Navy’s APL 67 Sails Away from Pascagoula, Bound for Japan Base

The Navy’s newest berthing barge, Auxiliary Personnel Lighter (APL) 67 sailed away from VT Halter Marine’s shipyard this week en route to Naval Base San Diego. APL 67 will eventually be delivered to Yokosuka, Japan. *NAVAL SEA SYSTEMS COMMAND*

PASCAGOULA, Miss. – The Navy’s newest berthing barge, Auxiliary Personnel Lighter (APL) 67 sailed away from VT Halter Marine’s shipyard this week en route to Naval Base San Diego, the Program Executive Office–Ships said in a July 21 release. APL 67 will eventually be delivered to Yokosuka, Japan.

APLs are 82-meter-long barges that can berth up to 611 people,

74 officers and 537 enlisted personnel. Mess seating is available for 224 enlisted personnel and 28 officers in 20-minute intervals, allowing food service for 1,130 personnel to have three meals a day.

APLs are equipped with offices, classrooms, washrooms, laundry facilities, a medical treatment facility, a barber shop and a fitness center.

“The modern APLs make the lives of our Sailors easier while their ships are in port for maintenance or training events.” John Lighthammer, acting program manager, Support Ships, Boats and Craft, Program Executive Office Ships. “We look forward to continuing to get these vessels delivered to the fleet to provide support while our Sailors focus on mission.”

VT Halter Marine is in production on APL 68 and three other APLs.

NSWC Taps VTG to Equip More Ships with Counter-UAS Laser

The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Higgins (DDG 76) steers away from Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) following a replenishment-at-sea, July 20, 2021. VTG will equip more such ships with anti-unmanned aircraft laser systems. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Sophia Simons*

CHANTILLY, Va., July 21, 2021 – VTG has been selected by the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Port Hueneme Division, to equip more ships in the U.S. fleet with an innovative laser designed to counter threats from unmanned aerial systems.

Under the prime, single-award contract, VTG will install and integrate the AN/SEQ-4 Optical Dazzler Interdictor, Navy (ODIN), a directed energy weapon, aboard five U.S. Navy Arleigh Burke-class destroyers.

“Our team is honored to support NSWC-PHD in integrating this innovative defensive technology into the fleet. The ODIN laser represents a significant advancement for the Navy in addressing asymmetric threats and protecting our sailors,” said John Hassoun, VTG president and CEO. “Delivering next-

generation capabilities to our warfighters is something we're passionate about. VTG's depth of expertise with ODIN, together with our skilled fleet modernization team, cutting-edge manufacturing and prototyping capabilities, and long-term legacy of support to the Navy, makes us uniquely qualified to perform this mission critical work."

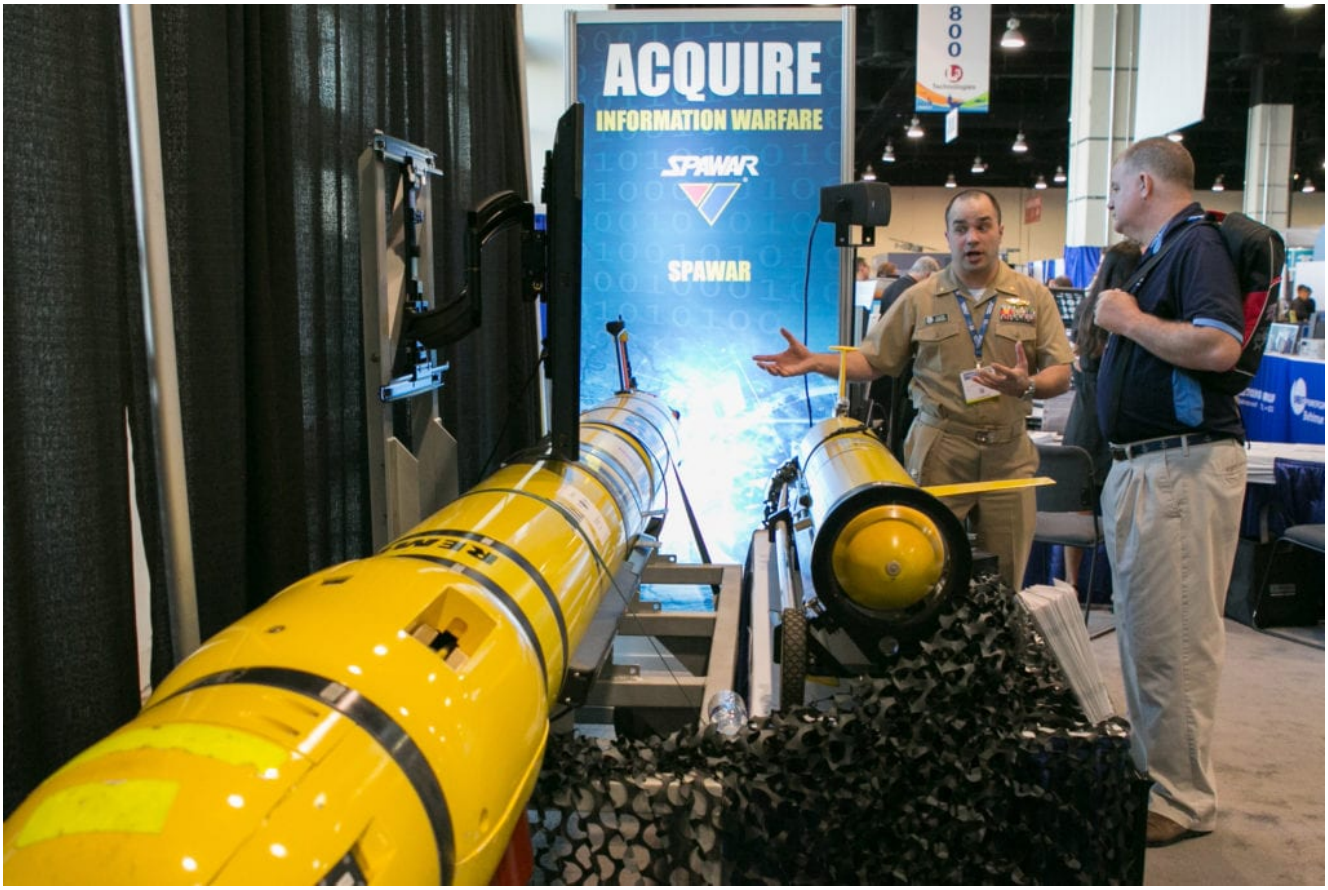
In 2020, VTG successfully integrated the ODIN laser aboard the USS Stockdale (DDG 106) and USS Spruance (DDG 111) through a separate sole-source contract, completing both projects on time and on budget, and setting the standard for future directed energy weapon installations aboard U.S. Navy ships.

ODIN is used to counter adversary UAS-mounted intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities. This laser for the optical dazzling of adversaries' long-range and very long-range surveillance systems is being developed and built by the government at NSWC Dahlgren Division, and rapidly fielded to meet an urgent fleet need. The ODIN laser will be employed on surface combatants to counter asymmetric threats and to provide a scalable response for escalation of force.

Over the past decade, VTG has modernized 240 different surface ships, aircraft carriers and submarines. With a record of exceptional quality, uncompromising safety, and on-time and on-budget delivery, VTG ensures that our sailors have a competitive advantage over near-peer adversaries now and in the future.

Navy Awards Teledyne Contract

for Autonomous Underwater Vehicles



Littoral Battlespace Sensing Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (LBS-UUV) on display at the Navy League's Sea-Air-Space conference and exhibition in 2017. The LBS-UUV is made up of two vehicle types, a glider and an autonomous undersea vehicle. *U.S. NAVY / Krishna M. Jackson*

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif. – Teledyne Technologies Inc.'s subsidiary, Teledyne Brown Engineering Inc., has been awarded an indefinite-quantity/indefinite-delivery contract with a maximum base value of $27.4 million from the U.S. Navy for the Littoral Battlespace Sensing-Glider (LBS-G) program, the company said in a July 19 release.

The contract, awarded under full and open competition, includes a single five-year ordering period and five one-year option periods. The option periods, if exercised, have a ceiling value of $39.2 million.

Teledyne Slocum gliders are long-endurance, buoyancy-driven autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs) that provide a highly persistent means to sample and characterize the ocean water column properties. They can do this at spatial and temporal resolutions not possible using other vessels or tactical units alone. The AUVs host a range of oceanographic sensors to support antisubmarine warfare, mine countermeasures and Naval Special Warfare mission areas.

Teledyne Brown Engineering and sister company, Teledyne Webb Research, will perform the design, development, fabrication, production, test, and support of the LBS-G systems. Under a previous contract awarded in 2009, Teledyne delivered 203 gliders to the U.S. Navy.

“We are pleased to announce the continuation of Teledyne’s successful partnership with the Naval Information Warfare Systems Command to deliver this capability,” stated Jan Hess, president of Teledyne’s Engineered System Segment and Teledyne Brown Engineering. “We look forward to supporting the Navy and assisting with its awareness and understanding of the ocean’s conditions.”

Teledyne Slocum gliders provide the U.S. Navy the capability to conduct persistent sampling of large ocean areas for long periods of time. They also allow focused sampling to obtain extremely high-resolution data within a smaller, tactically significant operating area. The LBS-G System, part of the LBS Unmanned Undersea Vehicles program, is part of a solution to close critical capability gaps allowing the U.S. Navy to characterize adequately and persistently the physical ocean environment on tactical and strategic scales in a battlespace.

Icebreaker Departs for Arctic Deployment, Circumnavigation of North America

The Coast Guard Cutter Healy (WAGB-20), a polar-class ice breaker, transits Southeast Alaskan waters Nov. 24, 2018. The Healy is one of two ice breakers in U.S. service. *U.S. COAST GUARD / Lt. Kellen Browne*

SEATTLE — The Coast Guard Cutter Healy (WAGB 20) departed Seattle on Saturday, July 10, for a months-long Arctic deployment and circumnavigation of North America, the Coast Guard Pacific Ares said in a July 16 release.

The crew aboard Healy, a 420-foot medium icebreaker, will provide U.S. surface presence in the Arctic, conduct high latitude science and research missions, engage in exercises

and professional exchanges with foreign navies and patrols, and conduct other operations as directed throughout the deployment.

Healy is scheduled to circumnavigate North America via the Northwest Passage and the Panama Canal. Healy's deployment supports the Coast Guard's Arctic Strategy while providing critical training opportunities for polar sailors and future operations in the Arctic.

The crew will promote U.S. interests along the U.S. and Russia maritime boundary line.

"Healy's deployment provides opportunities to deepen the Coast Guard's cooperation and commitment with our Arctic allies and partners and to support scientific exploration to increase understanding of the changing Arctic environment and associated impacts," said Coast Guard Pacific Area Commander Vice Adm. Michael McAllister.

The Healy deploys annually to the Arctic to support multiple science missions and Operation Arctic Shield, the service's annual operation to execute U.S. Coast Guard missions, enhance maritime domain awareness, strengthen partnerships, and build preparedness, prevention, and response capabilities across the Arctic domain.

Commissioned in 1999, Healy is one of two active polar icebreakers in the Coast Guard's fleet. The Seattle-based Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star (WAGB 10) is a heavy polar icebreaker commissioned in 1976.

The U.S. Coast Guard is recapitalizing its polar icebreaker fleet to ensure continued access to the polar regions and to protect the country's economic, commercial, environmental, and national security interests. The Polar Security Cutter is still in the design phase, and Halter Marine is working toward completing the necessary work to begin construction on this incredibly complex, state-of-the-art icebreaker. The contract

delivery date for the first Polar Security Cutter is 2024.

Bell Begins UH-1Y Production for the Czech Republic

Two UH-1Y Venoms, assigned to the “Vipers” of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron (HMLA) 169, prepare to land at Naval Air Facility (NAF) Misawa, Japan, on July 15. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Benjamin Ringers*

CRESTVIEW, Fla. – Bell Textron Inc., a Textron Inc. company, has restarted UH-1Y Venom helicopter production for the first international operator. Crestview Aerospace has completed manufacturing the first of eight cabins at the Crestview Florida facility. The aircraft will complete final assembly at the Bell Amarillo Assembly Center.

The helicopters are part of the 2020 U.S. Department of Defense contract awarded to Bell for the production and delivery of eight UH-1Y and four AH-1Z helicopters for the government of the Czech Republic.

“Crestview Aerospace is honored and grateful for the opportunity to team with Bell on the continued production of the UH-1Y cabin for the first international customer,” said Paul Kohlmeier, senior vice president, Strategy and Business Development, Crestview Aerospace. “Crestview continues to build in the same high quality and reliability into the international Venom helicopters that underpin the aircraft currently operated by the United States Marine Corps around the world.”

Bell delivered the final UH-1Y for the U.S. Marine Corps program of record in April 2018 and has continued to produce and deliver the AH-1Z as part of the H-1 production contract for 349 H-1 aircraft, consisting of 160 UH-1Y and 189 AH-1Z.

The UH-1Y shares 85 percent commonality of parts with the AH-1Z. The commonality between the aircraft enabled critical component supply chains to remain active during AH-1Z production for the USMC.

“Time, logistics, and man-hours are all strategic resources,” said Mike Deslatte, vice president and H-1 program director, Bell. “Commonality helps ensure everything between the Viper and Venom, from manufacturing, maintenance, and upgrades, remains seamless while simultaneously providing lower program and life cycle costs. It’s a real tactical advantage on multiple levels.”

The UH-1Y and AH-1Z share the same engines, integrated mission system and dynamic components, such as the four-bladed rotor system. Both aircraft are specifically designed and produced for expeditionary operations. Together, they provide a full

spectrum of military operations, unlike any other helicopter duo.

Bell anticipates production for the Marine Corps through early 2022, followed by continued production for foreign military customers. Bell has two signed Foreign Military Sales cases in production, Bahrain and the Czech Republic.

Navy Helicopter Crew Rescued After Crash Near Mt. Hogue, California

The MH-60S Knighthawk helicopter that crashed, assigned to the “Longhorns” of Helicopter Search and Rescue (SAR) Squadron,

conducts a one wheel during a simulated SAR training exercise in February. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Ryan M. Breeden*

NAVAL AIR STATION FALLON, Nev. – A Navy MH-60S Knighthawk helicopter crashed near Mt. Hogue, California, at approximately 5 p.m. on July 16, while conducting search and rescue (SAR) operations, the Navy said in a July 17 release. All four crewmembers survived the crash without injury and have been safely recovered.

The aircraft, call sign Longhorn 02, was supporting Mono County search and rescue efforts to locate a lost hiker in the rugged high-altitude terrain in the National Forest south of Boundary Peak, 120 miles south of NAS Fallon. The aircrew consists of four personnel – a pilot, co-pilot, and two crewmen.

The crash site is at 11,700 feet above sea level, in very rugged terrain. The crew were able to communicate following the impact, but a follow-on helicopter mission launched on the evening on July 16 from NAS Fallon was unable to retrieve them. An overnight kit was dropped to the survivors, who spent the night on mountain.

On the morning of July 17, an additional MH-60S, Longhorn 01, launched from NAS Fallon, and provided on-scene coordination, but could not affect a rescue. A CH-47 Chinook from Mather Air Force Base was called in for its superior high-altitude performance characteristics. It dropped off a ground SAR team that met up with the survivors while the CH-47 returned to Mammoth Lakes for fuel. The Chinook returned to the scene, and at approximately 2 p.m., the crew of Longhorn 02 was safely recovered aboard the CH-47.

All military support for civil mutual aid SAR missions are coordinated by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida. Pursuant to the National SAR Plan of the United States, military aircraft may

also be used for civil SAR/medevac needs to the fullest extent practicable on a non-interference basis with primary military duties according to applicable national directives, plans, guidelines and agreements.

The cause of the crash is unknown. The Navy will conduct a mishap investigation, with support from the Naval Safety Center. Following the on-site investigation, the aircraft will be removed from its current position on U.S. Forest Service land.

USS Dwight D. Eisenhower Returns from Deployment, IKE CSG Earns Navy Unit Commendation

The aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 6) returned to Naval Station Norfolk on July 18 following a six-month deployment. *U.S. NAVY*

NORFOLK, Va. – The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) (IKE) returned home to Naval Station Norfolk July 18 following a six-month deployment to the U.S. 5th and 6th Fleet areas of operation, the U.S. 2nd Fleet said in a release.

It was the third homecoming in as many days for the Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group (IKE CSG). The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Laboon (DDG 58) returned to Nofolk July 16 and the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Thomas Hudner (DDG 116) returned to its homeport in Naval Station Mayport, Florida, July 17.

Additionally, more than 1,800 Navy aviators from the nine squadrons of Carrier Air Wing Three (CVW-3) returned to their home bases at Naval Air Station Oceana, Naval Station Norfolk, Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, and Naval Air Station Jacksonville July 13.

The Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Vella Gulf (CG 72) will return to Norfolk July 23. Meanwhile, the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Monterey (CG 61) and Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Mitscher (DDG 57) and USS Mahan (DDG 72) remain on deployment and will return to Norfolk at a future date.

In addition to homecoming news, it was announced that the courageous efforts of the IKE CSG's Sailors were recognized by Acting Secretary of the Navy Thomas Harker with the Navy Unit Commendation for operational excellence.

"The Sailors of the Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group and their families have served and sacrificed a tremendous amount by answering the nation's call to duty, spanning two deployments with only a short reset in between," said Rear Adm. Scott F. Robertson, commander, Carrier Strike Group 2. "Nevertheless, our well-trained, exceptional Sailors rose to each challenge, enabling our strike group to be a dynamic force across great distances conducting simultaneous missions between both 5th and 6th Fleet."

The Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group departed Norfolk for deployment Feb. 18 after successfully completing a six-week, historic composite training unit exercise (COMPTUEX). This year's COMPTUEX included a NATO vignette and incorporated integrated training with SEALs from Naval Special Warfare Group 2 for the first time in recent history.

While in 6th Fleet, the IKE CSG supported national security interests in Europe through increased theater cooperation and maintaining a forward naval presence. While in the Atlantic Ocean and transiting through the Mediterranean Sea, the IKE CSG conducted Exercise Lightning Handshake 21, a U.S.-led, bi-lateral maritime exercise with the Royal Moroccan Navy and Royal Moroccan Air Force. The strike group also participated in Exercise Sea Shield 21, a multinational naval exercise hosted by Romania, alongside ships from nine different nations

to conduct operations across the entire spectrum of naval warfare. The IKE CSG also worked alongside the Israeli navy and conducted passing exercises with the Hellenic, Italian, Albanian and Turkish navies.

In 5th Fleet, the Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group and French Navy (Marine Nationale) Charles de Gaulle Carrier Strike Group (CDGSG) conducted dual carrier operations in the Arabian Sea. Shortly after the dual carrier operations, the IKE CSG ships participated in submarine familiarization exercises and conducted passing exercises with the Canadian navy in the Arabian Sea and later with the Egyptian navy in the Red Sea. The strike group's ships also participated in joint air operations in support of maritime surface warfare exercises with the United Arab Emirates, U.S. Coast Guard, Joint Aviation Command, Royal Saudi Naval Forces and U.S. Air Forces Central.

Embarked to Eisenhower, CVW-3 supported both missions Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR) and Operation Freedom's Sentinel (OFS), in the Arabian Sea as a continuation of the United States' commitment to maritime security, stability, as well as to ensure safe passage and deescalate tensions throughout international waters in 5th Fleet.

During its final month in 5th Fleet, the IKE CSG provided naval aviation support for the responsible, deliberate and safe drawdown of U.S. and coalition forces from Afghanistan April 28 to June 23 in support of OFS. CVW-3 conducted a total of 6,100 sorties and 12,401 flight hours throughout the strike group's deployment.

"The courage and effort put forth by the Sailors of CVW-3 over these many months speaks great volumes to their unwavering commitment to success, no matter what kind of adversity emerges over the horizon," said Capt. Marcos A. Jasso, commander, Carrier Air Wing Three. "Our Sailors gave it their all each and every day during this deployment and I am honored

to have served with our great air wing and flight deck crew. I wish them all a relaxed and enjoyable time off after deployment. The whole strike group deserves it. They've all earned it."

The Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group sailed more than 190,000 nautical miles, operating dynamically across multiple fleets with our NATO allies, partners and friends. The strike group's ships completed multiple strait and choke point transits, including the Strait of Gibraltar, the Suez Canal, Strait of Hormuz and Strait of Bab el Mandeb.

"As the flagship of the strike group, we maneuvered IKE into the right battlespace for launching and recovering air wing missions ashore and over the horizon," Campagna said. "IKE Sailors operated decisively and safely with a clear sense of purpose."

"It took diligence, hard work, and grit from everyone to ensure our strike group remained safe and combat-ready throughout this deployment. What we do while deployed is no small feat considering we are the only Navy that can operate in a sustained manner with the kind of combat power we provide," said Rear Adm. Robertson. "I am exceedingly proud of each and every one of our Sailors for their exceptional performance and it has been an honor to serve alongside this team of warfighters for the Eisenhower Strike Group's 2021 mission. However, we still have a few of our strike group's ships that remain on station and we should keep them and their families in our thoughts until they return to Norfolk."

Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group is a multiplatform team of ships, aircraft and more than 5,000 Sailors, capable of carrying out a wide variety of missions around the globe. The Navy provides a ready, flexible force capable of responding to a broad range of contingencies.

Navy Christens the First Ship in the T-AO Fleet Oiler Program

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi speaks at the christening of the future USNS John Lewis, the first ship in the U.S. Navy's new John Lewis-class fleet oiler program. *U.S. NAVY*

SAN DIEGO – The future USNS John Lewis (T-AO 205), the first ship in the U.S. Navy's John Lewis-class fleet oiler program, was christened July 17 during a ceremony in San Diego, the Navy said in a release.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-California, served as the principal speaker at the ceremony.

"As House Speaker, I am deeply honored to lead this

congressional delegation of many friends of our beloved late Congressman John Lewis to honor his beautiful and saintly life," said Speaker Nancy Pelosi. "John Lewis was a warrior for freedom and, as a titan of the civil rights movement, his courage and goodness helped transformed our nation. In the halls of the Capitol, he was fearless in his pursuit of a more perfect union, whether fighting to defend voting rights, end anti-LGBTQ discrimination or respect the dignity and worth of every person."

Following Pelosi, the ship's sponsor, Alfre Woodard Spencer, spoke briefly about the ship's namesake.

John Lewis "lives in the unalterable truths he spoke to power," said Spencer. "John Lewis lives in all those spaces where people reach out their hands to pull others up to the lives that they deserve. And now he lives in the name and the embodiment of this mighty sailing vessel and its mission of fortifying and sustaining those who have committed themselves to the service of our nation."

Following her remarks, Spencer christened the ship with the traditional champagne bottle break alongside the hull.

Additional remarks were provided by U.S. Navy representatives, Marcus Tyner, nephew of the ship's namesake, and Dave Carver, president of General Dynamics NASSCO.

"The christening ceremony today takes on a very special meaning, for it marks the one-year anniversary, to the day, of John Lewis' passing." Carver said. "Just as its namesake, this majestic vessel will be instrumental in shaping the future of our Nation. The shipbuilders of NASSCO are proud to ensure Congressman John Lewis' legacy will live on in this ship."

Former Navy Secretary Ray Mabus declared the John Lewis-class of oilers be named after leaders who fought for civil and human rights. The class and the first ship honors Congressman and American civil rights leader John Lewis.

In 2016, General Dynamics NASSCO was awarded the contract by the U.S. Navy for the detailed design and construction of the next generation of fleet oilers, the John Lewis-class (T-AO 205), previously known as the TAO(X). The contract calls for the design and construction of six 742-foot-long oilers with a full load displacement of 49,850 tons. Designed to transfer fuel to U.S. Navy carrier strike group ships operating at sea, the oilers have the capacity to carry 157,000 barrels of oil, a significant dry cargo capacity, aviation capability and up to a speed of 20 knots.

In addition to the christening of this ship, three ships in the T-AO class fleet oiler program for the U.S. Navy – the future USNS Harvey Milk (T-AO 206), the future USNS Earl Warren (T-AO 207), and the future USNS Robert F. Kennedy (T-AO 208) – are currently under construction. The second ship, the future USNS Harvey Milk (T-AO 206) is scheduled to launch later this year.

Marine Corps Selects Textron, GDLS for Advanced Recon Vehicle Prototypes

Concept art for Textron’s Advanced Reconnaissance Vehicle entry. *TEXTRON SYSTEMS*

QUANTICO, Va. — The Marine Corps selected Textron Systems and General Dynamics Land Systems for Advanced Reconnaissance Vehicle pre-award and will begin negotiations for Other Transaction Agreement awards of ARV prototypes, the Marine Corps said in a July 16 release.

Pending successful negotiations, Army Contracting Command—Detroit Arsenal will award the ARV OTAs utilizing the Ground Vehicle Systems OTA with the National Advanced Mobility Consortium.

A key Fleet Marine Force modernization initiative, the ARV Command, Control, Communications and Computers/Unmanned Aerial Systems will host a suite of C4 equipment, sensors, and operate both tethered and untethered UAS.

The ARV C4/UAS will employ an effective mix of reconnaissance, surveillance, target acquisition, and C4 systems to sense and communicate. These systems will enable ARV to serve as the manned hub of a manned/unmanned team and deliver next-generation, multi-domain, mobile reconnaissance capabilities.

Program Manager-Light Armored Vehicles (LAV), located at the Detroit Arsenal, Michigan, manages the ARV effort. PM LAV falls within the portfolio of programs managed by the Marine Corps' Program Executive Officer-Land Systems, Quantico, Virginia.

The period of performance for the agreements is 22 months, with prototype delivery expected in the first quarter of fiscal year 2023 and six months of government evaluation that will complete in the third quarter.

The Marine Corps is working to validate the ARV requirement to serve as a mobile protected hub of manned capability with the C4 to effectively operate robotic autonomous systems-enabled teams through a competitive prototyping effort with multiple industry partners.

The effort gained momentum following an industry engagement held in December 2020. PM LAV solicited proposals for prototypes through the consortium on March 30, 2021. The Marine Corps received responses on May 3 and promptly began evaluations.

In parallel to competitive prototyping, the Marine Corps is also pursuing an effort to define the trade space of a government off-the-shelf solution using the Amphibious Combat Vehicle. The data from the ARV competitive prototyping efforts and the ACV study will jointly inform a Marine Corps decision point in fiscal year 2023.

Navy to Christen First John

Lewis-Class Oiler

An Armed Forces Body Bearer Team carries the flag-draped casket of Rep. John Lewis at the U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C., July 27, 2020. DoD personnel are honoring the congressman by providing military funeral honors during his congressional funeral events. *U.S. ARMY / Spc. Zachery Perkins*
ARLINGTON, Va. — The Navy will christen its first-in-class John Lewis-class replenishment oiler, the future USNS John Lewis (T-AO 205), during a 9 a.m. PDT ceremony Saturday, July 17, in San Diego, California, the Defense Department announced in a July 16 release.

Speaker of the House of Representatives, Rep. Nancy Pelosi, D-California, will deliver the ceremonial principal address. Remarks will also be provided by James Geurts, performing the duties of Under Secretary of the Navy; Vice Adm. Ross Myers, commander, Fleet Cyber Command and commander, U.S. 10th Fleet; Rear Adm. Michael Wettlaufer, commander, Military Sealift Command; and Marcus Tyner, nephew of the ship's namesake. In a time-honored Navy tradition, the ship's sponsor, Alfre Woodard Spencer, will christen the ship by breaking a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow.

"Tomorrow we christen the first John Lewis-class replenishment oiler," said acting Secretary of the Navy Thomas Harker. "Leaders like Representative Lewis taught us that diversity of backgrounds and experiences help contribute to the strength of our nation. There is no doubt that the future Sailors aboard this ship will be galvanized by Lewis' legacy."

The future USNS John Lewis is the first ship in its class and will be operated by the Navy's Military Sealift Command. The ship is named in honor of the late politician and civil rights leader. John Lewis-class oilers will be named for other prominent civil rights leaders and activists.

The John Lewis-class ships are based on commercial design standards and will recapitalize the current T-AO 187-class fleet replenishment oilers to provide underway replenishment of fuel to U.S. Navy ships at sea. These ships are part of the

Navy’s Combat Logistics Force.

In June 2016, the Navy awarded a $3.2 billion contract to General Dynamics NASSCO in San Diego for the design and construction of the first six ships of the Future Fleet Replenishment Ship, the John Lewis-class (T-AO 205), with construction commencing in September 2018. The Navy plans to procure 20 ships of the new class.

Lewis passed July 17, 2020; the christening marks the one-year anniversary of his death.