

Del Toro Confirmed 78th Secretary of the Navy



Carlos Del Toro, confirmed by the U.S. Senate as 78th secretary of the Navy. *SBG TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS*
ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Senate has confirmed Carlos Del Toro as the 78th secretary of the Navy, the Defense Department said in an Aug. 7 release.

Below is a statement from Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III on the confirmation:

“Carlos Del Toro’s lifelong pursuits and deep experience advancing America’s national security make him well-prepared to serve as the 78th Secretary of the Navy. A student of the U.S. Naval Academy and Naval War College, Carlos rose through the ranks during the Cold War and Operation Desert Shield and Storm to serve as the first commanding officer of the destroyer USS Bulkeley DDG 84, and then later as a trusted aide to Pentagon leadership. He understands firsthand the most pressing challenges and opportunities facing our Navy, from addressing the pacing challenge of China and modernizing our capabilities, to investing in our most valuable asset – our people. As an immigrant who has dedicated his life to public service, Carlos exemplifies the core values of honor, courage, and commitment in defense of our country.

“We remain the preeminent force in the world because of leaders like Carlos, and I have no doubt our Navy and our nation will be well served. I congratulate him on his confirmation, look forward to working with him and take pleasure in welcoming him back aboard.”

CVN Ford Conducts Final Explosive Event, Completing Full Ship Shock Trials



The aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) successfully completes the third and final scheduled explosive event for Full Ship Shock Trials while underway in the Atlantic Ocean, Aug. 8, 2021. The U.S. Navy conducts shock trials of new ship designs using live explosives to confirm that our warships can continue to meet demanding mission requirements under harsh conditions they may encounter in battle. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Jackson Adkins*

WASHINGTON, D.C.— USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) successfully conducted a third explosive event off the coast of Jacksonville, Florida, on Aug. 8, marking the completion of the ship's Full Ship Shock Trials (FSST), the Program Executive Office Aircraft Carriers Public Affairs said in an Aug. 8 release.

Shock Trials validate a ship's shock hardness and ability to sustain operations in a simulated combat environment using live ordnance. During the four-month testing evolution, the first-in-class aircraft carrier withstood the impact of three 40,000-pound underwater blasts, released at distances progressively closer to the ship.

"The Navy designed the Ford-class carrier using advanced computer modeling methods, testing, and analysis to ensure the ships are hardened to withstand harsh battle conditions," said Capt. Brian Metcalf, manager for the Navy's future aircraft carrier program office, PMS 378. "These shock trials have tested the resiliency of Ford and her crew and provided

extensive data used in the process of validating the shock hardness of the ship.”

Metcalf said that the goal of the tests is to ensure that Ford’s integrated combat systems perform as designed and added “the tests demonstrated – and proved to the crew, fairly dramatically – that the ship will be able to withstand formidable shocks and continue to operate under extreme conditions.”

CVN 78 is returning to the Tidewater area for a six month Planned Incremental Availability (PIA). As the PIA begins, teams will conduct additional detailed inspections, assess any damage sustained during the shots, and continue modernization and maintenance work in advance of workups for the ship’s deployment in 2022.

Rear Adm. James P. Downey, program executive officer for aircraft carriers, rode the ship during the first and third shock evolutions, and observed the historic trials, first-hand. “FSST has proven a critical investment in the Ford-class development,” said Downey. “The ship and crew performed exceptionally in these very strenuous conditions and continued their operations throughout the shock events, demonstrating the ship’s ‘fight-through’ capability.”

“We’re designing and building these aircraft carriers to sail in some of the world’s most contested security environments. So, when you think about the threats to warships posed by non-contact blasts and the number of sea mines in the inventories of navies around the world, the gravity and consequence of these shock trials really come into focus,” he said. “The Navy’s ongoing investment in the design, including this modeling, will help ensure the resiliency of Ford’s integrated, mission critical systems in underway threat environments.”

Downey added that the trial’s ultimate success hinged on the

extraordinary performance of ship's force, in coordination with crews on several surface and aviation platforms that support FSST.

"The countdown to the actual shot is choreographed down to the smallest detail, and the coordination between the ship and the other surface and aviation platforms, as well as the on-scene environmental scientists has been impressive."

FSSTs are complex evolutions, conducted during a precise operating schedule in compliance with exacting environmental mitigation requirements, respecting known migration patterns of marine life and protected species. Ford's shock trials required exacting coordination across multiple Navy/Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) organizations and experienced FSST teams.

Prior to each shot, the FSST team notified mariners to avoid the test area, and implemented extensive protocols to ensure the safety of military and civilian personnel participating in the operation. A team of more than a dozen scientists, biologists, and observers were assigned to Ford, nearby support vessels, and observation aircraft. Observers used high-powered lenses to detect marine life at great distances, through ocean waves and white caps.

During the sequence of events leading up to each shot, crews operated in a heightened state of watchful readiness in anticipation of the ultimate go/no-go decision, which had to be made between 4:00 and 8:00 a.m. on the day of the scheduled blast.

Ford's commanding officer, Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, was the tactical commander that ordered the go/no-go decision, based on the interplay of several crucial variables, such as ship and crew readiness, weather, and sea state, as well as pre-set environmental mitigation measures, designed to protect any marine life spotted within the test area.

“Safety was always the driving consideration throughout the shock trials,” recalled Lanzilotta. “So, once we were ready and in position, pausing the countdown to the shot could really test our focus and persistence.”

“In spite of months of detailed preparation, you can’t always count on the weather,” he said. “But the crew hung in there and showed the great tenacity and professionalism reflective of their pride in our Warship.”

“So many pieces had to fall into place to execute Ford’s FSSTs within the testing window,” Lanzilotta said. “Success required equal measures of technical expertise, trust, and courage – traits you’ll find in great supply on Warship 78 and throughout the entire Ford Shock Trial Team. These shots have only strengthened my confidence in the durability of this ship, and the excellence of the crew who came out here to own it, and absolutely crushed it.”

The U.S. Navy has conducted FSSTs over several decades, most recently for the Littoral Combat Ships USS Jackson (LCS 6) and USS Milwaukee (LCS 5) in 2016; as well as on the San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock USS Mesa Verde (LPD 19) in 2008, the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD 1) in 1990, and the guided missile cruiser USS Mobile Bay (CG 53) in 1987. The last aircraft carrier to execute FSST was USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) in 1987.

The Navy conducted the Gerald R. Ford shock trial testing in accordance with Office of the Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 9072.2, and as mandated by the National Defense Authorization Act of 2016. The first two shots of the FSST sequence occurred on June 18 and July 16.

USS Gerald R. Ford is the newest and most advanced aircraft carrier in the U.S. Navy. The ship closed out a successful 18-month Post Delivery Test & Trials period in April, during which the crew completed all required testing, accomplished

planned improvements and maintenance ahead of schedule, and learned valuable lessons to increase the reliability of Ford-Class systems. At the same time, the ship also served as the sole East Coast platform for conducting carrier qualifications.

The Gerald R. Ford-class represents the first major design investment in aircraft carriers since the 1960s. CVN 78 is engineered to support new technologies and a modern air wing essential to deterring and defeating near-peer adversaries in a complex maritime environment.

U.S. Central Command Releases Statement on Investigation into Attack on Motor Tanker Mercer Street



Some of the damage caused to the Motor Tanker Mercer Street.
U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

TAMPA, Fla. – Following the July 30 explosive unmanned aerial vehicle attack on the Motor Tanker (M/T) Mercer Street while transiting international waters off the coast of Oman, an expert explosive investigative team from the USS Ronald Reagan embarked the M/T to examine the evidence and interview the surviving crew members, the U.S. Central Command said in an Aug. 6 release.

The team found:

1) The M/T Mercer Street was targeted by two unsuccessful

explosive UAV attacks on the evening of July 29. The crew reported the attacks via distress calls on the evening of July 29. Based on crew interviews, the investigative team found credible the reports of the attacks, which impacted the sea near the M/T Mercer Street. Investigators found small remnants of at least one of the UAVs on Mercer Street that the crew had retrieved from the water, corroborating the reports.

2) The investigative team determined that the extensive damage to the Mercer Street, documented in the attached slides, was the result of a third UAV attack on July 30. This UAV was loaded with a military-grade explosive, and caused the death of two crewmembers; the master of the ship, a Romanian citizen, and a United Kingdom national who was part of the security detail.

3) The explosive detonation following the UAV impact created an approximately 6-foot diameter hole in the topside of the pilot house and badly damaged the interior. Explosive chemical tests were indicative of a Nitrate-based explosive and identified as RDX, indicating the UAV had been rigged to cause injury and destruction.

4) Explosives experts were able to recover several pieces of this third UAV, including a vertical stabilizer (part of the wing) and internal components which were nearly identical to previously collected examples from Iranian one-way attack UAVs. The distance from the Iranian coast to the locations of the attacks was within the range of documented Iranian one-way attack UAVs. Following an on-scene analysis, some of the material was transferred to U.S. Fifth Fleet headquarters in Manama, Bahrain and subsequently to a U.S. national laboratory for further testing and verification.

5) U.K. explosive experts were provided access to the evidence at the 5th Fleet headquarters. Evidence was shared virtually with Israeli explosive experts. Both partners concurred with the U.S. findings.

U.S. experts concluded based on the evidence that this UAV was produced in Iran.

This statement was released with an accompanying briefing “Iranian UAV Attack Against MOTOR TANKER MERCER STREET”

<https://www.centcom.mil/Portals/6/PressReleases/MERCERSTREETATTACK06AUG2%20final.pdf>

The above statements and those in the accompanying briefing are attributable to U.S. Navy Capt. Bill Urban, the CENTCOM spokesman.

Cutter Mohawk Completes 52-day Eastern Pacific Counter-Drug Patrol



During the patrol, the Mohawk made significant advances in combating transnational criminal organizations and stopped more than 12,000 pounds of illicit drugs, valued at over \$218 million. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

KEY WEST, Fla. – The Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk’s crew returned to homeport Sunday, following a 52-day counter-drug deployment throughout the Eastern Pacific Ocean in support of U.S. Southern Command’s Joint Interagency Task Force South and the Eleventh Coast Guard District, the Coast Guard 7th District said in an Aug. 9 release.

During the patrol, the Mohawk made significant advances in combating transnational criminal organizations and stopped more than 12,000 pounds of illicit drugs, valued at over \$218 million.

The cutter's crew, with a deployed Coast Guard Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron crew and MH-65 Dolphin helicopter, interdicted seven vessels, apprehended more than 20 suspected drug smugglers and seized 11,416 pounds of cocaine and 736 pounds of marijuana. While deployed, the Mohawk's crew boarded five suspected drug smuggling vessels in less than two days. Later in the deployment, the Mohawk's crew successfully interdicted two separate vessels smuggling cocaine and marijuana in less than a day.

"I am extremely proud of this crew and all they have accomplished," said Cmdr. Andrew Pate, commanding officer of the Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk. "Despite encountering some significant equipment and logistics challenges, the Mohawk crew rose to the occasion time and again, demonstrating superior tactical proficiency and dedication to this joint mission. Keeping a 30-year-old cutter fully mission capable for two months in a harsh environment wouldn't be possible without partnerships on the water and unwavering support from back home. Mohawk's success in the Eastern Pacific Ocean is reflective of an increased commitment by U.S. and international partners to detect, disrupt, and deter criminal activity destabilizing the region."

The Mohawk's crew kicked off the deployment with a biannual shipboard training cycle off the coast Jacksonville, Florida. During a compressed week-long evaluation period, Mohawk's crew demonstrated their knowledge and skills by completing 76 drills in the areas of damage control, navigation, seamanship, naval warfare, communications, medical response, engineering casualties and force protection. The crew's efforts resulted in an average drill score of 96 percent, demonstrating excellence in all warfare areas.

While underway, the Mohawk's crew completed aviation, damage control, engineering, seamanship and navigation training to maintain operational readiness and prepare for future multi-mission deployments.

The Mohawk's crew also located, and successfully freed, a green sea turtle trapped in fishing gear off the coast of Central America.

The Mohawk is the last built of the 270-foot Famous-class cutters, commissioned in March 1991 and homeported in Key West, Florida.

U.S. Coast Guard Commissions 44th Fast Response Cutter



Members of the Coast Guard Cutter Glen Harris “man the rails” during the vessel’s commissioning ceremony at Coast Guard Sector Field Office Fort Macon in Beaufort, North Carolina, Aug. 6, 2021. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 2nd Class Paige Hause*

ATLANTIC BEACH, N.C. – The USCGC Glen Harris (WPC 1144) became the U.S. Coast Guard’s newest fast response cutter during a commissioning ceremony Aug. 6 at Coast Guard Sector Field Office Fort Macon, the Coast Guard Atlantic Area said in a release.

The Glen Harris will be homeported in Manama, Bahrain, and serve at U.S. Patrol Forces Southwest Asia. Adm. Linda Fagan, the vice commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, presided over the ceremony.

“Coast Guard Cutter Glen Harris is one of six fast response cutters that will relieve the 110-foot patrol boats which have boldly stood the watch in the 5th Fleet AOR since 2003,” said Fagan. “It is clear the Coast Guard is poised now more than ever to seamlessly integrate with the Navy and Marine Corps

team to support the advantage at sea and the Tri-Service Maritime Strategy. We are poised to be a key part of that strategy.”

The cutter’s namesake is Chief Petty Officer Glen Livingston Harris, a native of North Carolina. He acted as a landing craft coxswain during the landing of Tulagi, which took place Aug. 7-9, 1942, during World War II. Along with three other U.S. Coast Guard coxswains, Harris landed the first U.S. Marines on Tulagi. Over the next three days of conflict, he made repeated trips under heavy enemy fire to deliver ammunition and other supplies to U.S. forces. In September of the same year, he landed against forces at Taivu Point, Guadalcanal Island, thereby materially contributing to the enemy’s eventual defeat. Harris was awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry by Adm. Chester Nimitz.

“The Coast Guard will build 64 fast response cutters, name each for an enlisted hero like Glen Harris, and each dedication uncovers a little-known story, and each story adds volumes to our understanding of our own Coast Guard history,” said Fagan.

Stacy Howley, Harris’s eldest granddaughter, was present and ship’s sponsor, and Madison King, Harris’s eldest great-granddaughter, served as the long-glass presenter. Several members of the Harris family were in attendance, including his sister Allie Gaskill.

“My grandfather was one of the most honorable men I have ever known. He was so proud to be an American and a member of the United States Coast Guard. He was our papi, and we absolutely adored him,” Howley said. “He was an extremely humble man and rarely spoke about his time in World War II. But I believe if he were here with us today, he would most certainly say that his actions in the Tulagi Islands, as well as his crewmates that were by his side during the mission, were not heroic at all, but simply a reflection of the Coast Guard’s long

tradition of life-saving missions and of putting others before oneself.”

The Harris crew is already credited with saving lives. While in pre-commissioning status, the crew was first on scene and essential in the response, rescuing a member of the 175-foot lift boat capsizing eight miles south of Port Fourchon, Louisiana, on April 13. The U.S. Coast Guard and multiple good Samaritan vessels responded to the capsized vessel and searched for multiple missing people in the water.

“Clearly, this crew is already inspired by Glenn Harris and the cutter’s motto Gallantry Abroad,” said Fagan.

The Glen Harris is the 44th fast response cutter in the U.S. Coast Guard’s fleet and the third of six FRCs planned for service in Manama, Bahrain. Stationing FRCs in Bahrain supports U.S. Patrol Forces Southwest Asia, the Coast Guard’s largest unit outside of the U.S., and its mission to train, organize, equip, support, and deploy combat-ready U.S. Coast Guard forces in support of U.S. Navy 5th Fleet, U.S. Central Command, and national security objectives.

The Sentinel-class is a key component of the Service’s offshore fleet capable of deploying independently to conduct missions, including port, waterways, coastal security, fishery patrols, search and rescue, and national defense. They are 154 feet in length, 25 feet in beam, and 353 long tons in displacement. They have a top speed of more than 28 knots, a range of 2,500 nautical miles, an endurance of up to five days, and can hold a crew of up to 24. These new cutters are replacing the aging Island-class 110-foot patrol boats in service since 1985.

The U.S. Coast Guard accepted the Glen Harris on April 22. They will transit to Bahrain later this year with their sister ship, the Emlen Tunnell (WPC 1145), delivered July 1 and due to be commissioned in Philadelphia before departure.

Ship commissioning is the act or ceremony of placing a ship in active service. Once a ship has been commissioned, its final step toward becoming an active unit of the agency it serves is to report to its homeport and officially load or accept any remaining equipment.

Falconwood Awarded \$73 Million Navy Support Services Contract

ARLINGTON, Va. – Falconwood Inc. announced in an Aug. 9 release it was awarded a \$73 million task order on July 29, 2021 for professional and technical Engineering and Logistics Support Services for the Navy Enterprise Business Solutions (PMW 220) program office. PMW 220 is responsible for overseeing lifecycle management of several Navy business IT programs, projects, and initiatives, and is part of the Naval Information Warfare Systems Command (NAVWAR) and Program Executive Office Manpower, Logistics and Business (PEO MLB).

The task order was awarded under the Navy Seaport NxG contract and has a one-year plus four-option year period of performance.

“Falconwood is thrilled to continue providing support of PMW 220 in their mission of delivering Department of the Navy (DON) enterprise-wide business solutions,” said Allie Lawaetz, President of Falconwood, Inc. “Our company brings a wealth of experience and subject matter expertise in engineering, cyber and logistics. We are excited to continue support to our navy customer, assisting them in their objectives of the DON.”

Under this task order Falconwood will provide support to the Program Management Office (PMO) for the fields of engineering, cybersecurity engineering and logistics. The scope also includes risk management, test and evaluation, data planning, agile development, SecDevOps and configuration management (CM) support. The work will be performed primarily in the Washington D.C. area.

Lawaetz continued, "Falconwood continues to remain committed to the mission of our clients. Sue Licatovich will continue as the Falconwood Program Manager for PMW 220, ensuring continuity of service, while flexing and remaining agile for the future."

This is the second contract win for Falconwood this year, coming off the heels of a \$24 million contract award for Engineering and Logistics Services in support of the United States Marine Corps Logistics Integrated Information Solutions – Marine Corps (LI2S-MC) Program Office (PMW 230), also part of PEO MLB.

Falconwood is a small, veteran, woman-owned business providing executive level consultants and programmatic support for Department of Defense Information Technology (IT) initiatives and programs. Falconwood provides expert advice and consultation on a diverse range of IT subjects focusing on acquisition strategy, implementation activities, Information Assurance policy and engineering, through the total lifecycle of Information Technology systems and applications.

Coast Guard Cutter Alert

Completes Successful Fisheries Patrol



Crew members from the Coast Guard Cutter Alert launch the cutter's small boat July 10, 2021, to conduct vessel boardings during a 60-day fisheries patrol off the coasts of Washington and Oregon. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

ASTORIA, Ore. – The Coast Guard Cutter Alert and its crew returned to homeport in Astoria Aug. 7 after completing a 60-day law enforcement patrol, during which the crew enforced federal law and safety regulations aboard commercial fishing vessels operating within the United States Exclusive Economic Zone off the coasts of Washington and Oregon, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in an Aug. 9 release.

The two-month patrol focused heavily on albacore tuna fishing and saw law enforcement teams board 31 vessels – many of which have not been boarded in more than 10 years – and issue 22 violations to commercial fishing vessel operators.

“I couldn't be more proud of Alert's hard-working crew,” said Cmdr. Matthew Kolodica, commanding officer of the Alert. “It is an honor to be part of a crew that is so passionate and focused on helping Oregon and Washington coastal communities operate safely and sustain their fisheries industries.”

The nation's maritime ecosystems are key to the United States' economy and well-being. The Coast Guard plays a critical role in preserving and maintaining healthy populations of marine fish by preventing the decline of protected marine species populations, protecting and promoting the recovery of endangered marine habitats, and partnering with other agencies to enhance and sustain marine ecosystems.

In addition to safety and fisheries enforcement, the ship's crew also aided in saving a commercial fisherman's life. The

sole person aboard his boat, sinking 160 miles off Grays Harbor, Washington, escaped into the vessel's life raft before the boat submerged. The cutter was dispatched from another location July 30 to assist. Once on site, the crew served as on-scene coordinator and directed the Coast Guard Cutter Blue Shark, an 87-foot Patrol Boat homeported in Everett, Washington, to launch its small boat and safely recover the man.

Kolodica credited the versatility and success of the deployment – which was under the tactical oversight of the 13th Coast Guard District – to strong partnerships with the district and Coast Guard Air Stations Port Angeles, Astoria and North Bend.

Heckl Nominated for 3 Stars, Deputy Commandant for CD&I



Lt. Gen. Karsten S. Heckl. *U.S. MARINE CORPS*

ARLINGTON, Va. – Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced Aug. 6 that the president has made the following nomination:

Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Karsten S. Heckl for appointment to the rank of lieutenant general, and assignment as the deputy commandant for combat development and integration, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps; and commanding general, Marine Corps Combat Development Command, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia. Heckl is currently serving as commanding general, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California.

Below are excerpts from his official biography:

A native of Stone Mountain Georgia, Heckl graduated from Georgia State University and was commissioned in April 1988. He was designated an unrestricted Naval Aviator in September 1990.

Heckl commanded Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 162, which included a combat tour in Iraq in 2008 and Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron One (MAWTS-1) in 2010. From June 2018 to July 2020, he served as the commanding general, 2d Marine Aircraft Wing.

As a CH-46E pilot, Heckl deployed with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM) 365 and HMM-263 and served as a CH-46E Instructor and Division Head at MAWTS-1, MCAS Yuma, Arizona. Additionally, he was assigned as one of the initial cadre of pilots with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron 204 (VMMT-204).

Staff assignments include CH-46E and MV-22 Requirements Officer, Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC) Aviation Department, Washington DC; J3 director of Operations, United States Forces - Afghanistan (USFOR-A), Kabul, Afghanistan; senior military assistant and Marine Aide to the secretary of the Navy; assistant deputy commandant for Aviation, HQMC Aviation Department, Washington DC; chief of staff, Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO (STRIKFORNATO), Lisbon, Portugal.

Heckl is a distinguished graduate of the Amphibious Warfare School (AWS) and the Naval War College.

Navy Awards L3Harris \$393 Million to Upgrade Undersea Training Ranges



A crane lifts a 25-ton section of building simultaneously on each end Oct. 23, 2015 during construction of the East Coast Undersea Warfare Training Range's Cable Termination Facility in Jacksonville, Florida. *U.S. NAVY*

MELBOURNE, Fla. – The U.S. Navy has awarded L3Harris Technologies a \$393 million contract to install increments II and III of the Undersea Warfare Training Range (USWTR), the company said in an Aug. 5 release.

The award follows nearly 10 years of execution by L3Harris on Increment I and will replace and upgrade the remaining underwater training range sites.

USWTR Increment I included installing the ocean sensor and shore electronics subsystems instrumenting the approximately 500-square-nautical-mile area near Jacksonville, Florida. Under Increments II and III, L3Harris will upgrade and replace the previously installed systems at the U.S. Navy's three other range locations near Hawaii, Bahamas and Southern California.

The USWTRs enable ships, submarines and aircraft to track targets on the surface and subsurface for anti-submarine warfare training. The ranges each include more than 600 miles of undersea cables, several hundred sophisticated acoustic sensors, as well as shore-based control, display and processing facilities.

"I'm proud of our team for delivering Increment I two years early so we could accelerate this award to support the sailors and provide them with early access to the best undersea range

technology available to maintain operational readiness,” said Christopher E. Kubasik, chief executive officer, L3Harris. “For six decades in partnership with both our U.S. and international navy customers, L3Harris has successfully developed, manufactured, installed and supported undersea training range technology. Our capabilities ensure that sailors train in an environment that is as close to their mission environment as possible, giving them a competitive advantage.”

Navy to Christen Littoral Combat Ship Nantucket



The Freedom-variant littoral combat ships USS Wichita (LCS 13), USS Billings (LCS 15), and their embarked aviation detachments participate in a maritime training exercise with the Freedom-variant littoral combat ship USS Sioux City (LCS 11), July 4, 2021. They will soon be joined in the fleet by the newest Freedom variant, the future USS Nantucket (LCS 27). *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Marianne Guemo*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Navy will christen its newest Freedom-variant littoral combat ship (LCS), the future USS Nantucket (LCS 27), during a 10 a.m. CDT ceremony Saturday, Aug. 7, in Marinette, Wisconsin, the Defense Department announced in an Aug. 6 release.

The principal speaker will be Rep. Mike Gallagher, U.S. Representative for Wisconsin’s 8th District. In a time-honored Navy tradition, the ship’s sponsor, Polly Spencer, will break a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow.

“The future USS Nantucket will be the third U.S. Navy ship commissioned to honor the maritime history and spirit of Nantucket,” said Acting Secretary of the Navy Thomas Harker. “I have no doubt the Sailors of USS Nantucket (LCS 27) will carry on the proud legacy from generations past in preserving sea lanes, countering instability, and maintaining our maritime superiority.”

LCS is a fast, agile, mission-focused platform designed to operate in near-shore environments, winning against 21st-century coastal threats. The platform is capable of supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence.

The LCS class consists of two variants, the Freedom-variant and the Independence-variant, designed and built by two industry teams. The Freedom-variant team is led by Lockheed Martin in Marinette, Wisconsin (for the odd-numbered hulls). The Independence-variant team is led by Austal USA in Mobile, Alabama, (for LCS 6 and the subsequent even-numbered hulls).

The first Nantucket, a Passaic-class coastal monitor, commissioned on Feb. 26, 1863. Assigned to the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron, Nantucket participated in the attack on Confederate forts in Charleston Harbor on April 7, 1863. Struck 51 times during the valiant yet unsuccessful assault on the vital Southern port, the single-turreted monitor was repaired at Port Royal and returned to Charleston to support Army operations on Morris Island. The second Nantucket, a wooden light ship built in 1907 for the Lighthouse Service, was transferred to the Navy by executive order on April 11, 1917. During World War I, the ship continued its duties of warning vessels away from Nantucket Shoals and aided in guarding nearby waters against U-boats.