marine Corps team became more proficient in planning, communicating, and coordinating effective fires from manned and unmanned rotary wing aircraft. The proliferation of unmanned rotary wing platforms on U.S. Navy ships makes integration with Marine rotary wing and the MQ-8C a likelihood in the littoral environment.

"Adversaries are going to be placed on the horns of a dilemma as we strengthen our naval expeditionary force in leveraging unmanned systems to complement our rotary wing," said VMX-1 Science and Technology lead Maj. Ben Henry.

The mission of VMX-1 is to conduct operational test and evaluation of Marine Corps aviation platforms and systems.

NGC Begins Full-Rate Production of Link-16 for the Marine Corps H-1 Fleet

Link-16 will give the AH-1Z and UH-1Y the ability to share data and communications securely with other aircraft and users of military networks. *NORTHROP GRUMMAN*

WOODLAND HILLS, Calif. – Northrop Grumman has been awarded a $65 million contract by the U.S. Navy to execute the full-rate production of Link-16 for the U.S. Marine Corps AH-1Z and UH-1Y aircraft, which will involve the integration of data link hardware across the fleet, the company said March 9.

“As lead technology integrator for H-1 Avionics, we are expanding our long-standing partnership with the Marine Corps

to modernize electronic systems across the fleet through an open systems architecture approach," said Lindsay McEwen, vice president, navigation, targeting and survivability at Northrop Grumman. "Link-16 full-rate production is the starting point."

Link-16 is a secure data link that allows H-1 crews to share data and communications with other aircraft and users on military networks. This capability is a critical mission enabler as the Department of Defense moves to joint all-domain command and control.

The company said the processes, capabilities and open architecture developed for the H-1 fleet are directly applicable to other platforms and could be used in future aircraft development programs such as Naval Air Command's Vertical Take Off and Landing Family of Systems, MUX and others.