First ACV Command Variant Delivered to Marine Corps for Testing

U.S. Marines with Amphibious Vehicle Test Branch, Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity, drive new Amphibious Combat Vehicles along the beach during low-light surf transit testing at AVTB Beach on Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California, Dec. 18, 2019. U.S. Marine Corps / Lance Cpl. Andrew Cortez

STAFFORD, Va. – BAE Systems has handed over the first of a new variant of the Amphibious Combat Vehicle to the U.S. Marine Corps for testing, the company said in a Feb. 18 release. The Command variant (ACV-C) is designed to provide the highest levels of communications, coordination, and analysis on the battlefield to support command and control.

BAE Systems is under contract to deliver two variants to the Marine Corps under the ACV Family of Vehicles program: the ACV personnel carrier (ACV-P) and the ACV-C. A 30mm cannon (ACV-30) is currently under contract for design and development and a recovery variant (ACV-R) is also planned.

The ACV-C employs multiple workstations for Marines to maintain and manage situational awareness in the battle space. The workstations access independent networks for advanced digital communications while on the move. This capability supports immediate information synchronization in the application of combat power.

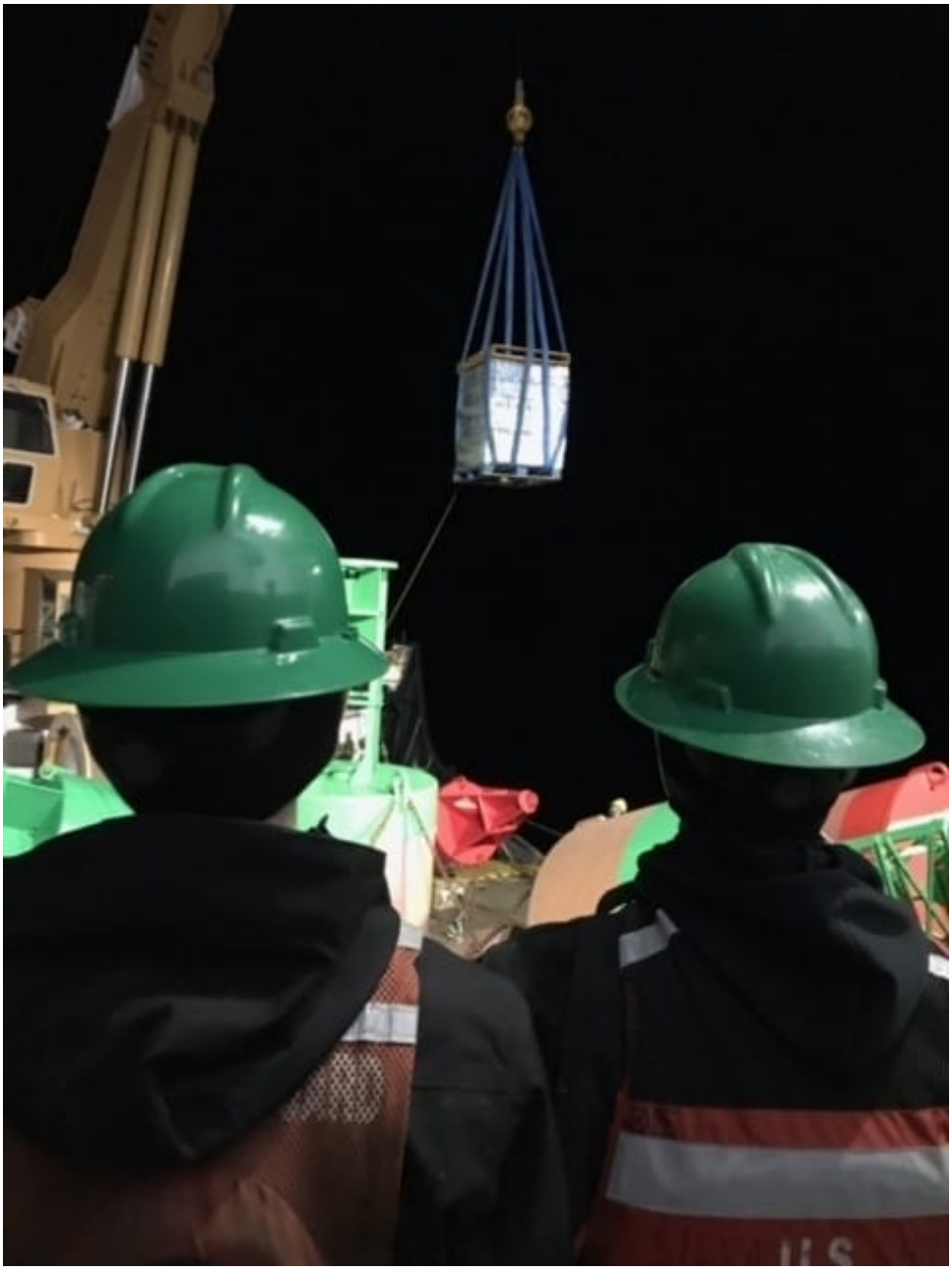
“This ACV’s base design for payload makes it a uniquely adaptable platform for the integration of numerous mission capability sets,” said John Swift, director of amphibious programs at BAE Systems. “The delivery of the first ACV-C for testing is significant as it provides Marines with advanced operational control for defeating adversaries. Marines will be able to quickly receive and analyze data, coordinate battlefield functions, and transmit information to provide terminal mission control rapidly from the mobile protected ACV-C.”

The ACV platform was designed to grow and adapt to mission needs, allowing space for new capabilities as technology evolves such as turreted, reconnaissance, electronic warfare, anti-air, and UAS systems integration.

The Marine Corps and BAE Systems entered full-rate production on the ACV program with a contract award in December, achieving its most significant milestone to date along with the Marine Corps’ decision to declare initial operational capability. Work is currently underway on the ACV-30 variant.

ACV production and support is taking place at BAE Systems locations in Stafford, Virginia; San Jose, California; Sterling Heights, Michigan; Aiken, South Carolina; and York, Pennsylvania.

Cutter Delivers Water to Alaska Residents Experiencing Waterline Failures



Coast Guard Cutter Hickory crewmembers offload pallets of water in a humanitarian effort to deliver goods to the small community of Angoon, Alaska, Feb. 14, 2021. U.S. Coast Guard

KODIAK, Alaska — The Coast Guard Cutter Hickory crewmembers delivered pallets of water to the remote community of Angoon, Alaska, on Feb. 14, after the residents experienced waterline

failures, the Coast Guard 17th District said in a Feb. 16 release.

The cutter crew loaded four pallets of water onto the ship with each pallet containing 1,700 bottles and delivered the supplies to Angoon Sunday evening.

Along with the nearly 7,000 bottles of water being delivered, the Hickory crew reportedly had 8,000 gallons of potable water onboard that could be offloaded to the residents if needed.

Coast Guard District 17 Command Center watchstanders received a call Saturday afternoon from the Alaska Emergency Operations Center requesting assistance in delivering the pallets.

Angoon, a small community with a population of 400, is experiencing waterline failures resulting in one third of the community being completely without water while the rest of the residents have been advised to boil water before consumption.

There was no water available at the local store and commercial services are not available to deliver water until late next week. The waterline failures are expected to last for a couple of weeks.

The Hickory is a 225-foot sea-going buoy tender homeported in Homer, Alaska.

Cutters Interdict 3 Suspected Smuggling Vessels, $156M of

Cocaine in Eastern Pacific

Coast Guard Cutter Munro (WMSL 755) boarding team member sits atop an interdicted low-profile vessel in the Eastern Pacific Ocean after crews seized 3,439 pounds of cocaine from the LPV, Jan. 27, 2021. U.S. Coast Guard

ALAMEDA, Calif. – Crews aboard two Alameda-based Coast Guard cutters interdicted three suspected drug smuggling vessels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean between Jan. 26 and Feb. 1 and seized more than 9,000 pounds of cocaine worth an estimated $156 million, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in a Feb. 17 release.

Conducting the operations were the crews of the Coast Guard Cutters Munro (WMSL 755) and Bertholf (WMSL 750).

Munro’s crew boarded a fishing vessel Jan. 26 suspected of smuggling illicit narcotics. Exercising a bilateral agreement with a partner nation, the boarding teams searched and discovered 1,300 pounds of cocaine concealed within the

vessel.

Munro’s crew interdicted a second suspected drug smuggling vessel hours later after a maritime patrol aircraft detected a suspicious vessel and directed Munro’s crew towards it. Munro launched a helicopter aircrew and boarding teams, and together they interdicted a low-profile vessel. The boarding teams discovered 3,439 pounds of cocaine aboard the purpose-built drug smuggling vessel.

“Having back-to-back cases lasting 31 hours pushed our limits, but our crew took on the challenge,” said Capt. Blake Novak, commanding officer of the Munro. “Cartels are cunning and sophisticated, and this is a dynamic environment, which required interagency and international coordination which yielded results. I am proud of our crew, but these successes would not be possible without our Central and South American partnerships.”

On Feb. 1, Bertholf’s boarding teams also interdicted a low-profile vessel, seizing more than 4,380 pounds of cocaine.

Cartels design low-profile vessels specifically to evade law enforcement by being difficult to detect. These vessels are built to ferry large quantities of illicit contraband while riding low in the water.

“The crew continues to impress me as they rise above challenges, stand a taut watch, and conduct themselves in a professional manner as we go about our business of stemming the flow of narcotics in the Eastern Pacific,” said Capt. Brian Anderson, commanding officer of the Bertholf. “I could not be more pleased with the overall teamwork between the aircraft, our small boats, and my crew in the interdiction of this drug laden vessel. Together we are making a difference.”

Nine suspected traffickers were taken into custody between the three interdictions.

Munro and Bertholf are two of four 418-foot Legend-class national security cutters homeported in Alameda. National security cutters have a crew of more than 150 and are among the largest and most technologically sophisticated vessels in the Coast Guard's fleet. The cutters can operate globally in the most demanding open ocean environments, from the North Pacific's hazardous fishing grounds to the Eastern Pacific's vast approaches, where its crews battle transnational crime.

Winston S. Churchill Seizes Illicit Weapons from Two Dhows off Somalia

A Sailor assigned to the guided-missile destroyer USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81), in accordance with international law,

boarded a stateless dhow off the coast of Somalia and interdicted an illicit shipment of weapons and weapon components, Feb. 12. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Louis Thompson Staats IV

INDIAN OCEAN – The guided-missile destroyer USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81) seized illicit shipments of weapons and weapons components from two stateless dhows during a maritime security operation in international waters off the coast of Somalia, Feb. 11-12, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command / U.S. 5th Fleet Public Affairs said in a Feb. 16 release.

Churchill's Visit, Board, Search, and Seizure (VBSS) team and embarked joint service Advanced Interdiction Team (AIT) discovered the illicit cargo during a flag verification boarding conducted in accordance with international law and in international waters.

The cache of weapons consisted of thousands of AK-47 assault rifles, light machine guns, heavy sniper rifles, rocket-propelled grenade launchers, and crew served weapons. Other weapon components included barrels, stocks, optical scopes and weapon systems.

The original source of the weapons has not yet been identified. Churchill located the dhows and provided more than 40 hours of over watch and security for the ship and its boarding teams throughout the two-day operation.

The dhow crews were provided food and water before being released.

"We are proud of the combined efforts of the AIT and Churchill crew members for executing dynamic and demanding boardings," said Lt. Travis Dopp, assistant AIT leader aboard Churchill. "We are proud to have a positive impact on the safety and security of coalition forces by interdicting shipments of lethal aid."

The seizure of the illicit weapons by Churchill was conducted as part of the U.S. Navy's regular maritime security operations in the region. These routine patrols are performed to ensure the free flow of commerce for legitimate traffic and to disrupt the transport of illicit cargo that often funds terrorism and unlawful activity.

"This joint team [Army, Navy and Coast Guard] on board Churchill came together to successfully execute this operation over the course of two days in the Indian Ocean. These operations prevent nefarious actors from illegally spreading their lethal aid," said Cdr. Timothy Shanley, commanding officer of Churchill.

Winston S. Churchill departed Norfolk, Virginia, Aug. 10 for a regularly-scheduled deployment to maintain maritime security and ensure the freedom of navigation in critical waterways.

U.S. 5th Fleet, headquartered in Manama, Bahrain, conducts joint and naval operations in order to support regional allies and partners and U.S. national security interests in the Middle East.

Cutter Mohawk Returns to Key West after Interdicting $69 Million in Drugs

Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk (WMEC 913) crewmembers interdicted a 25-foot vessel with two suspected smugglers and over 660 pounds of cocaine in Caribbean waters Jan. 24, 2021. U.S. Coast Guard

KEY WEST, Fla. — Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk's (WMEC 913) crew returned home to Key West Feb. 12 after a 59-day patrol in the Caribbean Sea.

The crew interdicted four drug vessels, detained five suspected drug smugglers and seized approximately 4,000 pounds of cocaine with a street value of approximately $69 million.

"These interdictions reflect teamwork and the unwavering resolve between the Coast Guard, federal law enforcement, Department of Defense, and our international partners to protect the region against the scourge of transnational criminal organizations," said Cmdr. James L. Jarnac, Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk commanding officer. "The crew of Mohawk demonstrated remarkable enthusiasm and commitment during the

execution of our missions over the last eight weeks, and it remains my pleasure to serve with and for them.”

During the patrol, Mohawk’s crew worked with multiple interagency and international maritime patrol aircraft and surface assets to counter transnational criminal organizations and hinder the illicit flow of drugs, people, and other dangerous cargo into the United States. This includes joint operations with the Dominican Republic navy, and Panamanian law enforcement officers, which further strengthened foreign partnerships and to detect, deter, and interdict vessels engaged in illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing within the Exclusive Economic Zone of Panama.

Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk is a 270-foot medium-endurance cutter with a crew complement of 80.

Fairbanks Morse Opens Mayport Facility to Support Navy, Coast Guard

Fairbanks Morse's new Mayport Service Center in Jacksonville Beach, Florida. Fairbanks Morse

BELOIT, Wis. and JACKSONVILLE BEACH, Fla. – Fairbanks Morse, a portfolio company of Arcline Investment Management, announced the opening of its 8,000-square-foot Mayport Service Center at 950 10th Street, Building B in Jacksonville Beach, Florida, the company said in a Feb. 16 release.

The facility represents a $350,000 investment in the community and places Fairbanks Morse in closer proximity to core customers such as Mayport Naval Station, Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, and other U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard installations.

"The opening of our Mayport Service Center is another step that Fairbanks Morse is taking to fulfill its promise to deliver world-class service to our customers," said George Whittier, CEO of Fairbanks Morse. "From this facility, we are

stocking a wide range of inventory to make parts available when and where our customers need them. This is just the beginning of our broader plan for a geographic expansion that extends our aftermarket services to help customers meet their mission-critical power needs.”

The Mayport Service Center will be staffed with factory certified, OEM [original equipment manufacturer] technicians to provide local engine, motor and controls maintenance and repair services to improve performance and reliability. Fairbanks Morse’s OEM technicians undergo rigorous qualifications to meet the company’s high standards for delivering best-in-class support.

A wide range of Fairbanks Morse engine and Ward Leonard motor and controls inventory will be available at the Mayport Service Center to reduce the amount of time for installation, repair and maintenance services. The move is part of the company’s renewed emphasis on expediting aftermarket services to military and commercial maritime customers across the nation.

Italian Navy Aircraft Carrier Arrives at Norfolk for F-35B Certification

Italian navy flagship, the aircraft carrier ITS Cavour (CVH 550), arrives at Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, Feb 13. The Cavour's visit is part of a series of operations alongside U.S. military assets to attain the Italian navy's "ready for operations" certification to safely land and launch F-35B aircraft. U.S. Navy / Capt. Cassidy Norman

NORFOLK, Va. – The Italian navy flagship, the aircraft carrier ITS Cavour (CVH 550), arrived at Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, Feb. 13 for a series of operations alongside U.S. military assets to attain the Italian navy's "ready for operations" certification to safely land and launch F-35B aircraft, the U.S. 2nd Fleet said in a release.

While in the Western Atlantic, Cavour will be embarked by an F-35 Joint Program Office test team to conduct sea trials, a series of tests and functional activities to create a safe flight operating envelope for the short takeoff and vertical landing (STOVL) variant of the fifth-generation aircraft aboard the recently upgraded ship.

This carrier-based flight test and other actions with U.S. 2nd Fleet ships and aircraft improve interoperability and

strengthen the relationship between two NATO Allies.

“Operating in the Western Atlantic with our NATO allies presents a mutually beneficial opportunity to enhance both of our navies’ capabilities,” said Vice Adm. Andrew Lewis, commander of U.S. 2nd Fleet. “Supporting our Italian allies in certification of their aircraft carrier increases our collective experience in safety and combat abilities. We are stronger together.”

While crossing the Atlantic from Italy, ITS Cavour was met by the Arleigh-Burke class guided-missile destroyer USS Stout (DDG 55) and conducted a three-day interoperability exercise with support from Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 7 and Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing (CPRW) 11. Specific events included integrated ship maneuvering, low-slow-flyer detect-to-engage, anti-surface warfare serials with P-8 participation, air defense/air intercept control event with F/A-18 participation, and C5I interoperability events in the Western Atlantic 10-12 Feb.

“We are deeply grateful for the warm welcome received by the U.S. Navy 2nd Fleet upon our arrival in the Western Atlantic waters,” said Capt. Giancarlo Ciappina, commanding officer of ITS Cavour. “My officers and the whole crew were impressed for the professionalism and seamanship shown during these three days of training by the crews of USS Stout, CVW-7 and CPRW-11. We consider a real privilege having the opportunity to sail and exercise alongside our closest allies and friends and we are very proud to share with the USN Community such important certification deployment, which will provide ITS Cavour and the Italian naval aviation with the fifth-generation air combat capability of the Joint Strike Fighter.”

Upon arriving in Norfolk, ITS Cavour was hosted by USS John. C. Stennis (CVN 74). Stennis is coordinating and providing all pier services required by Cavour, to include refueling, diving

operations, equipment and personnel on load, security, and contingency medical functions.

“We couldn’t be more excited to host our Italian ally,” said Capt. Cassidy Norman, Stennis’ commanding officer. “The Stennis team fully understands the importance of building trust and cooperation by supporting Cavour’s certification with the newest multi-role combat aircraft, the F-35. We are happy to see our Italian naval aviation counterparts dramatically increase their operational capability, strengthening our collective capability.”

The F-35 Pax River Integrated Test Force (ITF) team from Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland. NAS PAX River comprises almost 200 people with the engineering and test pilot expertise and experience to conduct F-35B envelope expansion flight test, two specially instrumented developmental flight test aircraft, and support equipment.

“Italy is a critically important Cooperative Program Partner in the F-35 enterprise,” said Andrew Maack, F-35 Pax River ITF chief test engineer and site director.

“We are excited to get underway with the sailors of Cavour and honored to contribute to the aircraft carrier achieving the Italian navy’s strategic goal of it being ready for operations,” Maack said. “We look forward to a phenomenally successful shipboard detachment.”

For decades, the bond between Europe and North America has made NATO the strongest alliance in history. Conducting training and exercises alongside allies and partners increases our collective capacity and capabilities as well as increased interoperability with the U.S. Forces.

U.S. 2nd Fleet exercises operational authority over assigned ships, aircraft, and landing forces on the East Coast and the

Atlantic.

Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star Collects High-Latitude Data of Remote Arctic Region

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star transits the Gastineau Channel to moor up in Juneau, Alaska, on Feb. 12, 2021, as the crew nears the end of their months-long Arctic deployment. U.S. Coast Guard / Senior Chief Petty Officer Trevor Bannerman

JUNEAU, Alaska – The Seattle-based Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star (WAGB 10) arrived in Juneau, Alaska on Feb. 12, for a logistics stop as the crew nears the end of their months-long

Arctic deployment conducting scientific research and protecting the nation's maritime sovereignty and security throughout the polar region, the Coast Guard 17th District said in a release.

In addition to Polar Star's strategic national security objectives, the nation's sole heavy icebreaker sailed north with scientists and researchers aboard to work in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory (CRREL), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), University of Washington, and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute (WHOI) to gather data and lessen the void of information from the region and better understand how to operate year-round in Arctic waters.

"The Arctic is cold, dark, and difficult to navigate in the winter," said Capt. Bill Woityra, the Polar Star's commanding officer. "Deploying with researchers and scientists aboard has aided in the development, understanding and pursuit of technologies that will mitigate risks and enable future mission performance so that looking forward, the Coast Guard can safely operate continually and effectively in this remote environment."

Working aboard Polar Star, Shalane Regan, a member of the Coast Guard Research and Development Center (RDC), teamed up with Lt. Lydia Ames, a NOAA Corps officer, to assist CRREL researchers by deploying buoys onto the ice where they will, over time, collect and transmit information about ice flow to help fill in data gaps for higher-latitude oceans.

The Polar Star crew also aided in a research project concerning water flow regimes in the Arctic, specifically the Chukchi Sea, a study developed by Dr. Robert Pickart of WHOI. The data collected during Polar Star's patrol will be used to develop a more complete understanding of the hydrology of the dynamic region.

To support Dr. Pickart's research, WHOI provided 120 Expendable Conductivity-Temperature-Depth (XCTD) instruments to measure temperature and salinity. These profiles of the water column will give a better picture of what water and nutrient flow look like in the Arctic winter. Polar Star crew members deployed the probes every 12 hours when above 65 degrees north.

Additionally, Regan, a mechanical engineer and researcher with the RDC Surface Branch, worked with other scientists and researchers on board to find ways to operate most effectively in the frigid Arctic environment.

For technology, Regan brought a 3-D printer and remotely operated vehicle aboard Polar Star to evaluate how the systems would react to the Arctic climate and ship life.

"I used the 3-D printer to complete many small projects that resulted in large lifestyle improvements for the crew," said Regan. "Most importantly, the knowledge I was able to gather about larger issues the crew faces, for example, visibility issues due to frost accumulation on the bridge windows, I can take home for my team to develop solutions that will create a better-equipped, mission-ready fleet."

Another big item the RDC team is focusing on is underway connectivity, specifically in the Arctic region.

To better understand high latitude communications, The Mobile User Objective System (MUOS) was installed on Polar Star to test its abilities at high latitudes in the harsh Arctic winter conditions. Developed for the U.S. Navy by Lockheed Martin, the MUOS is an ultra-high frequency satellite communications system that provides secure connections for mobile forces.

"Looking towards the future, all signs point toward the Coast Guard deploying more platforms to the Arctic, more often and during different seasons of the year," said Woityra. "The

Coast Guard is robustly proficient at summer-time Arctic operations, while winter presents an entirely new set of challenges. Polar Star's winter Arctic deployment has served to better understand and prepare for the challenges of operating in such a harsh and unforgiving environment."

MARAD Announces Comment Period for Future Use of the Historic Vessel NS Savannah

NS (Nuclear Ship) Savannah, the first commercial nuclear power cargo vessel, en route to the World's Fair in Seattle in 1962. Wikipedia / U.S. government

WASHINGTON – The Maritime Administration (MARAD) has published a Federal Register notice inviting comments on MARAD's future plans for the N.S. Savannah (NSS). The notice can be found at https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/01/13/2021-00527/collecting-proposals-for-future-use-of-the-historic-vessel-ns-savannah

The N.S. Savannah was the world's first nuclear-powered merchant ship. It operated from 1962 to 1971, when it was inactivated. It currently is moored in Baltimore.

Under the authority of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), MARAD is engaged in formal consultations with federal, state, and organizational stakeholders, and expects to enter into a Programmatic Agreement with those stakeholders in the next few months. The agreement includes a stipulation that details how MARAD will consider future uses for the vessel after its nuclear power plant is fully decommissioned.

Comments can be submitted electronically online through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at www.regulations.gov under docket number MARAD-2020-0133. Alternatively, comments may be mailed to the following address: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Management Facility, West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590. In person submissions are being accepted in accordance with social distancing protocols in place.

All submissions to the docket will be posted without change to www.regulations.gov and will include any personal information you provide.

CAE and Pinnacle Solutions Prepare to Deliver LCS Simulators to U.S. Navy

Two Littoral Combat Ship Bridge Part-Task Trainers representing the General Dynamics Independence variant will be delivered to the Navy's Surface Warfare Schools Command in Newport, Rhode Island. CAE

TAMPA, Fla.—The joint venture CAE USA and Pinnacle Solutions, Xebec, will be delivering the first three Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) Bridge Part-Task Trainers (BPTTs) to the U.S. Navy, CAE said in a Feb. 9 release.

The new LCS BPTTs recently completed factory acceptance testing at CAE's facility in Tampa, Florida and will now be packed and shipped to the Navy's Surface Warfare Schools Command (SWSC) in Newport, Rhode Island. The SWSC is the Navy's center of excellence for surface warfare where training for officers and Sailors who will serve on the Navy's surface combatants is delivered.

“The Navy is focused on navigation and seamanship training and these littoral combat ship simulators will greatly assist in this endeavor,” said Michael Beard, program manager, U.S. Navy LCS Training Systems for CAE. “The more training our officers and Sailors receive ashore, the better prepared they will be at sea in real life situations.”

CAE is featured a video demonstration of the LCS bridge simulators in the Innovation Hub as part of the CAE OneWorld virtual conference and tradeshow. CAE OneWorld 2021 will be available online for the next month.

Included in the initial delivery to the SWSC in Newport will be two LCS BPTTs for the LCS 2 Independence variant manufactured by General Dynamics and Austal USA, and one LCS BPTT for the LCS 1 Freedom variant manufactured by Lockheed Martin. The three LCS BPTTs will undergo site acceptance testing once installed in Newport and are expected to be ready for training by the end of April. Xebec is under contract to deliver four additional LCS BPTTs which will be delivered to the LCS training facilities located in San Diego, California and Mayport, Florida.

“The fidelity and flexibility of the littoral combat ship simulators we have developed will allow the Navy to deliver most of the personnel qualification standards training in a simulation-based environment,” said Ray Duquette, president and general manager, CAE USA. “This means when sailors get to their assigned ship they will be better prepared for the navigation and operational assignments required.”

The LCS BPTTs are being developed by Xebec, a joint venture of CAE USA and Pinnacle Solutions established under the U.S. Small Business Administration’s Mentor-Protégé program.

“We were pleased to establish the Xebec joint venture with CAE and the collaboration has resulted in a very successful

littoral combat ship simulator program for the Navy," said Mike Durant, Pinnacle's president and CEO. "We look forward to continuing deliveries of the LCS simulators to the Navy and to future pursuits with CAE through the Xebec joint venture."