HII Completes Assembly Building for Navy's Orca XLUUV Hulls

Hampton Mayor Donnie Tuck, Virginia Governor Ralph Northam and HII Executive Vice President and President, HII Technical Solutions, Andy Green break ground on HII's Unmanned Systems Center of Excellence in this September, 2020 photo. The first phase of the center is now complete with the construction of the first of two planned buildings. Huntington Ingalls Industries

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries has completed the first phase of its Unmanned Systems Center of Excellence with the construction of a 22,000-square-foot facility, the company said in a Jan. 11 release.

The first of two planned buildings on the 20-acre campus in Hampton, Virginia will be used to assemble hull structures for Boeing's Orca Extra Large Unmanned Undersea Vehicle (XLUUV) program for the U.S. Navy.

"We are thrilled to reach this critical milestone with the

development of our Center of Excellence campus," said Andy Green, executive vice president of HII and president of HII's Technical Solutions division. "Opening this initial facility immediately expands our unmanned systems capability and helps support the increasing needs of our customers who defend our national security."

Construction began in September 2020, following a ground-breaking event with special guests, including Gov. Ralph Northam and other state and local government officials.

Structural development of the main facility, a 135,000-square-foot building, is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2021. The purpose-built, state-of-the-art facility will be used for unmanned systems prototyping, production and testing.

"HII has made significant investments in the unmanned systems industry during the last year, including this Center of Excellence," said Duane Fotheringham, president of Technical Solutions' Unmanned Systems business group. "This facility solidifies HII's commitment to advancing development of unmanned systems for our current and future customers."

HII partnered with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, the city of Hampton and the Hampton Roads Alliance to secure the project. More than 250 high-quality jobs will be created to support unmanned systems design and production at the facility. Employees began working in the first building on Dec. 28, 2020.

Coast Guard Captures Alleged

Murderer; Transfers Custody to U.S. Marshals

The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Heriberto Hernandez interdicts a makeshift boat with three Dominican Republic nationals in the Mona Passage Jan. 5, 2021. One of the men was a fugitive with a standing warrant for an alleged murder who was transferred to the custody of U.S. Marshals agents in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico Jan. 7. U.S. Coast Guard photo

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Heriberto Hernandez transferred custody of a man wanted for an alleged murder to the U.S. Marshals Jan. 7 in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, following the interdiction of a makeshift vessel in Mona Passage waters near Puerto Rico.

Gustavo Guerrero-Reyes, 37, was arrested on an outstanding Puerto Rico state warrant, following his apprehension while traveling aboard a makeshift boat with two other men, whom all claimed to be Dominican Republic Nationals.

The interdiction is the result of ongoing Caribbean Border Interagency Group multiagency efforts in their common goal of securing the borders of Puerto Rico against illegal threats.

“This case was complex and the crew of the cutter Heriberto Hernandez did an outstanding job interdicting this voyage and working with our partners from U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the U.S. Marshals, which led to the apprehension of a wanted fugitive with a standing warrant for murder,” said Cmdr. Beau Powers, Sector San Juan chief of response. “This case is a testament to the professionalism of all interdicting agencies in securing and defending the United States’ southeastern border.”

Coast Guard watchstanders in Sector San Juan received a call Jan. 5 from a CBP Air and Marine Operations (AMO) agent, who reported the crew of an AMO maritime patrol aircraft detected a suspect vessel approximately 37 nautical miles north of Desecheo Island, Puerto Rico. Coast Guard watchstanders diverted the cutter Heriberto Hernandez to assess the situation.

Once on scene, the cutter’s over the horizon small boat launched and approached the suspect vessel. The Coast Guard boat crew identified the 22-foot white colored makeshift vessel was of wooden construction, unseaworthy, and had no markings or indication of nationality. The passengers onboard were also unable to provide a registration for the vessel.

The crew of the Heriberto Hernandez embarked the three men for safety of life at sea concerns and conducted biometrics processing, which revealed one of the men wanted in connection to a murder allegedly committed in March 2020.

The cutter Heriberto Hernandez rendezvoused with a Dominican Republic navy patrol boat Jan. 6 just off the Dominican Republic and transferred the two other passengers of the makeshift vessel for their return to the Dominican Republic.

Cutter Heriberto Hernandez is a 154-foot fast response cutter homeported in Miami and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

CNO Releases Navigation Plan 2021

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday, shown here at the Naval Postgraduate School in December, has released his Navigation Plan to the fleet. U.S. Navy / Javier Chagoya

WASHINGTON – Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Mike Gilday announced the release of his Navigation Plan to the fleet during virtual remarks at the Surface Navy Association Symposium Jan. 11.

"America is a maritime nation – our security and stability

depend on the seas," Gilday said. "The U.S. Navy is America's away team, and alongside our allies and partners, we defend freedom, preserve economic prosperity, and keep the seas open and free. Today, we are engaged in a long-term competition. China and Russia are rapidly modernizing their militaries to challenge the international order that has benefited so many for so long. To defend our nation and interests around the globe, we must be prepared to flawlessly execute our Navy's timeless roles of sea control and power projection. Joining with the Marine Corps and Coast Guard, we will generate decisive integrated all-domain naval power. There is no time to waste; our actions in this decade will set the maritime balance of power for the rest of the century."

This Navigation Plan nests under the recently-released Tri-Service Maritime Strategy and outlines how the U.S. Navy will grow its naval power to control the seas and project power across all domains, both now and in the future. It builds off the progress made under FRAGO and lays out what must be done this decade to deliver the naval power America needs to compete and win. This will be done by focusing on four key areas:

- **Sailors: Develop a Seasoned Team of Naval Warriors**
  Objective: A dominant naval force that can outthink and outfight any adversary. Our Sailors will remain the best trained and educated force in the world. We will cultivate a culture of warfighting excellence rooted in our core values.
- **Readiness: Deliver a More Ready Fleet**
  Objective: A Navy that is manned, trained, and equipped to deploy forward and win in day-to-day competition, in crisis, and in conflict. We will consistently deliver maintenance on-time and in full, refurbish our critical readiness infrastructure, master all-domain fleet operations, and exercise with like-minded navies to enhance our collective strength.

- **Capabilities: Delivering a More Lethal, Better-Connected Fleet**
  Objective: A Navy capable of projecting synchronized lethal and non-lethal effects across all domains. We will deploy the Naval Operational Architecture by the middle of this decade; an array of counter-C5ISRT capabilities; weapons of increasing range and speed; and a directed-energy system capable of defeating anti-ship cruise missiles.
- **Capacity: Deliver a Larger, Hybrid Fleet**
  Objective: A larger, hybrid fleet of manned and unmanned platforms – under, on, and above the sea – that meets the strategic and operational demands of our force. We will deliver the Columbia-class program on time; incorporate unmanned systems into the fleet; expand our undersea advantage, and field the platforms necessary for Distributed Maritime Operations.

"For 245 years, in both calm and rough waters, our Navy has stood the watch to protect the homeland, preserve freedom of the seas, and defend our way of life," Gilday said. "The decisions and investments we make this decade will set the maritime balance of power for the rest of this century. We can accept nothing less than success. I am counting on you to take in all lines and get us where we need to go – and to do so at a flank bell."

To read CNO's Navigation Plan in its entirety, click here.

To download a one-page infographic, click here.

Lockheed Martin Delivers HELIOS Laser Weapon System to Navy for Testing

An artist's rendering of Lockheed Martin's HELIOS system. Lockheed Martin.

MOORESTOWN, N.J. – This year, the U.S. Navy will field the first acquisition program to deploy the High Energy Laser with Integrated Optical-dazzler and Surveillance, or HELIOS, a laser weapon system with high-energy fiber lasers for permanent fielding by the U.S. Department of Defense.

HELIOS will initially be integrated on a West Coast-based Flight IIA Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer with the Aegis Combat System, but can be adapted to other types of ships and combat systems, says Lockheed Martin, which was awarded the HELIOS contract in 2018.

HELIOS is the first increment of the Surface Navy Laser Weapon

System. The initial system features a laser of around 60 kilowatts to counter fast inshore attack craft or unmanned aircraft.

Increment two will boost the laser power to around 300 kilowatts, company business development analyst Kris Biggs said Jan. 13 in a presentation at the Surface Navy Association's virtual annual conference, although he noted specifications haven't been released to industry. Increment three will build off HELIOS "with an expected focus on even higher energy laser levels," Biggs said.

Lockheed Martin completed the Critical Design Review and Navy Factory Qualification Test milestones for the system in 2020.

Raytheon to Deliver New Submarine Communications System

The Los Angeles-Class fast-attack submarine USS Cheyenne (SSN 773) and its crew arrive at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, after completing their latest deployment, April 26, 2019. Raytheon Intelligence & Space has been awarded a $90 million contractor for Submarine High-Data Rate antenna systems. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Daniel Hinton

ARLINGTON, Va. – Raytheon Intelligence & Space, a Raytheon Technologies business, was awarded a $90 million contract by the U.S. Navy for 23 Submarine High-Data Rate antenna systems, the company said in a Jan. 11 release. Contracted in 2020, the work is expected to be completed on the new antennas by January 2024.

The SubHDR system is used to provide submarines with high-capacity communications. The system vastly improves a submarine's mission capability and the quality of life for sailors by affording them high-data rate communications with the world outside of the sub without sacrificing the submarine's stealth.

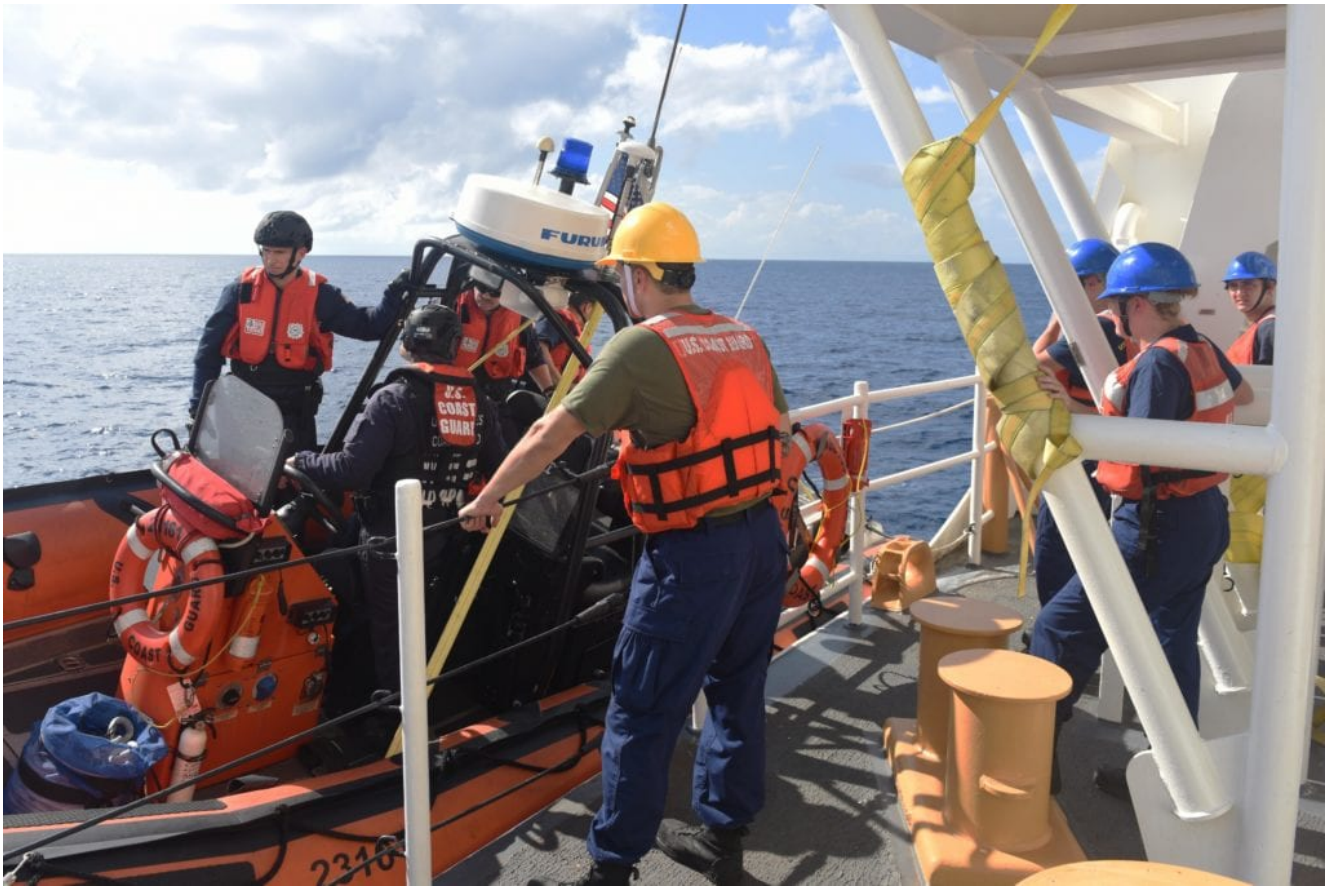
"Connecting people securely is essential to the success of any operation," said Denis Donohue, vice president, Communications and Airspace Modernization Systems for Raytheon Intelligence & Space.

“The SubHDR system provides secure connectivity for submarines that supports mission-critical information delivery to the right people at the right time.”

SubHDR links submariners to the Global Broadcast Service, the Milstar satellite constellation and the Defense Satellite Communications System, via a unique mast antenna that connects them to the above-sea world.

The SubHDR System gives submarines high-data rate, multi-band SATCOM capability. Operating via military satellites, SubHDR enables underwater forces to be full participants in coordinated fleet battle group and joint task force network centric operations. The mast-mounted SATCOM system transmits secure wideband multimedia, secure and non-secure internet access, voice and data traffic, imagery and video teleconferencing.

On First Voyage, USCGC Stone Crew Interdicts Narcotics in Caribbean



The crew on the USCGC Stone (WMSL 758) prepare to launch one of the ship's small boats in the Caribbean Sea on Jan. 6, 2021. The Stone sent a boarding team on the boat to intercept a vessel suspected of engaging in illegal activity. U.S. Coast Guard / Petty Officer 3rd Class John Hightower

PORTSMOUTH, Va. – While in transit to conduct joint operations off the coast of Guyana as part of Operation Southern Cross, USCGC Stone (WMSL 758) encountered and interdicted a suspected narcotic trafficking vessel south of the Dominican Republic Jan. 7, the Coast Guard Atlantic Area said in a Jan. 11 release.

Having stopped the illicit activity, Stone handed off the case to the USCGC Raymond Evans (WPC 1110), a fast response cutter from Key West, Florida, and continued its patrol south.

Early on Jan. 7, acting on information from a maritime patrol aircraft, the Stone crew approached the vessel of interest and exercised U.S. Coast Guard authorities to stop their transit and interdict illicit maritime trade.

The USCGC Raymond Evans arrived on the scene shortly after. A Coast Guard boarding team from the Raymond Evans conducted a law enforcement boarding, testing packages found aboard the vessel, revealing bales of cocaine estimated at 2,148.5 pounds (970 kilograms) total.

Stone's crew remained on scene during the search of the vessel to assist if need. Following the boarding, the Raymond Evans crew took possession of the contraband and detained the four suspected narcotics trafficking vessel members. They are working with the U.S. Coast Guard 7th District and Department of Justice on the next steps.

"I'm very proud of the crew for completing this evolution safely and making an immediate impact on our first patrol," said Capt. Adam Morrison, commanding officer of USCGC Stone (WMSL 758). "This case illustrates that Stone is a competent partner, and our crew is ready for the front-lines. We look forward to our upcoming engagements, first with Guyana."

Vice Adm. Steven Poulin, commander of U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area, said USCGC Stone "is a highly-capable multipurpose platform and ready to conduct missions to save lives, support lawful activities on the high seas, and highlight and build Coast Guard partnerships with other nations.

"I am not surprised that Stone interdicted drug smugglers – it is what the captain, crew, and every U.S. Coast Guard member is prepared to do every day underway. Stone's crew is exhibiting the highest professional competence, reinforcing that Stone is well-suited to help our partners in the South Atlantic expose and address illicit activities in the maritime domain. These transnational criminal activities – be it illegal fishing or the trafficking of people, drugs, money, etc. – challenge global security, and only together can we

combat these threats.”

“Our teammates aboard USCGC Stone are helping keep our shared neighborhood, the Western Hemisphere, safe, successfully stopping illicit narcotics smuggling, while continuing their equally important mission to counter predatory and irresponsible IUU fishing, a growing threat to our partner nations’ sovereignty and our collective regional security,” said Rear Adm. Andrew J. Tiongson, director of operations, U.S. Southern Command.

Operation Southern Cross is a multi-month deployment to the South Atlantic countering illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing while strengthening relationships for maritime sovereignty and security throughout the region.

CAE USA Awarded Navy Contract to Provide T-44C Aircrew Training Services

*CA*E USA will continue providing T-44C aircrew training to the U.S. Navy at NAS Corpus Christi, Texas. CAE USA

TAMPA, Fla. – CAE USA has been awarded a U.S. Navy contract to continue providing comprehensive T-44C Pegasus aircrew training services at Naval Air Station (NAS) Corpus Christi in Texas, the company said in Jan. 7 release.

Awarded as a base one-year contract with additional one-year

options through mid-2027, the contract is valued at more than $70 million. CAE USA provides T-44C aircrew training services to the Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA) under a contractor-owned, contractor-operated training program. The T-44C is the Navy's variant of the King Air aircraft used for intermediate and advanced multi-engine pilot training.

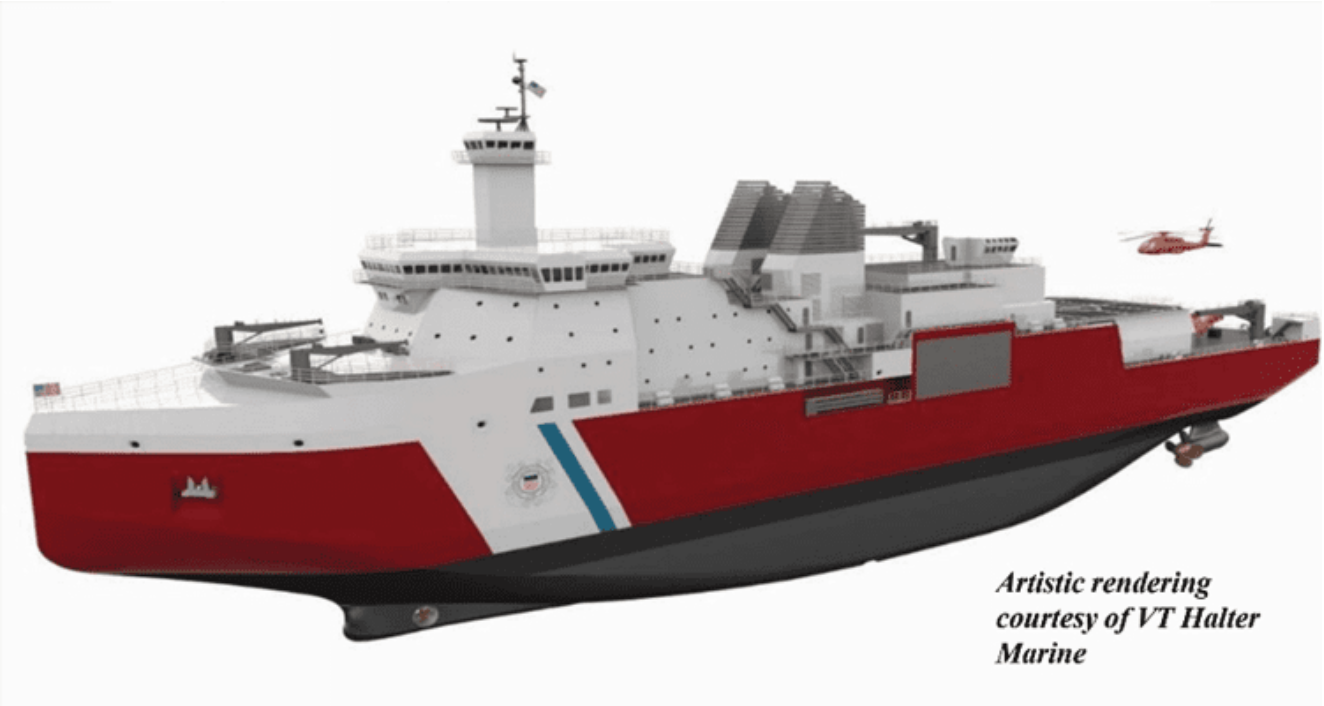
"We started delivering T-44C aircrew training to the Navy in 2013 and are honored the Navy has selected CAE USA to continue providing the essential training services for CNATRA's multi-engine training pipeline," said Ray Duquette, president and general manager, CAE USA.

CAE USA provides qualified instructors who deliver all the required T-44C classroom and simulator training at NAS Corpus Christi. CAE owns, operates and maintains a suite of T-44C training devices that are used extensively as part of the T-44C training syllabus. CAE is also introducing new virtual reality trainers based on the Microsoft HoloLens that will be used for T-44C familiarization and procedural training tasks. This will enable more student throughput by freeing the T-44C training devices and aircraft for more advanced training. In total, more than 400 U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, and international students train annually on the T-44C at NAS Corpus Christi.

"The Navy T-44C aircrew training program is a great example of how CAE partners with our military customers to introduce digital innovations such as virtual reality technologies that help contribute to more efficient and effective training," said Dan Gelston, group president, Defense & Security, CAE.

The T-44C aircrew training program falls under the responsibility of CNATRA, which oversees the Naval Air Training Command and the training of all naval aviators and naval flight officers.

Halter Marine Upgrades Launch Way in preparation for Polar Security Cutter



A rendering of the U.S. Coast Guard's forthcoming Polar Security Cutter. U.S. Coast Guard

PASCAGOULA, Miss. – The U.S Coast Guard's Polar Security Cutter (PSC) is rapidly progressing through the detailed design phase, and Halter Marine is actively preparing for its construction, the company said in a Jan. 6 release.

In July 2021, Halter Marine will complete upgrades to the launch way area where the PSC will be constructed. The 460-foot icebreaker is the heaviest vessel per foot of length that Halter Marine has constructed at its Pascagoula, Mississippi, shipyard. The launch way has been fortified to accommodate the PSC's 19,000-ton launch weight.

The Crowley Taino and El Coqui were the heaviest vessels

previously to launch from the company’s dock. These two vessels are 720 feet in length, providing a greater distance to leverage their weight.

“Based on weight per foot, the PSC outweighs those vessels,” said Bob Merchent, president and CEO of Halter Marine. “The PSC needs 22 tons of capacity per linear foot of rail line, and we have designed the new launch way to accommodate 27 tons per linear foot. We are preparing for our newest vessel while also looking forward to future, larger vessels.”

The upgrade project began in July by removing 11 launch way rail lines. Next, crews dug 1,283 holes that were filled with grout and concrete to serve as new piles. These piles will transfer the PSC’s heavy load to a deeper level than previously possible.

“Each drilled hole is 110 feet long, and we are pouring 27 miles of piles,” said Kevin Amis, executive vice president of operations for Halter Marine. “We are completing this project with a perfect safety record. I’m proud of the women and men at Halter Marine and Malouf Construction for accomplishing this invaluable project with a true focus on safety.”

The launch way upgrade project is funded with a generous grant from the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA).

“We appreciate the continued support of the MDA along with our federal, state and local officials,” Merchent said. “We are thankful for that, and we are all proud to support the men and women of the U.S. Coast Guard by providing them with better capabilities to operate in the Arctic.”

France to Procure E-2D Advanced Hawkeye Aircraft from U.S. Navy

In December, France signed a Letter of Offer and Acceptance to procure three E-2D Advanced Hawkeye aircraft from the U.S. Navy like the one pictured in this October, 2020 photo. U.S. Navy

PATUXENT RIVER, Md.—France became the second international customer of the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye (AHE), Dec. 2, with a signed Letter of Offer and Acceptance to procure three E-2D aircraft from the U.S. Navy, for a maximum value of $2 billion, Naval Air Systems Command said in a Jan. 5 release.

“The E-2/C-2 program office is looking forward to continuing a longstanding partnership with France and beginning a new chapter with the E-2D,” said Capt. Pete Arrobio, program manager of the E-2/C-2 Airborne Command & Control Systems Program Office (PMA-231). “This procurement will increase interoperability among the U.S. Fleet and international partners.”

The three E-2Ds are scheduled to be delivered by 2028 and will replace the three existing E-2C Hawkeyes of the French navy, Marine Nationale.

The E-2D AHE, produced by Northrop Grumman, represents a two-generation leap in technology compared to its predecessor, the E-2C Hawkeye. The aircraft features a state-of-the-art radar and upgraded aircraft systems that improve supportability and increase readiness. The centerpiece of the E-2D AHE is the APY-9 radar system, designed specifically to provide enhanced surveillance detection and tracking capability against advanced threat aircraft and cruise missile systems in the overland, littoral, and open ocean environments. With the addition of aerial refueling capabilities, the E-2D remains the most advanced command and control platform in the world.

The French navy becomes the second international customer of the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye. The Japan Air Self Defense Force has purchased 13 E-2D aircraft to date.

Marine Corps Presidential Helicopter Testbed Retired

Glenn Perryman, deputy program executive officer for Air Anti-Submarine Warfare, Assault, and Special Mission Programs, stands in front of Sikorsky NVH-3A Sea King BuNo 150614, which his father flew as commanding officer of Marine Helicopter Squadron (HMX) 1. The helicopter subsequently served Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (HX) 21 as a testbed for 32 years before making its last flight in October 2020. NAVAIR

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – After a 32-year career supporting the development of new technologies for the fleet, a historic Sikorsky NVH-3A Sea King helicopter assigned to Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (HX) 21 at Naval Air Station Patuxent River has flown its last mission – and a program executive with a special tie to the aircraft is hoping it will soon find a new permanent home where its story can be shared, the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division said in a Jan. 6 release.

The dark-green Sea King, known universally as “614” – in

reference to its military serial number, 150614 – rolled off the Sikorsky Aircraft assembly line in 1962 as a Sikorsky HSS-2 (later redesignated SH-3A). A decade later, the aircraft was assigned to Marine Helicopter Squadron (HMX) 1, where it was redesignated VH-3A and served for four years as a presidential helicopter for Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford. After a brief stint with Helicopter Combat Support Squadron (HC) 6, the Marine Corps transferred 614 to the Military Aircraft Storage and Disposition Center at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base in Arizona. There it rested for seven years, after accumulating a mere 4,500 hours of flight time.

Then, in 1984, the aircraft was pulled out of storage and underwent depot maintenance, and in 1988 arrived at the then-Naval Air Test Center (NATC) at NAS Patuxent River. Given the one-of-a-kind designation NVH-3A, 614 spent the next 25 years as a testbed for innovations in sensors, avionics, radios, computer hardware and software, composite rotor blades, and more. It even hosted the Navy's first successful demonstration of satellite Wi-Fi in a rotary wing aircraft.

After 614 was stripped to its metal bones in 2013 for a cockpit modernization project that was canceled before the aircraft could be refitted, HX-21's Presidential Helicopter Maintenance Team and flight test team undertook an unprecedented effort to return the aircraft to service as a VH-3D testbed. They installed a new power plant, drivetrain, rotors, and landing gear, as well as new electrical, avionics and fuel systems, and machined more than 200 custom parts. On April 4, 2017, the fully rebuilt aircraft took to the air once again.

For three more years, 614 flew in support of a wide range of innovative test programs at NAS Patuxent River, including secure wide-band line-of-sight communications technologies, night vision equipment for the executive transport mission, high-speed rotor and engine shaft track and balance functions, and test flight exercises with U.S. Naval Test Pilot School

students. But on Oct. 22, 2020, 614 made its final flight and the aircraft now rests inside one of HX-21's hangars, awaiting the next chapter in its storied life.

While 614 is well-loved by the men and women of HX-21, the aircraft has a uniquely special meaning to Glenn Perryman, deputy program executive officer for Air Anti-Submarine Warfare, Assault, and Special Mission Programs (PEO(A)). From 1971 to 1974, Perryman's father, Col. James Perryman Jr., served as commanding officer of HMX-1, and flew 614. In fact, Col. Perryman flew President Nixon twice on 614.

The elder Perryman served two combat tours in Vietnam before joining HMX-1 – and 614 was the first VH-3A he flew at his new squadron. ("How cool is that?" the younger Perryman remarked.) By the time he completed his squadron commander tour, Col. Perryman had made 48 flights in 614 totaling just over 66 hours' flying time. Col. Perryman passed away on New Year's Eve 2013, at the age of 80 – the same year that the younger Perryman joined PEO(A) as its deputy program executive officer.

Bringing his family history full circle, Perryman had an opportunity to fly in 614 in January 2018, not long after the newly refurbished aircraft had been returned to service with HX-21. Vice Adm. Dean Peters, commander of Naval Air Systems Command, was also on board for that flight, Perryman recalls.

"It was phenomenal," Perryman said. "To have the opportunity to fly in the same helicopter that my father flew almost 50 years ago, to sit in the same cockpit where he sat, is something that I'll never forget, quite frankly. Not everyone gets that kind of opportunity."

Perryman said his father's time at HMX-1 was the source of many childhood memories for him. "The squadron dominated our lives, as you can imagine," he said. "Wherever the president went, my dad would have to go. My brother and I thought it was

the neatest thing in the world that our dad flew the president."

It was this combination of the aircraft's unique history and his personal connection to it that spurred Perryman to action when he heard HX-21 planned to retire the aircraft. "It's a piece of history," he said. "It has served unique missions in its lifetime – presidential helicopter, developmental test aircraft for many new technologies. Not every aircraft has this kind of history attached to it."

Perryman believes 614 hasn't used up all of its nine lives yet.

"It's in superb mechanical condition right now, and if it can be preserved in some way, it will last even longer," Perryman said. "I'm doing everything I can to facilitate that. I would be happy to donate my father's log books to go along with the aircraft. I have some Nixon memorabilia, too. Wherever it ends up, I hope that it will be preserved."

"I cannot think of a more symbolic representation of what we do at the Presidential Helicopters Program than aircraft 614," stated Col. Eric Ropella, program manager of the Presidential Helicopters Program (PMA-274). "This aircraft gives a full, rich history as both a no-fail mission aircraft that flew Presidents Nixon and Ford, and as a test bed for delivering the newest capabilities to the presidential fleet. It seems only fitting that we try and find a place of honor for 614 and its 32 years of service here in front of the Presidential Helicopters Support Facility as a static memorial and display."