Navy Orders Three PteroDynamics UAS to Deliver Cargo

PteroDynamics' Transwing vertical takeoff and landing unmanned aicraft. *PTERODYNAMICS*

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. – PteroDynamics, an aircraft design and manufacturing company that develops innovative vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) aircraft, has secured a contract with Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD) to deliver three VTOL prototypes for the Blue Water Maritime Logistics UAS program, the company said in an Aug. 23 release.

In 2018, Military Sealift Command and Fleet Forces Command identified a need for the United States Navy to develop a capability to autonomously deliver cargo with unmanned aircraft to and from ships at sea. Their analysis found that 90% of critical repair cargo delivered at sea by helicopters and V-22 aircraft weighed less than 50 pounds. A VTOL UAS can fill this critical need and free the manned aircraft to perform other higher priority missions.

"We are honored to be selected for this important project," said Matthew Graczyk, PteroDynamics' CEO. "This contract is the start of an important partnership, and we look forward to delivering the prototypes to NAWCAD."

"This is an exciting milestone for our distinctive VTOL aircraft," added Val Petrov, PteroDynamics' founder and chief technology officer. "Our design is well suited for operations on ships where windy conditions and tight spaces challenge other VTOL aircraft during takeoffs and landings."

"Using unmanned, autonomous aircraft for delivery of these

critical payloads is an important capability for the Navy to have," said Blue Water's project lead, Bill Macchione. "The innovative design of PteroDynamics offers significant potential for both military and civilian missions."

HII Celebrates Ceremonial First Cut of Steel for the Aircraft Carrier Doris Miller

Members of Doris Miller's family attend the ceremonial first cut of steel for the aircraft carrier Doris Miller (CVN 81) at Newport News Shipbuilding division, Aug. 25, 2021. *HUNTINGTON INGALLS INDUSTRIES*

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries hosted a ceremonial event Aug. 25 at its Newport News Shipbuilding division that marked the first construction milestone in the life of the aircraft carrier Doris Miller (CVN 81), the company said in a release.

During a small ceremony held inside of a manufacturing facility, Thomas Bledsoe, the great nephew of the ship's namesake, gave the order to "cut that steel" to shipbuilder Gerald Bish, who operated a large plasma-cutting machine that sliced into a steel plate. Shipbuilders, U.S. Navy leadership, elected officials and Doris Miller's relatives signed their names on the plate.

"Today we recognize the start of construction of the fourth ship of the Gerald R. Ford class," said Jennifer Boykin, president of Newport News Shipbuilding. "From this day forward, our shipbuilders will put their hearts into every

pipe they fit, every unit they lift and every inch of steel they weld.

“Shipbuilders, I thank you for the hard work, innovation and dedication you will put into transforming this first piece of steel into an awe-inspiring aircraft carrier.”

Ceremony participants included U.S. Rep. Bobby Scott, D-Virginia, who offered remarks; Rear Adm. James Downey, program executive officer for aircraft carriers; Master Chief Petty Officer of the U.S. Navy Russell Smith; shipbuilders and six members of Miller’s family.

“It is so fitting and timely during a period of significant discussion and change we come together to begin construction of one of our Navy’s next great aircraft carriers, in the name of one of the finest heroes of the greatest generation,” Downey said. “We will construct a sound and mighty warship worthy of his legacy.”

Members of Virginia’s congressional delegation, including Reps. Rob Wittman and Elaine Luria also attended the event. Other guests included Capt. Andrew P. Johnson, commanding officer of Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion and Repair, Newport News.

Doris Miller is the second ship named in honor of Miller, and the first aircraft carrier ever named for an African American. This also is the first aircraft carrier named in honor of a sailor for actions while serving in the enlisted ranks.

Miller is credited with heroic actions while serving aboard the Newport News-built West Virginia (BB 48) during the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Miller’s bravery earned him the Navy Cross.

Doris Miller also is the second ship of the two-carrier contract award HII received in January 2019 for the detail design and construction of the Gerald R. Ford-class aircraft

carriers; Enterprise (CVN 80) being the first ship of the contract.

Newport News currently is performing early manufacturing of Doris Miller, which includes structural fabrication and shop work. The ship also will be the second aircraft carrier built completely using digital drawings and procedures rather than traditional paperwork packages and products.

Doris Miller's keel is scheduled to be laid in 2026 and delivered to the Navy in 2032.

"The Doris Miller story provides so many lessons to us as Americans," Bledsoe said. "The Miller family cannot express in words what this means to us, to Americans and to anyone inspired by Doris Miller's story."

The Ford class features new software-controlled electromagnetic catapults and weapons elevators, a redesigned flight deck and island, and more than twice the electrical capacity of the preceding Nimitz-class carriers. These aircraft carriers are designed to be the centerpiece of the nation's security strategy and support and protect the global economy through the protection of sea lanes around the world.

BAE Systems Unveils World's Smallest M-Code Military GPS Receiver

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa – Aug. 25, 2021 – BAE Systems Inc. unveiled its ultra-small MicroGRAM-M global positioning system (GPS) receiver compatible with next-generation M-Code military

GPS signals that are resistant to jamming and spoofing, the company said in an Aug. 25 release. About the size of a postage stamp, MicroGRAM-M is the world's smallest, lightest, and most power-efficient M-Code embedded GPS receiver – delivering assured positioning, navigation, and timing (PNT) for size-constrained and other micro-applications.

"We're delivering reliable PNT where our customers need it – from soldiers' handheld devices to small unmanned aerial vehicles," said Greg Wild, director of Navigation and Sensor Systems at BAE Systems. "MicroGRAM-M provides our armed forces and allies with a low-SWAP M-Code GPS solution that's resistant to adversaries' disruption efforts in highly contested environments."

MicroGRAM-M features rapid secure GPS signal acquisition, enhanced security and resiliency, anti-jamming and anti-spoofing capabilities, and the industry's lowest power consumption for an M-Code device. The 1.0" x 1.25" x 0.275" MicroGRAM-M has the same physical dimensions as its predecessor, enabling quick upgradability to M-Code and reduced system integration costs. At its core is a proven, tamper-proof M-Code Common GPS Module that encapsulates classified data and signal processing.

"MicroGRAM-M is the latest BAE Systems M-Code military GPS product, joining MPE-M and NavStrike-M, which deliver enhanced awareness in highly contested environments and precision munitions guidance," said John Watkins, vice president and general manager of Precision Strike & Sensing Solutions at BAE Systems. "Qualification of MicroGRAM-M is underway, with full-rate production expected in 2022."

HII Technical Solutions Division Announces New Business Groups

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries (HII) announced on Aug. 25 new business groups within its Technical Solutions division, on the heels of the successful acquisition of Alion Science and Technology.

The new business groups include:

- Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) – This group designs, develops, integrates and manages sensors, systems, and other assets to support ISR operations, exploitation and analysis.
- Live, Virtual and Constructive (LVC) Solutions – This group designs, develops and operates enterprise tactical training systems to ensure full coordination and readiness.
- Cyber and Electronic Warfare (EW) – This group provides full spectrum cyber, big data architectures, analytics and cloud migration; EW and foreign material exploitation.
- Fleet Sustainment – This group is responsible for full-spectrum sustainment, including hull, mechanical and electrical and C5ISR maintenance, modernization, and integrated product support.

The Unmanned Systems and Nuclear and Environmental Services business groups are unchanged.

Coast Guard, Partner Agencies Continue to Support Haiti

A U.S. Army CH-47 Chinook Helicopter crew chief assists a partner rescue agency crew with the delivery of food and medical supplies in Haiti, Aug. 23, 2021. The Coast Guard and partner agencies conducted humanitarian efforts in impacted areas of Haiti following a magnitude 7.2 earthquake, Aug. 14, 2021. *COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Ryan Estrada*

MIAMI — The Coast Guard, USAID, U.S. Southern Command and Joint Task Force-Haiti continue to have unity of effort and respond to critically injured Haitian citizens, Aug. 24, by transporting them to a higher level of care in Port au Prince, Haiti, the Coast Guard 7th District said in an Aug. 25 release.

"The Coast Guard immediately responded to the government of Haiti's request for assistance following the tragic 7.2 magnitude earthquake just over a week ago," said Coast Guard 7th District Commander, Rear Adm. Brendan C. McPherson. "Since then, the U.S. Coast Guard saved or assisted more than 350 lives and transported more than 350 medical personnel and first responders to the areas most damaged. As the USAID-led, DOD-supported mission transitions to an extended humanitarian assistance and disaster response operation, we will begin to transition our people and aircraft to best support Joint Task Force-Haiti while meeting our other mission demands in the region. We will continue to provide agile and versatile search and rescue capability if needed. Alongside U.S. Embassy Haiti, we remain a proud partner in our whole of government approach to help the people of Haiti."

In the past 24 hours, Coast Guard men and women deployed to Haiti have flown 14 evolutions, saved three people, assisted three others, transported four urban disaster and relief personnel and transported 1,800 pounds of disaster and relief

supplies.

Since Aug. 15, Coast Guard men and women have flown 227 evolutions, saved 219 people, assisted 145 people, transported 362 urban disaster and relief personnel and transported 13,400 pounds of disaster and relief supplies.

NAVCENT Stands Up Task Force Supporting Afghanistan Evacuation

U.S. Navy personnel construct a tent in a hanger in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations for use during efforts to support the safe transit of U.S. citizens and evacuees from Afghanistan. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Andy A. Anderson*

NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY BAHRAIN – A U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) task force established Aug. 19 is temporarily assisting the safe evacuation of personnel from Afghanistan, the command said in an Aug. 24 release.

More than 700 U.S. military personnel stood up Task Force 58 from units operating in the U.S. 5th Fleet region. U.S. Sailors, Marines, Soldiers and Airmen are working alongside their U.S. Embassy and Bahraini counterparts to temporarily facilitate the safe departure of U.S. citizens and evacuees from Afghanistan through Bahrain.

“We are extremely grateful for the Kingdom of Bahrain’s critical efforts and assistance in the safe transit of U.S. citizens and evacuees from Afghanistan,” said Vice Adm. Brad

Cooper, commander of NAVCENT, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces. “We deeply value our enduring bilateral relationship.”

International military staff from the Combined Maritime Forces are also contributing to efforts that include providing travelers meals, short-term lodging and medical services before departing for the United States.

“Every organization is contributing,” said Cooper. “The entire team is stepping up and doing phenomenal work during a challenging time. I could not be prouder.”

The U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations encompasses nearly 2.5 million square miles of water area and includes the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Red Sea and parts of the Indian Ocean. The region is comprised of 20 countries and includes three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal and the Strait of Bab-al-Mandeb at the southern tip of Yemen.

USS Billings and USNS Burlington Support Haiti Relief

An MH-60R Seahawk helicopter, assigned “Easyriders” of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 37 delivers cargo to the Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport USNS Burlington (T-EPF-10) Dec. 10, 2020. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Maria G. Llanos*
CARIBBEAN SEA – The Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Billings (LCS 15) and USNS Burlington (T-EPF-10), a spearhead-

class expeditionary fast transport ship, operated by Military Sealift Command are supporting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations off the coast Haiti, Aug. 22, the U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet said in an Aug. 23 release.

Both ships are supporting U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) following a 7.2-magnitute earthquake that struck Haiti on Aug. 14, 2021.

“As the maritime component for this mission, we are on scene ready to provide whatever support we can to USAID,” said Capt. Peter Ehlers, Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC). “Our ships, aircraft, and personnel are ready to provide relief to the people of Haiti.”

Burlington is utilizing its ScanEagle unmanned aerial system to obtain aerial images of the destruction on the ground which helps relief planners determine where supplies are needed, what airfields can be used, and what roadways are accessible.

Both Burlington and Billings, along with her embarked MH-60S Seahawk assigned to Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 28, will be prepared for any additional tasking such as afloat refueling from U.S. Southern Command Joint Task Force-Haiti, commanded by Navy Rear Adm. Keith Davids, which was stood up to coordinate military support.

They join other U.S. Southern Command components and U.S. Coast Guard ships already on station, in addition to allies and partners from the Netherlands, France, and United Kingdom.

USS Billings and USNS Burlington have been to deployed to the U.S. 4th Fleet area of operations to support Joint Interagency Task Force South’s mission, which includes counter-illicit drug trafficking missions in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific.

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet supports U.S. Southern Command's joint and combined military operations by employing maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships in order to enhance regional security and promote peace, stability and prosperity in the Caribbean, Central and South American region.

Joint Force Command Norfolk, U.S. 2nd Fleet Change of Command

Vice Adm. Daniel Dwyer reads his orders during his change of command ceremony aboard the aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75) Aug. 20. Vice Adm. Andrew Lewis was relieved by Vice Adm. Daniel Dwyer as Commander, Joint Force Command Norfolk, Commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet, and Director, Combined Joint operations from the Sea – Centre of Excellence. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Kris R. Lindstrom*

NORFOLK, Va. – Joint Force Command Norfolk and U.S. 2nd Fleet held a change of command ceremony aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), Aug. 20, the fleet said in an Aug. 22 release.

Vice Adm. Andrew Lewis was relieved by Vice Adm. Daniel Dwyer as commander, Joint Force Command Norfolk, commander, U.S. 2nd Fleet, and director, Combined Joint Operations from the Sea – Centre of Excellence (CJOS-COE).

"Today's ceremony marks a changing tide. So often in life a

beginning or ending of an era goes unmarked, and it is not until much later that we can look back and say ‘that is where it all began,’ or, ‘that is when things changed,’” Lewis said. “I cannot overstate the amount of work that goes into building two commands of this nature. Hundreds, if not thousands, of people have supported both 2nd fleet and Joint Force Command Norfolk since establishment, and a ‘thank you’ is truly not enough.”

On Sept. 30, 2011, after 65 years of faithful service to the U.S. Navy, 2nd Fleet was disestablished until then-Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. John Richardson, formally reestablished the command during an official ceremony on Aug 24, 2018. Lewis, a native of Los Altos, California, served as the first commander of the re-established 2nd Fleet, and was later named the commander of the newly established NATO command, JFC Norfolk.

Prior to assuming the responsibilities of 2nd Fleet and JFC Norfolk, Dwyer’s previous assignment was the director of plans and policy at U.S. Cyber Command at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland.

“Under the exceptional leadership of Adm. Lewis, JFC Norfolk and 2nd Fleet have become the commands that our nation and alliance both wanted and needed,” said Dwyer. “During this era of strategic competition, it is evident that the Atlantic and Arctic play a critical role in reinforcing common maritime norms, providing for economic freedom for North America and Europe, and for the ultimate goal of continued peace.”

Adm. Christopher Grady, commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, exercises operational authority over 2nd Fleet and CJOS COE, and was a guest speaker and presiding officer during the ceremony.

“Provided only one year to operationalize a fleet battle staff capable of conducting sustained major combat operations in the

Atlantic and High North, and with only 11 officers and four enlisted personnel at the start, Vice Adm. Lewis' deft leadership and tireless efforts resulted in Second Fleet achieving initial operating capability in just nine months," Grady said. "And true to his vision, he designed a fully integrated team that is lean, agile, and lethal in all domains and across the spectrum of conflict."

Gen. Tod Wolters, the commander of U.S. European Command and NATO's Supreme Allied Command Europe exercises operational authority over JFC Norfolk, and also spoke and presided during the ceremony.

"Vice Adm. Andrew Lewis comprehensively led his force and found a way to make this organization better through his sheer willingness and will power," said Wolters. "He found a way to take his component of JFC Norfolk and mesh it with all the components of NATO organizations and other commands to make them quicker, smarter and faster."

JFC Norfolk provides a critical capability to NATO, providing for fuller situational awareness to the SACEUR based in Belgium. The command mission is to secure the strategic lines of communication between North America and Europe.

Second Fleet exercises operational authorities over assigned ships, aircraft, and landing forces on the East Coast and throughout the Atlantic.

CJOS COE is a maritime focused NATO-accredited military think tanks established in May 2006 and with 13 member nations represented on the staff. CJOS is the only center of excellence in the U.S., and one of 25 NATO centers worldwide, whose collective wealth of international experience, expertise and best practices helps to improve alliance readiness for the future.

Del Toro Taps Berger to Perform Duties of the Undersecretary of the Navy

Deputy Secretary of Defense Dr. Kathleen H. Hicks swears in Meredith Berger as the assistant secretary of the Navy at the Pentagon, Washington, D.C., Aug. 5, 2021. *DOD / U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jack Sanders*

ARLINGTON, Va. — Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro selected Meredith Berger to perform the duties of the undersecretary of the Navy effective Aug. 25, the Navy announced in an Aug. 23 release.

Berger who is currently serving as the assistant secretary of the Navy for energy, installations and environment, will relieve James F. Geurts, who will retire Aug. 28 after 34 years of government service.

"The Department of the Navy has been strengthened by the wisdom and leadership generated by Mr. Geurts," said Del Toro. "I value his commitment to our personnel in uniform, his service to our great nation and his teamwork and communication amongst the personnel in this building. I know that Ms. Berger will carry on this strong tradition of collaboration as she performs the duties of the undersecretary of the Navy."

Geurts served for 22 years in a variety of acquisition positions, focused on engineering and program management while on active duty in the Air Force. Afterwards, he served as the U.S. Special Operations Command acquisition executive before joining the department in December 2017 as the assistant secretary of the Navy

for research, development and acquisition. He was selected to perform the duties of the undersecretary of the Navy in February 2021.

“It’s been an honor serving the Sailors, Marines and their families,” said Geurts. “I have great confidence that the Department of the Navy team is well positioned to take on the many challenges they will face in the uncertain future.”

Berger holds a bachelor of arts in American Studies and Spanish from Vanderbilt University, a juris doctor from Nova Southeastern University and a master’s degree in public administration from the Harvard Kennedy School. She has served in various positions in state and federal government to include the Florida Department of Financial Services, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Defense. Berger served as the deputy chief of staff to the secretary of the navy from 2014 to 2017.

“I am driven by the mission of supporting the department’s nearly one million Sailors, Marines, and civilians who do the brave work of defending our nation,” Berger said. “Ensuring they have the resources necessary to tackle current and future challenges, improve warfighting, and build resiliency and readiness is my top priority.”

Navy’s UISS Completes Initial Operational Test and Evaluation

A developmental, early variant of the Common Unmanned Surface

Vehicle (CUSV) autonomously conducts maneuvers on the Elizabeth River during its demonstration during Citadel Shield-Solid Curtain 2020 at Naval Station Norfolk. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Grant G. Grady*
WASHINGTON – The Program Executive Office for Unmanned and Small Combatants (PEO USC) has completed the ship-based Initial Operational Test and Evaluation (IOT&E) for the Unmanned Influence Sweep System (UISS) program onboard the littoral combat ship USS Manchester (LCS 14) off of the California coast, the Program Executive Office-Unmanned and Small Combatants Public Affairs said in an Aug. 23 release.

The ship-based IOT&E, conducted in May and June, included end-to-end minesweeping missions versus Navy Instrumented Threat Targets and demonstrated UISS supportability and integration with the LCS seaframe. The IOT&E team conducted pier-side and underway launch and recovery, maintainability demonstrations, and end-to-end mission execution in support of Initial Operational Capability and delivery of capability to the Fleet.

Designed for the LCS as part of the mine countermeasures mission package, the UISS consists of a mine-countermeasures unmanned surface vehicle (MCM USV) and a towed minesweeping payload for influence sweeping of magnetic, acoustic, and magnetic/acoustic combination mines. UISS can also be launched from vessels of opportunity or from shore.

“Completion of this operational test event achieves a major milestone for the UISS Program of Record and demonstrates continued progress to fielding the full capability of the MCM Mission Package aboard LCS,” said Capt. Godfrey “Gus” Weekes, LCS Mission Modules program manager (PMS420). “The test event demonstrated for the first time both the capability and sustainability of a minesweeping capability using an unmanned system from an LCS in an operationally realistic environment. I want to highlight the adaptability and dedication of the test teams across many organizations in executing these

critical tests despite the challenges imposed by COVID-19.”

LCS MCM sailors performed all operations during the UISS IOT&E events, including shore- and ship-based launch and retrieval, command and control, system maintenance, mission planning and post-mission analysis. Pending data analysis and concurrence of operational effectiveness and suitability, the next phase will be approval by PMS420 for UISS to proceed to Initial Operational Capability.